

'WATERGATE' HELD COMMON IN SOVIET

Dissident Says Similar
Abuses Are Routine

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MOSCOW, Oct. 8—The dissident Marxist historian Roy Medvedev said today that the Soviet press had suppressed news about Watergate not only because of support for former President Richard M. Nixon but because of the Kremlin's fear of showing how an independent press and judiciary and representative bodies can restrain executive power.

The kind of abuse exposed in Watergate, Mr. Medvedev said, is more common in the Soviet Union, but "the Soviet establishment is securely shielded not only from false charges but also from legitimate investigation of real abuses of power."

In an essay, "lessons of Watergate and prospects for détente," circulating here from hand to hand, Mr. Medvedev disclosed that the prosecutor in the Georgian Republic had been trying to obtain permission to search the apartment and interrogate the family of Vasily P. Mzhavanadze, the Georgian leader who was dropped in September, 1972, as an investigation of corruption began.

Although there was "more than enough evidence" to warrant investigation of the Mzhavanadze family, Mr. Medvedev said, ruling party officials did not permit it.

Interference by party leaders in criminal prosecutions is ("not considered a crime in our country," Mr. Medvedev said. "Everybody knows that search or arrest of a district or provincial official requires the approval of local party organs.")

The writer also contended that bugging of dissidents was routine in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Medvedev said he shared the concern of Andrei D. Sakharov, the physicist, that the present stage of détente was "thin and incomplete."

He went out of his way to say that he shared the view of his emigré brother, Zhores, expressed recently at the Nobel Institute in Oslo, that no other public figure in the Soviet Union was a more deserving candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize than Mr. Sakharov.

But Roy Medvedev said he and Mr. Sakharov differed on "some aspect of the tactics" of détente.

Whereas Mr. Sakharov has urged the Congress to demand concessions from Moscow on free emigration as conditions of freer trade, Mr. Medvedev has opposed this approach.

"Each step forward in détente must be conditioned on some concessions by both sides," he said. "But one cannot yet count upon major concessions, and, even more important, demands for such concessions must not look like ultimatums."