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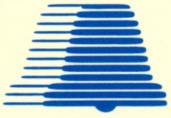

REPORT ON THE USSR

ALL-UNION TOPICS

IN THE REPUBLICS

Volume 1, Number 24
June 16, 1989

A weekly publication of RFE/RL, Inc.
on current Soviet affairs.

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REPORT ON THE USSR

Vol. 1, No. 24, 1989

ALL-UNION TOPICS

ECONOMY

Is the Contribution of the Defense Complex to Civilian Production Growing?

John Tedstrom

The disclosure by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in his policy speech to the Congress of People's Deputies that the defense budget of the USSR this year amounts to 77.3 billion rubles drew renewed attention both in the USSR and the West to the question of the size of the Soviet defense appropriation and the extent of the trade-off between Soviet defense spending and consumer welfare. In his speech Gorbachev also touched on a closely related if less attention-getting issue—namely, the contribution of the Soviet military-industrial complex (VPK by its Russian initials) to civilian production.

Known as "conversion," the shifting of resources away from defense towards consumption has become an increasingly frequent topic of discussion in Soviet economics literature, and much more is known about it today than was so even a year ago—thanks to *glasnost'*. Briefly, three different forms of conversion are talked about. The first and most straightforward of these is the shift of existing industrial capacity within the various defense-industrial ministries away from defense production to civilian production. The second is the transfer of investment resources within a defense-industrial ministry from its military to its civilian production. The third is the reassignment of civilian industrial enterprises or ministries to defense-industrial ministries, as has been done with the enterprises of the Ministry of Machine Building for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances.

Statistics on civilian production and conversion within the defense-industrial complex are, as might be expected, few and far between. There were some interesting data published early in 1989, and there have been statements made by various defense-industrial ministry officials on the progress of conversion within their ministries.[1] While useful, these sources did not provide a reliable, comprehensive picture of civilian production within the Soviet defense-industrial complex. The issue of the Soviet journal *Vestnik statistiki* for May, 1989, has, however, revealed for the first time the magnitude of civilian production within eight of the nine VPK ministries (see Table 1.)

[1] See, for example, *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*, No. 1, 1989, p. 10.

TABLE 1

CIVILIAN PRODUCTION WITHIN THE SOVIET DEFENSE-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX
(IN THOUSANDS OF UNITS)

MINISTRY	1987	1988	PERCENTAGE INCREASE
Radio Industry (Minradioprom)			
Televisions,	1,274	1,644	29
of which, color	521	887	70
Tape recorders	1,276	1,480	16
Refrigerators & freezers	396	384	-3
Washing machines	329	330	0
Vacuum Cleaners	792	840	6
Radio receivers	1,518	1,548	2
Watches	2,178	2,200	1
Aviation Industry (Minaviaprom)			
Refrigerators & freezers	844	869	3
Tape recorders	311	398	28
Washing machines	1,180	1,239	5
Vacuum cleaners	1,336	1,376	3
Radio receivers	53.0	44.5	-16
Watches	4,000	4,000	0
Electronics Industry (Minelektronprom)			
Televisions,	376	365	-3
of which, color	117	90.2	-23
Tape recorders	1,023	1,084	6
Videotape recorders	45	72.9	62
Radio receivers	9.3	7.0	-25
Watches	6,529	6,790	4
Batteries for electronic products	1,098	1,241	13
General Machine Building (Minobshchemash)			
Color televisions	534	636	19
Refrigerators & freezers	2,163	2,250	4
Washing machines	383	379	-1
Vacuum cleaners	765	926	21
Tape recorders	220	231	5
Radio receivers	158	155	-2
Communications Equipment (Minpromsvyazi)			
Televisions,	6,914	6,983	1
of which, color	3,458	4,080	18
Tape recorders	1,133	1,235	9
Radio receivers	5,781	5,608	-3
Defense Industry (Minoboronprom)			
Refrigerators	525	562	7
Motorcycles & motorscooters	596	601	0.9
Sewing machines	1,476	1,550	5
Washing machines	351	401	14
Vacuum cleaners	523	580	11
Tape recorders	22.1	24.7	12
Machine Building (Minmash)			
Refrigerators	1,773	1,879	6
Bicycles (not children's)	2,413	2,461	2
Tape recorders	520	577	11
Washing machines	1,132	1,139	0.6
Batteries for electronic products	82,600	95,000	15
Radio receivers	106	115	9
Watches	2,900	3,000	2
Shipbuilding Industry (Minsudprom)			
Refrigerators	115	145	26
Washing machines	715	751	5
Tape recorders	383	376	-2
Radio receivers	547	549	0.4
Medium Machine Building (Minsredmash)	—*	—*	—

SOURCE: Taken or calculated from *Vestnik statistiki*, No. 5,1989, pp. 72-73.
* Not available.

TABLE 2

CONCENTRATION OF PRODUCTION OF CONSUMER GOODS IN THE SOVIET DEFENSE-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX
(IN MILLIONS OF UNITS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

PRODUCT	TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 1987	VPK PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL	TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 1988	VPK PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
Televisions	9.1	94	9.6	94
of which, color	4.6	100	5.7	100
Tape recorders	5.0	97	5.5	98
Washing machines	5.8	78	6.1	69
Vacuum cleaners	4.4	75	4.8	77
Radio receivers	8.1	100	8.0	100
Watches	70.6	16	73.5	22
Video recorders	45	100	72.9	100
Batteries for electronic goods	—[a]	—	973	99
Motorcycles & motorscooters	1.0	57	(982)[b]	61
Sewing machines	1.5	100	1.6	100
Bicycles (not children's)	5.5	43	5.6	45

SOURCE: Calculated from data in Table 1 and *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, January 22, 1989, for 1988 figures; and from Table 1 and *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1987 g.*, pp. 152-153 for 1987.
a. Not available. b. Thousands of units.

It is interesting to note that for many of the goods listed above the Soviet defense-industrial complex is the predominant producer. For example, all Soviet videotape recorders are produced by Minelektronprom. Table 2 shows that for many of the most sought-after consumer goods production is concentrated to a high degree within the defense-industrial complex and isolated from consumer influence and competition from other, independent ministries and enterprises.

It would appear from the data in Table 1 that the level of production of consumer goods within the Soviet defense-industrial complex has increased significantly over the past year. The data presented in Table 2, however, show that production concentration did not noticeably increase from 1987 to 1988.Thus, for the most part, the defense ministries only kept up with production trends in other, civilian ministries and did not outperform them.

Another issue that the data raise is that of product quality. None of the products listed above are noted for their high quality, and some (such as Soviet televisions) are notorious for their poor quality.[2] It leaves one to wonder about the quality of military products produced in defense-industrial ministries. Either they are quite likely to be of low quality as well, or the VPK ministries are continuing to treat civilian production as a second or third priority. Given what little is known about the internal workings of VPK ministries, the latter is more likely. At best this is a matter of speculation, though.

In conclusion, it should be said that Gorbachev can point to the increased production of civilian goods within the VPK in the last year or so as one of his successes. The problem of industrial concentration has not yet been tackled, however (there are still less than 50,000 separate industrial enterprises in the USSR), and this continues to prevent a competitive environment from developing that would put upward pressures on product quality and downward pressures on prices. Another problem is that this policy of conversion strengthens the hand of the central bureaucracy over the economy, not weakens it. Who could possibly be less interested in or less influenced by consumer demand than a VPK minister? What Soviet planners have to recognize is that while it may be noble to shift resources away from defense towards consumption, such a policy begs the central question by not addressing the fundamental, systemic problems that plague the Soviet economy. Until those more profound issues are resolutely grappled with, such minor changes within the existing system will continue to fall far short of improving Soviet consumer welfare.

(RL 261/89, June 2, 1989)

[2] See A. Isaev, "Reforma i oboronnye otrasli," *Kommunist*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 24-31 on the poor performance of the defense sector; and Philip Hanson, "Economic Reform and the Defense Sector," *Report on the USSR*, No. 17, 1989, pp. 9-11.

Cofounder of "Moscow Tribune" Talks about Challenge to System

Kevin Devlin

Professor Leonid Batkin is a Russian cultural historian and an authority on the Italian Renaissance whose scholarly work was not accepted for publication in the USSR until after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. As a cofounder of the radically reformist "Moscow Tribune" group, however, he also personifies the new wave of Soviet intellectuals who have become a political force in the age of *perestroika* and *glasnost'*. In an interview with the Milanese newspaper *Il Giornale*, he has summed up the objective of the group as "the radical transformation of [Soviet] society, by bringing pressure to bear on the political world and on society."[1]

Batkin was among the original signatories to the founding manifesto of the "Moscow Tribune" in October, 1988. Others included Academician Andrei Sakharov; the historian Yurii Afanas'ev, who is rector of the Moscow Historical Archives Institute, where sessions of the "Moscow Tribune" reportedly take place; Academician Roal'd Sagdeev, a space scientist; the writer Ales' Adamovich; the political scientist Len Karpinsky; the philosopher and literary critic Yurii Karyakin; the historian Mikhail Gefter; and the literary critic Yurii Burtin. These were promptly joined by other distinguished figures, including the sociologist Tat'yana Zaslavskaya and the economist Academician Leonid Abalkin. Later, many of the informal associations that have been set up to press for reforms in various fields and in different parts of the USSR also became loosely linked with the group. These included the anti-Stalinist "Memorial" movement; the independent literary association "April"; political groups such as "Democratic *Perestroika*"; and the popular fronts in the Baltic republics. With the election of the Congress of People's Deputies, the group has become, more than ever, a point of reference for radical reformers in the Soviet Union.

Political Challenge

From the first, the "Moscow Tribune" has represented a direct political challenge to the status quo in the Soviet Union. As cited by the Moscow correspondent of the Italian Communist Party's newspaper,[2] the founding manifesto, which was signed by Sakharov, Batkin, and the others, emphasized the need for "democratization and radical economic reform," combined with "real popular power and the rule of law" and with "a responsible foreign policy that is defensive and ecologically responsible and placed under the control of democratic institutions." The general goal was to make *perestroika* not only irreversible but also "more dynamic and mature." The blend of realism and idealism was explicit, but the challenge to the political leadership was implicit:

> We think that we can help bring about the fulfillment of the current aims of the leadership of the CPSU only if we are able—in the same political spirit—to maintain our capacity for independent, lucid, and critical assessment. . . . *Perestroika* will prevail if the existing hierarchical relations between the Party-state leadership and society give way to a reasonable and mutually respectful dialogue.

The Moscow correspondent of *Il Giornale*, Ugo Tramballi, introduced the interview by describing Batkin as a leading protagonist of the present "confused and incredible political phase in the USSR . . . , this civil war between orthodoxy and renewal."

His first question was provocative: Did the efforts of the "Moscow Tribune" to promote radical change in the USSR contain "the seed of an alternative party to the CPSU"? This gave Batkin a chance to clarify the role of the group:

> Seeds of this kind have now been planted throughout the whole country. In spite of this I do not believe that the moment has come for a multiparty system. The "Tribune" has no intention of becoming a political force in the classical sense of the term, nor does it have the capacity to mobilize the vast sectors of society that would be necessary in order to form a true party. With the exception of the Baltic republics and Armenia, no one is in a position to do that: a proper alternative ideological process does not yet exist. Things are changing rapidly, however, and soon we may have to take a different view.

"Unimaginable Pluralism"

The electoral struggle in March and the unprecedented parliamentary debate now going on had opened up new horizons, he continued. "There is a pluralism that would have been unimaginable only a few months ago." One factor had been that the groups that had been formed to support individual candidates had not been dissolved after the elections. They had continued their political activity, now operating as "centers of discussion and protest." For the time being, however, there was "no alternative to the CPSU." He added that he liked Lech Walesa's goal of forming "a constructive opposition."

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[1] Ugo Tramballi, "Gorbachev Must Choose," *Il Giornale*, May 28, 1989.

[2] Giulietto Chiesa's report in *l'Unita*, October 12, 1988.

Seizing upon this reference, the interviewer asked whether what had happened in Poland could also take place in the Soviet Union. Batkin said that in Poland links had been established between the intelligentsia and a working class that was aware of its own interests. "We have not yet reached that level of maturity. Where that alliance has been achieved, as in the Baltic republics, the binding force is nationalism."

Resistance of "Dinosaurs"

In the meantime, the interviewer went on, the strains imposed by divergences between the Party and "a changing society," which were accentuated by the economic crisis, were increasing. Did Batkin not think that "the breaking point" was now approaching?

Batkin observed that when Gorbachev had insisted on the publication of the proceedings of the April Central Committee plenum the situation had been somewhat clarified:

> We were finally able to get a clear view of our "dinosaurs," of that political class that bears responsibility for all Soviet tragedies. We were able to see the chasm that lies between them and society, between the [country's] economic problems and their incapacity to solve them. The March elections and what is happening now are a second Kronstadt: they have made the Party face the gravity of the problems, although we have no illusions that they have understood [what is at stake]. . . . If the apparatus does not understand that we are facing a profound crisis that could bring us to the point of catastrophe within three years; that through the elections people have discovered the possibility of influencing political life; that if all that is happening has had no significance for the Party, then we must expect a dramatic confrontation between society and the system.

Pressed about the form that this confrontation would take, Batkin said that the popular fronts in the Baltic republics would take up more radical positions; in Armenia, a clandestine resistance movement might develop; some reaction could also be expected from the Georgians. "Then there are the Russians themselves: from Leningrad to Vladivostok people are tired of misery and of [mere] talk about *perestroika*. One cannot impose a curfew on the entire country."

How did he think the "conservatives" would react to such developments? Batkin said that the "orthodox" (as he preferred to call them, reserving the term "conservative" for Stalinists) had no plan for meeting this challenge.

> Sending in the troops, as happened in Tbilisi, is not a strategy but an instinctive reaction. The regime has no means of maintaining [the status quo]. My hope is that Gorbachev, seeing the open resistance of the apparatus even as the problems grow worse, will align himself more resolutely with the reformist forces.

Asked whether he considered Gorbachev a reformer, he said that the president was a politician who had set himself objectives to be achieved "with caution and shrewdness."

> This plan, however, had failed because of the resistance of the Party apparatus; and now he finds himself facing the choice between giving up or acting more resolutely, using the impulse of the new forces. He is, I believe, an intelligent man, a politician who respects the logic of events and not the inflexible theory of strategists. In everyone, however, there is more than one personality. Here we have the cautious Gorbachev and the determined one who overturns the traditional positions of the apparatus: the one who had the members of the Nagorno-Karabakh committee arrested and the one who pursues a reasonable policy in the Baltic. If we are talking about the Gorbachev of 1990, it will not be the Gorbachev of 1985 and 1988. The logic of events will take care of that.

(RL 262/89, June 5, 1989)

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Congress of People's Deputies on Poverty

Aaron Trehub

A few years ago, the study of poverty in the Soviet Union was almost exclusively the province of Western researchers such as Professor Mervyn Matthews of the University of Surrey, whose pioneering work *Poverty in the Soviet Union* (1986) is still the sole book on the subject. Since the advent of Mikhail Gorbachev and his policy of *glasnost'*, however, Soviet researchers have shown a greater

interest in the problem, and their findings have been appearing with increasing frequency in the Soviet press.[1]

The problem of widespread poverty in the Soviet Union is now being addressed by the leading political figures in the country. In his report to the Congress of People's Deputies on May 30, President Gorbachev expressed concern for the "more than 40 million people with low incomes" in the USSR.[2] The following day, deputy Boris El'tsin urged the congress to take immediate steps to ease the lot of the Soviet poor and handicapped and forwarded a draft decree on the matter to the presidium for review. Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov took up El'tsin's challenge on June 7, outlining a series of measures for helping the poor and handicapped that should go into effect as early as the beginning of next year.

El'tsin Plays Up the Poverty Issue

In his speech to the congress on May 31, deputy Boris El'tsin criticized the slow pace of Gorbachev's economic reforms and called on the parliament to "resolve at least one concrete social issue" before adjourning in order to restore the Soviet public's lagging faith in *perestroika*. El'tsin proposed that poor and handicapped people be exempted from paying for medicines and municipal transportation; he also urged the assembly to "solve the pension question, or at least a part of it." He announced that he was forwarding a draft decree on these matters, "compiled by a very large group of deputies," to the presidium for review, and he spoke of the need for "a law on poverty."[3]

In calling for a war on poverty, El'tsin showed considerable political astuteness. There are a lot of poor people in the USSR, and they have the potential to constitute a formidable political constituency. At the beginning of this year, the trade-union newspaper *Trud* revealed that 43 million Soviet citizens, or 15 percent of the population, have incomes below the quasi-official poverty line of 75 rubles a month.[4] Furthermore, most of the Soviet poor—35 million, according to one estimate—are pensioners.[5] There are some 58 million pensioners in the USSR; and, with few exceptions, their material situation is unenviable even by Soviet standards.

Apart from the sheer number of people involved, the poverty issue is attractive because it raises questions of privilege and social justice—two of El'tsin's favorite themes. The contrast between the pampered life style of the *nomenklatura* and the borderline existence of the Soviet poor is tailor-made for a populist politician, and El'tsin wasted no time in playing it up. "Why," he demanded, "are tens of millions living below the poverty line while others are wallowing in luxury?"

[1] See Aaron Trehub, RL 256/88, "Poverty in the Soviet Union," June 20, 1988.

[2] *Izvestia*, May 31, 1989, p. 2.

[3] *Izvestia*, June 2, 1989, pp. 2-3.

[4] "300 rublei 'chistymi'," *Trud*, January 12, 1989.

[5] "Za chertoi bednosti," *Nedelya*, No. 7, 1989, p. 2.

Ryzhkov Responds

El'tsin's challenge was taken up the following week by Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov. In the course of his long report to the congress on June 7, Ryzhkov outlined a series of emergency measures that should take effect as early as the beginning of next year.[6]

First, Ryzhkov said that the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers intend to raise minimum old-age pensions for blue- and white-collar workers and kolkhozniks to 70 rubles a month, which is the current minimum wage in the USSR. Ryzhkov said that this measure should take effect in January, 1990. If it does, it will eliminate one of the more glaring inequities in the Soviet social security system: the fact that the minimum old-age pension for kolkhozniks is 10 rubles less than that for blue- and white-collar workers (40 rubles instead of 50 rubles a month). Ryzhkov said that the increase will benefit 20 million people including 8 million kolkhozniks. It will not, however, change the pattern whereby the great majority of kolkhozniks fall into the lowest pension bracket (see Table).

TABLE

DISTRIBUTION OF SOVIET PENSIONERS BY SIZE OF MONTHLY PENSION, 1987

	BLUE- AND WHITE-COLLAR WORKERS (LAW OF 1956)	KOLKHOZNIKS (LAW OF 1964)
TOTAL PENSIONERS	47,670,000	10,070,000
Of whom receiving:		
Less than 60 rubles	14,968,380	8,529,290
60 to 80 rubles	9,057,300	825,740
80 to 100 rubles	7,102,830	365,520
100 to 120 rubles	5,386,710	181,260
120 rubles or more	11,154,780	171,190

SOURCE: Derived from *Sotsial'noe razvitie i uroven' zhizni naseleniya SSSR*, Moscow, 1989, pp. 88-89. The discrepancy in the kolkhozniks column is due to rounding.

Ryzhkov said that minimum disability pensions for so-called Category 1 invalids (that is, people with the severest injuries or handicaps) will be raised to 80 rubles a month, while minimum pensions for Category 2 invalids will be raised to 60 rubles a month. These measures will affect more than one million people, Ryzhkov said.

The prime minister then turned to war veterans and veterans of labor. He said that some 300,000 war invalids will receive a monthly supplement of 15 rubles, regardless of the amount of their pensions. Furthermore, some 7 million veterans of World War II or their widows will henceforth be entitled to receive medicines free of charge.

[6] *Izvestia*, June 8, 1989, p. 2.

This measure should prove especially popular because, although health care in the Soviet Union is nominally free, medicines are not, and one study has shown that some Soviet pensioners currently spend as much as 40 percent of their income on medication.[7] Finally, war veterans and people who received medals or commendations for their work on the home front during the war will be entitled to free public transportation—a privilege that will benefit nearly 6 million people, said Ryzhkov.

The prime minister also announced that, starting in 1990, the ceiling on the combined income of pensioners who continue to work after retirement will be removed. (The present rule is that pensioners who continue working in the administrative apparatus may not earn more than 150 rubles a month, while those who go on working as engineers or technical specialists are limited to a combined monthly income of 300 rubles.) Since some 10 million Soviet pensioners still hold jobs, the removal of the ceiling should also benefit a large number of people.

Ryzhkov said that the measures outlined above will affect about 22 million people and cost the state nearly 6 billion rubles.

When Will The New Pension Law Be Ready?

Ryzhkov also told the congress that "active work" is proceeding on the new law on pensions (the current law dates from 1956 and is clearly obsolete). This is good news, because this important law has been stuck at the drafting stage for almost three years.

In September, 1986, the Politburo announced that it had given the go-ahead to start drafting a new law on pensions. The task was assigned to the USSR State Committee for Labor and Social Problems (Goskomtrud), the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU), the USSR Ministry of Finance, and USSR Gosplan.

Originally, the drafting of the new law was to have taken between one-and-a-half and two years.[8] In fact, it has taken far longer; and, despite periodic announcements that the draft is almost finished, it has not yet been made public. Nevertheless, some of its features have emerged in interviews with Goskomtrud officials. Maria Kravchenko, a deputy chairman of Goskomtrud, told *Izvestia* in April, 1988, that the draft law fixes the basic pension at 55 percent of a worker's pay in the last five years of service.[9] This rate may be too low to ensure a decent standard of living, especially for workers in such poorly paid professions as teaching, nursing, and social security. In November, 1988, Leonid Kunel'sky of Goskomtrud said that the draft guarantees "a subsistence wage" for everybody, "including those having no actual service record (housewives, for example)." He also said that the draft raises the ceiling on old-age pensions (currently 120 rubles a month) and stipulates cost-of-living increases at regular intervals.[10] This last feature is especially important in view of the fact that inflation in the USSR is said by some economists to be running at about 8 percent a year.[11]

The catch is that a few more years will have to pass before the new pension law is ready for implementation. In February, 1989, Yurii Lubin, also of Goskomtrud, told *Ogonek* that the law will not come into force before 1991.[12] He also said that it will cost between 15 billion and 20 billion rubles, although it is not clear if this sum represents initial expenditure or is intended to cover a longer period.

A Supplementary Pension Plan

While work on the pension law proceeds, workers can hedge against poverty after retirement by taking advantage of a supplementary pension plan approved by the Politburo in August, 1987, and introduced in January, 1988.[13] The plan is administered by Gosstrakh, the state insurance agency, and can be bought into by men between the ages of thirty-five and sixty and by women between the ages of thirty and fifty-five. It provides a guaranteed supplement to the ordinary old-age pension at retirement age, which is sixty for men and fifty-five for women. There are five supplements on offer, ranging from 10 rubles to 50 rubles a month in increments of 10 rubles. The monthly contribution is deducted directly from a worker's pay check; its amount depends on (a) the age at which the worker enters the plan, and (b) the size of the supplement. For example, a man who enters the plan at the age of forty and chooses the maximum supplement of 50 rubles a month on retirement pays 15.05 rubles a month for twenty years. Workers can leave the plan at will, without losing the money they have already paid into it. They can also shift to a higher or lower supplement in accordance with changes in their income. Since the worker's contributions cover only about six years of supplementary payments after retirement, the balance is paid by the state.[14]

The number of workers who have taken advantage of the supplementary pension plan has not been made public, so it is difficult to say how affordable it is. It is clear, however, that the plan does nothing to help the millions of Soviet citizens living below the poverty line.

Conclusion

One question that arose after the Nineteenth Party Conference last year was whether the new political institutions endorsed by Gorbachev would contribute in any real way to the solution of longstanding social

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[7] See the letter from V. Rovinsky in *Ogonek*, No. 6, 1989, p. 3.

[8] *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 39, 1986, p. 8.

[9] "Garantirovat' kazhdomu," *Izvestia*, April 27, 1988.

[10] *TASS*, November 18, 1988.

[11] See Philip Hanson, "Inflation versus Reform," *Report on the USSR*, No. 16, 1989, pp. 13-18.

[12] "Zatyanuvsheesya ozhidanie," *Ogonek*, No. 7, 1989, p. 32.

[13] *Pravda*, August 21, 1987, p. 1.

[14] "Dopolnenie k pensii," *Izvestia*, September 19, 1987.

problems. In the case of poverty, the answer seems to be a qualified yes. Aleksandra Biryukova, a deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and chairman of the Bureau for Social Development, stated on the television news program "Vremya" that "we were intending to tackle these issues [low pensions and poverty] after we had passed the law on state pensions." She said, however, that "the debates in the congress have shown that the government and the political leadership must immediately study the possibilities and find the resources . . . to raise the standard of living of these sections of the population."[15] The measures announced by Prime Minister Ryzhkov are a welcome first step in this direction.

[15] *Central Television*, "Vremya", June 7, 1989.

(RL 263/89, June 10, 1989)

ECONOMY

New Draft Law on Income Taxes

John Tedstrom

Quite rightly, considerable attention has been devoted to a recently published draft law on income taxes in the Soviet Union. This law is potentially very important because, as in Western, market-oriented economies, the system of taxation is one of the most influential factors affecting the overall health of the Soviet economy and—particularly important—prospects for future development.[1]

There are two basic reasons why this latest round of tax reform in the USSR is so noteworthy. First, in a reforming Soviet economic system in which economic activity is increasingly—if slowly—becoming marketized, tax policy should be one of the main macroeconomic levers in the hands of the authorities. By means of tax policy, the central authorities can shift the burden of taxation to and from businesses and consumers and among different income levels in order to balance their own goals of economic development and social justice. Second, and more specifically, a good deal of hope for the future growth of the Soviet economy has been pinned on the development of the "private" sector of the Soviet economy—i.e., the cooperatives and the individual labor movement—and income taxes are likely to have a much greater effect on productivity in private enterprises than in the state sector. It is in this context that the recent draft law on income taxes should be considered.

In May, 1988, the USSR Supreme Soviet began a protracted and controversial discussion of the Soviet cooperative movement. At that time, the first stories of new Soviet "millionaires" were in circulation, generating a good deal of hostility towards members of cooperatives, whose incomes, it was believed, were too high relative to incomes paid in the state sector. The Ministry of Finance proposed at this meeting a special tax scheme for cooperatives and their members, in the hope that higher taxes imposed on cooperative activity would in some way justify the economic success of the cooperatives.[2] In an unprecedented display of resistance, Supreme Soviet deputies accepted the new "Law on Cooperatives in the USSR" only on condition that the tax code for cooperatives and for their members and contract employees be revised.

The tax scheme that caused such a stir at the Supreme Soviet session was a fairly straightforward, progressive one. Monthly income up to 500 rubles was to be taxed at the same rates as income in the state sector. Increasing marginal rates of tax were imposed on income over 500 rubles per month. The marginal tax on income between 501 rubles per month and 700 rubles per month was, for example, to be 30 percent. That marginal rate rose rapidly, reaching a maximum of 90 percent on income over 1,500 rubles per month, and was generally considered to be a disincentive to increased productivity and thus in direct conflict with the thinking behind the Soviet cooperative movement (see Table 1).

There was also to be a tax levied on the profits of cooperatives. This tax was set much lower than the tax on cooperative members' incomes in order to encourage profits to be reinvested in the cooperative rather than paid out as wages. All the same, the tax on the profits of cooperatives could be stiff. The original version of the tax code ruled that in the first two years of its existence a cooperative would pay between 2 percent and 5 percent of its profits in a flat tax. At the end of two years, that tax would be raised to 10 percent. In addition, 12 percent of the profits would go to social insurance and, on average, 10 percent towards the formation of a fund for "the industrial and social development of the cooperative."

Over the next twelve months, there was a wide-ranging discussion centered on achieving the "correct" balance between an economically efficient tax regime and a "socially justifiable" one, and a number of official and

[1] The standard work on this topic is Franklyn D. Holzman, *Soviet Taxation*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1955.

[2] For more details of the debate on cooperative taxes, see John Tedstrom, RL 329/88, "The Tricky Business of Cooperative Taxes," July 15, 1988.

unofficial proposals were informally put forward but quickly rejected. With the formal publication of the draft law on tax reform, it is more than reasonable to expect that we now know the essence, if not the exact details, of the new Soviet income tax law.[3]

As before, the draft law is targeted on exceptionally high earners, but not just cooperative members. When looking at the figures in the tables, it should be kept in mind that the average wage in the Soviet Union is about 220 rubles per month. Table 2 shows the distribution of incomes of blue- and white-collar workers in the USSR in March, 1986, the most recent comprehensive data available. This is sufficient, however, to gain an accurate sense of how the new income tax law will affect various income groups. (In 1988, the average blue- and white- collar wage was 217 rubles per month. Every seventh worker (or about 14 percent) had a monthly income of over 300 rubles, while some 3 million workers had monthly incomes of under 80 rubles.[4])

TABLE 1

INCOME TAX ON COOPERATIVE MEMBERS' EARNINGS
(VERSION REJECTED BY USSR SUPREME SOVIET IN MAY, 1988)

MONTHLY INCOME	TOTAL TAX
Up to 500 rubles	The same rates as for blue- and white-collar workers.
501–700 rubles	60.20 rubles plus 30 percent of the amount over 500 rubles.
701–1,000 rubles	120.20 rubles plus 50 percent of the amount over 700 rubles.
1,001–1,500 rubles	270.20 rubles plus 70 percent of the amount over 1,000 rubles.
Over 1,500 rubles	620.20 rubles plus 90 percent of the amount over 1,500 rubles.

SOURCE: *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 18, 1988, p. 8.

For those in low income groups (making less than 150 rubles per month), the tax rates will decrease slightly. For incomes of 150-700 rubles per month, taxes will remain the same, and for those with monthly incomes of more than 700 rubles taxes will increase, but at lower marginal rates than in the previous draft for cooperative income taxes (see Table 3). It is also significant that under the new draft law taxes begin to increase on incomes of 700 rubles per month, whereas in the earlier version they began to increase at 500 rubles per month (cf. Table 1). More specifically, calculations based on the new draft tax law yield the tax bills for various income groups shown in Table 4. (Based on a monthly income of 1,200 rubles per month, CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev would pay 186.20 rubles in taxes.[5])

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF WAGES IN THE USSR (MARCH, 1986)

RUBLES PER MONTH	PERCENTAGE OF ALL WORKERS
Less than 80	4.8
80–100	11.2
100.01–120	10.2
120.01–140	10.9
140.01–160	11.3
160.01–200	18.2
200.01–250	15.1
250.01–300	7.6
Over 300	9.5

SOURCE: *Trud v SSSR*, Moscow, 1988, p. 146.

In addition to the changes in the income tax rates for blue- and white-collar workers as a whole, there is to be a special tax on people who receive income from the publication of their works. When an author's income exceeds 1,200 rubles per year, he or she must pay additional taxes on that money.

Even so, the data presented above indicate that the new tax law would not significantly change the total tax receipts of the central budget, at least initially. First,

TABLE 3

TAX REGIME AS INCORPORATED IN DRAFT LAW ON INCOME TAXES
(REVISED AND PUBLISHED ON APRIL 16, 1989)

MONTHLY INCOME	TOTAL TAX
701–900 rubles	86.20 rubles plus 15 percent of the amount over 700 rubles
901–1,100 rubles	116.20 rubles plus 20 percent of the amount over 900 rubles
1,101–1,300 rubles	156.20 rubles plus 30 percent of the amount over 1,100 rubles
1,301–1,500 rubles	216.20 rubles plus 40 percent of the amount over 1,300 rubles
Over 1,500 rubles	296.20 rubles plus 50 percent of the amount over 1,500 rubles

SOURCE: *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*, No. 17, 1989, p. 3.

[3] *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*, No. 17, 1989, p. 3.

[4] *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, January 22, 1989, p. 1.

[5] Gorbachev disclosed his monthly salary as a member of the Politburo in *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, No. 5, 1989.

TABLE 4

IMPACT OF DRAFT TAX LAW ON VARIOUS INCOME GROUPS

MONTHLY WAGE (RUBLES)	CURRENT TAX (RUBLES)	PROPOSED TAX (RUBLES)	PROPOSED TAX AS PERCENTAGE OF MONTHLY WAGE
81	3.75	0.41	.5
85	5.11	2.05	2.4
95	7.60	6.15	6.4
150	14.70	14.70	9.8
250	27.70	27.70	11.1
600	73.20	73.20	12.2
750	92.70	93.70	12.5
1,000	125.20	136.20	13.6
2,000	255.20	546.20	27.3

SOURCES: Based on data in: *Izvestia*, April 23, 1989, p. 2, for incomes up to 600 rubles per month; *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*, No. 17, 1989, p. 3, for incomes above 600 rubles per month. The author cannot account for the discrepancy between his calculation of the tax on an income of 750 rubles per month and that given in *Izvestia*.

