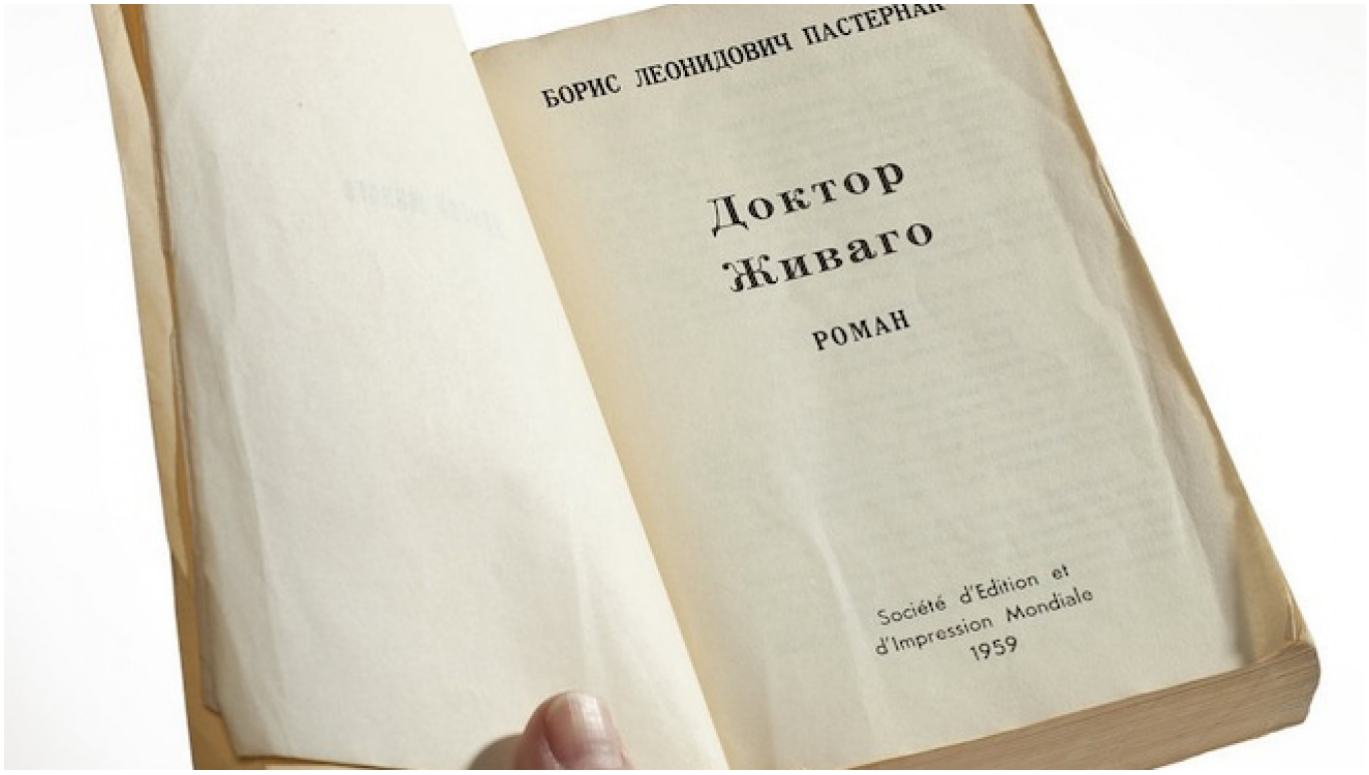
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Russian-Language Tweet Prompts Fears CIA's Twitter Account Was Hacked

By The Moscow Times

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Pasternak's novel Doctor Zhivago

A Russian-language tweet posted on the CIA's Twitter page left some Internet users in a buzz on Thursday, amid speculation that the agency's account had been hacked.

While a number of the CIA's 772,000 followers jumped to conclusions following the early morning tweet, others recognized the text for what it really was — a quote by the writer Boris Pasternak that said: "I wrote this novel for it to be published and read, and that is still my only desire."

The CIA waited for about an hour before following up with a flurry of other tweets that shed further light on the original message. The quote was apparently intended to highlight its role in helping smuggle banned manuscripts out of the U.S.S.R and publish them in the West.

One of these manuscripts was Pasternak's novel Doctor Zhivago, whose first Russian-

language edition came out in 1958. As noted in one tweet, the CIA's book program arranged its printing and distribution to Soviet visitors at the World's Fair in Brussels and later inside the U.S.S.R.

"The CIA's book program kept a critical mass of intellectuals in the Soviet Bloc informed about the values & culture of the free world," said another tweet.

The message could be interpreted as a hint to Russia's present-day administration, with the country's Culture Ministry pushing for a ban on films that undermine "national unity," and officials calling for a curb on any Western influence in favor of more patriotic — or Kremlin-loyal — types of art.

Yet even if this was the case, the intelligence agency could hardly be expected to acknowledge its true intentions.

After all, the first ever message posted to the CIA's Twitter account in June read: "We can neither confirm nor deny that this is our first tweet."

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