You Have Been Warned

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Summary
The paper that follows is a draft chapter for a book (in preparation for the Hoover Press), *One Day We Will Live Without Fear*. The book collects seven stories with a common theme: the adventures of ordinary citizens caught up in the working arrangements of a totalitarian police state. The book is based on documents from former Soviet archives held on microfilm at the Hoover Institution. It illustrates and discusses how and why communist rule evolved from bloody Stalinist terror to the more paternal and more finely discriminating authoritarianism of the late Soviet Union that forms the subject matter of the present chapter.

The chapter draws on my short working paper, "You Have Been Warned: The KGB and Profilaktika in Soviet Lithuania," PERSA Working Paper no. 62, University of Warwick, Department of Economics (October 12, 2010). Its subject matter is also my starting point for a new research project that is now in its first stage, with the title "You Have Been Warned: Managing threats to state security in Lithuania under Soviet rule."

Note
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Chapter 5. You Have Been Warned

Until the Bolshevik Revolution came to Russia in 1917, Lithuania was a province of the Russian Empire. The governor's court was accommodated in the center of Wilno, the Polish name for Lithuania's capital city. The building was square and solid, in the governmental style of the Empire, at the corners of a wide street and an open square lined with trees. Now Polish Wilno was Lithuanian Vilnius, and the same building provided the headquarters of the KGB of Soviet Lithuania, with offices upstairs and cells in the basement.

On a cool, dry day in October 1978 a nervous young man entered the KGB headquarters through the front door. He was there by invitation, but he did not know why. Aged 34, Algirdas was a section head in a radioelectronics design bureau. Radioelectronics had military applications, so his work required access to "top secret" government paperwork. The young man, Algirdas, had already been vetted and cleared by the KGB. He was also a candidate for full party membership. His record was clean—until now.

Algirdas was interviewed by three KGB officers. From the moment they opened the conversation, he knew he was in trouble. They told him they needed to talk about "the causes of his inappropriate behaviour in the collective, expressed in the dissemination of politically damaging propositions that denigrate our Soviet actuality."

An informer had reported Algirdas to the KGB as "telling anti-Soviet jokes, denigrating Soviet society and party and government leaders, belittling the role of the party and its youth league, and continually praising the American way of life." Through other informers the KGB confirmed the allegations. To protect the informers' identities, the KGB also secured formal witness statements from Algirdas's past and present colleagues.

We are told that the stages of loss—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—are universal.[1] So too were the stages of a warning conversation with the KGB.

Denial. At first "A. behaved mistrustfully and insincerely, and tried to show that he is not expressing ideologically incorrect and damaging judgments." (These are the words of the officer who made the record.)

Confession. "But, after he was provided with the concrete facts of his unhealthy propositions, he admitted that amongst his circle he actually did sometimes repeat jokes, without hostile intentions, and express other incorrect propositions."

Bargaining. At this point Algirdas came up with some excuses. He blamed his own lack of political understanding, and his inexperience and

lack of preparation as a section chief. By joking about the party, he claimed, he was just aiming:

> To amuse people so that their work would be worthy of the name. Comparisons with the USA served only as a benchmark for evaluation of work. After the conversation he understood that in making comparisons it is necessary to consider well so that everyone will understand it properly.

Warning. Algirdas "was warned of the unacceptability of similar facts in the future."

Acceptance. In response, Algirdas promised to change his behaviour with immediate effect.

Moving on. For a while Algirdas would be on probation. The KGB would share its information with the party committees at his places of work and residence, so that they knew to keep an eye on him. Based on his promises, the interviewers recommended not to keep him under direct KGB surveillance. But this recommendation was countermanded by their superior officer: "Set up surveillance for a period of one year."

From sword to shield

The secret police was the "sword and shield" of the Bolshevik Revolution. When it acted as the sword, officers took part in arrests, executions, assassinations, and "low intensity" military operations. Accounts of the sword are more sensational and better known than those of the shield. Yet for much of Soviet history KGB officers, especially in the provinces, spent more time acting as the shield of the regime.

The documentary evidence for this chapter comes from Soviet Lithuania. The history of Soviet rule in Lithuania shows both shield and sword at work. In the first years after World War II, Lithuania was under military occupation. KGB records from this time tell of nationalist resistance and Soviet counter-insurgency. The security police took part in military operations, mass arrests and deportations.[2] The insurgents were suppressed, and Lithuania became quiet. As that happened, the sword gave way to the shield.

As the shield of the Soviet state, the Lithuania KGB still had plenty to do. Although increasingly quiet, political life in Lithuania was never completely "normal." Because of its history of nationalism, strong Catholic congregation, large emigration, open coastline, and land border with conflict-ridden Poland, the KGB continued to regard Lithuania as a frontline theater of the Cold War.

When the KGB was shielding the Soviet regime, it continued to operate according to the basic principles of the police state (discussed in Chapter 1). For the sake of the First Principle (*Your enemy is hiding*), the Second Principle (*Start from the usual suspects*), and the Third Principle (*Study the young*), the KGB listened to the citizens in public and private, at home and abroad. It watched the borders and the coming and going of strangers. It covered the business of the state and party in a blanket of secrecy. It reserved its closest scrutiny for any that showed undue curiosity about secret business. The information that the KGB gathered was used in many ways. One important use of this information was to support its strategy for the stabilization of Soviet society: the strategy of prevention.

The logic of prevention, in Russian *profilaktika*, was simple: prevention is cheaper than cure. The sword was still available to chop off the heads of the real, inveterate enemies of the state. But the shield was designed to protect the potential enemies from the bad influences that might turn them one day into real enemies and so expose them to the sword.

Prevention was not for highly motivated dissidents or nationalists, those who had already committed "state crimes." In the eyes of the Soviet authorities these persons were real enemies who deserved retribution and isolation, not dialogue. Prevention was reserved for people who committed nothing more than "politically damaging misdemeanours," which were not yet crimes.[3] Such people needed patience, understanding, and advice; they were suitable cases for treatment. Intervention could save them by forestalling "the emergence of criminal intention and its realization."

This was a clear change from Stalin's time. In the 1920s, Stalin developed the idea that many people were potential enemies who were likely to betray the state under pressure, even if they did not know it themselves. In the 1930s, Stalin's treatment of choice was mass terror, including preventive arrest, imprisonment, or execution.[4] Compared to this, the technique of preventive warnings was humane. It was also absolutely necessary, if Stalin's successors were to manage the consequences of releasing millions of embittered former prisoners back into the community.

Foreign as well as domestic factors were at work. Stalin's successors began to open up Soviet society to the outside world. In that context, the strategy of prevention met the challenges of the outside world. It repaired some of the damage done to the Soviet Union's international reputation by the cruelty of the Stalin years. And it offered a way to inhibit the spread of imported fashions and youth culture from one impressionable young person to another.[5]

The "preventive discussion" was the defining moment in the KGB's strategy of prevention. It was a discussion, not an interrogation; no one was accused of a serious crime. Although the discussion gave both sides the chance to explain themselves, it was never open-ended; it always ended with the subject receiving a clear, unmistakeable warning. The person at the focus of the discussion had set out on a path that, if followed to the end, would lead to a collision with the state. If it came to a collision, the state would win. The message of the interview was that this collision was entirely avoidable. All that was required was an immediate change in the subject's behaviour.

The discussion ended when a promise was given to do so. But the end of the discussion was not always the end of the process. Sometimes the KGB accepted a promise to mend behaviour at its face value; at other times they maintained surveillance for a period.

