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What Went Wrong with Perestroika

MARSHALL I. GOLDMAN

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To

Jessica Ann, Samuel Todd, and Jacob Charles

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7

The Reaction Comes

In retrospect it is striking that the anti-reformers and defenders of the Stalinist status quo took so long to react to Gorbachev's perestroika in any systematic way. If implemented fully, sooner or later these reforms would affect every segment of Soviet society and, at least initially, in a disruptive way.

Since it took some time for Gorbachev to formulate his ideas, some beneficiaries of the status quo might not have realized initially how far-reaching Gorbachev's economic and political changes could be and how subversive to their way of life. Moreover, as pointed out, those ideas kept changing; on more than one occasion, Gorbachev reversed himself. Furthermore, as in the case of private property, for example, Gorbachev never seemed to overcome his commitment to socialism. Yet despite numerous ambiguities and policy reversals, it became clear by 1988 that Gorbachev was determined to shake up the status quo ideologically, politically, and economically, as well as in terms of personnel.

Hints of structural upheaval actually date from Andropov's election as general secretary, but Andropov seemed mainly interested in rooting out corruption and ineptness. Gorbachev broadened the circle of those he wanted retired to include those opposed to reform. Between the two of them, there was a whole-

sale turnover of personnel. By March 1987, 70 percent of the members of the Politburo, 60 percent of the *oblast* party secretaries, and 40 percent of the members of the Central Committee, who had been in power in October 1982 shortly before Brezhnev's death, had been replaced.[1]

Sooner or later there was bound to be a reaction. After all, the Soviet Union—and pre-revolutionary Russia before it—was not noted for its receptivity to evolutionary change. Russia and the Soviet Union after 1930 were among the most conservative societies in the Western world. The fact that the Soviet people put up with the Soviet system for almost seventy years with little protest and with the czarist form of government for centuries before that suggests that the people were not all that unhappy with the type of government they had. Indeed, it would seem that a good case could be made for arguing that they felt comfortable with it. The Moscow historian and outspoken proponent of reform, Yuri Afanasyev, for example argues that "Lenin's Bolshevism was preceded by a people's Bolshevism. There is no point in trying to shift the blame away from the people. . . . It was and is very characteristic of Russia to have the people at the 'bottom' harshly subordinated to the people at the 'top,' and for people generally to be subordinated to the state: such relations were formed back in the twelfth century. The eternal oppression in Russia created a reaction against it of intolerance, aggression, and hostility; and it is this oppression and the reaction to it that create cruelty and mass violence. It is true that the policies of the Bolsheviks did not derive from the will of the people, but the people participated in those policies, and took part in the mass terror."[2] As President Václav Havel put it when referring to the similar acceptance of totalitarian control in Czechoslovakia, "If I speak about a spoiled moral atmosphere, I don't refer only to our masters. . . . I am speaking about all of us. For all of us have grown used to the totalitarian system and accepted it as an immutable fact, and thereby actually helped keep it going. None of us are only its victims; we are all also responsible for it."[3]

Given this history, it is not too surprising that the conserva-

tive forces finally began to organize against perestroika and glasnost and to thwart Gorbachev's far-reaching reforms. What is surprising is the passivity with which those opposed to the reforms accepted the first two or three years of the Gorbachev reform process and the purge of their like-minded colleagues. The process of purging reform opponents and the superannuated seemed to be so easy. After years of taking their power and prerogatives for granted, they marched off to collect their pensions with no perceptible complaint. True, unlike the Stalin era, the purged officeholders were not sent off to camps, exile, or death; but the scope of the upheaval, at least in terms of the percentage of fired ministers and *oblast* leaders, brought back memories of the 1930s purges.

Gorbachev did not manage to suppress all opposition to his reform efforts. Some of the newly appointed conservatives would in time emerge to claim a conservative or anti-reform mantle. But often as not with time they too would be purged. Some of these latterday victims, such as Ligachev, would make more of a fuss not only about their treatment but also about their ideological opposition, but in the early years very few if any of those fired from office moved to criticize perestroika or glasnost overtly. There seemed to be general agreement that the Soviet Union could not continue to function as it had during what almost everyone came to agree were the "stagnation years" of the Brezhnev era. As one of his hosts told Gorbachev on a visit to Latvia in February 1987, "Life 'stank' in the Brezhnev regime."[4] Moreover, as long as they were lacking in clear and detailed definitions, glasnost and perestroika were essentially non-threatening concepts. During my visit to the Soviet Union in those early Gorbachev years, there was nary a discouraging word. Nearly all levels of society appeared to welcome the prospect of change.

Gorbachev's purging efforts were also facilitated by the general perception that those being purged deserved it. The fact that economic and political conditions had fallen to such a low point was not solely Brezhnev's fault. An unusually large number of long-serving officeholders bore a share of the blame for

that decline as well or had benefited from it. Consequently, the few protests about Gorbachev and his scary ideas were submerged by the louder public outcry over past incompetence and arrogance.

Nevertheless, throughout most of the first two years of Gorbachev's administration, there were mutterings and unsigned letters in the press as well as on-the-job obstruction. Those aggrieved included large numbers of workers as well as party and government bureaucrats. Their complaints were variously ideological, personal, and practical. Some feared a sell-out of socialism by Gorbachev and/or a surrender to the United States and its materialistic ways. Others worried about a collapse of the center and a growth of ethnic turmoil. There were also protests that reforms, including Gorbachev's, always fall on the backs of the workers. In particular, there were mutterings about the crackdown on the sale of vodka and the drop in wage bonuses resulting from the more rigid quality standards imposed by Gospriemka.

Even though complaints about Gorbachev and his reforms were disorganized and often at cross purposes, their rumblings reached Gorbachev, evoking at times some disquiet. On occasion his concerns were heightened by the receipt of actual physical threats against him and his family.[5] Periodically he sought help in dealing with this opposition from those whom he considered to be his natural constituency, the press and the intellectual community. In an off-the-record meeting on June 19, 1986, Gorbachev complained that the country's bureaucrats were particularly resistant to change.[6] After all, it was "the apparat that broke Khrushchev's neck," and Gorbachev feared that his opponents might now use the apparat to "break the neck of the new leadership."[7] On more than one occasion, he threatened to resign if he did not get his way. One of his earliest threats was made prior to the January 1987 meeting of the Plenary of the Central Committee, when he demanded approval of procedural changes.[8] The threat was repeated several times thereafter, including a session of the Congress of the People's Deputies in December 1990 when Gennady Yanayev, Gorbachev's nomi-

nee for vice president, was initially rejected.[9]

