

## Mother Russia by Luba George

### The KGB and the Dzerzhinsky method

*Moscow is now going beyond the ritual praise of the Cheka, the predecessor to the KGB.*

**H**e Was a Chekist" was the headline of the Dec. 3 Soviet military daily, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, honoring the 100th anniversary of the birth of Yakob Kh. Peters, co-founder with Felix E. Dzerzhinsky of the Bolshevik intelligence agency, the Cheka. The Cheka, forerunner of the KGB, is the acronym for the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage, founded on Dec. 20, 1917. The article praised the work of Peters and Dzerzhinsky in their "merciless" fight against "counterrevolutionary elements." The same week a similar article in praise of Peters and the Cheka appeared in the official daily *Izvestia*.

The Cheka, together with Lenin's Foreign Ministry, was at the center of arranging economic, political, and strategic dealings with pro-Soviet Western oligarchic circles, which were given the appellation, the Trust. Peters, a Latvian Bolshevik, was instrumental with Lenin's first foreign minister, Georgi Chicherin, in emphasizing collaboration with the Swedish component of the Western "Trust" networks. Resurrecting the memory of Peters is thus a Soviet signal in the aftermath of the Palme murder to Scandinavia to work out a new "Trust" arrangement.

Dzerzhinsky's counterpart in diplomacy, Georgi Chicherin, too, is now getting big praise in the Soviet press.

Gorbachov's predecessor, Yuri Andropov, for 16 years the KGB chief, often cited and modeled his work and

thinking on two leading Bolsheviks: Maxim Gorky, the cultist-satanist founder of the "Capri School" of National Bolshevism, and Cheka's first head, Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky. According to well-informed sources, Andropov was the key figure in the KGB to vigorously campaign to revive the image and methods of "Iron Felix" Dzerzhinsky. On one wall of Andropov's office, in the Dzerzhinsky Square complex which headquartered the KGB, hung Dzerzhinsky's portrait.

Shortly after being appointed KGB chairman, Andropov in an address to staff members (Dec. 20, 1967) paid extravagant tribute to Dzerzhinsky, recalling that V.I. Lenin had instructed the Cheka to exercise "merciless and immediate repression." On Sept. 9, 1977 Andropov, in a commemorative address for the 100th anniversary of Dzerzhinsky, eulogized "Old Felix" to near-sanctification. In the speech entitled "Communist Sense of Conviction Is a Great Force of the Builders of the New World," Andropov recalled that Dzerzhinsky had acted within the framework of "socialist legality" and "in accordance with revolutionary law" in conducting mass murders and planting political disinformation and assassination forces. Despite many changes since then, Andropov concluded, the "basic function and method" of today's KGB "remains unchanged."

Felix Dzerzhinsky, an ascetic, aristocratic-born Pole, speaking to the press in June 1918, minced no words

to describe the "method": "We stand for organized terror. . . . Terror is an absolute necessity during times like these. . . . The Cheka is obliged to defend the revolution and conquer the enemy even if its sword does by chance sometimes fall upon the heads of the innocent." Later he wrote: "My thinking compels me to be merciless, and I have the firm determination to follow my thinking to the ultimate. . . . We show no mercy. We terrorize the enemies of the Soviet government in order to stop crime at its inception." By 1921, by conservative estimate, more than 50,000 businessmen, intellectuals, prosperous farmers and peasants, officers, had been randomly exterminated.

One of the Western Trust's leading figures in this century, the late W. Averell Harriman, U.S. ambassador to Moscow during World War II, said in a *New York Times* commentary titled "Let's Negotiate with Andropov" (Jan. 2, 1983) that the new leadership in the U.S.S.R. was "pragmatic as well as determined." Similar labels are being applied today to Andropov's heir, Mikhail Gorbachov.

Andropov's role in reorganizing the KGB by Dzerzhinsky's "merciless method" is key to understanding the Gorbachov era. The Gorbachov-Ligachov leadership today was groomed under the tutelage of Andropov.

Gorbachov's propaganda chief and the Soviets' leading U.S.-Canada expert, Alexander Yakovlev, is one of the prime architects of the Kremlin's "new thinking," which embodies ideas articulated by a group of KGB-trained intellectuals brought to the fore by the "reform-minded" Andropov, and further promoted by Gorbachov. Yakovlev was deployed to the United States in the late 1950s, where he made his first contact with Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski.