

PERESTROIKA--A NEW STAGE IN SOVIET REFORM

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## ABSTRACT

*Perestroika*, unlike previous attempts at economic reform, represents the beginning of a new era in post-war Soviet politics. If one were to categorize the major Soviet leaders since Stalin it would be more accurate to term Khrushchev a liberal Stalinist, Brezhnev a conservative Stalinist, and Gorbachev, may be properly classified as an anti-Stalinist. Gorbachev's accession to power represents the beginning of what might be termed post-post-Stalin reform.

To illustrate the uniqueness of *perestroika*, this thesis is structured around a comparison of Gorbachev's economic, political, and social reforms with those of Nikita Khrushchev. A contrast with Khrushchev is necessary because it is impossible to determine the uniqueness of *perestroika* and to draw informed conclusions about Gorbachev unless the record of the first-post Stalin reformer is examined.

Because Gorbachev and Khrushchev are both reformers, it is to be expected that they should share certain common objectives. But the similarities are far less significant than the differences. The differences between Gorbachev's and Khrushchev's approaches to reform are a function both of substantive policy differences and historical circumstance.

### Historical Context

Khrushchev came to power at a time when the Soviet Union was weak relative to the United States. Externally,

the most pressing need was for the Soviet Union to achieve military parity with the United States. Internally, Khrushchev's first years were ones of struggle for absolute leadership with other Politburo figures who had differing notions of reform. The world that Brezhnev and his successors bequeathed to Gorbachev bore little resemblance to the one which Stalin left to Khrushchev. By the time of Gorbachev's accession to power, the Soviet Union had become the military equal of the United States.

#### Political Reform

Khrushchev's main objective was to weaken the power of the bureaucracy largely in order to enhance his own personal power. Gorbachev's focus is less Stalin than it is the Stalinist system. The lack of subordination of political and economic reform to the pursuit of personal one-man rule marks *perestroika* as a distinct improvement over de-Stalinization.

#### Economic Reform

In economic policy, Khrushchev followed Stalin's practice of meeting economic problems with administrative measures. Although Khrushchev made his reputation by denouncing Stalin's leadership, he did nothing to address the root of the Soviet Union's troubles--the Stalinist economic system. *Perestroika* is theoretically superior to de-Stalinization because Gorbachev eschews administrative tinkering in favour of economic change. Gorbachev has rediscovered the co-operative socialism and limited

tolerance for free-enterprise of the 1920s. The implication of this return to 'Leninism' is an admission that the Stalinist system is a failure.

#### CONCLUSION

The essence of Khrushchev's reforms, and their subsequent failure, can be traced to his fixation with appearance over substance. For all of his 'liberal' reforms, Khrushchev is essentially a 'Stalinist' politician. Perestroika is superior to de-Stalinization both because of historical circumstance and substantive philosophical differences. Gorbachev's return to Leninist principles effectively ends the period of reformed Stalinism. But the objective need for reform does imply its necessary success. There are many obstacles to effecting deep change in the Soviet Union, obstacles which cannot be surmounted soon. It cannot be expected that a people will cast off the habits of a lifetime. Nonetheless, Gorbachev's reforms are rigorous and potentially longlasting, as opposed to Khrushchev's 'administrative' changes which did not really address the flaws of the Soviet system.

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## INTRODUCTION

My purpose in writing this thesis is to demonstrate that Mikhail Gorbachev's program of perestroika, or restructuring, marks the beginning of a new stage in post-war Soviet politics. To defend this position, I will contrast perestroika with Nikita Khrushchev's de-Stalinization reforms of the 1950s and 1960s. A contrast with Khrushchev is necessary because it is impossible to draw informed conclusions about Gorbachev unless the record of the first post-Stalin reformer is examined.

It is incumbent upon us, as would-be interpreters of perestroika, to understand the theory and practice of Khrushchev's reforms in order to determine why he was ousted and to conclude therefrom what significance his political demise may mean for Gorbachev. Without an appreciation of previous reforms and the context in which such changes take place, any analysis or prognosis of perestroika is ahistorical and hence devoid of meaning. As Stephen Cohen observed, "...most Sovietological studies of conflict [over change] in post-Stalin politics lack any historical dimension, whereas much of that conflict actually grows out of--and thus cannot be fully understood apart from--the historical events...."<sup>1</sup> To build the proper historical foundation for a discussion of perestroika, this thesis begins with the event that inaugurated the era of de-Stalinization--the death of Joseph Stalin.

## Reform--A Historic Overview

The fact that Stalin died in March, 1953 did not diminish the influence his criminal past and his centralized economic system had on future generations of Soviet decision-makers. With his death, the task of his successors was to reform the terroristic Stalinist political system while being careful to avoid precipitating a genuine, comprehensive debate on the Soviet system and Stalin's leadership.

Khrushchev's de-Stalinization represents the first stage of post-Stalin reform. In fact, all post-Stalin reform is essentially de-Stalinization. How a leader deals with the 'Stalin question' classifies him either as a 'liberal' or 'conservative' reformer. Some might object to my use of the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative' with respect to Soviet politics. These labels have a very specific meaning in Western culture and are based upon the value-laden notions of Lockean or Burkean democracy with their attendant virtues of laissez-faire capitalism, individual rights and universal suffrage. In this thesis I employ 'liberal' and 'conservative' in the broadest sense: 'liberal' refers to a reformer who seeks to effect economic and political change. The 'liberal' reformer recognizes that economic reform requires political reform and that political reform requires a proper understanding of history. Broadly speaking, Khrushchev's 'liberalism' was based upon a willingness to expose Stalin's failures to discredit his personal rule,



while leaving the basic Stalinist approach to government and economic policy intact.

Ultimately, though, Khrushchev was turned out of office in 1964 by 'conservatives' who were uncomfortable with Khrushchev's unorthodoxy. The dominant characteristic of the 'conservative' leadership that followed Khrushchev was a quiet continuation of established Khrushchevian social and economic reforms at the mid-bureaucratic level, coupled with a reimposition of bureaucratic authority at the highest political level. This reimposition of bureaucratic order required an end to challenges to Soviet authority. Thus, the Brezhnev leadership terminated Khrushchev's historical revisionism in favour of the positive re-evaluation of Stalin, his cult, and his policies.

This reimposition of bureaucratic authority should not be taken to mean that the post-Khrushchev leadership formally abjured reform. In fact, the Brezhnev/Kosygin era may be understood not as a struggle between reformist and anti-reformist forces, as it is often argued, but rather as a competition between two competing approaches to reform. As the reader will discover, one of the dominant themes of this thesis is the concept of reform as a constant feature of Soviet politics from 1953 to the present. It is better to think of post-Stalinist Soviet history as a sequence of leaderships dedicated to differing understandings of reform. If one were to categorize the major Soviet leaders since Stalin it would be more accurate to term Khrushchev a

liberal Stalinist, Brezhnev a conservative Stalinist, and Gorbachev, may be properly classified as an anti-Stalinist. Gorbachev's accession to power represents the beginning of what might be termed post-post-Stalin reform.

Because of the rarity of predominantly reformist governments throughout Soviet (and Russian) history, it is easy to come to the conclusion that Gorbachev, like previous reformers, is a political phenomenon who will last only so long as it takes a conservative reaction to reassert the primacy of the status quo. The first reform, the New Economic Policy of the 1920s, was extinguished by Stalin's coercive centralism after only eight years, and Khrushchev's decade of de-Stalinization from 1953 to 1964 gave way to an eighteen-year long conservative rule under Leonid Brezhnev when reform was subordinated to the need for order and centralization.

Although Brezhnev's Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Aleksei Kosygin, opposed Khrushchev's political and cultural 'democratizations', he was enough of a realist to recognize the merit in Khrushchev's intent to decentralize economic decision-making. Kosygin put forth some modest economic reforms, but in 1965 the time for reform and the will to experiment had passed. Throughout the 1960s, Kosygin was sabotaged in his efforts by the bureaucracy and even by Brezhnev himself.<sup>2</sup> The end for reform formally came in July, 1979 in the form of a joint resolution of the Central Committee and the Council of

Ministers which nullified most of his reform's decentralization provisions.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout this thesis I have included Brezhnev in my treatment of Khrushchev and de-Stalinization because Khrushchev and Brezhnev represent the expansion and contraction of one reformist movement. It is tempting to resort to historical stereotype to depict Khrushchev as the reformer and Brezhnev as the neo-Stalinist anti-reformer who snuffed out attempts to relax the Soviet Union, yet it would be more accurate to say that the Brezhnev era represented the consolidation phase of Khrushchev's Stalinism. Beginning in 1964, the Brezhnev/Kosygin leadership "tempered and administered accomplished reforms as parts of the status quo...."<sup>4</sup> As Richard Lowenthal wrote in 1965, "Khrushchev was replaced not by his 'conservative critics' but by his own designated successors--men who have hastened to renew their commitment to the decisions of the three Khrushchevian congresses and to the 'revisionist' program of 1961...."<sup>5</sup> Thus, the Brezhnev period from 1965 to Gorbachev's accession to power should be seen not as a reversal of reform, but as the minimalization of change and as such should be understood as the winter of post-Stalin reform.<sup>6</sup>

The fate of Kosygin's reforms, though, is not a proper reference point from which to derive conclusions about Gorbachev's perestroika, since Kosygin was not General Secretary and thus could not direct the course of Soviet policy. The correct antecedent for Gorbachev, therefore, is

Nikita Khrushchev who was both First Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Ministers for most of his career. But before proceeding to a comparative study of Khrushchev and Gorbachev, some understanding about perestroika, itself, is in order.

#### **PERESTROIKA**

Mikhail Gorbachev's rise to power has not only changed the way we perceive the Soviet Union, it has changed the way we talk about it. Since he announced his plan for 'radical reform' at the 27th Party Congress, no book, article, or commentary is complete without at least a passing reference to *glasnost*, *perestroika*, or *samokritika*. The latter two terms are easily translated as 'restructuring' and 'self-criticism', respectively. *Glasnost*, however, is less precisely understood.

The noun '*glasnost*' is translated either as 'openness' or 'publicity' and is derived from the adjective *glasnyy* which means, among other things, 'public' or 'open' as in the case of *glasnyy sud*--a 'public' or 'open' trial. It would therefore seem that both 'publicity' and 'openness' are equally acceptable translations of *glasnost*; in fact 'openness' is the generally accepted English equivalent. As a translation, however, 'openness' is inadequate because it does not give an accurate rendering of the Russian sense of the word and because it assumes a commonality of interpretation between Russian and English.

In English, the word 'open' in the context of revealing information, carries with it a sense of propriety, honesty, and disclosure. We speak of being 'open and above board' in business dealings; a political candidate under public scrutiny wishing to play up his honesty may claim that his life is 'an open book'; and open Western societies in general are based upon the principle of 'free and open enquiry'. In the Soviet Union, all actions are taken within the context of Marxist-Leninist instrumentalism. Nothing in Soviet life or politics is 'free' or 'open'; personal liberty does not have independent meaning or existence. Of course, Gorbachev is not Lenin, and the 1980s are not the 1920s, but Gorbachev is nonetheless a Russian and is therefore an heir to, and a product of, the spirit of autocracy and the legacies of Marx and Lenin which pervade Soviet politics.

In the Soviet mind, Western liberalism is closely associated with a lack of commitment to hard work, irresponsibility and permissiveness--traits which have become synonymous with the very Brezhnevism that Gorbachev seeks to uproot.<sup>7</sup> When Gorbachev speaks of the need to 'democratize' Soviet society, he may appear to be describing a form of democracy not too dissimilar from the Western notion, particularly when he hails democracy as "the wholesome and pure air without which the socialist organism cannot lead a full life."<sup>8</sup> However, it is not democracy but the Russian affinity for strong central authority which

forms the basis of glasnost. Writing in the 1920s Nicolas Berdyaev observed that

liberal ideas, ideas of right as well as ideas of social reform, appeared in Russia to be utopian. Bolshevism on the other hand showed itself to be much less utopian and much more realist, much more ...faithful to certain primordial Russian traditions, to the Russian search for universal justice, understood in a maximalizing sense and to the Russian method of government and control by coercion.<sup>9</sup>

'Publicity' is the preferred translation of glasnost because it is neutral, that is, it is not laden with Western normative biases. Glasnyy, the adjective from which glasnost is derived, is itself derived from the noun golos, which means 'voice'. It would be more correct to understand the policy of glasnost as one of promoting the expression, or 'voicing', of differing opinions in order to "undermine the entrenched interests of the bureaucracy and ...expose those individuals and practices that stand in the way of his reforms....[It is not] an across the board liberalization."<sup>10</sup> The English word 'publicity', therefore, is the preferred translation because it is a word that describes glasnost but does not presume to interpret it.

Another benefit of 'publicity' over 'openness' is that 'publicity' does not breed unrealistic expectations about Gorbachev's reform in Western minds. On the one extreme, die-hard pessimists, who hold to an intractable, monolithic image of the Soviet Union, view any talk of progressive change with a jaundiced eye. Members of this school, like Richard Pipes and Robert Conquest, doubt that a Gorbachev-

led Politburo would differ very much from previous leaderships, all of which are seen as hostile to all things Western and bent on world domination. Change when it does occur, is seen as a tactical retreat necessitated by "failures, instabilities and fears of collapse."<sup>11</sup> No amount of reform would make any difference because reform would necessarily lead to power sharing and ultimately to political pluralism. Because these are anathema to the Soviet state any talk of reform as 'openness' is ipso facto absurd.<sup>12</sup>

Understood in the Western sense of the word, this statement appears to be reasonable but when applied to Soviet society, a society which has never experienced Western-style democracy, it betrays a lack of appreciation for the degree of centralization and authoritarianism in Soviet society and government. One need only look at changes in Soviet society that have taken place since the Great Terror to realize that reform qua reform is possible. Since Stalin's death we have seen the end of twenty-five years of official terror, a reduced police force, a curb on administrative and bureaucratic abuses, and the limited toleration of dissent. The greatest change has been the end to one-man dictatorship. In the wake of Stalin's death, Stephen Cohen has argued that there has actually developed "something akin to two distinct parties--reformist and conservative--...inside Soviet officialdom and even inside

the Communist Party itself, counterposing rival interests, policies, ideas and values in all political quarters."<sup>13</sup>

This conclusion of Cohen's is perfectly understandable. While there may not be the overt competition of views in the Soviet Union that we see in Western societies, a one-party government must by definition play host to all political views and persuasions, open or concealed. With the end of Stalin's despotic grip on the apparatus of government, non-conformist, that is, 'anti-Stalinist' views within the Communist Party, such as those of Khrushchev, could find expression and even official sanction. The very existence of such views should demonstrate that the great monolith of the Soviet political apparatus is not so immutable as conservatives would have us believe.

Many optimists in the West have hailed the selection of Gorbachev as General Secretary as a watershed in Soviet affairs, but this has been done almost exclusively on the basis of personality. Gorbachev's youth and dynamism stood in such marked contrast to the lethargy of his superannuated predecessors that he was judged to be a strong leader almost by default. Assessments about Gorbachev's charisma and competence were thus not so much made on the basis of his statements and speeches as they were on the image of charisma and competence that television projected.<sup>14</sup>

One sovietologist noted for his dovish views went so far as to deduce that Gorbachev consciously selected February 25th as the date for the 27th Communist Party



Congress in order to mark the 30th anniversary of Khrushchev's 1956 Secret Speech.<sup>15</sup> In addition, it was deduced that this act would presage a rehabilitation of Khrushchev and a more honest treatment of Stalin. As it turned out, Gorbachev did not rehabilitate Khrushchev, Stalin was not discussed, and the date selected for the 27th Party Congress was undoubtedly the result of coincidence. A proper understanding of glasnost may have tempered such premature enthusiasm. As columnist George Will observed, there have been people in every generation since the 1950s who have initially seen every successive Soviet leader as 'moderate' only to be disillusioned by the persistent fact that Soviets do not share Western political values.<sup>16</sup>

Clearly, such a priori assessments of Gorbachev do nothing to further understanding of his prospects for reform. To make an informed judgment about Gorbachev, it is vital that this thesis begin with a discussion of the historical context in which Gorbachev must operate, how it affects his political decisions, and how this context does or does not differ from that faced by Khrushchev. It is only in this manner that it is possible to determine whether Gorbachev's rule will inaugurate a long-term trend of reformist ascendancy or wind up as just another episode in the "congenital seesawing between openness and ossification" in Soviet politics.<sup>17</sup>

## CHAPTER I

### The Historical Context

This thesis begins with a comparison of the historical circumstances surrounding Khrushchev's and Gorbachev's rise to power. It is in part the differences in the legacies bequeathed to Khrushchev and Gorbachev by Stalin and Brezhnev, respectively, that lie at the heart of the contrasting natures of de-Stalinization and perestroika. The first part of this chapter examines the external and internal inheritances of Khrushchev and Gorbachev. The second part takes up the discussion of their policies in the context of their respective backgrounds.

#### KHRUSHCHEV'S INHERITANCE External Conditions

In the year that Stalin died, the Soviet Union faced a very hostile world. It had suffered great losses during the purges, the Terror, the collectivization and the Second World War. The state of the Soviet armed forces was also vastly inferior, qualitatively at least, to those of the United States. Regarding the latter, the inferiority of the Soviet Union was most evident in nuclear arms. Thus, in 1953 questions of national security continued to be of paramount political and economic importance. Khrushchev saw the function of military policy as designed to acquire "...a capacity to secure and enforce the fruits of victory [(from World War II)]...[and]...be sufficient in peacetime to allow

Soviet leaders to pursue their ambitions in an environment in which the danger of war would be minimized."<sup>1</sup>

The most pressing need was for the Soviet Union to be able, or perceived to be able, to be the military equal of the United States. The Soviet Union's inability to assert itself militarily was graphically illustrated when President Kennedy forced Khrushchev to withdraw nuclear missiles from Cuba in October, 1962. As Strobe Talbott explains the event, the humiliation of the Cuban Missile Crisis "clearly stimulated the Soviet Union's decision to undertake [a] twenty-year military build-up of which the SS-20 program was one of the most visible and troublesome manifestations."<sup>2</sup> The SS-20 was the Soviet Union's first MIRVed intermediate-range ballistic missile. To offset the U.S. superiority in strategic nuclear missiles over the short term, Khrushchev initiated the development of a class of missiles with capabilities that were able to challenge American nuclear power in areas of development that were "vacated or neglected by the West."<sup>3</sup> In other words, the development of the SS-20 was to achieve something resembling equality with the United States by developing an offsetting superiority in medium-range missiles, thus imposing an "asymmetrical anxiety" on the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

The need to minimize the risk of total war with the West while striving toward nuclear parity with the United States required a drastic increase in Soviet nuclear military capability. Khrushchev, like Malenkov, affirmed

that nuclear weapons had so changed the destructive potential of war that missiles alone were adequate to deter an attack. What mattered was not troops and equipment but the quality and quantity of one's nuclear arsenal.

The Soviet Union's nuclear capability effectively began with the successful launch of the Sputnik I satellite in October, 1957. More important than the satellite, though, was the SS-6 'Sapwood' booster rocket that launched it. The SS-6 was the first rocket to have intercontinental range. The invention of the first *de facto* ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) gave the impression that that Soviet military technology was more advanced than that of the United States, and Khrushchev sought to exploit this perception of the Soviet Union's nuclear capabilities. At a ceremonial session of the Supreme Soviet soon after the Sputnik launch, Khrushchev proposed a "high-level meeting of capitalist and socialist countries so as to reach an agreement based on the considerations of true reality."<sup>5</sup> In January 1960, Khrushchev boasted that the Soviet Union "'possess[ed] the absolute weapon', that Soviet missiles were so accurate they could hit a 'fly in outer space'"<sup>6</sup>

The bombastic rhetoric of Khrushchev's nuclear policy served primarily to mask severe shortcomings in Soviet rocketry. The appearance of superiority as being more important than actual ability is a characteristic typical of Khrushchev's approach to politics. An example of Khrushchev's preoccupation with pretense is reflected in the

cynical attitude he adopted toward nuclear disarmament. Khrushchev maintained that there were two levels to arms negotiations: real negotiations and the trumpeting of disarmament as a form of propaganda.<sup>7</sup> As he told Arkady Shevchenko, former Undersecretary General of the United Nations: "Never forget...the appeal that the idea of disarmament has in the outside world. All you have to do is say 'I'm in favor of it' and that pays big dividends....A seductive slogan is a most powerful political instrument."<sup>8</sup> Shevchenko believed Khrushchev's adoption of Lenin's credo of 'peaceful coexistence' was merely a "smokescreen" to obscure his plans to expand Soviet influence."<sup>9</sup>

Shevchenko's assessment is largely correct because, during Khrushchev's leadership, the Soviet Union changed from the inward-looking isolationist giant of Stalin's time to a major player in international relations. Khrushchev's inroads into the Third World in search of political allies represent the Soviet Union's desire to be able to compete with the United States as a world superpower and the need to be recognized as a political, military and economic co-equal of the United States.

