



# REPORT ON THE USSR

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## REPORT ON THE USSR

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### ALL-UNION TOPICS

#### POLITICAL THEORY

## Soviet Scholar Sees Roots of Stalinism in Bolsheviks' Terror and Marxist Theory

Vera Tolz

A four-part article published in the journal *Nauka i zhizn'* by Doctor of Philosophy Aleksandr Tsipko provides the deepest analysis of the roots of Stalinism to appear so far in the Soviet press.<sup>1</sup> Tsipko is an employee of the Institute of the Economics of the World Socialist System and the author of several books on the theory of socialism. In his article, he not only tells his readers to look for the origins of Stalin's purges in the Bolsheviks' terror after the October Revolution, but goes further and suggests that the phenomenon of Stalinism is actually a product of flaws in Marxist theory itself.

#### Stalinism as a Product of Marxism

Since last year, the most outspoken Soviet authors have started to express the opinion that the main tenets of Soviet Socialist theory are at odds

with real life. For instance, in his essay about Nikita Khrushchev published in the November issue of *Druzhba narodov*, writer Anatolii Strelyanyi accounted for the failure of Khrushchev's agricultural policy by the fact that Khrushchev's common-sense approach came into conflict with the theories that he followed. More recently, speaking at a press conference in Moscow on February 8, 1989, Oleg Bogomolov, the director of the Institute of the Economics of the World Socialist System (in other words, Aleksandr Tsipko's boss) said that Marxism "should be adjusted because many of the theories of Marx have failed to stand the test of time."<sup>2</sup>

Tsipko is, however, the first person who has dared to say openly in a Soviet periodical that the Soviet Union's great failures and tragedies

<sup>1</sup> See *Nauka i zhizn'*, Nos. 11 and 12, 1988; Nos. 1 and 2, 1989. For a brief biographical note on Aleksandr Tsipko and a listing of his principal publica-

tions, see *Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniya*, No. 4, 1986, p. 3. See also *Obshchestvennye nauki*, No. 6, 1988, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> AP, February 8, 1989.



may be the result of flaws in Marxism itself, or at least in its "Russian version," on the basis of which the Bolsheviks tried to build a new society in Russia.

Tsipko dismisses the approach of those critics of Stalinism who claim that the society built by Stalin had nothing to do with the Marxist perception of socialism and who like to speak of Stalin's Thermidor.

In Tsipko's opinion, today's anti-Stalinists should instead compare Stalin's view of socialism with the theories of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Before attacking Stalin, he says, one's first task should be "to check the correctness of Marxism." And the major part of Tsipko's four-part article is aimed at doing precisely this. The conclusions he reaches paint a rather unfavorable picture of Marxism.

First of all, Tsipko argues that Stalin's ideas about socialism were typical for the Marxists of his time. Comparing Stalin's statements on Socialist reconstruction with the ideas of Russian and European Marxists, Tsipko concludes that "Stalin never departed from the ABCs of Marxism in his articles or speeches." . . . Tsipko then calls on the Soviet people to admit that the problems with which the Soviet Union has been faced are the result not only of "Stalin's departure from the initial plan of socialism . . . but also the result of the fact that [Marxist] theory is in conflict with life and cannot foresee the future well enough."

Stalin never departed from the ABCs of Marxism in his articles or speeches. In his perception of the ultimate goals of a Socialist reconstruction of the economy, Stalin did not differ either from other Russian Bolsheviks—Kamenev, Zinov'ev, or Trotsky—or from his arch-enemy, the "opportunist and revisionist" Karl Kautsky. . . . [Stalin's] definition of the Communist Party as "the Order of Sword-Bearers" . . . and his idea that the class struggle would intensify in the course of building socialism seem to be the only visible "theoretical deviations" from Marxism-Leninism.

Tsipko then calls on the Soviet people to admit that the problems with which the Soviet Union has been faced are the result not only of "Stalin's departure from the initial plan of socialism . . . but also the result of the fact that [Marxist] theory is in conflict with life and cannot foresee the future well enough."

In analyzing the problems of the Soviet Union, Tsipko poses several fundamental questions about the correctness of Marxist thought. He says that

[in condemning] the barrack-type socialism [of Stalin], our criticism avoids the question whether it is at all possible to build not barrack-type socialism but democratic socialism on a nonmarket foundation.

Tsipko adds that, in his opinion, the struggle against the market always results in "totalitarianism, in the violation of the rights and dignity of individuals, and in the creation of an omnipotent administrative and bureaucratic apparatus." "Marx did not see this," and Lenin finally came to realize it only at the end of his life, Tsipko says.

Tsipko is also very critical of the traditional "class approach" of the Marxists. He says that the Marxists' conviction that "they know and understand something that others do not," as well as their division of people into "progressive and reactionary classes," could, in an extreme political situation, "become a basis

for justifying any form of violence."

Criticizing the idea of the state ownership of the means of production, Tsipko poses another unorthodox question—namely, can there be any strong "guarantee of the freedom of individuals or democracy if all members of society are employed by one employer—the proletarian state?" The author, however, reserves his sharpest criticism for the Marxist attitude towards peasants. Tsipko takes to task those anti-Stalinists who see the main problem with Stalin's collectivization in the pace and the methods with which it was introduced. According to Tsipko, the bitter experience of agriculture in the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries should make people ask "whether there was any need at all to have cooperative agriculture." As with other aspects of Stalin's perception of socialism, Tsipko argues that Stalin was not at all original in his ideas about collectivization. He says that in his policies Stalin was in fact inspired by the Marxist idea that "socialism is incompatible with individual labor [of peasants]." In his de-kulakization campaign, Stalin was guided by the Marxist thesis of "peasants as the last Capitalist class," Tsipko argues.

Tsipko does not see much sense in the Bolsheviks' industrialization schemes either. While praising Bukharin as the only Bolshevik

with an understanding of "the complexity of life," Tsipko dismisses the controversy between Stalin and Bukharin over the pace of industrialization and collectivization as meaningless. He says:

When the ideas about the goals of socialism are wrong . . . if they contradict the laws of normal civil life, it is useless to argue about the pace or methods by which they are achieved. When you are dealing with an unrealistic goal, it does not matter whether you try to achieve it by cavalry methods or gradually—the result will be the same.

All in all, Tsipko observes that, when changes are introduced in a society in accordance with an abstract theory rather than by following the dictates of common sense, the consequences are bound to be negative. He even quotes Russian revolutionaries of the nineteenth century as mentioning "how dangerous the dictates of an abstract theory can be." The Bolsheviks, however, were not on the whole aware of this danger.

Concluding his analysis of the Marxist roots of Stalinism, Tsipko tells his readers not to be afraid of making a critical evaluation of Marxism. He says:

"We will never stop being slaves" until we have fostered in ourselves a healthy doubt about some of the conclusions of Marxism. It is legitimate to ask whether the classics of Marxism were not mistaken, since they [Marx and Engels] were biased (even strongly biased), as any true revolutionaries are. Let us imagine what our country would turn into if we were to undertake yet another attempt—now the third (after War Communism and Stalin's assault on the market)—to build our economy according to the Marxist model—i.e., on the basis of direct exchange of products and all-embracing directive planning.

