

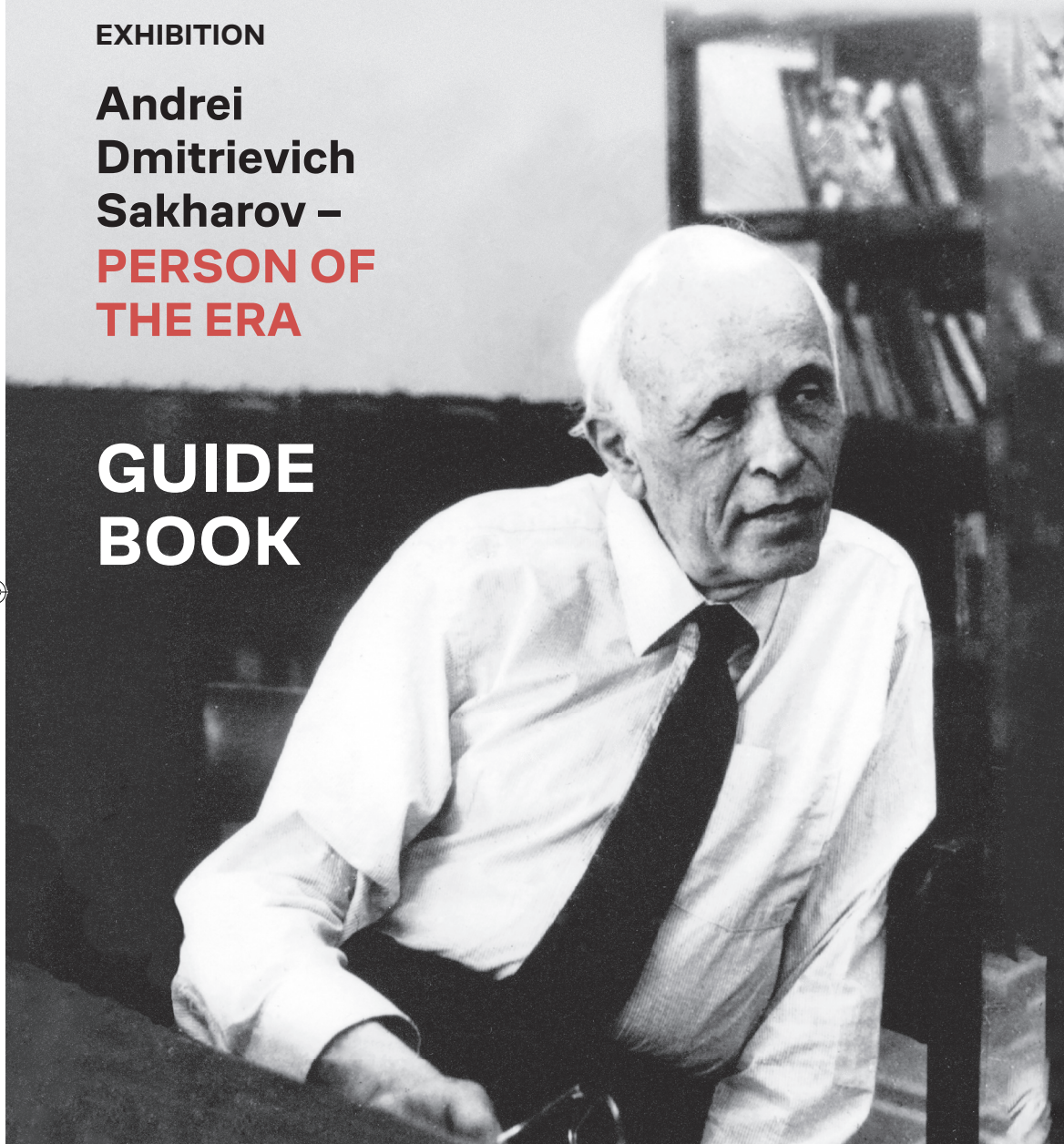
Sakharov Centennial
1921-2021



EXHIBITION

**Andrei
Dmitrievich
Sakharov –
PERSON OF
THE ERA**

**GUIDE
BOOK**



REVIVING

1975  2025

THE HELSINKI SPIRIT

REVIVING • REDEFINING • REVAMPING

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Foreword to the Guidebook “Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov - Person of an Era”

Exhibition “Sakharov Centennial 1921 - 2021”

In February 1989, on the occasion of the award of the first Sakharov prize, the then President of the European Parliament, Lord Plumb, explained the meaning of the newly created prize and of its name. The award, he said, is intended to pay tribute to those individuals who defend freedom of thought and, for the European Parliament, Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov embodies this fight. The same holds true today, in the year of his centenary.

The story of Andrei Sakharov's struggle for freedom continues to humble and inspire us today. In 1968, in a famous essay partially reproduced in this guidebook, Andrei Sakharov courageously expressed the view that intellectual freedom is essential. In the following decades, he dedicated his life to defending the right to freedom of thought. Co-inventor of the Soviet hydrogen bomb, he called into question the consequences of the nuclear arms race, which he came to consider as a form of global suicide. Faced with the repressive and brutal Soviet regime, Andrei Sakharov had the courage to take a stand against it. Officially persecuted for years in the Soviet Union and forced into exile, he had the strength to continue the peaceful struggle for the advancement of human rights and individual freedoms.

Andrei Sakharov was one of the driving forces of the dissident movements fighting for individual freedoms and democracy in the Soviet Union and in the Eastern European countries. His firm attachment to the importance of freedom of thought for a society, as well as his courageous acts have shaped the history of our continent, contributing to its pacification and making Europe's reunification possible.

Today, in a world where authoritarian regimes and populist forces undermine the fundamental freedoms and question the principle of human rights, the moral symbol represented by Andrei Sakharov constitutes a source of inspiration for all those that fight for democratic principles.

For more than 30 years, the European Parliament contributes to keeping this symbol alive by awarding the Sakharov prize for Freedom of Thought. An important part of the European Parliament's activities in support of human rights and democracy, the prize pays tribute all those who relentlessly fight for these values worldwide.

