

EIR Feature

'Gorbymania': Will the West wake up in time?

by Gen. Paul-Albert Scherer (ret.)

General Scherer was director of the West German Military Security Service (MAD) from 1972-77. The following essay was written in June 1990; it was translated from the German by John Chambless.

Today, it is simply too much for most people to process the flood of news in the media concerning the rapid, even stormy course of events in the Soviet Union, and to gain from it a picture of what is happening. The events follow too quickly on one another, and the sheer amount of news on these processes is too great. Most of the information from the Soviet Union has become a cause for concern. Recently, dramatic and bloody events have predominated, after it had seemed for years that the clever Kremlin leader could keep the world happy with his sensational domestic and foreign policy swings between confrontation and cooperation.

From the Western point of view, Moscow's unexpected, 180-degree change of course was a gift from heaven, because Moscow was for 40 years the center of brutal provocation, with threats of war, subversion, super armaments, cynicism, and export of revolution.

The verbosely inaugurated development was depicted as a product of moral superiority, as an action flowing from the voluntary contemplation of the good, as a second Russian Revolution, because of the uniquely courageous reformer Mikhail Sergeyeovich Gorbachov—and this was believed in the West in a kind of mass hypnosis. And even if this wishful thinking has diminished a bit recently, it still largely dominates the scene. In the 65-month tenure of the Kremlin leader, during which he has worked for reform, two new verbal creations for the successful manipulation of the Western public have appeared, in addition to the new verbal concepts of *perestroika* (restructuring), *glasnost* (openness), and *demokratizatsia* (democratization): "Gorbymania" and "Gorby magic." The latter is indicative of Gorbachov's extremely effective personal magnetism outside the communist sphere of power, where virtually magical abilities are ascribed to him.



Mikhail and Raisa Gorbachov arrive at Andrews Air Force Base on May 30, 1990, for summit diplomacy with President Bush. Moscow's clever propaganda job has blinded the West to the real reasons for the revolutionary changes that have gone on in the Soviet Union—and to the dangerous process of collapse that is currently under way.

Stuart Lewis

If we critically investigate this extremely successful strategy of influence, with its tactical and methodological finesse, which, with its mechanisms of manipulation, is directed against various target groups, we find three target areas, corresponding to old models of Soviet psychological warfare, distinguished in terms of personnel, population layer, and ideology:

First, anti-communism will be dried up by eliminating still-convincing indictments of Soviet policy and current areas of attack. This is being attempted through a rapid turn toward socialism with a human face.

Second, any consciousness of a threat with regard to the Soviet Union among the mass voters in Europe and North America will vanish, and thus any preparedness for defense will be abolished.

Third, what will follow within the overall area of Western advanced civilization and Western culture, including its important areas of intellectual influence, is an offensive self-portrayal of the Soviet Union as a nation of European culture that has overcome the barbarism of Stalinism, that has renounced nuclear madness, and that can therefore justifiably repudiate any cultural exclusion from Europe.

Western wishful thinking

Every driver fears the alarming loss of vision that results from fog or glare at night, but that is exactly what has now taken place in the realm of political perception. The Gorbachov group has managed to cloud the vision of people in the

West through a refined obscurity, so that millions do not know why, in fact, the Soviet leadership was forced to introduce the revolutionary, sensational change of the mid-1980s. Gorbachov came to power after a dangerous loss of time, which seemed almost to preclude the urgent and long overdue measures to stop the impending state bankruptcy. Moscow, however, succeeded in promoting the legend of Gorbachov as a morally enlightened creator of peace throughout the world, by means of systematically prepared operations of deception and deliberate, calculated dishonesty. It was said that, by the turn of the century, he would wipe out all the arsenals of nuclear weapons and totally disarm, if the covert war-mongers and profiteers from confrontation in the West would only give him the opportunity—a brilliant trick which completely surprised Western political elites, who imagined themselves to be superior, and a glorious achievement for the Soviets, who since 1917 have been the world's champions in the invention of fantastic fairy tales about their own actions and the supposedly destructive role of their opponents.

Since mid-March 1985, the West has completely lost its leadership in the shaping of political opinion in the world. Hardly anyone still pays attention to the fact that it was the West that always wanted peace and needed freedom, that totally disarmed after World War II and made endless sacrifices in caution, loss of reputation, and lost investments in the arms race and the forced proxy wars beneath the nuclear threshold, in order to prevent a world conflagration at virtually any cost.

Leadership in public opinion concerning the supposedly novel, serious peace initiatives, is a classical victory in the decades-long confrontations with the West that allowed the Kremlin to continue to pursue a strong and challenging foreign policy during its greatest and most profound crisis of survival. What does it matter that NATO has pursued partial disarmament for years as an honest and verifiable concession, that it, as the voluntary defense pact of free peoples in the most advanced industrial, affluent society of the Northern Hemisphere, is not comparable to the coercive apparatus of the Warsaw Treaty, imposed by an offensive occupying power? Most people, strengthened by the majority of those in the West who form public opinion, are now ready to believe that a threat from the Soviet Union's sphere of influence is absolutely out of the question and need no longer be considered in the future—just as if, given the decline of authority in Moscow that has recently occurred, acts of madness couldn't suddenly happen, and as if it were better if no further military concession on withdrawal be proposed, until the Soviets' fivefold conventional and threefold nuclear superiority against NATO forces has been dismantled—not merely in words, but also in reality.

Carefully analyzed, the transition which is commonly depicted of the formerly monolithic Soviet bloc into a revolutionarily active, pluralistic model that is the opposite of its previous historic behavior, has enabled the Kremlin since 1985 to gain unique areas for maneuver through dramatic changes of scene and set in the theater of world history. All the previous assumptions on which the leaders of public opinion in the West believed they could maintain themselves, have collapsed. The leadership in the West showed itself to be dangerously helpless. A surrender of conviction soon followed, a weak answer to the deviousness and cunning of such a strategy. Many observers were justifiably reminded of the cowardly attempts at accommodation in 1938 by Western politicians toward the brutality of Hitler.

The deceptive fantasies on peace and disarmament deliberately produced by the Soviets, have produced such a terrible confusion in the Western camp that, to the present, the process of decay and collapse that is happening before our eyes in the gigantic Soviet empire, with all its critical imperfections, is not rightly perceived and evaluated.

The revolution came from below

Had the barbed-wire barriers from Hungary to Austria not been cut with an extraordinary readiness to accept risk in May 1989, so that the mass flight of young East German families could become a most stirring TV experience for the world, and had not the terrifying scenes of murder of the peacefully demonstrating Chinese students in the so-called Square of Eternal Peace (Tiananmen) in Beijing in June brought shock via television into our living rooms, where would the West be today?

Nevertheless, concern about the Russian cult figure of

the West, Mikhail Gorbachov, was overshadowed by those political actions, without regard to the poor people in the Transcaucasus and the Baltic, whose rights and dignity were trampled by tanks and soldiers' boots. How far the bold disinformation of Western leaders through the underground networks from the Soviet Union was pushed, is shown by the assertion that Gorbachov himself had recommended elimination of the barbed wire to the Hungarians. Gorbachov and his KGB did indeed explode the strongholds in Budapest, East Berlin, and Prague of his orthodox party opponents, who were waiting for his downfall, but Hungary, quite conscious of Europe, opened the border completely at its own risk. It is known with certainty that the leadership there even expected an armed intervention by Soviet occupation forces, because they had said nothing to Moscow concerning measures for opening the Iron Curtain.

