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According to Marxism-Leninism, the emergence of a true Communist society will occur only after the final collapse of capitalism. The Soviet leadership has instituted for the young people essentially a military regime of indoctrination and training to produce the "New Soviet Man." The result has been a hardcore minority of zealots which may well produce the future leadership of the Soviet Union.

THE MILITARIZATION OF SOVIET YOUTH

by

David M. Gist

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Militarism that is built with the voluntary conscious participation of worker and peasant youth is not militarism, but rather is a weapon for the liberation of the toiling masses.¹

Leon Trotsky
1922

With this ideological rationalization, Naval Commissar Trotsky dismissed objections of doubters who feared that Komsomol "patronage" activities in the Red Navy would lead to the undesirable spread of militaristic attitudes. During the Civil War era there were still Bolsheviks who did not realize the possible implications of Lenin's "armed proletariat," and hoped there would soon be no need for a militarized society.

Since the days of Lenin, the inculcation of "ideological maturity" and militant patriotism has been a priority mission in Soviet schools and youth organizations. Military-oriented

activities have also been a constant feature; but except for periods of national crisis, military training for the civilian populace was largely voluntary. Since 1967, the Brezhnev regime has launched a new "military-patriotic indoctrination" program for youths which rivaled Stalin's campaign of the "Great Patriotic War" era.

A desired result of the present Soviet youth policy is the creation of a militarized society. This allegation relies on Webster's definition of militarism as the "glorification and prevalence of military attitudes," and the "policy of maintaining a strong military organization in aggressive preparedness for war."²

THE NATURE AND ORIGINS OF "SOVIET PATRIOTISM."

The distinguishing traits of a Socialist Patriot are love of

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Motherland, understanding of his country's role in mankind's drive for the most perfect social regime, and the striving to enhance its glory and power. Socialist Patriotism is shared by all the peoples of our country; it is indissolubly tied to proletarian internationalism.³

Every modern society attempts to inspire its youth with love for the homeland, respect for cultural traditions and pride in national accomplishments. But the Soviet concept of patriotism goes far beyond simple expressions of "bourgeois nationalism." In nonrhetorical terms, the prominent features of "Soviet Patriotism" are determination to serve and to defend the interests of the Soviet state as defined by the ruling elite; commitment to the international "victory" of socialism over capitalism; and rejection of all non-Socialist value systems, i.e., the hatred of "class enemies."

The oath of the Komsomol proudly declares,

We love our Motherland as our own Mother. We are prepared to serve her without sparing our strength or life itself because there is no other people as great as ours and no other country as great as ours.⁴

Belief in this sort of officially profered chauvinism is based on two patriotic precepts: the conviction that socialism is superior to any other belief system; and the egotistical attitude assumed by the Soviets who judge themselves the original prophets and only true practitioners of Leninism. Confidence in the superiority of the Soviet system is rooted in the Marxist-Leninist vision of communism as the world order of the future and the final salvation of the oppressed masses. To the "true believer," this fact is self-evident, historically predetermined and scientifically proven. The October Revolution provided an example to the world proletariat by creating the first success-

ful Socialist state. As "heirs of the revolution" and builders of the most advanced Socialist society, Soviet youths are constantly reminded that they must be grateful for citizenship in the best of all possible worlds.

The privileges of Soviet citizenship are accompanied by awesome patriotic responsibilities. To hasten the construction of Soviet communism, young people are told they must be unswervingly loyal and unhesitatingly obedient to the Communist Party leadership. Soviet patriots must be activists; selflessly and enthusiastically supporting all party policies and striving for fulfillment and overfulfillment of the state's economic, social and political goals. The young are urged to maintain a positive, optimistic outlook toward the Soviet system, its past history, present condition and future prospects. They are warned to be constantly vigilant for unorthodox attitudes and asocial practices which are invariably associated with vestiges of bourgeois mentality or foreign subversion.

To demonstrate his love for all things Socialist, the Soviet patriot must reject and exhibit hatred for alien belief systems.

Hate for the class enemies and love for the Socialist motherland are two externally opposite feelings which are in a unitary and dialectical relationship. They are two aspects of Socialist Patriotism. Fervent love for the Socialist fatherland is inconceivable without irreconcilable class hate for its enemies.⁵

As the leader of alleged world imperialism, the U.S. Government is a primary object of Soviet animosity.

Since communism is believed to be the historically inevitable successor and mortal enemy of capitalism, the two systems are inherently incompatible. "Détente" and limited cooperation with capitalist states are recognized expedients which can be used to further

Soviet interests while reducing international tensions and minimizing the danger of nuclear war. But any theories dealing with the permanent partnership or convergence of the opposing systems are flatly rejected. Soviet youths are told that such ideas are insidious "bourgeois propaganda" intended to undermine the spirit and goals of the Socialist revolution. Despite the easing of international tensions and prospects of arms limitations agreements, Soviet leaders warn youths against passiveness and political "neutralism."

Peaceful coexistence does not extinguish or cancel out the class struggle—it is a new form of class struggle employed by the working class and the socialist countries in the world arena. It cancels only one type of struggle—war as a means of settling international issues.⁶

Similarly labeled as a capitalist "propaganda trick" are bourgeois liberal views of pacifism which suggest that all wars are evil, producing "... only dead men and no heroes." Soviet leaders continue to support the cultivation of "heroic patriotism": the "readiness for heroic acts in combat and a will to victory even under the conditions of nuclear war."⁷

According to Marx and Lenin, the capitalist ruling class will not relinquish power without a fierce struggle. As the strength of socialism grows and capitalism approaches its "crisis," capitalist resistance to its certain fate sharpens, increasing the likelihood of a violent clash between the two systems. Although no longer stating that a direct confrontation of the superpowers is absolutely inevitable, the present leadership insists that increased military expansion and preparedness is an "objective necessity" due to the continued threat of imperialist aggression. Soviet leaders also justify the buildup of military power in order to protect the interests of the world proletariat.

The course of peaceful coexistence... is aimed at preventing the imperialists from unleashing a new world war, instigating international provocations and exporting counter-revolution. At the same time its purpose is to create favorable conditions for the peoples to exercise their sacred right of choosing their own road of development... (i.e., socialism).⁸

By maintaining military superiority over the Western imperialists, the Soviets see an alternative to general war while still pursuing the cause of world revolution.