Surveillance lay at the foundation of the strategy of prevention. Surveillance meant the gathering and collating of data from neighbors and work colleagues, informers, street watchers and followers, and mail and telephone intercepts. The KGB relied on mass surveillance to identify suitable cases for treatment and to signal the moment when the subject's behaviour required intervention. After an intervention, the subject's expectation that surveillance would probably continue was one factor that helped ensure their compliance. It was not always necessary to target continued surveillance on any particular subject, for there were enough agents and informers that no one could expect to go through life unobserved.

A wide range of interests

The KGB sought preventive interviews across a wide variety of cases, including many that would not seem remotely political at first sight. In Lithuania's seaport of Klaipėda, for example, many cases involved young Lithuanian women who were bored, looked for amusement, and found it on the dockside. Foreign sailors were continually in and out of the port, handling western currency and goods. Even if they started off just looking for a good time, these young women soon found themselves involved in petty currency violations, black-market trading, and casual prostitution. State security did not care about petty crime or prostitution; it did care about contact with foreigners. The KGB picked up these young people and warned them off, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups.[6]

A stream of related cases was provided by Lithuanian sailors who returned from the West with foreign goods and currency. These gave them entry tickets into the same underworld of petty criminality and easy sex. The KGB used its strategy of prevention to impose a cultural and

moral quarantine, aimed at stopping the spread of "unhealthy" Western-style values at the border.

For similar reasons it was the task of the KGB to control the conduct of Soviet citizens abroad. No one was allowed a passport to leave the country without detailed, intrusive checks into their background and reliability. Abroad, Soviet citizens had to conform to a fixed code of conduct (described in Chapter 6). Some of those who traveled abroad would inevitably violate the rules by going off on their own, by having unauthorized dealings with foreigners, or by reselling foreign goods or currency. On their return to the Soviet homeland those involved were duly reported, called in, and warned.

Some cases, like that of Algirdas, had a clear political dimension. The KGB was particularly interested in anyone that expressed nostalgia for "bourgeois Lithuania" (their name for the independent state that had existed from 1918 to 1940), that denigrated Soviet leaders or the Soviet way of life to their colleagues or neighbors, or that wrote indiscreetly to relatives abroad.

In KGB eyes young people were a problem in a way that older people were not (recall the Third Principle: *Study the young*). To the KGB the older people were a known quantity. But every new generation threw up its own surprises. The state had many ways to integrate young people into society—for example, through guaranteed employment, the communist youth league, and official youth clubs. But the opportunities these provided were always limited, and any group of young people would include a few rebels that were naturally inclined to push at the limits

While some young people just wanted more fun, others developed romantic feelings about political freedom and national identity. The KGB was continually treading on the heels of groups that discussed independent Lithuania, read nationalist poetry, or planned escapades involving leaflets and slogans. These were often students. The 1960s and 1970s were a time of student revolution; if in Paris or Prague, why not in Vilnius? Some students were children of the Lithuanian party elite; the party wanted them to aspire to lead Soviet Lithuania, not an independent state. Such young people were too precious to destroy, but sometimes they needed to be taught a lesson, so that they would return to the path of "healthy" behaviour.

On losing one's sense of humour

Algirdas was one who came to attention by telling jokes against the regime. He was a joker, in Russian an *anekdotchik*. He was treated leniently, in that he merely received a warning. In the past he might have

been dealt with more severely. While writing his wonderful history of communist humour, Ben Lewis interviewed Roy Medvedev, the historian and Soviet-era dissident.[7] According to Medvedev, the first assignment of trainee operatives of the Stalin-era NKVD was to hang around public places and listen for subversive jokes. This was their homage to the Fourth Principle (*Stop the laughing*). By prosecuting the citizens that spread underground humour, the state exercised its zero tolerance for the sharing of dissenting attitudes.

On Stalin's death, according to the well-informed Medvedev, the Soviet labor camps held around 200,000 anekdotchiki. When Stalin died and the regime went soft, the jokers were among the first wave of releases from the Gulag.

After that time, Lewis notes, it's hard to find more than a handful of people imprisoned under Soviet rule just for telling jokes. He suggests that official attitudes became so relaxed that disrespectful jokes became a matter for conservative protest. In 1964 a conservative protest appeared in *Pravda*:

> How should one deal with all these mudslingers? […] We cannot behave as our woodcutter used to do, when he pretended to be a gardener. But we have to fight them.[8]

The "woodcutter" is an oblique reference to Stalin, who used to lop off the mudslingers' heads with a sharp axe.

In reality things never became as relaxed as this might imply. The state continued to wage war on humour, although it stopped pruning the jokers by snipping them off from society and turning them into compost. Instead, the jokers were disciplined more gently, as the gardener might fasten a rambling wildflower to a trellis. In the struggle with the anekdotchiki the main gardener's tool became the preventive warning. Jokers like Algirdas were summoned to the KGB for a discreet conversation. The outcome was usually to take away their sense of humour, which was better for them than taking away their liberty.

What was the secret of the Soviet anecdote? A typical joke took some official slogan or formula and gave the words a playful twist. A newspaper headline imagined in the time when young volunteers were building a railroad in the Far East: "Young Communists: Your Place is in Siberia!" Or, for coal miners: "Communists: Your Place is Underground!"[9] What was the danger in such jokes?

Where was the treason in a moment's amusement? It's important to have in mind that the danger to state security did not lie in the joke itself. It lay in the fact that you were willing not just to think it but to share it. A joke is more than a joke; it's a medium for the exchange of feelings. It's a

moment in which two people (or more, which is worse) can share a grain of disbelief, of disloyalty. It's a moment in which the people who share it can learn: I am not alone.

The KGB mistrusted all networks of affinity that did not have official authority: artists, Jews, hippies, and so on. One such network was the network of jokers. Thus the KGB did not find Soviet jokes funny, and for good reason. For the same reason, perhaps, while the KGB was willing to record the fact that jokes had been told, they generally did not record the jokes for themselves. So, with rare exceptions (there will be a rather poor example in our final chapter), the documentation of the KGB does not contain any jokes. To make up for this, however, it reports events from life that are as funny as any joke. Here is one such story from the files of the Klaipėda town KGB in 1972.

Like every Soviet town, Klaipėda had few restaurants open to the public. In fact, to get into any Soviet-era restaurant in any town, you had to do two things. You had to go between mealtimes, because this was a workers' state where all the restaurants in every town would close for lunch and dinner so that the staff could take a break. When you got there, you had to wait in line outside the door because, with few restaurants and restricted opening times, there were always many would-be diners looking for a table in the middle of the afternoon and those that knew the doorman would get in first.

In 1972 a man was going around Klaipėda jumping queues and bagging tables by pulling the rank of a major in the KGB. He got a table at the Meridian, telling the doorman that he was on surveillance duty, watching foreigners. After dinner at the Neringa he left his compliments in the visitors' book ("excellent service!"), signing with his supposed KGB rank and an important clue: his real name and address.

A report found its way back to the Klaipėda KGB, where no such officer was listed. So the KGB went looking for their man and tracked him down: Tomas, a fitter in the building industry. At work, Tomas was a reliable employee who regularly met his performance indicators. At home he drank and quarrelled with his neighbors.

The KGB pulled Tomas in for a "preventive" discussion. To prevent what, exactly? They said: "In order to prevent the disclosure and discrediting of certain methods of work of the organs of the KGB."

The interview took place on 4 December 1972. Tomas was happy and content, he said, in his work and family life. From 1968 he had been on the police register as a low-level informer. He let his friends find out, and they began to call him "Major." So it all began with a joke, and Tomas went along with it. Then, everything got out of hand.

In the end, Tomas had made four mistakes. He shouldn't have bragged to his friends about his police contacts. He should not have inflated his

status to an officer of state security. He definitely should not have tried to exploit that status for enjoyment, for, in the guise of a KGB officer, Tomas found he could demand a table and be served in a restaurant while others stood in line. And it was just insane of him to have left a written record of his enjoyment in the restaurant visitors' book.