90.5 percent of the population have incomes of 300 rubles per month or less (Table 2), and the tax on incomes up to 1,300 rubles per month does not diverge greatly from the past rate of about 13 percent (the tax on 1,300 rubles per month is about 16.5 percent). Only on incomes over 1,300 rubles per month do the marginal tax rates force the overall tax up significantly over past levels, and relatively few people in the USSR earn that kind of money (legally). In view of this, it would seem that the new draft tax law is aimed almost entirely at achieving some kind of "social justice" vis-à-vis exceptionally high earners, while not totally stifling individual enterprise, rather than redressing any budgetary problems through the use of fiscal levers.

Nevertheless, these new tax rates represent a victory for those who stood up for members of cooperatives and others with higher incomes last May. Not only has the level at which stiffer tax rates apply been raised, but the marginal tax rates on the highest incomes are lower than those originally proposed (revised down from between 30 and 90 percent to between 15 and 50 percent). They thus represent less of a disincentive to productivity and entrepreneurship than before. Moreover, they apply to everyone, not just members of cooperatives, although that group must have been a prime consideration when the draft law was designed. Whether the lower marginal tax rates provide enough of an incentive to more efficient and innovative activity is another question, and there are other forces—such as the recent regulations on cooperative activity and the backtracking on price reform—that will militate against it.

Another unresolved question is the interaction between the movement towards economic autonomy in individual republics and these central decrees. The Lithuanian government announced recently, for example, that Lithuanians will not be obliged to pay a new nationwide highway tax.[6] Resistance of this kind to central authority could easily spread to other (particularly Baltic) republics and might result in incompatible republican legislation on other taxes. Other federations have successfully resolved such problems, and the Soviet Union is likely to also. Barring any unforeseen developments, the draft law on income taxes is likely to be approved in the relatively near future.

[6] *The New York Times*, May 25, 1989.

(RL 264/89, May 26, 1989)

SOCIETY

Neo-Nazis in the USSR: From "Mindless Childish Games" to a Program of Action

Valerii Konovalov

Around the time of the centennial of Adolf Hitler's birth, the Soviet press once again raised the question of the existence in various Soviet cities of groups of young people calling themselves neo-Nazis and neo-Fascists. There are well established contacts between all the groups of Soviet neo-Nazis, who, according to items in the official press, give their movements names like "The Russian National-Socialist Workers' Party," "The National Front," and "The Organization of National-Socialists."

The Neo-Nazi Movement in Leningrad

Ideas inspired by Hitler's national-socialism are to be found in almost every region of the Soviet Union—from Siberia and the Soviet Far East to Ukraine, Belorussia, and the Baltic Republics; from Central Asia in the south to the Kola Peninsula in the North. According to many reports in both the Western and Soviet press, in the European part of the country National-Socialist ideas are most prevalent among Soviet young people in Leningrad and Moscow. In

general, Soviet sources tend to regard Leningrad as the city where the neo-Nazi movement has established itself most firmly.

It was the publication of an article on the Leningrad neo-Nazis entitled "The Standartenfuehrer from Malaya Okhta" in *Leningradskaya pravda* in 1987 that lifted the veil of silence that had covered this issue in the Soviet press.[1] The reaction of the city authorities and the forces of law and order to the according of *glasnost'* to such a scandalous phenomenon in the "hero-city" was in the worst traditions of stagnation. There was an attempt to "put the brakes" on treatment of the subject, and the editorial board of *Leningradskaya pravda* meted out an administrative punishment to the overzealous author of the story.[2] But it was too late. The sensation of neo-Nazi groups in Leningrad, and in other cities as well, was eagerly seized upon by other journalists.[3]

This particular burst of *glasnost'* culminated in the screening of an excerpt from a Ukrainian documentary film, *Tak i zhivem* (This Is How We Live), on the popular television program "Vzglyad." The extract featured two young Soviet neo-Nazis from Leningrad who calmly acquainted the Soviet viewer with their ideas on how society should be reordered, particularly with regard to the treatment of "inferior races." "We will finish what the Fuehrer began," they declared. "He didn't bring in the right kind of Nazism in Germany. Only Russian soil is suitable for the real thing."[4] Leaving aside the earlier "feats" of Leningrad neo-Nazis and their colleagues elsewhere, which have been described in other articles,[5] it is time to examine the more recent items that have appeared in the Soviet press on this subject.

Second-Generation Neo-Nazis

This year, on April 20, the Leningrad neo-Nazis commemorated Hitler's birthday in their traditional way by holding a demonstration outside the Kazansky Sobor.[6] Similar events, with guests from Leningrad, were staged in other Soviet cities, including Tambov and Smolensk. In these cities, unofficial counterdemonstrations were held in which participants yelled slogans such as "Long Live Soviet Power" and "Smash the Fascists!" In Smolensk, the anti-Nazi demonstration was headed by Afghan war veterans. In Siberia, demonstrations were planned by neo-Nazis in Angarsk, Bratsk, and Cheremkhovo.[7] The press was not slow to respond to this latest rash of neo-Nazi activity. Articles dealing with this delicate subject appeared in *Nedelya, Sovetsky voin*, and a number of other publications.[8] Of these, an article in *Nedelya* entitled "Fashiki" (Little Fascists) undoubtedly merits closer scrutiny.[9]

Alongside the usual enumeration of exploits of the lower echelons of the neo-Nazi movement—the "storm-troopers" recruited from among students of Leningrad's vocational-technical schools—and references to the continuing inaction of the legal authorities, who tend to consider these phenomena as no more than "mindless childish games" (if these "children" murder someone, then measures will be taken), the article in *Nedelya* deals with a number of questions that the press has previously avoided.

According to the author of this article, the Leningrad neo-Nazi movement is structured in layers. Members of the first group regard themselves as urban or suburban "fashiki," calling themselves "The Russian National-Socialist Workers' Party." They consist of the vocational-technical school "stormtroopers" mentioned above and their leaders. The leaders come from better-off families, but their level of intelligence is not generally much higher than that of the rank and file. Their repertoire includes painting swastikas on the walls of houses, harassing passers-by at night, and picking on other young people. It is these representatives of the neo-Nazi movement who most often end up in court charged with petty criminal offenses.[10]

The second group calls itself "The National Front." These second-generation neo-Nazis have an identical ideological platform but they do not waste their talents on such trivial activities as vandalism and are far less inclined to demonstrate their adherence to national-socialism in public. They are very reluctant to talk outside their own circle, especially to journalists. They are also older—twenty-five and more. Students make up most of this group of Leningrad neo-Nazis.

The fact should not be ignored that many "fashiki" with a modicum of intelligence have moved on to the grown-up "uncles" —i.e., they have joined "Pamyat'" in Leningrad. The "Pamyat'" influence seems to be reflected in the second-generation neo-Nazis' cover abbreviation—"NF" (National Front)—and also in their rejection of the overtly provocative Nazi trappings. They believe that content is more important than form, and the essence of their ideology is to struggle for the purity of the Russian nation and to purge Leningrad of "the Russophobe element."

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1 *Leningradskaya pravda*, July 11, 1987.

2 *Leningradskaya pravda*, September 16, 1987.

3 *Krokodil*, No. 18, 1988; No. 34, 1988.

4 *Central Television*, "Vzglyad," July 8, 1988.

5 For details of the activities of neo-Nazis in the USSR, see also Julia Wishnevsky: RL 226/85, "Neo-Nazis in the Soviet Union," July 17, 1985; RL 40/86, "Soviet Neo-Nazis in the Official Press," January 29, 1986; RL 219/86, "Soviet Weekly Publishes Letter from Neo-Fascists," June 4, 1986; RL 312/87, "More about Neo-Nazis in Leningrad," August 12, 1987; Valerii Konovalov: RL 437/87, "Neo-Nazis in the USSR: A Menace to Society or 'Mindless Childish Games'?" November 4, 1987; RL 394/88, "Neo-Nazis in the USSR: More 'Mindless Childish Games'," August 31, 1988.

6 *Frankfurter Rundschau*, April 20, 1989.

7 *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, April 22, 1989; *Central Television*, "Vzglyad," April 28, 1989; *Press-byulleten' SibIA*, No. 3, April 23, 1989.

8 *Nedelya*, No. 15, 1989; *Sovetsky voin*, No. 7, 1989.

9 *Nedelya*, No. 15, 1989.

10 *Ibid.*

The authors of the latest articles on the Leningrad neo-Nazis, particularly those in *Sovetsky voin*,[11] hint broadly that the "students" of the second generation enjoy support in high places, a sort of "security group" that could, in an emergency, save the leaders, if not all the rank and file, from the retribution hanging over them. Lack of reliable information means that the identity of these highly placed patrons can only be guessed at, but there is no doubt that the Leningrad neo-Nazis have their own ideologists of a mature age and in good standing.

Quite recently, the Leningrad Oblast KGB cautioned Viktor Bezverkhii, a fifty-eight-year-old Leningrad resident, for propagating ideas inciting racial and national enmity. Bezverkhii had formulated and propagated a "Vedic" philosophy justifying the need for a speedy victory of fascism in Russia and introduction of racial segregation of the population. A former serviceman, Bezverkhii is a graduate of the Frunze Higher Naval School in Leningrad and holds the degree of candidate of philosophical sciences. He sought out like-minded people mainly in the armed forces, some of whom came not only to share his Nazi viewpoint but also to preach it.[12]

Attitude of Neo-Nazis to Military Service

Most Soviet neo-Nazis are in favor of military service, regarding it as an excellent opportunity to acquire the necessary physical stamina, acceptance of iron discipline and unquestioning obedience to orders, and—most important—ability to handle firearms and combat equipment. The two young neo-Nazis featured in "The Standartenfuehrer from Malaya Okhta" distinguished themselves during their military service, receiving top marks for combat and political training.[13] According to *Sovetsky voin*, one Leningrad neo-Nazi kept in contact with a friend who had served with him in the Moscow Military District, from time to time sending him leaflets plastered with Nazi symbols and slogans.[14]

Latter-day admirers of Hitler from the town of Nadym in the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Okrug, calling themselves "The Organization of Nadym National-Socialists" are also favorably disposed to service in the army. The organization has drawn up its own statute, according to which any boy or girl of fourteen may become a National-Socialist. They have written a party program and established links with similar groups in other parts of the country. The Nadym neo-Nazis regard service in the Soviet armed forces as the honorable constitutional duty of all members of their organization. They claim that all their lads are in good physical shape, many are familiar with technology, and therefore promise to make good soldiers. In short, they are all very dutiful youngsters. When they go into the army, the Nadym National-Socialists and their "brothers in the faith" from other parts of the country will no doubt, with their love of weapons, become highly competent with them. They need to be, for they believe that these skills will stand them in good stead, if not now, at some time in the distant future.[15] After all, even Hitler did not achieve everything in a day.

Neo-Nazis and Afghan War Veterans

The relationship between Soviet neo-Nazis and veterans of the war in Afghanistan deserves special attention. Artem Borovik was one of the first to describe a meeting between a lieutenant who had served in Afghanistan with Leningrad neo-Nazis in *Ogonek*.[16] When the lieutenant encountered a youth on Nevsky Prospekt wearing a swastika, he tried to rip it off but was quickly surrounded by a group of like-minded youths who had run up shouting "The airborne have landed! They're attacking our lads!" The lieutenant was forced to withdraw. He was of the opinion that the army—in particular, combat experience in Afghanistan—would serve as a cure-all for this home-grown "brown plague." But he was wrong. Of the more than 6,000 Afghan veterans living in Leningrad,[17] several dozen—if not hundreds—were certainly attracted to the Nazi ideology before they went to Afghanistan and may have kept up this loyalty to this day. How else to explain that, when the police shut down a training center (*kachalka*) of the neo-Nazis, the latter found refuge in an Afghan veterans' club. According to the "fashiki," the veterans were perfectly well aware of the identity of the young men in black shirts and jackets but did not stop them from using the club. "The Afghan veterans have a lot in common with us," one young Nazi told a *Nedelya* correspondent. "They are also stern fellows and dislike the same things we do."[18]

In view of these facts, it is not particularly surprising that some veterans of the war in Afghanistan have put their muscles and military experience at the disposal of the "Pamyat'" national-patriotic front and are working as bodyguards for Dmitrii Vasil'ev and his ilk.[19] After all, "Pamyat'" and the young Nazis dislike almost exactly the same things. But to be fair, not all Afghan veterans share the Nazi ideology. Faced with a planned demonstration by neo-Nazis in Smolensk to mark Hitler's birthday, it was veterans of the war in Afghanistan who headed the crowd that gathered spontaneously on the central square of the city to repulse the "Fascists."[20]

Why Does the Law Remain Silent?

This is a question that has been asked in one form or another by dozens of readers of newspapers and journals,

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[11] *Sovetsky voin*, No. 7, 1989.

[12] *Leningradskaya pravda*, December 22, 1988. *Vechernii Leningrad*, December 22, 1988.

[13] *Leningradskaya pravda*, August 5, 1987.

[14] *Sovetsky voin*, No. 7, 1989.

[15] *Sovetsky patriot*, February 26, 1989.

[16] *Ogonek*, No. 29, 1987.

[17] *Leningradskaya pravda*, March 18, 1989.

[18] *Nedelya*, No. 15, 1989.

[19] *Russkaya mysl'*, April 28, 1989; *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 18, 1989.

[20] *Central Television*, "Vzglyad," April 28, 1989.

who have on occasion reacted very strongly to articles and television programs about Soviet neo-Nazis.[21] It is a fact that adherents of the Nazi creed as a rule only fall foul of the law when they have committed specific criminal acts, be it hooliganism, grievous bodily harm, murder, or rape. Article 74 of the RSFSR Criminal Code and the corresponding articles of the criminal codes of the other Union republics that prescribe penalties for violation of national and racial equality have simply not been used.[22] The KGB has used these articles to caution grown-ups such as Vasil'ev and Bezverkhii for overdoing propaganda of Nazism and chauvinism,[23] but, for some reason, the guardians of the law have declined to take any notice of youngsters calling for a physical purging of the Russian nation by elimination of inferior elements and members of other nationalities. These "children," who are growing older, are gradually moving on from "mindless games" to a specific program of action.

It remains to be seen whether the recent decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet "On Criminal Liability for State Crimes" will alter the situation and bring more bearers of the Nazi creed to book. The maximum penalty prescribed in Article 74 of the RSFSR Criminal Code for violation of national or racial equality has been increased by this new decree to ten years deprivation of freedom instead of five years,[24] but even imprisonment does not seem to be an effective cure for "the brown plague." There is evidence that adherents of National-Socialist ideology are continuing their "struggle" even behind the barbed wire, and that neo-Nazi ideas have found fertile soil among prisoners. A criminal who took three women hostage in a penal settlement in Khabarovsk Krai and demanded money, arms, and a plane to South Africa turned out to be a neo-Nazi. Another neo-Nazi, who had served in the Black Sea Fleet before he ended up in a camp, strutted about the accommodation huts with an SS armband on his sleeve trying to establish "a new order" among the inmates.[25]

In short, the inactivity of the Soviet legal authorities has already begotten a second generation of Soviet National Socialists. These older Nazis, in contrast with their younger brethren, do not flaunt swastikas or SS regalia in public. They do not beat up passers-by, commit rape, or deface the walls of houses. They are calmer and quieter. Their program is aimed at the victory of National-Socialist ideas in Russia. The Nazis in Nadym envisage a time when thay can emerge from the "underground" and legally disseminate their ideas. They believe in an ideological struggle. They want to see a two-party political system in the country, with their party (The Organization of Nadym National-Socialists) and the Communist Party competing on a basis of legal equality.[26]

[21] *Veteran*, Nos. 39 and 40, 1988; *Krokodil*, No. 34, 1988; *Sovetsky patriot*, March 5 and April 12, 1989; *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 49, 1988.

[22] *Ugolovnyi kodeks RSFSR*, Moscow, 1987.

[23] *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 23, 1988; *Leningradskaya pravda*, December 22, 1988.

[24] *Izvestia*, April 10, 1989.

[25] *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, May 13, 1989; *Sovetsky voin*, No. 7, 1989.

[26] *Sovetsky patriot*, February 26, 1989.