Because of the emphasis placed upon military development, particularly in nuclear weapons, the military-industrial complex had first call on the intellectual, financial, and natural resources of the Soviet Union. Consequently, any notion of diverting resources away from

the military to effect deep, structural reform of the heavy-industry based Stalinist economic model was not possible.

### Internal Conditions

The domestic political environment of the immediate post-Stalin period presented the government of the day with two daunting challenges. The first was the task of rebuilding a national economy in the wake of the Second World War. In order to avoid stagnation, Georgii Malenkov, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, said in the summer of 1953 that the state must

raise sharply in 2 or 3 years the population's supply of foodstuffs, meat, and meat produce, fish, and fish products, butter, sugar, eggs, confectionary, textiles, clothes footwear, crockery, furniture, and other cultural and household goods.<sup>10</sup>

Khrushchev, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, would echo this preoccupation with speed throughout his leadership. At the 1954 Central Committee Plenum, for example, Khrushchev repeatedly insisted that measures to increase agricultural production had to be accomplished "in the next 2-3 years."<sup>11</sup> Khrushchev's preoccupation with appearance and speed is reflected in his frequent excursions and marathon speaking tours which took him among the people, especially in the countryside. On these frequent trips, he would exhort farmers to meet often unrealistic and unrealizable goals. Khrushchev's frequent outbursts of élan and fervour were attempts to combine Lenin's revolutionary fervour with Stalin's mobilizing energies.<sup>12</sup> These frequent trips also served the ulterior motive of allowing Khrushchev

to gain maximum exposure and to accentuate the indispensability of his leadership as a man who could get things done.<sup>13</sup> The haste with which Khrushchev implemented economic reform is demonstrated by the significant personal, political, and financial capital Khrushchev invested in such programs as the Virgin Lands, the Corn Campaign, and the *sovnarkhoz* program.

The second challenge facing the post-Stalin leadership was more politically disquieting. The pending release of millions of victims from forced-labour camps necessitated an official response to Stalin's cruelty. It is estimated that 12-13 million people were sent to labour camps during Stalin's rule. The head of the Soviet security apparatus, Lavrenti Beria, argued for keeping them in the camps permanently, while only those with special permission from the Ministry of Internal Affairs would be permitted to return to their homes.<sup>14</sup> This proposal was supported passionately by fearful conservative reformers like Malenkov and Kaganovich who, like Beria, were responsible for the death and internment of millions of innocent people. In fact, many detainees did remain in forced-labour camps for three years between Stalin's death and the Secret Speech in 1956. Four thousand were released in 1953, and up to 12,000 were released in 1954-55. These, however, were "a very special 12000", representing influential party and government officials and Khrushchev's aides and friends from his days in the Ukraine and during the war. In 1956-57,

according to "best estimates", 7-8 million were released and 5-6 million posthumously rehabilitated.<sup>15</sup>

A third factor that needs to be mentioned is the competition for power that followed Stalin's death. Stalin's paranoid dictatorial rule left a power vacuum in its wake. As one of Stalin's ambitious lieutenants, Khrushchev's first task was to outflank the influence of his chief rival for absolute power--Malenkov. The main obstacle to this task was the state of the government and party apparatus. The Stalinist bureaucracy had come to maturity at the cost of the near total emasculation of the Party membership, and, under Stalin's dictatorship, the Politburo and the Central Committee had ceased to function in any meaningful capacity. Toward the end of Stalin's reign, the Politburo became dominated by only a handful of powerful men, even though its membership officially stood at 12 members.<sup>16</sup> Shortly before his death, though, Stalin decreed that Politburo membership should increase to 11-25 full members and 11 candidate members and the Secretariat should be doubled from 5 to 10 members.<sup>17</sup>

The political climate inside the Soviet Union was no less violent than the one outside, perhaps even more so. Khrushchev not only had to wage a bitter political battle with Malenkov and other conservatives, but he also had to begin the process of de-Stalinization. Stalin's death may have allowed critical voices to be heard but it also created a political vacuum. With no single figure sufficiently



strong to emerge as leader, even in a collective leadership, the years 1953-57 were ones of sharp struggle and political manoeuvring.

#### **GORBACHEV'S INHERITANCE** **External Conditions**

The world that Brezhnev and his successors bequeathed to Gorbachev in March 1985 bore little resemblance to the one which Stalin left to Khrushchev in March 1953. By the time of Gorbachev's accession to power, the Soviet Union had become the military equal of the United States, as a result of the massive conventional and nuclear military build-up conducted throughout the 1960s and 70s. Today, the principal threat to Soviet national security and superpower status is less the threat of military conflict with the United States than it is the economic and military costs of maintaining a technologically backward economy. It is the recognition that the Soviet Union must modernize its economy that forms the essence of Gorbachev's 'new thinking' in arms control, foreign policy, economic policy and elsewhere.

The Brezhnev leadership which overthrew Khrushchev in 1964 brought stability and consistency to a foreign policy that had been governed by brinkmanship and adventurism.<sup>18</sup> However, Leonid Brezhnev "...shared the basic objectives of [Khrushchev's] strategy in the Third World"<sup>19</sup> namely, the expansion of Soviet influence, cultivation of allies against the West, and the enhancement of Soviet prestige at home and abroad. Learning from the humiliation of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Brezhnev set out on a deliberate course to increase

dramatically the size of the Soviet conventional forces so that "the Soviet military would be an instrument capable of supporting an active foreign policy."<sup>20</sup> From 1965-1975 Brezhnev presided over one of the most prodigious peacetime military build-ups in history, during which time the military became the primary instrument by which the Soviet Union expanded its influence throughout the Third World..

Today, however, Seweryn Bialer points out, that "[t]he policy of guns, butter and growth--the political cornerstone of the Brezhnev era--is no longer possible....[and]...the Soviet Union will face an economic crunch far more severe than anything it encountered in the 1960s and 1970s".<sup>21</sup> The relative military and technological gap between the U.S. and the Soviet Union that had narrowed slightly during Brezhnev's first decade has now begun to widen.<sup>22</sup> This has had significant economic repercussions.

The military-industrial complex in the 1980s is no longer the driving economic force it was for Khrushchev and Brezhnev. The military-industrial complex, which is the largest consumer of scientists, engineers, money, and natural resources, now accounts for 16% of the Soviet Union's gross national product (compared with 7% in the United States) and is an impediment to economic expansion and modernization in areas like high technology and secondary industry.<sup>23</sup> The need to curb military spending in favour of economic reform is demonstrated by Soviet concerns

expressed over President Ronald Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative:

Having invested heavily in the military, especially in land-based missiles, for two decades, and having achieved rough parity with the United States, the Soviets now perceive a new challenge that threatens to nullify many of these gains and force them into unbridled competition in an area where they are weak and America is strong: high technology. Even if the SDI does not work--and many scientists doubt that it will--the Soviets fear that there will be major technological spinoffs, especially in conventional weapons and other areas. These could give the United States important, albeit temporary, political and military advantages. A full-blown defense race would also force the diversion of still more resources to the military sector and undermine Gorbachev's plans for economic modernization and reform.<sup>24</sup>

Under Gorbachev, there is a tangible shift away from an offensive toward a restrained military strategy. In other words, Gorbachev is not looking to take on new military allies but rather is interested in stabilizing existing relations.<sup>25</sup> This sober assessment of Soviet commitments can be seen in Gorbachev's desire to end the Soviet involvement in the war in Afghanistan as expeditiously as possible,<sup>26</sup> and his willingness to make concessions to the United States in nuclear arms reduction talks that were unthinkable as few as five years ago. The culmination of attempts to bring about a real reduction in the nuclear competition came on 9 December, 1987 when Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan signed a treaty to abolish all intermediate-range nuclear weapons in Europe.<sup>27</sup> Such a sober appraisal of the world is a far cry from Khrushchev's adventurism.

Internal Conditions

Upon replacing Khrushchev as First Secretary (renamed General Secretary), Leonid Brezhnev formally eliminated reform as a leading government policy. Amid a broad-based demand for political and economic stability (see Chapter II), Brezhnev was left with little choice except to increase economic relations with the West as the only viable alternative to structural reform as a way to avoid a relapse into Stalinist autarky. The corollary to this is that the instinct for order did not permit the underlying flaws of the Soviet system to be addressed. As a consequence, it was during the Brezhnev era that problems of sloth, corruption, and nepotism became endemic. The effect of the reimposition of strict centralized bureaucratic Party control by Khrushchev's successors was that the deficiencies of Khrushchev's meddling, micro-management style of leadership were masked by a stultifying, plodding conservatism. The Brezhnev era was typified by an uncritical defence of the status quo and rigid imposition of ideological orthodoxy. This climate stifled popular initiative and innovation and permitted sloth and corruption to flourish. This is the Brezhnev legacy that provides the impetus for Mikhail Gorbachev's campaign for radical reform--perestroika. What is this negative legacy and how does Gorbachev intend to combat it?

Leonid Brezhnev was able to maintain both a high level of domestic spending and a prodigious conventional and nuclear arms build-up because, up until 1976, Brezhnev

compensated for the structural inadequacies of the Soviet system with greatly increased Western imports. During this time the Soviet economy experienced reasonably sustained economic growth and a rising standard of living. After twelve years of relative prosperity, however, the economy began to stagnate.<sup>28</sup> As Timothy Colton writes, in order to

cushion the defense budget and social programs, [the Politburo] bank[ed] on the soundness of Brezhnev's conservative management policy....and [decided to pare] growth and investment targets....In sector after sector throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, 'once the break in trend occurred, performance continued to deteriorate erratically along the new, steeply declining trend line.' As imbalances multiplied, 'plan discipline' was undermined, midyear revisions in production plans being made in each year from 1979 on.<sup>29</sup>

From 1976 until Brezhnev's death in 1982 the economy virtually ground to a halt. In 1976, overall industrial growth fell 2.6% over the previous year--the greatest one-year decline since 1950.<sup>30</sup> Included in this figure are agriculture production, oil production, military spending, construction projects, and mining. Soviet economic decline can be traced to the 1971-75 five-year plan. This was the first plan to emphasize growth in light industry and consumer goods over investment in heavy industry.<sup>31</sup> Table 1-1 clearly illustrates the negative effect of Brezhnev's policy of increasing imports from the West, in this case grain, to compensate for the structural inadequacy of the Stalinist economic system. Note the ratio between exports and imports over these twenty years with respect to similar

harvests. While variation is evident throughout, it is in

**Table 1-1**  
**Soviet Grain Harvests, Exports and Imports**  
**(million metric tons)**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Harvest</u>	<u>Exports</u>	<u>Imports</u>
1950	81	2.9	0.2
1955	104	3.7	0.3
1956	125	3.2	0.5
1957	103	7.4	0.2
1958	135	5.1	0.8
1959	120	7.0	0.3
1960	126	6.8	0.2
1961	131	7.5	0.7
1962	140	7.8	---
1963	108	6.3	3.1
1964	152	3.5	7.3
1965	121	4.3	6.4
1966	171	3.6	7.7
1967	148	6.2	2.2
1968	170	5.4	1.6
1969	162	7.2	0.6
1970	187	5.7	2.2
1971	181	8.6	3.5
1972	168	4.6	15.5
1973	223	4.9	23.9
1974	196	7.0	7.1
1975	140	3.6	15.9
1976	224	1.5	20.6
1977	196	3.0b	10.5a
1978	237	1.5b	23.0a
1979	179	3.0b	25.5a
1980	189	2.0b	30-35a
1981	160b	3.0b	43.0a
1982	170b	2.0b	35.0b
1983	190b	1.8b	34.0a
1984	170b	---	43.0a

Source: Marshall I Goldman, "The Burden of the Stalinist Model: The Case of Soviet Agriculture, Industry, and Consumer Goods" in Uri Ra'anana and Charles Perry eds., *The USSR Today and Tomorrow*, (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath, 1987) p.73.

a: U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates.

b: Marshall Goldman's estimates.

(for full list of Soviet and American sources for this table, see Ra'anana and Perry, p.73).

the mid-1970s, around the time of Brezhnev's consolidation of power, that the differences become pronounced. Note particularly the differences between 1974 and 1977: with identical 196 million-ton harvests, the ratio of imports to exports ballooned from 1.01:1 to 3.5:1. In 1983 with a harvest of 190 million tons the ratio was 18.89:1! Such enormous disparities cannot be ascribed solely to poor weather or increased concern over the public's diet. They must be seen as the consequence of the failure of the Stalinist agricultural structure to meet the needs of the Soviet people. For example, in the Soviet Union 20-25% of all grain rots in the fields because there is no efficient means to harvest it, and half of all available tractors to harvest the grain are used instead to haul trucks which become bogged down in mud for want of paved roads.<sup>32</sup>

The hallmark of the Brezhnev years was the subordination of inventiveness and criticism to the defence of the bureaucratic order and the status quo. Policy debates were largely exercises designed to avoid addressing problems. The effect of this conservatism was that deep-rooted flaws in the Soviet system were not addressed and grew worse over time. This is particularly the case with Soviet agriculture and the 1979 Food Programme--Brezhnev's attempt to 'reform' every aspect of Soviet agriculture in one fell swoop. The Food Programme was also the one policy of the Brezhnev era with which Gorbachev was the most deeply involved.

The Food Programme Plenum issued decrees for targets in all areas of food production, agricultural machinery, food processing, sales, and exports.<sup>33</sup> This was the clearest manifestation of Brezhnev's policy of resolving problems by blindly expanding investment. The Brezhnev leadership's credibility was founded on the promise of better food supplies. However, as Zhores Medvedev writes, the leadership could not distinguish between realistic and impossible goals and did not know how to set about achieving the targets they set for themselves.<sup>34</sup> The Programme failed because "there was not a single change which could be classified as a reform."<sup>35</sup> The vast amounts of money spent in the Food Programme--35% of the State budget--were wasted because its drafters did not address the root cause of the problem of Soviet agriculture: the Stalinist economic system. "[T]here was to be no liberalization of the decision-making process at the bottom level and no freedom of choice for individual collective and state farms"--in fact, bureaucratization of the decision-making process was compounded.<sup>36</sup>

The ritualistic cant of Marxism-Leninism cannot suffice for Gorbachev the way it did for his predecessors. The advances of Western technology and the decrepit state of the Soviet economy today demand that the Politburo address the endemic, structural crises both in government and the Party, crises which are traceable to the regressive influence of the Soviet economic system, which, in turn, is rooted in the Stalinist practices of rigid centralization and



collectivized agriculture. Khrushchev, by contrast, could get away with ignoring the root cause of the Soviet Union's economic crisis because the illusion of of Marxism-Leninism as a dynamic, progressive world doctrine and the superiority of the Stalinist economic model were still defensible. This is not so any more.

#### APPROACHES TO REFORM

##### Khrushchev--The Optimistic World-view

For Khrushchev, the world was divided into capitalist, communist, and colonial worlds with the Soviet Union in the vanguard of the communist world and as the champion of progressive revolutionary forces in the Third World. Khrushchev foresaw the eclipse of the "capitalist encirclement" of the Soviet Union by "the conditions created by the existence of a world socialist system...."<sup>37</sup> The increasing numbers of 'national democrats' and 'wars of liberation' in the Third World "supposedly heralded the developing world's irreversible march toward socialism--and alignment with Moscow."<sup>38</sup> Unlike Stalin who disparaged the leaders of former colonial possessions as 'lackeys of imperialism', Khrushchev actively courted Third World nations in order to expand Soviet influence (to compete with American influence), and to enlist their aid in the Soviet Union's ideological struggle with the West.<sup>39</sup>

Khrushchev's understanding of international relations was rooted in the belief that the high standard of living enjoyed in Western societies was the result of colonial exploitation and was doomed to fall as colonies achieved

independence. Because capitalist countries need colonies to absorb excess production, Khrushchev took the disappearance of colonies to mean that the decline and fall of the Western economies was internally generated and inevitable. This optimistic interpretation of the Marxist-Leninist historical dialectic led Khrushchev to the conclusion that the Soviet Union need have no fear of war with the West. Furthermore, the Soviet Union had an obligation to help bring about workers' revolutions in other countries.

Khrushchev's optimism about the future of communism and his devotion to communist ideals are basic to his economic and political beliefs. Khrushchev, born in 1894, grew up believing in the romantic ideal of "...a classless society with one single form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society...."<sup>40</sup> By the end of the Civil War in 1921, he was personally prepared to suffer "cold, hunger and deprivation" to implement the "ideas of Lenin" in the rebuilding of Soviet heavy industry and military force, and he extended this willingness to suffer "for the Party's sake" to the people as a whole.<sup>41</sup> Khrushchev, firmly convinced of the moral superiority of communism over capitalism, believed that communism would one day dominate the world.<sup>42</sup>

Khrushchev's optimism led him to reject the traditional Leninist maxim that there must be a final war between capitalism and communism. His promotion of peaceful co-existence with the West, especially with the United States,

is Khrushchev's most significant contribution to communist theory. Khrushchev, though, did not start out as a foreign policy reformer. Premier Georgii Malenkov was the first post-Stalinist leader to advocate a policy of peaceful coexistence.<sup>43</sup> In fact, Khrushchev's initial views on foreign policy reflected Stalin's xenophobic defensiveness and had the support of the arch-conservative Vyacheslav Molotov, Stalin's long-time Foreign Minister.<sup>44</sup> In contrast to the views of Malenkov and other 'conservatives', Khrushchev, in 1954, believed that capitalism, not civilization would perish in a nuclear war.<sup>45</sup> Over the first three years, Khrushchev did finally come to reassess his policy in light of the destructive potential of nuclear weapons "...and by the end of 1955 he was prepared to advance the Malenkov view as his own."<sup>46</sup>

Khrushchev's political views were shaped by the brutish political environment that followed Lenin's death. The Stalin/Trotsky rivalry and the early stages of Stalin's terror and forced collectivization of agriculture fostered an environment wherein reason and debate were virtually outlawed and where an attitude of sycophancy toward one's superior was necessary to ensure one's political and personal well-being. For example, Khrushchev, in 1924, wrote a strong polemic against Leon Trotsky to please his superior, Lazar Kaganovich, and it did not seem to matter to Khrushchev that Trotsky had decorated him the previous year.<sup>47</sup>

Khrushchev's political education formally began in 1929. It was in that year that he went to Moscow to study metallurgy at the J.V. Stalin Industrial Academy. At the Academy, Khrushchev became its political secretary and in the process developed a friendship with fellow student Nadezhda Alliluyeva, Stalin's wife. Khrushchev was always concerned that Alliluyeva talked to Stalin about the political properness of the directives he gave to her and other students. As a consequence, Khrushchev was careful to ensure that his views agreed with the general party line, that is, with Stalin. Through his wife's reports, Stalin came to trust Khrushchev and, with the help of Lazar Kaganovich, Khrushchev moved into the Moscow Party apparatus where he began his political career.<sup>48</sup> Khrushchev credits Alliluyeva's influence with Stalin for his advancement in the Moscow party apparatus.