Tomas knew he should not have done these things. He promised his interrogators he had never put his little pretence to any more sinister purpose. He swore he would never, ever do it again.

Of course this was not the only society in which citizens had an incentive to impersonate an officer of the security service. In western societies, too, citizens sometimes impersonate the police. They do this often to get money, sex, or drugs.[10] When they do this they are often taken to court and issued with a penalty or jail time. But Tomas lived in a socialist country where the rewards and penalties were different. In the Soviet Union, impersonating a KGB officer enabled you to jump the queue for a decent meal. And the punishment? Tomas was made to acknowledge his guilt, write an explanation, express contrition, and seek forgiveness. And that was it, for this was already communism "with a human face." The KGB let him go home, as long as he ate his dinner there from now on.

A life-changing moment

Like the KGB, every police force tries to reduce reoffending. The results do not always impress. In England and Wales first offenders may be given police cautions for minor violations. Between 2000 and 2009, the police issued more than two and a half million cautions. Proven reoffending in the twelve months after the caution was approximately one in six among adults and one in four among juveniles.[11]

An innovation in the struggle against petty crime in England and Wales was the Anti-Social Behaviour Order. The ASBO is issued by a court against a person and is designed to prevent behaviour that is recognized as anti-social but would not in itself normally warrant prosecution. Once an ASBO has been issued, however, to breach it is a criminal offense. Between 2000 and 2011 more than 21,000 ASBOs were issued in England and Wales. Over the same period, more than half of the ASBOs issued were violated. When an ASBO was breached, it was breached on average on more than four occasions.[12]

The KGB strategy of prevention was astonishingly effective by comparison. In eight years from 1967 to 1974, according to KGB figures for the whole Soviet Union, just over 120,000 people were "treated" by profilaktika. Around 70,000 of these were warned for saying or doing things that were "politically damaging," and another 11,000 for "suspicious contacts with foreigners and nurturing inclinations to

treachery." Only 150 of those that received a warning—just over one per thousand—were subsequently prosecuted or punished administratively for an actual offense.[13] One per thousand is a reoffending rate that western justice systems can only dream about. At last—an aspect of Soviet society that actually worked!

It is clear that the preventive discussion could be a moment that changed your life. What made it so effective? Fear was the key. The subject of a preventive discussion with the KGB was made to feel fear—not just everyday anxiety, but a deeper fear that the young person issued with an English police caution or ASBO does not feel. There is no other reasonable explanation for the extraordinary effectiveness of profilaktika.

The presence of fear leaves few traces in documentary records. Perhaps there were varieties of fear. For some of those interviewed, the KGB would have had a terrifying reputation, rooted in its history. Despite the reform of 1954, KGB leaders themselves emphasized continuity with the secret police of Lenin and Stalin. In living memory the KGB's predecessors had brought about the death of millions and the imprisonment of tens of millions. In the western borderlands, including Lithuania, many young people were likely to know of relatives or family friends of the older generation who had been imprisoned, deported, or caught up in armed conflicts that the KGB's forerunners had waged ruthlessly, with total commitment, and won.

For others there would have been a more immediate fear. In this most centralized society the KGB spoke not only for the police functions of the state. If necessary it could give instruction to your employer, teacher, landlord, doctor, and psychiatrist—and those of your parents or children. All of these were agents of the same state and answered to the same government and ruling party as the KGB itself. As a result you or your loved ones could be barred from promotion or foreign travel, or expelled from university. If you persisted, as Old Man Nikolayenko found (in Chapter 4), you could be put on trial or detained in a psychiatric hospital. There was no aspect of a person's life, however private, that the KGB could not touch if it wished.

In the course of a short conversation, each person experienced a collision with the state. For most, it tilted the axis of their life forever. The conversation altered their relationship with authority, and it also altered their feelings about friends, colleagues, neighbors, and even loved ones. When the KGB asked you to consider your behaviour, you learned two things, perhaps in the same instant. One lesson was: The KGB knows everything about you. The other lesson followed: They know everything about you because among those closest to you are your betrayers. *You are alone.* Devastated and isolated, you nearly always took the only option on offer, the path of compliance. At the end of the psychological demolition, it

was not uncommon that you thanked the KGB officers for their helpful advice.

Many preventive interviews were conducted in the privacy of the KGB offices, but another version of the drama was enacted in semi-public meetings in schools and colleges, offices, or neighborhoods. This "social" form of prevention was sometimes applied to groups such as student networks on the edge of nationalist activity or young women that were going together to meet sailors in the ports. The emotional beating was administered not by KGB officers, but by work colleagues, teachers, fellow students, and community leaders. When young people were living at home, parents would be drawn in so that they could be beaten up too.

A hard case to crack

Preventive discussions rarely deviated from the script. A rare case was that of the stationmaster at Leplauke on the Baltic railroad between Šiauliai and the coast. The stationmaster, aged 30, was Juozas. From here on you'll need to get used to some Lithuanian given names. In Lithuania men's given names generally end with the letter S. In this chapter they include Algirdas, Juozas, Jurgis, Ljudas, Romas, and Vytautas. Women's names usually end with an A or E. In this chapter we have only Aldona and Maria. You can say these words pretty much the way they are spelt, except to remember that the letter J always sounds like a Y. Juozas should sound like *Yoh-AH-zahs*, which is not exactly what you'd expect but it's near enough. Anyway, I'm trying to tell a story, not teach you Lithuanian.

The KGB had Juozas in their sights over several years in the 1960s. Eventually, on 19 December 1968, they prompted his bosses to call him into the Šiauliai railroad office for a preventive warning. By this time the evidence on Juozas was considerable. He had said to one of his subordinates:

> I'm going to kill you. The communists' time is ending and your time will come too. We'll shoot all the communists and the same with the Jews.

He ordered a second subordinate to avoid contact with a third, a party member:

> He's a communist, a swine through and through … We need to isolate him.

Still others confirmed these menaces. Juozas was continually threatening to settle accounts and take revenge; he saw a time coming to deal with the

communists as they were handled in 1941 (when they were massacred by the Germans or by Lithuanian nationalists).

Juozas did not stop at personal threats. He was reported as castigating Soviet rule for repressing the church and impoverishing the people:

> They give no freedom to the church or to live freely, they put pressure on [us] until there's not enough air to breathe, even … Look at how they live in America, how many cars they have … They don't let us make money and they send all the best abroad.

Another dimension of the case against Juozas was his attitude to classified information. As a railroad official he was responsible for the military freights passing through his station, blanketed by darkness and secrecy. Juozas talked openly about explosives and weapons delivered to a missile base in the woods near Šateikiai.

Confronting Juozas with the accusations, his superiors told him there was enough to dismiss him. Juozas took this badly. He flatly denied everything. He said he had no idea that military freights passed through his station. He blamed the accusations on a workplace intrigue against him.

This did not go down too well. His bosses brought additional factors into the conversation: Juozas had a previous conviction for disorderly conduct, including threatening behaviour. He had been fined for financial violations. He could not be ignorant about the military freights because it was his job to see them through the station. He was known to have a big mouth. They reminded him that his job was at risk.

Juozas was one of a small minority that remained defiant after a warning. As far as he was concerned they could take away his station. They could sack him altogether. He could easily get another job. This was not just cheap talk. Soviet factories and building sites were always hungry to recruit more workers. In the Soviet economy job creation was never a problem; the problem was to motivate the workers and make the jobs productive. As the saying went: "They pretend to pay us and we pretend to work."