(RL 265/89, June 12, 1989)

FOREIGN POLICY

The "New Thinking" and Gorbachev's Visit to West Germany

Matthew Frost

In a major speech to the Congress of People's Deputies, Mikhail Gorbachev spelled out the governing principles of current Soviet foreign policy: maintenance of the security of the country, primarily by political means; elimination of nuclear weapons by negotiation; reduction of the state's defense potential to a reasonable sufficiency; rejection of confrontation and its replacement by dialogue, with the aim of achieving a balance of interests as the only method of resolving international problems; and incorporation of the Soviet Union in the world economy on a mutually advantageous and equitable basis. The section of Gorbachev's speech pertaining to foreign policy was subsequently debated in the Congress of People's Deputies. A number of deputies drew parallels between the fledgling democratic processes that are currently under way in the Soviet Union and the implementation of Soviet foreign policy. In response to Gorbachev's speech, V. Gol'dansky declared:

> No barriers, not even ideological ones, should be allowed to dominate international affairs. Life [conceived of] within the confines of ideological concepts has done a great deal of damage, caused many difficulties, and led us up a blind alley. It is absolutely essential that we break out onto [the road] of world progress. There is no other way.[1]

Similar statements about the benefits to the Soviet Union of the "deideologization" of foreign relations and about the need to recognize that Western "bourgeois" governments do in fact represent "a broad section" of the populations of their countries have been circulating in Soviet foreign policy journals for some time and constitute an integral part of Gorbachev's "new thinking."[2] Just how the comprehensive overhaul of Soviet foreign policy guidelines over the past four years will be translated into improved relations with other countries on a case by case basis remains to be seen, but Gorbachev's summit meeting this week with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has undoubtedly acquired increased significance not only because of the "new thinking" but also because of the rapid pace of Soviet internal reform and vastly improved relations between the USSR and the United States, which look set to produce far-reaching conventional and nuclear arms reductions, of which West Germany will be a major beneficiary.

After a series of largely successful superpower summit meetings and the historic normalization of relations with China after a thirty-year break, Gorbachev is now set on improving relations with West Germany, which, in Soviet eyes, is the single most important Capitalist country after the United States in political, economic, and military terms. Although political commentators have referred to Gorbachev's relentless "charm offensive" to woo Western public opinion, the state visit by Gorbachev to the Federal Republic starting on June 12 will be only the third occasion on which he has traveled to a West European capital during his four years in power. (He visited Paris in 1985 and London in April of this year). Following Kohl's trip to Moscow last October, when he declared that a new chapter had been opened in Soviet-West German relations, it is expected that agreements will be signed on closer economic, technical, and cultural cooperation, together with a joint political declaration on the future of bilateral ties. The situation of ethnic Germans in the Soviet Union will also be discussed, and the West Germans will be hoping to persuade the USSR to grant them more cultural autonomy and to allow more of them to emigrate if they so desire.

The Soviet Union has long recognized the value of good relations with a state that dominates the geopolitical situation in Central Europe, boasts the strongest economy on the continent, and plays a pivotal role in the NATO alliance. Although relations cooled for a time in the early 1980s as a result of the West German decision to deploy medium-range missiles in defiance of Moscow's wishes and, more recently, because of Kohl's comparison of Gorbachev to Nazi propaganda chief Josef Goebbels, West Germany's status as a "privileged interlocutor" may well be restored. This is all the more likely in view of the Federal Republic's "pacifist" stance within NATO and recent statements by Kohl, Foreign Minister Genscher, and President Weizsäcker about the responsibility of the West for ensuring the success of *perestroika* in the USSR.[3]

There are three main reasons for the Soviet Union to improve relations with West Germany. First, West Germany's unique position in the center of Europe means that any attempt by the Soviet Union to implement its concept of a "common European home" must involve cooperation with that country. Second, the Soviet Union is eager to boost trade with West Germany, which is already far and away its largest Western trading partner. Third, any deals that Gorbachev strikes with the United States over arms reductions are bound to affect West Germany, where nearly a million troops are stationed, together with most of NATO's nuclear and non-nuclear arsenals in Europe.

Although agreements on a whole range of bilateral issues are expected to be signed during Gorbachev's visit, problems remain in all three of these areas. The very concept of a "common European home" is untenable inasmuch as Germany currently occupies two adjoining rooms but there is no guarantee that the Soviet Union has any intention of removing the dividing wall. Furthermore, with the Baltic and other peripheral republics actively seeking to secede from the Soviet Union, it is hardly likely that West European states, especially members of the European Community, will be interested in a Soviet-led United States of Europe.[4] Similarly, Moscow's intransigence over the status of West Berlin, which it does not recognize as a part of the Federal Republic, has proved to be a serious obstacle to signing a bilateral shipping agreement.[5] For strong historical reasons the Soviet Union is unlikely to make many concessions over an eventual reunification of the two Germanies, although in recent statements from Moscow the idea has not been rejected out of hand. In any case, the reunification of East and West Germany would be likely to cause as much consternation in London, Paris, and Washington as in Moscow.

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[1] *APN*, June 5, 1989.

[2] See, for example, "Vneshnyaya politika—uroki proshlogo," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 84-92.

[3] See, for example, Kohl's statement reported in *TASS*, June 6, 1989.

[4] See Mikhail Dobrochinsky, "Sblizhenie narodov Evropy: trudnosti i perspektivy," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 38-46.

[5] Some idea of Moscow's sensitivity on the Berlin issue can be gleaned from V. Pleskov, "Po povodu suvereniteta FRG," *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'*, No. 1, 1989, pp. 93-95.

Where substantial progress does seem possible is on the economic front. Although trade between the two countries stagnated in the mid-1980s, Soviet imports from West Germany—mostly machinery, electrical equipment, and chemical products—rose by 15 percent last year and look set to expand at an even faster rate in the years to come. The Soviet Union is also seeking to diversify its exports to West Germany, which consist at present mainly of oil and natural gas, the hard currency value of which has been steadily declining due to the fall in the oil market. As one West German publication colorfully described the situation:

> Hopeful waiters in Moscow hotels are anxiously awaiting the speedy delivery of West German coffee machines...[while] hundreds of Soviet specialists are scouring the length and breadth of West Germany trying to discover how the world's greatest export nation arose from the ruins of 1945.[6]

The list of West German firms engaged in joint projects with Soviet companies is impressive. Volkswagen, Daimler-Benz, and numerous other large companies are involved in sizable contracts in the USSR. Only last week, at a Moscow press conference, the West German chemical industry giant Homatek announced that a conference and training center is to be built in the heart of Moscow to facilitate West German-Soviet industrial collaboration under the slogan: "Homatek supports *perestroika*."[7] There are at present fifty joint West German-Soviet projects, and another fifty are in the pipeline. West Germany is also providing considerable investment capital for modernizing the troubled Soviet food-processing industry and will give much-needed management training to Soviet executives.

Although Soviet economists point to enormous opportunities for further industrial ventures involving the two countries, they also note with dismay the limitations on the Soviet Union's ability to become an active player in the world economy:

> According [to specialists], at the present time there are only 200 Soviet enterprises capable of establishing direct links with foreign partners. The number could increase to 40,000 if the enterprises had access to hard currency reserves.[8]

The absence of a convertible ruble and the ban on foreign firms' repatriating their profits are not the only obstacles to trade between Soviet and Western firms. There are serious conflicts of interest as well. While Western firms are eager to gain access to the huge Soviet domestic market, Soviet enterprises are almost exclusively concerned with manufacturing goods for export to acquire hard currency.

The Soviet Union has often been accused of singling out West Germany for preferential treatment in order to drive a wedge between it and its allies in NATO. Official West German statements supporting *perestroika* and West German insistence on the holding of negotiations on the removal of all tactical nuclear weapons from the European theater have only fueled fears in the West. However, a satisfactory compromise solution has now been found on the question of tactical nuclear weapons following President Bush's visit to West Germany last month. Regarding the apparent conflict between West Germany's loyalty to the West and its desire to do business with the Soviet Union, Chancellor Kohl's foreign policy adviser Horst Telcik eloquently stated the West German position on Soviet television last week:

> First, the FRG must be concerned with preserving the dynamism of mutual understanding between the two superpowers. Second, the relationship between the FRG and the USSR and the other Warsaw Pact countries must develop in an all-round way, not only in the area of disarmament but also in the areas of political, economic, scientific, and cultural cooperation.[9]

Thus, with both sides employing similar conciliatory terminology, and with numerous agreements waiting to be signed, there would seem to exist real possibilities for Soviet-West German relations to move out of the lingering shadow of "revanchism" that clouded Soviet attitudes to the Bonn government for so long into a new phase of, above all, prosperous economic cooperation and flourishing scientific and cultural exchanges. Bonn, however, would be wise to temper its enthusiasm for the "new thinking" in Soviet foreign policy and bear in mind the deterioration in Anglo-Soviet relations over allegations of espionage and also the Soviet government's tardy response to the atrocities in Beijing. Both indicate that there is still more than a trace of "old thinking" left in Soviet foreign policy.

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6 *Der Spiegel*, No. 23, 1989, p. 155.

7 *TASS*, June 6, 1989.

8 *Novoe vremya*, No. 19, 1989, p.16.

9 *Central Television*, "9-ya studiya," June 3, 1989.

(RL 266/89, June 8, 1989)

UZBEKISTAN

"Birlik" Stages Another Demonstration in Tashkent

Annette Bohr & Timur Kocaoglu

On May 21, in the center of Tashkent, the Uzbek popular front, "Birlik" (Unity), staged its third major demonstration.[1] The previous day, the Tashkent City Executive Committee had given official permission for the demonstration to be held, but with the proviso that it be held outside the city center, in Chuqursay Raion in the northern part of Tashkent.[2] Accordingly, on the morning of May 21, policemen and military personnel blocked off Tashkent's central Lenin Square and many government buildings, preventing thousands of would-be demonstrators from entering the city center. By mid-morning, however, approximately 10,000 people had managed to gather in front of the Navoi Theater in the heart of the city. Although the majority of the participants were Uzbek, members of several other nationalities were present, including Russians, Tatars, Kazakhs, and Jews.

The chief demand of the demonstrators was that the target set for Uzbekistan's major crop, cotton, be lowered to a maximum of 4 million tons annually. Uzbek officials recently appealed to the central authorities to lower the target to 5 million tons (a reduction of 250,000 tons) and asked that it remain at this figure for one or two five-year plan periods.[3] Public dissatisfaction with the relatively small reduction requested by the authorities was evidenced at the demonstration by signs with "5,000,000" written on them and a large black slash running through the figure. Other placards read: "We Demand that 'Birlik' be Recognized"; "Freedom of Information"; and "As Long as the Language Lives, the Nation Lives" (a quote from the Kirgiz writer Chingiz Aitmatov). A very large banner, written in Russian, read: "The Ways to Solve the Nationality Question," with a quote from Lenin and a quote from Stalin printed underneath. The quote from Lenin was: "There is only one way to solve this central question—through democracy," and the one from Stalin was: "The way to rid ourselves of the vestiges of nationalism is to expurgate them with a red-hot poker. It is necessary to defeat this nationalism once and for all."

Abdurrahim Pulatov, the chairman of the working group of "Birlik" and a member of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, made the opening speech. "'Birlik' is not trying to pit the people against the government," he said; "rather, it is the government that is putting itself in opposition to the people through its policies." Following Pulatov, the Uzbek poet Usman Azim, also a member of the working group, noted that "Birlik" is not nationalist but internationalist in character, as was illustrated by the number of different ethnic groups represented at the demonstration. Professor Alim Karimov then discussed the situation of farmers in Uzbekistan, stating that "Uzbek farmers should own their land for life, an economic freedom that would allow them to feed a population of 20 million."

The Uzbek poet Gulchehra Nurullaeva proposed that the current Uzbek national hymn be scrapped, since it is "denigrating to Uzbek national pride." Uzbeks find the opening line—"Greetings to the Russian people, our elder brothers"—particularly offensive. The new version offered by Nurullaeva mentions such prerevolutionary historical figures as Navoi, Babur, and Tomaris.[4]

[1] The information contained in the present article was received through two telephone interviews—one with "Birlik" working group member Safat Bijanov, who was speaking from the headquarters of "Birlik" in Tashkent, and one with an Uzbek journalist who wishes to remain anonymous. The two other demonstrations organized by "Birlik" took place on March 19 and April 9. See Timur Kocaoglu, "Demonstrations by Uzbek Popular Front," *Report on the USSR*, No. 17, 1989, pp. 13-15.

[2] After the demonstration on March 19, the Tashkent City Party Committee banned the staging of demonstrations in the center of the city.

[3] For more information on this topic, see Ann Sheehy, "Uzbeks Requesting Further Reduction of Cotton Target," *Report on the USSR*, No. 8, 1989, pp. 19-21.

[4] Alisher Navoi was a fifteenth-century poet whom many Uzbeks consider the father of Uzbek literature. Babur, who was born and spent his early years in what is today the Uzbek SSR before going on to found the Mogul Empire in India, is regarded by Uzbeks as a national hero but by orthodox Soviet ideologists

Uzbek officials have made it plain that they do not look favorably upon demonstrations by the popular front. On May 6, the Uzbek Party Buro published a resolution in *Pravda Vostoka* calling for strengthened measures against "antisocial phenomena" in the republic and expressly condemning the activities of "Birlik." In addition to criticizing the leaders of the popular front for refusing to take into consideration "the great work" currently being done by Party and state organs towards resolving the republic's economic, social, and cultural problems, the resolution also censured them for "inciting various groups of people" to attend unsanctioned demonstrations during which efforts are made to "discredit" the organs of power. The resolution warned that Party members working in the Prosecutor's Office, the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Justice, and the Uzbek Supreme Court have been advised "to use more fully the power of the law" against those who instigate disorderly conduct and kindle interethnic tensions. Apart from "Birlik," the resolution also denounced activists in other "independent organizations" who are attempting to incite believers to violate existing legislation on religious cults.

Members of "Birlik" responded to this resolution by widely distributing a document entitled "An Open Letter to the Uzbek Population," dated May 11. The letter defended the popular front as a democratic organization born in the spirit of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* and refuted all charges of extremism. Regarding the reference in the Party Buro's resolution to "the great work" being undertaken by officials to alleviate the republic's pressing problems, the letter stated: "Unfortunately, we have not seen this in practice. We find the work of Party and state officials deficient in this regard."

It should be noted that Uzbek officials have consistently refused to register the popular front despite several attempts by the working commission of "Birlik" to obtain official recognition.

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as a feudal despot. According to the Uzbek Soviet encyclopedia, the Greek historian Herodotus wrote of the brave struggle of Tomaris, the legendary queen of the Massagates in Central Asia in the fifth century B.C., against the Persian invading forces.

UKRAINE

Plagiarism and Politics in Kiev

David Marples & Roman Solchanyk

A clash between two newspaper editors in Kiev over an apparent case of plagiarism throws some interesting light on electioneering politics in the Ukrainian capital and, more generally, on the political struggle over *glasnost'* and *perestroika* in Ukraine. At the center of the controversy is Vitalii Karpenko, chief editor of *Vechirnii Kyiv* and an unsuccessful contender for a seat in the Congress of People's Deputies.

In late April, an item published in *Robitnycha hazeta* accused Karpenko of plagiarism in an article that he had written for the journal *Dnipro*.[1] The topic of the article was a seemingly innocuous one—"Impressions of Japan." According to the author of the item in *Robitnycha hazeta*, however, Karpenko had simply copied articles about Japan that had been published in *Novyi mir* and in book form in Moscow by two writers, V. Ovchinnikov and V. Tsvetov. In response to the charge, Karpenko composed an open letter to the editor of *Robitnycha hazeta*, Mykola Shybyk, who also heads the Ukrainian Union of Journalists, accusing him personally of trying to sabotage Karpenko's chances in the runoff election campaign. In a further twist to the story, the editors of the Kiev daily *Prapor komunizmu* then joined in the attack on Karpenko.

The article in *Robitnycha hazeta* that started the controversy was by R. Mikhn'ov, an economist who had formerly been a specialist in Japanese affairs and had retained an interest in contemporary Japan. Mikhn'ov wrote that he had picked up a copy of *Vechirnii Kyiv*, which had reprinted Karpenko's article from *Dnipro*, and been "staggered" by what he described as Karpenko's "direct, shameless larceny." He then proceeded to list eight quotations, each several lines long, in two columns: the left-hand column consisted of Russian-language comments by Ovchinnikov and Tsvetov, with the sources listed underneath, while in the right-hand column Karpenko's Ukrainian-language text was given. Mikhn'ov maintained that he could have provided many more examples and asked: "How could a journalist, the head of a newspaper, sink so low? And at what cost to our trust in him as readers and citizens?"

Karpenko's open letter to Shybyk appeared in both *Vechirnii Kyiv* and *Robitnycha hazeta*.[2] He devoted little of it, however, to a rebuttal of the accusation of plagiarism.