Given that for seven decades it had been illegal to organize anything like formal opposition to the Soviet leadership, the absence of an organized opposition to Gorbachev, particularly from anti-reform conservatives, was perhaps not so surprising. Those supporting the status quo presumably adhered to the idea that in a communist country, there should be no organized opposition. For them to organize, even in a time of glasnost, would be equivalent to committing an anti-social if not an illegal act. When members of the National Rifle Association, normally one of the staunchest law-and-order organizations in the United States, ultimately decided to disobey a 1991 California law banning the possession of most semi-automatic weapons, their hesitancy about defying the law reflected similar ambiguities.[10]

Nevertheless, as noted earlier, some of Gorbachev's early policies, especially the callous way in which he treated the labor force, brought a quick end to his honeymoon and lost him goodwill that he would need later. Particularly upsetting for the workers was Gorbachev's crackdown on the sale of vodka.[11] For most workers, the fact that such a policy might bring better health or a happier marriage was not as important as their bottle, which was the only way they could escape from Soviet reality. Lines would form two hours before the two o'clock opening of liquor stores. That did not bother the alcoholics; they had nothing else to do. But it was a bother for those who wanted an occasional bottle of vodka or wine to celebrate some anniversary. Initially their resentment was deflected into humor. After standing in line for two hours, one drunk complained to the other, "This wait is due to the fact that Gorbachev is a teetotaller." "Shsh!" responded his partner. "Imagine what would happen if Gorbachev were celibate!"

Gorbachev was fully aware of such criticisms.[12] He acknowledged publicly that his critics referred to him scornfully not as the *Generalnie Secretar* (General Secretary of the Communist Party) but as the *Mineralnie Secretar* (Mineral Water Secretary).[13] Even though by late 1988 Gorbachev began to relax

* abstainer

controls on the sale of vodka, the workers became more alienated and labor productivity continued to fall. Thereafter the workers met almost all of Gorbachev's initiatives with resistance and cynicism.

Installing inspectors from Gospriemka in all Soviet factories in 1987 only seemed to confirm Gorbachev's supposedly anti-labor bias. Initially at least, these inspectors took their work very seriously. On average they rejected from 7 to 30 percent of the typical engineering factory's production, causing a drop in industrial output and reducing the bonuses of wages of managers and workers.[14] When instead of spending money on building new factory capacity, Gorbachev moved to institute second and third shifts in many existing factories, a logical byproduct of the intensification campaign associated with the machine-tool industry, it further antagonized the workers.[15] What was not explained, however, was how workers would be enticed to leave their daytime shifts. No wage supplements were anticipated and no infrastructure was provided to service night-time workers who complained that at the end of their shifts, there was no transportation available to take them and no restaurants open to feed them.[16] In addition, working the night shift disrupted family life. As one Soviet worker complained at the time, "Why is it that every time there is a new reform initiative, it is always the workers who are asked to make the first sacrifices?" Eventually this discontent precipitated strike threats, strikes, and the formation of both radical and reactionary labor groupings. The radicals sought more worker control over their unions and working conditions; the reactionaries sought a return to the older order and control. Both groups were clearly opposed to any kind of extra work.

Not surprisingly, similar efforts to revitalize the bureaucracy met similar resistance. Any change in leadership is potentially unsettling to the party apparatus. New leaders usually bring with them new conceptions and initiatives, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. Moreover, the more serious the existing situation, the more extensive the resulting bureaucratic upheaval. Yet just like their counterparts in the non-communist

world, Soviet *apparatchiks* have also learned to protect themselves from such upheavals. In some cases that means falling back on friends, shifting jobs, or verbally agreeing with the reforms, but in fact stonewalling in the realistic expectation that sooner or later the current boy wonder or brainstorm will pass just like those before them. In that way the infrastructure in the apparatus, particularly the bureaucracy, survives all such changes. There have been of course major discontinuities such as the 1917 Revolution and the Stalinist purges, but the durability of the Russian *chinovnik* (the czarist equivalent of the *apparatchik*) is impressive and reassuring to those who believe that bureaucracies somehow never die.

Nonetheless, attempting to learn from the failure of Khrushchev's reforms, Gorbachev insisted that his effort would be more extensive and far-reaching. Khrushchev's mistake was that he was not ambitious enough; Gorbachev by contrast sought to encompass all aspects of Soviet life, supposedly making his reforms irreversible.[17] That certainly seemed ominous, and Gorbachev did little to comfort his intended targets. Equally unsettling, Gorbachev began to target not just individuals in bureaucratic strongholds like Gosplan, the ministries, and ultimately the Central Committee of the Party, but he threatened the remaining bureaucrats' continued access to special privileges.[18] To many defenders of the party elite, that was the cruelest cut of all. Yegor Ligachev charged that criticism of special treatment for the party faithful was undeserved. He explained, "The Party worker has one privilege—to be at the front, to fight for the Party's policies and to serve his people with faith and truth. Believe me, he has no other privileges."[19] (That was not a widely shared view.) And as for pay, Ligachev argued that Communist Party workers receive a wage equal to the national average. "It transpires that contrary to the widely held view, party workers rank 26th in the country as regards pay—the average pay of a party worker is 216 rubles per month."[20] For that matter, Ligachev insisted that criticism of most party workers was even unjustified during the Brezhnev period. Defending himself before the 19th All Union Communist Party Conference, Ligachev reminded his fellow delegates that " 'during the years of stagnation—I lived and worked in Siberia, a harsh land but a truly wonderful one. People often ask me what I was doing at the time. I answer with pride: I was building socialism. There were millions like me.' Applause."[21]

Because it seemed to epitomize the bureaucracy's resistance to his efforts, Gorbachev seemed particularly distressed about what became known at the time as the Chabanov affair. A. I. Chabanov was a party member in good standing, a director of the Research Institute of the Ministry of Electrical Engineering in the Ukrainian city of Cherkassy.[22] His research institute had developed a new type of machine-tool and control system that according to Gorbachev was shown overseas and was ordered by foreign and Soviet customers. However, the Cherkassy factory of the Ministry of Electrical Engineering steadfastly refused to produce this new equipment. In July 1985, when most of the senior managers were on vacation, Chabanov was appointed acting manager of the factory. He proceeded immediately to produce his new designs. Upon their return from vacation the regular management reported Chabanov's unauthorized acts to the ministry and regional party committee. Chabanov was accused of padding his reports and misappropriating state funds.[23] Ministry officials thereupon relieved Chabanov of his duties and set up a special investigation.

Learning of the miscarriage of justice, officials in the party's Central Committee and the procurator general intervened to protect Chabanov. Although he was absolved of all criminal intent, the local party *apparatchiks* nonetheless proceeded with their effort to expel Chabanov from his Communist Party cell. Moreover, when some of his supporters wrote to complain to Moscow authorities about the continuing abuse of justice, the letters were confiscated in the Cherkassy post office and never reached their intended destination. Ultimately justice was done and Chabanov remained in the party, but similar resistance to bureaucratic revamping led Gorbachev to postpone a meeting of the Central Committee three times because of the refusal of its rulemaking bodies to make the changes he requested. With

good reason he warned in February 1987 that "the next two or three years will be the most difficult."[24] However, Gorbachev or his associates were to warn almost every year that "the next two or three years" would be the hardest.