Because Khrushchev's political life was formed by Stalin's secretive, nepotistic, and insular style of political decision-making, it should not come as a surprise to see this trait reflected in Khrushchev's own leadership. Throughout his political career, Khrushchev sought advice principally from a coterie of personal aides who were not from the Party and who did not have good credentials. These aides were Trofim D. Lysenko, A.S. Shevchenko, V.S. Lebedev, and Aleksei Adzhubei. Adzhubei was Khrushchev's son-in-law. These men owed their position and influence to their

personal relationship to Khrushchev and not to any particular skill.<sup>49</sup>

Khrushchev's economic reforms were coloured by a personal unfamiliarity with the essence of the reforms being conducted in his name and under his direction. Even though he staked his political future almost entirely upon a dramatic increase in agricultural production, Khrushchev was largely ignorant of agricultural methods or the problems faced by farmers. In 1928, Khrushchev asked his superior in the Ukrainian Party apparatus, Lazar Kaganovich, to assign him to an industrial area on the grounds that he "didn't have much experience in farming and would have been out of his element in an agricultural area."<sup>50</sup> In 1947, before he was made agriculture spokesman, Khrushchev pleaded ignorance about agriculture to Stalin in order to "beg out of" delivering the general report to a special Central Committee plenum on agriculture.<sup>51</sup>

Nevertheless, in 1950 Stalin appointed Khrushchev Politburo spokesman for agricultural policy. Khrushchev was given this position because he earned Stalin's favour by thinking up a cost-free administrative 'breakthrough' to improve the stagnant state of Soviet agriculture. Khrushchev's plan was to revitalize Soviet agriculture through increased administrative efficiency. Specifically, this entailed the amalgamation of the existing 6069 collective farms of the Moscow oblast into 1668 by June 1950.<sup>52</sup> While some consolidation could have been justified,

Khrushchev took the idea too far. The reason for this was that Khrushchev had an ulterior motive for suggesting the amalgamation, one which demonstrates the influence of his romantic optimism and the linkage of political and economic circumstances. This ulterior motive was his idea of constructing 'agrotowns'--self-contained, self-sufficient, modern farming communities. The benefits to the Soviet hierarchy from such a program would be the destruction of the village, and with it the powerful bond between the peasant, the village and the land, and also the relocation of the peasantry into a more easily controlled environment.

However, after a pilot project in 1950-51 failed and the agrotown project was publicly condemned by Malenkov in a 1952 speech, Khrushchev no longer served as agriculture spokesman and he returned to Party work.<sup>53</sup> Khrushchev preferred to work behind the scenes to purge Malenkov supporters in key bureaucratic positions and install his own 'Ukrainian' allies.<sup>54</sup> Khrushchev re-entered the agriculture arena after Stalin's death and began with a speech designed to undermine Malenkov's political standing. In denouncing Malenkov, Khrushchev disclosed for the first time the unvarnished, truth about the sorry state of Soviet agriculture and animal husbandry. However, "[a]t no point in the speech did [Khrushchev] so much as begin to hint at the true reasons for the continued failure: the system itself."<sup>55</sup>

The essence of Khrushchev's reforms, and their subsequent failure, can be traced to his fixation with appearance over substance. The reason that I have cited the example of Khrushchev's agrotown policy at this point is to demonstrate that, for all of his 'liberal' reforms, Khrushchev is essentially a 'Stalinist' politician: Khrushchev's struggle for one-man rule, his use of 'purges' albeit without terror, to solidify his hold on power, his patronage of a small circle of loyalists, his lack of formal education, and his impulsive approach to decision-making are all typical of Stalin's leadership. The Stalinist element in Khrushchev's de-Stalinization reforms will be explored in later chapters.

#### **GORBACHEV**

##### **The Pessimistic World-view**

Mikhail Gorbachev is not possessed of grand illusions about the demise of capitalism or of the imminent victory of communism. In fact, unlike Khrushchev, Gorbachev is distinctly pessimistic about the future of the Soviet Union. As Gorbachev declared in his speech to the 27th Party Congress,

[c]hanges in present-day world development are so profound and significant that they require the reinterpretation and comprehensive analysis of all its factors. The situation of nuclear confrontation makes necessary new approaches, methods and forms of relationships among different social systems, states and regions.<sup>56</sup>

Gorbachev's pessimism is a product of an upbringing that was much different than Khrushchev's. Whereas Khrushchev was politically active during the initial years

of Stalin's reign, which included the forced collectivization of agriculture (1929-31) and the purges (1934-38), Gorbachev was born in the year collectivization reached its zenith--1931. Gorbachev was too young to have had personal experience with the political and economic upheavals of the time, although his family was deeply affected.<sup>57</sup> Gorbachev, like Khrushchev, grew up in peasant surroundings. As a teenager, he worked summers as a Machine Tractor Station combine operator. It was expected that the young Gorbachev would continue in the agricultural or agricultural machine industry as a profession. His eventual choice of law in 1950 as a career was unexpected.<sup>58</sup> While at university, Gorbachev shared a room with Zdenek Mlynar the liberal Czech communist. As Zhores Medvedev points out, "[i]t is extremely likely that after five years of sharing a room with a Czech intellectual Gorbachev must have been profoundly influenced..."<sup>59</sup> Further, Medvedev states that Gorbachev's Western manners and appearance are due to his prolonged exposure to "the culture and attitudes of a traditionally Western nation."<sup>60</sup>

Concerning his political development, Gorbachev spent his youth in the *Komsomol*, the Young Communist League, and it was not until 1961 that he decided to pursue a career in the Party. His rise through the Party ranks was rapid, and in 1968 he was promoted to second, or agricultural, secretary of the Stavropol kraikom (district council) without having served as the third secretary whose



responsibility is ideology. Just two years thereafter, Gorbachev was made the kraikom's first secretary.<sup>61</sup> His tenure as second secretary was augmented by correspondence courses through the Stavropol Agricultural Institute in plant and stock breeding, agro-industry, agricultural machinery, field crops, agricultural organization, and kolkhoz/sovkhoz finance.<sup>62</sup> Gorbachev was graduated in 1967.

Gorbachev's rapid advancement can be attributed to his expertise in agriculture and his personal leadership skills, but the major factor in his political success was the influence of his political patron, Yuri Andropov. His influence was largely responsible for Gorbachev's appointment as the Central Committee Secretary for Agriculture in Brezhnev's Politburo.

Perestroika is associated with Mikhail Gorbachev yet the idea of radical reform was first articulated by Yuri Andropov in an address in November, 1982.<sup>63</sup> Andropov was the immediate heir to Brezhnev's Russia and was the first to address the problems of bureaucratic inertia. Ten days after becoming General Secretary, Andropov spoke of the need "'to expand the independence' of lower-level management, which he insisted, could be 'combined with greater accountability and with concern for national interests.'" <sup>64</sup> Gorbachev's own policy for streamlining the economy and instituting accountability is based upon a January 1984 resolution by Yuri Andropov.<sup>65</sup> In a July 1985 resolution, Gorbachev affirmed that Andropov's experiment of streamlined

management is to be made mandatory by 1987, and already in 1985 and 1986 other ministries have been combined.<sup>66</sup>

The erudite, cultured background of Gorbachev's early years is ably reflected in the high quality of people he has gathered around him, especially in economic policy. The level of intellectual input behind perestroika is far superior to that of de-Stalinization. Gorbachev's advisors fall under the rubric of 'technocrats'--people who possess technical, managerial and political skills.<sup>67</sup> For example, in economics, Abel G. Aganbegyan is Gorbachev's chief advisor. Aganbegyan leads a group of reform-minded intellectuals which includes Leonid Abalkin and Tatyana Zaslavskaya. Abalkin is the Director of the Institute of Economics and a member of the editorial boards of two major economic journals.<sup>68</sup> Zaslavskaya is a pioneer in the field of sociology. Aganbegyan and Zaslavskaya have been respected in the economic and sociological communities respectively since the early 1960s, even though their unconventional, objective, and critical opinions carried little influence amid the anti-intellectual orthodoxy that prevailed under Brezhnev.

What is possible today in structural reform, including criticism of the past and military accommodation with the West is not the same as it was twenty or thirty years ago. The passage of time between Khrushchev's generation and Gorbachev's and the increasing seriousness of economic stagnation permit a greater degree of candour today than was

previously possible. Additionally, because Gorbachev does not bear any responsibility for Stalin's criminal past, there is no pressure to denounce him in such a controversial and condemnatory fashion as did Khrushchev in order to protect himself and to further his own political ambitions. Khrushchev and Gorbachev are, therefore, two very different reformers. By virtue of their different upbringings and the political climate of their respective generations, each saw reform as having to meet different priorities.

#### Similarities

Differences in political climate and upbringing notwithstanding, it would be wrong to leave the impression that Gorbachev is absolutely different from Khrushchev. It is expected that, as reformers, Khrushchev and Gorbachev should share certain common objectives: both men came to power after prolonged periods of conservative rule, and both came to power as champions of meritocracy against an inefficient and privileged bureaucracy. Additionally, they both support economic decentralization and the loosening of claustrophobic social controls. For instance, Gorbachev's themes of *demokratizatsiya* and *samokritika* are almost a verbatim reiteration of Khrushchev's appeals twenty-five years earlier. In his address to the 22nd Party Congress in 1961, Khrushchev said that the task of the Soviet leadership is "to draw all citizens without exception into the affairs of society....Every Soviet citizen should take an active part in the management of public affairs--that's our slogan,

our task."<sup>69</sup> In his speech to the 27th Congress Gorbachev similarly declared that:

The success of any endeavor is determined, to a decisive extent, by how actively and consciously the masses participate in it. To convince broad strata of the working people of the correctness of our chosen path, to give them a moral and a material interest, to restructure the psychology of cadres--these are highly important conditions for accelerating our growth.<sup>70</sup>

On the subject of samokritika, or self-criticism, Khrushchev said:

Supervision by the general public, and strict verification of the way decisions have been carried out, is a method by which the principle of criticism and self-criticism can be put into effect.<sup>71</sup>

It is necessary to introduce a system that will make it difficult for comrades who have been elected to leading posts to bar the way to fresh forces....[Some of our long-serving comrades] have lost the ability to work creatively, have lost all sense of the new, and have become a hindrance. To keep them on in these posts just because they were elected to them in the past would be wrong....The proposed system of forming elective bodies opens new opportunities for developing criticism and self-criticism...."<sup>72</sup>

Furthermore, Khrushchev stated that

Every good innovation, every good idea, every valuable proposal should be given the most thoughtful consideration and support, and should be realized....[The promotion of party leaders] from among the party membership [should be] on the basis of merit of their talents and their political and business capacity, that they have close ties with the communists, with the people."<sup>73</sup>

On the same topic Gorbachev has stated:

The Party will continue to see to it that the most worthy people...are elected deputies....In this respect, apparently the time has come to make necessary adjustments in our electoral practice....

One cannot help seeing that officials in the apparatus who remain in the same posts for a long time frequently lose their taste for the new, fence themselves off from people through instructions they themselves have concocted, and sometimes even retard the work of the elective agencies. Apparently it is time...to conduct the certification of executives in their apparatus and make urgent personnel changes after every election....

...[I]t is the duty of the older generation to do everything it can to see to it that its successors are even more intelligent, more capable and more educated....

Criticism and self-criticism are a natural principle of the vital activity of our society. Without them, there is no development. It is time for literary and art criticism to shake off complacency and servility to superiors, which corrodes healthy morality, remembering that criticism is a public matter, not a sphere serving authors' vanity and ambitions.<sup>74</sup>

From a discussion of the differences and similarities behind Soviet reform, the next two chapters will contrast the political and economic aspects of perestroika and de-Stalinization. The fourth chapter will discuss the uniqueness of perestroika as a reform and offer some conclusions about the future of Soviet reform.

## CHAPTER II

### Political Reform

After his death, it was Stalin and his legacy of criminality, not the development of communism itself, that became the primary focus of political reform. Addressing Stalin's legacy remains today "the most fundamental and abiding conflict in Soviet political life."<sup>1</sup> Because Khrushchev and Gorbachev, both came to power challenging the Stalin legacy and the highly bureaucratized and centralized economic order, there does not appear to be much to distinguish the political objectives of glasnost from de-Stalinization. Khrushchev's 'liberalism' was based on the assumption that there was an "immense untapped capacity for growth in the rural sector"<sup>2</sup> and that this capacity could not be tapped unless system were changed so that the people were free to use their initiative. Similarly, on the day after becoming General Secretary, Gorbachev stated: "The better people are informed the more consciously they will act, the more actively they will support the party, its plans, and its programmatic goals."<sup>3</sup>

Also common to both de-Stalinization and perestroika is the focus on the government and party bureaucracy as the *bête-noire* of the Stalinist system. Gorbachev, like Khrushchev, intends to render it "more client and leader-oriented."<sup>4</sup> But the similarity ends there. While both Khrushchev and Gorbachev accepted "conflict, open and

clandestine, as an inevitable concomitant of his policies,"<sup>5</sup> the difference lies in the intent of the conflict. As will be shown, Gorbachev uses conflict to foster healthy and progressive change, whereas Khrushchev used conflict destructively in order to create an atmosphere of controlled tension between the bureaucracy and the masses which was designed to enhance his personal role as leader and problem-solver.<sup>6</sup>

#### THE STALIN QUESTION--Khrushchev

In contrast to Malenkov, Molotov, and the other 'conservative' reformers who sought political and personal security for state and party officials, and a limited disclosure of Stalin's legacy, the 'liberal' Khrushchev advocated a thorough airing of Stalin's crimes. Furthermore, Khrushchev believed that the decompression of political controls that would follow such disclosures "would not foster political deviance"<sup>7</sup> and rank-and-file workers would police themselves without the need of "administrative methods" or "police power."<sup>8</sup> In imagery reminiscent of Bukharin,

[Khrushchev] held out a vision of a Soviet society in which citizens could breathe more freely, officialdom could exercise initiative without fearing the consequences, the bond between party and people would be strengthened, and the authority of the regime would be built on the rational foundations of regularized procedures, concern and popular welfare, and confidence rather than fear.<sup>9</sup>

But if Khrushchev's rhetoric brings Bukharin to mind, his advocacy of relaxed social controls and his denunciation

of Stalin were themselves highly 'Stalinist'. As Richard Lowenthal wrote in 1965, "[i]n Khrushchev's mind, the abandonment of Stalin-style mass terrorism did not at first mean the renunciation of Stalin's program of revolutionary social change inside and outside Russia."<sup>10</sup>

For example, Khrushchev knew "[t]he Stalin brand of collectivization had brought [the Soviet people] nothing but misery and brutality,"<sup>11</sup> but he did not set about to dismantle it. To expose and reverse the excesses of collectivization would at least mean that the entire Stalin era was illegitimate, a betrayal of the October revolution, and that the Bukharinite opposition of 1928-9 was correct. At worst it would also brand the cult of personality as "blind admiration for authority", thus threatening that existing system of controls."<sup>12</sup> Khrushchev recognized that the legitimacy of the communist party "and the party leadership rested entirely on the the Stalinist legend of forced collectivization as a spontaneous, voluntary, and benevolent process of the peasants themselves."<sup>13</sup>

Because a thorough, objective investigation of the Stalinist period would have implicated the Party and members of the ruling élite in the commission of Stalin's crimes, Khrushchev's main motive for denouncing Stalin was to distance the Party from the Stalinist record as much as possible and to free himself personally from any guilt by his association with Stalin.<sup>14</sup> The Central Committee, in 1955, established a special commission under the direction



of Politburo member P.N. Pospelov to investigate all aspects of Stalin's Terror. Naturally, it had nothing to say about the fact that Khrushchev advanced up through the Moscow apparatus on the backs of the reputation of Bukharin, that Khrushchev personally supported forced collectivization, or that, as Stalin's viceroy, Khrushchev was a major figure in the 1938 purge of the Ukrainian Communist Party and in the repression and execution of Ukrainian nationalists.<sup>15</sup>

Information gathered by Pospelov's commission made up much of Khrushchev's Secret Speech, but given the dangers of too comprehensive a rendering of the facts, "the commission was not expected to present the total picture in the full light of day--rather it was to give a partial view with special lighting effects."<sup>16</sup> Objectively, Khrushchev went into great detail concerning specific abuses of authority such as the murder of Leningrad Party chief Sergei Kirov, the wholesale slaughter of party cadres during the Great Purge of 1937-38, Stalin's failure to defend the Soviet Union on the eve of the Nazi attack, and the fabricated conspiracy cases of the 'Leningrad Affair' and the 'Doctors' Plot'.<sup>17</sup> The subjective aspect of the speech was that it served the narrow political purpose of allowing Khrushchev to "[present] himself as the one man who dared to speak out,"<sup>18</sup> thus enhancing his own reputation at the expense of Stalin's legacy and of his heirs, particularly Malenkov and Beria.<sup>19</sup> While Khrushchev condemned Stalin's abuses of power, he defended as inevitable and necessary

certain measures like the liquidation of the 'left' and 'right' deviations, the ruthless collectivization of farms and the brutal treatment of the kulaks.

Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin was limited to crimes committed against the Party and the army--no mention was made of the wrongs done to individual rank-and-file party members or innocent non-party members, whose arrest rate was seven times that of party members.<sup>20</sup> In fact, among the rehabilitation and exoneration of thousands of party, government, military, and cultural figures, not one word was mentioned about Nikolai Bukharin, Aleksei Rykov, Grigorii Zinoviev, or Lev Kamenev.<sup>21</sup> Stephen Cohen argues that Khrushchev did not officially rehabilitate Bukharin because he "lacked resolve" or because his political opposition was too strong.<sup>22</sup> The failure to rehabilitate Bukharin properly, however politically impossible it may have been, impoverished the intellectual and theoretical dimension of Khrushchev's reforms. The paradox of Khrushchev's reforms is that while he made his reputation by denouncing Stalin, Khrushchev was nonetheless "a true believer in Stalin's ideological vision."<sup>23</sup>

#### THE STALIN QUESTION--Gorbachev

Gorbachev's first statement on Stalin was in an interview with the French communist daily *l'Humanité*, in February, 1986, in which he displayed a significant lack of candour about the late dictator's repressions. Gorbachev was unwilling to acknowledge that Stalinism was a legitimate

subject for discussion, much less a problem: "Stalinism is a concept thought up by opponents of communism and is widely used in order to blacken the image of the Soviet Union and of socialism in general."<sup>24</sup> Further in the interview, Gorbachev made reference to the resolution of the 20th Party Congress regarding the question of Stalin's 'cult of personality' and how it was "a test of Party principles and faith in Leninism." He then asserted that "we [i.e. the Party] passed the test with merit and have drawn from the past the necessary conclusions...[referring to] the life of the Party itself and Soviet society in general."<sup>25</sup> This euphemistic circumlocution was inadequate because it omitted any specific reference to Stalin or his abuses of power. The fallacious argument that Stalinism was simply a contrivance of foreign provocateurs was a serious indication that Gorbachev's political standing at the time was not secure and that too much glasnost about Stalin was not politically possible. Admittedly, this interview took place during Gorbachev's cautious phase, a time before Aleksandr Yakovlev, Nikolai Slyunkov, Dmitrii Yazov and other allies entered the Politburo.<sup>26</sup> As such, a defensive tone toward Stalin was to be expected. Even still, it is hard to understand how stonewalling about Stalin could further the cause of a leader who is staking his future on a campaign of glasnost.<sup>27</sup>

Gorbachev's next pronouncement on Stalin came on 2 November 1987, in a major speech on Soviet history.

Expectations were that, in the spirit of glasnost and 'new thinking,' Gorbachev would provide a more 'objective' version of Soviet history including a positive assessment of Nikita Khrushchev, and a rehabilitation of past victims of the Stalinist Terror including Nikolai Bukharin. What emerged, however, was a speech that was tentative and equivocal. Stalin's past was discussed only broadly, while NEP supporters were not given a totally positive treatment. Instead of being formally rehabilitated, Bukharin and his supporters were depicted largely unsympathetically as "dogmatists" who did not fully understand the "dialectical conditions" of the time.<sup>28</sup> Gorbachev even went so far as to mention that the Bukharinites later confessed their 'errors' but without mentioning how such 'confessions' were coerced and that their trials were fraudulent. Nonetheless, by the very fact that he even mentioned Khrushchev, Stalin, Trotsky, and Bukharin, Gorbachev re-established their legitimacy as historical figures.

The item of greatest significance in his speech was Gorbachev's announcement that the Politburo will set up a commission to conduct a comprehensive examination of all past and present information regarding the Stalin cult.<sup>29</sup> In February 1988, the commission formally repealed the criminal convictions of Bukharin, Rykov and others. The commission declared that their condemnations to be "gross violations of socialist legality."<sup>30</sup> Stephen Cohen argues that the repeal

of Bukharin's criminal conviction represents a "radical act of anti-Stalinism".<sup>31</sup>

In interpreting Gorbachev's November speech, it is important to recognize that it came a scant week after a challenge by then Moscow Party boss, Boris Yeltsin, that Gorbachev was fostering a 'cult of personality' and proceeding too slowly with reform. This accounts for the overly cautious tone which was undoubtedly the result of last-minute conservative influence. Although, in fairness to Gorbachev, his intent was not to give a full and objective exposé of Soviet history but to build historical and doctrinal legitimacy for perestroika.