[1] *Robitnycha hazeta*, April 23, 1989; *Dnipro*, No. 9, 1988.

[2] *Vechirnii Kyiv*, April 25, 1989; *Robitnycha hazeta*, April 26, 1989. In his editorial commentary, Shybyk merely noted that Karpenko had not answered the charges made in Mikhn'ov's article.

Rather than concentrating on his own defense, Karpenko launched an attack on Shybyk, reminding him that Mikhn'ov had conveniently ignored the *Dnipro* article for six months and then rediscovered it during an election campaign. According to Karpenko, the item in *Robitnycha hazeta* had been timed so that it would adversely affect his candidacy for the Congress of People's Deputies. Moreover, he wrote, "it is no accident that such a publication appeared in your newspaper." After subtly implying that the plagiarism charge had been inspired by the fact that he had made critical remarks about the leadership of the Ukrainian Union of Journalists,[3] Karpenko focused on Shybyk's hostility to the national revival that is being promoted by the Ukrainian intelligentsia:

> I am far from the viewpoint that this is a response to my criticism of you personally at one of the plenums of the Board of the Ukrainian Union of Journalists for the slow pace of *perestroika* within the Board that you head, for secretiveness in deciding important questions. The issue here is the strikingly clear tendentiousness of your views on specific matters, especially [those] relating to writers.

Karpenko then proceeded to characterize Shybyk as a longtime opponent of Ukrainian writers, citing an alleged defamation of Volodymyr Sosyura,[4] unwarranted past attacks on Oles' Honchar,[5] and an attempt to ostracize writer Borys Derevyanko, the editor of the newspaper *Vechernyaya Odessa*, in order to prevent him—unsuccessfully as it turned out—from being elected a deputy to the congress. Now, he continued, the same tactics were being used to discredit the editor of *Vechirnii Kyiv*—i.e., Karpenko himself:

> The newspaper that you head publishes a contrived attack against a colleague, journalist, and editor who is fighting for a deputy's mandate. Where are the ethics of the journalist's profession? Who empowered you to raise, in the name of all "readers and citizens," the question of trust in me on the eve of the elections?

A relatively hostile commentary on the Karpenko affair was offered by the editors of the Kiev daily *Prapor komunizmu*.[6] They published both the accusation and the open letter in their newspaper, because, they stated, they found it both painful and offensive that the credibility of a colleague such as Karpenko should be called into question. On the desk of the editor of *Prapor komunizmu*, they noted, is a campaign poster for Karpenko inscribed with the slogan: "Nothing but the truth." At the same time, they claimed to be deeply offended by the attack on Shybyk, editor of "a newspaper that has great authority in the republic." They rebuked Karpenko mildly with regard to the plagiarism but took him to task for turning the affair into an assault on Shybyk.They also criticized *Vechirnii Kyiv*, declaring that Karpenko had already undermined his own cause by slandering people in the newspaper "under the slogan of pluralism."

The attack on Karpenko has all the ingredients of a political scandal behind which lies the continuing struggle between liberal and conservative forces in Ukraine. Karpenko's newspaper is immensely popular in Kiev; in the last three years its circulation has more than doubled, from 210,000 to 460,000 copies.[7] This may well be a result of the fact that *Vechirnii Kyiv* is very much a *Ukrainian* newspaper (although it is published in both Ukrainian and Russian), devoting a great deal of attention to the language question and the need for *perestroika* in the national-cultural sphere. Some of the hardest-hitting journalistic pieces on these issues, by such well-known writers as Ivan Dzyuba, Ivan Drach, and Dmytro Pavlychko, have been published in *Vechirnii Kyiv*. Earlier this year, one reader even complained that

> the editors, by-passing materials of concern to a city of three million, suddenly get into questions uncharacteristic of an evening city newspaper. Thus, for example, for some reason entire pages are devoted to the Ukrainian language. In my opinion, this is a topic for *Radyans'ka Ukraina*.[8]

Karpenko himself appears, moreover, to be a staunch supporter of Ukrainian national rights and a severe critic of the slow pace of *perestroika* in the republic. In a recently published dialogue with another unsuccessful candidate for a seat in the congress, Ivan Salii, first secretary of the Podil' Raion Party Committee in Kiev, Karpenko forthrightly blamed "conservatives" for blocking the progress of *perestroika*:

> I am aware of the vulnerability of this statement. You can easily force me into a corner with one phrase: Identify these conservatives. I would not be able to do so. And not only because even today that is a rather dangerous thing to do, but mainly because it is not easy to prove: the conservatives are safely

[3] See Karpenko's speech to the joint plenum of the Boards of the Ukrainian Union of Journalists and the Kiev journalists' organization held at the end of December, 1988 (*Zhurnalist Ukrainy*, No. 3, 1989, p. 8).

[4] The reference is to an article in *Literaturna Ukraina*, March 2, 1989.

[5] See Shybyk's criticism of Honchar at the plenum of the Ukrainian Party Central Committee in January, 1988 (*Radyans'ka Ukraina*, January 26, 1988).

[6] *Prapor komunizmu*, April 26, 1989.

[7] "Hostri kuty perebudovy," *Ukraina*, No. 15, 1989, p. 3.

[8] Letter from O. Kokorin in *Vechernii Kiev*, January 23, 1989.

protected by the vocabulary of *perestroika*. And here they would not be on the defensive but on the attack.[9]

In the course of the same discussion, Karpenko showed himself to be a strong advocate of Ukrainian language rights, revealing that the issue of returning *Vechirnii Kyiv* to its previous status—i.e., publication exclusively in Ukrainian—had been raised with the Kiev City Party Committee at one of its plenums.[10] At the same time, he gently criticized proponents of language reform for faulty tactics. The language campaign, according to Karpenko, should not focus on the kindergartens but on the institutions of higher learning:"When learning here is in Ukrainian, when this language is used for training cadres with higher education, then life itself will force the introduction of Ukrainian into the school, the kindergarten, and the family."

Two weeks before the second round of elections, the republican newspapers reported on a meeting of the Ethics and Law Council of the Ukrainian Union of Journalists, which examined Karpenko's "violation of journalistic ethics" and resolved to: (1) condemn Karpenko's actions; (2) raise the question of his suitability for the post that he holds with the Kiev City Party Committee; and (3) raise with the Board of the Ukrainian Union of Journalists the question of dropping him from the editorial board of *Zhurnalist Ukrainy*.[11]

Karpenko and his newspaper have apparently proved to be rather too forward-looking to suit the tastes of the Ukrainian establishment.

[9] *Ukraina*, No. 15, 1989, p. 3.

[10] The same issue was raised by Dmytro Pavlychko at the recent conference of the Kiev writers' organization. See *Literaturna Ukraina*, May 4, 1989.

[11] *Radyans'ka Ukraina*, April 29, 1989.

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SUPREME SOVIET

Uzbek Party First Secretary Elected Chairman of Council of Nationalities

Ann Sheehy

On June 6, after lengthy questioning by his fellow deputies, the first secretary of the Uzbek Party Central Committee, Rafik Nishanovich Nishanov was elected chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet. In the revamped Soviet parliament, this is no longer the ceremonial and representational post it was in the past. The Council of Nationalities will be sitting for eight months a year in future and is likely to be the scene of some lively and acrimonious debates on nationalities issues. Nishanov can hardly be called a liberal, but he apparently enjoys Mikhail Gorbachev's regard.[1] His candidacy was proposed by the Council of Elders, and he was elected with only five votes against and eleven abstentions. (The number of votes in favor was not recorded, but the total membership of the Council of Nationalities is 271.) Nishanov will have to give up his post as Uzbek Party leader.

Nishanov is the second Uzbek to have been elected chairman of the Council of Nationalities in the past thirty-five years. The other, Yadgar Nasriddinova, who held the post from 1970 until 1974, was expelled from the Party last year and is currently under investigation on charges of bribery originally brought during the 1970s.[2] All the other former holders of the post since 1954 have been Balts—four Latvians and one Lithuanian.[3]

There were probably several factors behind the choice of a Central Asian this time. Any of the Baltic deputies could have been seen as too radical. An Armenian or an Azerbaijani would have been unacceptable because of the bitter dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh. And if the choice was not to fall on a Slav, then it would seem natural to choose a member of the largest of the Turkic nationalities, who form the second largest block after the Slavs.

Unlike Nasriddinova, Nishanov has never fallen under suspicion of being involved in the massive corruption scandal in Uzbekistan. Born in 1926 in Tashkent Oblast, he graduated from the Tashkent Pedagogical Institute and holds the degree of candidate of historical sciences (he

[1] For example, Nishanov was a member of Gorbachev's entourage when the general secretary visited India at the end of 1988.

[2] See *Izvestia*, November 2, 1988, and *Pravda*, December 8, 1988.

[3] They were: Vilis Lacis (1954-58); Janis Peive (1958-66); Justas Paleckis (1966-70); Vitalii Ruben (1974-84); and Augusts Voss (1984-89).

defended his dissertation on "The Activity of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan on Internationalist Education" in the CPSU Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences in 1969). After service in the Soviet army from 1945 to 1950, he held a series of Komsomol and Party posts in the city of Tashkent, eventually working his way up to head the executive committee of the city soviet. In 1963, he became Central Committee secretary with responsibility for ideology.[4]

After some years in the post of ideology secretary, Nishanov fell out with the then Uzbek Party first secretary, Sharaf Rashidov, over the way things were going in Uzbekistan, and in 1970 Nishanov was shunted off into the diplomatic service, serving first as Soviet ambassador to Sri Lanka and the Maldive Islands and then, from 1978 until 1985, as Soviet ambassador to Jordan. Nishanov was thus out of Uzbekistan during the latter years of the Rashidov era, when the corruption in the republic was at its height.

He was brought back to Uzbekistan in March, 1985—when the campaign against corruption was already well under way—to be republican minister of foreign affairs. At the end of December, 1986, he became chairman of the Presidium of the Uzbek Supreme Soviet, and just over a year later he succeeded the now discredited Inamzhon Usmankhodzhaev as Uzbek Party first secretary.

Nishanov's inheritance as Party first secretary was not an enviable one. Not only had Uzbekistan become a byword for corruption, but the republic was constantly under fire for its poor economic performance. It was natural, therefore, that any Uzbek leader should feel somewhat defensive vis-à-vis Moscow. Even so, on the whole Nishanov has come across as being cautious, if not downright conservative. True, it has recently been agreed that Uzbek should be declared the state language of Uzbekistan, but this is not a very radical step now that the native language is the state language in six republics. Apparently without Moscow's prompting, Nishanov also took steps to defuse allegations by Tajiks of discrimination against the Tajik community in Uzbekistan.[5] On the vexed question of cotton monoculture, which is seen to be at the root of many of Uzbekistan's current problems, he has tried to steer a middle course between Moscow's demands that Uzbekistan maintain production of raw cotton and the more and more vocal opposition to this policy in the republic. His speech to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies seems to have been the first occasion when he went so far as to refer openly to cotton monoculture as "a real calamity" for Uzbekistan.[6]

The attitude of the Uzbek Party leadership headed by Nishanov towards the emergence of "Birlik," the nascent Uzbek popular front, can, at best, be described as nervous, particularly since the dispersal by force of the demonstrations by Georgian nationalists in Tbilisi in early April.[7] The very conservative nature of official political life in Uzbekistan was illustrated most clearly, though, in the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, when Nishanov and a large number of other senior functionaries stood unopposed and few members of the intelligentsia managed to get elected. Indeed, there have been allegations of official skulduggery aimed at preventing one of the most popular and outspoken members of the younger intelligentsia, the poet Muhammad Salih, from being elected.[8] The Uzbek slate for election to the new USSR Supreme Soviet was also remarkable for the high number of apparatchiks it included.

During the discussion in the Council of Nationalities of Nishanov's candidacy for the chairmanship, many delegates spoke favorably of his conduct as chairman of one of the sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies and of his ability and willingness to seek compromises. It was also said that he could be tough when necessary. A deputy from Tajikistan praised his efforts to improve Uzbek-Tajik relations. Gorbachev himself said that what impressed him about Nishanov was his belief that efforts must be made to create a better life for people of all nationalities and his inclination to solve problems through compromise and consensus.

At the end of the questioning of Nishanov, a Belorussian deputy brought up what he termed the "delicate" question of how his constituents might react to the election of an Uzbek to this post in view of "recent events [in Uzbekistan] connected with the name of Rashidov." This gave Nishanov the opportunity to condemn the abuses that had occurred in the republic under Rashidov and at the same time to put on record his own attempts to draw attention to them at the end of the 1960s, when he was ideological secretary. "More than once," he said, "I spoke out against these phenomena both in official and in private talks with Rashidov, and I also posed these questions in the CPSU Central Committee. It ended with my being appointed ambassador." Fifteen years later, "at the suggestion of the CPSU Central Committee, I returned to the republic and involved myself actively in the work being carried out by the republican Party organization on the moral purging of cadres."[9]

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[4] See Bess Brown, RL 20/88, "New Party First Secretary in Uzbekistan," January 12, 1988; and *Izvestia*, June 8, 1989, p. 9.

[5] See Ann Sheehy, RL 366/88, "Tajiks Question Republican Frontiers," August 11, 1988.

[6] *Izvestia*, June 1, 1989, p. 9.

[7] See Annette Bohr & Timur Kocaoglu, "'Birlik' Stages Another Demonstration in Tashkent," *Report on the USSR*, No. 24, 1989, pp. 16-17.

[8] See "Soviet Union: from Birlik to Byelorussia," *Eastern Europe*, No. 5, 1989, p. 7.

[9] *Izvestia*, June 8, 1989, p. 9.

(RL 269/89, June 8, 1989)

The Non-Russian Republics and the Congress of People's Deputies

Ann Sheehy

In his closing speech to the first session of the new Congress of People's Deputies, Mikhail Gorbachev commented that no single issue had been so widely discussed by the congress as that of interethnic relations.[1] Another deputy, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR Valentina S. Shevchenko, remarked that "the problem of interethnic relations is not simply making itself heard, it is screaming . . . to all of us for help."[2] If nationality issues did not completely dominate the proceedings of the congress, they certainly figured very prominently; the non-Russian speakers showed little inclination to postpone discussion of such questions until the forthcoming CPSU Central Committee plenum on interethnic relations.

Almost before the session had started, a deputy from Latvia leapt up to demand that the memory of those killed in the dispersal of the nationalist demonstration in Tbilisi on April 9 be honored.[3] The Baltic deputies, representing largely the views of the popular fronts in their republics, were the most active and best prepared of all the deputies, seeking at every opportunity to establish and defend the sovereignty of their republics and gain acceptance for their concept of economic autonomy. The Central Asians, criticized by some for their attempts to drown out the speeches of liberal deputies and for their voting as one, were nonetheless persistent in emphasizing the economic, ecological, and social woes in their republics that have resulted from the distorted development of their economies. The Armenians and Azeris continued their feud over Nagorno-Karabakh, while the Georgians, supported by deputies of other nationalities, were loud in their condemnation of the tragic events in Tbilisi. A Georgian deputy attacked Moscow's practice of appointing republican Party second secretaries from outside the republic,[4] while the Moldavian writer Ion Druta, after listing some of the unsatisfactory people who had been sent from Moscow in the past to run Moldavia (Leonid Brezhnev, Konstantin Chernenko, Nikolai Shchelokov, and Sergei Trapeznikov), requested that in future no one else be sent from Moscow "to reinforce leading cadres."[5] The Kazakh premier, Nursultan Nazarbaev, stated that it was necessary to "guarantee fitting representation of the non-Russian republics in the leadership of all federal agencies, including legal, defense, and foreign policy" bodies.[6] The Ukrainian and Belorussian deputies who spoke reserved their fire mainly for the disturbing consequences of Chernobyl'.[7] (The Russian nationalist position was represented only by the writers Vasilii Belov and Valentin Rasputin,[8] but then few of the better known Russian nationalists were elected to the congress.)

It was not only the Union-republican nationalities that made their voices heard. An Abkhaz speaker gave the background to recent demands that Abkhazia again be accorded the status of a Union republic, which it enjoyed from 1921 until 1931, and expressed apprehension about how the Abkhaz will fare at the hands of the Georgians when the planned expansion of the powers of the Union republics takes place.[9] An Ingush pleaded for the restoration of the autonomy of Ingushetia, abolished in 1934 when the Ingush Autonomous Oblast was merged with the Chechen.[10] Lieutenant Colonel Petr Fal'k, a senior navigator with the Soviet Air Force, speaking as a representative of the Soviet Germans, asked that a decision finally be made on the restoration of the republic and national raions of the Soviet Germans.[11] The need to solve the Crimean Tatar problem was mentioned by several deputies, as was the plight of the numerically small peoples of the North. And so it went on.