II

Finally in 1988, the anti-reformers became emboldened enough to make their grievances explicit. On March 13, 1988, the day before Gorbachev's scheduled departure for Yugoslavia and while his ideological ally, Alexander Yakovlev, was in Mongolia, a 4,500-word "letter" entitled "I Cannot Renounce Principles" appeared on page 3 of the newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossiia,* ostensibly the official government paper of the Russian Republic. While claiming support for Gorbachev's policies of perestroika, it was in fact a blistering, hate-filled attack on almost everything Gorbachev stood for.

Its author was Nina Andreyeva, a chemist in the Leningrad Technology Institute. According to a reliable report, the published letter had the imprint of her husband, Vladimir Klushin, an instructor of Marxism-Leninism and a party ideologue.[25] Although Andreyeva insists the words were entirely hers, Ligachev and the editors linked to him may also have had a hand not only in its publication but also its content.[26] Giuletto Chiesa, then the Moscow correspondent for the Italian paper *L'Unità,* reported that he saw a draft of the article before it was published.[27] He says that of the original eighteen pages, only five emerged substantially as they were sent in. The rest were either omitted or heavily edited. Andreyeva does acknowledge that she sent a copy of the letter to Ligachev after it had been rejected by several other national papers in September 1987.[28]

Whether or not he had anything to do with the article's content or its publication, there is substantial evidence that Ligachev did everything he could to publicize its content after it had been published. On March 14, the day after the appearance of Andreyeva's manifesto, Ligachev convened an unauthorized meeting of the leading middle-of-the-road and con-

servative newspaper editors to impress upon them the significance of the Andreyeva letter.[29] He intentionally excluded invitations to the liberal editors of *Moscow News* and *Ogonyek.* Simultaneously the Tass News Agency alerted its subscribers to Andreyeva's article and notified them that they might want to consider reprinting it. This led to the republication of the letter in at least forty-three regional papers, including many military publications.[30] It was also printed in the conservative East German anti-perestroika party paper, *Neues Deutschland,* and discussed on Leningrad television. While Gorbachev was in Yugoslavia, Andreyeva's letter and its implications became the focus of a widening circle of special Communist Party meetings convened throughout the Soviet Union.

For those supporting perestroika and Gorbachev, the Andreyeva manifesto was a frightening throwback to the era of repression. Andreyeva criticized what she viewed as a growing disavowal of the past, particularly of the Stalinist years, as well as the recent growth of multi-party freedom, tolerance for religion, emigration, sexual promiscuity, and criticism of the army and the army draft. As she saw it, there was entirely too much "verbiage about 'terrorism' [criticism of anti-reformers], 'the people's political servility,' 'uninspired social vegetation,' 'spiritual slavery,' 'unusual fear' and 'dominance by boors in power' " to explain the spiritual, social, political, and economic "emptiness" of the country since the Bolshevik Revolution. For those who believe in the uniqueness of "the Russian soul," such self-flagellation was too much. No wonder her students had begun to express "nihilistic sentiments" and lose their "political bearings."

She rejected charges that Stalin was responsible for the advent of fascism or Hitler or the assassination of Trotsky or Kirov. Instead of attacking Stalin, the Soviet people should praise him for defending the Soviet Union from Hitler and bringing industrialization, collectivization, and the cultural revolution to the Soviet Union. Was this fair to those who gave their lives for the Soviet Union in World War II and had worked so hard to industrialize the country, she asked. Such

criticisms were making the Soviet people question the value of their own lives. How disgraceful it was when students of university age had the audacity to ask army heroes from World War II not about the great accomplishments of the Soviet Army but "about the political repressions within the army." After all, Czar Peter the Great, like Stalin, also had "personal qualities" that were "disturbing." Yet today Peter is praised as the one who made Russia "a great European power."

Those criticizing the Soviet past were newly ascendant "left wing liberals," she charged, who have "cosmopolitan tendencies" (a code word used by Stalin when he attacked the Jews) and encourage "refuseniks" (Jews). They "kowtow . . . to the 'democratic' charms of contemporary capitalism . . . its real and supposed achievements." What, Andreyeva asked, has happened to "the class struggle-[and] the leading role of the proletariat?" Don't the workers "oppose world capitalism" any more? What about the millions in the world who are "dying of starvation, epidemics and military adventures by imperialists?"

Even more astounding than the tone and content of the Andreyeva manifesto was the lack of response to it, particularly among Soviet intellectuals. With few exceptions, almost everyone assumed that the party line had been reversed and that a new course had been set over which reformers had little influence. As one of my Soviet friends put it, "I had been nervous about how far the reform process had gone. Sooner or later I knew there would be a reaction and a halt. When I learned of the Andreyeva letter, I assumed that this was it and I accepted the consequences. The reform process had been exciting while it lasted."

The fact that her letter had appeared in a major newspaper like *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (which until April 1986 when the conservative Valentin Chikin took over as editor had been one of the more outspoken papers in favor of reform) and had the undoubted sanction of Yegor Ligachev, the number-two man in the Politburo, was proof enough.[31] Virtually no one responded to her. The exception was a thoughtful but relatively unnoticed critique in *Moscow News*.[32] In addition several papers, including a major paper in Belorussia, refused to reprint the Andreyeva declaration, despite some high-level pressure.[33] But the willingness to accept the abortion of the reform process, and the paucity of protests in support of reform, suggest just how frail Gorbachev's reforms were and how shallow their roots had been.

For three weeks there was also no official reaction. Finally, after his return from Yugoslavia and amidst considerable lobbying, including yet another threat to resign, Gorbachev was able to craft an authoritative response.[34] His intellectual comrade in arms in the Politburo and the official responsible for ideology, Alexander Yakovlev, was assigned to prepare the answer. According to Roy Medvedev, Gorbachev convened a meeting of the Politburo during the last week of March, probably March 30, to force a showdown.[35] By coincidence, Ligachev had left for a trip to Vologda.[36] Yakovlev's strong reply was then delivered to *Pravda* and other editors in Moscow were told to publish the article over the weekend. But nothing appeared, which only increased the sense of doom and panic among many of the reformers.[37] Determined to force the issue, Gorbachev apparently convened another meeting of the Politburo, and this time warned that unless there was a vote of confidence for a continuation of the reform process and a reprimand for *Sovetskaia Rossiia,* Gorbachev would resign.[38] With that Yakovlev's response was finally published on April 5, 1988, in *Pravda* as "Principles of Perestroika: The Revolutionary Nature of Thinking and Acting."[39] While acknowledging the need for discussion, Yakovlev warned that Andreyeva's letter was not constructive. It attempted to set one group against another, and in its continued defense of Stalin, it sought to build on his arbitrary methods and stifle all criticism just as Stalin had. Furthermore, Yakovlev insisted, attacks on Stalin did not invalidate or blaspheme the sacrifices of the Soviet people. "The lives of the Party, War, and Labor veterans were not in vain." Nevertheless, he argued, those sacrifices did not mean that there were no abuses.