For the bourgeoisie to give up power without an armed struggle, it must be forced to do so with the help of revolutionary coercion... To force the bourgeoisie to give up power, the proletariat must have at its disposal superior physical force.⁹

When Soviets speak of abrogating war, they refer only to the "predatory, aggressive wars" waged by imperialists and reactionary powers against "oppressed peoples" and to direct confrontations between the U.S.S.R. and the West. There is another type of war which is entirely justified by Communist ideology: anti-imperialist "wars of liberation."

Peaceful coexistence has nothing in common with class peace and does not cast even the slightest doubt on the oppressed peoples' sacred right to use all means, including armed struggle, in the cause of their liberation.¹⁰

As an "internationalist," the Soviet patriot cannot truly embrace the building of communism in the U.S.S.R. without recognizing the essential role of "just wars" in advancing the cause of world communism. In a philosophical sense, internationalism merely recognizes the spiritual "class solidarity" of the Soviet and world proletariats. In practice, the Soviet patriot is obliged to

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promote morally and materially the export of Socialist revolution. Preparing for and support of these liberation struggles is a prime responsibility of Soviet citizenship.¹¹

Of all patriotic obligations, the "sacred duty" of military service "in defense of the Motherland" is the highest calling. In the words of the Komsomol bylaws, the "first duty" of every Soviet patriot is "... to study military matters, to be supremely devoted to the great Socialist Motherland, and to be prepared to give it all his strength and, if necessary, his life." It is not enough to submit passively to the duty of military service. The true patriot "yearns to join the glorious ranks of the Young Friends of the Border Guards or of the Soviet Army," and anxiously awaits the day of his own conscription.¹²

The honored status of the Soviet military cannot be understood without appreciating the enormous impact of the World Wars on Soviet society. To the true Soviet patriot, the survival of the Socialist system and life itself were insured by the "heroes" who fought the revolution and defeated the Fascist threat. While aspiring to join the honor roll of those who served the Socialist cause, youths are taught to extoll and to revere the image of the Soviet soldier.

Our Soviet Army, child of the Great October Revolution, the flesh and blood of the people
... the people and the army
compose one whole, one family
... In the Soviet Union the people love, respect and care for the army.¹³

Soviet "heroes" are not just the veterans of World War II, but the border guards defending against Chinese aggression and infiltrating foreign agents; garrison soldiers who "protect the gains of Socialism" in Eastern European countries; technicians performing their "internationalist duties" by advising "liberation forces"; and Soviet sailors

who bolster the defense of socialism's friends and allies in the Mediterranean, Caribbean and Indian Oceans.

THE "UPBRINGING" OF THE "SOVIET PATRIOT"

In most Western countries, the socialization of the young is left to nonpolitical institutions such as the family, church and community. In Russia, the Bolshevik Revolution severely disrupted the functioning of traditional institutions. Collectivization, industrialization and urbanization further complicated the problem of inculcating moral and social values. Lenin and Stalin, as members of a small political cadre, were faced with the monumental task of imposing a Socialist value system on millions of politically illiterate people who had never heard of Karl Marx and were interested only in "land and liberty." The newly born Soviet Union was, at best, a loose federation of diverse nationalities and ethnic minorities. Non-Russians comprised more than half the Soviet population and strongly identified with their own cultures. Obviously, the social and political "upbringing" of future Soviet generations could not be entrusted to the family and other traditional institutions. It became the primary responsibility of a comprehensive party-directed program carried out through All-Union youth organizations and the schools.

Believing that youths cannot assimilate the desired values without intensive, long-term indoctrination by adults directed by the party elite, the Soviets have sought to avoid the emergence of any spontaneous youth culture by monopolizing the time and energy of young people in closely supervised activities. This massive effort is designed to produce permanent mobilization, either for explicit military purposes or other national priorities.

A primary educational goal is the

creation of dedicated Soviet patriots. The militant nature of patriotic education is reflected by frequent use of the term "military-patriotic indoctrination" in reference to the teaching of "Soviet Patriotism." Military-patriotic activities are invariably accompanied by a profusion of aggressive, simplistic slogans or "banners" tailored for their romantic appeal to young "fighters and revolutionaries."

The Soviet education law of 1919 clearly defined the role of the schools as agents of the Communist Party, which were tasked to teach party ideology and goals for regenerating society.¹⁴ The original function of the schools has not changed. As the Minister of Education in the RSFSR has stated, teachers must provide "preparation of students for defense of the motherland starting with the first day of their presence in the school."¹⁵

Although frequently featured as a discrete subject, military-patriotic indoctrination is fully integrated into all instructional areas.* One Western educator has noted that virtually every Soviet textbook includes some "proof" of Socialist righteousness and capitalist degeneration or patriotic appeals for continued vigilance against imperialist aggression.¹⁶ Science courses depict Soviet superiority in all technical fields. In music classes, martial spirits are aroused with patriotic lyrics like "Know that I am in the Attack."¹⁷ The sources of gallantry and heroism are revealed through the literature of "Socialist realism" which idealizes the image of true patriots. Social science and history courses play an especially vital role by instilling confident belief in socialism's glorious past and ultimate victory. They also teach the "correct" Socialist interpretation of world history, international politics and current events.¹⁸

In addition to regular academic

courses, weekly "political information" sessions are part of the curriculum. In Leningrad schools, for instance, each student completes a 250-hour political syllabus beginning in the fourth grade. The children study current examples of imperialist aggression, the efforts of Socialist "liberation fighters," Soviet foreign policy, and the need to maintain superior military defenses.¹⁹

Teaching techniques bear a resemblance to Pavlov's work in conditioned response, featuring frequent drills with standardized questions and answers:

Teacher: "What kind of political structure is better, capitalism or socialism?" "Of course, socialism," the student answers. "Now, what methods are used to maintain the proletariat in power and why?" "Force and violence," says the student, "because until the final stage of communism is reached, the dictatorship of the proletariat must prevail . . ."²⁰

The predominant approach for teaching patriotism is the study and glorification of the Soviet military, especially the lives and exploits of "heroes" of the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars. While providing an example for future soldiers, this technique is intended to establish a sense of continuity between youths and the older generations.