A perfect illustration of this forceful fight are the laureates of the 2020 Sakharov Prize - the Belarussian Democratic Opposition. Along with all the other Sakharov laureates, they taught us all what it means to never give up when it comes to defending your rights and freedoms and to fighting for a better, fairer society. A lesson that is both humbling and inspiring, just as Andrei Sakharov's struggle for freedom and human rights was.

David Maria Sassoli

David Maria Sassoli,
President European Parliament





The Importance of Andrei Sakharov and His Legacy Today

Edward Lucas

The world in which Andrei Dmitrievich made his mark can seem distant. Most people reading this excellent and timely publication will have little first-hand knowledge of Sakharov's life and works. In today's globalised world, where we worry about climate change and pandemics rather

than ideological struggles, the defining issues of the past age can seem like exotic but ancient history.

The technological breakthrough of splitting the atom; the resulting development of weapons that could end life on the planet; a world sharply divided into Soviet and Western blocks, the astonishing courage of dissidents faced with the ruthless repression of Soviet life, and then the evil empire's sudden, largely unforeseen collapse — these were the landmarks of Sakharov's life. But blow off the dust, and they are just as relevant today.

Start with technology, for Sakharov was a physicist before he was anything else. We are now on the brink of a technological leap as great as the breakthroughs in nuclear physics that marked Sakharov's career. Hurtling towards us are advances in artificial intelligence, quantum computing and life sciences that present our species, and the planet it inhabits, with colossal opportunities and dangers. For that we need Sakharov's perspective on the uses of our inventive powers. Technology must serve civilisation, not the other way round. It was the dangers of the arms race that first drew Sakharov to public life. These dangers have not gone away: indeed, the prospect of escalating capabilities in autonomous weapons are a terrifying reprise of the world of doomsday devices, dead hands, and Dr Strangelove.

If Sakharov could make his leap from the privileged heart of the Soviet establishment to the perilous margins of Soviet society, we can believe that others may do the same in other times and places. Sakharov's courage stretched the bounds of the possible then, and of our imagination now. We cannot know if Chinese Sakharovs are right now examining their consciences in the laboratories and research establishments of the Chinese party state. But history shows us that there is indeed something about physics that fosters moral courage. Physicists have been among the most outspoken critics of the party-state in the past. The late Fang Lizhi was one such dissident in the 1980s. Another, Liangying Xu, received the American Physical Society's Sakharov prize in 2008. More will come.

Sakharov's message crossed an east-west gulf that no longer exists. But even in today's seemingly globalised and interconnected world, we have seen the way in which the "Great Firewall of China" has cut off that country from the free internet that the rest of the world uses. Carbon paper, typewriters, and shortwave radio – technology that once seemed utterly obsolescent – are coming back into fashion. The all-pervading digital scrutiny of the Chinese party-state's surveillance machine can capture biometric data, crack electronic communications, and attack digital devices anywhere in the world. But it still cannot penetrate a message written by hand on a folded piece of paper, or prevent you tuning into a radio broadcast bounced off the ionosphere. Sakharov, confined without a telephone in Gorki, would appreciate the way in which the wheel of history has turned.

Sakharov's powerful criticism of the Soviet regime was matched by an unflinching eye for the West's faults, in particular for racial injustice in the United States. That could not be more topical today. Our greatest weakness in the free world is not what our enemies do to us. It is what we do to ourselves: the greed and complacency of our decision-makers, the festering economic, social, and racial divisions in our societies. Nobody made us do this. Sakharov's stereoscopic vision was the antithesis of the black-and-white simplicities of cold war propaganda.

It is easy to be discouraged. The Chinese and Russian regimes seem to withstand the puny sanctions and criticism that we muster. China in particular has a daunting combination of economic clout, military heft, technological prowess, and decisive leadership. The "hybrid" arsenal (which Sakharov would have instantly recognised under its old name of "active measures") allows our adversaries to rampage through our societies and public institutions.

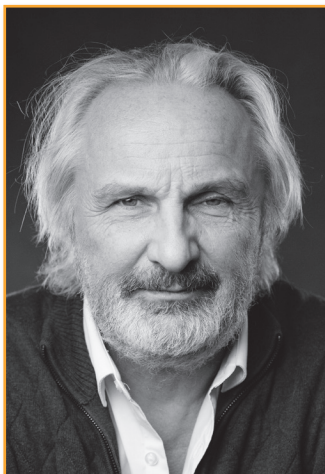
Yet we should remember how much more daunting things seemed for Sakharov — and indeed for the Lithuanians and other captive nations living under Soviet rule in the 1960s. It seemed Quixotic to believe that the courage of a sole, frail, cerebral figure, armed only with words and thoughts, could dent the fortunes of a totalitarian superpower. Yet it did. His Nobel Peace Prize in 1975 infuriated and demoralised the Soviet leadership (as we now know from Politburo minutes). They refused to let Sakharov attend the ceremony. He went to Vilnius instead, to attend the trial of his fellow-dissident and friend, Sergei Kovalyev. Just 15 years later, Lithuania declared the restoration of its independence – something that would have seemed inconceivable at the time.

It is also important to remember Sakharov's unwavering moral compass. Many believed that Mikhail Gorbachev epitomized reform in the Soviet Union. Those who stood in his way were troublemakers. That accusation was frequently levelled against the Baltic states. Yet Sakharov thought the slogan "don't hamper Gorbachev's efforts" was dangerous: for the Kremlin leader, and for the Soviet Union.

In the closing minutes of the June 1989 session of the Congress of People's Deputies, Sakharov's final words before Gorbachev (not for the last time) switched off his microphone were to demand the withdrawal of the Soviet ambassador from Beijing in protest at the crushing of the pro-democracy protests there.

It is fitting that so many heroes of the resistance against the Chinese party-state's repression and aggression have received the Sakharov prize awarded annually by the European Parliament: the democracy activists Wei Jingsheng and Hu Jia and most recently Ilham Tohti, a peaceful advocate of Uyghur culture, now languishing in jail. Is it too much to imagine a day of dawning democracy in China when a repentant leadership summons Tohti to Beijing? Impossible? That is how Sakharov's invitation to Moscow seemed only weeks before Gorbachev issued it.