One can see a distinct parallel between Gorbachev's and Khrushchev's treatment of Stalinism: both reformers set up commissions to investigate the Stalinist record and both gave major speeches regarding Stalin's past, and both used attacks on Stalin to promote their reforms, although to different degrees.

Khrushchev was content to focus on Stalin and use his past as a tactic to weaken his political opponents. However forcefully he denounced Stalin, Khrushchev was conspicuously silent on the subject of the major political figures who opposed Stalin and suffered persecution because of it. Gorbachev, on the other hand, is less strident in his criticism of Stalin. The anti-Stalinist aspect of glasnost serves to foster "the beginning of of a political debate over the future of the Soviet system."<sup>32</sup> Through glasnost,

Gorbachev has succeeded in introducing debate and rationality into areas previously considered sacrosanct; Stalin's military leadership, his system prison camps, and the privileges of the Party élite.

By speaking positively about Bukharin, Rykov and others, it could be argued that Gorbachev has done as least as much to destroy the memory of Stalin as did Khrushchev who devoted an extraordinary meeting of the Party Congress to denounce Stalin. By defending Bukharin, the champion of Lenin's New Economic Policy of the 1920s, Gorbachev invites far-reaching questions as to the legitimacy of Stalin's claim to be Lenin's legitimate heir and the necessity of the entire Stalinist period. If it could be demonstrated that the purges, the Terror, and the collectivization were all a horrible mistake and not the product of Lenin's thought, for what purpose did the Soviet people suffer?

For Gorbachev to succeed in promoting radical reform, he must not only attack Stalin, but must also discredit the mythology surrounding his legacy, particularly among the elderly who hold a romantic nostalgia for that period, and who are among the most resistant to perestroika. But Gorbachev has to pay a price for his candour. As he tears down Stalin, he lacks an alternate ideological force to attract the minds and energies of the Soviet public. The deterioration of the appeal of traditional communist dogma has left perestroika without a spiritual focus. Unlike Khrushchev who defended the legitimacy of Stalin's rule, who

created his own 'cult of personality', and who held out dreams of a glorious plentiful future for Soviet citizens, there is little incentive that Gorbachev can give his people for having to work harder, be more productive, and to accept greater responsibility and criticism except self-interest and reform for reform's sake. Without ideology, Soviet society loses its most cohesive force, and without social cohesion the Soviet Union would face anarchy.<sup>33</sup>

#### POLITICAL REFORMS--Khrushchev

Khrushchev's political reforms can be broken down into two periods. The first period, from 1953-57, was dominated by his power struggle with Malenkov. During this first period, Khrushchev's reforms focused generally on reducing the authority of the police system, ending the use of terror, and effecting some manner of welfare reform.<sup>34</sup> Up until the 22nd Congress in 1961, Khrushchev's policies included elements of anti-elitism but did not yet fully embody his populist optimism because of the restrictive political climate.

Khrushchev, in 1954, began his assault on the bureaucracy by publicly criticizing Stalin's restrictive Party enrollment policy.<sup>35</sup> Citing the need for "the individual recruitment of front-rank people", Khrushchev, at the 20th Party Congress in 1956, "obliged" party organizations to seek out such people "choosing them first and foremost from the ranks of the workers and collective farmers."<sup>36</sup> To build up a power base of his own, Khrushchev

brought young communists in to fill the void in Stalin's neglected party apparatus to help him oust his Presidium rivals.<sup>37</sup>

The dilution of individual power that was the object of Khrushchev's expanded enrollment policy made alliance building within the Party and government apparatus extremely important. In order to promote himself above Malenkov and the other conservatives, Khrushchev sought to "cultivate the image of a problem solver who would synthesize populist political reforms and assure political cohesion in ways that would serve the goals of economic effectiveness and political legitimacy."<sup>38</sup> Khrushchev needed to set himself apart because, in the period immediately following Stalin's death, there was a consensus over the objectives of reform. There was to be increased involvement of the citizenry in the administration of policy; increased input from specialists before decisions were taken; a transference of minor administrative functions to social activists and mass organizations; and increased rights for citizens and mass organizations against executive authority.<sup>39</sup> Most importantly, Stalin's successors collectively abjured terror as a political tool. "There was to be no successor to Stalin, no supreme boss, no second Stalin with the power of life and death...."<sup>40</sup>

One of the guiding principles in Khrushchev's political thought was his image of the CPSU as the motivator and leader of the people. In Lenin's phrase he was "the



energizer in policy-making and implementation".<sup>41</sup> Khrushchev considered it the task of the party to draw all citizens into political life and to be the instrument which modernizes production methods and political outlook.<sup>42</sup> Throughout the period of de-Stalinization, Khrushchev adopted a high-profile, populist leadership style, called upon Soviet officials to abandon leadership from above, and to inspire the masses without terror.<sup>43</sup> Thus, we can see a two-stage process to Khrushchev's reform: the expansion of the bureaucracy to dilute the individual power of his rivals, and then the promotion of populism not only to continue the assault on his rivals but also to undermine the power of the newly expanded bureaucracy. In all of this, the system itself and the citizen's place as an obedient servant of the Party line and Khrushchev's policies were never questioned.

It was after Khrushchev acquired the position of Chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1958 that he consolidated his power and the second period of his political reforms began. Khrushchev's anti-Stalinism at this time, as Cohen argues, "came to include quasi populist ideas and policies that impinged directly upon the nature of the central party-state bureaucracy and its power relations with society rather than with the leadership regime from above."<sup>44</sup> It was at this time also that Khrushchev began to free himself from the "self-imposed shackles" forged by the tactical alliance he had built up within the bureaucracy.<sup>45</sup>

Once Khrushchev established himself as *primus inter pares* in the Kremlin, the predominant theme of his de-Stalinization became the enhancement of his own power and prestige and the depreciation of bureaucratic authority.

The first of Khrushchev's intraparty reorganizations was the institution of a mandatory 'rotation system' for party officials which was articulated at the Twenty-second Party Congress in 1961.<sup>46</sup> At each congress, one-third of all raion, oblast and Central Committee members would be replaced, while members of the Presidium would be able to serve no more than three 5-year terms while city and regional officials would have to stand for election more frequently and serve only a total of six years.<sup>47</sup> This "regular renewal of the composition of the leading party bodies", said Khrushchev, would apply also to elected state and public organizations and represent a "big step forward in the development of our democracy."<sup>48</sup> Ostensibly, the rotation was meant to preclude the reoccurrence of a 'cult of the individual'.<sup>49</sup> Yet the fact that Khrushchev's proposal did not apply to the First Secretary and to "experienced party members of special merit"<sup>50</sup> strongly suggests that this purge of party officials was not genuinely democratic but merely a device to get rid of critics. Another tactic Khrushchev used to dilute the power of the bureaucracy was his practice of expanding plenums and conferences to include non-voting, non-party specialists who by-passed the standard political training of the party schools and who were

directly accountable to the Secretariat, that is, Khrushchev. Khrushchev used these expanded meetings to show respect and deference to the specialists at the intended expense of the voting, party apparatchiki whom Khrushchev treated with contempt and derision.<sup>51</sup>

The second structural change was the decision to split oblast-level party committees into equally senior industrial and agricultural branches. Khrushchev believed that the workload of party organizations was too heavy, and by doubling the staff and separating areas of responsibility, Khrushchev hoped to increase the level of training and specialization of the party secretaries. By having specialists in each sector concentrate on a smaller number of problems, party officials would be better able to react to urgent problems and devote more energy to long-term planning.<sup>52</sup> The object, of the separate administrations, according to Khrushchev, was to "lead the apparatchiks to become more deeply involved in economic activities" so that, party functionaries would become more "qualified", "concrete", and "systematic".<sup>53</sup>

In total, the 'bifurcation' created 156 new obkoms and kraikoms and 1711 territorial agricultural production administrations. In all, the campaign lasted from the 22nd Party Congress until Khrushchev's removal from power in October 1964. A scant month after his overthrow, the Central Committee issued a decree ordering the reunification of industrial and agricultural obkoms and kraikoms.<sup>54</sup>

Ultimately, the negative administrative aspects of the bifurcation far outweighed any ideological or organizational benefits. First, the total separation of responsibilities left the agricultural sector without adequate manpower, with fewer administrative or financial resources, and without a ready pool of factory and office workers to help bring in the harvests. Since each sector was responsible for its own affairs, there was no longer any incentive for the industrial party apparatus to want to help their agricultural bretheren. More generally, under the bifurcation there was a lack of clear authority. With two equally senior organizations there was no one person, for example, to receive complaints from Soviets or production administrators.<sup>55</sup>

In addition to its inefficiency, the break-up of the party apparatus engendered a competition for influence that bore all the signs of a nascent pluralism. The agricultural and industrial sectors each had to defend and promote its own particular interests in order to compete for the same resources. Further, since one of Khrushchev's primary goals was to dilute the the power of the Presidium, (now Politburo) and the bureaucracy, it was essential for Khrushchev's opponents to arrest this development before the next Party Congress lest the bifurcation invite the creation of two Central Committees or two KGBs.<sup>56</sup> The result was that Khrushchev's decentralization schemes produced decentralization without order and without discipline. Some

party officials who lent their support to the program did so only to ensure that Khrushchev would initiate or continue other programs of particular interest. Others did so purely out of careerist ambitions.<sup>57</sup> As it turned out, the bifurcation program, which the Central Committee approved for the period November 1962 to November 1964, was never fully implemented and only came to include one-third of the *obkoms* and *kraikoms*.<sup>58</sup> In essence, as George Breslauer has suggested, de-Stalinization failed because it was intimately bound up with Khrushchev's personal political fortunes as "either a product of his personal political initiative or as a reflection of his problem solving strategy."<sup>59</sup>

#### POLITICAL REFORMS--Gorbachev

Broadly speaking, Gorbachev's political reforms are designed to accomplish three objectives: the sharp reduction in the intermediate levels of the bureaucracy; the curtailment of elite prerogatives at the upper levels; and the independence of the lower bureaucratic functionaries through a policy of consultation rather than dictation.<sup>60</sup> At the upper level of the political apparatus, Gorbachev, like Khrushchev, has proposed limiting the length of service of party and government officials. The Central Committee reported that, to avoid abuses of power and poor job performance

[a]ll party committees starting at the district and city level shall be elected for a standard term of five years. Simultaneously a Communist shall not hold an elected post in the C.P.S.U. for more than two terms in a row. Election for a third term in a row shall be possible only on the

initiative of Communists and shall require a preliminary decision on admission to the elections. Such a decision shall be passed by no less than three-fourths of the membership of the party committee concerned. The voting shall be by secret ballot.<sup>61</sup>

Gorbachev's proposal goes farther than Khrushchev's because there are no exceptions made for the General Secretary or "exceptional party members of special merit." Although, it is not yet clear whether this proposal is to apply to Gorbachev as the incumbent leader.<sup>62</sup>

At the regional and factory level, Gorbachev's plan for political decentralization is based upon an initiative of his predecessor, Yuri Andropov. The intent of Gorbachev's promotion of limited local and factory-level democracy is to stimulate productivity and individual accountability. Gorbachev argues that it is necessary to "[strengthen] the independence and activeness of the local bodies of power" and that this is only possible if "every citizen [had] a real opportunity to actively influence...managerial decisions...." It is up to the Party to ensure that management no longer continues to be the privilege of a narrow circle of professionals but to ensure that "the most worthy people capable of conducting state affairs at a high level are elected Deputies, and that the composition of the Soviets is systematically renewed."<sup>63</sup> Gorbachev announced, in January 1987, that, as an experiment, there would be local government elections in selected raions and oblasts that June.<sup>64</sup>

Gorbachev does not advocate competitive, Western-style elections, but rather a structure wherein 'collectives' are to discuss several candidates, while the Party is to have final authority to accept or not to accept a nominee.<sup>65</sup> Gorbachev has announced that his experiment with electoral reform will include several candidates from which to chose, larger electoral districts, several deputies elected, increased voting representation and voter wishes, and a secret ballot for all secretaries.<sup>66</sup>

The foundation of Gorbachev's drive to promote self-criticism, economic efficiency, and 'democratization' is glasnost, or 'publicity'. As Gorbachev declared in his speech to the Party Congress: "[w]ithout public openness, there is not and cannot be any democracy...[it is only by]...combining centralism with democracy" that such democracy is realizable.<sup>67</sup> Like Khrushchev, Gorbachev has affirmed that glasnost "would not cause order to collapse,"<sup>68</sup> but it is growing increasingly apparent that glasnost will not submit to government controls.

#### Political opposition to glasnost

A major cause of political opposition to glasnost is that while Gorbachev has spoken about 'democratizing' Soviet society and 'psychological restructuring', he has had little to say about the role the Communist Party is to play. Gorbachev has only spoken of the Party in vague, negative terms--that it should not obstruct perestroika.<sup>69</sup> As he stated in May 1985: "...[A]nyone who is not prepared to

adapt and who moreover impedes the resolution of these new tasks should get out of the way. Get out of the way and don't interfere!"<sup>70</sup> By failing to articulate a clear, positive function for the Party, Gorbachev does not appear to have given much thought to what is to replace its functions. "...[E]ven in the latest [June 1987] version of reform...market mechanisms only supplement, not supplant administrative leadership."<sup>71</sup>

*Perestroika* is likely to be rather short-lived unless Gorbachev moves quickly to establish unequivocal authority over the political leadership in order that he may have the security and confidence to implement fundamental economic and social reforms. Of the major players in the Politburo, Yegor Ligachev, Nikolai Ryzhkov, Viktor Chebrikov, Vitalii Vorotnikov and Lev Zaikov all were brought into the Central Committee by Yuri Andropov.<sup>72</sup> Although Ligachev, Ryzhkov, and Chebrikov were made full members of the Politburo by Gorbachev, they cannot be considered as allies. Zaikov, though, more strongly supports Gorbachev's version of 'radical reform' and *glasnost*.<sup>73</sup> As a result, Gorbachev leads a predominately independent Politburo and Central Committee, cannot rule by fiat as did Khrushchev, and thus will have more difficulty in pushing through reforms.

Within Gorbachev's Politburo, the strongest conservative resistance comes from second secretary Yegor Ligachev. He has differed with Gorbachev on such major items as secret ballots, mandatory retirement for party officials



and has supported greater emphasis on military development.<sup>74</sup> But, the differences between Gorbachev and Ligachev are less ideological than they are tactical: both recognize the need for reform but differ over how far and how fast reform should be implemented. One can see in Ligachev a reflection of the cautious reformism of Andropov. Ligachev's less-than-total commitment to glasnost was evident in an interview he gave with the French daily *Le Monde* in early December, 1987. Ligachev gave what amounted to a *pro forma* endorsement of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Although he stated that talk of *perestroika* without *glasnost* is "foolish", throughout the interview he consistently spoke favourably of instances where 'publicity' was compromised in favour of assertions of ideological orthodoxy. Typical of his discomfiture with *glasnost* is his attitude toward Gorbachev's re-examination of Soviet history. Ligachev contended in the interview that

...it is not necessary to review our history: what has happened has happened. We are not re-examining history but the manner in which it has been presented, we are eliminating the 'gaps' left by the past. The limits of this reappraisal are perfectly clear--to learn historical truth.<sup>75</sup>(my emphases)

Like the cautious reformers of the post-Stalin leadership, Ligachev does not want to challenge established myths and perceived truths about Stalin, and other aspects of the Soviet past. Because of the consensual nature of Soviet politics Ligachev's reservations about *glasnost* must be inferred from indirect criticisms, such as the absence of

any overt support. At the beginning of the interview, Ligachev made a point of explaining how it was his responsibility, not Gorbachev's, to chair meetings of the Secretariat. This assertion is significant because the General Secretary usually presides over these meetings. More than the substance of the statement, though, is that Ligachev felt the need to mention the matter at all. According to the Central Intelligence Agency's senior expert on the Soviet leadership, Ligachev has "sent signals" that he would prefer a more cautious approach to reform. By giving this impression, "he's letting it be known that should the Central Committee become fed up with Gorbachev, he can continue with the change but at a much slower, more moderate pace."<sup>76</sup> The analyst, Marc Zlotnik, concludes that there is indeed a threat to Gorbachev.

It is expected that Gorbachev will move to consolidate his power within the Politburo by the next Party Congress in 1991. Already, it appears that Gorbachev has had some success in this area. In May 1987, the Mathias Rust incident gave Gorbachev an excellent opportunity to rid himself of obstructionist elements in the Politburo and the armed forces by firing Sergei Sokolov, the Defence Minister, and General Aleksandr Koldunov, the commander of the Soviet anti-aircraft forces.<sup>77</sup> These firings and the subsequent purge of the military did not so much reflect embarrassment over the Rust incident as it did "a deeper and longstanding

tension--even hostility--between...Gorbachev and his generals...."<sup>78</sup>

The threat to Gorbachev's authority is more complicated than were the challenges to Khrushchev's authority. Unlike Khrushchev who was the supreme authority in the Politburo, at least from 1958 onward, perestroika's future is closely related to Gorbachev's political standing within the Politburo which is not beyond challenge. In addition, Gorbachev must build coalitions behind his programs. Both Khrushchev and Brezhnev were supported by the strong Ukrainian party machine; Gorbachev does not have a comparable apparatus in his native Russian republic.

The independence of Gorbachev's Politburo has exposed Gorbachev to criticism from other reformers--a problem Khrushchev did not have to consider. On October 21, 1987, at a full meeting of the Central Committee, Boris Yeltsin, Central Committee Secretary for the city of Moscow and candidate member of the Politburo, is reported to have accused Gorbachev of "developing a cult of personality that threatened to undermine his programs."<sup>79</sup> This outburst of discontent from an ardent supporter of reform highlights the problem Gorbachev faces because he encourages open expression of views. In a sense, Khrushchev was fortunate that he had to deal with an early formal challenge to his authority because in his victory, he was forced to consolidate his power. After the defeat of the 'anti-party group' in 1957, Khrushchev supplanted Nikolai Bulganin as

Premier and thereafter was essentially the supreme leader of the Politburo. Under de-Stalinization, there was no doubt as to what constituted the official line or who made it. Khrushchev was the official authority in the Politburo, and his policy of promoting differing views did not extend to his Presidium colleagues.

Because Gorbachev has a two-front war to fight, he now no longer finds himself on "the cutting edge" of reform but in the role of a manager "trying to position himself between the extremes of the entrenched party bureaucrats and change-minded 'reformers' who want heavy doses of perestroika and glasnost."<sup>80</sup> The long-term problem for Gorbachev is less the success or failure of his radical reform than it is the fact that its success will have serious socio-political repercussions for the future stability of the Soviet regime which is rooted in ideology and mythologized history. The upshot of Gorbachev's dilemma is that he is as much a prisoner of the Stalinist system as he is a reformer of it.

'Democracy' in economic management, for example, is evident only at the microindustrial and microsocietal level with no evidence of macroindustrial democracy.<sup>81</sup> In the election at the Transport Construction Research Institute, the Party intervened to add two candidates of its choosing to the four that were already chosen by the workers. The additions were the highly unpopular deputy director and an outsider who was a scientist. After private meetings with a representative of the Ministry of Transport, the four

popular candidates suddenly withdrew. In addition, it was determined that only active staff members "in the party and other official agencies were deemed eligible to vote, a total of 300 people [out of 2000]". Preferring the devil they did not know to the one they did, the outsider was elected. As one staff member commented: "At the beginning every one was excited by the process, but as time passed people slowly understood that nothing would come of the election. We realized that the ministry, just as it has always done would pick the director."<sup>82</sup> As he stated in his report to the 27th Party Congress,

the tasks of the Central Committee and the Politburo include enhancing the effectiveness of the centralized management of the economy and the strengthening of the role of the center in realizing the basic goals of the Party's economic strategy and in determining the rates and proportions of the development of the national economy and its balance.<sup>83</sup>

But the promotion of social tolerance should not lead one to believe that either Khrushchev or Gorbachev is willing to entertain genuine dissent. It goes without saying that giving some degree of decision-making independence to citizens is integral to a reform strategy designed both to tap the intellectual potential of Soviet society and to strengthen the economy. But the unwanted side-effect of economic reform is that the loosening of controls precipitates demands for political change. Such a change, is anathema to the Soviet state.