After this bruising encounter, things went downhill. While the railroad authorities worked on demoting Juozas and moving him to a station away from the lines used for military shipments, the KGB discussed bringing criminal charges. Meanwhile, they continued to receive reports. Through the winter of 1968 Juozas drank heavily, lost interest in work, and appeared to look forward to leaving his job. In workplace conversations he was open about the charges against him and did not deny them.

Yet the redeeming power of profilaktika was such that there was still a happy ending. The same informers that had brought his bad behaviour to

the authorities' attention continued to work alongside Juozas. In the spring of 1969, Juozas recovered his spirits and won back his self-control. He drank less, changed his friends, and focused on work. By March, his job was no longer under threat. The KGB was content to maintain surveillance for a short period, before leaving Juozas alone to manage his station.

Setting a trap

In management studies it's a cliché that a threat is also an opportunity. For the Lithuania KGB, the military shipments that criss-crossed the country were a threat—a continual security headache. But they were also an opportunity. Like the hunter who stakes out a lamb as bait to catch a wolf, the KGB staked out the railroads to catch the suspicious characters that showed undue interest.

A KGB counter-intelligence plan dated 28 January 1972, shows how this was done. The plan was drawn up to anticipate 32 military trains that would enter the country over the next ten days. The plan had many elements, which I'll paraphrase:[14]

- Tighten scrutiny of the usual suspects that were already under surveillance to see whether any of them showed heightened interest in the railroads over the period of the military freight movements.
- Mobilize the KGB informers on the railroads to watch their colleagues (and anyone else) for suspicious behaviour.
- Watch the outgoing mail from the districts affected for letters and packets going abroad.
- Tighten scrutiny of the other usual suspects: those previously convicted of espionage and so on, now living on the territory of the republic after serving out their terms.
- Mount a watch on the stations where military trains would stop for servicing to spot bystanders showing a suspicious interest.
- Keep a check on the timetable for movement and delivery of the military freights.
- Use the KGB informers on the railroads to avoid or manage timetable disruptions affecting the military freights.
- Tighten scrutiny of foreigners visiting Vilnius who might have connections with foreign intelligence; this was done separately for diplomats and tourists from capitalist countries, and for students.
- Monitor international telephone calls to identify callers who coincide repeatedly with the passage of military freights, and to listen in on any conversations involving people who have called abroad before.

- Monitor the radio frequencies for suspicious transmissions.
- Use the KGB informers on the railroads to watch for suspicious contacts with foreigners and possible caches of secret material on trains leaving the country.
- Collate the information acquired.

In the file, the plan is followed by a summary of intercepted correspondence and copies of many of the letters themselves.

The KGB rarely caught any real spies, but real spies were not their only target. Soviet citizens could also show undue interest in secret matters for private reasons. Some were just curious, or liked to show off to neighbors and workmates. A few might have dreamed about turning up at the American embassy in Moscow and using what they knew to buy a ticket out of the country. Whatever their motives, they were not conducting themselves as loyal Soviet citizens should. The KGB liked to find out about them and keep them tabbed in its card catalogues.

From this angle the positive thing about secrets was that they naturally attracted the very people that the KGB wanted to observe, like moths to a flame. The KGB understood this perfectly well and even exploited it. In the spring of 1965, for example, under an operation codenamed "Neman," the KGB organized two months of unusually intensive military rail traffic. The purpose of this operation was not to move troops and weapons into the right positions but to create a bustle of secretive activity. Lots of people would be charging around in the middle of the night saying loudly: "Hush! It's a secret!" The bustle would draw the attention of enemy agents and disloyal citizens, who could then be identified and exposed.[15]

The first resort for those that disclosed an unhealthy interest in secret matters was, once again, a preventive discussion. Ljudas of Kretinga, Lithuania, liked to brag about his service in the missile troops. Among his drinking companions he would show off his technical knowledge of weaponry and boasted about storing photographs and films at home. Unfortunately for him, his audience in the local bar included a KGB resident who reported him. In January 1973 Ljudas was pulled in for a quiet chat. It turned that his talk was mostly empty; there was no cache of secrets under his floorboards. He promised to hold his tongue from now on.

Another veteran of the missile troops was Vasily, a Russian from Moletai. Vasily bumped into a former comrade and they chatted about old times. Vasily asked his friend to get him a photograph of a rocket in its launcher. Supposedly he wanted a memento of his time in the services. But the old comrade was a KGB informer, so the KGB identified Vasily and invited him in. Since they could not establish any sinister motivation, they

decided he was one of those who were too curious for their own good. They warned him, let him go, and kept him under surveillance. According to reports Vasily immediately changed his ways and took on a new job and new friends. But he also began to drink and became so tiresome that not even his new friends would drink with him. He lost his new job and was soon well on the way to losing another. Eventually the KGB lost interest, and wrote him off as just another hopeless alcoholic. This was not a happy ending for either Vasily or society, but it was no longer the KGB's problem.

Controlling infection

The word profilaktika translates directly as "prophylaxis" or "prevention." In medical science prophylaxis means the prevention of conditions that are spread by human contact, which could include disease or pregnancy. This turns out to be a good metaphor.

Soviet rulers correctly believed that their power depended on maintaining mass conformity. The state endorsed a fixed set of "healthy" ideas and behaviours that loyal citizens should follow. Anything outside this set was a sign of potential disloyalty. Moreover, disloyalty was like an infection because examples could spread like a disease. The Soviet authorities were afraid of infectious disorder that could take hold and propagate rapidly by example, as in the Fifth Principle (*Rebellion spreads like wildfire*). They developed the technique of preventive warnings to quickly isolate individual examples of "unhealthy" expressions before they could spread to others.

The KGB did not employ any sociologists, but the idea of disloyalty as a social infection is easily understood in social science.[16] Mixing with others makes us more likely to catch their germs. In much the same way as we catch a germ, we can also "catch" habits and ideas. According to behavioural science, we human beings follow each other from birth, beginning with copying our mothers' expressions, gestures, and words. As we grow up, we imitate those around us in fashion, sexual attitudes, family size, religion, investments, and voting. In deciding whether or not to steal, speed, or drive when drunk, we are influenced by the example of others. There is a lot of imitation in self-harming behaviour from over-eating, drinking, and smoking to suicide.

The KGB's job was to keep down Soviet society's vulnerability to infection by examples of disloyalty. They did this by continual surveillance and rapid intervention. A new example is like a new virus. Some people have low resistance. If a new virus is going round, they need only a single exposure to catch it at once. Another group of people has medium resistance and will catch the virus only after ten exposures.

Beyond them is a high resistance group that needs at least 100 exposures to catch the virus. The result is that the introduction of a virus (or an example of a new idea or a new fashion) can have two outcomes. If you intervene quickly and isolate the first sufferers, the spread will stop there. The middle group will fall short of ten exposures and remain unaffected. But suppose you allow the infection spread into the middle group, and suppose that middle group is large. In that case enough people will soon catch it that *everyone* will catch it in the end, even those that are highly resistant. If the infectious new idea is "multi-party democracy" or "national independence," the patient may not survive.

The Sixth Principle (*Stamp out every spark*) required the KGB to keep a vigilant watch on society and stay alert for the very first signs of the "unhealthy" examples that could raise society's temperature. They might not be able to prevent the first handful of cases, exemplified by people with poor self-control like Juozas, the station master, or by highly motivated enemies or traitors. But by acting quickly and resolutely they could hope to prevent the example from multiplying.

In the panopticon

The strategy of prevention required the KGB to stand ready to clamp down on each and every example of disloyalty in the moment that it first arose. This was a demanding requirement. The KGB could not operate the strategy of prevention without raw data. The data were the thousands of reports or "signals" from informers and others observers that flowed into KGB offices around the country about petty acts and expressions of disloyalty. To keep up mass surveillance and produce a steady stream of signals was one of the most important duties of the KGB's network of informers.