In these months, we contemporaries are intimately experiencing world history being made from below. This naturally does not fit the plans of certain elites in the political and opinion-creating brotherhood of the free West and the police states of the East. The so-called summit meetings at Malta and Washington, D.C., with their meager and in part inconsequential results for the preservation and assistance of Gorbachov, are a proof in this direction. Their true character as mere show, corresponds to the largely slipshod, superficial, and insubstantial social responsibilities that today are so largely subordinated to the market of contemporary vanity. Nothing much will come from there. A fatally ill society such as the Soviet one will now be moved and renewed from below, until normality can be restored.

Western politicians in office would be well advised to evaluate Gorbachov's possibilities for action according to historical examples of this sort. His greatest handicap is the factor of time. The dissolution of the Soviet empire is proceeding rapidly, and has already proceeded a long way. His reforms need time that he cannot procure, and because of that, he will fail. The disappointed peoples of 131 nationalities with 96 languages are no longer ready to accept Moscow's system of suppression and poverty without resistance and to tolerate the fact that, during Gorbachov's five years in office, things have merely gone from bad to worse.

The decay of the Soviet Union can be divided into different steps or stations, where one collapse follows the next. Two hundred and eighty-seven million Soviet human beings are resigned to this, and now, for the most part, believe in nothing. Only their great capacity for suffering has up to now prevented something worse. How long can that continue?

Andropov and the SDI

Step 1 of the agonizing process of decay of this empire, which covers one-sixth of the land area of our planet, coincides with the death of President Yuri V. Andropov in February 1984 and the failure to elect his designated successor, Mikhail S. Gorbachov, on Feb. 13, 1984. Brezhnev's fol-

General Scherer, friend of the United States

General Scherer, one of the world's leading experts on the Soviet Union, has had a career as a journalist and a security consultant and was, during the 1970s, the head of the Militärische Abschirmdienst (MAD), the military intelligence and counterintelligence service of the West German Bundeswehr. He was a personal and security adviser to then-Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.

In recent years, he has visited the United States many times, to brief congressmen, intelligence professionals, and others on the disastrous situation in the Soviet Union and on his view that the Atlantic alliance must absolutely be maintained and strengthened. He has also been an outspoken defender of his friend Lyndon LaRouche.

In testimony presented to the Sept. 9-11, 1987 hearings of the Fact-Finding Committee of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States, Scherer asserted that his professional evaluation was that the Kremlin was waging "a typical, targeted psychological terror campaign of worldwide proportions against the person of Lyndon LaRouche and against his potential influence. . . . LaRouche is without doubt one of their very top targets in the West."

Following LaRouche's conviction in a political frame-up trial and his jailing on Jan. 27, 1989, General Scherer wrote to Helga Zepp-LaRouche that he was "deeply shocked" to learn of the news about her husband. "With profound regret and intense disappointment," he wrote, "we must recognize that in the West, too, moral degeneration of the state and political manipulation of the judiciary, of judges in particular, of the free press with its responsibility for the progress of society, and of the media in general—have gained the upper hand."

In a visit to the United States in January 1990, Scherer emphasized LaRouche's importance to the Kremlin. "We have to remember that in many ways it has been the SDI, or at least the threat of the SDI, that has driven the Russians to the wall," he told a group of strategic analysts. "The SDI, even as a perspective, terrified the Russians. I



Gen. Paul-Albert Scherer, speaking at a meeting of the international Commission on Human Rights Violations in Boston, Oct. 20, 1987.

saw a letter to the editor of *Time* magazine, commenting on the issue that had Gorbachov on the cover. The letter pointed out that the changes in Eastern Europe and elsewhere were not Gorbachov's achievement, but rather Reagan's achievement. There is something to that, but the adequate way to put the matter is to say that it was really not so much Reagan who can take credit, but LaRouche, since it was LaRouche who actually designed the SDI as a policy. LaRouche—maybe along with Reagan—but LaRouche was the one who has now got the Soviets with their backs to the wall."

lowers in the Politburo decided against Gorbachov, their youngest member, and in favor of Konstantin Chernenko, the aged secretary of ideology. For almost a half year, Gorbachov had been allowed to stand in for the bedridden Andropov as general secretary, and had energetically set the direction for perestroika. Additionally, he was, as Central Committee chairman, responsible for agriculture, but, be-

cause of failed harvests, his work was graced with little success.

Previously, in December 1982, after Brezhnev's death and the assumption of power by long-time KGB head Andropov, internal economic investigations were made on the cost framework for the Afghanistan War; the titanic naval and missile buildups, the ambitious space program, and the giant



Peasants waiting to buy milk in Krasnodar, in southern Russia. Gorbachov promises reforms that he cannot deliver, and because of that, he is doomed to fail. During his five years in office, things have gone from bad to worse.

Ogonyok

burden of the guidance or support of allied powers in the communist camp. The analysis predicted a sharp economic crisis around 1987, because of economic ineffectiveness, highly wasteful production, outmoded capital goods, the exhaustion of labor, and so forth, unless fundamental changes were made.

In the spring of 1983, came the next drum beat with the announcement by President Ronald Reagan of the launching of the Strategic Defense Initiative project, for defense against Soviet long-range rockets in space. In a sensational interview in *Der Spiegel* magazine, Andropov put out clear peace feelers in the direction of Washington, and made proposals for the division of the world into the spheres of interest of the two superpowers. For an increase of productivity and effectiveness domestically, he ordered a harsh discipline campaign. He also reduced expenditures for the war in Afghanistan. With the election of Chernenko, however, the Soviet leadership, not recognizing the approaching danger to the empire, decided against the strategic factor of time.

Perestroika off to a false start

Step 2 began with Gorbachov's funeral oration at the open casket of Chernenko, who died on March 12, 1985 after 13 months of illness in office. The text of the oration was extremely aggressive, an encouragement to the party and the masses of workers to produce more. Impatience could be heard in the speech of the 53-year-old Gorbachov, who was elected as general secretary just hours after Chernenko's death, only through the support and vote of Andrei Gromyko.

In a short period of time, Gorbachov lost loyal support, because of the lack of agreement with large groups of the Soviet "priestly caste" over the implementation of perestroika and the planned reform of the party, and met with covert resistance. Following a sensational interview in *Time* magazine, came Gorbachov's opening appearances on the world stage: First, he was honored with great success on TV in Paris, and then he traveled to the first summit meeting with President Reagan in Geneva in November 1985.

Gorbachov's three-part disarmament package was not accepted, which, as he later wrote, caused him considerable

disillusionment. His intimate knowledge of the predicament facing him and the circumstances in which he had to act, and the needs of the empire that can be saved only through extreme austerity and revolutionary changes in the willingness to work of the 140 million employed, forced him to travel incessantly throughout the country, giving long speeches, criticizing the party, and fighting alcoholism with harsh prohibitions. But he had little success. Immediately, sugar purchases began to increase enormously, since people were making alcohol at home. Tax revenues dropped sharply as a result.

The catastrophe at Chernobyl

Step 3 of the decay process occurred along with with the huge propagandistic uproar over what purported to be a Soviet total disarmament initiative, in connection with which deceptive offers and promises ensued that became best-sellers politically—without, as we noted at the beginning, the words being followed by deeds. This was not only because of the continuing war in Afghanistan, but also because only a disarmament that can be verified within Soviet national territory itself can bring more security. The Soviets have not agreed to that, despite 12 years of negotiations in Vienna, putting forward the argument of the threat of espionage. Internally, Gorbachov's reputation as a politician to be taken seriously fell considerably. The world, however, continued to rejoice with the peace movement.

In April 1986, the awful catastrophe at the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl in northern Ukraine occurred. The misanthropic perversities that took place in connection with that disaster only came to light fully in 1990, but word got around earlier, because of the partial knowledge of international rescue parties in the death zone. The Soviet Union showed that it was not in the position—as later with the earthquakes in Armenia—to cope with sudden great state disasters. According to the Soviets' own statements, the cost was 20 billion rubles. The perestroika program suffered as a result, but suffered even more from strong negative pressure from party functionaries who feared losing their privileges.