### The Identification of the Roots of Stalinism in Bolshevik Policy after the Revolution

Starting with the publication of an article by the economic journalist Vasilii Selyunin in *Novyi mir* in May, 1988, the Soviet press began, rather cautiously, to draw a connection between the Bolsheviks' terror at the time of War Communism and Stalin's subsequent purges. More recently, in a three-part article on Russian history published in *Izvestia*, the writer Boris Vasil'ev reiterated the view held by some Western sovietologists,

such as Richard Pipes, that the disbandment [by the Bolsheviks] of the Constituent Assembly in January, 1918,

put an end to the possibility of parliamentary democracy in our country and cleared the way for all kinds of dictatorship—from dictatorship by the state (War Communism) to dictatorship by an individual (Stalinism).<sup>3</sup>

In his article in *Nauka i zhizn'*, Tsipko devotes considerable attention to this connection. He says that the desire of the whole Party, not only of Stalin, to retain power at all costs and the Party's calls for repressions against opponents and rivals inevitably led to Stalin's terror. Quoting several sources, including the first Russian Marxist, Georgii Plekhanov, Tsipko shows that even before October, 1917, the Russian Social-Democrats had started to regard "the interests of defending the revolution to be of higher priority than traditional ideas about law, democracy, and morality." And after the October Revolution, Tsipko shows, the Bolsheviks acted in accordance with this idea.

As precursors of Stalin's terror, Tsipko cites the execution of the entire Tsarist family in July, 1918. He also mentions "the Red Terror" in Petrograd in 1919, which he describes as resulting "in the shooting of hostages, in the introduction of the principle of collective guilt of a class or an estate, [and] in the massacre of people of nonproletarian origin." "Officers of the Tsarist army were killed simply because they were officers, churchmen because they were churchmen," Tsipko says.

He contends that a condemnation of Stalin's terror is only valid in the context of an outright rejection of terror of any kind. He complains that many current critics of Stalinism have failed to take this approach and, while abhorring Stalin's purges, have sought to defend the postrevolutionary terror of the Bolsheviks.

Although in his article Tsipko pays considerable attention to "the Red Terror," he clearly tries to dissociate Lenin from it. He holds only Stalin and Zinov'ev responsible for what went on in Petrograd in 1919. Lenin is mentioned only in the context of his finally realizing the mistakes of War Communism and turning the country towards NEP. Nevertheless, Tsipko's article is one of the most thoughtful analyses of the Soviet Union's past to have appeared in the Soviet press.

<sup>3</sup> *Izvestia*, January 16, 17, and 18, 1988. The remark on the disbandment of the Constituent Assembly is to be found in the second part of the article, published on January 17.



# Results of the 1988 CPSU Report-and-Election Campaign

Dawn Mann

The conduct and the results of the CPSU report-and-election campaign held during the last quarter of 1988 clearly indicate just how difficult it will be to rouse the Party's passive members, restore confidence in the Party among its members and the general population, and stymie the active efforts of the entrenched Party bureaucracy to sabotage any changes that threaten their position.

The recommendation that a report-and-election campaign be held before the end of 1988 was one of the outcomes of last June's Nineteenth All-Union Party Conference. The purpose of this campaign, which CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev said would be qualitatively different from previous campaigns, was to implement (at all levels below the republic) the first steps, as approved by the Party conference, towards the democratization of intra-Party affairs. In plain English, this campaign was to mark the start of the much-talked about "control from below"—i.e., genuinely democratic elections of the Party's leading organs. The introduction of the accountability of Party officials to those whom they serve is an important component of the political reforms now under way. It is supposed to accomplish several aims, including rousing rank-and-file Party members to become more active in Party affairs and providing an alternative means of replacing unsatisfactory officials with those more supportive of *perestroika*.

Replacing officials who are blocking *perestroika* is, for obvious reasons, one of the key tasks facing Gorbachev. Prior to the Party conference, many reform-minded individuals suggested that a "purge" (*chistka*) of the Party's almost 20 million members be carried out, but at the Party conference Gorbachev told the delegates that such a purge was unnecessary.<sup>1</sup> Instead, members of the Party apparatus were to be subjected to a process of "certification," (*attestatsiya*) and all Party commit-

tees below the republic level were to hold report-and-election campaigns. According to Georgii Razumovsky, now chairman of the CPSU Central Committee Commission on Party Development and Cadre Policy, the report-and-election campaign would require that "the entire corps of Party workers" pass "an exacting test," that of seeking the support of their constituents.<sup>2</sup>

## Rules of the Game

The Central Committee plenum in July, 1988, was devoted to "practical work" to implement the decisions contained in the resolution on political reform adopted at the Nineteenth Party Conference. In his opening speech, Gorbachev dwelt at some length on the upcoming report-and-election campaign. Each of the points he mentioned—pre-election discussions of candidates, two-term limits, secret balloting, and multi-candidate elections, among others—subsequently appeared in the resolution adopted by the Central Committee at the close of the plenum.<sup>3</sup>

The Central Committee resolution on the conduct of the report-and-election campaign was unprecedented, but, according to Gorbachev, dictated by present circumstances. Party committees from the workplace to the regional level were instructed to allow broad discussion of candidates for membership on Party committees and secretaries of Party committees, to make full use of the possibility of holding multi-candidate elections and recommending candidates for election to higher-level Party bodies, and to allow voting by secret ballot. The Central Committee's resolution also noted that, in keeping with the Party conference resolution on limiting terms of office to two, terms beginning with this campaign would be counted as the first. The fate of secretaries and committee members already in office was left in the hands of Party members—they could choose to reelect them

or be governed by the spirit of the new two-term limit if they so desired. Finally, the campaign was to be given wide coverage by local print, radio, and television media.

This resolution was later supplemented by more detailed instructions from the Central Committee.<sup>4</sup> These instructions supercede previous instructions dating from 1962 (to which some slight modifications were made in 1966 and 1973) and expand on the rather vague formulations contained in the Party Rules as well as the Central Committee's resolution of July, 1988. Among the more important points are provisions for the regular election of leading Party organs at intervals of one year for primary Party organizations and five years for all higher organs up to and including the republic level. The instructions also provide for elections in the period between conferences (which are held once every two to three years) and call for a 20 percent "renewal" of the composition of the leading organs. This proviso, however, will not actually come into effect until the appropriate changes have been made to the Party Rules (presumably at the Twenty-eighth Party Congress). In the interim, the instructions, using Paragraph 24 of the Party Rules on the "systematic renewal" of Party organs as justification, place a limit of two five-year terms on holders of elective Party offices. The instructions also detail the procedures by which the composition of leading Party bodies can be changed in the period between conferences and report-and-election campaigns.

The instructions, however, have several faults and were criticized by such prominent supporters of *perestroika* as Gavriil Popov, Mikhail Shatrov, Aleksandr Gelman, and Elem Klimov. The problem with the way in which the resolutions, instructions, and Party Rules are worded is that they do not exactly forbid past practices and frequently do not make mandatory the new procedures they are introducing. For example, according to Georgii Kryuchkov, at the time a deputy chief of the CPSU Central Committee Organizational Party Work Department, the adoption of the new instructions put an end to the practice whereby a Party secretary or "narrow circle of people" put forward only one candidate. The instructions, however, do not forbid this practice and state only that Party members are allowed to nominate candidates of their own choosing. Similarly, pre-election discussion and voting by secret ballot are only "provided for" and not necessarily required.