Sakharov bequeathed us a colossal moral and intellectual legacy. It awaits vindication. Let us get to work.



Smuggling Samizdat: The extraordinary tale of how Sakharov's first public essay reached the West

Robert van Voren

In the 1960s, when the Soviet human rights movement emerged and more and more writers and thinkers sought alternative ways to voice their opinions or have their literary works published, there were only limited options. It was virtually impossible to publish

officially in the Soviet Union, unless the authorities themselves decided to publish a work as part of a policy of “managed freedom”.¹ As an alternative, many dissident authors decided to turn to “samizdat”,² and published their works themselves by typing them out on a typewriter, often with carbon paper between sheets of paper in order to create multiple copies.

A second possibility was to have works smuggled out of the country, published in the West and sometimes, as *tamizdat*,³ or works published tam (“over there”), and smuggled back into the USSR. Smuggling samizdat out was a complicated matter, because Western visitors who functioned as “couriers” were often searched at customs before leaving the country, and so the most trusted avenue were diplomats or foreign correspondents, who could make use of the diplomatic pouch.

One of the most extraordinary tales of “samizdat smuggling” concerns Sakharov's 1968 essay “Thoughts on Progress, Peaceful Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom”. One of Sakharov's fellow dissidents, the historian



Andrei Amalrik,⁴ obtained a copy and decided to try to get the text out to the West for publication. Two years earlier, two Soviet writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, had been sentenced to seven and five years' labor camp, respectively for publishing their works in the West under pseudonyms, and thus it was clear that following their example would not be without risk, and would likely be met with repressive measures by the authorities. Amalrik decided to turn to one of his close Western friends, Karel van het Reve, the Dutch correspondent of the newspaper *Het Parool* in Moscow

Van het Reve, a professor of Slavic languages, had arrived in Moscow in 1967 for a two- year stint and was one of the most fearless correspondents in Moscow. While most stayed clear from the dissident movement, Van het Reve became friends with many of them and was not shy about reporting on them in his newspaper.

After he received a copy of Sakharov's essay from Amalrik, Van het Reve immediately realized he had something unique in his hands. Here was a prominent nuclear physicist, a member of the upper nomenklatura, or Soviet elite, who openly criticized his government and carefully outlined his vision for the future. In order to maximize the chance of the text reaching the West, Van het Reve decided to give a copy to his colleague Ray Anderson of the *New York Times*. Both would try to get the text out, and then publish it in their respective newspapers.



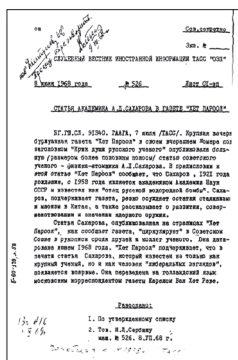
Karel van het Reve translated the text into Dutch and turned the manuscript into a two-part publication. The first part he managed to send out with a person who was apparently able to pass customs without any checking. On July 6, 1968 the first half appeared in *Het Parool*. Realizing it was an international scoop, *Het Parool's* editor in chief in Amsterdam was delighted, and immediately called Van het Reve to tell him he wanted his "sugar cake", meaning the rest of the text. As they were in a hurry, they decided that Van het Reve would read the entire text over the telephone. Apparently, the KGB did not have a Dutch-speaking censor on

¹ E.g. "One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich" by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn or "Doctor Zhivago" by Boris Pasternak

² Samizdat: a word made out of a merger of from "sam" (self) and "izdat" (publish)

³ Tamizdat: a word made out of a merger of "tam" (there, meaning the West) and "izdat" (publish)

⁴ Andrei Amalrik (1938-1980), author of among others the famous essay "Will the Soviet Union Survive until 1984".



hand, and thus in the course of several hours the whole text was read unobstructed, and subsequently the second part also appeared in *Het Parool*.⁶

Ray Anderson was less fortunate. He managed to get the text out, but his editor in New York was very hesitant. He was convinced the text was a fake and refused to publish it in the *New York Times*. After long deliberations, he agreed that Ray Anderson could write an article in which he summarized Sakharov's main message. The article was published on July 11, 1968. Gradually, the editor realized that they text was real,

and that indeed this prominent physicist was the author, and ten days later, on July 21, 1968 the whole text was published in the *New York Times*.⁷

The publication greatly upset the Soviet authorities. Sakharov was a highly respected member of the elite and although he had repeatedly voiced his concern over the development of the nuclear arsenal, nuclear proliferation, and the threat of a nuclear war, this went much further. Here was a document in which he openly criticized Soviet policy in much more extensive terms and focused on issues that in their view were none of his business.

To them, Sakharov had allowed himself to take an anti-Soviet stand, which under normal conditions would have led to criminal prosecution. When the KGB found out of the existence of the essay, they demanded that Sakharov withdrew his text, which he flatly refused. Now the text was even published in the West, as was reported in a “top secret” report from TASS in The Hague, and the damage was done.

Andrei Sakharov was suddenly propelled into the position of a leading critic of the Soviet authorities. Soon, he and several dissident friends would establish the dissident group, the Committee for Human Rights, and step by step he became the main spokesperson of the human rights movement in his country, and spent most of his time defending political prisoners, holding press conferences and meetings with foreign visitors, and writing more works on Soviet policy, East-West relations, and the threat of a nuclear war.

⁵ The identity of the person was never revealed but there is reason to believe it was the well-known violinist Emmy Verhey who at that time visited Moscow frequently

⁶ Karel van het Reve wrote twice about his “international scoop”, once in 1975 and a second time in ...; the second article was also published in the book “Voor Sacharov”, edited by John Löwenhardt and Bart Tromp (1986).