Resistance from the party majority

Step 4, as a clearly recognizable step in the decline of the Soviet empire, intruded during 1986, as Gorbachov seized upon the accusation of "sabotage"—a grave word in the Soviet lexicon—for his severe reproaches, and used it to openly attack the orthodox old and neo-Stalinists and Brezhnevists in all subordinate ranks of the hierarchy, who were intriguing with the majority of the party against his reforms. Sabotage is the most reprehensible state crime in the Soviet penal code. Gorbachov is a lawyer, and has been active in politics since 1956, and since 1971, when barely 40 years old, a member of the Central Committee, the leading organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). In 1980, when 49 years old, he created a sensation by becoming

a member of the Politburo, the executive organ with highest power in the Soviet empire. He was thus familiar with every trick and every detail of the system. He was selected and recommended as the successor of the general secretary by the ascetic and ideological pope Mikhail Andreyevich Suslov, the supervisor of all cadre records, after 20 years of intimate observation, after Gorbachov had been selected for leading functions from among the upcoming young functionaries.

Gorbachov was infinitely disappointed and highly irritated by this repulsive mass of refractory dignitaries of the *nomenklatura*. They knew nothing of the predicament in the background, and did not realize that they were accomplishing nothing with their sabotage but ruination of the party's elite layer of 18 million, which was holding the empire together. Above all else, however, they were inflicting a death blow to the highly endangered Great Russian Empire, which has existed since 1480. For Gorbachov, it was clear that those who did not sufficiently heed the fundamental factors of time, the domestic psychological condition, structures of power, and economic efficiency, in all their inexorable compulsions, were not only destroying themselves as a caste no longer called to or fit for leadership, but also were, consciously or unconsciously, blowing apart the overall social structure.

That is the dynamic of the incompetence of leadership layers that can be observed over and over in the course of history over the centuries. Gorbachov found himself forced to heavily emphasize his right to give orders according to the decisions by the Politburo, and the duty of the party to obey. He came forward with the programmatic demand for glasnost, as the completion of perestroika.

Eighteen months later, he denied, in his book *Perestroika*, published in New York by Harper, that he pushed through glasnost, the Russian concept for "openness, publicity," because of Chernobyl.

That is true only in part. The outcries of accusation, the demonstrations and official demands for compensation from northern, central, western, and then even southern Europe, because no public warning had been given and because of the contamination of water and food, put the Soviet leadership under considerable pressure. In fact, however, the introduction of glasnost into the tactical calculus is a fundamental, revolutionary decision which is life-endangering for the Soviet system and which, for the first time, leads two great societal groups, those with insignificant power and those utterly powerless, against the previously all-powerful party into the battle to save the system.

In the West, this was celebrated as a liberation struggle that would lead to democracy, as an escape from press censorship and from being patronized by an antiquated police state. What a mistake! Gorbachov deployed the intelligentsia in, above all, the press, to implement the continuing economic reforms. Simultaneously, he allowed the mass of the people to exert massive pressure, by a deliberately guided letters-

to-the-editor campaign and by allowing public discussion, against the disobedient party that was sabotaging his efforts.

Naturally, this bright side of saving the system had inevitably its dark, even poisonous opposite side: The introduction of freedom of thought and speech in a police state has the effect of a razor placed against the throat of the leadership of the regime, when the reforms do not succeed. The limitation of the absolute, systematic monopoly of information under Lenin and Stalin had already led in the 1960s and 1970s—despite the 30,000 active jamming transmitters used to block independent information from foreign sources—to a significant psychology of rejection throughout the entire Soviet Union, but particularly in the border areas of its sphere of power.

Since 1986, glasnost has allowed the free exchange of opinions outside of the newspapers, radio, and TV, which still were subjected to a new form of controlling influence, and thus to limited censorship. In theaters, cabarets, and films, no restrictions are prescribed, but are possible. The production of literature can still be guided along by the distribution of paper. Information on Stalinism and the so-called period of stagnation—the Brezhnev era—was freely and happily given, in order to fatally strike at adversaries, the reactionary blockheads and agitators in the party who are hostile to reform—or, at least, to neutralize them before the public.

Threats of strikes in Siberia

Step 5 of the Soviet collapse, with startling and abrupt negative transformations, showed that, beyond the party functionaries—and perhaps instigated by them—Gorbachov's reforms were also rejected by the workers. The former appeals and indoctrination measures were not effective. Dissatisfaction spread. In Siberia, where there was a higher wage level because of the unfavorable climate and transportation conditions and the limited possibility for free time, decreases in pay on the one hand, and deteriorating supplies for the population on the other, were regarded as a mockery of the many promises that had been made. Workers and their families took to the streets in protest. They felt punished for their former years of sacrifice to make Siberia into an important industrial region. Opposition in the work places was serious. The threat of strikes was in the air. Gorbachov found himself forced to travel through Siberia. He attempted to calm the situation through his personal appearance, and called a mass meeting that was transmitted via TV to the entire Soviet Union.

Gorbachov met the demands of the workers, thus pacifying the situation, but the plans for reform with respect to cost-saving measures were watered down. It became apparent that the population, as a result of the extensive use of "agitprop" since Gorbachov's entry into office, had been pushed into an attitude of expecting reform, that the belief in miracles and wishful thinking had been set off far too early

in the distant parts of the country without the possibility of fulfilling such expectations. The result was unexpected resistance. The loudly expressed objections rose to a climax in the statement, "They talk, talk, talk, but things only get worse, and then the party itself isn't fit to do anything, as they themselves have discovered." A further, more resigned objection, which has been heard everywhere for some time and has caused much bad blood because it admits that the Stalinists are right, reflected the disappointment of the masses: "We weren't this badly provided for until 1953 [the death of Stalin]." The loss of trust in the regime was gigantic.

Gorbachov leads the nomenklatura by the nose

Step 6, a development leading more and more into the abyss of ungovernability, was characterized by two spectacular events, one concerning domestic policy, the other, the preservation of Soviet interests in foreign policy. Gorbachov was forced by the reports received from members of the Politburo to immediately abandon recent efforts to better provide for the population in all 15 republics and autonomous areas through the cooperatives, because the workers' collectives were opposed to that. The reformers were criticized as cultivating new Soviet millionaires, as in the last part of the Brezhnev era.

In fact, the goods offered by the cooperatives were more expensive than those in the state stores, but the leadership was interested in "more and better"; simultaneously, the excess purchasing power in private hands was in part sucked up by the higher prices, and tax revenues significantly increased. Gorbachov's opponents in the *nomenklatura*, however, exploited this situation to inflame hostility to private property and envy among the disgruntled masses. In this connection, persisting socialist illusions played an important role. The anticipated move into a sort of free space for free market activities was strangled. Gorbachov proved to be too weak to harshly push through the ever more urgent solution to the economic crisis. Time was running out.

The second summit meeting with President Reagan, in the Icelandic city of Reykjavik in October 1986, called with such a flurry of propaganda, served for the Soviets, as it later turned out, the single goal of inducing the Americans to give up the SDI program, by means of the familiar mixture of extortionist threats and selected attractive offers. Reagan did not give in, and did not allow himself to be overpowered even by the ultimate pressure, well knowing that the Russians had been pursuing similar concepts for strategic defense since 1966. Gorbachov was forced to break off negotiations because the majority of the Politburo did not authorize him to continue the negotiations on his own initiative. Gorbachov's being subordinated to directions from the Politburo was not kept secret, and was a diplomatic disaster for him. Two days later, from Moscow, he attempted to follow up the negotiations with the United States at Reykjavik. Thus, a world empire in decline is governed.