The instructions also state that the limit to the number of candidates is to be decided by an open vote at the meeting. Here there is a chance to openly influence participants and to pressure them to

reduce the number of candidates. When all was said and done, how democratic the report-and-election campaign was depended largely upon the desires of the Party committee members. As V. Shostakovsky, the rector of the Moscow Higher Party School, put it, the resolutions and instructions "create the organizational prerequisites for Party democratization... but organizational mechanisms are not sufficient in themselves in the cause of democracy. An organizational mechanism, however well-oiled, is not in itself automatically capable of influencing the Party's life and work."<sup>5</sup>

Both Popov and Shatrov singled out for criticism the continued existence of the rule permitting only those who receive 50 percent or more of the vote to be elected. As Popov put it, "cases where more than 50 percent of those at a meeting vote 'no' are exceptionally rare."<sup>6</sup> Shatrov and Vladlen Loginov, a doctor of historical science, were also of the opinion that "nothing" had changed in the new instructions.<sup>7</sup> As the campaign drew to a close in late December, six well-known supporters of reform published an open letter to Gorbachev charging that the report-and-election campaign had been saddled with so many instructions and directives that it was all but impossible to replace existing cadres with more "talented organizers." The Party, they wrote, was overrun by a "dictatorship of mediocrity."<sup>8</sup>

## The Course of the Campaign

The campaign began in August-September with workplace and primary Party organization conferences, followed by district and city Party committee conferences in October-November and regional Party committee conferences in November-December. As the campaign got under way many Soviet citizens wrote to the press and voiced skepticism about its outcome. One observed, "[the elections] will be a kind of test... I doubt whether many will fail this test." Another noted that "worthy Communists are not sufficiently confident that they can really influence the course of events."<sup>9</sup> The letters suggest that passivity and cynicism are widespread among the Party rank and file, who do not yet believe that they can have any direct influence over those at higher levels in the Party.

<sup>5</sup> *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, October 6, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> *Moscow News*, No. 37, 1988.

<sup>7</sup> *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, September 10, 1988.

<sup>8</sup> *Moscow News*, January 1, 1989. The six signatories were Grigorii Baklanov, Aleksandr Gel'man, Daniil Granin, Elem Klimov, Roald Sagdeev, and Mikhail Ulyanov.

<sup>9</sup> *Izvestia*, September 3, 1988.

<sup>4</sup> *Partiinaya zhizn'*, No. 16, 1988.

<sup>1</sup> CPSU membership has reportedly been falling in some regions. See, for example, reports in *Pravda*, December 12, 1988; *Reuters*, February 12, 1989; and, for figures on the membership of the Komsomol, *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, November 19, 1988. Interestingly, in 1988, the yearly edition of *KPSS v tsifrakh* did not appear. On the need for a purge, see a letter published in *Pravda*, May 8, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> *Pravda*, August 18, 1988. Reports announcing results of the certification campaign give the impression that most Party workers are passing this test without problems. The reports also emphasize that, while the certification campaign should be approached seriously, it should not be considered a purge.

<sup>3</sup> *Pravda*, July 2, 1988; *Pravda*, July 31, 1988.



Their skepticism was, in many instances, justified. At the end of August, just a few weeks into the campaign, an editorial in *Pravda* observed that "stage-managing" had occurred and that the members of one unnamed Party organization had sat passively throughout their meeting.<sup>10</sup> In South Sakhalin Oblast, the Party first secretary said that meetings in the region's lower-level Party organizations were "frequently" conducted according to the old scenarios and were characterized by "inertia."<sup>11</sup> TASS announced on August 15 that "to judge from newspaper reports, Party groups are not using secret ballots very often" and that in numerous instances only one candidate was being proposed. In late September, Georgii Kryuchkov said that multiple-candidate elections had been held in about 15,000 primary Party organizations, and in December *Pravda* reported that every third Party group leader and every second secretary of workplace and primary Party organizations had been elected from a multi-candidate slate (in 1987 there were over 441,000 primary Party organizations).<sup>12</sup>

As is often the case in the Soviet media, what is missing is as important as what is included, and the conspicuous absence from almost all press accounts of any details of the election proceedings leads one to suspect that, in the majority of cases, the elections were not conducted in accordance with the new instructions.

#### Turnover

It would appear that turnover during the report-and-election campaign was less than spectacular. The work of 5,602 Party group leaders, 5,223 shop secretaries, and 3,275 primary Party organization secretaries was found lacking—but this is a small percentage of the total number of such people. At the raion (district) and city Party committee level between 30 and 40 percent of the delegates at such conferences "not infrequently" voted against incumbent leaders, but with the rules requiring a more than 50 percent vote against, these secretaries managed to retain their posts.<sup>13</sup> Such results lend further credibility to the criticisms of Shatrov, Popov, and others.

At the regional (oblast and krai) level, more first secretaries were replaced during the 1988 campaign than during the 1987 campaign. In the RSFSR, between September and December, 1988, six new obkom first secretaries were appointed. In the non-Russian republics, 21 new obkom first

secretaries were elected.<sup>14</sup> In many instances, though, there was nothing "democratic" about the way in which these new secretaries were appointed. For instance, in Murmansk, which has been under the leadership of Vladimir Ptityn for seventeen years, delegates to the conference tried to rebel against "the recommendation" of Aleksei Balagurov for the post of first secretary. "You understand," said one delegate, "we are not voting against the new first secretary personally—we don't know anything about him. Communists are sick and tired of no one asking their opinion." But this delegate, and those who shared his opinion, did not get to address the conference and, in the end, Balagurov was elected first secretary.<sup>15</sup>

#### The Accountability Reports

According to Razumovsky, the reports delivered at the meetings were to serve as "a platform for the discussion of the most important, acute, urgent, pressing problems." "It is," said Razumovsky, "necessary not merely to set tasks but to determine clearly for each task what is to be done, when and how." Again, the aim is to increase the accountability of local Party officials before their constituents; at the same time, such explicit reports could provide higher-level Party officials with a record that could be used to evaluate performance.

Many of the reports were quite critical in their assessment of the local Party committees' efforts to solve "the most important, acute, urgent, pressing problems." Even more frank were the reports and comments of the rank-and-file Party members at many of the meetings. Clearly, just about everyone has realized that criticism and self-criticism are the order of the day. But it is also just as clear that most participants had no idea how to solve these problems. To judge from the press accounts, speakers rarely had any concrete suggestions.<sup>16</sup>

Party committees also tried to excuse themselves for a lack of attention to urgent socioeconomic problems by pointing to the elimination of the sectoral departments that dealt with them—without which, they claim, they have not got the staff to tackle these problems. According to a *Pravda* editorial, what is needed, however,

<sup>14</sup> The appointment of a new first secretary, however, was not always tied to the report-and-election campaign.

<sup>15</sup> *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, December 29, 1988. In Pskov Oblast Committee, the delegates were able to propose and elect—over the candidate's repeated objections—a new first secretary. See *Pravda*, December 22, 1988.