For many of the non-Russian deputies, the congress offered an unprecedented opportunity to present their case to a country-wide television and radio audience and thus countervail the omissions and distortions of the central media. The non-Russian deputies had some other causes for satisfaction as well.The Baltic popular fronts succeeded in getting their sympathizers elected to the Supreme Soviet, the revamped parliament that will sit for up to eight months a year. The Baltic deputies also succeeded in having a commission of liberal complexion set up that will pronounce on the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939, which created the conditions for the Soviet occupation of the Baltic States and other western territories. (The failure of the Soviet authorities to acknowledge the existence of the secret

[1] *Izvestia*, June 10, 1989, p. 2. The stenographic report of the congress is published in *Izvestia*, starting with the issue of May 26, 1989.

[2] *Izvestia*, June 8, 1989, p. 3.

[3] *Izvestia*, May 26, 1989, p. 4.

[4] *Izvestia*, June 1, 1989, p. 6.

[5] *Izvestia*, June 2, 1989, p. 7.

[6] *Izvestia*, June 1, 1989, p. 4.

[7] See, in particular, the speeches by A. A. Grakhovsky of Gomel Oblast (*Izvestia*, June 3, 1989, p. 2) and Z. N. Tkacheva of Slavgorod (*Izvestia*, June 4, 1989, p. 3).

[8] *Izvestia*, June 2, 1989, p. 9, and June 8, 1989, p. 6.

[9] *Izvestia*, June 4, 1989, pp. 3-4.

[10] *Izvestia*, May 30, 1989, pp. 2-3.

[11] *Izvestia*, May 27, 1989, p. 3.

protocols is a burning issue with the Balts.) Two other commissions were also established—one to investigate the tragic events in Tbilisi on April 9 and the other to look into the allegations made both by and against the group of investigators headed by Tel'man Gdlyan. The latter commission is, of course, of interest to both the Uzbeks and the Estonians, since Gdlyan's group is accused of violations of the law in investigations in both republics.

Republican Representation in the Congress

One possibly negative development as far as the non-Russian republics are concerned is the fact that the RSFSR's share of the deputies to the congress is significantly higher than was its share of the deputies to the former Supreme Soviet. According to figures cited by the chairman of the Mandate Commission, Boris Gidaspov, the RSFSR accounts for 49 percent of the deputies to the congress.[12] This compares with only 43 percent of the deputies to the old Supreme Soviet. The shift, which brings the RSFSR's share close to the republic's proportion of the Soviet population (51 percent), is the result of the election by some public organizations, such as the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Academy of Sciences, of a preponderance of RSFSR residents as deputies.

The shift may be significant if it means that there is a higher proportion of Russians than before among the deputies and if voting were to be largely on nationality lines. The nationalities of the deputies are not yet known, however, and it is possible that the proportion of Russians among them may be little or no higher than before, since at least some of the non-Russian republics have elected fewer Russians than in the past. The increase in the RSFSR's share of the deputies is, moreover, much smaller in the new Supreme Soviet than in the congress.

Organization of Deputies by Republic

In the absence of a multiparty system, during the election campaign the Central Electoral Commission was already viewing the prospective deputies as belonging to regional or republican groupings, however disparate their views might be. The deputies met as groups in the republics before setting out for the opening session of the congress in Moscow, and they were seated in the congress hall by republic or region, the deputies elected by all-Union public organizations being distributed according to their places of residence.[13]

This organization more or less by republic had some advantages for the non-Russian republics and, particularly, for the majority in each republican group of deputies. The Baltic deputies, who were afraid that, with their relatively small numbers, they might be given little opportunity to take the floor, asked that each non-Russian Union republican group be allowed to have at least three speakers in each debate. Their request was granted, and this led to grumblings among the deputies from the RSFSR and the autonomous republics that they were not getting a fair deal. So as to avoid complaints against the chair, the republican groups were asked to nominate the speakers themselves, listing them in order of priority. The majority in each group was thus enabled to deny the minority view a hearing—which seems to have been the reason why none of the more liberal Ukrainian and Belorussian deputies addressed the congress.

The nomination of deputies for election to the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet was also entrusted to the republican groups, but an attempt by Baltic deputies to have the republican slates voted on only by the deputies of the given republic, on the grounds that only they were acquainted with the candidates, came to naught. What the Balts feared was that their popular front sympathizers would be rejected if voted on by the whole, largely conservative, congress. In the event, the Balts' fears proved groundless. Their candidates were elected by large majorities, receiving far fewer votes against than the radicals of the Moscow group[14] for the simple reason that, as one Baltic deputy said afterwards, their names were unknown to the vast majority of the other deputies.

The Balts were not successful in securing for the republican groups of deputies the power of veto over legislation affecting the vital interests of their respective republics. A walkout by most of the Lithuanian deputies, however, after the majority voted in favor of the immediate formation of a USSR Constitutional Oversight Committee, had the desired effect of getting the formation of the committee postponed until at least the next session of the congress. The Lithuanians, who, together with the Estonians, have recently adopted legislation in conflict with the present USSR Constitution, argued that the committee should only start to function after the appropriate changes had been made in that document. (A commission to draft a new constitution was set up by the congress but is not likely to produce one for some time. Certain changes in the existing constitution will be made in the meantime, but exactly what these will consist of and whether they will satisfy the Balts remains to be seen.)

Gorbachev's Report

The first session of the congress was not marked by the announcement of any new departures in policy. Gorbachev's chief statement on nationality policy came in his report "On the Main Trends of Domestic and Foreign Policy," made to the congress on the fifth day. Given the urgency of nationality problems at the present time, his remarks were somewhat disappointing in that they not only contained nothing essentially new but also, like the rest of the report, were for the most part lacking in specifics.

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[12] *Izvestia*, May 26, 1989, p. 2.

[13] See Dawn Mann, "The Opening of the Congress," *Report on the USSR*, No. 23, 1989, pp. 1-8, for a fuller discussion of procedural matters. See also *Izvestia*, May 26, 27, and 28, 1989.

[14] *Izvestia*, May 28, 1989, pp. 6-7.

In the section of his report devoted to the nationality question, Gorbachev acknowledged the acuteness of the problems and their potential for "weakening the state and causing instability in society, with unforeseeably serious consequences." He also acknowledged that in the early days of *perestroika* the leadership had underestimated the need to revamp nationality policy and that the consequent delay in solving certain problems had led to tragic events in a number of republics.[15]

Looking to the future, Gorbachev did not make the usual call for a return to Leninist principles. Instead, he emphasized that nationality policy should take into account present-day realities and the changes in society. While claiming that the principle of national self-determination advanced by Lenin remained one of the main elements of the Party's nationality policy, he nonetheless made plain that he envisaged the development of all Soviet nations "in the framework of the federative union state." In other words, he confirmed that the possibility of secession—being openly discussed today—was not on the Party's agenda. The policy was rather "to fill the federal structure of the state with real political and economic content, so that this form should fully satisfy needs and yearnings and correspond with the realities of the present day." Gorbachev then outlined briefly the Party's current nationality policy in the political, economic, and spiritual spheres. This amounted to the by now standard commitment to an expansion of republican rights, though not at the expense of the state as a whole, and assurances that every single national culture would be preserved.

Presumably with situations like Nagorno-Karabakh in mind, Gorbachev stated that it was necessary to work out legal measures to deal with "the collisions that can arise in interethnic relations." He did not get any more specific than that, however, and he certainly gave no grounds for thinking that any change in the status of Nagorno-Karabakh was imminent; in fact, he rebuked an Armenian deputy in the course of the debate for acting as though the autonomous oblast were no longer part of Azerbaijan. In the face of the outcry over the use of troops and special units of the MVD to break up the peaceful demonstrations in Tbilisi on April 9, Gorbachev also stood firm on the state's ultimate right to enforce the law.

In general, both in his report and in his other remarks during the first eight days of the congress, it was difficult to detect any shift in Gorbachev's views on nationality problems. The only exception seemed to be a grudging willingness to confront the vexed issue of the secret protocols of the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Gorbachev agreed to the setting up of the commission on the matter with a membership differing little from that proposed by the Baltic deputies themselves, and he even proposed that the liberal CPSU Central Committee Secretary Aleksandr Yakovlev head the commission.[16]

Like Gorbachev, the newly reappointed chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Nikolai Ryzhkov, showed little inclination to change Moscow's generally negative attitude towards the radical Baltic concepts of republican economic autonomy. Both when he was being questioned prior to his reappointment as premier and in his report on the program of the USSR government, Ryzhkov stated that, while there were constructive elements that were worth looking at in these concepts, a number of the proposals were in conflict with the constitution.[17]

Conclusion

No one watching, listening to, or reading the debates at the first session of the Congress of People's Deputies could have been left in any doubt as to the acuteness and complexity of nationality problems in the USSR. The congress did not come up with any ready solutions, but the non-Russian deputies welcomed the opportunity to air their grievances, and several made plain that they thought the congress was a better forum for their purposes than the forthcoming CPSU Central Committee plenum on interethnic relations, with its restricted participation, would be.

[15] *Izvestia*, May 31, 1989, p. 3.

[16] *Izvestia*, June 3, 1989, pp. 2-3.

[17] *Radio Moscow*, June 7, 1989.

(RL 270/89, June 13, 1989)

CENTRAL ASIA

Violence Erupts in Uzbekistan

Annette Bohr

Violent clashes during the first two weeks of June in the Fergana Oblast of the Uzbek SSR have left at least eighty-seven people dead,[1] including sixty-three Meskhetians (Georgian Muslims deported to Central Asia in November, 1944, on Stalin's orders) and seventeen Uzbeks. This figure is steadily increasing as more corpses are discovered and the injured die in hospital. By June 13, according to a spokesman for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 974 people had been injured during the riots and 748 homes had burned down.[2] Dusk-

[1] *Radio Moscow*, June 12, 1989.

[2] *AP*, June 13, 1989.

to-dawn curfews have been imposed in several cities in this easternmost oblast of Uzbekistan. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has flown some 11,000 troops to the area[3] and evacuated more than 4,500 Meskhetians to oblasts in the RSFSR for resettlement.[4]

The seemingly minor incident that precipitated the violence that has now involved thousands of people is reported to have occurred on May 23 in the central marketplace in the city of Kuvasai, approximately fifteen kilometers southeast of Fergana, when a young Meskhetian overturned a plate of strawberries and spoke rudely to the female vendor because he believed the price to be too high. According to an account of the sequence of events given by Uzbek Party First Secretary Rafik Nishanov to the Council of Nationalities on June 6, a fight soon broke out but was brought under control. Later, a small group of Meskhetians attacked a group of local young people, killing one of them. The local newspaper *Ferganskaya pravda* issued a short report on the disturbances, stating that on May 23 six people, including two policemen, had suffered injuries as a result of "hooligan activities instigated by groups of young people." The article went on to report that on May 24, in the central square in Kuvasai, another incident occurred that left twenty-three people injured and one person dead.[5]

Additional information was received by the Moscow-based independent journal *Glasnost'*, according to which a large group of young people, ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-five, had gathered on May 24 in a part of Kuvasai where many Meskhetians reside and warned that the latter should leave the territory of the Uzbek SSR within twenty-four hours or face dire consequences. Those who delivered the ultimatum, the report stated, expressed anger over the fact that the Meskhetians allegedly enjoy greater privileges than the Uzbeks and have better private plots.

Tensions between Uzbeks and Meskhetians reached a crescendo on June 3 and 4, when violence erupted in several areas in Fergana Oblast, including the cities of Kuvasai, Margilan, and Fergana, the oblast capital. Nishanov stated that Uzbek youths armed with chains, sticks, and axes set fire to houses belonging to Meskhetians, mutilating people along the way. On June 4, a large group of rioters in Fergana seized the first and second secretaries of the regional Party committee as hostages, and then attempted to storm the local police station in order to obtain arms and ammunition. According to a Fergana police official, "the fight with the mad crowd lasted six hours."[6] The Soviet television news program "Vremya" reported on June 5 that Fergana "resembles a city under siege," with armed troops stationed everywhere. On June 6, Radio Moscow said that 130 policemen and Internal Affairs Ministry troops were injured in the clashes, during which more than 500 houses and cars were set ablaze.

On June 7, the unrest spread to Kokand, plunging this city in the western part of Fergana Oblast into two days of heavy rioting. A crowd numbering some 5,000-6,000 besieged the city police station for seven hours and attacked other state buildings and the homes of Meskhetians. A group of 500 people, many armed with automatic weapons, assaulted the local transportation department of the Internal Affairs Ministry.[7] Rioters also stopped a train and let fuel spill from one of the tanks it was carrying, threatening to set it on fire if officials failed to comply with their demands that 400 people be released from custody and all Meskhetians and a police officer who had opened fire be handed over to them.[8]

The eyewitness account by an Uzbek journalist of the events in Kokand provides some insight into the motivations behind the killings and the cases of arson that have occurred in the region.[9] While the killing of an Uzbek youth by a group of Meskhetians may have been the initial pretext for the unrest, the article states that the subsequent outpouring of rage was caused by the belief of many of the rioters, the majority of whom were Uzbek, that they were subject to national discrimination. According to the journalist, members of many other nationalities living in Uzbekistan are "well-fed," whereas Uzbeks remain the most socially and economically disadvantaged group in their own republic.

The journalist reported that, on his way to Kokand on June 8, he met a group of more than 100 people marching towards the city carrying banners that read "The Price of Cotton Should Be Raised." Members of this group told him that they were marching because most of the nationalities living in Kokand—including the Meskhetians, the Crimean Tatars, the Jews, and the Germans—are financially better off and have greater opportunities than the Uzbeks. "Is it our fault that we live in the villages and grow cotton?" they asked him. He was also informed that there have been many cases of discrimination against the native population. One such instance was the decision taken last year not to employ people from outside the city in factories in Kokand. Yet, despite this ruling, people from Tajikistan, Kirgizia, and Orenburg were offered jobs while "hundreds of youths in Margilan and Tashlak are wandering the streets."

"Vremya" also described the events as going "far beyond the limits of interethnic tensions" and revealing "acute social problems"—namely, wide-scale unemployment in the region. "There is a surplus of manpower, and some people have not been working for three or four years," it was reported. "There are no jobs, which is especially difficult for young people." To be sure, the Fergana Valley is the most densely populated region in the republic.[10] Workers from Andizhan, Namangan, and

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *AFP*, June 13, 1989.

[5] *Ferganskaya pravda*, May 28, 1989.

[6] *Pravda*, June 9, 1989.

[7] *Central Television*, June 8, 1989.

[8] *TASS*, June 9, 1989.

[9] *Sovet Ozbekistani*, June 13, 1989.

[10] L. Maksakova, *Migratsiya naseleniya Uzbekistana*, Tashkent, 1986, p. 147.

Fergana Oblasts are offered major incentives to move to the Dzhizak, Kashkadarya, and Syrdarya Oblasts, respectively, to develop arable lands—a project intended to help absorb the valley's overabundant labor resources. In 1987, there were 287.6 residents per square kilometer in Fergana Oblast as compared with an all-Union average of 12.6.[11] Furthermore, Uzbekistan, like Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, has a very high rate of population growth relative to the rest of the country. The population of Fergana Oblast increased by 27 percent during the period 1979-89, whereas that of the USSR as a whole grew by only 9.3 percent.[12]

In contrast to the Uzbeks, the Meskhetians—like many of the peoples who were forcibly resettled in Uzbekistan, including the Crimean Tatars and the Koreans—appear to have done quite well for themselves financially during the years following their deportation. According to Nishanov's statement, there are currently 60,000 Meskhetians living in Uzbekistan, including 12,000 in the Fergana valley region. Over the past twenty years, many Meskhetians have lobbied for permission to return to Georgia, and others, who consider themselves Turks, have requested permission to emigrate to Turkey. The newspaper *Trud* stated last year that 300 Meskhetian families were to be given permission to move back to Georgia, although many more than this number are reported to have requested it.[13] It is not clear whether the frustration felt by many Meskhetians over being prevented from emigrating has contributed to the strained interethnic relations in Uzbekistan.[14]

As the unrest escalated, Soviet officials evacuated some 11,000 Meskhetians to makeshift refugee camps located outside the immediately affected regions. In a dramatic development on June 10, approximately 350-400 people in trucks and automobiles attempted to attack one such camp situated in the mountains west of Kokand. In response to an alert about the approaching convoy, military personnel were despatched in four helicopters to halt the advance. During the ensuing crossfire, two people were killed and five wounded.[15] As a result of this incident, the USSR Supreme Soviet took a decision to airlift several thousand Meskhetians to nine oblasts in the RSFSR, including Ivanovo, Pskov, Smolensk, and Belgorod Oblasts.[16] By June 13, about 4,500 Meskhetians had been evacuated on a voluntary basis to central Russia, where they are being provided with shelter and jobs.