Soviet leaders emphasize that the young must "realize that they are the successors of their fathers who brought about the October Revolution and defended socialism in fierce battles against fascism. In (these) feats, the children must see living people, the source of their spiritual strength, unprecedented courage, endurance and daring."²¹

In regular courses or special study groups, students are asked to write on such subjects as "The Glory of Those Days (World War II) Will Never Die," "If the Father is a Hero, Should the Son

*A Soviet authored teaching guide for the study of patriotism is included as Appendix I

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also become a Hero?" and "The Enthusiasm of Draft-Age Youth."²² Picture albums of school graduates who served in the war, combat souvenirs and other military memorabilia are frequently collected and displayed in colorful "rooms of combat glory." Although similar displays are devoted to Lenin and "labor heroes," the increasing preponderance of military themes over the past decade is striking.

Overlapping extensively with indoctrination efforts in the schools, the extracurricular activities of the Komsomol (Communist Youth League or YCL), pioneers and other youth organizations provide intensive and varied military-patriotic programs.

The Komsomol has lost much of its former elitist character and become a mass organization which numbers over 40 million members. This number represents about 70 percent of the eligible age group from 14 to 28.²³ As the training ground for future Communists and the party's junior arm for political "agitators," mass educators and ideological "shock workers," the Komsomol provides the vanguard of military-patriotic indoctrination efforts. Naturally, YCL members are expected to exhibit exemplary patriotism. They are required to disseminate "military-technical" knowledge to their members and prepare themselves mentally and physically for service in the armed forces. Periodic examinations are administered to test the level of political and military learning.²⁴

Beginning with the Red Navy in 1922, the YCL has supported the armed forces through the broadly defined institution of "patronage." Members write letters of appreciation to servicemen and send delegations to military bases to demonstrate the "love and support" of the people. They provide facilities and social activities for soldiers and sailors which are not unlike the work of the American USO. Another aspect of Komsomol patronage involves enhance-

ment of the military's public image. The YCL sponsors public appearances by military "heroes" and joint civilian-military "self-help" construction projects. The past exploits and current activities of their "beloved" army and navy are widely publicized in YCL's news media. Komsomolites are expected to provide the "soul" and junior leadership of paramilitary clubs and societies. For example, 70 percent of the YCL's membership is also enrolled in the All-Union Voluntary Society for Assistance to the Army, Air Force and Navy (DOSAAF) paramilitary activities.²⁵

The patronage concept continues as Komsomolites enter military service. By 1974, 92 percent of the officers and 80 percent of the enlisted men serving in the uniformed services were either active YCL members or former Komsomolites who had graduated to Communist Party membership.²⁶ YCL primary organizations function within most military units where Komsomolites are tasked to exemplify the spirit of "heroic patriotism," enhance the "ideological maturity" of fellow soldiers, and insure the "political reliability" of the armed forces.²⁷

Komsomol youth are equally active in Soviet schools. Every administrative unit, government committee or other group dealing with educational policy is required to include Komsomol representation.²⁸ Teachers are urged to cooperate with YCL students in the planning and presentation of political and patriotic instruction. Upper-grade Komsomolites designated as "political information officers" often lead the "political information sessions" discussed earlier.²⁹ Following the major theme of glorifying the Great Patriotic War, Komsomolites organize study groups, research projects and special events such as "Two Generations Rallies" where students meet and honor war veterans.

Military-patriotic indoctrination for younger children is conducted through

the Pioneers and Octobrists. Practically all urban children and 75 percent of the total population between the ages of 7 and 15 belong to these mass organizations. Pioneer and Octobrist activities closely parallel those of the Komsomol and are generally supervised by that senior group. Since membership is virtually all-inclusive for a given peer group, the threat of exclusion and social pressure provides powerful incentives to conform with behavioral norms as defined by the youth organizations.

The three Soviet youth groups form a hierarchal pyramid with military service and eventual Communist Party membership at the apex. Octobrists and Pioneers aspire to Komsomol membership. Komsomolites yearn to become "heroic fighters" in the service of the motherland who will prove worthy of selection to the "Party of Lenin."

The trend toward military hero worship during the past decade has reached its peak in an allegedly spontaneous mass movement called the "Red Pathfinders." Originating in 1965 from a Komsomol "drive for tourism," the Red Pathfinders movement is an activity rather than a formal organization. It reportedly enjoys overwhelming popularity with Soviet youth 11 years old and older. The Pathfinders are credited with the establishment of over 71,000 museums, rooms and corners of "combat glory"; 58,000 monuments and obelisks commemorating heroic deeds; and dozens of parks on the sites of wartime battles.³⁰

But the primary activity of the Red Pathfinders is "exploring the trails of glory." Every summer, millions of young people troop to the countryside to trace the paths traveled by famous Soviet military units during the Civil and Great Patriotic Wars. The Pathfinders search for unmarked graves, documents, photographs and other relics of historic value. The ultimate goal of this crusade was illustrated by the experience of a Belorussian Group in 1967.

These astute explorers discovered the unburied remains of 70 fallen soldiers in a collapsed bunker. "By studying half-decayed notes, papers and identification badges," the Pathfinders verified that these "heroes" were members of the 100th Soviet Guards Division which fought to the last man against Hitler's initial onslaught. Through the efforts of the Red Pathfinders, "a feat of heroism performed by the (military) unit became known to the people and would never be forgotten."³¹

Red Pathfinder marches often last 3 weeks or more and may include several hundred students in a single group. The major annual event is the "All-Union March" (also called the "All-Union Tour") in which youth groups from across the Soviet Union converge on some historic spot for a mass patriotic rally. During the course of the affair, "officers, even generals in reserve and retirement, commanding and political officers of (active military) units help the young people in their search for combat relics and unknown heroes." According to Marshal Konev, Chairman of one All-Union March, military personnel also introduce hikers to "military games, forced marches, map orientation . . . and radio communications."³² The fifth All-Union event in 1971 involved 30 million Pathfinders. Based on their cumulative performance in the military exercises, distances marched, relics uncovered, monuments erected, patriotic songs written and amateur documentary films produced, the winning detachments are selected and duly honored at concluding ceremonies.