The power struggle climaxes

Step 7 in the imperial decline was reached in 1987, with the journey of appeasement made by Gorbachov to Prague, which had been forced since 1968 to follow a direction set by Moscow. What was important here was to break down the powerful irritations felt by comrades throughout the world—not merely in Czechoslovakia, but also in East Germany, Hungary, Cuba, Ethiopia, Angola, Nicaragua, and the communist parties not in power—that had come about as the result of the many curious statements from the Kremlin leader in the two years he had been in power. Gorbachov's fundamental statement didn't in the least eliminate doubt about his "dancing on eggs," as his comrades quite disrespectfully put it in public. At the largest meeting in Prague, he stated: "My goal is, not to move away from socialism, but more socialism! My reform is designed to provide the desired leap so that the entire society stands on one side of the barricade!"

A further unmasking for Moscow: In the summer of 1987, a young German broke through the previously highly praised military border space and air surveillance in a private flight from Finland, and landed in Red Square before the Kremlin walls. Gorbachov exploited the storm of outrage against slovenliness in the military to trim the influence and the participation in decision-making of both the first pillar of power in the Soviet Union, the party, and the third pillar, the military.

Further breakdowns ensued: Gorbachov's opponent Yegor Ligachov—second man in the Kremlin, a Russian from Siberia born in 1920, eventually party chief of Tomsk—took the opportunity, as the individual responsible for ideological questions, to publicly criticize the outgrowths of glasnost that, in his opinion, were no longer reasonable. The media had far exceeded the allowable limits, he complained.

Gorbachov vanished from the public eye for two months, supposedly to write his book. When he returned in the fall of 1987, he acknowledged the failure of his previous reform efforts: "Perestroika is moving into its critical phase. It can be overcome within 18 months. A social and political upheaval will not take place!" Calculating the time, that means that Gorbachov proposed overcoming this critical phase, the wandering through the deepest vale of exhaustion and tears, by the middle of 1989, if "sabotage" of this reform were successfully eliminated. Gorbachov showed the direction of his thought in a statement to Bulgarian party chief Todor Zhivkov: "Without a further consolidation of the leadership role in the party, drastic changes are not to be expected."

After two and one-half years, he still believed in the leadership role! Of course, there was a hidden intention behind that, that can be gleaned from intimate conversations in the Kremlin. In a special conference for Soviet media editors, Gorbachov introduced the "second step of perestroika," shoved the blame for the delays that had occurred onto the shoulders of conservatives and followers of Brezhnev, and

expressed regret that his reforms had not previously been embodied in the law.

The power struggle in the Kremlin reached a climax. Before the assembled Central Committee, Boris Yeltsin, who was one of Gorbachov's followers, gave a speech that included insulting tirades against Ligachov. Yeltsin is a member of the Politburo and has been party head of Moscow since Gorbachov brought him to the capital from Sverdlovsk. Yeltsin reproached Gorbachov—who rejected Yeltsin's radical reform demands and was afraid of a controversy with the Ligachov group—for weakness, and then resigned from all his offices, now also challenging Gorbachov.

The beggar's oath

Step 8 came in May 1988. The decline was now becoming more and more conspicuous, and the power struggle was increasingly marked by intrigue. Ongoing abuses of Soviet psychiatry through compulsory institutionalization of dissidents by the security apparatus were discovered. The KGB—that feared, giant octopus of a police, surveillance state with a flawless central and regional structure—had elevated Gorbachov to power, had supported him, and was now supposed to be disciplined. KGB head Viktor Chebrikov was relieved of his post—he was "kicked upstairs," as the special agent for the Central Committee for supervision of the Soviet judiciary. What cynicism, in this fatally ill collective society that had been led into paralysis by epigones!

Meanwhile, food supplies for the population worsened. The internal potential for conflict grew in the factories. Instead of machines, directors of the collectives bought supplies from the Moscow center for their staffs, and were fired as a result. The black market and urban criminality grew to an extent that could hardly be reversed. A devastating analysis by the historian Dashchichev in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* gained worldwide respect and set off bitter reactions domestically. For the first time, it was admitted that Stalin had wanted to establish a communist world order of the Soviet type by means of destabilization and liquidation of bourgeois democracies. Brezhnevism had exploited détente actively for strengthening of its military potential, had endangered the balance between East and West, and had thus increased the danger of war.

This beggar's oath—demarking Moscow's former mendacity and the Kremlin's criminal policy—in the intelligence journal of the so-called Westernizers in the Soviet Union, was clearly in pursuit of three goals: 1) to stimulate the Reagan administration and the U.S. Congress into acceptance of the controversial INF treaty in preparation for the summit meeting in Moscow; 2) domestically, to eliminate President Gromyko, who as foreign minister had grimly and hypocritically pursued this criminal policy, and to open up his position for Gorbachov; 3) to allow Gorbachov's reform group to appear internally and externally as the purified faction representing a new honesty.

Gorbachov's book *Perestroika*, which in the meantime had appeared on the U.S. market, can only cause amazement. Passages can be found there that are quite contrary to the truth and are threats; for example, "The West must free itself from the self-delusion that the Soviet Union needs disarmament more urgently than itself." There is no greater lie. And then, "With the SDI, they are pursuing the goal of starving us out. And yet we, the Soviet leadership, know that there is nothing that our scientists and engineers cannot achieve. One-tenth of the U.S. investments would be sufficient to build up a counter-system, and to thwart the SDI." Boastful and scheming, and aimed completely at further confrontation where there is success to be had: "Glasnost does not apply in the area of astronautics."

Withdrawal from Afghanistan

Step 9 of the process of decline is marked from the beginning of the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Moscow summit, and the 19th All-Union Conference in 1988.

The first regiment of Soviet intervention troops in Afghanistan began the long-promised withdrawal in installments that was later to degenerate into a concealed flight from three Air Force bases, with a consequent massive loss of heavy equipment blown up in the emergency. The shameful withdrawal from Afghanistan led to a new wave of disillusionment and to limitless resignation. The senselessness of this war was communicated to large sections of the population by the returning soldiers and the cripples left at home, especially to mothers, but also to soldiers in all sections of the Armed Forces. Trust in the political leadership was finally destroyed by a sense of rapidly growing catastrophe and bitter experience.

Were it not for this historically conditioned mentality—the capacity for morose suffering, a total retreat into self-effacing private life—and an inhuman surveillance system, this late feudalistic colonial empire of poverty, along with its many nationalities, languages, and religions, this system of a degenerate party nobility and of suppressed and ill-treated slave-laborers (even if there are people who developed an essentially higher culture), would have long ago exploded in a historically unprecedented eruption.

The Russian Civil War of 1918-21 can only be used in comparison here in a limited way since, at that time, in spite of all the horrors, there was still hope and an atmosphere of a new beginning. Today, self-hate dominates, along with decadence and a deformed consciousness. There are today more obstructions than there were then against moving in a Western direction.

The INF treaty

The third Reagan-Gorbachov summit meeting in May-June 1988, the 15th summit meeting between East and West since 1955, had a spectacular effect on the world, but the effect upon the Soviet elite and the nationally conscious Great

Russians was strangely dubious. Delayed and timed to arrive after President Reagan, a special aircraft sent by the U.S. Congress brought the President an Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty that had been written at the last minute. According to the treaty, 3% of nuclear weapons were to be eliminated by 1992, including NATO's effective, accurate intermediate-range missiles in Europe, whose stationing in 1979 had been threatened and which were then stationed in the free part of Germany during 1982-83 because the Soviets continued to station additional SS-20 rockets. Thus Gorbachov received—to the detriment of an effective NATO defense and in spite of the continuing gigantic superiority of the Soviets—an important chance to force his military into beginning controlled disarmament of conventional weapons (through the middle of 1990 he had not succeeded—a very disappointing, disquieting proof of the loss of authority in the Kremlin). Reagan's summit surprise, with the invitation of 47 opponents of the Soviet regime to the Kremlin palace, an open reminder about human rights despite the stony faces of his hosts, and the U.S. President's insistence on the termination of all covert activities in Angola, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nicaragua, and so forth, demonstrated to the Soviet leaders, but also to the masses, that with or without Gorbachov, a new age must be dawning.