In Lithuania the KGB achieved this on the basis of a relatively small operation. In 1971, roughly 1,200 officers and civilian staff and 11,500 informers kept watch over 3.1 million citizens.[17] This gives us an idea of how many people the KGB had on hand to do a job at a given moment—and it is not that many. If you added them up, the proportion to the total population was about 4 per thousand, which does not seem much. (It was well below the 10 per thousand in Lithuania during the postwar insurgency, and 17 per thousand in East Germany in 1989.) There was considerable turnover in the ranks of the KGB and its agent network, so, if you asked how many people in Lithuania worked for or with the KGB *ever*, you would get a much larger number, perhaps as many as 100,000.[18] This is informative of how many people ended up with some reason to identify their personal safety with upholding the Soviet regime, but it was still

only 30 per thousand, and it does not tell us how many people were on hand at a particular time.

The effectiveness of mass surveillance did not lie in numbers alone. It lay partly in priorities: the KGB did not scatter its resources thinly across the whole of society, but focused on particular installations and groups. In line with the Third Principle (*Study the young*) it concentrated informers on the places where students and young educated workers would be gathered: schools, colleges, and science-based facilities.[19]

Mass surveillance was effective partly because of the way it spread fear and suspicion. The English philosopher Jeremy Bentham wrote about this because he was interested in the management of prisons and other large-scale institutions where the behaviour of residents is of concern:[20]

> The more constantly the persons to be inspected are under the eyes of the persons who should inspect them, the more perfectly will the purpose X of the establishment have been attained. Ideal perfection, if that were the object, would require that each person should actually be in that predicament, during every instant of time. This being impossible, the next thing to be wished for is, that, at every instant, seeing reason to believe as much, and not being able to satisfy himself to the contrary, he should conceive himself to be so.

In short, mass surveillance was not just a support for the strategy of prevention, but was itself an active element in that strategy. Everyone knew it happened, and that knowledge had its own chilling effect on the way that each person acted and expressed his or her views.

In the Soviet setting there was one more twist that Bentham did not consider. Three strangers are gathered round the office teapot: Adomas, Barbara, and you. Into the conversation, Adomas drops a joke about the time of "bourgeois Lithuania" when the country was free and independent. How should you respond? You know you're not an informer, and Adomas is not behaving like one. But what about Barbara? If she is an informer, and if she reports the conversation before you do, what will that mean for you that you listened and said nothing? As for Adomas, clearly he does not fear you—but why not? It's not as if he knows you well. Perhaps he is testing you both. This fear, ever-present in the company of strangers, is recalled by someone who grew up in Odessa after the war:

> If someone would tell jokes, and you didn't report, someone might report you that you were not one who reported … [When I heard a joke from someone I didn't know] I would refrain from reacting at all. I just played the role of an idiot. I didn't get it. And it was a signal to them. Take it anyway you want, and try and repeat it and expose

yourself more without knowing why I didn't react. Or just get that I don't want to hear it.[21]

In short, the Soviet system of mass surveillance was designed to do without the establishment of a vast formal apparatus. It was designed to spread mistrust and to inhibit informal networks that might spread dissenting attitudes—including jokes. In the ideal outcome, each person would watch everyone and all would become informants.[22]

They are ahead of us in Kaunas

From time to time, the strategy of prevention failed. In Lithuania in 1972, some of the KGB's darkest fears were realized. In March of that year, the underground Chronicle of the Catholic Church in Lithuania first began to circulate. In April a church petition for greater religious freedom in Lithuania reached the United Nations. Under the nose of the KGB it gained an astounding total of 17,000 signatures.

Suddenly, things got much worse. On Sunday 14 May a student, Romas Kalanta, set himself on fire in the square before the Kaunas Musical Theater. This was a symbolic location, the place where the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union was announced in 1940.[23] He died the next morning in hospital.

Kalanta's funeral was set for Friday 18 May. In the days before, the authorities did all they could to quieten the mood among young people and to discourage shows of solidarity. The official line was that Kalanta was mentally unbalanced and killed himself in a fit of depression. The subtext was that his tragic end was completely non-political, but others were exploiting it for political ends.[24] In reality there was certainly a political aspect to Kalanta's final act for he had left a note, scribbled on a page torn from a calendar: "Blame only the regime for my death." Hardly anyone knew this, however, because the note quickly disappeared into KGB files, where it was found again only in 1988. To the frustration of the authorities, this did not stop ordinary people from putting their own interpretations on what had happened.

When the day of Kalanta's funeral came the KGB tried to forestall any kind of public manifestation by advancing the ceremony without notice. The result was to provoke exactly what the KGB feared: hundreds of young people gathered, found that the funeral had already taken place, became angry, protested, and marched to the Musical Theater, where their numbers grew to around 2,000. They were dispersed violently and more than 400 of their number were arrested. The next day, another 1,500 protesters gathered. The police and troops of the interior ministry

intervened; this time no one was arrested but hundreds were beaten in and off the streets.

After two days of disorder, Kaunas became quiet again, but it was some time before the country settled down. In the two weeks after the Kaunas events, the KGB recorded many incidents of nationalist or pro-Kalanta graffiti and fly-posting in a dozen towns across Lithuania.[25]

The elements that came together and reacted so violently in Lithuania in 1972 were many.[26] Underlying features of Lithuanian society were strong memories of national independence, a strong church with a degree of independence of the state, both kept alive by a large community in the West and frequent correspondence with family members abroad. There had been recent upheavals in other communist states: Czechoslovakia had seen the Prague Spring of "communism with a human face" in 1968, suppressed by Soviet military intervention. In 1970 the neighboring northern region of Poland had been rocked by riots against food price increases, violently put down. Growing student protests across Europe were an important part of the 1960s. An aspect that is sometimes forgotten is that it was preceded by a ripple of young men burning themselves to death as public protests against communist rule across Ukraine, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland after 1968.[27] Nationalism, utopianism, romance, self-destruction, and youthful exuberance proved an inherently combustible mixture.

It was bad enough that Kalanta had been able to plan and execute his own death, possibly with the connivance of others, without any signal reaching the KGB. It was still more shocking that this had become an occasion for mass disorder. Such disturbances were exactly what KGB surveillance and prevention were supposed to avoid. There was bad news in the composition of those detained, who were mostly young, male, and politically and socially aware. Nearly all were either in education or in the first year of employment (so just out of education). One in four belonged to the party's own youth league.[28] Thus, while they were not exactly a cross-section of Lithuanian society, they *were* a cross-section of Lithuania's future.

At the same time not all the news was bad. While the main demonstration in Kaunas on 19 May was suppressed by force, the KGB did not abandon the logic of its preventive strategy.

The KGB treated a few of its detainees as enemies who merited punishment. Eight of them were brought to court, tried on charges of anti-social behaviour or violent disorder, and jailed for one to three years. It seems these were singled out from the others on three criteria: they were among those that demonstrated on the first day, and they marched in the front row, or they already had a police record. Around thirty more received police detention (10 to 15 days in the cells).

But those who were punished formally made up only one tenth of the number of the 400 detainees. The rest, that is the overwhelming majority, were treated not as enemies, but rather as *potential* enemies who could still be saved. If they were in work, they were required to attend "cautionary conversations" with the KGB and police; this could involve being named and shamed in workplace meetings. A few, described as "ill-intentioned," were demoted to lower paid work. Among school and college students there were more cautionary conversations; a number were quietly expelled from their courses. [29]

In other words, in managing a crisis the state did not deviate from its primary reliance on the strategy of prevention, and acted on the belief that most of those caught up in the troubles could be set back on the right path. Later in the year, the KGB concluded that this response had been a success: preventive warnings had succeeded in suppressing bad behaviour:[30]

> Such measures, as a rule, have positively influenced not only those preventively warned but also those around them, and have helped to uncover the factors giving rise to undesirable manifestations, to eliminate defects, and to improve educational work in the college and workplace collectives of those being warned.

