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INFOGUIDE: INTERIM GUIDANCE ON SOVIET ANTI-STALIN CAMPAIGN

It is now clear that ~~the~~ Soviet leaders have launched a widespread campaign to repudiate in large part Stalin and his reign of terror. By no means is it yet certain why they have chosen such an unusual method of attempting to destroy ~~the~~ symbols of "Stalinism" or what their long-range goals may be. Because Communist Party strategy is maintaining ~~a~~ shroud of secrecy over this part of ~~the~~ 20th Party Congress proceedings in Moscow, we are still without adequate factual information. For this reason ~~the~~ ~~State~~ State is unable to take definite position and provide USIA with conclusive, comprehensive guidance. ~~State~~ is making an intensive effort to obtain ~~the~~ best available information and expert analysis as to ~~the~~ motivation of the current Soviet moves and their intended objectives. In ~~the~~ meantime, ~~the~~ following preliminary evaluation and tentative guidance, subject to immediate change, is provided to assist USIS missions on ~~the~~ interim basis.

Background:

1. ~~the~~ Act of Repudiation

a. ~~the~~ symbols of Stalin have been subjected to ~~a~~ shrinking process

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during ~~the~~ three years since his death. ~~It~~ Late as last January, however, Stalin was accorded occasional positive recognition.

b. Khrushchev is reliably reported to have made ~~a~~ denunciatory speech at ~~the~~ closed session of ~~the~~ 20th Party Congress in February. As first exposed by ~~the~~ western press, ~~the~~ speech presumably characterized Stalin as: (1) ~~a~~ sadistic tyrant, ridden in his later years by ~~a~~ persecution phobia; (2) ~~a~~ megalomaniac who rejected expert advice; (3) ~~a~~ vain egotist who ordered history rewritten to glorify himself, etc. ~~The~~ Criticism has been focused on ~~the~~ ill effects of one-man rule, not on basis Soviet policies.

c. Soviet domestic media since the Congress still ignores Stalin issue, but foreign Communist leaders in public statements have stressed ~~the~~ merits of Stalin in his earlier years and have thus indicated an attempt not to destroy him completely.

d. ~~The~~ Substance ~~of~~ Khrushchev's speech has apparently been conveyed by party spokesmen to local groups throughout ~~the~~ Soviet Union.

e. ~~The~~ Text ~~of~~ Khrushchev speech, notwithstanding official recognition of its occurrence, remains secret presumably until ~~the~~ Soviet rulers feel that ~~the~~ population ~~is~~ prepared for its presentation. Reports

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have been received that ~~a~~ shorter version ~~is~~ being prepared for public release.

2. Questions of Advance Planning and Compulsions:

a. Whether Khrushchev's secret speech, as actually made, had been planned in advance is open to question.

b. ~~These~~ Soviet rulers appear ~~to~~ be motivated by free choice rather than compulsion. With reported calm and control at home, and relative success abroad, there is no evidence that they were compelled by domestic or foreign policy considerations to indulge in such ~~a~~ vigorous anti-Stalin campaign.

c. ~~The~~ gradual de-emphasis of Stalin may have been considered inadequate and ~~the~~ 20th Congress chosen as ~~a~~ forum for ~~a~~ more emphatic and dramatic denunciation.

3. Possible Implications:

a. ~~The~~ Soviet rulers appear to have been confident of their ability ~~to~~ control unfavorable reactions.

b. ~~The~~ psychological impact of Stalin's repudiation at home and among followers abroad creates mass disciplinary and widespread personal readjustment. Already there are currents of confusion, uncertainty,

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embarrassment, resentment and tension in ~~the~~ USSR, in ~~the~~ satellites and among foreign Communist groups.

c. Criticism of Stalin's performance during his long regime could easily open ~~the~~ way for fundamental reappraisal of past issues, policies and facets of Soviet and Communist patterns of action.

d. Present rulers of ~~the~~ Soviet Union were closely associated with Stalin. They must have recognized ~~the~~ risk of being personally implicated in his excesses which they now expose.

e. This risk may have been weighed against ~~the~~ assumed improvement in ~~the~~ respectability of ~~the~~ Soviet Union and indigenous Communists abroad.

f. There is no indication from other developments at the 20th Party Congress that the Soviets have departed, or intend to depart, from the fundamental Soviet policies or objectives established by Stalin.

Tentative Information Policy Guidance:

1. ~~The~~ U.S. attitude for ~~the~~ time being should not be conclusive in nature, excited in tone, nor give ~~the~~ appearance of over-indulgence in propaganda excesses. Rather it should be characterized by calm, reasonable objectivity holding our fire for possible attack when we have better factual information.

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2. Care should be exercised ~~to~~ avoid ~~the~~ premature commitment of ~~the~~ U.S. to a specific course of analysis or interpretation of ~~the~~ Anti-Stalin campaign.

3. By judicious selection of material from unofficial sources, with attribution, attention should be called to ~~the~~ confusion, tension and harassment which ~~the~~ Soviet rulers have brought to ~~the~~ satellites and Communist groups throughout ~~the~~ world.

4. Emphasis should be placed on ~~the~~ fact that ~~the~~ blood-thirsty tyranny now described by Khrushchev could never have taken place in ~~a~~ truly democratic society. ~~The~~ Soviets have now belatedly confirmed what ~~the~~ outside world has been saying for years.

5. For ~~the~~ time being, however, ~~the~~ main burden of ~~the~~ U.S. information effort should be ~~the~~ pursuit of ~~a~~ hopefully embarrassing line of questioning-- without necessarily presuming to have the answers -- specifically relating ~~the~~ Anti-Stalin campaign to certain basic issues, such as:

a. How can ~~the~~ present Soviet leaders live down their former approval, not to say fulsome support, of Stalin's personal policies? Can they divest themselves of basic complicity. (Selected quotations will follow by pouch.)

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b. What now, therefore, can be ~~the~~ claim of present Soviet rulers to credibility?

c. What are Communist leaders in other countries to expect and to believe? Will they now seek the truth for themselves, or again fall back behind ~~the~~ new leadership of still unproven intentions?

d. What, in effect, can be said of a system where loyalties are based on terror one day and repudiated by expediency the next?

e. Does ~~the~~ Stalin repudiation mean return to "Leninism"? If so, how can one, upon ~~the~~ examination of Lenin's record, conclude that his personal conduct ~~was~~ essentially different from that of his ardent disciple Stalin?

f. After all these years of banishment, how can ~~the~~ mantle of Trotsky or other opponents of ~~the~~ Stalinist interpretation of Marxism suddenly be accorded any degree of respectability?

g. If terror and tyranny -- ~~the~~ mainstays of Communist rule -- have been expunged at home, what basic changes can be expected in Soviet external policies -- in ~~the~~ satellites, with respect to German unification, disarmament, renunciation of international Communism, etc.?

~~The~~ tentative nature of ~~the~~ foregoing ~~is~~ again emphasized. Further

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guidance based on new information and subsequent analysis ~~████████~~ forthcoming
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