The 19th All-Union Conference

The three-day 19th All-Union Conference, convened at the end of June 1988, and with its usual composition of representatives from the farthest regions of this gigantic country, was essentially called to generate backing for Gorbachov. But it turned out otherwise, and, for the first time at a conference, Gorbachov found himself with his back to the wall. Massive reproaches were brought up: Gorbachov's turning away from socialism; the crisis in world communism, supposedly caused by Moscow; and the sudden explosion of nationalistic conflict south of the Caucasus Mountains. The power struggle's front lines became unambiguously evident. They wanted to pile all the problems onto Gorbachov's back, and yet there was no indication that his critics, themselves with diverging goals, could agree on a different, better leader.

Crisis in the Transcaucasus

Step 10 suddenly revealed the catastrophic psychological conditions of decay in the countries of the Transcaucasus, countries that are significantly blessed by nature. In alliance with local and regional party leaders, the hostile peoples organized against one another, since the central power in distant Moscow was becoming weaker and weaker. Armenia as well as Azerbaidzhan were free states until the occupation by the Red Army in 1920. The conflict was ignited in the Armenian enclave of Karabakh in Azerbaidzhan—a very fertile mountainous region where Christian Armenians have lived since time immemorial—because of violence between the groups in the city of Sumgait, further to the east, where

only a minority of Armenians lived.

The Armenians, whose population has again grown to 5 million, look back on a 2,000-year national history in this extended area; by the year 300 A.D., they were already Christians. Armenian minorities are in Georgia, Azerbaijan, and in Iran. In 1923, parts of the population were wiped out in Turkey in massacres. The trades of printer and goldsmith, the cultivation of silk worms, wine grapes, irrigated farming, and a unique architecture were all introduced by Armenians; in Persia and Russia, many were elevated to the nobility. The Azeris are also an ancient people with a crafts tradition; they came early under Arabian rule in the area where they presently live, and were then dominated by the Turks. In addition to 8 million Azeris in the Soviet area, 10 million live in northern Iran, down to the south shore of the Caspian Sea, a region that since 1915 has been occupied three times, over a period of many years, by Russian or Soviet troops.

It seems completely out of the question that Soviet rule in the Transcaucasus region can be maintained, since the peoples know that the hour of freedom will be possible as soon as security troops are moved to another region, and therefore their numbers are no longer sufficient to control uprisings, unrest, or strikes. In Armenia, the impulse to secede from the unpopular Soviet Union became overwhelming during and after the catastrophic earthquakes at the end of 1988. People there speak of unparalleled evidence of the Soviets' incompetence and infinite sloppiness. Even now, in mid-1990, the transportation system is still in a state of collapse. The cities and villages destroyed by the quake, in which 25,000 human beings were killed, have been only temporarily rebuilt, and the loss in infrastructure and the uncertainty of food supplies have not been rectified. Moscow will have to spend 10 billion rubles in assistance. National anarchy, not merely in times of emergency but as a normal condition, seems absolutely unacceptable to Armenians. National demonstrations and thoughts of 1918, when, at the end of World War I, the Armenians had a free national state, and of the Soviet occupation at the end of 1920, demonstrate a profound nationalism that is confirmed in everyday life.

People in the Transcaucasus look upon the Balkans as a courageous pioneer, and await with longing a national uprising in Ukraine. The central government in Moscow will not be able to deal with 50 million Ukrainians. As always happens in history, when the ruling people shows weakness, a natural separatism flares up in a subject people, in a historic consciousness of their own traditions and their own national identity.

Deployment of shovels in Georgia

Step 11 shows, after the warning prelude of so-called nationality problems in 1988, a hair-raising image of imperial decline, of mismanagement, and a party leadership that has

been limited too late. In Tiflis (Tbilisi), the capital of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, completely peaceful mass demonstrations took place. Special troops were flown in, since they had been expecting anything since the previous year. There are 11 colleges there, with 10,000 students. Stalin himself was a Georgian, and his memorials are still frequently visited. Georgia is a proud country. At one time occupied by the Arabs, it remained Christian. It has been occupied by the Russians since 1801.

People in the Transcaucasus look upon the Balkans as a courageous pioneer, and await with longing a national uprising in Ukraine. As always happens in history, when the ruling people shows weakness, a natural separatism flares up in a subject people, in a historic consciousness of their own traditions and their own national identity.

Demonstrations against Russification and against the mismanagement of the economy, for Georgia and for freedom—all that isn't much to the liking of foreign security forces. Troops were deployed, using polished shovels against the demonstrators. Nineteen people, including women, were literally slaughtered, and there were innumerable injured. No one in Georgia or in the Transcaucasus will ever forget April 9, 1989. Since that day, there have been demonstrations against Russification everywhere in the border states around the core region of Russia. Hatred and loathing for the occupiers is growing.

Retrenchment in Moscow

Since the beginning of 1989, Gorbachov has avoided calling together the usual, regular meetings of the Politburo. Meetings take place only every three weeks. The former party leadership has been neutralized as much as possible, in order to pass jurisdiction over to the new Congresses of People's Deputies, which were formed using every neo-Stalinist trick, through supposed democratization using elections (1,500 persons) and delegation (750 persons). The purges in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, continuing since the fall of 1988, have cost tens of thousands of functionaries their livelihood.

Now, the reformers want to reduce subsidies, pay a purchasing-power compensation, and save 100 billion rubles,

because inflation is continually increasing. Now, the number-two pillar of power, the government and administrative apparatus, is being put to the test. The state economy, with its system of irrelevant directives, is shriveling rather than growing according to plan. The independence of business concerns is being eliminated. Broader layers of the population than ever are sliding into social misery. Despite perestroika, 80 million people are vegetating below the Soviet poverty level. Portable soup kitchens are still providing for the elderly on at least a meager basis. Given the unprofitable nature of businesses, Gorbachov does not dare introduce the regulatory measures necessitated by the upward tendency of wages and the price explosion, since total chaos would break out. Above all else, the bitter complaints about the shortage of housing, which is approaching astronomical proportions, are growing louder and more powerful. Nine cubic meters is still the quota for a family. All this is creating a sense that the end is near in the Soviet Union. There was not and is not any solidarity.

Hunger riots in Central Asia

Step 12 of the Soviet process of decay was reached with increasingly dangerous upheavals caused by hunger riots in the poorest country in the Soviet Union, Uzbekistan, in the early summer of 1989. The Muslim population of 20 million is at the end of its ability to withstand the strain. Uzbekistan is purely a supplier of cotton, and the population receives starvation wages, and is not sufficiently nourished for its difficult work by flat bread and tea. Here, there is the highest death rate from chemical spray poisoning, since the Moscow reformers are pushing exploitation to the maximum, because of their interest in export and hard currency. Meanwhile, the shops stand empty.

The Russian inhabitants of the gigantic capital of Tashkent, who constitute 60% of the population and consider themselves to be members of an occupying force and an elevated class, hear from the mosques the warning, "Get out, or else. . . ." As a result, all furniture transport vans going in the direction of Russia have been reserved in advance through the end of 1990; riots have occurred, and tens of thousands of Russians have already fled.