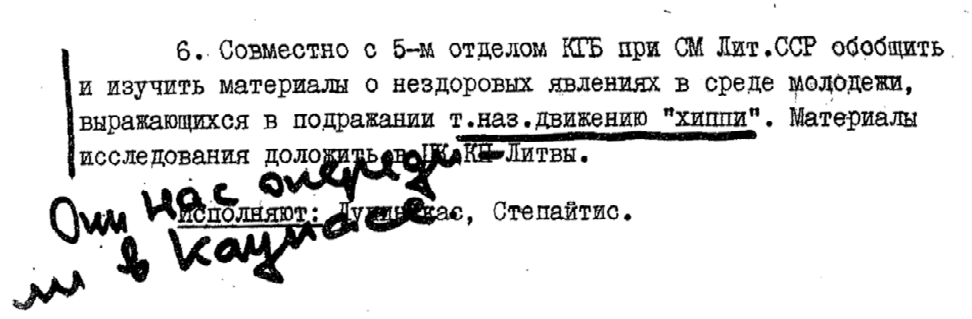
The Kaunas events did not take everyone by surprise. The KGB had its own anonymous prophet. Six weeks earlier the Lithuania KGB's chief of information and analysis signed off his divisional plan of work.[31] Item number 6 was: "Summarize and study evidence of unhealthy manifestations among young people, expressed in imitation of the so-called "hippy" movement. Present the documents of the investigation to the central committee of the communist party of Lithuania." Using a fat black nib an unidentified reader marked the paragraph, heavily underlined the words "'hippy' movement," and wrote over the typescript: "They are ahead of us in Kaunas."

As Lithuania returned to "normality," the KGB resumed routine operations. To have suffered an uprising of young people, suddenly and out of the blue, was a serious blow. But the KGB was able to contain the uprising firmly and decisively using a minimum of force, without mass arrests or widespread bloodshed. The most important weapon in its armoury continued to be profilaktika.

Thereafter the KGB continued to watch Lithuanians warily, especially after the sudden rise of Solidarity in neighboring Poland. The Poles were in the grip of a mass epidemic; how easily would it slip across the border and take hold in Lithuania? This risk assessment was essentially correct, but the threat took time to reappear. Mass opposition in Lithuania was

resumed suddenly in 1988. This time it spread widely and unstoppably, leading directly to national independence in 1990.

"They are ahead of us in Kaunas"



6. Совместно с 5-м отделом КГБ при СМ Лит.ССР обобщить и изучить материалы о нездоровых явлениях в среде молодежи, выражающихся в подражании т.наз.движению "хиппи". Материалы исследования доложить в ЦК КП Литвы.

Они нас опередили в Каунасе

Исполняют: Лукшас, Степайтис.

Source: Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793, 4.

After the Kaunas events

Many people were caught up in the aftermath of the Kaunas events, including some that were nowhere near the events themselves. It was their feelings that betrayed them. In June 1972, the Klaipėda KGB heard that Aldona, a port dispatcher, was talking about Kalanta at work. The official media claimed that Kalanta's death had nothing to do with politics. To the contrary, Aldona said to her workmates, Kalanta had died in protest against the denial of free speech under Soviet rule. She went from this to even more dangerous ground: in her view, an independent Lithuania would freely choose "a state of the type presently existing in Yugoslavia."

You could read the desire for Yugoslav-type independence in two ways. From one angle it illustrates how dissenters often limited their aspirations under Soviet rule. Yugoslavia was marginally more liberal than the Soviet Union, but it was still a communist party dictatorship under which several national republics were welded together by force. From another angle it shows why Soviet rulers from Stalin onwards regarded the Yugoslav experiment with such intense mistrust: the smallest deviation from orthodoxy abroad could become a banner for malcontents at home.

When the KGB made enquiries about Aldona, it found grounds for both reassurance and anxiety. Or rather, the good news was also bad. Reassurance came from the fact that Aldona was a bright young professional woman, a graduate with an unblemished work record, previously secretary of her communist youth branch. But herein also lay cause for profound anxiety. She was not a "usual suspect"; she was not some ageing, unreconciled nationalist. There was nothing in her background to explain why she should suddenly be spouting such

nonsense! She was young, Soviet-educated, and upwardly mobile; people like her were supposed to be Lithuania's future.

The warning was delivered, not directly, but through her party committee secretary, thought to be a person whose influence she respected. Like others when confronted, Aldona at first denied everything, then prevaricated, then reached the stage of acceptance. She now understood, she said, "where an incorrect interpretation of the Kaunas events could lead." She promised to avoid any repetition. And the KGB left it there.

With my own eyes I saw

Others became entangled in the consequences of Kalanta's suicide when they tried to exploit the tragedy for some incidental benefit. Here's the story of Vytautas, a factory worker from Radviliškis in Šiauliai county. On the weekend of the events, Vytautas visited relatives in Kaunas, which meant a bus journey of more than 70 miles. The following Monday Vytautas was absent from work. When he showed up on Tuesday his colleagues asked him where he'd been. He told them a long story. It began on Sunday with a visit to the square before the Musical Theater in Kaunas. With his own eyes, Vytautas related, he had witnessed a young man pour petrol over himself and set himself on fire. Other youths with long hair had stood around. No one had stopped the young man and no one had intervened as he cried out for someone to put him out of his misery.

Vytautas had more to tell about the aftermath. When the police arrived in the square, he claimed, the long-haired lads had attacked them with knives. The police were reinforced, but more "hippy" types also gathered and began to throw rocks and bricks at them. Order was restored only when troops arrived. A number of young people were arrested and driven away in vehicles. The parents of the dead man were brought to identify him.

This detailed account led up to the reason Vytautas gave for absence from work the next Monday: he had missed the Sunday evening bus to Radviliškis because of the intensive police checks along the way.

Among the listeners that Tuesday morning at the Radviliškis factory were two informers who soon reported what they had heard to their KGB officers. It was decided to invite the loose talker to visit the KGB for a preventive discussion.

Under KGB questioning, Vytautas withdrew his story. A new, simpler narrative emerged. He had not been in the square at the time of Kalanta's suicide, but he had been close by—perhaps 100 yards away. He learned what had transpired there at second hand, from people leaving the square. On Sunday evening he did not miss the bus to Radviliškis; on the

contrary, he caught it and returned home, arriving late. On Monday morning he overslept and decided to skip work. On Tuesday he needed an excuse for his Monday absence and at the same time his workmates asked him if he had heard about the events in Kaunas. He made the rest up.

The KGB made Vytautas sign a statement. He admitted making up an excuse for absence from work, apologized for spreading false rumours, promised never to do anything similar again, and asked not to be punished. He had been warned.

What had Vytautas really seen? Most likely, not what he claimed on the Tuesday of his return to work. Then, he had told his co-workers that a crowd of young people was already present in the square at noon on Sunday when Kalanta set himself alight, and that they went on to attack the police. But according to other accounts the square was relatively empty at midday. Kalanta's parents were not called to identify his body, because he did not die in the square; he was taken to hospital and died there the next morning. No one attacked the police on Sunday afternoon, and no other witness saw a riot in the square.[32] So it seems that Vytautas just wanted a day off work, and his mistake was to invent an excuse that inevitably drew the attention of the KGB.

The students are on strike

Skaudvilė is a pretty village in western Lithuania. From there to Vilnius, the road lies through Kaunas. On 24 May 1972 a telegram was handed in at a post office near Skaudvilė. Addressed to the commandant of a hostel for building workers in Vilnius, it read:

> Inform the management that I cannot get from Skaudvilė to Vilnius.
> The roads are jammed. In Kaunas the students are on strike.