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, the press account of the meeting in Sverdlovsk Oblast in *Sotsialisticheskaya industriya*, December 27, 1988.

is not sectoral departments, but a "creative" approach. This creative approach seems to allow for initiatives of almost any sort, provided they get the job done. Addressing the Kursk obkom conference, Razumovsky made this point quite directly. Commenting on the absence of "a well-adjusted economic and political system," he stressed that all Party and soviet bodies, all Communists and all activists must persistently strive for the implementation of all the social reforms that ensure the steady and consistent molding of the Leninist image of socialism in our country. He added: "At the same time it is also necessary to attend effectively and without delay to the vast range of practical matters on which the improvement of working people's living conditions depends."<sup>17</sup>

#### Glasnost' and Campaign Coverage

Despite the recommendation of widespread *glasnost'* contained in the Central Committee resolution, not all Party committees complied. In one instance, which received national coverage in *Pravda*, an instructor attached to the organiza-

<sup>17</sup> *Pravda*, December 26, 1988. See also *Pravda* of December 5, 1988, on the reduction of departments in Moscow Oblast.

tional department of the Saratov obkom went so far as to specifically deny permission to journalists to attend a report-and-election meeting in a factory.<sup>18</sup> What *glasnost'* there was was characterized by one participant as "stagnation in the spirit of openness."<sup>19</sup> Party committees and secretaries have, according to Boris Pugo, chairman of the CPSU CC Party Control Commission, "underestimated the possibilities offered by the press and are failing to utilize its potential for influencing public opinion. . . . Does this not account for the fact that often the population lacks authentic information, while there is no end of rumors and conjecture?"<sup>20</sup>

While there were multi-candidate, secret ballot elections held during the 1988 report-and-election campaign, the spirit of democratization can by no means be said to have spread throughout the Party. The means provided are as yet insufficient to achieve the reformers' desired ends, and the struggles of Party members who attempt to democratize the Party's activities at the lowest level are finding the going just as tough as those at the top.

<sup>18</sup> *Pravda*, September 26, 1988.

<sup>19</sup> *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, January 7, 1989.

<sup>20</sup> *Izvestia*, December 26, 1989.

(RL 83/89, February 13, 1989)

## ARMED FORCES

# The Soviet Military under Siege

Stephen Foye

#### Background

In recent months, the Soviet military has found itself increasingly a target of civilian dissatisfaction. Caught between the imperatives of a political leadership determined to reform Soviet society and the frustrations of a more and more restive population, the military has been blamed for social ills ranging from economic stagnation to shortcomings in higher education. Criticism has come not only from the civilian sector but also from reform-oriented officers within the military community itself. The erosion of the traditional privileged status of the military was made especially clear by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's recent announcement that the Soviet Union intends to reduce the strength of its armed forces unilaterally by half a million men. The decision to make these reductions indicates a diminution of military influence even in the key area of national security policy, and its consequences appear to have left the military leadership in disarray.

Gorbachev's defeat of his political opponents at the plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU on September 30, 1988, appears to have set the scene for a new round of confrontation between the Party and military leaderships. A month later, in the course of a speech at a Komsomol rally, the general secretary carefully addressed the sensitive issues of troop reductions and changes in military draft regulations.<sup>1</sup> His pronouncements, though moderate, were important because they appeared to open the way for a wider-ranging discussion of these questions. Only a few days later, Colonel Aleksandr Savinkin had called for the transformation of the Soviet armed forces into a relatively small and mainly volunteer professional army, to be supported by a network of local militia

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, November 1, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup> *Pravda*, August 31, 1988.

<sup>11</sup> *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, September 9, 1988.

<sup>12</sup> *The New York Times*, September 21, 1988, *Pravda*, December 12, 1988.

<sup>13</sup> *Pravda*, December 12, 1988.



organizations.<sup>2</sup> Savinkin's extremely radical views on restructuring were supplemented by an equally interesting ideological framework. Contending that Lenin had supported the idea of a "professional-militia" army in the early 1920s, Savinkin argued that the massive reduction of the armed forces in 1924 (from 5 million to 562,000 men) had been based both on this Leninist norm and on a lessening of international tensions. In Savinkin's view, the policy subsequently adopted by Stalin was at variance with Lenin's original intentions and was ultimately responsible for the huge losses suffered by the Soviet armed forces in the early days of World War II. Savinkin's evocation of Lenin's ideas from the period of the New Economic Policy placed him squarely in the Gorbachev camp. Just as Gorbachev had himself drawn on this legacy to justify his call for radical political and economic reform, so Savinkin applied it to military restructuring.

### Force Reductions and Their Consequences

While Savinkin's recommendations may to some extent anticipate Gorbachev's ultimate vision of military restructuring, the general secretary's initiative at the United Nations has had more concrete and dramatic consequences. In the months preceding this speech, the military leadership had been unanimous in rejecting unilateral Soviet cuts in personnel and equipment vis-a-vis NATO forces. Asymmetries existed, it was said, but the overall correlation of forces in Europe represented approximate parity. The generals contended that any attempt to redress specific imbalances must be based on reciprocity.

Gorbachev's announcement of unilateral reductions in Soviet military strength clearly rocked the military leadership. The sudden retirement of the chief of the Soviet General Staff, Marshal Sergei Akhromeev, was in all probability a result of his objections to Gorbachev's decision. It was rumored that others in the military leadership were similarly opposed to the proposal and that Minister of Defense Dmitrii Yazov and Warsaw Pact commander Viktor Kulikov might also be removed from their posts.<sup>3</sup>

It is the General Staff, however, that stands to lose most as a result of Gorbachev's peace initiative. The central planning and directing organ of the Soviet armed forces, the General Staff is responsible for strategic planning and coordinates the various service branches. It occupies, in short, a preeminent position in the Soviet military estab-

lishment, and its responsibilities and influence surpass those of any comparable military body in the West. The retirement of Akhromeev and his subsequent replacement by the little-known Colonel General Mikhail Moiseev were, therefore, especially significant. Akhromeev had played a key role in recent Soviet-American arms-control negotiations and enjoyed a high reputation both in the Soviet armed forces and among foreign military experts. The forty-nine-year old Moiseev, on the other hand, had little arms-control experience and was promoted over the heads of a number of more senior officers.<sup>4</sup> Although a protégé of Defense Minister Yazov, Moiseev's lack of stature and experience will almost certainly result in a further diminution of the General Staff's influence on the political leadership, particularly in the area of arms control. As an outsider whose primary interests to date appear to have been cadres policy and the strengthening of military discipline, Moiseev's appointment may also be construed as a move by the political leadership to bring the prestigious and independent-minded General Staff to heel.

Developments since Moiseev's appointment seem to confirm this assessment. In the weeks following his promotion, a spate of articles by senior General Staff officers appeared in the Soviet press.<sup>5</sup> Their contents suggest that the Party has been conducting a campaign aimed at bringing recalcitrants within the General Staff into line with Gorbachev's latest arms-control initiative. Former opponents of unilateral force reductions within the General Staff seem to have been charged with the public defense of the new policy. Colonel General Vladimir Lobov, for example, a first deputy chief of the General Staff and once Akhromeev's heir apparent, has reversed himself entirely on the question of unilateral cuts since Moiseev's appointment.