No discussion of the military-patriotic indoctrination process would be complete without mentioning the important role of the media. Patriotic themes abound in Soviet art, films and television. The Military Publishing House distributed 134 million copies of

2,819 novels and nonfictional works between 1961 and 1968. *Red Star*, the official army newspaper, is primarily directed at civilian readers and enjoys a multimillion copy circulation. In the two leading children's magazines; 42 percent of the content of one, and 19 percent of the other, consists of romanticized military-patriotic material.³³

Significantly, the indoctrination process does not teach a specific dichotomy between civil and military affairs. Defending the homeland, supporting the international socialist movement, constructing Soviet communism, serving the Soviet people and obeying the Communist Party are not independent duties which can be performed separately. They are mutually inclusive aspects of a single attitude deeply ingrained in the ideal Soviet patriot.

The militant character of "Soviet Patriotism" and preoccupation with "combat hero" worship would amply demonstrate the presence of militarism in Soviet society even if no other evidence existed. But an equally prominent manifestation of militarism does exist: the explicit training of school-aged youth in the arts and skills of warfare.

TRAINING THE FUTURE SOLDIER

The forms of military-patriotic education in the Soviet general education schools have varied. Now they are closely linked with initial military training. And this is correct. . . . Patriotic education must be accompanied by military instruction, how to master weapons, and how to conduct oneself in war. The education of love for the motherland and readiness to defend it must be accompanied by the mastery of the science of winning.³⁴

This 1969 statement by the Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Pedagogical Sciences illustrates the

growing association of military training, patriotic indoctrination and general education in Soviet youth policy. Peacetime military training has always been available to Soviet youth, even before the days of universal conscription. Before 1967, however, participation for non-Komsomolites was generally voluntary except for civil defense training.

The organization primarily responsible for the military training of the populace has been the All-Union Voluntary Society for Assistance to the Army, Air Force and Navy (DOSAAF) and its various predecessors. Of all Soviet mass organizations, DOSAAF is the largest, numbering over 80 million members. In some urban areas, up to 90 percent of the eligible population have joined DOSAAF ranks.³⁵ Membership begins at age 14 and overlaps heavily with the ranks of Komsomol. Although the organization is ostensibly an independent body under the Ministry of Defense, reserve and retired servicemen monopolize instructor positions while the senior leadership is filled with active-duty military officers.

Besides DOSAAF's "patronage" function as promoters of public goodwill, understanding and support for the Soviet military, DOSAAF is charged with two vital missions: to instruct youth and the general populace in civil defense skills; and to prepare youth physically, mentally and technically for service in the armed forces.

Since its introduction in 1955, mandatory civil defense training has steadily expanded. The current program for school-aged children begins in the second grade where boys and girls first learn proper use of gas masks and air raid shelters. By secondary school graduation, all youths complete a minimum 62 school-hour program of classroom instruction augmented by 60 to 80 hours of evacuation drills and field exercises. Predominant instructional topics include: the effects of conventional, nuclear, chemical and bacterial

weapons; bomb shelter construction, decontamination procedures, rescue operations, survival techniques and first aid. Honor graduates of the program win the badge, "Ready for Anti-Air Defense, First Grade." As a minimum, all Soviet citizens must participate in a 20-hour basic civil defense course each year. Members of local civil defense formations receive up to 90 hours additional training annually. An obvious purpose of this extensive program is to reduce the civilian casualty levels in the event of a general war. But the training also prepares the population for rapid, total mobilization during any national emergency. Significantly, the instruction is designed to ease public fear of nuclear warfare and to build confidence in the certain survival and victory of the Soviet Union under any circumstances, including a nuclear holocaust.³⁶

The second major role of DOSAAF is to "strengthen the defensive capability of the Soviet Union" by teaching military skills. Although available to the general public, DOSAAF military training activities are directed toward teenaged and adolescent youths. DOSAAF-sponsored study groups in schools, factories, farms and residential complexes acquaint young people with the regulations, responsibilities and activities of soldiering. The most popular DOSAAF activities are the many and varied paramilitary clubs where students may earn a technical or athletic rating which will influence their future military assignment. The clubs encompass most special skills useful to the military including marksmanship, flying, sky-diving, vehicle driving, automotive maintenance, electronics repair, radio/radar operation and police-dog training.³⁷

"Young Soldier," "Young Sailor," and "Young Border Guard," clubs are especially popular with the Pioneer and younger Komsomol age groups. Participation in these units is reportedly widespread, probably due to extensive Pioneer and Komsomol involvement.

DOSAAF is a major sponsor, but many of these clubs are under the direct tutelage of regular armed forces units. "Young Soldiers" and similar clubs utilize military organizational structures and design their own colorful uniforms, flags and insignia. Students receive extensive practice in small arms firing, mock grenade throwing, map reading, navigation, camouflage, saluting and close order drill. Special emphasis is placed on group participation in elementary combat tactics. Military tactics are taught by injecting military principles into organized play activities. Schoolyard favorites include "Capture the Sentry," "Remain Undetected," and "Defend the Bridge."³⁸

During the summer months, paramilitary clubs take to the field. Young Soldier summer encampments feature forced marches, war games and tactical exercises. A typical day at camp might consist of a lengthy cross-country march on compass bearings with frequent stops for communications drills, crossing "mine fields," taking cover from "nuclear explosions," donning gas masks and neutralizing "enemy" positions.³⁹

Another military training approach is provided through a growing number of "military-patriotic schools" attached to regular armed forces units and military academies. These institutions promote "special relationships" between military personnel and local youth. The servicemen provide part-time helpers and instructors for Pioneer work and other military-patriotic activities in the regular schools. In return, local children visit the participating military installations to attend military-technical classes and often join in or observe other service activities. In 1971, for example, more than 60,000 Young Border Guards are said to have participated in patrols with regular troopers and were credited with the arrest of "tens of border violators" and "hardened spies." Besides the general aim of involving students in military affairs, the "military patriotic school"

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concept is intended to attract promising young people to military careers and specific service branches.⁴⁰