At 5 pm the telegram reached the district center of Šilalė. The Šilalė postmaster notified the local KGB.

The KGB authorized the cable's transmission—reluctantly. The same evening, they identified the sender and pulled him in for questioning. Jurgis was an employee of the building trust that maintained the Vilnius hostel. From 25 April he was on leave, staying with his girlfriend, a dairy maid on a farm near Skaudvilė. (The KGB checked her out: "compromising evidence not found."). He should have been back at work on Tuesday 16 May, but claimed to be unwell—or perhaps he was just reluctant. Having heard about the Kaunas events from villagers nearby, he decided to use them as a reason for further delay.

The ruse was all-too transparent. In fact, from 20 May the streets of Kaunas and thereabouts were quiet again.

The KGB did not have the slightest interest in the fact that Jurgis had made up a story in order to take time off work. It was the story he made up that bothered them, combined with his use of the state telegraph system to disseminate it. So the interrogation of Jurgis turned into a preventive warning. He was instructed in "the damaging nature of the content of the telegram and what might be its further consequences." He "acknowledged his incorrect behaviour and promised not to engage in similar acts in future."

The matter did not end there. The unfortunate post office clerk who had accepted the telegram in the first place was hauled up before the Šilalė postmaster. What was she supposed to have done? He told her: "In similar circumstances she should attempt to persuade the client to alter the content of the text."

In other words, under Soviet rule censorship took many forms. There were the professional censors, whose work was described in Chapter 2. But even those whose work was completely unrelated to censorship had a duty to censor the public expressions they encountered at work or in their leisure time. And the ideal citizen censored herself.

Restoring appearances

By warning the people that they saw as standing on the brink of anti-state criminality, did the KGB hope to change their hearts or just change their behaviour? Did they require the "broken and contrite heart" of true repentance, or only the simulation of it?

The written record doesn't tell us exactly what happened in the room, let alone what happened in the soul. But fear was the key. It's likely that many encounters were much more threatening and humiliating than appears from the typed summary. No one would leave the room with their sense of the person they were and the person they wanted to be, their integrity, whole and untouched.

Still, it is hard to imagine that many people would change deeply held beliefs and preferences as the result of an hour or so in the hands of the KGB, no matter how difficult and frightening. It is much easier to suppose that most victims quickly understood the script they were supposed to follow and adopted a strategy of obedience and conformity. The KGB could make a hostage out of your job, your home, your loved ones and your children. Wouldn't you prefer to say what had to be said and just get it over with and get out as quickly possible?

In many cases the confessions of guilt, the realizations of harm done, and the renewed vows of loyalty to Soviet rule were surely insincere. Well, if we can guess that, the KGB officers who witnessed it could probably guess it too. Yet it seems they were content with lip service.

You could think that this all was part of the decline of the Soviet system: everything now depended on appearances. The KGB demanded the pretence of loyalty and the citizens pretended to supply it. This is true, in a sense, but it also underestimates the importance of appearances.

Forty years before the opening of the Russian archives, when Stalin was barely in his grave, the sociologists Alex Inkeles and Raymond Bauer put their finger on the issue.[33] Soviet leaders, they wrote, did not expect loyalty; on the contrary, they expected their policies to create hostility and assumed that every citizen was at least potentially disloyal. All their efforts went, therefore, into modifying behaviour and giving the citizen "no viable alternative except to conform."

Conformist behaviour, in turn, had a striking effect. Each person tended to conform, and by conforming mirrored the conformity of those around them. The result was "an exaggerated picture of actual loyalty." Each person concluded that they were the only one to feel alienation from a society in which they had no choice but to live and get along. The Seventh Principle told them: *Order is created by appearances*. It was the appearance or order that stabilized the Soviet system of rule; in turn, stability forced everyone into loyalty.

But this was also the weak point in the system: When the first person with enough youthful optimism and irrational courage to stand up and differ did so, all around that person were others who suddenly realized for the first time: "I am not alone." This was the basis of the Fifth Principle: *Rebellion spreads like wildfire*. Here is why mass surveillance, unceasing vigilance, and zero tolerance were so important for the KGB. Their answer to the Fifth Principle was the Sixth: *Stamp out every spark*. They had to be ready to step in at the first sign of some "politically damaging misdemeanour." If they sat back and waited for the second or third sign, it might be too late to prevent a conflagration.

The case is closed

Maria was excited. She heard about the Kalanta affair by listening to foreign radio broadcasts. Married, in her mid-twenties, she was a quality checker at the Sirius factory in Klaipėda. Talking to her workmates, she related what she had heard about the young man's suicide and the disturbances in Kaunas. She went on to raise:

> The lack of freedom in our country, the supposed state of occupation in Lithuania and the Kaunas students' struggle for its independence, and the outrages supposedly perpetrated by the authorities in suppressing the "demonstrations."

The KGB asked about Maria at work. “A frivolous, lazy woman with primitive views and interests, who leads an unrefined way of life.” In the official language of the Soviet Union each of these words would carry a particular meaning. “Frivolous”: easy-going, possibly in sexual matters. “Lazy”: not interested in going the extra mile. “Primitive”: not interested in the party line. “Unrefined”: not interested in Dostoevsky or Dickens.

Maria was interviewed at work by her bosses. A personal story emerged. She came from a working class family. Her father drank away his wages. When her elder sister gained a place at university, she had to leave school to bring money into the family.

When challenged to explain the reports, Maria denied them. Then, confronted with more detailed testimony, she crumbled. She blamed her living situation. She and her husband did not have a place of their own; they were living with her parents. Then she blamed her poor understanding of government policies. Finally, she blamed the foreign radio stations for distorting her perceptions of Soviet “actuality.”

Then Maria had to listen to a lecture about those government policies that she did not understand, especially about the government policy on nationalities that allowed Soviet Lithuania to exist in the “indissoluble union of free republics” (the opening words of the Soviet Union’s national anthem: the union was forever and beyond question, yet the national republics were somehow also free). She also heard about the harm that was done by listening to the voices of western radio.

As she listens, Maria does not fail to “get” these lessons. A bright light has been switched on inside that supposedly empty head. Now she appreciates how wrong she was, and she says so. More than that, she realizes how bad is the influence on her of those western radio stations that she listened to. She sees that she herself became part of the infectious spread of bad influences through Soviet society, by sharing her thoughtless thoughts with her workmates. This smart young woman will never in her life do these things again; she will change her ways “fundamentally.”

Her bosses have the last word, speaking the lines written for them by the KGB:

> At the end of the preventive-warning discussion, [Maria] was warned that, in the event of a repetition of similar utterances on her side, more severe measures of influence would be applied to her.

There was no need for further surveillance. They closed Maria’s case.

Sources and endnotes

The stories in this chapter describe the KGB practice of profilaktika ("prevention"). The idea of profilaktika has been described in histories of Soviet policing and secret policing by Julie Fedor, Paul Holquist, David Shearer, and others, but these appear to be the first detailed descriptions of profilaktika from primary documentation of the way it was practiced in the 1960s and 1970s.

The stories are drawn from among hundreds of similar records in the files of the KGB of Soviet Lithuania, now held on paper at the Lithuanian Special Archive (LYA) in Vilnius and on microfilm at the Hoover Institution where I consulted them. The KGB, like the party control commission the records of which formed the basis of previous chapters, was one of the Soviet Union's fact gathering agencies. Its documentation requires interpretation, taking into account its mission and the incentives that its operatives faced to report or distort the facts as they saw them. The interested reader may consult the full discussion of these issues in the note at the end of Chapter 1.