Prior to Gorbachev's speech at the United Nations, Lobov had made his opposition to unilateral Soviet arms reductions very clear. At the end of August, 1988, for example, he had argued:

[The Soviet Union] withdrew 1,000 tanks and 20,000 soldiers from the GDR in 1980. This move remained without a response from the other side. Why should we repeat it now? Unilat-

eral measures only lead to a situation in which the aforementioned asymmetry is even more to our detriment.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, in two articles that appeared within days of Moiseev's appointment, Lobov was clearly supporting the force reductions. Unilateral cuts, he now claimed, demonstrated "in practical terms the unity of the political and military aspects of the Soviet Union's military doctrine."<sup>7</sup> This theme was echoed in articles by many other General Staff commentators and clearly reflected Gorbachev's desire to assure the West that military restructuring was not mere propaganda. Lobov stressed that the reductions would not be limited to obsolete equipment but would include recent models as well. The reductions would not, Lobov contended, have a negative impact on Soviet defense capabilities: "The armed forces possess, and will continue to possess, 'sufficient strength and means to protect the motherland against any encroachments.'"<sup>8</sup> As perhaps a final lesson in humility, Lobov also engaged in some public self-criticism:

As a professional soldier who has been in uniform his whole life, I ought, of course, to regret the reduction of divisions.... Isn't it clear: the larger the force, the easier it is to accomplish the task. Yes, so it was reasoned in my youth. And it was probably true. But how quickly the world around us is changing! And here we have become not only witnesses but active participants in the reversal from principles of high armament levels to those of reasonable sufficiency for defense.<sup>9</sup>

While the General Staff has apparently been brought into line on the issue of unilateral cuts, others in the military leadership seem to be less convinced. Marshal Kulikov, for example, who has long been looked upon as an opponent of reform, recently contended that the NATO and the Warsaw Pact forces were already in a state of relative parity.<sup>10</sup> The unilateral reductions announced by Gorbachev, he implied, would alter the military balance in favor of the Western alliance. Minister of Defense Yazov, while apparently voicing support for the current arms-control policy, nevertheless warned that "the process of disarmament and the movement

towards a nuclear-free and nonviolent world are still not irreversible and have encountered powerful resistance."<sup>11</sup>

### Domestic Military Restructuring

Concern about the course of domestic military restructuring has also reemerged recently as a major theme in the military press. At a Party conference held in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany at the end of December, Minister of Defense Yazov devoted virtually the whole of his speech to a delineation of shortcomings that needed to be overcome in this field. He charged that efforts to date "have not led to any appreciable improvement ... in the training of troops or in the strengthening of discipline."<sup>12</sup> He was particularly critical of the unreformed attitude taken by many commanders and, in a clear warning to them, lamented:

Unfortunately, we have not heard here of instances in which a Party organization has taken a Communist firmly to task for an irresponsible attitude towards his primary duty—being prepared for battle.<sup>13</sup>

The General Staff too has become a major target of criticism in this campaign. A General Staff Party conference held a few days later was marked by the abundance of criticism and self-criticism that took place among even the highest-ranking officers present.<sup>14</sup> With Moiseev in attendance, the proceedings appeared to confirm the Party's intention of reasserting control over the General Staff apparatus. While the political organs were indicted in particularly strong terms, the report indicated that criticism was directed at all levels of personnel. It was asserted that *perestroika* "has yet to become a general and natural quality of relations throughout the General Staff apparatus."<sup>15</sup> More ominously, particularly in view of Akhromeev's recent and unexpected departure, the participants were warned that "the dividing line between those who act in accordance with *perestroika* and those who reason about it abstractly is becoming increasingly clear."<sup>16</sup>

### Budgetary Stringency and Morale

In addition to the assault launched by Gorbachev on the military for reasons of political control, the generals are also under increased

<sup>2</sup> A. Savinkin, "Kakaya armiya nam nuzhna?" *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 45, 1988, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> See Milan Hauner and Alexander Rahr, RL 546/88, "New Chief of Soviet General Staff Appointed," December 16, 1988.

<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of Moiseev's background and the significance of his appointment to the General Staff, see Sergei Zamaschikov, "Virtual Unknown to Head General Staff," *Report on the USSR*, No. 3, 1989, pp. 14-17.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, V. Lobov in *Pravda*, December 17, 1988, p. 5, and *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 51, 1988, p. 5; Yu. Lebedev in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 23, 1988, p. 5; N. Chervov in *Trud*, December 22, 1988, p. 5; V. Kuklev in *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 28, 1988, p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> V. Lobov, as cited in *Magyar Hirlap*, August 31, 1988, pp. 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> *Pravda*, December 17, 1988.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 51, 1988, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> As cited in *Die Welt*, December 27, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 25, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 28, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*



pressure because of the Soviet Union's continuing economic woes. An editorial in *Izvestia* recently criticized the "irrational obsession with secrecy" that has hitherto prevailed in respect of military spending and claimed that even the generals do not know how much is spent on defense.<sup>17</sup> Lobov was himself derided for his apparent ignorance in this area. The author of the article, political commentator Stanislav Kondrashov, demanded in no uncertain terms both that the defense budget be made public and that in future military spending be subjected to public discussion.

The requirement that the Soviet military must now operate under conditions of greater budgetary stringency was made explicit in a recent speech by Gorbachev at a meeting with Soviet intellectuals. Claiming that "drastic measures" were needed to cut the Soviet budget deficit, Gorbachev said:

The question is so acute that we must also review expenditures on defense. A preliminary study shows that we could cut them without weakening our state's security or its defense potential.<sup>18</sup>

In the face of these pressures from the civilian sector, the military leadership must also contend with morale problems among its officers and enlisted men. The most serious issue to date is the proposed discharge of half a million personnel, a move that is as much a product of economic shortfalls as it is of foreign policy considerations. Concern about possible deactivation first manifested itself in October, 1988, during the initial stages of implementation of the INF agreement.<sup>19</sup> Gorbachev's subsequent announcement of unilateral force reductions has, not surprisingly, greatly increased anxiety within the military community. Aware of the disastrous effects that larger reductions had under Nikita Khrushchev, both the political and the military leaderships have handled the subject with the greatest care. A series of innocuous letters in *Krasnaya zvezda*, for example, addressed it in relatively benign terms.<sup>20</sup> Their publication appeared to be an effort by the military leadership to provide the officer corps with a controlled forum for venting its frustration.

Nearly every civilian and uniformed commentator who has discussed military questions since December 7, 1988, has taken great care to reassure servicemen—in particular, the officers—that those

who are discharged will be shown every consideration in rebuilding their lives. Yazov, for example, pledged to the officer corps that reductions will affect only those who have completed their terms of service,<sup>21</sup> while Lobov promised that:

not one officer, not one warrant officer, will be treated badly, neither materially nor spiritually. This is not simply my desire or hope. The General Staff has a clear plan of action.<sup>22</sup>

#### The Armed Forces and Society

Apart from these reactions to specific policy decisions, the military leadership has also been conducting a rearguard action in defense of the status of the armed forces in Soviet society. While complaints have been heard for years about the erosion of the "military-patriotic values" of young people, the problem does seem to have become more acute in recent months. There have been antimilitary protests in higher educational institutions all over the Soviet Union.<sup>23</sup> The students have been complaining primarily about the courses they are obliged to take in military-science departments and about the active service requirements that interrupt their education.

As antimilitarism has spread on college campuses in recent months, there has been a significant change in the military reaction to it. Whereas earlier appeals for changes in the draft laws were stonewalled by the military authorities,<sup>24</sup> the current policy appears to be one of accommodation. In response to student demands that the courses in the military-science departments be improved, a recent commentary agreed that "many of them [the students] are quite correct, their complaints are justified."<sup>25</sup> Regarding the draft laws, the author made a statement that would have been unthinkable even a year ago. He was certain that in the near future the armed forces would be able to maintain the requisite level of combat capability "without enlisting students for military service."<sup>26</sup>

The relatively flexible reaction in this particular instance may indicate a growing awareness among the military leadership of the complex situation it will face in the future. Gorbachev's incipient revolution is potentially a systemic

one, and the military establishment, which profited so handsomely under the old regime, could be the biggest loser under the new. In a society that is slowly becoming more open, the battle for the hearts and minds of the people will become an increasingly important consideration. Yazov appears to be cognizant of this fact. Referring to the plethora of social problems currently besetting the military community and the negative impact that they have had on the military's public image, the minister of defense stated:

Everyone must understand that this is a question of great political significance, a question of the army's prestige and of the faith that the

Soviet people have in it. And it is necessary to do everything possible to preserve and strengthen this faith.<sup>27</sup>

More than a month earlier, Savinkin had made this same point with greater clarity. "The strength of the army," he had asserted, "lies in the support of the people."<sup>28</sup> It would seem that, as long as Gorbachev's reforms continue to advance, the military will be restructured in accordance with the demands of the civilian leadership. Reform-minded officers like Savinkin can be expected to advance with it.