On June 11, the violence spread from Fergana Oblast to neighboring Namangan Oblast. More than 300 Uzbeks were reported to have converged on the railway station in the city of Namangan, and 2,000 others rampaged through other parts of the city shouting threats and stoning police officers. On the same day, reports of violence were also received from Kokand and Margilan. On June 13, however, the Soviet media, reported that the situation was gradually returning to normal, although Internal Affairs Ministry troops in bulletproof vests and helmets were still patrolling the streets of Fergana, Kokand, Margilan, and Kuvasai. More than 900 self-defense detachments involving some 10,000 citizens have been set up in cities, villages, and enterprises to help Internal Affairs Ministry troops maintain public order.

As a sign of the Kremlin's concern, Politburo members Nikolai Ryzhkov and Viktor Chebrikov flew to Uzbekistan on June 12 to "consider questions of normalizing the situation in the Fergana Valley." During a visit to a refugee camp outside the city of Fergana where thousands of Meskhetians are currently accommodated, Premier Ryzhkov proposed that a special commission be created under the auspices of the USSR Council of Nationalities to study the possibility of returning the minority group to their "historical homeland" in Georgia.[17] Rusim Aliev, the chairman of a local committee of Meskhetians that has been actively lobbying for a return to Georgia, warned reporters that many Meskhetians would begin a hunger strike unless they received "a positive answer" to their appeal.

The chairman of the Uzbek popular front "Birlik," Abdurrahim Pulatov, and the Uzbek poet Muhammad Salih also traveled to Fergana to garner information about the clashes. Recently, Nishanov accused "Birlik" members of kindling interethnic tensions by distributing pamphlets "with open nationalistic appeals."[18] According to *Pravda Vostoka*, such appeals were responsible for a recent brawl in the city of Almalyk involving some 700 people.[19] The leaders of "Birlik" have categorically denied that they were in any way involved in the preparation or distribution of such pamphlets and further claim that it has cost them considerable effort to dispel such rumors. (It should be noted that, in addition to being entirely peaceful, all three of the major demonstrations organized by "Birlik" to date have brought together members of several different nationalities.) While recent attempts in the Uzbek press to discredit "Birlik" members seem obviously contrived, any

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[11] *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR za 70 let*, Moscow, 1987, p. 389.

[12] *Pravda Vostoka*, May 13, 1989. See also Ann Sheehy, "Preliminary Results of the All-Union Census Published," *Report on the USSR*, No. 20, 1989, pp. 3-5.

[13] *Trud*, September 8, 1988. For more information about the Meskhetians, see Elizabeth Fuller, RL 168/88, "Deportation of Meskhetians Discussed in Georgian Press," April 12, 1988, and S. Enders Wimbush and Ronald Wixman, "The Meskhetian Turks: A New Voice in Soviet Central Asia," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, Volume XVII, No. 2/3, 1975, p. 323.

[14] Several Western reports have incorrectly attributed the riots to rivalry between Shi'a and Sunni Muslims. In fact, the majority of Meskhetians, like the Uzbeks, are Sunni Muslims although small groups belong to the extremist Shi'ite sect of Ali Illahi.

[15] *Pravda*, June 12, 1989.

[16] *Radio Moscow*, June 12, 1989.

[17] *AFP*, June 13, 1989.

[18] *Pravda Vostoka*, May 20, 1989.

[19] *Pravda Vostoka*, May 13, 1989.

serious attempt to implicate them in the recent upsurge of ethnic tensions in Fergana Oblast could bring lasting harm to the reputation of the fledgling popular movement.

Pointing to "the solid financial resources" of the rioters and their organized approach, several reports in the Soviet media have suggested that they are connected with professional mafia gangs. While such a connection is improbable as professional racketeers have no vested interest in nor any tradition of openly massacring small minority groups, Soviet officials should not be surprised that the rioters possess a large number of firearms. (According to a spokesman for the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a total of 5,561 weapons have been appropriated, including many hunting guns handed in by residents in response to a call to prevent arms falling into the hands of rioters.) Since 1987, the central media have been publishing reports about caches of weapons in the hands of private citizens, a phenomenon that is particularly widespread in the Central Asian republics that border Afghanistan.[20] Moreover, given the abysmal social and economic conditions in the republic as well as increasing competition for jobs and other scarce resources such as land and water, Soviet officials should not wonder at the rioters shouting slogans such as "Uzbekistan for the Uzbeks!" and "We'll strangle the Turks, we'll strangle the Russians!" Whatever the root cause of the unrest, the rapid escalation and spread of violence throughout the Fergana region suggests that plans for "a pogrom" had probably been in preparation for some tim, and that the Meskhetian minority provided a safer target than the more numerous Slavic population in the republic.

[20] See Aaron Trehub, RL 536/88, "Privately Owned Weapons in the Soviet Union," December 5, 1988; *Pravda*, April 6, 1989; *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, April 29, 1989.

(RL 271/89, June 14, 1989)

CENTRAL ASIA

Appeal to the People of Fergana

Yaqub Turan & Timur Kocaoglu

According to information received from Tashkent by the Uzbek Service of Radio Liberty, the leaders of "Birlik" and two other informal groups—"The National Turkish Association for the Return to the Homeland" (representing the Meskhetians) and "The National Movement of the Crimean Tatars"—met in Tashkent on June 7 and signed a joint appeal for calm addressed to the various nationalities in Fergana Oblast. The following is the full text of the joint appeal, which was distributed in the region on June 8:

"We are deeply disturbed and saddened by the current unnecessary bloodshed in Fergana Oblast. It is very difficult to describe the present calamity in words. Attempts have been made to discredit the innocent informal groups in Uzbekistan by accusing them of being behind the Fergana tragedy. The ancient Romans used to ask the following question to solve a murder case: 'To whose advantage was it to commit murder?' Let us ask the same question and analyze the answer. It is unlikely that people who can hardly make ends meet, who do not have a job or enough land to cultivate, who have to move to inhospitable Siberia to search for work, and who united to defend their own privileges and equality among nations would find it necessary to shed the blood of their own people and of other friendly nations. It is also unlikely that these informal groups would set a people against its own brothers or set the Turks against other Turkic peoples. Are not the roots of the tragedy much deeper than this? Are not those who blame the informal groups today themselves behind the present violence? Were not the homelessness of the Turks and the hardships of the Uzbeks in their own country the main causes of these killings? It would have been logical to find in these reasons an answer to the question: 'To whose advantage was it to commit murder?'

"Dear people! Even a lie should be told in such a way that at least a few people can believe it. It is unlikely that the whole population would follow a handful of drunks and drug addicts. Dear brothers, Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kirgiz, Crimean Tatars, and fellow Turks! We share our history, our religion, and our hearts. We likewise share our poverty, our unemployment, and our unhappiness. Now, we also share our tragedy. Would it not be better to struggle together with open eyes and solidarity against our common calamity instead of fighting each other in this darkness? Why can we not unite? Brothers, there is enough room for consultations. Why should we be using our fists when it is possible to solve the problem with words? Otherwise, a large fist could easily nail us down on the black bench of the law. Please stop! Not in withdrawal and defeat, but in order to think logically. In order to stand straight in front of the people and justice tomorrow, we should show courage and patience today. We should stop to find the real intriguers. We should stop and confer before they divert our caravan from the main road. We should not give up our generosity and humanity. We should remain faithful to our centuries-long history, to the memory, intelligence, and humanity of our ancestors!

We want our future generations to remember our deeds with pride. We also want our children to live close together and grow old in brotherhood.

"Dear fraternal brothers! We should not jeopardize our longstanding relationship by cutting off our roots.

Uzbekistan's Popular Front Birlik,
The National Turkish Association for
the Return to the Homeland,
The National Movement of the Crimean Tatars.
Tashkent, June 8, 1989"
(RL 272/89, June 8, 1989)

The USSR This Week

Vera Tolz

Saturday, June 3

Congress of People's Deputies and USSR Supreme Soviet Sessions

On June 3, one of the two chambers of the new USSR Supreme Soviet, the Council of the Union, held its first session in Moscow. The session was opened by Mikhail Gorbachev. There was also a joint session of the councils of elders of both chambers of the Supreme Soviet, who examined the agenda and work of the Supreme Soviet. They also elected Academician Evgenii Primakov as chairman of the Council of the Union (*TASS*, June 3). Primakov, who is fifty-nine, was formerly head of the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of World Economics and International Relations.

At the morning session of the Congress of People's Deputies on June 5, Gorbachev proposed that the congress adjourn for the day to mourn the victims of the gas explosion near Chelyabinsk. Before the congress adjourned, however, Gorbachev read aloud an appeal signed by a group of deputies from Moscow, Leningrad, and the Baltic calling on various Soviet nationalities—i.e., as Gorbachev explained, residents of the Fergana valley in Uzbekistan, where national disturbances were reported over the past weekend, and of Nagorno-Karabakh—to refrain from violence and to air their grievances by peaceful means (*Radio Moscow*, June 5).

On the morning of June 6, the congress approved almost unanimously a noncommittal declaration on the bloody events in Beijing. While acknowledging that "human casualties" had occurred, the declaration avoided specifics and stated that any attempt to interfere in China's internal affairs could hinder stabilization of the situation.

Of the twelve principal speakers at the morning session, only five presented what might be called reformist programs. Four of these were representatives of various nationalities who were seeking more rights and more independence for their peoples. The fifth, Academician Sergei Alekseev, put forward a substantive program of overdue legal and economic reforms. The academician characterized the four Constitutions since 1918 as propaganda documents, and he called for the introduction of a real Constitution. The other main speakers came out against reformist trends, particularly the developments in the Baltic republics and in the media. They rebuffed earlier critiques of the Soviet Army and the KGB aired by their reformist colleagues. Some condemned Yurii Karyakin's proposal to remove Lenin's body from the Mausoleum, and three made speeches in defense of Egor Ligachev.

Ligachev's most outspoken champion proved to be Valentin Rasputin, who likened his liberal opponents to some liberal and Socialist figures who overthrew the Tsarist regime in 1917. The writer called on Gorbachev to rebuff Roy Medvedev's insinuation that a kind

of coup d'etat took place whenever Gorbachev and Yakovlev were out of the country. He also defended Ligachev against the accusations arising from the Ivanov-Gdlyan affair. "The struggle for supreme power has been going on for a long time in our country," Rasputin claimed. "The first victim [Ligachev] is marked. There is no need to remind you of who will be the next," said Rasputin, clearly hinting at Gorbachev.

A Kazakh deputy compared the recent events in Tbilisi with the troubles in Alma-Ata of December, 1986, when, he claimed, a peaceful demonstration was brutally broken up by soldiers. A woman deputy from the Far East who tried to defend Sakharov over his allegations about Soviet behavior in Afghanistan was silenced by the chairman and asked to leave the rostrum.

On June 7, both houses of the USSR Supreme Soviet met to confirm appointments of officials. Deputies elected Gennadii Kolbin, who had been proposed by Gorbachev, as chairman of the People's Control Committee at a joint session of the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities. Against all expectations, this candidature encountered much greater resistance than that of Nikolai Ryzhkov, who was confirmed in his post as Soviet prime minister during the same session. (Only 9 of 509 deputies with the right to vote voted against Ryzhkov; 31 abstained.)

Many deputies, among them Roy Medvedev, said the post of chairman of the People's Control Committee should have been offered to Boris El'tsin. Gorbachev agreed that there should be a place for El'tsin in the Soviet governmental system and revealed that he had offered El'tsin the post of head of the Committee for Civil Construction and Architecture. El'tsin himself spoke in support of Kolbin. Some deputies asked that there be alternative candidates for top state jobs, pointing out that the present practice of recommending one candidate for each post should be termed "appointment" rather than "election."

The afternoon session of the Supreme Soviet chose a new chairman of the Supreme Court. He is Evgenii Smolentsev, a Russian, who has been chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Court since 1987. He replaces seventy-three-year-old Vladimir Terebilov, who has held the post since March, 1984. The Supreme Soviet also elected a new chief arbiter. He is Yurii Matveev, a forty-nine-year-old Doctor of Law who has been chief arbiter of the Ukraine since 1987. He replaces Nikolai Mashakov, who was appointed in the summer of 1987. The Supreme Soviet also voted to retain Aleksandr Sukharev as general prosecutor (*Radio Moscow*, June 7).

On June 8, the congress continued discussion of reports by Gorbachev and Ryzhkov. (In his speech to the congress on June 7, Ryzhkov provided a breakdown of the figure of 77.3 billion rubles for Soviet defense expenditure given by Gorbachev on May 30; he also said the USSR strove to reduce by one-third to one-half the relative share of defense expenditure in the national income by 1995. Ryzhkov also supplied further details of the budgetary deficit and set improbably high targets for the agricultural sector through 1995 (an average annual output of 200 billion rubles worth of foodstuffs). See *Izvestia*, June 8.

On June 8, the first of the thirteen speakers at the congress suggested calling a congress of Soviet blue-collar workers. Economist Nikolai Shmelev suggested some radical measures for cutting the Soviet budget deficit, which, he claimed, will reach 120 billion rubles this year. Among reasons for the present catastrophic state of the economy, Shmelev cited Soviet interference in Latin America—in

particular, subsidizing the crippled Cuban economy. The measures suggested by Shmelev include ceasing all exports of industrial equipment and putting an end to "all building-sites of Communism"—i.e., ambitious projects of questionable economic value. Shmelev said that the Soviet Central Bank should be subordinate only to the Congress of People's Deputies.

Aleksei Emel'yanov, head of the Department of Agronomy at Moscow State University, received a storm of applause when he sharply criticized the role of the CPSU in Soviet society. The people is higher than the Party, Emel'yanov said, and thus a Congress of People's Deputies must be higher than a Congress of the CPSU, and a Supreme Soviet higher than the CPSU Central Committee.

Georgian Party leader Givi Gumbaridze criticized the Soviet Army and General Igor Rodionov, commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, for the army's role in breaking up the Tbilisi demonstration on April 9. While acknowledging that the demonstration was of a controversial political nature, Gumbaridze said the use of force was not justified. He suggested the police rather than the army be used on such occasions. Gumbaridze particularly criticized the military for its refusal to tell the truth about the use of poisonous gas against civilians and expressed gratitude to Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Razumovsky for their cooperation in investigating the Tbilisi events and in bringing in physicians from Moscow and from abroad to provide medical treatment for the victims.

The tragic events in Tbilisi would not have happened if the Soviet public had learned the true nature of the student demonstrations of December, 1986, in Alma-Ata, said the Kazakh writer Oldzhas Suleimenov. Suleimenov termed the Alma-Ata events of 1986 "the first unauthorized meeting in our country" and called on the gathering "to review them in the light of the new approach." Suleimenov also expressed the gratitude of fellow Kazakhs to Andrei Sakharov for his role in the antinuclear movement and called on the congress to issue a declaration condemning any kind of repressions against dissidents. The Kazakh writer called for the publication of "a Black Book" on "the crimes of Stalin's clique against socialism, including its persecution of the opposition." All the troubles in the twentieth century started with the persecution of dissent, Suleimenov said, revealing that, while only 30,000 Kazakhs fell during World War II, 4 million died as a result of repressions in the Stalin era.

Debates also took place on the composition of a new committee to supervise compliance with the Constitution. Voting on membership of the committee was blocked, however, when the Lithuanian delegation and some other Baltic deputies walked out of the hall to protest against the way the committee members were being chosen. They objected to the lack of information about deputies proposed as committee members and the vagueness of the powers of the committee., which is expected to decide whether laws are constitutional. As a result of the Lithuanian protests, the plan to create the new committee was dropped and it was decided instead to establish a commission to prepare a draft law determining the basis on which the committee would act. Voting on the composition of this commission took place on June 9. The Congress of People's Deputies named Mikhail Gorbachev to head the commission. TASS said other members include Andrei Sakharov, Boris El'tsin, and public figures from all the republics.

On the evening of June 8, there was a surprise closed session of the Congress of People's Deputies. Mikhail Gorbachev asked the press and guests to leave the hall before the session but gave no

reason. Deputies later told Western news agencies that the closed session had discussed the recent violence in Uzbekistan, where more than seventy people have died in interethnic clashes since June 3. Gorbachev addressed the deputies at the session.