For the primary documents underlying this chapter, specific references are to Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/667, 125-129 (the story of Juozas); K-1/3/696, 80-81 (Jurgis); K-1/3/697, 44-46 (Vytautas) 67-68 (Aldona); 76-78 (Maria);83-84 (Tomas); K-1/3/710, 1-2 (Ljudas); K-1/3/713, 4-6 (Vasily); K-1/3/753, 74-76 (Algirdas). I have suppressed all the family names of the subjects of these reports because any of these people could still be alive, and their personal details were collected without their consent. The chapter also makes use of a Politburo document found in the Dmitrii Volkogonov collection, also held on microfilm in the Hoover Archive. Dmitrii Volkogonov was a Soviet army officer and historian who carried out major research projects on Soviet political history in the Soviet central archives in the late Soviet period.

Additionally, the chapter contributes to the wider historical literature on mass unrest under Soviet rule (for example Baron, *Bloody Saturday in the Soviet Union*; Central Intelligence Agency, *Dimensions of Civil Unrest*; Kozlov, *Massovye besporyadki v SSSR*). The particular episode that is featured in this chapter is the "Kaunas events" of 1972, which began with a young man's suicide in a public square, followed by several days of demonstrations and other illegal manifestations of discontent and nonconformity. At this point I must also thank Amanda Swain for allowing me to read her fascinating PhD dissertation "A Death Transformed" and other writing on these events.

The wider literature understandably highlights the Soviet authorities' resort to violence in order to suppress public disorder, and Amanda's research also shows that in Kaunas in 1972 police violence was certainly

a factor in the rapid overpowering of the demonstrators. Nonetheless the stories in this chapter also suggest another interpretation: in the Kaunas events the use of force was kept to a minimum, extreme violence and mass reprisals were avoided, and for most of the people involved and their sympathizers KGB profilaktika turned out to be an effective response.

This pattern of response to the Kaunas disturbances has significant implications. The fact that the Kaunas events took place was a failure of the KGB's preventive policies. The subsequent victory over the Kaunas demonstrators was one battle in a protracted war that the Soviet police state would eventually lose. We know from the wider literature that in waging this war the KGB was sometimes thuggish and incompetent. Not always, however. The KGB response to the Kaunas events provides a case study of how, in this one particular instance, secret policemen could respond to an emergency and overcome resistance by means of flexible and efficient repression.

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[1] Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*.

[2] Reklaitis, "Cold War Lithuania"; Statiev, *Soviet Counterinsurgency in the Western Borderlands*.

[3] Chebrikov, *Istoriya sovetskikh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopastnosti*, p. 503; Nikitchenko et al., eds, *Kontrrazvedyvatel'nyi slovar'*, pp. 237–238.

[4] Khlevniuk, "Objectives of the Great Terror."

[5] Fedor, *Russia and the Cult of State Security*, p. 52, discusses the origins of profilaktika as a concept for managing external relations and foreign exposures. The full story of the emergence of profilaktika as a practical technique has yet to be told.

[6] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/697 (Senior commissioner of Klaipeda KGP second division, captain Epishov and others, "Report on implementation of preventive work in relation to a group of persons among the associates of foreign sailors," to Lithuania KGB chairman Juozas Petkevicius, 27 March 1972), 15–20.

[7] Lewis, *Hammer and Tickle*, pp. 69–75. I also once interviewed Roy Medvedev back in Soviet times when he was a dissident. I have to say that Lewis's questions were better than mine.

[8] Lewis, *Hammer and Tickle*, p. 177.

[9] Melnichenko, *Sovetskii anekdot*, p. 658 (nos 3350 and 3353).

[10] Pretending to be an agent of the U.S. Federal government is now a popular ruse employed by internet scammers according to Carol Kando–Pineda of the Federal Trade Commission's Division of Consumer and Business Education, "The Grate Pretenders," 2 March 2015, available at https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/grate-pretenders (retrieved 23 April 2015).

[11] "Compendium of Reoffending Statistics and Analysis" (2010), Table 1.4, available at http://www.justice.gov.uk/statistics/reoffending/compendium-of-reoffending-statistics-and-analysis (retrieved 23 October 2012).

[12] "Anti-Social Behaviour Order Statistics—England and Wales, 2011" Table 7, http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/crime-research/asbo-stats-england-wales-2011/ (retrieved 23 October 2012).

[13] Hoover/Volkogonov, container 28 (reel 18) (USSR KGB chairman Yuri Andropov, memo "Concerning some results of the warning and preventive work of the organs of state security," 31 October 1975).

[14] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/694: 3–7 (Colonels Naras and Ščensnovičius, "Plan of agent-operative measures to ensure secrecy and security of military freights," 28 January 1972); 8–62 (list of mail intercepts and copies of letters).

[15] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/644: 70–75 (Lithuania KGB second administration, first department chief, Lieutenant-Colonel Naras, report on counter-intelligence work around military facilities of special importance, 4 February 1966).

[16] On copying see Banerjee, "Simple Model of Herd Behavior"; on thresholds, see Granovetter, "Threshold Models of Collective Behavior."

[17] These and the other figures below are from Harrison and Zaksauskiene, "Counterintelligence in a Command Economy," p. 000, and Weiner and Rahi-Tamm, "Getting to Know You," p. 33.

[18] Burinskaitė and Okuličiūtė, *KGB in Lithuania*, p. 15.

[19] Harrison and Zaksauskiene, "Counterintelligence in a Command Economy."

[20] Bentham, *Panopticon*, p. 3. For more general discussion see Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

[21] Reported by Oring, "Risky Business," p. 218. Omissions and insertions are as in the original.

[22] For more in this vein see Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual*, pp. 101–117.

[23] The events of May 1972 have been carefully documented and described by Swain, *A Death Transformed*, pp. 62–67; also Swain, "Negotiating Narratives of Kaunas 1972," and "From the Big Screen to the Streets of Kaunas." Earlier accounts include Remeikis, "Self-Immolation and National Protest," and "Eyewitness Report of Demonstrations." For the KGB report of the incident itself see Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793: 142–149 (Lithuania KGB chairman Juozas Petkevičius, report, not dated but May 1972).

[24] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793, 142–149 (Lithuania KGB chairman Juozas Petkevičius, report, not dated but May 1972).

[25] Swain, *A Death Transformed*, pp. 121–122.

[26] Swain, *A Death Transformed*, provides a fuller analysis.

[27] For background see Weiner, "Déjà Vu All Over Again."

[28] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793: 146–7.

[29] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/703: 170–174 (Lithuania KGB Kaunas city chief Bagdonas and third division chief Trukhachev, "Report on measures for implementation of the decree of the Lithuanian communist party central committee of 30 May 1972," 17 August 1973).

[30] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/717: 123–130 (Lithuania KGB fifth department deputy chief Stalauskas, second administration third department deputy chief Grishechkin, and senior inspector under the Lithuania KGB chairman Malakhov, "Report on the condition of prophylactic work in the Lithuania KGB and measures to improve it," 17 October 1974).

[31] Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793: 1–4 (Lithuania KGB information and analysis division chief Major E. Andriatis, plan of work for 1972 dated 27 March 1972).

[32] See for example Daškevičiūtė, "Remembering Romas Kalanta." According to Lithuania KGB chairman Juozas Petkevičius, Kalanta arrived in the square alone. After setting fire to himself he did indeed cry out for help to save him or end his life. At this stage, however, the KGB was already building its own narrative of this terrible event. Hoover/LYA, K-1/3/793: 150–159 (Lithuania KGB chairman Juozas Petkevičius, "Report of evidence of the investigation of the mass anti-social manifestation in the city of Kaunas 18–19 May 1972," not dated but May 1972).

[33] Inkeles and Bauer, *Soviet Citizen*, pp. 282–283 and 290–291.