## Public Dissent

It is Gorbachev's relaxation of social taboos and tolerance of dissent that have provided much of the tangible evidence of radical reform and have most strongly suggested a parallel with Khrushchev. In the literary field, glasnost has made possible the publication of Anatolii Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat* and the showing of the long-suppressed Georgian film, *Repentance*--both frank and unvarnished accounts of life under Stalin's terror.<sup>84</sup> Taking Gorbachev's November, 1987 speech to be a sign of official willingness to expand the boundaries of disclosure and examination of the Soviet past, the journal *Ogonyek*, for example, published an article documenting Stalin's responsibility for the 1929-32 famine in the Ukraine and exploding the fiction that the famine was due to to a poor harvest. Additionally, the article broke new ground by citing the victims of Stalin's Terror in the millions, not thousands as is officially claimed.<sup>85</sup> In the performing arts, Mikhail Shatrov's play, *The Brest Peace*, portrays the negotiations surrounding the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and depicts Trotsky and Bukharin as important historical figures.<sup>86</sup> Similarly, during the cultural thaw from 1961-64, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* was published, researchers and writers generally enjoyed a freedom not experienced since the early 1930s, and anti-establishment expression was encouraged.<sup>87</sup>

Because Khrushchev staked his political future on dramatic increases in agricultural production, and because increased agricultural production required strong leadership and proper organization in agriculture, Khrushchev felt an increase in the liberalization of political expression and the depoliticization of many social initiatives would lead to the breakthrough that was needed to stimulate the dormant energies of the people.<sup>88</sup> Khrushchev felt that such relaxation would not require police methods to enforce them. One reason for this was that dissent was limited to criticism that supported Khrushchev and his policies. In May 1959, in his address to the Third Writers Congress, Khrushchev deprecated the worth of critics of the Soviet system while openly espousing 'varnishers', those writers who write only about positive aspects of Soviet life.<sup>89</sup>

By contrast, the anti-Stalinist element of *glasnost* is evident in the lack of the overt subordination of social policy to personal political ambition. Gorbachev's refusal to cultivate one-man rule in his drive to effect deep, structural change, combined with a lack of manipulation of doctrine from above has left Soviet society freer to express itself than at any time since the 1920s. As a result, social expression is not uniform and there has developed a variety of interpretations of what precisely is meant by *perestroika*. Most importantly, there has developed a discrepancy between the official Party-sanctioned *glasnost*

and the unofficial and spontaneous demands for public reform. This has been a mixed blessing for Gorbachev.

A case in point is the recent arrest of Sergei Grigoriyants and police raid on the offices of the magazine *Glasnost*, of which Grigoriyants is the editor. Grigoriyants was arrested because of his affiliation with the Democratic Union, a group that has proclaimed itself to be an opposition party.<sup>90</sup> The arrest was seen as a serious setback for advocates of *glasnost* because *Glasnost* had already existed for ten months and had published its material with the consent of the Politburo. Roy Medvedev explains that Grigoriyants was singled out for arrest because of the nature of his dissent. Andrei Sakharov and he are left alone, Medvedev says, because they see reform of the communist system as possible, while Grigoriyants "sees Communism as beyond reform."<sup>91</sup>

On the positive side, there is the appearance of unofficial political associations. The *Perestroika Club* in Moscow, for example, is but one of a core group of 50 political clubs boasting a membership of over 250 activists,<sup>92</sup> which belong to the *Federation of Socialist Clubs*. The aim of the clubs is to "[combine] Western-style freedoms and legal rights with the economic protections of a socialist welfare state."<sup>93</sup> In all, *Pravda* estimates that there are some 30,000 unofficial organizations including environmental, cultural humanitarian and peace groups, many having their own *samizdat* publications.



Unlike the samizdat publications of the 1960s and 1970s, unofficial publications today not only reflect the views of dissenters, but also of those who seek to co-exist with the system and desire only editorial independence.<sup>94</sup> Lev Timofeyev, the publisher of *Referendum*, an unofficial opinion magazine, confidently asserts that "[m]odern technology will spread and come into its own....The authorities are already losing control over the spread of information."<sup>95</sup> This feeling is especially strong among the *Komsomol* leadership which sees developments like the *Perestroika Club* as a threat to its official monopoly on the minds of Soviet youth.<sup>96</sup>

Official tolerance of dissent is limited to those activities which do not criticize the regime. A *Pravda* editorial declared "illegal" such acts as demonstrations which are conducted "[w]ithout the permission of the authorities" and also the printing and dissemination of "literature hostile to socialism."<sup>97</sup> In a statement critical of *Moscow News* editor, Yegor Yakovlev, Ligachev said: "It is really going beyond the bounds of democratic practice when items are published according to the editor's personal decision, without examination by the editorial board of the newspaper or magazine."<sup>98</sup> Criticism has also been levied against *Ogonyek* and *Sovetskaya Kultura*. Additionally, it would appear that Viktor Chebrikov, the head of the KGB, is uncomfortable with the publication of long-banned

literature, criticism of Stalin, and far-reaching economic reform.<sup>99</sup>

Political discomfiture over glasnost is evident in the contempt Yegor Ligachev and others have shown toward certain publications, especially *Moscow News* which has been the most conspicuous force in the struggle to stretch the limits of samokritika and glasnost. In late March 1987, *Moscow News* published a letter from prominent emigré dissidents calling for Gorbachev to pull the Red Army out of Afghanistan,<sup>100</sup> and most recently it criticized the government's decision to impose a blackout on news regarding nationalist demonstrations in Armenia. The Armenian demonstrations were an expression of local discontent against a perceived bureaucratic injustice--the awarding of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan.<sup>101</sup> These demonstrations were not directed against Soviet authority, unlike those in the Baltic republics; in fact the Armenian demonstrators invoked perestroika as part of their cause.

To quell the unrest, Gorbachev appointed an Armenian to lead the Nagorno-Karabakh government but did not accede to demands that the region be given to Armenia. Moscow's decision simply to appoint an Armenian as regional leader has not diffused the issue. The conflict has now become a constitutional crisis. The Armenian legislature unanimously endorsed the call to annex Nagorno-Karabakh and justified its position according to Article 70 of the Soviet Constitution which provides for "free self-determination of

nations" within the USSR, while just as forcefully, the Azerbaijani legislature cited Article 78 which affirms that the territory of a republic "may not be altered without its consent."<sup>102</sup>

The Caucasian unrest is just one of several instances of popular discontent over the last fifteen months. In December 1986, citizens in the Kazakh capital of Alma-Ata rioted in the streets after it was announced that an ethnic Russian was to take the place of fired Kazakh Party boss, Dinmukhamed Kunayev. In July 1987, Tatars demonstrated in Moscow for the right to return to their homeland in the Crimea. (The entire population of Crimean Tatars were deported *en masse* to Siberia and eastern Kazakhstan by Stalin in 1944). The following month, in the capitals of the Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, anti-Soviet demonstrations marked the 48th anniversary of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact that effectively consigned the three republics to Soviet domination.<sup>103</sup>

Recently the authorities in Estonia took the audacious step of sanctioning the creation of "the first large-scale political group outside the Communist Party".<sup>104</sup> The Estonian group, the *Peoples Front*, is open to anyone who supports *perestroika* and opposes "Stalinist, conservative viewpoints."<sup>105</sup> More than just a society or club, the *Front*, which has similar organizations in Moscow, Leningrad, Yaroslavl, Kiev, and in Lithuania is an aggressive political organization dedicated to the promotion of reform and

fighting conservative reaction. In Latvia, cultural leaders have taken the boldest step to date by advocating sovereign status for Latvia within the Soviet Union, including separate representation at the United Nations, control over its own press, and greater control over its own internal and external security.<sup>106</sup>

The Caucasian and Baltic issues and the ambivalent attitude of the authorities toward dissent represent a long-term problem for Gorbachev. Gorbachev is not yet prepared to risk the political consequences that a strong move toward economic reform requires. Gorbachev's change of tactic from leading advocate of reform to centrist manager of differing interests was underscored when he "firmly distanced himself from more radical advocates of change, severing political and philosophical links to a wing of that party movement for which he had 'shown considerable sympathy earlier.'" <sup>107</sup> On issues of dissent, Gorbachev has so far resisted taking substantive decisions, preferring instead to allow the aggrieved parties to channel their dissent into the press and local legislatures. But problems like the Caucasian and Baltic disputes and the vacillating official attitude toward tolerance of dissent will not soon go away; they will have to be faced sooner or later with significant consequences.

#### CONCLUSION

The future for glasnost and political reform in general is still unclear. The need for candour about the past and unease over the potential ramifications of this candour have

created a dynamic between the forces of glasnost and tradition in Soviet politics that is likely to last for years. As Gorbachev has recognized, "[i]t was the absence of a proper level of democratization in Soviet society that made possible the personality cult, the violations of legality, the wanton repressive measures of the 30's."<sup>108</sup> Yet, however necessary political change may be, it must not be forgotten that the regime harbours a deep mistrust of the population and would no doubt resort to force to maintain its vanguard role should perestroika begin to undermine the Party's monopoly of political authority.<sup>109</sup> It is for this reason that that Gorbachev at the current Communist Party Plenum sought to make irreversible his plan to limit the role of the Communist Party in the day-to-day affairs of Soviet life. It is widely believed that a successful Plenum is necessary to set the proper political climate for the introduction of far-reaching economic reforms that are expected at the Twenty-eighth Party Conference in 1991.

While it is expected that the Party will endorse perestroika in general, it will not be the great opportunity to purge the Party of conservatives, because most of the 5000 delegates to the Plenum were chosen from the conservative ranks.<sup>110</sup> The predominance of conservative delegates should not come as too much of a surprise because a society that has only known authoritarian dictatorship will not easily cast off the habits of a lifetime.

It could be argued that Gorbachev's political survival is just as dependent upon mass support as was Khrushchev's. In Khrushchev's case, the more he used the masses to undermine the bureaucracy, the more he became dependent upon continued public support, a support that lasted only so long as Soviet economic performance matched Khrushchev's rhetoric and anti-Stalinism remained popular. By 1964, though, Khrushchev's brand of anti-Stalinism had lost much of its earlier momentum. The military and the civilian leadership now had had enough of Khrushchev's harebrained schemes and personal style of leadership which threatened the privileges and power of the élite. In October 1964, Khrushchev was overthrown and replaced by Leonid Brezhnev as General Secretary.

In the 1960s, the Soviet leadership was not ready to accept such reforms and it is not clear whether the Party leadership, or even Soviet society, is sufficiently 'enlightened' to accept Gorbachev's proposals. Yet, the struggle between supporters and opponents of *glasnost* and *perestroika* within the leadership and within Soviet society is a necessary and healthy development, and the surest sign that the Soviet Union is facing up to its history.

So far, Gorbachev has succeeded "more at improving human performance than at promoting structural change."<sup>111</sup> because *perestroika* does not yet seem to have found universal favour among the élite or to have filtered down to the lower level of the bureaucracy. The future for reform,

though, must not be judged in the present; its ultimate success is a long-term proposition. By promoting elections, party accountability, and a balanced assessment of Soviet history, Gorbachev's political reforms are rigorous and potentially longlasting, as opposed to Khrushchev's 'administrative' changes which did not really address the flaws of the Soviet system.

## CHAPTER III

## Economic Reform

The one broad similarity between Khrushchev's and Gorbachev's remedies for the Soviet Union's economic woes is that both men advocate decentralization. However, the decentralization Gorbachev advocates bears little resemblance to the kind of decentralization that Khrushchev practiced. Khrushchev argued on administrative grounds for the need to decentralize economic decision-making, but he did not change the decision-making monopoly of the centre or Moscow's monopoly on the allocation of key resources. Mikhail Gorbachev, by contrast, eschews administrative tinkering. Gorbachev is the first post-Stalinist reformer to advocate systemic economic change (change of the economic structure itself), as opposed to systematic change (change within the existing structure). It is this willingness to take on the Stalinist economic system that distinguishes Gorbachev from Khrushchev as a risk-taker.

This chapter begins with Khrushchev's economic reforms. It will show that all Khrushchev accomplished was to substitute one form of empire building with another, and in the process, he exacerbated the problem of overcentralization by increasing centralized meddling in day-to-day business affairs.



## KHRUSHCHEV

As this thesis has already argued, Khrushchev's economic reforms were principally concerned with agriculture. In January 1954, during the midst of his competition with Malenkov, Khrushchev began the first of his agricultural reforms with the announcement that he intended to cultivate the vast region of virgin and fallow lands in eastern Kazakhstan and southwestern Siberia, largely for spring wheat. The top priority for Khrushchev was not the gradual development of these lands but rather the achievement of rapid results. Khrushchev rejected the traditional agricultural practice of concentrating the cultivation, fertilization, and raising of crops on the best soil in favour of expanding the total area under cultivation. In his drive to achieve a dramatic success Khrushchev ignored consideration of the vast amounts of labour, fertilizer, sunlight, mechanical equipment that would be needed, the environmental impact of wind and soil erosion, or the limits of rich soil.<sup>1</sup>

The first year of the 'Virgin Lands' campaign was successful, but this was due to good weather and not to good management. The next year, 1955, was extremely dry and the harvest was poor. The failed harvest precipitated criticism from the Central Committee and Khrushchev's main rivals. Kaganovich, Malenkov, Molotov and others complained about the "pointless" flow of equipment and manpower to the east, noting that the Virgin Lands harvest would require the

mobilization of some 300,000 'volunteers', mostly from the Komsomol, 50,000 tractors, and over 6000 trucks.<sup>2</sup> Khrushchev's political difficulties abated for a time the following year, however, when the summer of 1956 brought abundant rain to the region and the Virgin Lands produced a bumper crop. This year was the zenith of Khrushchev's success in agricultural reform. It was during this year that Khrushchev embarked on his other second major agricultural undertaking. This was his promotion of corn as a feed crop to increase meat production. The corn-as-fodder campaign started off successfully in 1956. Cornfields grew from 4.3 million hectares in 1954 to 18 million in 1955, reached 20 million by 1960, and by 1962 had reached 37 million.

But the agricultural successes that silenced Khrushchev's critics bred other problems. Khrushchev's growing prestige in the wake of the 1956 bumper grain and corn harvests generated a co-ordinated reaction from conservatives led by Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich. To diminish Khrushchev's personal authority and enhance the power of the bureaucracy, they proposed, at a Plenum of the Central Committee in December 1956, that the *Goskonomissiya*<sup>3</sup> become a superministry to issue orders to other economic ministries. In order to eliminate this institutional challenge, Khrushchev responded by dismantling the entire ministerial structure. Khrushchev's first major structural economic reform, therefore, was his decision to remove the management of industrial production from Moscow

closer to local centres of consumption and supply which were under the control of his own regional and district party chiefs.

In addition to undermining his political opposition, there was an economic rationale behind Khrushchev's assault on the ministerial structure. Khrushchev believed that decentralization would counteract the competitive "empire building" that existed among ministries and would eliminate the inefficiencies of the rigid and centralized Stalinist economic system.<sup>4</sup> Thus, Khrushchev, in 1957, abolished individual ministries in favour of *sovery narodnogo khozyaistva--sovnarkhozy* (regional economic councils). These bodies were to be subordinated to the governments of the 15 union republics. In the case of smaller political administrative units, their boundaries were to be "coextensive with a *sovnarkhoz*."<sup>5</sup>

But while Khrushchev successfully combatted the problem of ministerial empire-building by decentralizing ministerial functions, the abolition of ministries did not affect Moscow's central control over resource allocation. The end result was that the *sovnarkhoz* structure bred a new, regional parochialism. Among *sovnarkhozy* there was no redistribution of materials even between individual industrial sectors,<sup>6</sup> and officials of each *sovnarkhoz* sought to promote only the interests of their region even to the detriment of other *sovnarkhozy*.

At about the same time as he started his sovnarkoz reorganization, Khrushchev decided to decentralize machine equipment distribution to the collective farms. Machine Tractor Stations had provided kolkhozy with farm equipment, training, and maintenance in exchange for produce, but after the amalgamation of the kolkhozy under Stalin, Khrushchev felt that it would be more efficient if each new consolidated kolkhoz owned its own equipment. The concept of a "gradual and selective reorganization of MTSS" was feasible, but in March 1958 Khrushchev succumbed to impatience and against preponderant moderate advice Khrushchev forced all kolkhozy regardless of wealth to purchase their own equipment within one year and at a price that was double that what the state originally paid for it.<sup>7</sup>

In theory, Khrushchev sought to replace a self-serving ministerial structure with a more efficient, co-ordinated network of regional authorities working for the common good. However, the sovnarkhoz and machine tractor reorganizations made matters worse. In the case of the sovnarkhozy the result of the sovnarkhoz was regulation without genuine decentralization.<sup>8</sup> It turned out that part of the function of the sovnarkhozy was to participate in the drafting and organization of the plans and to supervise the fulfillment of supply contracts. As a result the central authority, Gosplan was saddled with the task of managing the affairs of the sovnarkhozy but with only a portion of its former authority.<sup>9</sup> The fundamental weakness of the program was that

the sovnarkhozy did not have the actual authority to act independently but only to fulfill plans dictated by Gosplan. The reason for this was that when Khrushchev abolished economic ministries in 1957, the implementation of government policies fell to central governmental agencies.

As for the abolitions of the MTSSs, the effect on Soviet agriculture was devastating: farmers now were coerced into spending exorbitant sums for equipment, storage facilities, maintenance, and operators' wages. Nothing was now left to provide for equipment repairs or investment and most were forced to buy their equipment on credit. Khrushchev gave no consideration to the ability of the kolkhozniki to use the machinery since most had little or no experience with it. To demonstrate the absurd timetable Khrushchev demanded of his farmers, it took the state eight years to expand the number of MTSSs from 2446 to 7069. By 1958 there were approximately 8000. By the end of 1958, over 80% of all kolkhozy had been compelled to purchase their own equipment. By January 1959, 345 MTSSs remained--by December the number was 34.<sup>10</sup>

The politicization of Khrushchev's economic policy makes it difficult to determine where economic considerations began and where political expediency and showmanship stopped. While Khrushchev claimed to be emulating Lenin's practice of forging "[s]tronger ties with the masses"<sup>11</sup> both politically and personally, there was "a strong smell of opportunism to Khrushchev's Leninism."<sup>12</sup> The Virgin Lands announcement, for example, was essentially a

dramatic and bold publicity stunt to permit Khrushchev "to bring himself into the limelight and keep him there."<sup>13</sup> Typically, Khrushchev made this announcement in advance of the February 1954 plenum without first consulting the Presidium.<sup>14</sup> Khrushchev's agricultural programs overstretched financial and manpower resources to the point that investment in heavy industry and the military had to be sacrificed.

### Reforms Fail

The economic programs which showed some initial success in the 1950s were proven to be dismal failures by 1960. The Virgin Lands campaign, originally meant to be a temporary measure until traditional food production areas could be developed, became a permanent and necessary fixture of Soviet agriculture, even though the climate of the region is only suitable for wheat 2 out of every 5 years.<sup>15</sup> As for Khrushchev's corn campaign, 70-80% of the 1962 summer harvest was lost because of too much rain.<sup>16</sup> In the end, there was an embarrassing gap between Khrushchev's boasting about the future of Soviet agricultural production and hard economic reality.<sup>17</sup>

The essence of Khrushchev's economic reforms, and their ultimate failure can be traced to his fixation with appearance over substance. Khrushchev could have employed traditional agricultural practices to increase crop yields, but the perceived need for a dramatic increase in total output and the need to demonstrate to the world that the

Soviet system could meet the challenge of a food shortage and surpass the West in the process, led to serious blunders.

#### GORBACHEV

#### Principles of perestroika

Gorbachev's accession to power in March, 1985 signals the end of the reformed Stalinist era. Perestroika is a return to Leninist economic principles in order to address the inefficiency and corruption inherent in the Stalinist socio-economic system. In his report to the 27th Party Congress, Gorbachev recognized the inability of the Soviet Union to meet its stated economic goals:

Difficulties began to build up in the economy in the 1970s, with the rates of economic growth declining visibly. As a result, the targets for economic development set in the Communist Party program, and even the lower targets of the 9th and 10th five-year plans were not attained. Neither did we manage to carry out the social program charted for this period. A lag ensued in the material base of science and education, health protection, culture, and everyday services. Though efforts have been made of late, we have not succeeded in wholly remedying the situation. There are serious lags in engineering, the oil and coal industries, the electrical engineering industry, in ferrous metals and chemicals and in capital construction. Neither have the targets been met for the main indicators of efficiency and the improvement of peoples' standard of living.<sup>18</sup>

Gorbachev has also admitted publicly that the Soviet system is backward and needs to import not only Western technology but also, and perhaps more importantly, Western management and production techniques.<sup>19</sup> This recognition lies behind Gorbachev's break with previous reforms in the shift toward qualitative from quantitative indicators of

output and his new focus on economic accountability. Chief among Gorbachev's economic objectives, therefore, is the elimination of the "petty tutelage of...the day-to-day activities...of enterprises by ministries and departments."<sup>20</sup>

This new approach to economic reform will be conducted in part through the vertical integration of industries. This change will compel planners to take into account social preferences to ensure that goods are sold, thus ending the practice of producing junk year after year.<sup>21</sup> Under this structure, prices and profits are to determine indirectly the business considerations of plant managers who are to have greater operational independence.<sup>22</sup> This policy, *khozraschet*, formally went into effect on 1 January, 1988. From this time, managers of 60% of all Soviet industry are to be accountable for their own operations. By 1990, the *khozraschet* is to have universal application.<sup>23</sup> This movement towards managerial self-responsibility is a repudiation of Khrushchev's practice of using 'administrative levers', such as the direct intervention of state agencies into the day-to-day affairs of firms, to effect change.