⁷ For an extensive description see the biography of Karel van het Reve “Denkbeelden uit een Dubbelleven” by Ger Verrips, Arbeiderspers, 2004



The 1968 essay “Thoughts on Peace, Progress and Intellectual Freedom” by Andrei Sakharov

Introduction

Arkady Ostrovsky

Among the epistolary legacy of Andrei Sakharov, his “Thoughts on Peace, Progress and Intellectual Freedom” published in samizdat in Russian and in the New York Times in English in 1968, stand out for three main reasons.

One, it was Sakharov’s first published statement that manifested a pivot from his role of a secret nuclear scientist to the number one public advocate of human rights in the Soviet Union and in the world.

Two, it is the most comprehensive expression of his scientific and humanistic view of the world and as such it represents a connection between what are often wrongly considered to be two distinctly separate parts of his life.

Three, it had an explosive impact on all thinking people in the Soviet Union, Europe and United States and was printed in 18 million copies, overtaking Agatha Christie’s novels. And as such it remains as alive and relevant now as it was then.

Sakharov’s essay was novel not only in terms of its thesis, but also in terms of his method of thinking about a world divided by the ideological rivalries of the Cold War. That method, as he states at the beginning, was formed by his scientific life, and is based on a deep and unprejudiced study of facts, theories, and views. Both as a scientist and as a humanist, he saw truth not as relative, but as an absolute category.

That “scientific approach” untainted by ideological constructions allowed him to penetrate the essence of political systems with the same precision that he penetrated physical matter. In a country whose political regime relied on lies and propaganda, his attitude toward truth was the biggest heresy of all.

The essay was a logical continuation of his activities as a nuclear scientist and inventor of the Soviet H-bomb, the deadliest weapon on the planet that was capable of wiping out human civilization several times over. The idea behind the bomb, as far as Sakharov was concerned, was to prevent a military conflict between the two superpowers by making the cost of escalation intolerably high.

Yet, the very existence of such a weapon created risks that could only be mitigated by putting the values of human life and spirit, rather than geopolitics or ideologies, at the heart of any decision-making. This required abandoning the logic of a zero-sum game, as well as any realpolitik, and accepting the universal principle of the “rights of man” to decide their own fate and express their free will.

Sakharov’s belief in the moral imperative was engendered by the victory over fascism in Europe and the rejection of Stalinism in the Soviet Union. Like most people of his generation, Sakharov made a clear distinction between the socialist ideas of social justice and the moral importance of labor, which he subscribed to, and Stalinism, that hypocritically and demagogically used socialist ideology to perpetrate crimes comparable to the horrors of Hitlerism that engaged in an openly cannibalistic ideology. “As a consequence of this ‘specific feature’ of Stalinism, it was the Soviet people, its most active, talented and honest representatives, who suffered the most terrible blow,” Sakharov wrote.

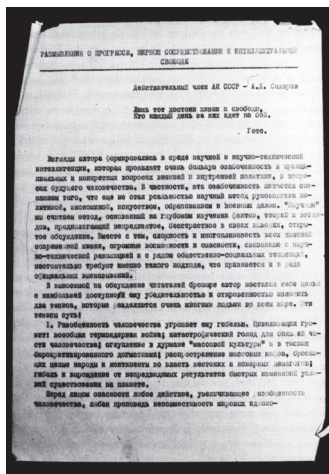
His own ability to rise above ideologies that prescribed to people how to think meant that he was equally appalled by McCarthyism in America and the manifestation of neo-Stalinism in the Soviet Union; by the egotism and racism of white workers towards American Blacks and the egotism of the unaccountable Soviet nomenklatura, protective of its hidden privileges, and contemptuous towards a vast majority of Soviet workers.

The convergence between capitalism and socialism would be beneficial to people in both countries but must not involve a deal between the two self-interested elite groups, he argued. Market reforms and the removal of censorship in Czechoslovakia was a proof positive that such convergence was possible and desirable. His essay was an appeal to the Soviet government and to “all people of goodwill around the world”.

Sakharov underestimated the “egotism” of the Soviet managerial group that considered his idea of “convergence” with its emphasis on the transparency of distribution, market reforms and intellectual freedom a far greater and more real threat than a thermonuclear war. Two weeks after the publication of Sakharov’s essay in the New York Times, the Soviet government responded to his idea by crushing Czechoslovakian reform with tanks.

Sakharov was not naïve and never thought the process of convergence was quick or easy. In his essay he said it was likely to take about 30 years and he lived long enough to see it happen. In 1986 Mikhail Gorbachev brought Sakharov back from exile in Gorky and began to open up the country and implement Sakharov’s idea of convergence based on intellectual freedom and respect for human rights.

Russia’s current conflict with the West, its reversal to the worst Soviet practices driven largely by the egotism and corruption of the post-Soviet ruling elite, does not negate Sakharov’s ideas advocated in “Thoughts on Peace, Progress and Intellectual Freedom”. It only makes them as relevant today as they were then. Yet, 100 years after his birth, nobody embodies the idea of convergence and moral imperative as much as Sakharov himself.



Thoughts on Peace, Progress and Intellectual Freedom

An abbreviated version of the original text⁸

The author's views were formed in a scientific milieu and by the scientific and technological intelligentsia, which has shown a great deal of concern about fundamental and specific issues of foreign and domestic policy, on matters concerning the future of humankind. This

concern was particularly sustained by an awareness that the scientific method of managing policy, the economy, art, education, and military affairs had not yet become a reality.

By “scientific,” we mean a method based on deep study of facts, theories, and views, presumably unprejudiced, impartial in their conclusions and involving open discussion. Moreover, the complex and multifaceted nature of all phenomena of modern life; the enormous opportunities and dangers connected to the scientific and technological revolution, along with a number of civic and social trends, urgently require exactly such an approach, which is acknowledged even in a number of official statements. In this essay, submitted to readers for discussion, the author intends, with the greatest persuasiveness and frankness possible, to outline two theses shared by many people throughout the world. The essence of these theses is:

“THE DIVISION OF HUMANKIND THREATENS IT WITH DESTRUCTION”

Civilization is threatened by these phenomena: universal thermonuclear war, severe hunger for most of humanity, stupefaction by the drug of “mass culture,” and, in the grip of bureaucratized dogmatism, the dissemination of mass myths, the abandoning of entire peoples and continents to the power of brutal and bloody demagogues, and death and degeneration from the unforeseen results of rapid changes in the conditions for existence on the planet.

