

## Excerpt from Anatoly S. Chernyaev Diary

January 3, 1976

From interesting things in the CC, in the three days before the New Year's, there was, I think, the following.

Andropov presented a memo to the Politburo about the situation with the “dissidents” in the USSR. Saying that the Soviet people listen to the radio and wonder why the FCP [French Communist Party] has suddenly come out in defense of Plyusch and Sakharov, and was in general barking at the CC CPSU in connection with “the existence of political prisoners in the USSR.” The memo does not contain an answer about what to do in this regard. And it turns out that the inner intention [of the memo], as it seemed to me, was in self-justification to the CC along the lines that notwithstanding the protests on the part of our détente partners, we will have to “continue to jail” [the dissidents]. The document contained some curious data: in the last ten years about 1,500 people were arrested for anti-Soviet activities. When in 1954, Khrushchev announced to the entire world that there were no political prisoners in the USSR, there were no less than 1,400 of them. In 1975, there were about 850 political prisoners; among them 261— [sentenced] for anti-Soviet propaganda. I was struck with the [following] number: there are 68,000 “prophylacted” persons in the country, i.e. those, who were summoned to the KGB and warned about “impermissibility” of their activities. Over 1,800 anti-Soviet groups and organizations were warned after being uncovered through “penetration.” All in all, in Andropov's opinion, there are hundreds of thousands of people in the Soviet Union, who are either acting or are ready to act (under proper circumstances) against the Soviet regime.

*[Source: Anatoly S. Chernyaev Diary, Manuscript, provided by the author]*

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