Organized sports play a prominent role in the Soviet militarization process. Participation in competitive athletic events develops comradeship, goal orientation, physical endurance, self-discipline, the will to win and other qualities essential to the Soviet Patriot. The current All-Union program, "Prepared for Labor and Defense of the U.S.S.R.," provides physical fitness activities for all age groups, but a primary goal is to prepare youth for military service. At each grade level, children strive to meet norms in running, jumping and swimming. They must also compete in one or more "military-technical sports" such as parachuting, marksmanship, scuba diving, flying, motorcycling or radio telemetry. As a reward for excellent performance in the All-Union program, the graduating secondary school student can win the honored badge, "Ready for the Defense of the Motherland."⁴¹

Since 1970, the "All-Union Federation of Military Related Multiple Events" has conducted countrywide competition in military sports for youths 16 to 25 years of age. Popular events include cross-country running, long-distance swimming, marksmanship, grenade throwing and motor vehicle driving. The 1970 All-Union Games in "Military-Technical Sports" reportedly involved 21 million contestants.⁴² Military-technical events are also prominent in the most grandiose of all Soviet sports spectacles, the annual "Summer Tournament of the Soviet Nations." Over 80 million athletes are said to have taken part in the Sixth Summer Tournament held in 1975.⁴³

The most blatantly militaristic of the so-called Soviet "sports" activities are "Summer Lightning" for Young Pioneers (ages 10-15) and "Eaglet" for Komsomol-aged youth. These comprehensive arrays of military-patriotic

indoctrination, field trips and militarized games are directly supervised by the Ministry of Defense. In contrast to most DOSAAF programs (which concentrate on technical skills), specialized paramilitary clubs and summer camp activities, Summer Lightning and Eaglet are full-time programs designed to familiarize children with army life. Participants become members of permanent formations, elect their own officers and train throughout the year for final tactical exercises held each summer. Beginning in the third grade, children are introduced to the elements of military discipline, army regulations, guard duty and maneuvers in formation. Simple running, jumping and swimming games are given military significance by names such as "Obstacle Zone," "Minefield," and "Torpedo Attack." As the students progress, the games become more complex and realistic. Eaglets receive training in advanced tactics and automatic weapons firing.⁴⁴

The most elaborate Summer Lightning and Eaglet exercises closely resemble the war games used for combat training in most modern armies. Communications equipment, field rations, vehicles and other equipment are provided by the Soviet military. The students are divided into "friendly" and "aggressor" forces. Armed with mock rifles, machineguns, hand grenades and artillery, the youngsters battle to a "decisive victory" as judged by their military advisors. A special degree of realism is often added by simulated news reports from student "war correspondents," and mock air attacks or paratrooper assaults by cooperating DOSAAF clubs or regular military units.⁴⁵ These exercises are sometimes combined with the maneuvers of the regular armed forces. In 1971, a group of 6,500 Summer Lightning participants joined with the Soviet Navy for amphibious landings and the "repulse of a naval assault force" in the Vladivostok area. The event concluded with a

ceremonial pass in review before a vice admiral.^{4 6}

Summer Lightning and Eaglet qualify as sports only because many of the military skills and tactical exercises are organized and taught as competitive events. Local winners advance through regional contests and eventually reach the All-Union games where victorious units and individuals are nationally honored. Presumably excluding participants in local events, 16 million children are said to have competed in the 1973 All-Union Summer Lightning games.^{4 7} Soviet officials insist that these programs are not mere recreation, but serious business. Defense Marshall Grechko publicly cited the rapid growth of Summer Lightning and Eaglet, stating that they have become "... one of the most important forms of military-patriotic indoctrination of youth."^{4 8}

The 1967 "Law of the U.S.S.R. on Universal Military Service" created a new dimension in juvenile military training. While reducing the required active-duty periods by 1 year, the law established an ambitious program of "basic military training," (BMT) for 15 to 18-year old boys in the last 2 years of general, vocational and technical schools.* BMT has also been extended to factories and state and collective farms. Original plans called for implementation of BMT for all eligible youths by the 1972-1973 school year.^{4 9}

The announced purposes of BMT were twofold: to compensate for the loss of training time resulting from reduced active duty tours; and to provide conscripts with improved technical skills needed for effective operation and maintenance of increasingly sophisticated military equipment.^{5 0}

Superficially, the content of BMT contains little that was not previously

available to most Soviet students through Komsomol, DOSAAF clubs and other voluntary paramilitary organizations. But the increased scope, intensity and universal application of mandatory military training to the entire teenaged population is unprecedented as a Soviet peacetime policy.

BMT is generally advertised as a 140-hour program conducted for 2 hours weekly during the last 2 years of secondary school. This minimum time requirement is misleading since mandatory technical training, physical conditioning and summer field exercises are not included in the formal portion of the syllabus. The amount of time reportedly devoted to these extra areas extends the total BMT program to approximately 260-300 hours. Although descriptions of the syllabus vary and are subject to local modifications, data pieced together from a number of Soviet news reports and secondary sources is summarized in Appendix 2.^{5 1}

BMT for working youth is conducted at designated "training points" or centers. Training points are generally housed in the economic enterprises which they serve. When fewer than 15 students are present at a particular enterprise, city or district centers are being established. These centers are given the auspicious title, "Universities of the Future Soldier."^{5 2}

Girls are also required to participate in BMT, but apparently receive only 50 to 70 percent of the syllabus hours in each area. As a technical specialty, girls complete a 44-hour course in first aid in preparation for possible service in the "ambulance and sanitary branches" of the armed forces.^{5 3}

The administration and supervision of the BMT program is quite involved. Responsibility for overall planning and coordination rests with the Ministry of Defense which works through the military commissariats in each republic. Each republic commissariat must coordinate the efforts of designated

*Military service periods were reduced to 2 years for the army and air force, 2-3 years for the border guards depending on assignment locale, and 3 years for the navy.

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supporting agencies including the republic DOSAAF committee, Komsomol organization, Ministry of Education, physical culture agencies, trade unions and active-duty military units. Although military bases provide support for nearby BMT activities, the primary responsibility for providing instructors and supervisors belongs to DOSAAF. Retired or reserve military officers and senior NCO's are preferred. If sufficiently qualified "volunteers" are not available in the local DOSAAF membership, which is often the case, the responsible "training point" commander, school principal, factory manager or farm chairman may be held personally accountable for obtaining a satisfactory BMT staff at his institution.⁵⁴ Obviously, BMT is a high priority program in which every conceivable agency dealing with youth plays some role.