In the end, Gorbachev and Yakovlev prevailed. Reportedly

the Politburo voted to reprimand Chikin, the editor of *Sovetskaia Rossiia,* and *Sovetskaia Rossiia* duly reprinted the *Pravda* article on April 6.[40] The Politburo also reprimanded Ligachev for convening the editors' meeting the day after the publication of the Andreyeva letter.[41] Yeltsin, who was out of the Politburo by then, asserted that in the aftermath, Gorbachev and Ligachev stopped speaking to each other.[42] Nonetheless, the confrontation demonstrated that despite three years of glasnost and democratization most of the country's intellectuals were still easily intimidated. Democracy and due process were still fragile transplants.

It could be argued that Ligachev and Andreyeva acted prematurely. Gorbachev was able in 1988 to deflect their efforts to halt the reform process. Moreover, after the showdown Gorbachev moved to undercut Ligachev's power, and two years later, at the 28th Congress of the Communist Party, he forced Ligachev into retirement. Perhaps if Ligachev and Andreyeva had waited another year or two, particularly as economic and political conditions continued to deteriorate, they might have been able to muster more support. The accelerating discontent openly expressed just a year or so later in large part reflects the bold assertiveness shown by the anti-reformers in late 1990. Nonetheless, the timing of Andreyeva's statement defined the position of a heretofore unfocused opposition to the reform process. It had taken almost three years from the day that Gorbachev had assumed power; but once articulated, the Andreyeva effort rallied others. When asked why it took so long, several of my Soviet friends have explained that it was not only the reluctance of these anti-reformers to challenge Soviet authority (loyal, disciplined party members always obeyed the party general secretary), but that these traditionalists tend to be less articulate than the liberal intelligentsia and reformers. Those opposed to Gorbachev and his reforms tended to be "strong and silent" types, not used to verbalizing their feelings. Moreover, they usually avoided contact with foreigners, particularly those from the West. Nor were they always in agreement

about their concerns. But Andreyeva's going public provided encouragement and stimulus to others.

Subsequently, Andreyeva continued to protest, and eventually she took the lead in organizing *Edinstvo* (Unity), an association of like-minded supporters.[43] *Edinstvo*'s impact has been difficult to judge, but many of its stands and members are also those of *Soiuz* (Union), a caucus of hard-liners in the Supreme Soviet and the Congress of People's Deputies that was formed in February 1990. They were able to muster 561 votes at the fourth session of the Congress of People's Deputies in December 1990. They were blamed by the supporters of reform for Shevardnadze's resignation and Gorbachev's retreat from his advocacy of the reform process.

As the members of *Soiuz* grew in numbers and shrillness, as glasnost seemed to turn into anarchy, and as perestroika brought more bad economic news each day, Gorbachev found himself deferring more and more to the hard-liners' point of view. By December 1990, Gorbachev had in effect isolated himself from some of his longtime fellow reformers and close associates such as Alexander Yakovlev and Eduard Shevardnadze, and had aligned himself instead more and more closely with traditional party functionaries. His selection of Gennady Yanayev as vice president of the Soviet Union reflected that shift. Only a few months earlier while chairman of the Soviet Trade Union movement, Yanayev actually sought to generate opposition among the workers to Gorbachev's economic reforms. He warned of price increases, mass unemployment, and bankruptcies if the perestroika process were not halted. Even after his election as vice president, Yanayev identified himself as a supporter of the *Soiuz* faction.[44]

Gorbachev's shift did not pass unnoticed among his onetime opponents. After Shevardnadze's resignation, Yegor Ligachev in an "I told you so" interview trumpeted that "many of Gorbachev's proposals seem realistic to me now: on the structure and executive authority, on the strengthening of law and order and on improving management and economic ties. . . . I once had

an argument with Gorbachev—a little less than two years ago. He declared that the main danger stems from the conservative forces. This is wrong."[45]

III

Theoretically, Gorbachev should have welcomed the overt manifestation of a conservative opposition. That was presumably what democratization and glasnost were all about. Gorbachev in fact had actively sought grass-roots involvement and the questioning of the government processes from both the left and the right—reformers and anti-reformers. The expectation was that such involvement would uncover and expose the malfeasance of those working against Gorbachev's reform efforts. That was true when the criticism came from those supporting glasnost and perestroika. But as the anti-reformers became more articulate, they began to use the same opportunities to attack not only the reforms, but the reformers. This disoriented at least some of the reformers, who saw it not as legitimate criticism but as ingratitude and disloyalty.

Even someone like Eduard Shevardnadze, who probably had as much exposure to the ways of Western democracies as anyone in the reform group around Gorbachev, apparently had trouble understanding just what a true democratic process entails. In his dramatic December 1990 speech announcing his unexpected resignation as minister of foreign affairs, most of his focus was on warning about an impending dictatorship and Gorbachev's turn away from reform. Shevardnadze also complained bitterly, however, about the criticisms that were being made of him and Gorbachev. As he saw it, government officials in a democracy must be treated with respect. After all, they were not just hired hands. "Because many people think that the ministers who sit there or the members of the government or the President or someone else are hired, they [the critics] can do what they want with them. I think that is impermissible." Why had no one defended him, Shevardnadze demanded to know. "Not one person could be found, including the person

in the chair [Gorbachev] who was willing to reply and say simply that this was dishonorable, that this is not the way, not how things are done in civilized states [sic]. Why is no one rebuffing them?" he asked.[46]

As we noted earlier, democratization and glasnost can be a prickly, even painful process. It is likely to spawn not only "right thinking" but "wrong thinking," even deviant groups such as *Pamyat* or Memory. *Pamyat* is a perfect example of what so concerned Shevardnadze. This organization dates back to 1979, when several preservationists joined together in an effort to protect historical buildings and monuments.[47] Initially, it was a non-partisan organization linked to the non-controversial All Russian Society for the Preservation of Historical and Cultural Monuments (VOOPIK). In late 1987, a rump group led by Dmitri Vasiliyev, a charismatic but controversial part-time actor and essayist, managed to seize control of the Moscow branch of VOOPIK.[48]