<sup>27</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 25, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Savinkin, *op. cit.*

(RL 84/89, February 7, 1989)

## FOREIGN POLICY

# Prospects for Future East-West Relations

Milan Hauner

On January 28, in its program "Studio 9," Soviet television broadcast a discussion between two Western elder statesmen and two Soviet experts on international relations. The participants were Yasuhiro Nakasone, prime minister of Japan from 1982 to 1987; Henry Kissinger, US secretary of state from 1969 to 1977; Valentin Falin, head of the CPSU Central Committee International Department; and Evgenii Primakov, director of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The discussion was moderated by Valentin Zorin, political observer on Soviet television and radio. Both Nakasone and Kissinger were in Moscow for talks with Soviet leaders as members of the Trilateral Commission. Created in 1973 by David Rockefeller, this commission is an international body consisting of about 300 distinguished public figures, mostly former politicians, in the non-Communist world.

#### Old Clichés Challenged

There are two reasons why this discussion, of which little notice was taken by foreign correspondents, qualifies as one of the most remarkable programs on East-West relations thus far to be broadcast from Moscow. First, Kissinger appeared in a quite different light from the one in which he is normally portrayed—as an incorrigible critic of

*perestroika*.<sup>1</sup> Second, the participation of a Japanese statesman conspicuously underlined the different priorities of non-Communist Asia, as represented in this case by its most dynamic nation, and of the Atlantic Community, as represented by Kissinger.

Between these two worlds lies Soviet Eurasia, which desires to become a bridge between the two but which lacks almost everything that could stimulate a brisk economic exchange. Deemphasizing the role of ideology—in particular, the promotion of international class war—has resulted in the granting of foreign credits to the Soviet Union but has not as yet changed—and, most likely, will not in the foreseeable future change—the socioeconomic pattern in this last colonial empire. Its only assets are its prerogatives as a military superpower, and these are regarded by Gorbachev and his more outspoken supporters as no longer relevant in today's world.

#### Global Interdependence in Year 2000

Asked by Zorin what factors would be determining East-West relations in the year 2000, Kissinger answered: "The predominant feature in both

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Gennadii Vasil'ev's article in *Pravda*, January 13, 1989. See also Henry Kissinger, *The Los Angeles Times*, January 18, 1989.

<sup>17</sup> *Izvestia*, January 3, 1989, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> As cited in *The Washington Post*, January 9, 1989, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> See Stephen Foye, RL 504/88, "New Developments in Military Restructuring," November 9, 1988, pp. 2-4.

<sup>20</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 15, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>21</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 25, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> *Moskovskie novosti*, No. 51, 1988, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 15, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>24</sup> See, for example, M. Gareev, *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 23, 1987, p. 11; D. Volkogonov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 22, 1987, p. 2.

<sup>25</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 15, 1988, p. 2.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*



economics and politics will be the growing interdependence of the world." Political problems, Kissinger insisted, could no longer be solved by traditional means such as wars, which would be catastrophic for all concerned, since there could be no winners. Global interdependence will be equally crucial in the sphere of economics. Kissinger said: "I was amazed to hear, during talks with your leaders, that they too now agree to be linked in some sort of system, a mutually beneficial system. I feel that it is precisely this that will become the predominant feature of the nineties."

Nakasone concentrated entirely on the economic aspects of the global East-West relationship. There could be no progress in economic integration without the ruble's becoming convertible, he interjected bluntly. He kept returning to the absence of a convertible ruble throughout the discussion, as if it had been the very symbol of poor Soviet-Japanese relations. The whole climate of the Soviet state was hostile to business. As a good example he cited, with the visible approval of Falin and Primakov, the total absence of such capitalist middlemen as stockbrokers. By contrast, he went on to say, in Japan "they play the role of hormones and vitamins in our economy."

#### Sharing Gorbachev's New Philosophical Concept

While Kissinger showed his enthusiasm for Gorbachev's speech at the United Nations, particularly for its philosophical message ("because it proposed an approach that obviously differed from the usual ones, different from all that was heard in the past"), Nakasone was skeptical. True, he said, Mr. Gorbachev's policy was impressive, progress had been achieved in certain aspects of arms reduction and in the solution of human-rights problems in Vienna; but these were, Nakasone reflected, to be viewed more as European problems. "We also want to develop civilization in the interests of all mankind," Nakasone declared, but the bridges are not yet being built "to achieve these great goals."

#### European Priorities versus Asian Priorities

On the one hand, Nakasone continued, there were problems of "European interrelations," such as human rights and attempts to improve cooperation between the EEC and Comecon, but from Japan's perspective, he averred, the priorities were different. Japan was concerned about the Korean peninsula, about Vietnam, and about a whole range of problems related to the development of economic cooperation between Japan

and the USSR. It would be good for Asia to create a situation similar to that established in Europe. "We are indeed able to create... a kind of an economic commonwealth," Nakasone concluded.<sup>2</sup>

While Nakasone paid a glowing tribute to Gorbachev's speech at the United Nations ("he earned the right to be called a pioneer of a new stage in world history"), he immediately expressed his uneasiness that, "from the Japanese point of view as an Asian country, there has been too great an emphasis on Europe in world politics, and somewhat less attention has been paid to Asian affairs." To substantiate his criticism, Nakasone said that even the reduction of Soviet troops in Asia by 200,000, which was announced by Gorbachev ten days earlier in the Kremlin<sup>3</sup> to the members of the Trilateral Commission, was not enough. It was not enough, he said, to remove Soviet troops from Mongolia; more radical cuts must be introduced in the whole Far Eastern region, and these should also include Soviet naval forces. Notwithstanding strong protests from the Soviet participants, Nakasone went on to say that, from the Japanese point of view, Vladivostok remained exclusively a naval base and had no economic or cultural significance whatever. Characteristically for the Soviet Union, the detailed figures on military strengths—"to the last officer and man," as Valentin Falin chose to put it—that were published in Moscow two days later related exclusively to the East-West balance in Europe, not in Asia.<sup>4</sup>

#### Future Course of US-Soviet Relations

Questioned by Zorin about the future development of US-Soviet relations, Kissinger understandably avoided a direct answer. He admitted, however, that he had participated in three very extensive conversations with the new president of the United States, George Bush, in the presence of the new Secretary of State, James Baker, and the new National Security

<sup>2</sup> It was impossible to decipher what term Nakasone, who was speaking in Japanese with an overlaid simultaneous Russian translation, used for this new "East Asian economic commonwealth." During the 1930s, Japanese expansionists had, of course, the concept of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere (*Dai Toa Kyoeiken*), to which they also applied the Buddhist symbol of "Eight Corners Under One Roof" (*Hakko Ichiu*).

<sup>3</sup> *Radio Moscow*, January 18, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> *Prauda*, January 30, 1989.