⁸ On page 28 a QR code will lead the reader to the complete text on the website of the Andrei Sakharov Research Center as published in the New York Times in 1968.

Faced with danger, any action which increases the disunity of humankind, any preaching of the incompatibility of world ideology and nations is madness, is criminal. Only world-wide cooperation under the conditions of intellectual freedom, the high moral ideals of socialism and labor, with the elimination of the factors of dogmatism and the pressure of hidden interests of the ruling classes will be in the interests of preserving civilization.

The reader understands that even so, this is not a question of an ideological world with the kind of fanatic, sectarian and extremist ideologies which repudiate any possibility of rapprochement with them. It is not about any discussion and compromise, for example, with the ideologies of fascist, racist, militarist or Maoist demagoguery.

Millions of people throughout the world are striving to end poverty; they detest persecution, dogmatism, and demagoguery (and their extreme expression – racism, fascism, Stalinism and Maoism); they believe in progress on the basis of utilizing, under conditions of social justice and intellectual freedom, all the positive experience accumulated by humankind.

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IS ESSENTIAL

This is freedom to receive and disseminate information; freedom of unprejudiced and impartial discussion; and freedom from the pressure of authority and prejudices. Such triple freedom of thought is the only guarantee against the infection of the people by mass myths which in the hands of cunning hypocrites and demagogues easily turn into a bloody dictatorship. This is the only guarantee that a scientific and democratic approach to politics, economics, and culture will work.

But freedom of thought in modern society is under a triple threat: from the calculated opiate of “mass culture”; from cowardly and selfish petty bourgeois ideology; from the ossified dogmatism of the bureaucratic oligarchy and its beloved weapon – ideological censorship.

Therefore, freedom of thought needs the defense of all thinking and honest people. This is the task not only of the intelligentsia, but of all strata of society, especially its most active and organized stratum, the working class. The global dangers of war, hunger, cultism, and bureaucratism threaten all of humankind.

The realization by the working class and the intelligentsia of the commonality of their interests is a remarkable phenomenon of our time. We can say that the most progressive, international and selfless part of the intelligentsia is essentially part of the working class; and the advanced, educated, and international part of the working class, the part farthest from the petty bourgeoisie, is simultaneously part of the intelligentsia.

Such a position of the intelligentsia in society makes it pointless to loudly demand that the intelligentsia subordinate its efforts to the will and interests of the working class (in the USSR, Poland and other socialist countries). In fact, such calls imply submission to the will of the party, or to be more specific, to its central apparatus, to its bureaucrats. But where is the guarantee that these bureaucrats always express the true interests of the working class as a whole, the true interests of progress, and not their own caste interests?

This essay is divided into two parts. The first is titled “Dangers” and the second “Grounds for Hope.”

THE THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR

The experience of past wars provided numerous examples of how the first use of a new technological or tactical method of attack has usually turned out to be very effective when a simple antidote could be found. But in the event of thermonuclear war, the first use may already be decisive and nullify years of work and many billions spent on the creation of anti-missile defense. The exception is when there is a very great difference in the technological and economic potentials of two opposing enemies. In this case, the stronger side, having created an anti-missile defense with lots of safety reserves, is tempted to try to get rid of the dangerous, unstable balance forever – to go on a preventive adventure, expending part of its attack potential on destroying most of the enemy’s missile launch positions and counting on impunity at the last stage of escalation, that is, when destroying the enemy’s cities and industries.

Fortunately for the world’s stability, the difference between the technical and economic potentials of the USSR and USA are not so great, that for one of these sides, such “preventive aggression” would not be associated with a nearly inevitable risk of a retaliatory, devastating strike, and this situation will not change if the arms race is extended to building anti-missile defense systems.

In the opinion of many, shared by the author, the diplomatic formulation of this mutually understood situation (for example, in the form of a treaty on

a moratorium of construction of anti-missile defense systems) would be a useful demonstration of the wish of the USA and USSR to preserve the status quo and not expand the arms race to insanely expensive anti-missile systems; a demonstration of the wish to cooperate and not fight.

Thermonuclear war cannot be viewed as the continuation of politics by military means (in Clausewitz's formula) but is a means of global suicide.

INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS AND NEW PRINCIPLES

International politics should be fully imbued with scientific methodology and a democratic spirit, with an effort to fearlessly consider all facts, views, and theories, with the maximum transparency of precisely formulated main and intermediate goals, with a principled consistency.

1 All peoples have the right to decide their own fate with free expression of will. This right is guaranteed by international oversight of compliance with the Declaration of Human Rights by all governments. International monitoring involves both the use of economic sanctions and the use of the UN's armed forces for protection of human rights.

2 All military and military-economic forms of export of counterrevolution and revolution are unlawful and are the equivalent of aggression.

3 All countries strive toward mutual aid in economic, cultural, and general organizational problems in order to eliminate domestic and international difficulties painlessly, and in order to prevent the aggravation of international tension and strengthening of the forces of reaction.

4 International policy does not pursue the goals of exploiting local concrete conditions to expand a zone of influence and to create difficulties for another country. The purpose of international policy is to ensure the universal implementation of the Declaration of Human Rights, to prevent the aggravation of the international situation, and the strengthening of tendencies of militarism and nationalism.

Such policy is not in any way a betrayal of the revolutionary and national liberation struggle, the struggle with reaction and counterrevolution. On the contrary, in eliminating all dubious cases, the opportunity for decisive actions is increased in those extreme cases of reaction, racism, and militarism, when no other means remain except armed struggle; the deepening of peaceful coexistence would provide the opportunity to prevent such tragic events as have occurred in Greece and Indonesia. Such a policy positions the Soviet armed forces before clearly limited defensive tasks, the tasks of defense of our country and our allies from aggression. As history indicates, in defending the Motherland, and her great social and cultural conquests, our people and its armed forces are united and invincible.

POLLUTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

We live in a rapidly changing world. Industrial and hydraulic engineering, logging operations, plowing of virgin lands, and the use of toxic chemicals – all of this is changing the face of Earth, our “habitat,” in uncontrollable, spontaneous ways.

Scientific study of all the interconnections in nature and the consequences of our intervention clearly lags behind the pace of the changes underway. An enormous quantity of harmful wastes from industry and transportation are released into the air and water, including carcinogenic wastes. Will the “safety limit” be crossed everywhere, as is already the case in a number of places?

Carbon dioxide from the burning of coal changes the heat-reflecting properties of the atmosphere. Sooner or later, this takes on dangerous proportions. But we do not know when this will be. The toxic chemicals used in agriculture to combat pests have penetrated the bodies of humans and animals both directly and in the form of a number of modified, even more dangerous compounds, and have a very harmful effect on the brain, nervous system, bone marrow, lymph nodes, liver, and other organs.

The use of antibiotics in poultry farming contributes to the development of new forms of pathogenic microbes which are resistant to antibiotics.

I could mention the problem of the dumping of detergents and radioactive waste, the erosion and salinization of the soil, the flooding of fields, the deforestation of mountain slopes and woods needed for water conservation, the death of birds and such useful animals as toads and frogs, and many other examples of unreasonable predation caused by the primacy of local, temporary, bureaucratic and selfish interests, and sometimes simply

questions of bureaucratic prestige, as was the case in the notorious problem of Lake Baikal.

The problems of geohygiene are complicated and multi-faceted, and very closely interlinked with economic and social problems. It is impossible to solve them completely at a national, much less a local scale. The saving of our external habitat urgently requires overcoming disunity and the pressure of temporary, local interests.

Otherwise, the USSR will poison the USA with its wastes and the USA will poison the USSR with its wastes. For now, this is hyperbole, but with an increase in the amount of wastes by 10% every year, in 100 years, the overall increase will reach 20,000 times as much.

POLICE DICTATORSHIPS

Fascism in Germany lasted 12 years; Stalinism in the USSR lasted twice as long. Even with very many features in common, there are certain differences. There is a much more sophisticated reserve of hypocrisy and demagoguery, relying not on an openly cannibalistic program, like Hitler's, but on a progressive and scientific socialist ideology, popular among working people.

This served as a very convenient screen for deceiving the working class, for dulling the vigilance of the intelligentsia and rivals in the struggle for power; with the cunning and sudden use of chain reaction mechanisms of torture, executions, and denunciations; with intimidation and duping of millions of people, who are largely not cowards or fools at all. This "special nature" of Stalinism had as one of its consequences that the most terrible blow was made against the Soviet people, its most active, capable, and honest representatives.

No less than 10-15 million Soviet people perished in the dungeons of the NKVD (the secret police) from torture and execution; in labor camps for exiled kulaks and the so-called "kulak enablers" and members of their families; and in labor camps "with no right of correspondence" (these were essentially prototypes of the fascist death camps, where, for example, thousands of prisoners were machined-gunned to death if the labor camps were "overcrowded" or if "special instructions" were received).

People perished in the freezing coal mines of Norilsk and Vorkuta, and from the cold, hunger, and backbreaking labor at countless construction sites, logging camps, and canals; or simply died while being transported in boarded-up train cars and the flooded holds of the "death ships" of the Sea of

Okhotsk; and during the deportation of entire peoples – the Crimean Tatars, the Volga Germans, the Kalmyks, and many other peoples.

Stalin's aides came and went (Yagoda, Molotov, Yezhov, Zhdanov, Malenkov, and Beria) but Stalin's anti-people regime remained just as ferocious and at the same time dogmatically limited, and blind in its cruelty. The destruction of the military and engineering cadres before the war; the blind faith in the rationality of a partner in crime – Hitler – and other sources of the national tragedy of 1941 are covered well in the book *The Punished Peoples* by Alexander Nekrich; in the writings of Maj. Gen. Petro Grigorenko and in a number of other publications – this is far from the only example of this combination of crimes and criminal narrow-mindedness and short-sightedness.

Stalinist dogmatism and detachment from real life were particularly manifested in the rural areas – in the policy of unrestrained exploitation of villages – with predatory procurement at “symbolic” prices; with almost serf-like enslavement of the peasantry; with depriving collective farmers of the right to own the main means of mechanization; and with the appointment of collective farm chairmen on the basis of obsequiousness and cunning. The result is obvious – the most profound destruction of the economy and the entire way of life in the village, difficult to repair, which, by the “law of communicating vessels” has undermined industry as well.

The anti-people nature of Stalinism was vividly manifested in the persecution of the military who survived fascist captivity but landed in Stalin's labor camps; in the anti-worker “decrees”; in the criminal deportation of entire peoples, dooming them to slow death; in the vociferous petty bourgeois antisemitism common to Stalin's bureaucracy and the NKVD (and to Stalin personally); in the draconian laws to preserve socialist property (five years for taking the gleanings from the fields and so on) which essentially served for the most part as a means of meeting the demand for the “slave market”; in the Ukrainophobia peculiar to Stalin, and so on.

THE THREAT TO INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

A threat to the independence and the value of the human individual is a threat to the meaning of human life.

Nothing so threatens the freedom of the individual and the meaning of life as war, poverty, and terror. But there are very serious indirect dangers as well, only slightly more distant.

One of these dangers is the stultification of people (the “grey masses” in the cynical definition of the bourgeois futurologist) with “mass culture”, intentional, or commercially determined reduction of the intellectual level and the problematic, which emphasizes entertainment or utilitarianism, with carefully guarded censorship.

Another example is connected to the problems of education. The educational system under government control; the separation of the school from the church; the universal free learning – all of this is the greatest achievement of social progress. But all of this has its reverse side – in this case, it is excessive unification, which spreads both to the teaching itself, and to the programs, particularly in such subjects as literature, history, sociology, geography, and to the system of exams.