With *Pamyat* as his forum, Vasiliyev and his associates urgently sought to broadcast the message that Russia was in trouble because its leaders had fallen under the spell of a Masonic Zionist plot. As proof, they cited the fact that the Masons use six-pointed stars and that Lenin supposedly had a Jewish grandfather. If further proof were needed, they also discovered that Lenin had three copies of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* in his library.[49] (This was the faked 1890s French essay contrived to show that the Jews were bent on taking over the world.) Even more to the point, they noted that Marx was a Jew and Stalin had fallen under the influence of Leon Trotsky and Lazar Kaganovich, both Jews. Trotsky, *Pamyat* insists, was responsible for the first purges of the peasants and Kaganovich for the destruction of so much of what was old Moscow. Kaganovich supposedly constructed the Moscow street network in the form of the six-pointed star of David. Several true believers noted that the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* had predicted that someone someday would do just that. Moreover, Kaganovich designed the Moscow subway system so that "all the principal transfer stations are located under party and gov-

ernment institutions. This, insists Vasiliyev, made it easy to blow up all the government organizations and their documents.[50]

Pamyat also demanded a change in the design of the monument to the Soviet victory in World War II that was being built outside Moscow on Poklonnaia Hill. While others in the Soviet Union were upset by what they saw as a wasteful expenditure of millions of rubles and the desecration of an environmentally important site, *Pamyat* supporters were incensed by what they insisted were the use of Masonic and Zionist symbols in the monument.[51] Last but not least, they added their voices to those critics of Stalin who insist that flooding on the site selected by Stalin for what was to have been the world's largest skyscraper was God's wrath for tearing down the Church of Christ the Savior. Several splinter groups that spun off from the original founders, each professing its own unique version of the truth, have taken even more outlandish stands. In the most extreme wing of *Pamyat* there are some who are opposed to anything Western, including Christianity. For that reason they also criticize Solzhenitsyn and see the conversion of Kievan Rus (the ninth-century original precursor of the modern Russian empire) to Christianity as a Zionist plot.[52] After all, Jesus was a Jew.

If *Pamyat* had restricted itself merely to espousing these ideas, it might not be much of a threat, but its members also believe in action. Activists wear black shirts and frequently express themselves by beating up those they regard as opponents.[53] When one of their members was on trial, they disrupted court proceedings, and they have also disrupted public and private meetings. Because it was videotaped and subsequently shown on Soviet television, the *Pamyat* raid on the liberal Soviet Writers' Club on January 18, 1990, was seen as a particularly dangerous manifestation of fascism. Members of *Pamyat* broke into the meeting, roughed up a few members, and warned that they would return with machine guns. After a rather stormy and occasionally disrupted trial, the leader of the attack,

Konstantin Smirnov-Ostashvili, was found guilty and sentenced to jail.

So far, however, *Pamyat*'s threat appears to be more symbolic than actual. Its members can mount demonstrations and call for pogroms; their threats have probably done as much to precipitate the emigration of Soviet Jews as the breakdown of the country's economy and the social disorganization. But *Pamyat* has been unable to win any significant support at the ballot box. Its candidates have done poorly in elections. Rumors that they have friends in high places (Ligachev was viewed as a supporter and Yeltsin when he was head of the party in Moscow met with them), and that *Pamyat* is a creation of the KGB, just as its predecessor the Black Hundreds was a puppet of the czarist secret police, are hard to verify. The emergence of such deviant forces is probably a source of embarrassment for Gorbachev, especially in his dealings with Western leaders, but it is an unavoidable product of glasnost.

IV

Given the way ordinary workers have been exploited under communism, it might have been expected that Soviet workers would have been in the forefront of the reform movement. In the Brezhnev years, some dissidents in fact did try unsuccessfully to establish their own independent unions and demand better working and living conditions.[54] In fact in 1989, almost half the country's coal miners struck and eventually organized their own independent unions dedicated to promoting economic reform. But offsetting these examples of support for reform which were not always necessarily sought by Gorbachev were efforts by other worker groups to halt the whole process. Some of these efforts were devious maneuvers by anti-Gorbachev bureaucrats and economic administrators to embarrass Gorbachev and ultimately abort his efforts. Others reflected honest fears among workers about the real possibility of unemployment, further exploitation, and economic impoverishment.

The official trade union movement was notorious for its adherence to the party line and willingness to tolerate working and living conditions that would provoke strikes in most other societies. Thus, it was not surprising that in the more relaxed political conditions evolving out of glasnost and democratization, some members of the official labor movement became emboldened enough to create their own labor movement. What was surprising, however, was that several of these efforts were so opposed to change. One of the most influential groups, the United Russian Workers Front, was closely identified with a charismatic rolling-mill operator from the Nizhnii Tagil metallurgical combine, Veniamin Yarin.[55] As one of the few workers elected to the new Council of People's Deputies, Yarin captured the country's attention with his early outspokenness and willingness to criticize the Soviet economic system and its leadership.[56] There are rumors that Yarin's group (he is co-chairman) is a front for the apparatus.[57] He has denied that. Nevertheless, he has been highly critical of Gorbachev's efforts to switch the Soviet economy to a market orientation and the resulting income inequalities that the market is likely to bring. He has warned, properly so, that sooner or later there will be proposals to legalize private property and then who knows, capitalism may be right around the corner. He was also distressed that in an open election, worker candidates have fared worse than candidates who are white-collar workers and intellectuals. In the pre-Gorbachev years, workers did not have to subject themselves to such competition and thus were assured a sizable number of seats. Consequently Yarin demanded that candidates for the Supreme Soviet be elected in their work place—not place of residence.[58] If it had been adopted, this arrangement would have guaranteed that candidates picked by the labor movement would dominate legislative bodies.

For a time Yarin's movement seemed to generate considerable enthusiasm and support. The leaders of the anti-reform coalition had been looking for some way to broaden their base among the general population. Going back in history, they first decided to take a page from the nineteenth-century *narodnik* effort and began their organizing efforts by attempting to reach out to peasants in the countryside. The peasants have always been romanticized by Russian intellectuals, and it was assumed that if the peasants could be mobilized by the intellectuals, the rest of the population would follow. However, the twentieth-century effort was not much more successful than its historical antecedent. The peasants essentially refused to involve themselves in the political struggle. Eventually Yarin and his allies came to realize that they could generate more opposition to the reform movement by concentrating their organizational efforts among Soviet workers, where political awareness and discontent were more acute. By capitalizing on the discontent of the industrial workers, there were serious concerns that Yarin might evolve as a leader of a semi-Fascist labor coalition. These fears were dissipated at least temporarily several months later, in March 1990, when Gorbachev co-opted Yarin and installed him as a member of the cabinet-like Presidential Council. At that point, Yarin seemed to sublimate his energies into more conventional channels. Temporarily at least, the United Workers Front dropped off the front pages.