Although official sources proclaim student enthusiasm for BMT, the Brezhnev leadership has provided a powerful incentive to insure popular support: Students who fail to perform satisfactorily in the program do not receive secondary school graduation certificates.

The initiation of BMT was lauded by a barrage of optimistic press notices. Subsequent Soviet editorials and journal articles reveal that the program is lagging. In November 1972 only 60 percent of the proposed BMT units were in operation. Full implementation of the program has yet to be announced. Blame has been placed on military equipment shortages, "superficial support" from active-duty military units, too few "volunteers" for instructor duty, and bureaucratic bungling by the Education and Defense Ministries. It is also probable that the program suffers from inadequate funding and overreliance on local initiative. These problems are not surprising considering the demands of the program. There are more than 40,000 secondary schools and 50,000 industrial sites presumably

designated as BMT training centers. Including at least 10,000 other centers to serve rural areas, well over 100,000 facilities must be staffed and equipped.⁵⁵

The quality and performance of BMT instructors has been questioned. While many of these "teachers" are reportedly lacking in pedagogical skills and expertise in sophisticated military-technical fields, they have been accused of attempting to impose military regimes on schools and factories. Educators and economic unit managers resent this infringement on their domains and have protested the additional burden on their overtaxed space, personnel and supply resources.⁵⁶

Despite official dissatisfaction with BMT's progress, the program is beginning to pay dividends. The improved performance of 1975 conscripts was attributed to the claim that 70-80 percent of them were graduates of BMT programs.* Reenlistment rates and requests for admission to officer academies have also increased.⁵⁷

SOVIET MILITARISM: CAUSES AND IMPLICATIONS

The possible goals of Soviet militarization policies may be divided into two categories: to increase military strength for defensive or offensive purposes, or to provide increased control and mobilization of the civilian populace for internal purposes.

Taken at face value, an obvious goal of the Kremlin's intensive youth programs is to improve the effectiveness and depth of Soviet military power. Although the 1967 Universal Conscription Law did not significantly enlarge the standing army, the effect has been

*The percentage of conscripts who received BMT does not necessarily indicate the degree to which BMT is implemented for the entire draft-aged population since BMT graduates are probably selected first. The current conscription rate is approximately one half of the eligible 18-year-old population.

to cycle more men through active-duty service while increasing the size and experience level of the reserve forces. BMT and paramilitary activities not only improve the quality of conscripts, but provide military indoctrination for the 50 percent of draft-aged youth who are not conscripted. The desired result appears to be the creation of a "nation in arms" which could easily be mobilized in times of crisis.

The close association of patriotic education with military training may partially be explained as an effort to improve civilian attitudes toward military service. Soviet rulers must overcome the absence of a strong military tradition in the Russian culture and the lingering abhorrence of war resulting from the suffering endured in the two world wars. The glorification of the Red Army is necessary to overcome the fact that World War II Soviet forces were not very professional or effective by international standards. Heroic victories were achieved only after costly retreats. After being assured of Soviet military supremacy all their lives, many young men see no pressing need for universal conscription. Like youths in Western countries, they are not anxious to interrupt their educations or to leave civilian jobs for the austere life of soldiering. Despite recent improvements, military pay and living conditions are still well below civilian standards. The military's reputation for stern discipline further dampens enthusiasm.^{5 8} Despite massive attempts to enhance the status of military service, many young people are openly cynical. A 1969 study revealed that military officers ranked only 4.3 on a 10 point job prestige scale. Scientists, engineers, doctors, university teachers and even artists and writers received higher ratings.^{5 9}

If increased military strength is accepted as a Soviet goal, the underlying motivation and intent of this aim must be addressed. A sincere insecurity complex offers one explanation. The Soviets

can cite ample historical evidence to support their claim of "capitalist encirclement." Although the shifting balance of power, weakened U.S. resolve to contain the expansion of Soviet influence, and the current trend of East-West relations seemingly leave little justification for Soviet insecurity, Communist dogma maintains that capitalist nations will become increasingly dangerous and irrational as their power wanes. The persistent threat of Chinese aggression offers an even stronger case for maintaining a strong defensive posture.

Some experts contend that offense, not defense, is the Soviet aim. In the past, the Russians have chosen to limit cautiously the projection of military force overseas, probably as a result of pragmatic analysis of their inferior military position. Kremlin leaders still make frequent reference to the "international function" of the armed forces, i.e., the direct support of allies, client states and revolutionary "wars of liberation."^{6 0} Recent Soviet actions in the Middle East, Africa and elsewhere demonstrate a degree of boldness and self-confidence unprecedented since the 1962 Cuban missile exploit. The relative increase in Soviet power and influence over the past decade may have convinced Kremlin leaders that direct confrontations with the United States no longer carry unacceptable risks. Some experts fear that the dramatic increase in mobilization, particularly the increase in civil defense training, indicates a Soviet intent to launch a preemptive nuclear war. This type of "capability-equals-intent" reasoning can be misleading. If applied to the relative emphasis Soviet leaders place on various forms of military training, it could also be argued that the Russians are expecting a major conventional land war, an amphibious invasion, airborne assaults, and so on.

Turning to internal factors, it may well be the process of militarization that is important rather than actual military results. The attainment of true

communism requires the emergence of what Russian ideologues call the "New Soviet Man," a selfless breed who would always place the interests of society above his own, require no supervision and allow the state to "wither away." Marx believed that such men would naturally evolve within a socialist system. Soviet attempts to militarize youth may be one more phase in the struggle to mold a "New Soviet Man." Even if ideology is disregarded, the process of militarization offers an excellent tactic for beating down opposition to Communist Party control and extending habitual conformity to wider sectors of Soviet society.

Although Soviet leaders have proven highly adept at manipulating social institutions, the continual effort to maintain goal directed behavior, harness creative energies and modify national "nodal personalities," showed many signs of failure by the mid-1960's. During the Stalinist era, Soviet society had stabilized into a conservative, bureaucratic, totalitarian police state. The vision of a prosperous and classless Utopia had become a tarnished dream. Industrial modernization, mass education and Khrushchevian "liberalism" had contributed to a flourishing of individuality and growing disenchantment with ideological orthodoxy. This trend was evidenced by heightened nationalism among the Soviet minorities, renewed interest in religion and a wave of open dissent among the intelligentsia.