It is impossible not to see the danger in excessive appeal to authorities, to a certain narrowing of the framework of discussions and the intellectual daring of conclusions at the age when the formation of beliefs occurs. In ancient China, the system of exams for a position led to mental stagnation, to the canonization of the reactionary sides of Confucianism. It is very undesirable to have something like this in modern society.

Modern technology and mass psychology have provided ever new opportunities for management by established criteria, behavior, desires, and beliefs of the popular masses. This is not only information management, taking account of the theory of advertising and mass psychology, but more technical methods as well, about which a lot is being written in the foreign press. Examples are the systematic control of the birth rate, biochemical management of psychological processes, and radio electronic control of psychological processes.

From my perspective, we cannot fully reject new methods; we cannot fundamentally prohibit the development of science and technology. But we must clearly understand the terrible danger to basic human values, to the very meaning of life, which is concealed in the abuse of technical and biochemical methods and methods of mass psychology.

A human being should not turn into a chicken or a rat as in the famous experiments, experiencing electronic pleasure from electrodes embedded in the brain. Also related is the question of the growing use of tranquilizers and mood enhancers, legal and illegal drugs and so on.

We must not forget as well about the quite real danger about which Norbert Wiener wrote in his book *Cybernetics* – about the lack of sustainable human installation criteria in cybernetic technology. The unprecedented seductive power given to humanity (or, even worse, to a certain group in a divided humanity) in the use of the wise advice of future intellectual assistants – artificial “thinking” automatons – can turn out to be, as Wiener stresses, a fatal trap: t advice can turn out to be incomprehensibly insidious, pursuing not human goals, but the goals of solving abstract tasks, unpredictably transformed in the artificial brain.

Such a danger will become quite real several decades from now, if human values, above all freedom of thought, are not reinforced during this period, and disunity is not eliminated.

Background on the Exhibition

The original Russian-language version of the exhibition “Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov – Man of an Era” was developed by the Moscow Sakharov Center. It was translated into English by Catherine A. Fitzpatrick and subsequently enlarged with several new banners together with the Andrei Sakharov Research Center for Democratic Development and the Sakharov Prize Office of the European Parliament.

For the exhibition four new clips were developed, to be shown during the exhibition:

- 1** On basis of a 90-minute film by the Ukrainian filmmaker Iosif Pasternak a 22-minute clip was produced that focuses on several important moments in Sakharov’s life, much of it based on documentary material.

- 2** A 9-minute clip was made by the French journalist Nicolas Miletitch and the Ukrainian filmmaker Lesya Kharchenko, based on interviews Nicolas Miletitch made with Soviet dissidents and others who knew Andrei Sakharov personally.

- 3** A third clip of 7 minutes is based on an interview made with the granddaughter of Andrei Sakharov, Marina Sakharov-Liberman, made in February 2020.

- 4** A fourth clips was made by the European Parliament on the occasion of the Sakharov Centennial.

In addition to the above, the exhibition includes an expose showing how uncensored literature, so-called samizdat⁹, was made in Communist times, and also how samizdat was smuggled out of the country to the West. Some of this literature was then printed in the West and smuggled back into the Eastern Bloc, so-called tamizdat.¹⁰ A selection of original samizdat and tamizdat is shown.

This part of the exposition includes typewriters, photo- and film-cameras and also the “magical slates” that were used to communicate in flats of dissidents that were bugged by the KGB.

A collection of books by and about Andrei Sakharov completes the exhibition.



(credit: By Nkrita - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0)

⁹ Samizdat, literally “self-published,” was a form of dissident activity across the socialist Eastern Bloc in which individuals reproduced censored and underground makeshift publications, often by hand, and passed the documents from reader to reader.

¹⁰ Tamizdat refers to literature published abroad (там, tam, “there”), often from smuggled manuscripts.

Sakharov Today

More than thirty years after Dr. Andrei Sakharov died at a relatively young age, his legacy lives on and continues to inspire people across the globe. Many organizations and institutions invoke his heritage to mobilize people to stand for their rights and actively contribute to the creation of a more just and humane society. Special emphasis has been made on educating younger people, who grew up after Sakharov died and who have no living recollection of his enormous contribution to world peace and human rights.

Moscow Sakharov Center

The Public Commission for the Preservation of Academician Sakharov's Legacy was formed in 1990 at the behest of Sakharov's widow Elena Bonner. In 1994, the Public Commission created the Sakharov Archive, and on the 75th anniversary of Sakharov's birth the Sakharov Center was opened in Moscow, not far from the house where he and Bonner had lived from 1972–1989 (except for the years of exile, 1980–1986).

The Sakharov Center is a museum, civic and volunteer center. The Center organises and hosts public lectures and discussions, press conferences, film screenings, theater performances, exhibitions, and charitable events. It also creates projects for informal education in the field of human rights. The permanent exhibition at the Centers museum is dedicated to the history of Soviet totalitarianism and resistance to oppression. The Center also hosts and updates online databases on history of political repression and the human rights movement.

The Moscow Sakharov Center has become a common home for human rights defenders and civic activists in Moscow and throughout Russia. Every year, the Sakharov Center hosts more than 400 events dedicated to both historical memory and current pressing events and topics.

In contemporary Russia Sakharov Center remains one of the very few independent venues which provides an alternative to the official mainstream. It gives an opportunity to civic activists, human rights defenders and public intellectuals to present their take on human rights, democracy and freedom to the public and to create and implement civic initiatives in these spheres.

The Public Commission for the Preservation of Academician Sakharov's Legacy was declared in December 2014 a "foreign agent" by Russian authorities and has to function despite multiple legislative and unspoken restrictions and barriers.

Andrei Sakharov Research Center for Democratic Development

The same motto guides the Andrei Sakharov Research Center for Democratic Development. Founded at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas (Lithuania) in 2017 with the goal of contributing to the development of a pluralist and democratic society in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union based on the rule of law, respect for human rights and equal opportunities for all. The Center combines academic work with public events.

A special focus of the center is on the younger generation, in order to promote their active civic participation through **"young changemaker events,"** where social and political developments in Europe are discussed.