Another of Gorbachev's innovations is his attack on the established practice of basing wages on flat pay-scales and seniority, and in particular the practice of *uranilovka*--wage-leveling. As a consequence, Gorbachev is putting forth the position that wage differences between professional and



managerial personnel on the one hand, and labourers on the other ought to be widened.<sup>24</sup> This is unavoidable. The problem with current attempts to increase productivity is that there is no tangible benefit to the consumer: wages tend to 'level out' leaving only morale boosters such as medals, and awards as compensation for hard work.<sup>25</sup>

This new approach toward the structuring of wages can be seen in Gorbachev's promotion of a *prodnalog*, or tax-in-kind, to permit peasants to sell their produce privately after taxes as as the case with the *prodnalog* of the New Economic Policy. The state under *perestroika* would set fixed five-year targets for state procurement so that peasants would not have to suffer yearly increases and also so that peasants could freely sell their surpluses.<sup>26</sup> The intent is that the *prodnalog* would "[loosen] the creative energy of the masses" and help to break down bureaucratic impediments to progress,<sup>27</sup> even though the state would still be the principal purchaser of agricultural products.

A graduated tax is not an entirely new concept. In his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, Karl Marx asserts the principle that all people do not have "equal production capacity" and thus have a legitimate claim to an unequal share of the "social consumption fund." In other words, Marx rejects the idea that all citizens in socialist society must be paid the same wage. In the *Critique*, Marx asserts that "the economic basis of the state [is] a single progressive income tax."<sup>28</sup> Ironically, it was Khrushchev that abolished

the progressive tax in favour of the leveling practice of raising the minimum income level.<sup>29</sup> The practice of raising lower wages and freezing higher wages was continued under Brezhnev and combined with substantial subsidies on such basics as foodstuffs, transportation, and housing.<sup>30</sup> Today, such subsidies and leveling practices are prime targets of economic restructuring.

Within the upper-level of the bureaucracy, the numerous economic ministries of the Soviet bureaucracy are to be amalgamated into super-ministries which would act in a supervisory as opposed to an interventionist capacity. Gorbachev's first super-ministry, the Gosagroprom (the State Agro-Industrial Committee) under the direction of Vsevolod Murakhovsky, was formed in November, 1985.<sup>31</sup> Gorbachev seeks to "relieve [Gosplan] of routine management questions" so that it may become "the true economic research headquarters of the country."<sup>32</sup> By contrast, under the *sovnarkhoz* campaign, Khrushchev reduced Gosplan to the level of partner in the drafting and execution of farm plans. Gorbachev recognizes that [i]t is senseless to increase the output of foodstuffs and not to show concern for delivering the products to consumers."<sup>33</sup> He therefore rejects

ambitious developmental projects [in favour of] increas[ing] the yield from fertile farm areas, diverting investment into already developed lands and encouraging family and group enterprises."<sup>34</sup>

In his report to the 27th Party Congress Gorbachev declared:

Genuine economic accountability and the dependence of enterprises on final results should become the norm for all units of the agro-industrial complex, and above all for collective farms and state farms."<sup>35</sup>

In a thinly veiled criticism of Khrushchev's Virgin Lands program, Gorbachev repudiated 'harebrained schemes' in his speech to the 27th Party Congress.<sup>36</sup> This perception of economic reform as being more than just a question of increasing production was absent from Khrushchev's agricultural reforms.

Gorbachev's adoption of Western economic characteristics is also evident in his recognition of the need to tap the creativity of the Soviet people. It is Gorbachev's dependence upon public participation and co-operation that requires social and political reform to create the proper climate for economic reform. In November 1986, for the first time, the Soviet government officially recognized and legitimized the underground economy, and since May 1987, a new law has been in effect permitting individuals to set up their own businesses. It is estimated that there are 17-20 million people producing US\$7.3-8.8 billion per year. Because the hiring of workers by individuals is prohibited by Soviet law, these enterprises are more akin to small-scale cottage industries than major financial undertakings. The potential for significant tax revenue and higher quality goods and services has given Gorbachev added incentive to co-opt the underground economy instead of fighting it.<sup>37</sup>

In a further loosening of controls, in June 1987, the state passed a new law to protect intellectual property and to provide for patent protection and royalty payments to inventors.<sup>38</sup> This new law coincides roughly with the establishment of a level of intermediate markets or 'co-operative stores' between the state and the farmers' markets; the setting up of roughly 70 'enterprise centres' within the economic ministries to serve as 'profit centres' to handle nearly 65% of all exports; and joint ventures with foreign investors.<sup>39</sup> In sum, it may be argued that Gorbachev intends to effect a loosening of strict centralized control over production, and foster a new centralism in economic management.

#### Agricultural Policy

Gorbachev's objectives for Soviet agriculture at first glance differ little from those of Malenkov, and later Khrushchev: "A problem we will have to solve in the shortest time possible is that of fully meeting our country's food needs...to insure a substantial increase in the per capita consumption of meat, milk, vegetables, and fruit."<sup>40</sup> But as we have seen, Khrushchev's reforms were administrative, not economic. The antecedent for Gorbachev is Lenin's New Economic Policy, and therein lies the potential for meaningful change.

Gorbachev and his advisors have repeatedly drawn parallels between perestroika and NEP.<sup>41</sup> This is not simply

propaganda--the similarities are profound. Under NEP, the Bukharinites

advocated raising grain prices sufficiently to induce peasants to part with their surpluses voluntarily. They fought for a balanced investment policy that would combat the goods famine by maintaining a modicum of development in light-industry rather than concentrating nearly all available resources on heavy-industry expansion.<sup>42</sup>

Moreover,

[t]he Soviet state retained control of heavy industry, foreign trade, banking, and transportation. But lesser enterprises were denationalized, the principle of private peasant farming reaffirmed, and market relations...restored....the Communist Party maintained its dictatorship...but the party-state of the 1920s was limited and relatively tolerant, allowing a greater degree of social, cultural and intellectual pluralism than has ever existed in [the Soviet Union]....[although] [t]he 1920s were neither democratic nor, in our sense, liberal."<sup>43</sup>

We can see this same philosophy in Gorbachev's programs of co-operative stores and increase of local decision-making authority. Lenin summarized the spirit of "co-operative" socialism in his 1923 article *On Cooperation*:

All we actually need under NEP is to organize the population of Russia in co-operative societies on a sufficiently large scale, for we have found that degree of combination of private interest, of private commercial interest, with state supervision and control of this interest, that degree of its subordination to the common interest....

[Those who] look down upon our co-operative societies [fail] to appreciate their exceptional importance, first from the standpoint of principle (the means of production are owned by the state), and, second, from the standpoint of transition to the new system by means that are the simplest, easiest and most acceptable to the peasant.<sup>44</sup>

Gorbachev must repudiate the legacy of forced collectivization because it poses an insurmountable obstacle to long-term reform. In his speech of 2 November, 1987 Gorbachev acknowledged that Stalin and his aides (who were never mentioned by name) had permitted "massive repressions and vast unpardonable acts of lawlessness" in the pursuit of collectivization, but nevertheless he praised the collectivization as an event which "created the socialist basis for the modernization of the agrarian sector and set it on the rails of proper management."<sup>45</sup> As for the rise of the Terror, Gorbachev blamed it on "the absence of a proper level of democratization in the Soviet society." Furthermore, Gorbachev justified the collectivization as "a transformation of fundamental importance" which led to "excesses" only because "there had [not] been a consistent line to promote the alliance with the middle peasantry"--honest peasants who were lumped together with the kulaks. In fact, it is fair to say that perestroika's economic aspect is a reaffirmation of the principles of the NEP: economic expansion, limited private enterprise, respect for differing views, yet also disciplined, authoritarian leadership.

In agriculture particularly, Gorbachev must unequivocally repudiate the system of Stalinist collectivization because it poses a "paralyzing ideological obstacle" to a successful restructuring of the economy.<sup>46</sup> Unless Stalinism is rejected in practice, not just in speeches, perestroika will suffocate. It is therefore vital

for Gorbachev that his commitment to Leninism be total--half-measures will not do.

### Obstacles to perestroika

As we saw in Chapter II, there is significant opposition to fundamental reform. Throughout the upper levels of the government and party apparatus, there are still thousands of anti-reformist obstructionists, and even many economists disapprove of Gorbachev's capitalist profit motive.<sup>47</sup> As yet there is no indication that Gorbachev's promotion of economic instruments over administrative measures "...will change the basic irrationality of the existing economic model,"<sup>48</sup> because Moscow continues to interfere in the affairs of individual enterprises. This interference has led Gavril Popov, an economics professor at Moscow State University to form an uncharacteristically critical and pessimistic prognosis of perestroika. Popov admitted that "factory managers and workers who are now supposed to run their own businesses will actually be hamstrung by central controls that remain in place." In Sverdlovsk oblast, for example, the local Party secretary has reported that "600 factories working under the new system had not been released from the all-powerful clutch of planners and ministries in Moscow."<sup>49</sup>

An indication that Gorbachev does not yet have adequate support within the elite is that "the most politically explosive feature of Gorbachev's economic plan--the end of food price subsidies--[is to] be introduced in two or three

years."<sup>50</sup> According to Nikolai Slyunkov, the three-year transition period is to permit Gorbachev time to conduct a more moderate "methodical loosening" of controls.<sup>51</sup> It is hardly a coincidence that the three-year transition period ends at about the same time that the next Party Congress is scheduled to take place, by which time it is expected that Gorbachev will have consolidated his authority within the Central Committee and the Secretariat.

But more than high-level political resistance, the most serious problem for Gorbachev is that many Soviet citizens may not want *perestroika*. They and some Party officials have shown hostility toward Gorbachev's policies of meritocracy and material incentives.<sup>52</sup> Much of the cause of this resistance is inherent in the very nature of *perestroika* itself. Given that Gorbachev intends to cut inefficiency at the mid-bureaucratic level, it is small wonder that, outside Moscow, lower-level bureaucrats equate economic and social reform with reduced political power. For these workers, Gorbachev's support of local elections means the loss of their privileged control over the political machinery without any visible sign of compensation. As a result, *perestroika* is met with little enthusiasm. This is especially true in agriculture, where the attack on the Stalinist economic structure "will undercut thoroughly the power base of the rural party apparatus."<sup>53</sup> A survey taken by *Literaturnaya Gazeta* indicated that

no more than half of [its] readers support the expansion of private initiative and no more than



one-third support the idea of electing managers. One-quarter of the respondents directly challenged the rationality of glasnost, declaring that it brings more harm than good to Soviet society.<sup>54</sup>

While giving greater self-reliance to Soviet citizens may well be an economic necessity, it "runs against a deep grain of tradition."<sup>55</sup> In those areas where market forces are having an impact, the inevitable rise in prices for scarce goods and services and higher wages for certain citizens have the effect of tainting perestroika with the odour of capitalism. The result is the alienation of older Soviet citizens who still cling to communist ideals and of the population in general by demanding harder work without giving them immediate benefits in return.<sup>56</sup>

The cradle-to-grave security of the Soviet welfare state is the fundamental bond between the people and the Party. When this political reality is combined with traditional Russian prikhodlivost--an innate resistance to change and stoic resignation in the face of adversity--the people, not the Party, are in fact the greatest conservative force against reform. While on a recent trip to the Soviet Union, *Time* editor Roger Rosenblatt perceived the spiritual bond between the people, their government and their history: "...sometimes one also feels that...mass inefficiency and old-fashionedness is willed by the people themselves as a means of retaining the past and holding modernity away."<sup>57</sup> Thus the great paradox of perestroika is that, by promoting economic self-reliance, Gorbachev will likely alienate those whom he needs most--working-class

Soviets. As Marshall Goldman observes, "[f]or workers to produce more, Gorbachev needs to offer them more consumer goods and services. Yet in order to be able to offer them more goods and services he needs more productive workers."<sup>58</sup>

If the youth and middle-class professionals, the people Gorbachev is depending on to be in the vanguard of his radical reform, are not given the material incentives and opportunities they demand, they could "boycott the system...by performing their duties in a pedestrian way", thus depriving Gorbachev of his basis of support.<sup>59</sup> There already appears to be some evidence of long-term social resistance.

For the youth, the response to perestroika appears to be resistance or at best indifference. While the Komsomol leadership dutifully rails against "formalism" in party policy, "[a] lot of young people [in the words of one youth] are sick and tired of the official ideology...Perestroika is just the same ideology, only more cunning."<sup>60</sup> According to the Young Communist League itself, "only 8% of young people reported some significant change in their organization...[and] only 20% of managers believe that 'restructuring at their enterprises is progressing successfully'" as compared with 40% who "preferred the old system."<sup>61</sup> For all of Gorbachev's need for public co-operation and his relaxation of the political climate to allow people to participate in the economic reconstruction, the people who are expected to contribute the most while

receiving the fewest benefits are the consumers. "...Gorbachev nowhere suggests channeling new resources toward consumption."<sup>62</sup>

In Moscow, today there are complaints that there is less food in the stores than there was even 5 years ago, and shortages outside the Moscow area are worse, including a lack of housing.<sup>63</sup> Seweryn Bialer has noted the long-term socio-economic problem this poses: "Today the main danger to the Soviet system may emanate from the industrial working class, which is being disrupted by the dismantling of the old social contract--a process already begun."<sup>64</sup>

There is also a third obstacle frustrating Gorbachev's restructuring: the structural backwardness of the Soviet Union. Theoretical breakthroughs in science and technology, when they occur, can rarely pass the drawing-board stage. For all of Gorbachev's rhetoric, encouragement, discipline, and *glasnost*, it is clear that the Soviet Union lacks the sophisticated scientific foundation to become the modern technological superpower that Gorbachev envisages. It is one thing to know that reform is necessary but quite another to put it into practice.

In a very real sense, this gap between theory and practice in politics reflects the main structural problem of Soviet industry. For one thing, Soviet industry suffers from a crippling lack of reliable, plentiful, modern equipment. In a land that boasts one-quarter of the world's scientists and one-half of its engineers, research and technical

equipment are "hopelessly obsolete".<sup>65</sup> The problem is particularly acute in genetic engineering which has not yet fully recovered from Lysenko's charlatanism.

There are two basic reasons why Soviet industry is loathe to assimilate innovation. The first is that, despite Gorbachev's exhortations, plant managers are still preoccupied with the quantitative approach to production. They are too concerned with meeting quotas and afraid to negotiate the maze of bureaucratic obstacles to acquire new equipment. Even if a plant should get new equipment, the time lag between the order and delivery usually renders this equipment obsolete.

The second reason is the institutionalized separation of science and industry and the concomitant restrictions on the scientific community. Unlike Western society, where industries have an intimate relationship with the scientific community and scientists are encouraged to make discoveries and conduct experiments, the structure of the Soviet command economy is such that any innovation must be prescribed from above. A situation in which, for example, a computer 'hacker' is given free-rein to develop new software is still virtually impossible even in Gorbachev's Russia where the state still zealously guards its monopoly over information control. Scientists have difficulty obtaining official permission to attend conferences overseas and even scientific journals are still censored. Bureaucrats in Moscow have absolute authority to determine whether a given

good should be produced or whether an innovation will be adopted. Thus, even though the Soviet Union can boast of having world-class theoretical scientists, Soviet scientists avoid dealing with industry and their ideas rarely get a hearing outside of the classroom.

Finally, Gorbachev's own prescription for change--acceleration of growth of national income and an increase in the quality of production--may be too ambitious. Gorbachev has declared his intention to double national income by the year 2000, but it is a moot point as to whether this objective attainable. For the Soviet Union to meet its food and production targets, the agriculture and consumer goods sectors will require greatly increased investment at the expense of heavy industry and the military. As Bruce Parrott observes, Gorbachev's commitment to high-technology and increased investments "...have intensified short-term demands on economic resources and have strengthened the temptation to divert inputs previously earmarked for current military spending."<sup>66</sup>

According to a joint report by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Defence Intelligence Agency, the benefits to the civilian economy from such a transfer would be "enormous". According to the report's estimates, "...the non-defense component of gross national product could be as much a 2 percent higher than it otherwise would be by the turn of the century."<sup>67</sup> The report further showed that the

total output of goods and services rose only 0.5% in 1987 as compared with 3.9% in 1986.<sup>69</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that, as economist Thomas Naylor writes, the root cause of Soviet economic inertia "is not ideology but rather the lack of familiarity with market mechanisms".<sup>69</sup> Soviet managers have no idea how to market products, set prices or handle employee relations.<sup>70</sup> To combat this problem, Soviet managers and bureaucrats are being sent to institutes in Moscow to be schooled in Western market-oriented management techniques. Thus, in Gorbachev's drive to impel Soviet society into the twentieth (to say nothing of the twenty-first) century, it is clear that *perestroika* must be more than merely an economic reform--it cannot succeed without broad governmental and public support for genuine decentralization.

It is fair to say that *perestroika* is dependent on nothing less than Gorbachev's ability of to force the Soviet economy to pass through two socio-economic revolutions at the same time--the second industrial, or 'consumption' revolution, and the third, post-industrial, or 'information', revolution.<sup>71</sup>

If my conclusions are valid, how successful is *perestroika* likely to be? Mikhail Gorbachev has been General Secretary of the Communist Party for three years, yet already there is talk of the Gorbachev 'Era'<sup>72</sup> just as there was with Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev.

Before Gorbachev is invested with such terminological longevity, it must be remembered that every leader since Stalin built his reputation on the repudiation of the policies of his predecessor. We have already had de-Stalinization, de-Khrushchevization, and de-Brezhnevization--is there to be a de-Gorbachevization?<sup>73</sup> It is theoretically possible that Gorbachev could still be overthrown as Party leader. Such an event would resemble Khrushchev's fate in that there was no obvious successor and it was conducted swiftly and with complete surprise. But such a fate is highly improbable: for one thing, the conservative opposition does not have champion around whom to rally, and for another there is no alternative to radical reform.

But the best we can do is speculate about Gorbachev's future. An unavoidable shortcoming of this thesis is that while Khrushchev's reforms can be examined with historical hindsight, *perestroika* is still evolving and thus its eventual outcome cannot be predicted with any accuracy. There is, however, one preliminary conclusion that may be drawn at this time. In his crash program to bring the twentieth century to the Soviet Union, Gorbachev exhibits some Khrushchev's dynamism, but by recognizing that radical reform will precipitate socio-economic dislocations, Gorbachev demonstrates a coherent understanding of reform and a willingness to take risks that was absent in de-Stalinization.

## CHAPTER IV

### **Conclusion: The Uniqueness of Perestroika**

From a comparison of some of the specifics of perestroika and de-Stalinization, this chapter focuses on the uniqueness of perestroika as a stage of Soviet reform. I stated in the introduction that perestroika represents "a new stage" in Soviet politics. I stated further that Soviet history could be divided into three major periods. The first period, the Leninist era, began in the years leading up to 1917 and continued under Bukharin's leadership to 1929. The second period, the Stalinist era, began in 1929 and continued effectively until Gorbachev's accession to power in 1985. Within the Stalinist era, I identified two sub-periods: the period of Stalinism (1929-53) and of reformed Stalinism (1953-85). This latter period was further divided into periods of 'liberal Stalinist' reform (1953-64) and 'conservative Stalinist' reform (1964-85).<sup>1</sup> The third major era, the Gorbachev period, began in 1985 and continues to the present. Gorbachev's perestroika represents the end of the Stalinist period and the beginning of the third era in Soviet history.