Adviser, Brent Scowcroft. "All of them, and especially the new president," Kissinger said, "adhere to the idea of introducing fundamental changes in the political relations between the Soviet Union and the United States." Until recently it had been arms control that dominated negotiations between the two superpowers—that is, essentially a technical

matter.<sup>5</sup> In future, Kissinger concluded, "we must work at reducing and eliminating political causes for the existence of these weapons."

<sup>5</sup> Henry Kissinger, "Observations on US-Soviet Relations," *The Heritage Foundation*, No. 174, 1988. See also *The Los Angeles Times*, February 5, 1989.

(RL 85/89, February 6, 1989)

## MILITARY

# New Commander in Chief for Warsaw Pact\*

Douglas Clarke

It has been announced in Moscow that Marshal Viktor Kulikov is stepping down as commander in chief of the Joint Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact, to be replaced by Army General Petr Lushev. Lushev will become only the fifth commander in chief in the thirty-four-year history of the Warsaw Pact. While his position is sometimes likened to that of NATO's Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, there are far more differences than similarities between these two jobs.

#### No Wartime Role For Lushev

Neither can be considered an operational military commander, at least in peacetime. Other than having control of air defense forces, neither has direct command over significant numbers of troops from day to day. The big difference is that this would change dramatically for the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe once war broke out, but probably not for Lushev. Most Western analysts believe that the Joint Command that Lushev now heads is a peacetime organization only. On the Soviet side, a war in Europe would be fought by different headquarters and staffs, principally the shadowy High Command of the Western Theater of Military Operations (*Teatr voennykh deistvii* or TVD), believed to be located in Legnica, Poland.<sup>1</sup>

\* This paper was first published as RAD Background Report/27, *Radio Free Europe Research*, February 15, 1989.

<sup>1</sup> Some people believe that at least the Soviet elements in the Joint Command would have a wartime role, perhaps as the basis of a higher command level placed between the TVDs and the Stavka of the Soviet Supreme

Soviet Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov headed this staff after he was replaced as Chief of the General Staff. He has since been succeeded by Army General Stanislav Postnikov. Officers commanding the various TVDs all but drop off the face of the earth as far as the public is concerned. Even in this the age of *glasnost*, their names seldom appear in the press, and never in a way that would identify their position. Ogarkov, who was a prolific author when chief of staff, was effectively muzzled as commander in chief of the Western TVD.

While the Joint Command would not be used in wartime, many of the forces that comprise the Combined Armed Forces of the Warsaw Pact would, of course, be used—especially the various Groups of Soviet Forces and many of the units of the non-Soviet members of the Warsaw Pact. These forces, however, would be under direct Soviet command, using channels outside the formal Joint Command structure. Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, who formerly headed the Operations Directorate of the Polish General Staff, has revealed that the Soviet Union has virtual control over the Polish Army. In wartime, the Polish armed forces would be placed under the command of the Soviet Western TVD.<sup>2</sup>

High Command. The Joint Command could command a European Theater of War that would guide the efforts of the three European TVDs. See Michael Sadykiewicz, *The Warsaw Pact Command Structure in Peace and War*, RAND Report R-3558-RC, Santa Monica, RAND, September, 1988, pp. 34-39.

<sup>2</sup> See Natalie Gross, *Eastern Europe and Soviet Coalition Warfare: Dilemmas of Analysis*, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, Soviet Army Studies Office, September, 1987, p. 18.



### Originally a Paper Command

The Joint Command that Lushev now heads is as old as the Warsaw Pact Treaty itself (both were founded on May 14, 1955), but for almost the entire first decade it was very much only a paper organization. The USSR was, and remains, so militarily and politically preponderant in Eastern Europe that it could dictate to its allies what was expected of them in military terms. Even the paper structure of the alliance's military wing crudely reflected this Soviet supremacy; the defense ministers of the non-Soviet partners in the alliance reported to a Soviet commander in chief, who was himself merely a deputy minister of defense in his own government.

The first challenge faced by the Warsaw Pact was an internal one: the Hungarian uprising in 1956. There was no involvement of the Joint Command—sometimes also referred to as the Combined Command—in the steps taken by the USSR to crush this rebellion. It was not until 1961 that armies of the Warsaw Pact held their first combined exercise. These exercises increased in both size and frequency and became an important means of molding the East European armed forces and their military doctrine into the Soviet image. They were also used to impress potential foes—NATO—and to put pressure on wayward allies.

### Czechoslovakia 1968

As the Prague Spring unfolded, the USSR utilized combined military exercises to put pressure on the Czechoslovak authorities. Ten joint exercises were held in 1968, either in areas of East Germany and Poland adjacent to the CSSR or in Czechoslovakia itself. Yet, when the invasion finally took place, the Joint Command was neither involved in the planning nor the execution, despite the participation of troops from all Warsaw Pact countries other than Romania. Likewise, the Warsaw Pact's formal political and military structure played no direct role during the Polish crisis of 1980-81. One Western study of the Warsaw Pact points out, however, that, of the 103 combined exercises conducted between 1968 and 1983, approximately 40 percent were used to exert political pressure on Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Poland.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey Simon, *Warsaw Pact Forces: Problems of Command and Control*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1985, p. 216.

In the last two decades the USSR has sought to increase some semblance of allied participation in security decisions. In 1969, the Combined Command was reorganized so that allied deputy defense ministers, rather than ministers themselves, became nominal deputy commanders of the Joint Armed Forces. This at least corrected the original oversight in protocol. A permanent Combined Staff was also created that provided for some allied participation, although not at the highest level.

### Only Soviets at the Top

Even today, all the top positions in the Joint Command hierarchy are held by Soviet officers. While the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe—an American—has both a German and a British four-star officer as his deputies and the major staff

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department heads are divided evenly between the nations, all the key positions in the Warsaw Pact Combined Command staff are, without exception, filled by Soviet officers.<sup>4</sup>

There are also no combined Warsaw Pact commands at lower levels. The Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, for example, has three major subordinate commanders in Europe, each with a combined staff and each responsible for defending a geographic region in Western Europe. One of these commanders is British, one American, and one German. These major commanders, in turn, have subordinate headquarters that are often also multinational. None of this integration exists in the Warsaw Pact.

All this is not to say that Lushev will not have plenty to do in his new position. The position of commander in chief of the Warsaw Pact is a very visible one. In his twelve-year tenure, Kulikov made an average of one visit a month to a non-Soviet Warsaw Pact country. The formal structure of the Eastern alliance has fallen into the same regular pattern as NATO, with frequent meetings of defense ministers, foreign ministers, and lower-level coordinating and consultative bodies. Most of these include the commander in chief. Like the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, he must also often cajole reluctant allied leaders to do more for the common defense. One sign of the changing times could be that he will probably no longer be too successful in this regard.

<sup>4</sup> Sadykiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

(RL 86/89, February 15, 1989)

REPORT ON THE USSR

## IN THE REPUBLICS

### NATIONALITIES

## Non-Russian National-Democratic Movements Adopt Charter and Issue Appeal to Russian Intelligentsia

Bohdan Nahaylo

On January 28 and 29, the fifth meeting of representatives of non-Russian national-democratic movements was held, this time in Vilnius. Eight national movements were represented: the Ukrainian, the Armenian, the Georgian, the Latvian, the Estonian, the Lithuanian, the Crimean Tatar, and, for the first time, the Belorussian. Although information about the meeting is still sketchy, the participants are known to have issued two important new documents: a "Freedom Charter of the Enslaved Nations of the USSR" and an appeal to the Russian intelligentsia.<sup>1</sup> Significantly, these materials are distinctly more radical in tone than the documents issued at the previous meetings of non-Russian national rights campaigners.