V

Yarin's failure with the peasants notwithstanding, by 1990 political unrest also began to appear in the countryside. Opposed to any diminution in their authority, a large group of collective and state farm managers on October 6, 1990, organized themselves into what they called the USSR Peasant Union. The USSR Peasant Union opposes efforts to set up private and family farms. Led by Vasily Starodubtsev, a collective farm director from the Tula region, and encouraged by Yegor Ligachev, the USSR Peasant Union, despite its name, is made up primarily of collective and state farm managers and ministry officials who are determined to maintain the status quo.[59] They point out that 25 percent of the country's state and collective farms are unprofitable.[60] In their eyes, breaking up these collectives and converting them into private farms where

the peasants would be left to fend for themselves would, they argue, cause enormous hardship for the members. To the farm managers, and other members in the USSR Peasant Union, this would be a step backward and "deeply reactionary."[61] Given that the large collective farms generally were unprofitable, Ligachev assumed that smaller farms would be equally unprofitable. Without support from the larger collective or state farms, how would the peasant or the family farms support themselves? Would they too go hungry? For a believing communist like Ligachev, this was heresy. This was not, he insisted, what he had stood for as a communist all these years.[62] To Ligachev, the solution was not to turn state and collective farms into private and family farms, but to increase the national funds allocated to agriculture.[63] That was only fair, Ligachev argued, because it would partially compensate for the "billions of rubles" which the state in the 1930s took from the peasants "through low fixed prices for agricultural produce in order to create a socialist industry."[64]

Similar sentiments were expressed by other members of the USSR Peasant Union. In fact, however, the governing principle for most of them, particularly the farm directors and other former members of the Gosagroprom apparat who dominate the USSR Peasant Union, was their fear that a breakup of the collective and state farms would mean an end to their prerogatives and power. Nikolai Petrakov, for a time Gorbachev's chief economic adviser, referred to these farm directors as "the red landowners."[65] Their reaction was not too different from the way Russian landowners responded when Czar Alexander II announced his intention to emancipate the serfs in 1861.

VI

Although they were fewer in number, Soviet managers also began to organize in order to press their views. The deconstruction of the central planning process and the growing disregard of orders issued by Gosplan began to cause chaos among those dependent on Gosplan for the supply of manufacturing components. In July 1990, for example, managers of fifty leading Soviet engineering factories petitioned the government to reinstitute the central supply and planning system for raw materials.[66] Production in 1991 would be jeopardized, they warned, without a return of power to Gossnab and Gosplan. Less than six months later, in December, 3,500 managers joined the 50. Together they criticized not only the breakdown at the all-union level, but also the growing anarchy at the republic and *oblast* level.[67] They wanted a return to central dictate for the delivery of supplies and "guarantees of managerial rights," as well as the reinstitution of discipline in the work place. From their perspective, the switch to the market was not working. Even if it were, most state entities would not benefit because they were not equipped to seek out customers or respond quickly to customer needs. Many of them were purposely designed to handle massive projects with an emphasis on long-term production runs rather than on flexibility and change.[68] The Uralmash combine in Sverdlovsk with 45,000 employees in one location, for example, was well suited to mass-produce machine tools, products that required infrequent model changes. Without millions of dollars in foreign currency to modernize their facilities, Uralmash officials insisted they would be unable to attain the production flexibility that is necessary to be competitive in world markets.

Perestroika, therefore, has created heretofore unprecedented problems for managers of state factories. In addition, the cut in the Soviet military budget had a devastating impact on almost all Soviet military producers. According to the deputy director of the Uralmash plant, orders for tanks and other weapon parts fell by one third from 1988 to 1990.[69] Moreover, with the breakup of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance in January 1991, the longstanding and obedient purchasers of Soviet industrial equipment located in Eastern Europe were no longer obligatory customers of Uralmash. They are now free to look elsewhere, and since they have to pay for their purchases in hard currency, they look first to the West rather than the East.

On top of everything else, some of the best and most enter-

prising Soviet engineers and managers have set off on their own or have joined up with cooperatives where the pay is higher and the room for creativity is greater. To those brought up in the central planning tradition, this is heresy. It hurts even more when engineers in these new cooperatives devote themselves to making consumer goods such as pots and pans rather than space missiles. To an economist, this makes sense if the salary for making pots and pans is higher than it would be for making space missiles. Presumably this shows that society places a higher value on consumer goods. Engineers, particularly in the Soviet Union, have trouble understanding how making such trivial products is not a misuse of engineering talent.[70] In their eyes, it would make so much more sense to bring back central planning where orders are obeyed, machine tools have priority, deliveries are assured, and chaos is a description of capitalism, not communism.

VII

Elements in the military and the KGB also made similar but obviously more threatening complaints about the viability of perestroika. This opposition was expressed by Vladimir Kryuchkov, the chairman of the KGB, in a speech to the Fourth Congress of the USSR People's Deputies.[71] In a throwback almost to the days of Stalin, Kryuchkov launched an all-out assault on the changes wrought in Soviet domestic and foreign policy under Gorbachev. He is not a "witch-hunter," he insisted; he is only seeking to weed out the criminal, dishonest, subversive, secessionists, and those bent on foreign infiltration and espionage. The only ones who have benefited from the move to the market, he asserted, are the speculators and black marketeers. These members of the mafia have bribed and bought up the government and the police. Today, the rich are those who thrive on unearned incomes. In the meantime, crime and pornography have become major forces in our society. Is this what we aspire to? he asked. What happened to socialist morality, to Russian dignity?

Kryuchkov is especially concerned about the breakdown of a unified Soviet Union and the growth of ethnic tensions and divisiveness. The different nationalist and splinter groups as well as those who criticize existing government structures are of particular concern. How can the KGB be blamed for insisting on law and order and instituting violent measures when there are already "over 20 nationalistic politicized associations in the country which have paramilitary units or armed detachments of guerrillas?" Yet there is a campaign to discredit not these secessionists, but "the army, the procuracy, state security bodies [the KGB], and the Soviet militia [police]."

He also attributed the breakdown in the Soviet economy to both open and covert conspiracies. "KGB organs have recently uncovered cases of people causing serious damage to our financial system," he said ominously. "One can observe unjustified losses of foreign currency in the carrying out of foreign economic activity. These are particularly palpable on the oil and oil products export market. Note this: In 1989, 127 million tons of oil were sold at the then comparatively low prices. This year [1990] when prices rose considerably, exports fell to 101 million tons. In 1991 it is planned to supply 61 million tons in the foreign market."[72] Coming from someone else in a different context, this would simply be an interesting piece of news. But following a comment which points out that "in a number of places, procuracy bodies [the attorney general] have initiated criminal proceedings," the paragraph on the drop in exports suggests that there is something deeper at work here.

