

LETTERS

From the *Slavic Review* Editorial Board:

Slavic Review publishes signed letters to the editor by individuals with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be restricted to one paragraph of no more than 250 words; comment on an article or forum should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. When we receive many letters on a topic, some letters will be published on the *Slavic Review* Web site with opportunities for further discussion. Letters may be submitted by e-mail, but a signed copy on official letterhead or with a complete return address must follow. The editor reserves the right to refuse to print, or to publish with cuts, letters that contain personal abuse or otherwise fail to meet the standards of debate expected in a scholarly journal.

To the Editor:

In his review of my book, *Secret Patenting in the USSR and Russia* (vol. 71, no. 1), Malcolm R. Hill asked for suggestions on possible future research.

To encourage further research, I have made a copy of my book's principal database available on my Web site, www.john-martens.com/DB/database_files.html (last accessed 21 September 2012). It contains bibliographic data on all previously secret inventions (4,566) handled by the Soviet Ministry of Defense's Department for Inventions and published between 1942 and 2007. The database also includes inventors' names, information I did not use in writing the book, but which might be useful for studies on the participation of women or nationalities in secret Soviet science and engineering.

As Hill suggests, specialists studying the development of specific fields of Soviet science and technology should find the data on previously secret inventions useful, for these data are often detailed, cite both Soviet and foreign prior art, and precisely date the information. In addition, the entire file wrappers are now available at the Samara branch of the Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv nauchno-tekhniceskoi dokumentatsii (RGANTD, filial v g. Samare) for almost all formerly secret inventor's certificates granted between 1924 to 1955. These file wrappers contain an invention's full specifications, drawings, and any correspondence between inventors and examiners. I should add that the Samara staff is extremely courteous and professional. A good overview of the archive's holdings is available on its Web site, www.rgantd-samara.ru/ (last accessed 21 September 2012).

Other possibilities for further research undoubtedly exist. I am open to sharing my knowledge with any specialists wishing to explore them.

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