Among the public events are annual Sakharov Conferences, held on or around Sakharov's birthday on May 21, and annual Leonidas Donskis Memorial Conferences, commemorating Leonidas Donskis, the prominent Lithuanian thinker and political activist who died in 2016, and for whom Andrei Sakharov was an ongoing source of inspiration.

Among the archival holdings are the world's largest archives on the political abuse of psychiatry in the USSR, as well as archives of well-known Sovietologists and human rights activists.

Sakharov Prize, the European Parliament prize for Freedom of Thought

Andrei Sakharov was in exile to Gorky when he learnt that the European Parliament intended to create a prize for freedom of thought which would bear his name. He sent a message to the European Parliament, giving his permission for his name to be given to the prize and saying how moved he was. He rightly saw the prize as an encouragement to all those who, like him, had committed themselves to championing human rights. More than 30 years on, the prize that bears his name goes far beyond borders, even those of oppressive regimes, to reward human rights activists and dissidents all over the world.

Awarded for the first time in 1988 to Nelson Mandela and Anatoli Marchenko, the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought is the highest tribute paid by the European Union to human rights work. It gives recognition to individuals, groups and organisations that have made an outstanding contribution to protecting freedom of thought. Through the prize and its associated network the EU assists laureates, who are supported and empowered in their efforts to defend their causes.

The prize has so far been awarded to dissidents, political leaders, journalists, lawyers, civil-society activists, writers, mothers, wives, minority leaders, an anti-terrorist group, peace activists, an anti-torture activist, a cartoonist, long-serving prisoners of conscience, a film-maker, the UN as a body and even a child campaigning for the right to education. It promotes in particular freedom of expression, the rights of minorities, respect for international law, the development of democracy and the implementation of the rule of law. Several laureates, including Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai, Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad, went on to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

The European Parliament awards the Sakharov Prize, with its EUR 50,000 endowment, at a formal plenary sitting in Strasbourg towards the end of each year. Each of the Parliament's political groups may nominate candidates, as may individual Members (the support of at least 40 MEPs is required for each candidate). The nominees are presented at a joint meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Development Committee and the Human Rights Subcommittee, and the members of the full committees vote on a shortlist of three candidates. The final winner or winners of the Sakharov Prize are chosen by the Conference of Presidents, a European Parliament body led by the President, which includes the leaders of all the political groups represented in the Parliament, making the choice of laureates a truly European choice.

QR Codes



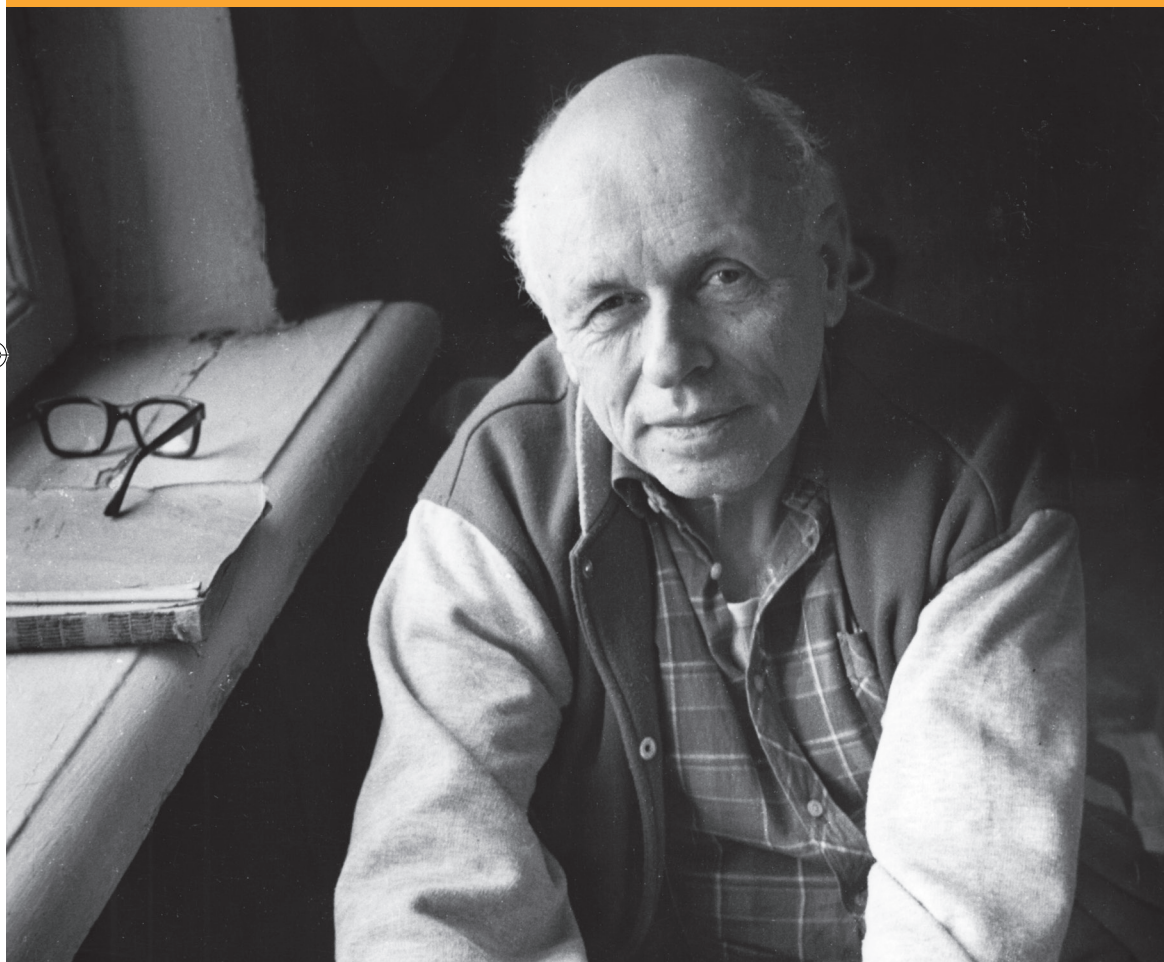
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