The implication of foreign as well as domestic conspiracy was heightened when Kryuchkov went on to warn that rubles were being smuggled out of the Soviet Union. He estimated there were as many as 12 billion rubles in Switzerland alone that could be used to undermine the Soviet economy. More than that, "a number of our foreign partners" were committing economic sabotage, and some foreigners were attempting "to inflict economic damage on our country."[73] Food exporters were delivering "impure and sometimes infested grain as well as some that is radioactive or mixed with chemical additives."

(This is a particularly sensitive matter in the Soviet Union because of its experience with food contamination after Chernobyl.) According to his calculations, 40 percent of the Soviet Union's imported grain was weed-infested and 10 percent was substandard.

Conditions were not much better in industry. Used equipment was being exported to the Soviet Union instead of new, and some of the foreign equipment was "ecologically dirty." In addition, some of the Soviet Union's best minds and technicians, Kryuchkov complains, were being lured outside the country to work for the Soviet Union's rivals. At the same time, outsiders were seeking "to foist questionable ideas and plans" on the Soviet Union as it tried to solve its problems.

Kryuchkov was not the only one to call for heightened vigilance against economic crimes and foreign economic intrigue. Valentin Pavlov, who replaced Nikolai Ryzhkov as prime minister, justified his January 23, 1991, currency reform by asserting that it "was not a matter of confiscation but a matter of protection."[74] His reform invalidated all fifty- and one hundred-ruble notes in circulation and allowed the redemption of no more than an amount equal to one's monthly wage or at most 1,000 rubles. Pavlov claimed, however, that the victims of the monetary reform were not Soviet citizens but Western bankers and "ultraradicals" determined to "get rid of uncooperative political figures" like "President Gorbachev," who "has begun to step on someone's toes."[75] These alleged Western manipulators were charged with putting up $7.8 billion to buy 140 billion rubles.[76] Such accusations seem highly fanciful. Anyone putting up that much money to buy that many rubles even at the then highly favorable but illegal exchange rate of 18 rubles to the dollar must have a serious personality flaw. Yet apparently some investors did put up some money for that purpose.[77] Presumably they were attracted by the favorable rate of exchange, which was far superior even to the tourist rate of 6 rubles to the dollar. According to the KGB, the originator of the plot was Colin Gibbins, an Englishman who was the head of the Dove Trading Company. Nonetheless, it is hard to see what foreign-

ers could buy with 140 billion rubles. The same question puzzled Pavlov, who still accepted the KGB's accusation at face value. "Such an influx of money would be tantamount to a financial catastrophe."[78] In his eyes this was part of a "financial war" that had been declared against the Soviet Union.

To hard-liners like Kryuchkov and Pavlov, perestroika by opening the door to Western capitalists had exposed the Soviet Union to the evils of capitalism, allowed foreigners more opportunities to undermine the Soviet economy, and in addition provided Soviet enemies with access to the Soviet Union's most vital military installations and secrets. To the extent capitalism gains a foothold in the Soviet Union, socialism dies. How can we in the KGB, Kryuchkov asked, be anything but alarmed when perestroika stands for almost everything those who defend the Soviet Union have always opposed? In Kryuchkov's words, "Do all the negative features and vices of the capitalist market really have to become an automatic part of our life?"[79]

VIII

Senior military officers have come to share many of these same views. Prior to 1989, such feelings were muted. Gorbachev appeared to be very much in control of the military. After the military leadership embarrassed itself by failing to detect the young West German, Mathias Rust, as he flew in a rented Cessna Skyhawk from Finland into Red Square on National Border Guard Day, May 28, 1987, Gorbachev shook up the military command, making very clear that he was in charge. He then ordered the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan by February 15, 1989, and made far-reaching arms agreements with the United States at the expense of the military. Soviet troops had to withdraw from Eastern Europe as East Germany became absorbed into West Germany and as the other countries of Eastern Europe renounced their adherence to communism.

It mattered little that Gorbachev, as well as Shevardnadze, was as surprised as anyone at the speed of the collapse of the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the unification of

Germany. Evidence suggests that Gorbachev's actions in East Germany were done in the hope of nudging the East German leadership under Erich Honecker to liberalize some of its hard-line positions in order to ward off an explosive reaction and violence. In other words, Gorbachev sought the same kind of change in East Germany that he had overseen in the USSR, under the assumption that the pattern would be the same. He expected that the East German and other East European Communist parties would remain in control and change would come gradually. Gorbachev miscalculated. The peoples of Eastern Europe, sensing their opportunity, decided to break with the communist system completely. It had been imposed on them from the outside by the Soviet Union; now that the Soviet Union was undergoing its own transformation, the peoples of Eastern Europe guessed correctly that 1989 was the year to escape and change. Whether stunned or not, Gorbachev acquiesced. For that he received the Nobel Prize and the world's applause. But for the anti-reformers inside the Soviet Union, especially among the military, these concessions amounted to an enormous sacrifice and the breaching of Soviet security.

Thus, by 1989 there was a marked turn in military attitudes. From a Soviet military officer's point of view, the world had been turned upside down. Instead of praise, critics now attacked the army for its behavior in Afghanistan. Mothers demanded an end to the draft as the more open media reported there had been 15,000 non-combat deaths among army draftees over a five-year period. Partly in response to the deaths and partly due to growing ethnic tensions, the number of deserters totaled 4,300 in 1990, and 35,000 young men failed to answer the draft call.[80] The situation was particularly alarming in some of the non-Russian republics. Monuments to the victory in World War II were defaced or torn down. In the Baltic republics, threats were made to cut off supplies of food, water, heat, and energy to Soviet Army bases.[81] In the Chita *oblast* in East Siberia, civilian authorities decided not to feed or clothe the army out of regional stocks.[82] Other areas declared that there was not enough housing to relocate officers and their families

being reassigned from Eastern Europe. Just among the elite missile troops, ten thousand lacked housing in late 1990.[83] To make matters even worse, delegates to the Congress of People's Deputies complained that non-Russian nationalists in some of the Baltic states had thrown stones at "little children of Soviet officers, causing them serious injuries." Others were charged with throwing Molotov cocktails at weapons depots or raping the wives of Russian officers.[84] Such accusations seemingly were exaggerated in order to justify the creation of Committees for National Salvation in all three of the Baltic republics. These committees were shadowy front groups made up of hard-line communists, military officers, and Russians. Reacting to the confusion and chaos which they in large part had generated, they then demanded the use of military force to restore law and order and prevent the restoration of "bourgeois" regimes.