Gorbachev called the closed session while clerks were counting the results of voting for the post of general prosecutor. TASS said later Sukharev had won, but did not give figures. Before the voting, Sukharev was criticized by some deputies at the congress for alleged ties to Egor Ligachev and for suspending the work of corruption investigators Gdlyan and Ivanov. Both investigators took part in the debate.

Addressing the congress on June 9, Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov said the Soviet Union owes the West the hard currency equivalent of 34,000 million rubles. Western analysts say it is the first time that the Soviet Union has officially revealed the extent of its debt to the West. The same session was also addressed by Mikhail Gorbachev, who rejected suggestions that he was trying to concentrate power in his own hands by combining the posts of state and Party leader.

The afternoon session was addressed by Andrei Sakharov, who spoke against the concentration of too much power in Gorbachev's hands. He also proposed that the length of military conscription be cut by half and said the Soviet Union did not need an army stronger than those of the United States and China together. When, however, Sakharov started discussing the USSR's nationality problems, Gorbachev interrupted him on the grounds that Sakharov's speech was too long. At the same session, the congress also voted for the abolition of a controversial decree that made it a crime to criticize public officials in the Soviet Union. (The decree was issued by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on April 8.)

The Congress of People's Deputies ended its session in disagreement over what it had accomplished. Andrei Sakharov said the congress had failed in its main task—namely, to provide a power structure that ensured that problems will be solved. Gorbachev, however, said that Sakharov's assessment sought to depreciate the role and significance of the congress. Gorbachev said the congress's first session had provided convincing evidence that compromises on crucial issues can be reached through democracy and openness (*Radio Moscow*, June 9).

Ogonek Publishes Solzhenitsyn Short Story

The latest issue of *Ogonek* carries the first part of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Matrenin dvor* (Matryona's House), a short story about a decaying Russian village. It is the first work of fiction by Solzhentisyn to be published in the USSR since well before his exile in 1974. On May 26, *Literaturnaya Rossiya* published an article by literary critic Vladimir Bondarenko analyzing Solzhenitsyn's prose. An introduction to the article said a collection of Solzhenitsyn's works will be published next year by the "Sovetskaya Rossiya" publishing house.

USSR Accuses Britain of Planting Listening Devices

The Soviet Union accused Britain of planting listening devices in Soviet offices and diplomats' apartments in London. The British Foreign Office immediately denied the accusation. The accusations followed the expulsion from Britain two weeks ago of eight Soviet diplomats and three journalists for spying. In apparent retaliation, the Soviet Union expelled eight British diplomats and three journalists (*Reuters*, *TASS*, June 3). The same day Soviet Ambassador to Britain

Leonid Zamyatin asked to meet British Foreign Office officials to talk about "an urgent issue." Officials would not elaborate, but it is believed the meeting could be in connection with the expulsions (*AP*, June 3).

Central Asian Military District Abolished

The Soviet Union's Central Asian Military District has been abolished. TASS said the district, which borders China, had been incorporated into the adjacent Turkestan Military District as of June 1. The agency quoted Lieutenant General Yurii Petrov—a deputy chief of the Armed Forces General Staff—as saying the abolition of the Central Asian District is related to the reduction in the USSR's armed forces by 500,000 men.

Sunday, June 4

Railway Disaster in the Urals

The Soviet media said hundreds of people were killed when a gas explosion wrecked two trains traveling on the Trans-Siberian railway between Chelyabinsk and Ufa in the Urals on the night of June 3. Soviet television and TASS said more than 1,200 people were aboard the two trains. Mikhail Gorbachev, who visited the scene of the tragedy, told a television interviewer it appeared that negligence and safety violations were to blame for the accident. On June 5, *Izvestia* said the gas leak that led to the fatal explosion had been noticed hours before the blast but nothing had been done to stop it. A special government commission was set up to investigate the accident. June 5 was declared a day of national mourning in the USSR for the victims of the disaster (*TASS*, June 5). On June 6, it was reported that the Soviet Union had received international offers of help for burn victims of the explosion. A USSR Foreign Ministry spokesman compared the offers to the international response to the Armenian earthquake last December (*Reuters*, June 6). *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya* of June 6 reported that a gas pipeline had also exploded near a railroad in Moldavia on June 3 but nobody was injured. On June 7, a mass funeral was held in Chelyabinsk for fifteen young victims of the disaster. On June 8, TASS said about 500 people were officially listed as dead or missing from the railway disaster. Another 700 were said to have been hospitalized.

Clashes in Uzbekistan

The Soviet media said there had been deaths as a result of violence between Uzbeks and Meskhetian Turks in the Fergana Oblast of eastern Uzbekistan on June 3 and 4. Initial Soviet reports did not say how many people had been killed or injured (*TASS*, June 4). (The Meskhetians were deported to Central Asia from Georgia in November, 1944, on Stalin's orders.) A curfew was imposed in several cities in eastern Uzbekistan following the clashes. According to TASS, the clashes resulted from "armed hooliganism by youth groups." (Over the past twenty years many Meskhetians have lobbied persistently for permission to return to Georgia, and in the past five years some of them have been allowed to do so; others consider themselves Turks and have requested permission to emigrate to Turkey.)

On June 5, more details emerged of the scale of the violence in Fergana Oblast. Speaking on Soviet television, USSR Minister of Internal Affairs Vadim Bakatin disclosed that 6,000 MVD troops had been flown to the area where "dozens" of people had been killed and

hundreds wounded in what was described as "bitter clashes of thousands of bestial people." Most of the dead were said to be Meskhetians, and most of the sixty-four persons arrested, Uzbeks. Oblast Party leaders were castigated for thinking primarily of their own safety and cordoning off Party headquarters with troops rather than engaging in dialogue with the people and taking measures to stabilize the situation. Telephone reports from Moscow indicate that the Uzbek authorities may be trying to pin blame for the clashes on the unofficial society "Birlik".

On June 6, "Vremya" reported that 1,000 members of the Meskhetian minority had been evacuated from the Fergana Valley. On June 7, *Komsomol'skaya pravda* gave a preliminary death toll of sixty-seven for the clashes in the Fergana Valley. The same day, *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya* quoted Bakatin as saying more troops were on their way to Uzbekistan. The same day, speaking in the Congress of People's Deputies, Mikhail Gorbachev said the situation in Uzbekistan was under control but the atmosphere still charged from the conflicts (*Radio Moscow*, June 7). A TASS report from the scene of the clashes in Fergana said shots were heard in parts of the city on the night of June 6. In its news program "Vremya," Soviet television reported more incidents in the Fergana area. In one town a police station was attacked and in another there was an incident at an administrative building.

On June 9, the Uzbek Ministry of Internal Affairs said about eighty people were now known to have been killed and 800 others injured during the week of ethnic disturbances in Uzbekistan. As quoted by *Izvestia*, the ministry said hundreds of houses and vehicles had been destroyed in what it called pogroms. TASS said the situation was still tense in the town of Kokand, where the latest clashes took place. In its "Vremya" news program, Soviet television said that MVD troops had sealed off the center of Kokand and more troops were being flown in to cope with the unrest.

Soviet Television Shows Beijing Clashes

Film of the clashes between troops and protesters in Beijing was shown on "Vremya," the main Soviet television news program. However, the item, which used explicit footage from a Eurovision video film, came twenty-seven minutes into the program, following not only a report on the Urals train disaster but also several domestic news items of secondary interest and a report on the Polish elections. The "Vremya" report on events in Beijing quoted the official Chinese statement that the action was carried out "to maintain normal life in the capital," but the commentary also included references to foreign news reports that hundreds had been killed in Tiananmen Square and that there was unrest in other Chinese cities. On June 5, Boris El'tsin told reporters in Moscow that the attacks by Chinese troops against civilians in Beijing were "a crime against the people" and he likened the incident to the clashes in Tbilisi. A comparison between the events in Beijing and Tbilisi was also drawn on June 5 in a broadcast of Radio Moscow's World Service in English (1810).

KGB Chairman on Organized Crime

Nedelya (No. 22) carries a memorandum by KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov in which he claims that the state security organs are stepping up the struggle against organized crime. Kryuchkov's memo came in response to a letter from "a Moscow worker, Yu. Nikiforov," who suggested (in *Nedelya*, No. 14) that the KGB take a more active part in the fight against racketeering and other organized crime.

Soviet Media Coverage of Polish Election

The Soviet domestic media gave minimum coverage to the remarkable results of the Polish elections. "Vremya" devoted less than thirty seconds to the matter half an hour into the program, while Radio Moscow reported the results in a few lines. TASS, in Russian, quoted a Polish Communist Party spokesman as saying the Party had lost to Solidarity, but it did not elaborate or comment.

Figures on Foreign Travel by Soviet Citizens

Argumenty i fakty (No. 19) has a table compiled by the State Committee for Statistics showing the number of Soviet citizens who traveled abroad in 1988, broken down by country and purpose. All in all, 4,243,000 Soviet citizens traveled outside the USSR in 1988, with 2,735,000 going to CMEA and Socialist countries, 885,000 to "developed capitalist countries" (of whom 58,000 went to the United States), and 416,000 to developing countries. A second table shows that 6,007,000 foreigners visited the Soviet Union in 1988 .

Call for Moscow to Investigate Lithuanian Situation

The Russian-dominated Edinstvo (Unity) organization in Lithuania wants Moscow to establish a commission to investigate the situation in Lithuania. RFE's Lithuanian Desk reported today that the organization held a meeting in Vilnius on June 4. Participants told RFE that the meeting wants a commission to analyze the work of the latest session of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet, which adopted resolutions on sovereignty, and to investigate the activities of the Sajudis reform movement and relations between nationalities in Lithuania. Several speakers even went so far as to say the Vilnius region should be transferred to the RSFSR. Earlier this year, the Russian-dominated International Front in Estonia put forward a similar proposal, namely, that the Tallinn region be transferred to the RSFSR. This invoked strong criticism from the Estonian Party leadership.

Lithuanian Komsomol Declares Independence from Moscow

The Lithuanian Komsomol was reported to have declared its independence from Moscow. TASS said the Twenty-Second Congress of the Lithuanian Komsomol had approved a resolution calling for relations with the All-Union Komsomol to be based on partnership and mutual understanding. The resolution also said political and organizational independence were essential for active participation in *perestroika*.

Kuznetsov Speaks at Paris Human-Rights Conference

Speaking at the Paris Human-Rights Conference, the head of OVIR, Rudolf Kuznetsov, proposed talks with the United States about the thousands of Soviet citizens with exit visas for the United States who cannot leave because of delays in US processing of their applications for immigration. The chief US delegate, Morris Abram, said 26,000 Soviet citizens are waiting for interviews with US immigration officials. He said the United States is taking steps to deal with the increase in applications (*RFE/RL Special*, June 5).

Tuesday, June 6

MVD Reports Deaths in Prison Uprisings

TASS quoted the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs as saying convicts had been shot dead during uprisings in Soviet penal camps this year.

It did not say how many people were killed. It quoted Lieutenant General Ivan Katargin as saying the shootings had occurred to end incidents in which convicts took camp officials hostage. He was quoted as saying none of the hostages was killed.

Soviet Jewish Emigration Down in May

A total of 3,333 Jews emigrated from the Soviet Union in May, compared with 4,129 in April. The announcement was made in Geneva by the intergovernmental committee for migration. Altogether 16,197 Jews left the Soviet Union in the first five months of this year. Soviet Jewish emigrants in 1988 totaled 20,082 (*AP*, *Reuters*, June 6).

Wednesday, June 7

USSR Buys More US Grain

The Soviet Union has bought another 400,000 metric tons of grain from the United States. The US Agricultural Department said the latest purchase included 300,000 tons of corn and 100,000 tons of sorghum. Officials said the latest purchase boosted total US grain sales to the Soviet Union since October 1, 1988, to 15.9 million tons (*AP*, *Reuters*, June 7).

Soviet Officials in Paris Discuss Ukrainian Catholic Church

A Soviet law expert at the Paris Human-Rights Conference said some Soviet citizens are hostile to the banned Ukrainian Catholic Church because they believe it supported the Nazis during World War II. But Professor Aleksandr Berkov, of the Institute of State and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences, said the issue of legalization must be considered in drawing up a new national law on religious freedom (*RFE/RL Special*, June 7).

Pro-Sakharov Rally Held in Moscow

Reports said there was a big rally in Moscow on June 6 in support of Academician Andrei Sakharov. AFP (June 7) said the rally drew about 20,000 people. Participants who spoke to RFE/RL by telephone claimed the number of people taking part was much higher. The speakers included Boris El'tsin, who called on the crowd to applaud Sakharov for having the courage to publicly criticize the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. (On June 2, Sakharov was shouted down in the Congress of People's Deputies during an angry debate in which some deputies criticized him for saying in February that Soviet helicopters had fired at Soviet soldiers to prevent them from being captured.)

Aganbegyan Estimates Inflation Was 8-9 Percent Last Year

Academician Abel Aganbegyan said the Soviet Union's inflation rate was between 8 and 9 percent last year. That is higher than official estimates. USSR Deputy Minister of Finance Vyacheslav Senchagov told reporters he thought Aganbegyan's estimate was basically correct, though somewhat high. But both said the Soviet Union has trouble deciding what the inflation rate is because it is difficult to obtain accurate statistics. The officials spoke at a conference in Moscow aimed at exploring the possibilities and problems of Western investment in the Soviet Union. Some 300 Western businessmen and financial experts attended the conference (*AP*, June 7).

Soviet Aide Says Baltic Problem Can Undermine Future

A deputy head of the CPSU Central Comittee's International Department, Andrei Grachev, said the Baltic problem resulting from the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of 1939 could undermine the future of the Soviet Union. Speaking at a news conference in Bonn, Grachev also commented on the current situation in China, saying that both China and the Soviet Union are undergoing reforms that are sometimes very sensitive and dramatic (*RFE/RL Special*, June 8).

Friday, June 9

Shevardnadze in East Berlin

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in East Berlin for an official visit that will include talks with East German head of state and Party General Secretary Erich Honecker. Shevardnadze's East German visit was originally scheduled for April but was postponed after he was sent to investigate the fatal clashes between troops and demonstrators in Tbilisi (*TASS*, June 9). Speaking at an official lunch in East Berlin, Shevardnadze said each nation has the right to choose its own course. (East German leaders have said that the GDR does not need *perestroika*.) The same day, Shevardnadze started talks with East German officials. They discussed Gorbachev's visit to West Germany as well as the session of the Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow (*AP*, *Reuters*, June 9).

Soviet Pilot Defector Receives Asylum in United States

The Turkish Foreign Ministry said the Soviet pilot who defected to Turkey in a MiG-29 fighter last month had been flown to the United States. A ministry spokesman said the United States had agreed to grant Captain Aleksandr Zuev political asylum. Zuev landed his plane at Trabzon airport on the Black Sea coast on May 20. Turkey has rejected a Soviet request for Zuev's extradition (*AP*, June 9).

Gerasimov on Situation in China

Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadii Gerasimov said Soviet officials were extremely dismayed at the way the Chinese authorities had put down the prodemocracy demonstrations in Beijing. Gerasimov said in an interview with AP that the Soviet authorities had not expected the Beijing action.

USSR Seeks to Limit Damage after MiG Crash

The Soviet Union sought to limit damage to its aviation reputation after a MiG-29 combat jet crashed on the first day of the Paris Air Show. Soviet aviation officials held a news conference on board an Antonov-225 cargo aircraft, the world's biggest plane, which is being exhibited for the first time in the West. Soviet aviation official Petr Balabuev told reporters that MiG pilot Petr Kvorchur, who ejected from his plane two seconds before it crashed, was already out of hospital. Soviet aviation officials said it was now virtually certain that the MiG-29, one of the Soviet air force's most powerful fighters, blew its right engine as it flew a demonstration flight at Le Bourget airport on June 8 (*Reuters*, June 9).

(RL 273/89, June 9, 1989)

ISSN 1042-7503

Report on the USSR (USPS 343-930) is distributed in North America on a weekly basis at a subscription charge of $85 per annum by RFE/RL, 1775 Broadway, New York, New York 10019, USA, and in Western Europe and other parts of the world at a subscription charge of DM 150 per annum by RFE/RL, Oettingenstr. 67, D-8000 Munich 22, West Germany. A combined subscription to research materials of both RFE and RL is $135 per annum in North America and DM 250 per annum in Western Europe and other parts of the world. Second Class Postage paid at New York. Postmaster, send address changes to:

Report on the USSR, RFE/RL, Inc. 1775 Broadway, New York 10019.