

A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

The lot of our Moscow bureau chief is rarely an easy one. Bureaucracy and secretiveness often combine to make the Soviet Union a journalist's despair. But for John Shaw, Russia simply presents the best sort of reportorial challenge: "The KGB agents who sometimes follow you, the Soviet officials who often want your opinions, the visiting scholars who call with questions, all symbolize in their way the unique position of the foreign correspondent in Moscow," he says. "There are always two levels to Moscow life. One evening you may entertain a couple of editors of a party paper, the next a group of dissenting intellectuals. A lavish lunch with an official and a cold supper with the family of a political prisoner are part of the correspondent's regular range here."

Shaw's view of Moscow includes a watch on his neighbor Soviet Leader Leonid Brezhnev, who has an apartment a block away in the Kutuzovsky Prospekt. Almost every day for the past 18 months, Shaw and Brezhnev have passed briefly on their block—Shaw walking to the TIME bureau, Brezhnev speeding to work in his black limousine.

For this week's cover story, Shaw once again watched Brezhnev go to work and then followed him, along with ten other newsmen, for a 3-hr. 20-min. interview, the first ever between the 66-year-old Soviet leader and American reporters. Shaw also analyzed the diplomatic, political and economic climate in Moscow on the eve of the second U.S.-Soviet summit in less than 13 months.



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