Judging from the contrast between perestroika and de-Stalinization, one might conclude that Gorbachev's reforms represent merely a reapplication of Leninism. When Gorbachev says that his perestroika is "a return to



'Leninist principles' that were sidetracked by Lenin's death in 1924,"<sup>2</sup> it is understandable how this impression could gain wide currency. Some observers might conclude that perestroika is little more than a composite of other attempts at reform: Gorbachev's crusade against alcoholism, absenteeism and drug abuse are based upon Yuri Andropov's crusade for social discipline; Nikita Khrushchev is the proper antecedent for Gorbachev's campaign for debate and candour about Soviet history and *samokritika*; and the limited competition of ideas and support for limited free enterprise may be seen as a return to Lenin's New Economic Policy.

In this chapter, the Leninist element in perestroika will be examined in greater detail in order to reinforce areas of congruence and to identify points of dissimilarity. Through this analysis, I intend to identify perestroika as a unique stage in Soviet politics.

### **Perestroika and the New Economic Policy**

The first point to be made in establishing the connection between Gorbachev and Lenin is the recognition that Stalinism was, in the main, a betrayal of Lenin's philosophy. Where Lenin saw the state as a means to a greater end, the establishment of a communist society, Stalin saw the state under his absolute control as the end in itself.

The anti-Leninist element in Stalinism is evident in the fact that the policies of forced collectivization and

rigid party control over economic enterprises, the foundation of Stalinist economic policy, had been shown to be misguided and self-defeating by 1921. During the period of the Civil War (1918-20), Lenin practiced a policy of repressive centralized authority with oppressive measures designed to extract grain from peasants at low prices. These oppressive measures, collectively called War Communism, were justified because the revolutionary communist state, in Lenin's words, had to fight off the "gigantic forces of world imperialism."<sup>3</sup> After the Civil War, Lenin was forced to recognize two facts. First, that the practices of forced grain requisitions and collectivization of the peasantry, which occurred during the period of War Communism, were mistakes and detrimental to the welfare of the young revolutionary state. Second, that in 1921 it was too soon to talk of political change among the peasantry.<sup>4</sup> Lenin concluded that it would "take generations to remould the small farmer and recast his mentality and habits."<sup>5</sup>

The NEP, thus, marked a significant change in Lenin's thought; instead of a violent, coercive transformation into socialism, Lenin argued that Russia would proceed gradually along the path to socialism. This new tolerance would entail increasing the relative economic welfare of the middle and poor peasants by ending the requisition of fixed quotas of produce in favour of a flexible tax-in-kind, a *prodnalog*. The intent of the *prodnalog* was to encourage all peasants, poor and rich, to show enterprise and innovation so that the

cities would not starve.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Lenin argued that, because of accomplished land redistribution, most of the kulaks had been eliminated and farmers were largely middle-peasants, and thus there was no need to fear a political challenge from the kulaks.<sup>7</sup> After the Intervention, it was time to develop the agricultural class, socially, economically, and politically.<sup>8</sup> The main threat to Bolshevik power during the 1920s thus was the decrepit state of the economy after years of "war, ruin, demobilization, and the disastrous crop failures"<sup>9</sup>. Consequently, the prime directive of the Party's policy was to respond to this threat by removing restrictions on the peasantry. The tolerant nature of the New Economic Policy was treated briefly in Chapter III.

The economic aspect of the NEP was accompanied by fundamental political reforms to create the proper conditions for economic improvement. The political aspect of the NEP is based on the frank recognition that the task of building communism could not be accomplished by the efforts of Communists alone. Communists, Lenin said, "are but a drop in the ocean, a drop in the ocean of people."<sup>10</sup> Lenin made this declaration at the Eleventh Party Congress in 1922 which is also noteworthy for a positive reassessment of the value of free-enterprise, as this excerpt shows:

During the past year we showed quite clearly that we cannot run the economy. That is the fundamental lesson. Either we prove the opposite in the coming year, or Soviet power will not be able to exist. And the greatest danger is that not everybody realizes this. \* \* \*

The mixed companies that we have begun to form, in which private capitalists, Russian and Foreign, and Communists participate, provide one of the means by which we can learn to organise competition properly and show that we are no less able to establish a link with the peasant economy than the capitalists; that we can meet its requirements; that we can help the peasant make progress even at his present level, in spite of his backwards; for it is impossible to change him in a brief span of time. <sup>11</sup>

For Lenin and Bukharin, socialism did not represent simply the collective ownership of the means of production: "[it] signified an economically and culturally advanced society with machine technology and an educated populace imbued with a socialist consciousness, participating in cooperative forms of work."<sup>12</sup> However, Lenin believed that the bureaucracy stood in the way of the people and the leadership and was in fact a threat to the authority of the leadership.<sup>13</sup> Shortly before his death in 1924, Lenin warned that the party apparatus was becoming too bureaucratized, resembling little more than the old tsarist apparatus underneath a thin veneer of Bolshevism.<sup>14</sup> Thus, the political aspect of the NEP is evident in Lenin's criticism of absolute Party control over economic policy.

The similarities between the New Economic Policy and perestroika should be obvious. First, they were both motivated by economic necessity. The threat to the welfare of the Soviet state that inefficient agriculture posed to Lenin and Bukharin is no less serious for Gorbachev. Second, both Lenin and Gorbachev recognize the debilitating influence of strict Party control of the economy.

Gorbachev's *khozraschet* is a rediscovery of Lenin's recognition that the Communist dictatorship has limitations and that 'co-operative socialism' is the only means by which the Soviet Union can develop. In sum, both reforms represent the superiority of pragmatic, rational decision-making over blind devotion to ideology.

Gorbachev's determination to reapply Leninist principles cannot be overemphasized because its implications for the future of the Soviet Union and of Gorbachev in particular are enormous. By even intimating that a return to Leninist principles is necessary, Gorbachev challenges the legitimacy and even the necessity of the entire Stalinist period. It undermines the basic myths of contemporary Soviet culture: that every aspect of Soviet political and economic life since Lenin is the only possible manifestation of Lenin's vision, and that Stalin continued and upheld the basic theoretical tenets of Leninism. In short, *perestroika* is an admission that Stalinism was a mistake and that the Leninist path must be picked up again. To distinguish reformed Stalinism from *perestroika* a further discussion of the doctrinal aspect of Stalinism is necessary. I intend to show that reformed Stalinism is a continuation of Stalinism.

**Reformed Stalinism and Stalinism**

In a speech delivered in 1926, Nikolai Bukharin argued that the NEP was the proper course because "class struggle... will diminish little by little until it dies out in communist society without any third revolution".<sup>15</sup>

Bukharin also argued elsewhere that cultural and intellectual life should be "based on the 'principle of free and anarchistic competition' rather than squeezing everybody into one fist" as Stalin advocated.<sup>16</sup> However, after Lenin died in 1924, the political force behind the New Economic Policy was significantly weakened. The result was that Lenin's and Bukharin's evolutionary path toward socialism gave way to intensive heavy industry and forced collectivization after Stalin outmanoeuvred Bukharin and others in 1929. Where Gorbachev founded his economic reforms upon the NEP, the Stalinist "third revolution" that Bukharin opposed, served as the model for Khrushchev.

Ironically, the doctrinal basis for Stalin's repressive dictatorship was Lenin, himself. The tyranny that Stalin unleashed was partly due to the overconcentration of authority in the hands of the Communist Party that occurred under Lenin. Recently the journalist Vasily Selyunin traced the origins of labour camps and forced collectivization to Lenin and the period of War Communism.<sup>17</sup> In an earlier April article in *Sovetskaya Kultura* the Soviet historian Nikolai Popov wrote that "the concentration of excessive power in the hands of the Communist Party started under Lenin and that this paved the way for Stalin's creation of 'the perfect totalitarian state'."<sup>18</sup>

Where Lenin and Bukharin employed economic measures to increase productivity in order to squeeze out the kulaks, Stalin employed unbridled coercion to bludgeon the peasantry

into collectivization. It is regarding the collectivization of agriculture that Stalin's fixation with absolute power and reversal of NEP principles is the clearest. It is impossible to separate Stalin's drive for absolute power from the collectivization. Bukharin's "no third revolution" theme collided with Stalin's inner vision of himself and his destiny."<sup>19</sup>

For Stalin, the decision to collectivize Soviet agriculture was a political tactic to give the regime control over food supplies by limiting the economic independence and bargaining power of the peasantry. As an amendment to the 15th Party Congress, Stalin added: "At the present time, the task of transformation and amalgamation of small industrial farms into large-scale collective farms must be set as the party's fundamental task in the countryside."<sup>20</sup> Alec Nove argues that some form of coerced collectivization was inevitable during 1928-29, regardless of who was in power, because voluntary co-operation from the kulaks was not producing enough grain. While Nove does not imply that the eventual leader, Stalin, was a necessary consequence of Bolshevism, certain aspects of Stalinism, like forced collectivization, was necessary in principle.<sup>21</sup> Throughout the latter half of the 1920s the kulaks, although declining in number relative to newly created middle-peasants, were still the most productive peasants. But the mutually incompatible objectives of eliminating the kulaks as a class of peasants and pursuing a tolerant agricultural

policy to increase total food output, led to wide policy swings between repression and tolerance of kulaks during this period.<sup>22</sup>

The tragic aftermath of Stalin's forced collectivization was a vicious circle of repression: the coerced collectivization, meant to increase food supplies dramatically, led to reduced harvests; reduced food supplies led to decreased living standards and shortages in the cities; shortages precipitated more ruthless enforcement of Stalin's "emergency measures"; the increased coercive authority of the police state led to censorship and disinformation which, among other things, exacerbated the food shortage.<sup>23</sup>

In his book, *Children of the Arbat*, Anatolii Rybakov paints a detailed picture of Stalin's paranoid fixation with absolute power. In a dictation to Nikolai Yezhov, successor to G.G. Yagoda as head of the NKVD (the forerunner of the KGB), Stalin articulated the need for absolute Party control over the economy:

The industrial machine is changing from a Soviet machine into a technocratic machine. A grave danger!...The technocratic machine is striving for economic supremacy, and it is one of the fundamental truths of Marxism that economic supremacy is political supremacy. We cannot allow the economic, and hence the political, supremacy of the technocracy, as it would mean the end of the dictatorship of the proletariat....

What does this signify? This signifies that the technocratic machine feels itself to be beyond control and beyond reproach...[C]ontrol of the economic machine must be carried out at the equivalent Party level. The Party machine must control all the country's administrations, including the economic and above all the



industrial machine, which has at its disposal the most dependent, most educated and most arrogant personnel (*italics in original*).<sup>24</sup>

As our discussion of the agrotown and sovnarkhoz campaigns has shown, Khrushchev eschewed the terroristic aspects of Stalinism but did not reform the Stalinist system. Gorbachev is clearly unique among post-war Soviet reformers because he recognizes that Lenin's economic reform was betrayed by Stalin's tyranny.

### The 'Cult of Personality'

An integral part of Stalin's vision of himself and pursuit of absolute control was his need to present himself not only as Lenin's successor but as Lenin's only legitimate heir. Because he was only a minor revolutionary in the years leading up to the revolution, Stalin embarked upon a conscious plan to falsify history to present this image. As Robert Tucker explains,

[s]ince there was no formal office of *vozhd'* [supreme leader]...the only way in which Stalin could finally establish and consolidate himself in the successor role was to gain general party recognition in it. To be the supreme leader he had to be publicly acknowledged and acclaimed as such. A further major move was called for in the politics of biography--a celebration of Stalin as party chief.<sup>25</sup>

This policy of self-acclamation was the beginning of a full-fledged cult of personality, a development which became a feature of leadership throughout the period of reformed Stalinism. As an article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* recently reported, "the Soviet Union had endured not just one cult of

personality, but several, including the periods of Nikita S. Khrushchev and Leonid I. Brezhnev."<sup>26</sup>

A concomitant of the cult of personality was the leader's fear of challenges to his authority. Because Stalin and his successors suffered from a crisis of political legitimacy, the Stalinist style of leadership included the denigration and removal of people of intelligence and ability from governing apparatus in favour of blindly obedient loyalists. Sergei Kirov and Nikolai Bukharin were but two of the intelligent, popular Party members of the first rank that were executed on Stalin's orders because they did not subordinate themselves to Stalin's will, and who knew the difference between historical truth and Stalin's falsified version of his past. They were replaced by reliable yes-men like Kliment Voroshilov, Lazar Kaganovich, and Georgii Malenkov.<sup>27</sup> We saw in Chapter II how Khrushchev surrounded himself with loyal people of poor quality, and how Brezhnev crowded out the reformist Kosygin element after 13 years. Where the leadership under Lenin was meant to serve the Party, under Stalin communist ideology degenerated into a dogma which held as the highest virtue the apotheosis of the leader and the "justification of the bureaucratic-dictatorial system" of government.<sup>28</sup>

#### Glasnost and de-Stalinization

Gorbachev's candour about the past and his innovations in foreign policy may also be sourced to an earlier reform. But unlike economic reform, the antecedent here is mainly

Khrushchev, not Lenin. Since I mentioned in the introduction that all post-Stalin reform is essentially de-Stalinization, and since Stalin followed Lenin, it is to Khrushchev, the first post-Stalinist reformer, that glasnost about the Soviet Union and its history must be traced. This thesis has dealt at length with the the reasons why Khrushchev was not totally forthcoming about Stalin and this discussion will not be repeated here, but it must be noted that the opening of the Soviet past that Khrushchev started is the reason why Gorbachev has accomplished as much as he has. Gorbachev has successfully employed glasnost to foster "the beginning of a political debate over the future of the Soviet system"<sup>29</sup> by relaxing controls in areas not critical to Party legitimacy. Most of all, Gorbachev has succeeded in reintroducing debate and rationality into areas previously considered sacrosanct: Stalin's military leadership, his prison camps, and the privileges of the Party elite.<sup>30</sup> But such criticism is not remarkable in itself: criticism regarding Stalin and party privileges has existed openly to varying degrees ever since Khrushchev denounced Stalin in his 1956 Secret Speech.

One notable aspect of glasnost is the speed with which the bounds of allowable criticism are being extended. In publications, the myth of Stalin has almost been entirely exploded. An article in the magazine *Znamya* has now described Stalinism as "perverted Communism" and "counterrevolution." Bukharin is now officially recognized as Lenin's true heir.<sup>31</sup> Even Lenin and the period of War

Communism, heretofore untouchable, is now within the bounds of allowable criticism.<sup>32</sup> However, this is less a criticism of Lenin's leadership than an indirect slap at Stalin who revived the policies of War Communism.

In foreign policy, it is the decline of the Soviet system, the achievement of military parity with the United States, and estrangement from Stalinism that has allowed Gorbachev to be bold and innovative. Where Khrushchev spoke of forcing the West to recognize a 'new reality', Gorbachev's foreign policy is based upon "an orientation toward dialogue and mutual understanding."<sup>33</sup> Gorbachev recognized the need for a new attitude in his report to the 27th Party Congress:

Changes in present-day world development are so profound and significant that they require the reinterpretation and comprehensive analysis of all its factors. The situation of nuclear confrontation makes necessary new approaches, methods and forms of relationships among different social systems, states and regions.<sup>34</sup>

Gorbachev's structural economic reforms, his criticism of Stalinism, and his drive for a 'psychological restructuring' should be seen as the continuation of the dynamic spirit of Khrushchev's reforms that was arrested by Brezhnev. But rather than simply continuing reform in the Khrushchevian style, Gorbachev has added the pragmatism of the NEP period, particularly in the recognition that the Communist Party cannot run the country by itself and must enlist the aid of the Soviet people. As Seweryn Bialer notes, "Gorbachev realizes that the Soviet Union's systemic

crisis is not primarily economic but social and political--even moral, ethical and existential. Economic backwardness and decline are symptoms of a deeper malaise.<sup>35</sup>

Perestroika is superior to de-Stalinization as much because of historical circumstance as any substantive policy differences. Gorbachev's return to Leninist principles effectively ends the period of reformed Stalinism. Gorbachev's overt self-identification with Bukharin and the NEP and comprehensive assault on Stalin and his myth may be seen as an attempt to give his leadership the legitimacy that Khrushchev and Brezhnev lacked. Therein lies the uniqueness of perestroika.

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18. Condoleezza Rice, "Defence and Security" in Martin McCauley ed. *The Soviet Union Under Gorbachev* (London: University of London Press, 1987), p. 193.
19. Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1985), p. 161.
20. Rice, in McCauley ed., p. 193.
21. cited in Paul Kennedy, "What Gorbachev is Up Against", *Atlantic* (June, 1987), p. 43.
22. Bruce Parrott, *The Soviet Union And Ballistic Missile Defense* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1987), p. 45.
23. *Business Week* (7 December, 1987), p. 76.
24. F. Stephen Larrabee and Allen Lynch, "Gorbachev: The Road to Reykjavik", *Foreign Policy*, No.65 (Winter 1986-87), p. 25. There have been "sharp and open clashes" between the civilian and military leadership over the allocation of funds for research and development. (Parrott, p. 49, and McConnell op cit).
25. Rice, in McCauley ed., p. 203.
26. Bill Keller, "Moscow Declares Its Aim Is To Leave Afghanistan", *New York Times* (7 January, 1988), pp. 1,6.
27. see *New York Times*, various articles.
28. see Table 1, Chapter IV.



29. Timothy J. Colton, *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1986), pp. 25-6.
30. Ibid., p. 25.
31. Marshall I. Goldman, *The USSR in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), p. 72.
32. Colton, p. 21.
33. Zhores Medvedev, *Gorbachev* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1986), pp. 112, 113-14.
34. Ibid., p. 114.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Khrushchev, *Documents II*, p. 30; Shevchenko, p. 103.
38. Larrabee and Lynch, *Foreign Policy*, p. 22.
39. Crankshaw, *Khrushchev*, p. 221.
40. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Speech to the 22nd Party Congress*, translated in *Documents of the 22nd Party Congress of the CPSU Report on the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Vol II* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1961), p. 33. (Hereafter, *Documents II* and *Documents I* for Volume I).
41. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 15.
42. Valerie Bunce, *Do New Leaders Make A Difference?* (Princeton: University Press, 1981), p. 198.
43. Nogee and Donaldson, p. 106.
44. Crankshaw, pp. 218-9.
45. McConnell, *World Politics*, p. 320.
46. Crankshaw, *Khrushchev*, p. 219; Nogee and Donaldson, pp. 27-8, 110.
47. Richard Harrity and Ralph G. Martin, "Khrushchev: The Red Riddle" *Look* (19 November, 1963), p. 36.
48. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, pp. 43-4, and Khrushchev, *The Last Testament*, p. 547.
49. Medvedev and Medvedev, pp. 130-3.

50. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 32.
51. *Ibid.*, pp. 236-7.
52. Crankshaw, *Khrushchev*, pp. 174-75.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 181.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 190.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 193.
56. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (25 February, 1986) translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (Vol. 38, No. 8.) (hereafter cited as Report), p. 4.
57. Zhores Medvedev, *Gorbachev*, pp. 22-6.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 32-5.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 43.
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-5.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-8; 62-3.
63. Colton, p. 77.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
65. *Ibid.*, pp. 156-7.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
67. Larrabee and Lynch, *Foreign Policy*, pp. 10-11. For other changes in personnel see pp. 11-13 and Brown, *Foreign Affairs*, pp. 1049-55.
68. Philip Taubman, "Architect of Soviet Change", *New York Times* (10 July, 1987), pp. 25-7.
69. Khrushchev, *Documents II*, pp. 111, 133.
70. Gorbachev, *Report*, p. 12; see also Anatoly Dobrynin, "Glavnaya Sotsial'naya Sila Sovremennosti", *Kommunist* No.16 (November, 1986), p. 18.
71. Khrushchev, *Documents I*, p. 167 see part 3, chapter 2 generally.

- 72. Ibid., Documents II, pp. 175, 6, 8.
- 73. Ibid., pp. 177, 9.
- 74. Gorbachev, Report, pp. 24, 25, 39.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER II

- 01. Stephen Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 12.
- 02. George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982), p. 32.
- 03. Pravda (12 March, 1985), cited in Colton, p. 161.
- 04. Seweryn Bialer, "Gorbachev's Move", *Foreign Policy* No.68 (Fall 1987), p. 66.
- 05. Timothy J. Colton, *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1986), pp. 132-3.
- 06. George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982), p. 59.
- 07. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, p. 26.
- 08. Ibid.
- 09. Merle Fainsod, "Khrushchevism in Retrospect" *Problems of Communism*, (January-February 1965) p. 4.
- 10. Richard Lowenthal, "The Kremlin's Difficult Choice" *Atlantic*, (April, 1965) p. 77.
- 11. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers* edited and translated by Strobe Talbott with commentary by Edward Crankshaw (Boston: Little, Brown, 1970), p. 74.
- 12. Cohen, pp. 115-6.
- 13. Ibid., p. 115.
- 14. Richard Harrity and Ralph G. Martin, "Khrushchev: The Red Riddle" *Look*, (19 November, 1963) p. 44.