In the border states along the over 2,500-mile southern rim of the Soviet Union, conquered by the czar's cossacks, with their Turkish populations of, in part, higher culture, the shameless attempts at oppression and Russification are answered by bloody attempts at desertion and separatism. Conditions like those in Lebanon could come into existence, because the intense pent-up hatred and passions are running at high tide.

World-class chess players

In Eastern Europe, in the meantime, orthodox and conservative communists are waiting for a change of course in the Soviet Union and for the replacement of Gorbachov in

the Kremlin; they are maintaining close conspiratorial connections to headquarters in Moscow. Naturally, Gorbachov knows this, and ostentatiously sends a telegram of congratulations on the removal of the cadre cliques from power, which created a false impression in the West, as if he were really moving in the direction of democracy and was showing an astounding ability to learn, as socialism comes to an end. On the contrary, his opinion has not changed: The Soviet Union is the furthest behind in the reform process. The empire can only be saved if stubborn doctrinaires, now reduced in offensive leadership and executive power, are eliminated, because their existence precludes the Western help necessary for finding, in a timely manner, a way out of the self-caused, almost deadly exhaustion and backwardness.

Thus Gorbachov put Ligachov and Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov in secondary positions, and allowed Erich Honecker to fall. Then later, after a recovery of the empire, the world can still be led into a happier future at the end of the age of bourgeois exploitation, by means of the superior theory of class struggle. Gorbachov is ready to sacrifice much for that; it is his mission. Even if only the core area of Russia is saved as the extended cell for the future historic world influence of socialism, the mission of Gorbachov's foster father, Andropov, will be achieved.

Whoever helps or wants to help Gorbachov should critically consider this factor: Given the Russians' historical conditions, they have been forced to become masters of an artificial reality. We should think of the dictatorial terror of their occupation forces, and of Potemkin villages. Also, they are world-class chess players. Whoever possesses the temerity and the impudence to bug the Americans in their new embassy in Moscow, at a time of supposed détente, in such a way that the newly constructed multi-story building had to be completely torn down, deserves our cautious respect.

Mine workers' strike

Step 13 encompasses dramatic events in the Soviet sphere of power that, set off in 1989 with momentarily powerful force, represented the coming of revolution per se. Intended here is the dictum of Lenin, that a revolutionary situation exists when those on top cannot any longer do what they want, and those below can do what those on top do not want.

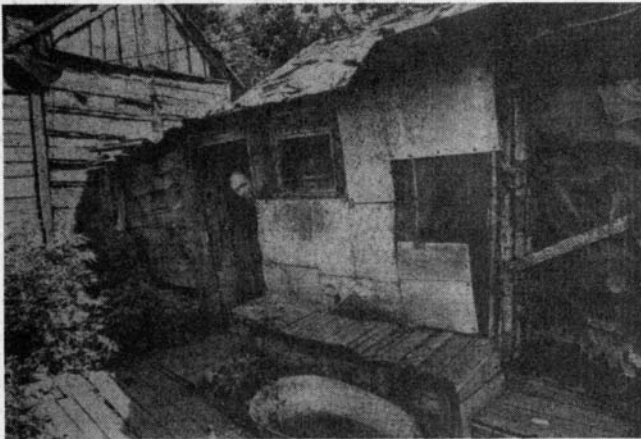
In two cases already, no longer controllable forces exerted by the peoples of the Soviet Union have plunged the entire situation into chaos.

First, there were the miners in the three largest coal-mining areas in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan. They started regional strikes with clearly defined political goals and ultimatums to be met by Christmas, after there had been demonstrations in 1988 against special distributions of soap, handkerchiefs, and work shoes.

Gorbachov sent Nikolai Ryzhkov (a Russian from the Urals, born in 1929) into the battle. As prime minister and member of the Politburo, Ryzhkov is responsible for the



Ogonyok



Striking miners in the Kuzbass region of Siberia, July 1989 (above). According to Lenin, a revolutionary situation exists when those on top cannot any longer do what they want, and those below can do what those on top do not want. The photo below shows the wretched housing conditions of the miners.

second pillar of power, the government administrative apparatus, and thus also for the portentous management of the economy. For the miners, it was a matter of more freedom, self-determination, and raising their miserable standard of living. For many days, Kremlin headquarters feared a general strike. The costs of the work stoppage were enormous, and the loss of energy strained industrial production. Gorbachov saw himself forced to propose anti-strike legislation to the Supreme Soviet which would practically prohibit strikes in the country. That was rejected, because of threats from the people. A formulation was decided upon whereby no strikes were to take place for 18 months. But because no one heeded that, the situation has become increasingly chaotic.

Revolution in Central Europe

The second manifestation of forces from the people that brought the entire situation into disorder, achieved historic

levels when three great people's movements wrote uncensored world history: The Hungarian people, the German people in the part of their country that was previously suppressed, and the Czechoslovaks were able to force the complete dissolution of the postwar order by their clear, demonstrative rejection of the conditions of power and life imposed by the Soviets.

The Kremlin's calculation, that left-oriented regimes friendly to the Soviets could succeed the governments that had become intolerable, was not borne out. The other Eastern European peoples were able to force through essential changes in 1989, but were not able to force an entirely new order. In Poland, the Solidarnosc government, the Armed Forces, and the internal order of the state were controlled in part by Russophilic communist functionaries, in part by KGB agents, so it still isn't certain whether, in light of the catastrophic conditions in the country, a recovery of this society, which has been exploited for years, is possible without a revolutionary purge. In tormented Romania, the dictatorship of the Ceausescu family was brought through revolution to a bloody end, but circumstances there make a civil war seem both possible and probable. Bulgaria is on the way to gradually liberating itself from the burden of its difficult past, after the forced resignation of Zhivkov and its first elections. Still, communist Yugoslavia, which does not belong to the communist sphere of power, cannot survive as a multi-peopled state of opposing interests and national cultures. The efforts by the Serbian majority and the strangulation of the Albanian minority in Kosovo will also lead to a civil war, unless the red fascism of Serbian communist party leader Slobodan Milosevic in Belgrade is eliminated.

Thus the Soviet Union stands, relative to the 45-year strategic buffer extending into Central Europe that it has developed, before a task that is depressing the ruling elite and the older generation: that of releasing this space all the way to its own western border and of withdrawing its occupation forces from those countries. They must surrender their victors' trophies from World War II, German land to the Elbe to the people of Germany, within the context of peoples' right to self-determination.

As the many diplomatic and undiplomatic attempts to delay, to raise the stakes, and to impose foreign power show, the Kremlin has not at all given up its goal of neutralizing of Germany. Further, it is also striving for the denuclearization of Europe, without surrendering its own position as a military superpower. Thus Moscow, now as before, will have available the superior military power in Eurasia. The military potential of the other European states will be, in any case, less. The old strategic goal, of enticing the United States out of Europe, has been tabled only until a justification for Russian troops remaining on German soil has been found and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) negotiations over Germany make the participation of the United States and Canada necessary. Allied in a friend-



East German demonstrators in Leipzig, in February 1990. The banner reads: "Red gang get out of our country!" Moscow was disappointed to find that the countries of Eastern and Central Europe that had just swept out the hated communists, were not interested in putting leftist, pro-Soviet regimes in their place.

Laurent Mancel

ly way to Germany, an economic giant close to home and aware of its obligation to deliver the goods, would create a blissful security for the Kremlin in Lenin's sense (1922: "Germany and the electrification of the Soviet Union will secure us world victory.")