By 1966 the signs of discontent were particularly evident among Soviet youth. Apathy, pessimism and alienation of the younger generation had become serious and persistent problems. Whether "dropping out" of society as irresponsible "stilyagi" or actively joining in dissent movements, the rising tide of youthful individuality suggested that the ideological "upbringing" work of schools and youth organizations was unequal to the task. Beginning as future

oriented reservoirs of revolutionary inspiration, Communist youth programs had become dull and ineffectual defenders of the establishment.

While launching "neo-Stalinist" cultural and economic policies, the Brezhnev regime began a massive effort to regain the confidence, loyalty and commitment of youth. Borrowing a page from Stalin's book, Brezhnev de-emphasized the more esoteric elements of Communist dogma and exploited the innate patriotism and national pride of his youthful subjects.

Soviet leaders claim that the present generation lacks ideological conviction and revolutionary zeal because they have been spoiled by material advantages and not suffered through the "hard school" of social conflict and war. By glorification of wartime "heroes" and past victories, the regime hopes to refurbish the Socialist vision and inculcate youth with the revolutionary élan and "partiinost" (party mindedness) of their fathers. Even if the current programs fail to reseal totally the generation gap, military sports, war games and "hero" worship undoubtedly have more romantic appeal than the intricacies of dialectical materialism.

Other prominent features of militaristic patriotism enhance the political and social primacy of the ruling elite. By promoting xenophobia and an atmosphere of constant siege, Soviet leaders justify the necessity of national unity and continued subordination of individual interests to the needs of society as interpreted by the party. Use of external threats shifts latent hostility toward the regime to an alien scapegoat. Meanwhile, the ruling elite legitimizes its right to power by making its role as prime protector of socialism appear indispensable.

In a sense, the Soviet trend toward militarism is an admission that socialism has failed to produce a "New Soviet Man" through the "objective realities" of life in a "classless" society. The

Brezhnev leadership is redefining the "New Man" in the image of the patriot-soldier. A communal, technical specialist with high regard for productive work and Socialist responsibility, the *idealized* Soviet soldier possesses iron discipline, unquestioning loyalty to superiors, respect for authority, absolute conformity to behavioral norms, and determination to endure any hardship for the Communist cause. This describes the reasonable facsimile of the "New Man" which Kremlin leaders hope to impose on society through the militarization of Soviet youth. As Brezhnev has said, "The Army is becoming an important *school of life* for our youth and a component part of the entire system of Soviet indoctrination."⁶¹ Educators report that the military's influence has already had a favorable effect on student discipline and appearance.⁶²

Militant rhetoric is often discounted as the "Soviet style," not to be taken seriously since it proves only that Kremlin leaders are still obliged to legitimize their rule through identification with outmoded revolutionary idealism. Likewise, Soviet citizens may mimic militant rhetoric and participate in military-patriotic activities in order to survive or get ahead in the system. While many youths undoubtedly display the "outer cover" or "reddish scale," it is naive to suggest that Soviet youth are unanimously playing the role of George Orwell's Winston Smith. When an entire population is constantly bombarded with a parochial viewpoint, denied free access to opposing ideas, and required to reaffirm ceaselessly their zealous support for the system, the "mere propaganda" of the party line is bound to have a substantial effect. As Orwell so graphically illustrated in 1984, the Winston Smiths of an authoritarian

system represent an exceedingly small minority.

In the final analysis, there is no simple explanation for current Soviet developments, but a complex combination of internal and external considerations. Even if domestic factors appear to provide the primary motivation for militarism, there is still cause for concern in the West.

Judging from the record of similar social experiments, the Brezhnev policies will probably produce a minority of militant zealots and various degrees of conviction or passive acceptance among the rest of the current generation. Unfortunately, the Soviet leaders of the future may well come from the hardcore group of militarized converts and hard-line ideologues who will resist internal reform and be oriented toward military solutions to international problems. Unlike zealots of the previous generation, the leaders of tomorrow will possess a military arsenal which equals or exceeds the power of their Western "class enemies." The final result could be an increasingly activist and belligerent foreign policy.

BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Following his graduation from the University of Missouri, Lieutenant Commander Gist has had extensive flying duty involving carrier tactical air operations. In 1974 he earned his M.P.A. from the University of Washington. During academic year 1976-1977 he was an Advanced Research Associate at the Naval War College. His current duty assignment is Executive Officer, Attack Squadron Eighty-two.

APPENDIX 1

This outline first appeared in the professional educators journal *Sovetskaia Pedagogika*, No. 1, 1967. It was part of a classroom teaching guide for the study of "Soviet morality."

A. Soviet Patriotism: Service to the State

1. The *love* for one's country and one's native language; the love for the distinguished people of the Soviet state.

The *readiness to defend* the great socialist country. Willingness to die for it if it becomes necessary.

Always be proud of socialism; Soviet socialism is the best in the world. Socialism was first established in the Soviet Union.

2. *Hate* toward the enemies of the country.

3. Desire to *serve* the Soviet country; belief in the communist society; optimism; self-confidence.

4. *Subordination* of individual interests to the country's interests.

Emphasis added.

Source: Wasyl Shioniak, *Communist Education: Its History, Philosophy and Politics* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), p. 165.

APPENDIX 2

Summary of available data on Basic Military Training (BMT) syllabus for secondary school and working males, aged 15 to 18.

Subject	Approx. no. of hours
1. "Psychological indoctrination" (Classroom instruction on Soviet defense policy; military history; draft law; duties of a soldier; military discipline, regulations, customs and traditions; basic strategy)	20 hrs.
2. Basic military skills (marksmanship with small arms, machine guns and anti-tank guns; grenade throwing; small arms maintenance; close order drill; communications; camouflage; small unit tactical operations)	80 hrs.
Topography	6 hrs.
3. Military-technical specialty training (most commonly mentioned include communications, radar operation, electronics repair, motor vehicle operation and repair, heavy construction equipment operation, seamanship and deep sea diving, parachuting and flying)	<u>30-50 hrs.</u>
Total:	136-156 hrs.