Undeniably, Soviet troops felt unappreciated. Even in Moscow, some acknowledged openly that when they could avoid it, they no longer wore their military uniforms in public for fear of being insulted. By early 1990, there was a growing sense that the Soviet Union had squandered all the gains it had made in World War II. With Gorbachev and Shevardnadze's acquiescence, Germany had been reunited and the Soviet Union had committed itself to withdraw within five years all its military forces from their positions in Eastern Europe. Indeed, in the case of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, the Soviets had promised to withdraw before the end of 1991. Many in the Soviet military saw this as a sell-out by Gorbachev and other civilians to the United States.

In addition, a growing number of military officers suspected that in exchange for supporting Gorbachev's domestic politics, the United States had maneuvered the Soviet Union into supporting U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf. They saw themselves in the uncomfortable position of backing U.S. imperialist oil policy in the Middle East and turning their back on their previous allies in countries such as Iraq.[85] They also feared that the Soviet Union might agree to send its troops to the area and find itself bogged down again in another war.[86]

Against this backdrop, several once timid military officers began to express their frustration publicly. Many joined *Soiuz,* the conservative anti-reform faction within the Congress of People's Deputies. Two of the more outspoken critics of Gorbachev, Lieutenant Colonel Viktor Alksnis and Colonel Nikolai Petrushenko, decided to escalate their demands and pressured for the resignations of Vadim Bakatin, a liberal reformer who was then serving as the minister of the interior, and Eduard Shevardnadze. Both men subsequently resigned, with Shevardnadze complaining openly that no one had defended him when the two colonels boasted that they had toppled Bakatin and warned that Shevardnadze would be next.[87]

In such a climate, there was reason to believe rumors of a coup attempt when two elite regiments of Soviet paratroops suddenly appeared in Red Square in early September 1990 dressed in their battle gear. Subsequent explanations that the troops were on their way to pick potatoes (in their flak jackets) or rehearsing for the November 7 Revolution Day Parade two months hence were laughable.[88]

Indications of the tensions between Gorbachev and the military were revealed at Gorbachev's meeting on November 13, 1990, with one thousand military personnel.[89] Accounts reported that Gorbachev was heckled* and booed as he tried to address their complaints.[90] This confrontation was followed a few days later by another meeting between Gorbachev and military personnel who had been elected as delegates to various parliamentary or national and republic Supreme Soviets. Apparently it was at such a meeting that Colonel Alksnis challenged Gorbachev head on and warned him that he had only thirty days to impose order or face a vote of no confidence. According to Alksnis, Gorbachev had already lost the support of the army, which might well adapt its own operating procedures.[91] Reportedly that evening Gorbachev succumbed and drafted a new plan to impose stringent presidential controls.

Certainly not all Soviet military personnel hold similar views. Some junior ranking officers have formed a union called Shield *(Shchit)* and work within the liberal Interregional Group of

* questionato

Deputies in the Congress of People's Deputies to press for the sort of reforms that so upset their superiors. But increasingly these supporters of reform find themselves on the defensive. Reflecting the growing climate of distress and bitterness, two military officers aligned with the more reformist Interregional Deputies were ordered out of the proceedings of the military delegation to the Congress of People's Deputies because of accusations that the Interregional Group was being financed by the CIA. Dissent in the army can be hazardous.[92]

X

The anti-Western and chauvinistic views of the anti-reformers in many ways bear a strong resemblance to the attitudes of the Slavophiles and nationalists of the nineteenth century, just as today's reformers have much in common with the nineteenth-century westernizers. Concern for the communal life of the peasants, fears that the Soviet Union will become westernized, or even a "marionette of Western Zionism"—all views expressed at the 1990 Congress of the Russian Writers' Union—are themes similar to warnings heard a century earlier.[93] The cast is different, but the sentiments are much the same. As one delegate put it when attacking Alexander Yakovlev, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Mikhail Gorbachev, "Some people may be even worse than the Jews."[94]

Of course not everything is an echo of the past. Certainly the central planning versus market debate is a Soviet, not a prerevolutionary matter. But the complaints that Gorbachev and other reformers are spending too much time in the West and, as Kryuchkov of the KGB insisted, foisting too many alien concepts on the country are old refrains. As proof that the reformers are too taken with their foreign admirers, they published the mayor of Moscow Gavril Popov's itinerary. It shows him roaming from Western Europe to the United States to Japan, and Sergei Stankevich, the vice mayor, traveling from India to Mexico to Guatemala to Greece to the United States to France to Poland to Sweden to Japan. This, their critics say,

is evidence of their Western orientation and lack of commitment to the Russian tradition and soul.[95]

As the reform process began to falter, Gorbachev found himself facing increasing polarization within the country. The reformers looking to the West for inspiration stressed the 1986–88 Gorbachev emphasis on democratization, pluralism, and move to the market. The bureaucrats and military officers who found their prerogatives threatened by such reforms were joined by those primarily concerned about the increasing anarchy and empty shelves in their daily lives. To save the empire and himself, Gorbachev began to turn away from his earlier aspirations. He found himself moving ever closer to those who looked to the past and inward. Besides, the reformers had had a chance and failed. It was their policies which led to the 4 percent drop in national income in 1990 and an anticipated drop exceeding 10 percent in 1991. They had been unable to put food on the shelves or quiet ethnic discontent. Discredited, they began to lose popular support. By December 1990, the Interregional Group of reformers shrank from 330 supporters early in the month to 229 in late December.[95] As described by the army hard-liner Colonel Petrushenko, "the struggle is now caught between the two camps we have in this country: the democrats and the patriots. The democrats have had their day. We, the patriots, will now dictate the future direction of the country. We are people who do not rush off to the United States to read lectures or open foreign bank accounts. We stay at home and think through our plans for the future of a great Russia."[96] Caught between these increasingly divergent views, Gorbachev found himself agreeing to a series of successive compromises that ultimately satisfied neither him nor his various opponents and led him in mid-1991 to move back at least partly to the reformist fold.

8

Where Does the Soviet Union Go from Here?

As first perestroika and then glasnost failed to produce the reforms Gorbachev was seeking, and as pressure from the public and the military industrial complex could no longer be ignored, Gorbachev switched course. Like a ship's captain who unexpectedly finds himself in a hurricane, Gorbachev first headed to the port side. When the wind shifted, he abruptly reversed course and headed to starboard. But none of these shifts has helped stabilize his ship. In the meantime, more and more of his passengers have become seasick. Similarly, the impact of Gorbachev's indecisiveness on the economy and the Soviet political system has generated more confusion than meaningful action. Amidst the turmoil, Supreme Soviets in the country have become more and more like debating rather than legislative bodies. After a time, no one seemed to be complying with orders from the center. Gorbachev even tried issuing orders demanding compliance with his earlier orders, but these were ignored as well.

For those of us living outside the Soviet Union it is hard to appreciate just how disorienting the Gorbachev years with all their course reversals in industry, agriculture, administration, and legislative and economic advisers have been. Earlier we saw how on taking over as general secretary, Gorbachev's industrial