The Baltic question

The new Russia of 2010 could then make its way proudly in the world, as we hear from Eastern public relations men whose profession it is to look into the future. To bring to fruition these conceptions and distant plans of Moscow, and also some medium-term scenarios, the Kremlin must prevent the Baltic, with its higher cultural level, from freely drifting toward Europe and forming a permanent area hostile to Russia. The three Baltic countries—Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia, from 1918 to 1940 free democratic, parliamentary republics that were occupied by the Red Army and forcibly partitioned as Soviet republics by the Hitler-Stalin Pact and subsequent Soviet ultimatums—are, as a result of their eventful history, Scandinavian, German, and Polish, with their own empire that extended to Kiev (at the end of 1667); they are culturally developed, and religiously either Roman Catholic or Lutheran, and thus completely oriented toward the West.

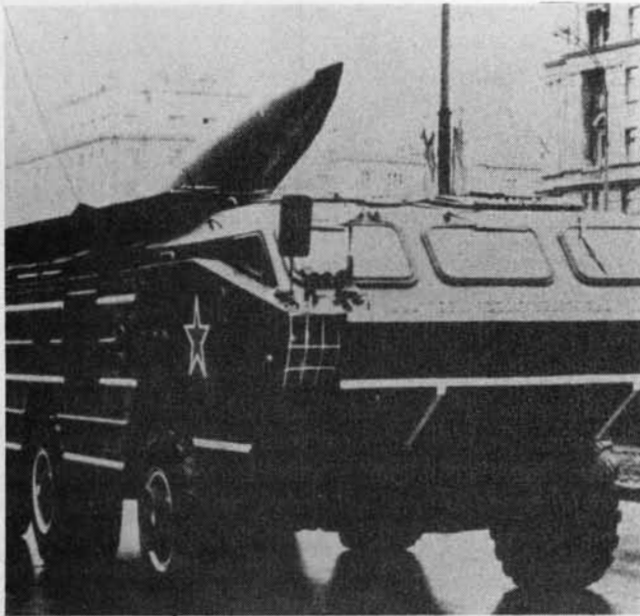
Gorbachov has denied, to the point of desperation, the existence of the diabolical secret treaty between Hitler and Stalin, and likewise the Soviet murder of 40,000 Polish officers and intellectuals, until the proof from a German private archive and the evidence from excavations and some new discoveries meant that the truth could no longer be denied. Now, he lyingly argues that the Baltic people had officially professed their loyalty to the Soviet Union, and that their declarations of independence were in violation of the consti-

tutions. This repulsive trampling of the right of self-determination, which in Helsinki in 1975 Moscow solemnly guaranteed for all peoples, gives us more of a sense of the spirit that dominates the Kremlin today than all Gorbachov's grand theatrical gestures and promises. It was and therefore is legally incomprehensible, and is merely a matter of power politics, that at the two summit meetings at Malta and Washington, D.C., the President of the United States did not remind the Soviets about keeping their promises in an unambiguous and recognizable fashion before the entire world, as Reagan had done previously.

This terrifyingly naive or cynical pretext, of the supposed necessity of supporting Gorbachov, recalls Yalta in 1944, the fundamental error of Western policy, which prescribed the division of Europe and established the bipolar system of Washington and Moscow. It also recalls President Carter's fondness for Brezhnev, despite the shameless deception over rearmament that the CIA sufficiently documented. The bitter consequence: In Azerbaidzhan, the civil war occurs with the deployment of tanks in the capital of Baku, creating misery and more misery for the human beings there; in Lithuania, the military rattling of sabers and blockade, to force the government to its knees. We ask ourselves, whether a drawn-out change in power in the Kremlin justifies the price of sacrificing convictions, even of betrayal at the crucial moment of people who bravely wanted to throw off a foreign power. Can we only think in the categories of often cowardly pragmatism? Is that the fitness to lead an almost worldwide alliance of freedom?

How powerful is the military?

Step 14 in the Soviet process of decline was reached in the spring of 1990, which, despite the mild winter and despite



U.S. Department of Defense

Gorbachov is relatively certain that the Soviet military will not rise up to threaten his rule. Military officers are watched day and night by the security forces, plus the continuing supply of new equipment for the Armed Forces shows that the political leadership is not about to abandon the military.

deliveries of food from the European Community as well as generous Western credits, brought further deterioration in food supplies for the population. The economic situation forced Premier Ryzhkov to introduce (far too late) a motion in the Supreme Soviet for a transition to a market economy in the Soviet Union. To put pressure on the deputies, he put his political future on the line. The privatization of the exhausted economy and of social life, reform of the financial, banking, and pricing systems, as well as the introduction of a convertible ruble, no longer seem to be deferrable, as was seen from the analysis of a major commission of experts. There were tumultuous controversies in parliament; opponents of the proposal said that a 180-degree turn of this excessive sort would be suicide, and could not be asked of the masses. While this quarrel continued as it had before, the population of the cities was gripped by fear of the coming food crisis, more so than those living in the countryside. This was seen in hysterical purchasing for purposes of hoarding and the introduction of rationing even in Moscow. The official explanation, "There is no other way," says it all.

A further delay of the perestroika program, using the typical Gorbachovian tactic of indecision, no longer works, since time has been used up. Critics of the President point to the fact that in his over 63 months in office, he has left everything that demanded serious decisions up in the air. The Soviet population sees in Gorbachov 1990 merely a failure, as he was literally called on signs carried in demonstrations. One essential factor in his loss of popularity was that, forced

by the Politburo, he had to accept a failure in Lithuania, both in the streets and at a meeting with the leadership there, without ultimately being able to achieve recognition through force. He and his advisers knew, on the other hand, that military compulsion in the Baltic could set off a civil war that would necessarily lead to a loss of Western good will with all its attendant consequences.

Perplexity is now Gorbachov's daily companion. Were he not capable of such obstinacy and iron hardness, the lasting war of nerves would have long since destroyed him, since his lucky talent of self-presentation reflects only a portion of his personality. What man in his unique position would, for example, have said openly that a grim military marshal would take over his position if no one were to help him? With the coldest calculation, he conjured up a dark picture of the future to manipulate the fears of Western politicians. He accepted the price of humiliating the military and creating suspicion of it, because he is relatively certain that Bonapartism could hardly develop within the Soviet Armed Forces. This third, military pillar of the system's power is watched closely, day and night, from top to bottom, by the fourth, the security apparatus, aided by the political administration, which is present everywhere. There were still independent impulses from the merely military in the time of Marshal Georgi Zhukov, but that was quickly cauterized by Stalin and secret service head Lavrenti Beria, systematically and very painfully. Recent attempts at political influence from the realm of then-Chief of the General Staff Nikolai Ogarkov were extraordinarily gruffly rejected by Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov, with the concurrence of the KGB, at the end of the Brezhnev period, although the old Brezhnev was in bondage to the military.

We must learn to regard the Soviet military according to feudal models drawn from the Age of Absolutism. As soon as they attain prominent service at the rank of colonel or higher and assume command positions, they belong to the most closely watched of the petty courtiers to the Kremlin mighty. They are allowed to work up proposals and studies. And what would happen, given the normal conditions of the police state, to one of their own significantly strengthened special internal security troops (grown to seven divisions since 1989), if a battalion or regiment went berserk with live ammunition? Only if chaos breaks out as the result of a nationwide discontent that overtaxes the capacities of the security apparatus, if a general strike knocks everything out of kilter, will intramilitary battles become possible. In this connection, the Air Force and the rocket troops will make the difference between success and failure.