15. Harrity and Martin, pp. 36-9.
16. Roy and Zhores Medvedev, *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), p. 67.
17. Secret Speech reproduced in Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, pp. 574, 590, 597-8, 600.
18. Nikita Khrushchev, Report to the 22nd Party Congress reprinted and translated in *Documents of the 22nd Congress of the CPSU Vol. I*, (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1963) chapters 9-10.
19. Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 350. see also Crankshaw's footnote.
20. Edward Crankshaw, introduction to Chapter 3, Part 2, *Khrushchev Remembers*, p. 75.
21. Cohen, p. 280.
22. Cohen, p. 281.
23. Robert G. Kaiser "The Soviet Pretense", *Foreign Affairs* Vol.65 No.2 (Winter 1986-87), p. 243.
24. "Otvety M.S. Gorbacheva na Voprosi Gazety 'Yumanite'", *Kommunist* Vol.3, No.1283 (February 1986), p. 19.
25. Ibid.
26. Slyunkov is Gorbachev's chief economic planner; and Yazov is the Defence Minister.
27. The essence of Stalin's brutality was known in considerable detail even during Khrushchev's time. In his memoirs, Khrushchev wrote,

Just before the Twentieth Party Congress I summoned the State Prosecutor, Comrade Rudenko, who had been involved in many of the cases during the purges of the thirties. I asked him, "Comrade Rudenko, I'm interested in the open trials. Tell me, how much basis in actual fact was there for the accusations against Bukharin, Rykov, Syrtsov, Lominadze, Krestinsky, and many, many other people known to the Central Committee, to the Orgbureau, and to the Politburo?"

Comrade Rudenko answered that from a standpoint of judicial norms, there was no evidence whatsoever for condemning or even trying those men. The case for prosecuting them had been based on personal confessions beaten out of them under

physical and psychological torture, and confessions extracted by such means are unacceptable as a legitimate basis for bringing someone to trial (p.74).

28. Mikhail Gorbachev, "Oktyabr i Perestroika: Revolyutsiya Prodolzhayetsya", *Pravda* (3 November, 1987), p. 2.

29. Gorbachev, *Pravda* (3 November, 1987), p. 2.

30. Philip Taubman, "Soviet Panel Clears Bukharin, 50 Years After His Execution", *New York Times* (6 February, 1988), pp. 1, 5. In June, the convictions of Lev Kamenev and Grigorii Zinoviev were also overturned. Bill Keller, "Court Vindicates 2 Stalin Victims Who Were Allies of Lenin's", *New York Times* (14 June, 1988), p. 6.

31. Ibid.

32. Bill Keller, "Reporter's Notebook: Search For Outer Limits of 'Glasnost'", *New York Times* (13 August, 1987), pp. 1, 5.

33. Joseph L. Nogee and Robert H. Donaldson, *Soviet Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1985), p. 39.

34. Cohen, p. 145.

35. T.H. Rigby, *Communist Party Membership in the USSR 1917-1967* (Princeton: University Press, 1968), p. 217. The speeches were delivered in Byelorussia, the Ukraine, and Georgia; note 1, p. 297.

36. Rigby, pp. 202-3.

37. Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Soviet Political System: Transformation or Degeneration" *Problems of Communism* Vol. 15 (January-February 1966), p. 4; *Life* (23 October, 1964), p. 40.

38. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, p. 57.

39. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, p. 127.

40. Edward Crankshaw, *Khrushchev: A Career* (New York: Viking, 1966), p. 189.

41. Lowenthal, *Atlantic*, p. 81.

42. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, p. 35.

43. George W. Breslauer, "Khrushchev Reconsidered" *Problems of Communism* Vol.25 (September-October 1976), p. 23.

44. Cohen, p. 145.
45. Lowenthal, *Problems of Communism*, p. 12.
46. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Speech to the 22nd Party Congress*, translated in *Documents of the 22nd Party Congress of the CPSU Report on the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Vol II* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1961), pp. 172-83. (Hereafter, *Documents II* and *Documents I* for Volume I).
47. Arkady N. Shevchenko, *Breaking With Moscow* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), pp. 125-6.
48. Khrushchev, *Documents II*, pp. 124-5.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
50. Breslauer, *Problems of Communism*, p. 26; Medvedev and Medvedev, p. 152.
51. William Hyland and Richard Wallace Shryock, *The Fall of Khrushchev* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), p. 194.
52. Jerry Hough, "A Harebrained Scheme in Retrospect", *Problems of Communism* Vol.14 (January-February 1965), p. 28.
53. Barbara Ann Chotiner, *Khrushchev's Party Reform* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 277.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 273.
55. Hough, *Problems of Communism*, p. 31.
56. Medvedev and Medvedev, pp. 156-7.
57. Hyland and Shryock, p. 273; Chotiner, p. 273.
58. Chotiner, p. 276.
59. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev*, p. 131.
60. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, pp. 69-70.
61. *Excerpts From the Soviet Proposals*, distributed and translated by TASS, cited in *New York Times* (27 May, 1988), p. 8.
62. Philip Taubman, "Soviet Moves to Curtail Communist Party's Power", *New York Times* (27 May, 1988), pp. 1, 8.
63. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (25 February, 1986) translated in

Current Digest of the Soviet Press (Vol. 38, No. 8.), (hereafter cited as Report) p. 24.

64. Theodore Shabad, "Soviet Competitive Ballot Set For June", *New York Times* (15 April, 1987), p. 6.

65. Dimitri Simes, "Democracy in Russia? Don't Hold Your Breath", *Los Angeles Times* reprinted in *Vancouver Sun* (12 February, 1987), p. B5.

66. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "Speech to the Central Committee", excerpted in *New York Times* (28 January, 1987), p. 4.

67. Gorbachev, Report, p. 26.

68. Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev Urges Armenians To End Nationalist Furor", *New York Times* (27 February, 1988), p. 6.

69. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, p. 74.

70. Seweryn Bialer and Joan Afferica, "Gorbachev's Preference For Technocrats", *New York Times* (11 February, 1986) p. 31.

71. Ibid., p. 70.

72. Ligachev is the Central Committee Secretary overseeing ideology and party organization; Ryzhkov is the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister; Chebrikov is head of the State Security Apparatus, the K.G.B.; Vorotnikov is the Chairman of the Russian Republic; and Zaikov has the rare distinction of holding two portfolios--Secretary for the military & police sector and economic co-ordination as well as head of the Moscow city apparatus. The latter post came to him after Boris Yeltsin was dismissed from the Politburo, and subsequently from the Central Committee, for critical remarks aimed at Gorbachev and others. (see below).

73. Colton, p. 162.

74. Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev and Ligachev, His Deputy, Differ in Ways Both Subtle and Blunt", *New York Times* (12 June, 1987), p. 5.

75. Yegor K. Ligachev, interview with *Le Monde* (4 December, 1987), pp. 1, 6.

76. Taubman, *New York Times* (12 June, 1987), p. 5.

77. Mathias Rust was the West German teenager who violated Soviet airspace and landed in Red Square unhindered. The embarrassment to the Soviet Union bred a thorough shake-up of the military and earned Rust 4 years of penal servitude

in a prison camp. There is speculation that Gorbachev will grant him a pardon before his sentence is completed. See, for example, *New York Times* (31 May; 1 June; 2 September, 1987).

78. Robert C. Toth, "Ousters Over Flight Seen Reflecting Soviet Tension", *Los Angeles Times* (2 June, 1987), p. 1.

Sokolov's firing represents only one of several removals of Brezhnev-era conservatives: in January 1987, Kazakh party chief Dinmukhamed Kunayev was expelled from the Central Committee; in October, 1987 First Deputy Prime Minister Geidar Aliev, a lukewarm supporter of perestroika, was removed from the Politburo. The only remaining holdovers from Brezhnev's time, besides Gorbachev, are President Andrei Gromyko, Ukrainian Party chief Vladimir Shcherbitskii, and the Chief of the Party Control Commission, Mikhail Solomentsev.

With this removal of 'conservative' opposition, Gorbachev has brought supporters into key positions. In June 1987, the Central Committee approved three Gorbachev protégés for full membership in the Politburo: Aleksandr Yakovlev, Nikolai Slyunkov, and Viktor Nikonov. Additionally, Defence Minister Dmitri Yazov was named a non-voting, or candidate, member to replace Sokolov. Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev Policy Gains As Three Allies Advance in Party", *New York Times* (27 June, 1987), pp. 1, 5. On 18 February 1988, Gorbachev added two more allies to non-voting status in the Politburo: Georgi P. Razumovski, an agriculture expert with a long association with Gorbachev, and Yuri D. Maslyukov, an experienced manager in the defence industry. Felicity Barranger, "Soviet Ousts Yeltsin From Ruling Body," *New York Times* (19 February, 1988), p. 4.

79. Philip Taubman, "A Challenge to Gorbachev is Linked to Summit Delay", *New York Times* (30 October, 1987), pp. 1, 4.

80. William Safire, "The Abuse of History", *New York Times* (4 November, 1987), p. 29.

81. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, p. 64.

82. Philip Taubman, "An Election in Moscow Sputters Out", *New York Times* (29 May, 1987), p. 3.

83. Gorbachev, *Report*, p. 15.

84. Serge Schmemmann, "Moscow in a Thaw, Awaits Literary Bombshell", *New York Times* (31 October, 1986), pp. 1, 7.

85. "Stalin Altered Figures to Hide Famine Deaths, Magazine Says", *Vancouver Sun* (24 December, 1987), p. H8.

86. Bill Keller, "Soviet Actors Struggle As Unpersons Return", *New York Times* (24 December, 1987), p. 16.



87. Breslauer, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, p. 130.
88. George W. Breslauer, "Khrushchev Reconsidered", *Problems of Communism* (September-October 1976), p. 25.
89. Nikita Khrushchev, "Address to Third Writers Congress" 22 May, 1959, translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (Vol. 11, No. 21), pp. 1, 28-9.
90. see *New York Times* 10 May, p. 7; 19 May, p. 6; 24 May, 1988 pp. 1, 8.
91. Bill Keller, "Pieces to a Soviet Puzzle", *New York Times* (20 May, 1988), pp. 1, 4.
92. Bill Keller, "For New Soviet Clubs, Democracy in the Rough", *New York Times* (2 October, 1987), pp. 1, 4.
93. Ibid.
94. Bill Keller, "For Soviet Alternative Press, Used Computer Is New Tool", *New York Times* (12 January, 1988), pp. 1, 4.
95. Ibid.
96. Keller, *New York Times*, (2 October, 1987).
97. Bill Keller, "Pravda Warns of Offenses by the New Political Clubs", *New York Times* (28 December, 1987), p. 6.
98. Philip Taubman, "No.2 Soviet Official Puts in a Bad Word Against 'Glasnost'", *New York Times* (24 September, 1987), pp. 1, 6.
99. Paul Quinn-Judge "Big Brother is not Pleased", *Christian Science Monitor World Edition* (September 1-7), p. 13. *Moscow News* is published in several foreign languages and is intended mainly for visitors to the Soviet Union, although about 250,000 Russian copies are also available in Moscow for Soviets.
100. Philip Taubman, "Emigrés' Letter Printed in Soviet Draws Harsh Reply From Pravda", *New York Times* (26 March, 1987), p. 4.
101. See the following *New York Times* articles: Philip Taubman, "Soviet Charges U.S. Incites Tatars in Homeland Protests" (31 July, 1987), p. 3; Bill Keller "Russians Say Western Radio Instigated Baltic Protests" (25 August, 1987), p. 3. Baltic Protests broke out again in February, 1988 in observance of the 39th anniversary of Soviet annexation.

Philip Taubman, "In the Soviet Baltic, Openness Yields Unsought Nationalism" (10 February, 1988) pp.1, 8.

102. Bill Keller, "Armenia Legislature Agrees With Protest On Annexing Area", *New York Times* (16 June, 1988), pp. 1, 7.

103. regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh incident see *New York Times*, (24 February to 11 March, 1988).

104. Bill Keller, "Setting Precedent, Estonia Allows A Non-Communist Front to Form", *New York Times* (21 June, 1988), pp. 1, 5.

105. Ibid.

106. Keller, *New York Times* (16 June, 1988), pp. 1, 7.

107. Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev To Center", *New York Times* (14 January, 1988), p. 8.

108. Gorbachev, *Pravda* (3 November, 1987), p. 3.

109. Colton. p. 121.

110. Philip Taubman, "The Old Guard Votes a Rebuff to Gorbachev", *New York Times* (9 June, 1988), p. 1, 6.

111. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, p. 59.

### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

01. George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982), p. 123.

02. Roy and Zhores Medvedev, *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), pp. 59, 60.

03. In June 1965, Gosplan was divided into two departments: the State Committee on Long-term Planning, the Gosekonomissiya, and the State Committee for Current Planning, still called Gosplan. Alec Nove, *An Economic History of the USSR* (London: Penguin, 1969), pp. 341-3.

04. Alec Nove, *The Soviet Economic System* 2nd edition (London: Allen & Unwin, 1980), p. 72.

05. Ibid., pp. 72-3.

06. Ibid., p. 75.

07. Medvedev and Medvedev, pp. 26, 85-8.
08. Breslau, Khrushchev and Brezhnev, p. 127.
09. Ibid, p.73.
10. Ibid., pp. 25, 88, 91.
11. Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Speech to the 22nd Party Congress*, translated in *Documents of the 22nd Party Congress of the CPSU Report on the Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Vol. II* (New York: Crosscurrents Press, 1961), p. 57. (Hereafter, Documents II and Documents I for Volume I).
12. Medvedev and Medvedev, pp. 58, 118-9.
13. Ibid., p. 125.
14. Khrushchev, *Documents I*, p. 162.
15. Edward Crankshaw, "Russia's Imperial Design", *Atlantic* (November, 1957), p. 44.
16. Edward Crankshaw, *Khrushchev: A Career* (New York: Viking, 1966), p. 193.
17. Valerie Bunce, *Do New Leaders Make A Difference?* (Princeton: University Press, 1981), p. 198.
18. Thomas Naylor, *The Gorbachev Strategy* (Lexington, Massachussetes: D.C. Heath, 1988), pp. 24-5.
19. *Business Week* (7 December, 1987), p. 88.
20. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, "Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union" (25 February, 1986) translated in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (Vol.38, No.8.) (hereafter cited as Report), pp. 15-6.
21. Timothy J. Colton, *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1986), p. 145.
22. Ibid., pp. 158-9.
23. Bill Keller, "For Soviet, A Sharp Turn", *New York Times* (2 January, 1988), pp. 1-5; and "Nervous Soviet Awaits Local Factory Control" (31 December, 1987), pp. 1, 5.
24. Colton, p. 149.

25. Philip Taubman, "To Spur Work, Estonia Tries Lures", *New York Times* (21 January, 1986), p. 2.

26. Robert C. Tucker, "Gorbachev and the Fight for Soviet Reform", *World Policy Journal* (Spring 1987), p. 180.

27. Mikhail Gorbachev, "Oktyabr i Perestroika: Revolyutsiya Prodolzhayetsya", *Pravda* (3 November, 1987), p. 3.

28. Reproduced in David McLellan ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 564-570. The citation is on pp. 568-69.

29. Khrushchev, *Documents II*, pp. 86-7. see also "Russians Have Had Income Taxes Since The Czars", *Letters*, *New York Times* (5 April, 1988), p. 22.

30. Colton, p. 21. Colton acknowledges that there is some controversy on this point--see his note p.238.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Philip Taubman, "Gorbachev is Striving to End Food Shortages", *New York Times* (21 October, 1987), p. 2.

35. Gorbachev, *Report*, p. 15.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Philip Taubman, "Soviet Law Widens Private Business", *New York Times* (20 November, 1986), p. 5.

38. Thomas H Naylor, "Gorbachev Says Radical Reform and Means It", *New York Times* (27 June, 1987), p. 15.

39. Peter G. Peterson, "Gorbachev's Bottom Line", *New York Times Review of Books* (13 August, 1987), p. 30.

40. Naylor, *The Gorbachev Strategy*, p. 27.

40. *Pravda*, (2 February, 1986), cited in Colton, p. 146.

41. *Ibid.*

42. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as a Revolutionary 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1973), p. 410.

43. Stephen Cohen, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 75-6.

44. Vladimir I. Lenin, "On Co-operation" (January, 1923), translated in Robert C. Tucker, *The Lenin Anthology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), p. 708. Italics in original.
45. Gorbachev, *Pravda* (3 November, 1987), p. 3.
46. Nicolas Spulber, "Proof of Gorbachev is in Soviet Tasting", *Letters*, *New York Times* (22 October, 1987), p. 22.
47. Colton, p. 159.
48. Seweryn Bialer, "Gorbachev's Move", *Foreign Policy*, No.68 (Fall 1987), pp. 60-1.
49. Bill Keller, "A Gorbachev Ally Calls Latest Changes 'Fiction'", *New York Times* (6 January, 1988), p.3.
50. "Job Cuts Loom For Soviets", *New York Times* reprinted in *Vancouver Sun* (4 July, 1987), p. C1.
51. Bill Keller, "Gorbachev Backing Only Some Change", *New York Times* (13 June, 1987) p. 5.
52. Seweryn Bialer and Joan Afferica, "Gorbachev's Preference for Technocrats", *New York Times* (11 February, 1986), p. 31.
53. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, pp. 74-75.
54. Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Soviets Head For Showdown on Reforms", *Toronto Globe & Mail* (21 July, 1987), p. A7.
55. Bill Keller, "Russia's Restless Youth", *New York Times Magazine* (26 July, 1987), p. 18.
56. *Time* (27 July, 1987), p. 24.
57. Roger Rosenblatt, "Enter This House And Let The Ice Melt", *Time* (26 October, 1987), p. 87.
58. cited in *ibid*.
59. Jiri Pehe, "The New and Democratizing Soviet Middle Class", *New York Times* (25 May, 1987), p. 15.
60. Keller, *New York Times Magazine*, p. 27.
61. Vladimir Shlapentokh, "Soviets Head For Showdown on Reforms", *Toronto Globe & Mail* (21 July, 1987), p. A7.
62. Spulber, *New York Times* (22 October, 1987), p. A7.
63. "Poseshcheniye M.S. Gorbachevym goroda Zelenograda", *Pravda* (30 July, 1987), p. 1.

64. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, p. 87.
65. This passage is based upon the Nova documentary, "How Good is Soviet Science?" which aired in mid-November, 1987 on the Public Broadcasting System.
66. Bruce Parrott, *The Soviet Union And Ballistic Missile Defense* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p. 49.
67. Clyde Farnsworth, "Study Finds Soviet Output is Stagnant", *New York Times* (25 April, 1988), pp. D1-2.
68. Ibid.
69. *Time* (27 July, 1987), p. 24.
70. Keller, *New York Times* (13, June, 1987), p. 5.
71. Bialer, *Foreign Policy*, p. 79.
72. *Time* (27 July, 1987), pp. 18-19.
73. Timothy J. Colton, *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union* 2nd ed. (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1986), p. 13. Of course, no leader has followed a program of de-Leninization, at least not officially.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

01. Because of the short tenures, the Andropov and Chernenko periods are discounted.
02. Bill Keller, "Lenin Faulted on State Terror, And a Soviet Taboo is Broken", *New York Times* (8 June, 1988), pp. 1,6.
03. Vladimir Lenin, "Communism and the New Economic Policy" reproduced in Robert C. Tucker ed. *The Lenin Anthology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975), p. 518.
04. Ibid., p. 528.
05. Vladimir Lenin, "Introducing the New Economic Policy", in Tucker ed., p. 505.
06. Roy Medvedev, *Let History Judge* (New York: Vintage, 1971), pp. 73-4.

07. Lenin, "Introduction to the New Economic Policy", pp. 505-9.
08. Ibid., p. 503.
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12. Robert C. Tucker, *Stalin as a Revolutionary 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1973), p. 369.
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