Additional required training associated with BMT but not included in "140 hour" syllabus.

1. Civil defense skills (Classroom instruction and drills on the use of gas masks, dosimeters and other emergency equipment; decontamination procedures; first aid; search and rescue; crowd control and evacuation procedures)	35 hrs.
2. Physical training (includes basic conditioning, obstacle course running and other paramilitary sports)	80 hrs.
3. Field exercises (summer camp)	5-14 days

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NOTES

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2. *Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language*, 2d College Ed. (New York: World, 1972), p. 901.
3. Quoted from *Public Education in the U.S.S.R., 1917-1967* in "Character Training in School and in Out-of-School Organizations," *Soviet Education*, November 1968, p. 22.
4. Quoted in Virginia Rhine (trans.), *Young Communists in the U.S.S.R.* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1950), p. 2.
5. Quoted from editorial in *Communist of the Armed Forces*, no. 13 (July 1969), p. 26 in Leon Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination of Soviet Youth* (New York: National Strategy Information Center, 1973), p. 10.
6. M. Sidorov quoted in Foy D. Kohler, et al., *Soviet Strategy for the Seventies: From Cold War to Peaceful Coexistence* (Miami: University of Miami, Center for Advanced International Studies, 1973), p. 3. Similar Soviet views are quoted in Herbert Goldhamer, *The Soviet Soldier: Soviet Military Management at the Troop Level* (New York: Crane Russak, 1975), pp. 213-214.
7. L. Oshurkov quoted in Gouré, p. 8. Recent Soviet statements on justification of limited warfare and permissible nuclear war are quoted in *Soviet World Outlook*, 13 February 1976, pp. 7-8.
8. CPSU Theses Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the October Revolution (1976) quoted in Kohler, et al., p. 186.
9. Col. N. Kitayev quoted in Kohler, et al., p. 9.
10. CPSU Theses for Lenin Birth Centenary quoted in Kohler, et al., p. 72.
11. For recent examples of Soviet views on "internationalist duties" see K. Spirov, "The Soviet Army—A School of Internationalism," *Soviet Military Review*, October 1974, pp. 23-25.; M. Zenovich, "Dawn of Freedom for Angola," *Soviet Military Review*, May 1976, pp. 38-40; and O. Ivanov, "Lessons of Vietnam," *Soviet Military Review*, April 1976, pp. 44-47.
12. Excerpts from Komsomol oath quoted in Rhine, p. 23. Also see Robert G. Wesson, *The Russian Soviet State* (New York: Wiley, 1972), p. 297.
13. *Ibid.*
14. Wasyl Shimoniak, *Communist Education: Its History, Philosophy and Politics* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1970), p. 108.
15. L. Baliasnaia quoted in Gouré, p. 28.
16. Shimoniak, p. 54.
17. O.A. Sarkisian, "The History Teacher and the School Komsomol Organization," *Soviet Education*, August 1973, p. 106.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 96-108.
19. *Ibid.*; Also N.A. Syreishchikova, "The Political Education of Schoolchildren," *Soviet Education*, August 1973, pp. 87-95.
20. Quoted in Shimoniak, p. 210.
21. F.F. Korolev, "The October Revolution and the Education of the New Man," *Soviet Education*, October 1968, p. 48.
22. Gouré, pp. 31, 50.
23. Goldhamer, p. 72.
24. Ralph T. Fisher, Jr., "The Soviet Model of Ideal Youth" in Joseph L. Noguee (ed.), *Man, State and Society in the Soviet Union* (New York: Praeger, 1972), pp. 336-344.
25. Gouré, p. 21.
26. *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, v. XVIII, No. 17, p. 13, and v. XII, No. 20, p. 6.
27. For description of the Komsomol role in the Armed Forces, see Major A. Rybin, "Ideological Education of Servicemen," *Soviet Military Review*, September 1976; V. Selyodkin, "Maturing of Soldiers," *Soviet Military Review*, August 1976, pp. 36-37; "Raising Offensive Enthusiasm," *Soviet Military Review*, July 1976, pp. 34-35; and "Komsomol Forum," *Soviet Military Review*, May 1974, pp. 38-39.
28. Shimoniak, p. 443.
29. Sarkisian, p. 97.
30. "Character Training in School and in Out-of-School Organizations," *Soviet Education*, November 1968, p. 23.
31. Marshal Ivan Konev, "Exploring the Trails of Glory," *Soviet Military Review*, January 1968, p. 19.
32. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

33. Robert G. Wesson, *The Soviet Russian State* (New York: Wiley, 1972), pp. 300, 297.
34. V. Khvostov quoted in Gouré, p. 7.
35. Goldhamer, p. 42.
36. For descriptions of Soviet civil defense youth training, see Leon Gouré, *Civil Defense in the Soviet Union* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1962), pp. 45-55, 155-169; Leon Gouré, *War Survival in the Soviet Union* (Washington: Center for Advanced International Studies, 1976), pp. 193-199, and Goldhamer, pp. 74-81.
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38. Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . pp. 39-40.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
43. V. Gavrilin, "Grand National Competitions," *Soviet Military Review*, December 1975, pp. 59-60.
44. Summer Lightning and Eaglet are described in Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . , pp. 42-43, and Goldhamer, pp. 70-72.
45. For fascinating descriptions of other war games, see Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . , pp. 43-45.
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52. Rosen, pp. 421-422.
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55. BMT implementation problems are discussed in "A Report on Military Training at Secondary School," p. 16; Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . , pp. 61-66; Rosen, pp. 421-422; and Goldhamer, pp. 47-55.
56. Goldhamer, pp. 50-51.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 48, 65, and Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . , p. 62-63.
58. A 1971 study indicated that 42 percent of draft-age youth surveyed cited "submission to military discipline" as the most serious adjustment problem they would encounter if conscripted. Another 21 percent anticipated that a "high physical work load" would be their principal problem. Quoted in Goldhamer, p. 214.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
60. Several Soviet references to the "international function" of the armed forces are given in Kohler, et al., pp. 76-78, 190-199. Also see references listed in note 11.
61. Emphasis added. L. Brezhnev quoted in Gouré, *The Military Indoctrination* . . . , p. 13.
62. *Ibid.* p. 61.; Rosen, pp. 421-423.