Disarmament talks since Gorbachov's accession to power, the discharge of military school graduates, and the nationality problems extending even into the military forces themselves, have naturally made the Armed Forces quite insecure. Over 1,200 soldiers deserted during battles in the Caucasus. There is also considerable resistance and hesitation concern-

ing the party abandoning its monopoly of power. On the other hand, many officers do not feel themselves bound by the orders of the party. The continuing rearmament with new equipment, new tanks, and so forth, however, shows unequivocally that the political leadership is not going to abandon the military. In the Navy, there is positive recognition of there being more new equipment now than in many years. Here, the discrepancies between the inflation of Gorbachov's disarmament proposals and reality are dramatically revealed. In Scandinavia, there is great concern about current construction of mammoth strategic positions on the Kola Peninsula.

The end, or . . .

Step 15 in this tragic process of decline and decay of the Soviet Union was determined by the sensational loss of authority of the most powerful figure in the Kremlin reviewing stand, by the appearance of an opposing power, and by the rise of group pluralism. How politely oriented and totally blinded the reaction of many politicians and public opinion-makers was to the tens of thousands of shrieks and catcalls against Gorbachov, the new Czar-President, and the disparaging comments on Boris Yeltsin's electoral victory; this considerably damaged the urgently necessary insight in the West into the Soviet processes, which still need explanation. However, 1990 is the year of decision. Here, as there, it is a matter of nuances.

Gorbachov has tried everything possible, and has wasted much valuable time. He intends to introduce a real reform with a popular election; he hopes to prevent the dissolution of the empire with presidential power. Too late! As history proves, all reformist Russian czars have failed. And Gorbachov will fail because his technical knowledge for the judgment of such powerful economic and political reforms has not been sufficient. An administrator who does not know that his task cannot be accomplished, has failed as soon as he begins.

The Soviet Union is not capable of reform in and through this system. Whoever would help from outside, will only help to prolong the existence of the system. The classical factors for judgment—the power structure, human potential, time, spatial conditions, and economic potential, including logistics—seem to confirm the incapacity for reform. What most importantly needs reform in this country, is transportation. Now, there is none that deserves the name. Even formerly functioning transportation connections are now completely ruined and have collapsed. The ruling elite is completely burned out. The “monster KGB,” as Yeltsin called it, is under presidential oversight, and is buying up agents let go by East Germany. It keeps watch over the system of professional liars, its environment. The Soviet Union is selling gold by the ton in order to obtain urgently needed hard currency, and has stopped payments to Western creditors and businessmen.



Soviet farm transportation. What most urgently needs reform in the Soviet Union is the transport system, which has deteriorated even from its previous level of Third World backwardness.

In Kirghizia, there are 107 dead in the revolt against the central power; flags showing the crescent moon of Islam were hoisted, and the Central Committee building was set on fire. The ministers of defense of the Warsaw Pact met in East Berlin, and each one knows it will be the last time that this large number will meet. The Council of Mutual Economic Assistance knows of the Czechs, the Slovaks, and the Hungarians' intentions to change sides and join the European Community, while Moscow sends a tank expedition through Azerbaidzhan to Armenia, to break up, using military force, the long-term blockade that stemmed from the strike.

In the Soviet Union as a whole, there are currently over 200 parties; new sects and religions are pulling in thousands. This society, crippled by the levelers of collective equality, is breaking out of its old identity. But they live in a political kindergarten. Gorbachov receives an audience with the Pope, well knowing that the Old Catholic United Church in Ukraine will no longer allow itself to be classified as illegal, and that everything there is in confusion. The people's fronts in all 15 republics reached a breakthrough in the spring 1990 elections, just as Yeltsin was elected President of Russia on the third ballot, despite continuing obstacles provided by the

KGB. Now clearly recognizable as political parties are Democratic Russia, represented by over 200 deputies in the Congress of People's Deputies, along with the Democratic Platform, which aims at splitting the CPSU; the Russian Christian Movement, already represented in the Supreme Soviet; the Social Democratic Workers Party, also in the Supreme Soviet; the right-radical Democratic Union; and, Pamyat, a growing group with patriotic-Russian, anti-Semitic-fascistoid tendencies, which cooperates with the Republican People's Party.

If there is a necessity of vital importance in these final days, which will also be a time of birth for something new, then all people of good will in the West must support the so-called Westernizers, that is, Soviet citizens who, like the reformer Czar Peter the Great, wish to knock on and open widely a window to the West. If many do that, as politicians, as businessmen, as tourists, and groups, and so forth, Moscow can be turned out of its wrong direction away from Western culture, and in the direction of human dignity and individual freedom, despite all the great encumbrances that the near future will bring.

In written history, there is no example for stopping and turning around a social development that is moving in a natural direction toward withering away, if the social forces in their leading functions and leading positions are used up, and are no longer capable of reacting in an appropriate manner to the challenges that they confront. Gorbachov said in

Lithuania in January 1990 that the Soviet Union is like a large ship, on which everything can take a turn for the better if everyone sticks together. But that is only an approximately acceptable image. Gorbachov, the illusionist of a false theory that is dying, does not have the power to recognize the real image, which looks quite different.

The ship has hit a reef that is causing fatally excessive demands; water is pouring rapidly into the machine room and supply areas. The party's pumps, in total collapse, no longer work. On the upper decks, confusion, fear, despair, and rage reign, because here the prisoners are locked up who recognized that the ship is foundering, but do not know what fate awaits them. There are too few lifeboats to offer any hope. Up top, beneath the command bridge, in sight of the ocean, the last prisoners taken on board are already partly free. They were able to force some of the crew to give away their life jackets, and have jumped overboard. The captain and his officers are close to panic; the radio has also ceased to function. Whoever still claims that all that can be stopped and turned around, is as blind as the ship's leadership. No one will come back on board from the water, not even through the compulsion of armed force, since they can already recognize, off in the distance, an island of freedom. The prisoners below deck must free themselves; they have no choice, for there will be no help from outside. Whether the now fearful, very uncertain crew of guards will use their weapons, cannot be foreseen.

In Defense Policy
and as a
Military Phenomenon

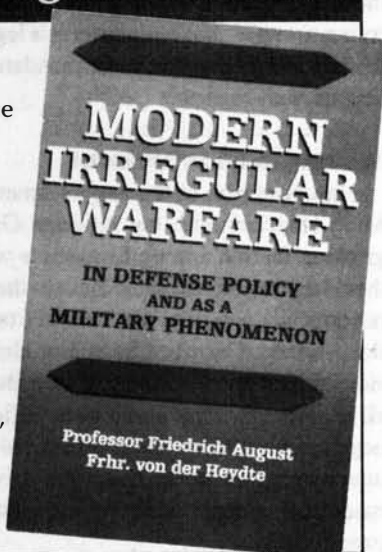
Modern Irregular Warfare

by Professor
Friedrich August
Frhr. von der Heydte

Order from:

Ben Franklin
Booksellers, Inc.
27 South King St.
Leesburg, VA 22075

\$9.95 plus shipping
(\$1.50 for first book,
\$.50 for each
additional book.)
Bulk rates available.



**A TOTAL WAR
STRATEGY AGAINST
PEKING**

by Gen. Teng Chieh

"All we need do is to understand how to make the most of our strengths to attack the enemy's weaknesses. Then we can snatch victory out of the jaws of defeat. The Chinese Communist Party is extremely weak. Just like a paper tiger—one poke and you could pierce it through. All the masses on the mainland are opposed to communism."

—Gen. Teng Chieh

This amazing little book by one of the top leaders of Taiwan's Kuomintang party, published by Chinese Flag Monthly in December 1988, charted the course for the Chinese students' revolution that erupted just a few months later. Preface by Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr.

Exclusive U.S. distributor:
Ben Franklin Booksellers
27 South King St.
Leesburg, VA 22075
(703) 777-3661

\$5.99 (plus \$1.50 postage and handling
for first book, \$.50 for each additional
book). Virginia residents add 4½% tax.