The Charter is addressed "To the Governments and Nations of the World." It opens with the announcement that the representatives of the "national-liberation" movements of Armenia, Belorussia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Estonia are setting up a joint committee to unite their efforts to establish free and independent national states. Declaring the existence of multinational empires to be an anachronism, the authors say they consider pluralism to be as much a fundamen-

tal principle in international relations as it is in the sphere of human rights. "Each nation," they maintain, "has the right to its own individual path of development," and it is unacceptable for nations to be forced to be part of an empire or even a federation or confederation. The authors appeal for political and moral support from the outside world and conclude by expressing their confidence that their nations will "find freedom," as well as their hope that this will be achieved "in the near future and by nonviolent methods."

At the previous meetings of activists of the non-Russian national movements,<sup>2</sup> the participants did not go so far as to demand political independence. At the last meeting, which was held in September, 1988, in Riga, the non-Russian activists limited themselves to calling for the political and economic decentralization of the USSR and the restoration of political self-government to the nations of the USSR.

The manifesto was signed by representatives of seven non-Russian nations. The signatories were Mekhak Gabrielyan of the "Association for the National Self-Determination of Armenia"; Vaan Ishkhanyan of the group "Struggle for the Survival of Armenia"; Merab Kostava of the Georgian "Society of Saint Ilia the Pious"; Taniel Gviniashvili of the Georgian "Ilia Chavchavadze Society"; Serzhuk Mekhames of the Belorussian informal group "Pahonya"; Stasys Buskevicius and Paulius

<sup>1</sup> The information in this paper about the meetings in Vilnius and Riga is based on reports obtained by telephone from several non-Russian activists and participants. These documents were subsequently translated and published by the *Ukrainian Press Agency* in London. See its press releases: "Non-Russian National Democratic Movements Adopt Charter," No. 19, 1989, and "Non-Russian National-Democratic Movements Send Letter to 'Russian Intelligentsia,'" No. 20, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> See Bohdan Nahaylo, RL 283/88, "Representatives of Non-Russian Movements Establish a Coordinating Committee," June 22, 1988, and RL 465/88, "Non-Russian National-Democratic Movements Hold Another Meeting," October 10, 1988.



Vaitiekunas of the "National Youth Association of Lithuania"; Lagle Parek and Ants Tindis of the Estonian "National Independence Party"; Algimantas Baltusis and Antanas Terleckas of the "Lithuanian Freedom League"; Ints Calitis of the Latvian "Informal People's Front"; Ivan Makar and Bohdan Hrytsai as representatives of "the pre-inaugural faction" of the "Ukrainian Helsinki Union"; and Reshat Dzhemilev on behalf of the Crimean Tatars.

The influence of several of the overtly pro-independence groups is apparent in the Charter. Some of the representatives at the meeting seem to have had reservations about signing such a radical statement. The "Ukrainian Helsinki Union," for example, adheres to the more moderate positions espoused by the popular fronts in the Baltic republics and has come out in favor of transforming the USSR into a loose confederation. The two members of the Coordinating Council of the "Ukrainian Helsinki Union" who were present at the meeting in Vilnius, Mykola Horbal' and Oles' Shevchenko, did not sign the Charter. Their signatures, as well as those of several other representatives of non-Russian groups who did not endorse the Charter, do, however, appear at the bottom of the "Appeal to the Russian Intelligentsia."

The second document is in fact just as forthright and uncompromising in tone as the Charter. The authors begin by asserting that the Soviet state finds itself in a deep imperial crisis. They accuse it of having continued the chauvinistic and assimilationist policies towards the non-Russians that were pursued under the tsars and of having relied on fear and force to keep the empire together. Today, they claim, the USSR is the last empire in the world where great-power chauvinism, assimilation, and the subjugation of the peoples in question feature so prominently. They see these policies and the unequal relationship between the Russian "ruling nation" and the non-Russians as the reason for Moscow's present predicament.

Addressing the Russian intelligentsia, the non-Russians state:

Not only the oppressed nations suffered great casualties, but also the Russian nation, which is an instrument of oppression and a means of assimilation in the hands of the regime. Attempts on the part of the great-power leadership of the USSR to preserve for the ruling Russian nation the system of national subjugation will only lead to a sharpening of nationality relations and to an inflammation of enmity and hatred. In connection with this, we, representatives of the national-democratic movements of

nations living on the territory of the Soviet Union, consider that the time has come when promises have to be kept. The right of nations to self-determination that the Communist Party has been proclaiming since its very inception must become a reality.

Here, the non-Russians repeat a complaint they made at an earlier meeting in Lvov last June—namely, that "many of the activists of the Russian democratic opposition have not yet grasped the primary axiom of democracy: nations cannot be free if they oppress others or if they serve as instruments of such oppression." This time, the non-Russians go further, declaring:

We are astonished that, apart from a few exceptions among the representatives of Russia's democratic movement, the Russian intelligentsia as a whole has not found the courage to express itself clearly on the nationality question, to condemn the dictatorship of spiritual oppression maintained by the Russian-Soviet government as a crime against humanity.

In the opinion of the authors of the Appeal, the present crisis in the Soviet empire is so serious that things cannot be allowed to continue as before. A break has to be made with the past, and the non-Russians must be offered a new deal. The Russians themselves, the authors suggest, should renounce their imperial ambitions and apply themselves to promoting the national renewal of Russia. As the non-Russian representatives put it,

the time has come, and the system has collapsed. The new structure has to be built on a new basis. We propose that it be built on the basis of national sovereignty and independence and also on the basis of democratic, nonviolent principles. We call on genuine Russian patriots—including those who are based beyond the borders of Russia and who feel the need to return to it—to begin actively, decisively, and selflessly the construction of their own democratic national state. In realizing this aspiration, you can always depend on a very supportive attitude from us. . . . We express the hope that the Russian intelligentsia, the Russian democratic movement, and all Russian patriots will support the idea of national independence, which is recognized by the entire international community.

The authors are quite correct in pointing out that so far only a few Russian intellectuals have come out openly in support of breaking up the Soviet empire or even of transforming it into a

confederation.<sup>3</sup> The only appeal on record up to now that has been addressed by Russian intellectuals to their non-Russian counterparts concerning the nationality question shows how great a gap still separates the two sides' ideas as to what constitutes the essence of the nationality problem and what the remedies should be. Issued in December by a group of Russian scholars and cultural workers and published in *Literaturnaya Rossiya* on January 6, the statement calls on non-Russians to combat "anti-Russian attitudes" and "the myth of forcible Russification" and to "strengthen our internationalist brotherhood" and the joint "Socialist Fatherland."

It is worth noting that, on the same weekend that the meeting of non-Russian activists took place in Vilnius, the unofficial "Democratic Union of the Soviet Union" held its second all-Union congress in Riga. It was attended by 135 delegates from thirty-two cities and by thirty-five guests. This meeting also discussed the nationality question and adopted several resolutions, including ones condemning Moscow's "military intervention" in Armenia and the continuing Soviet "occu-

<sup>3</sup> See Bohdan Nahaylo, RL 456/88, "Change in Russian Views on the Nationality Problem?" October 2, 1988.

## UKRAINE

# Chernobyl' Area Declared Unfit for Permanent Habitation

David Marples

In October, 1988, an article in *Pravda* disputed the contention of the "Kombinat" production association, which is in charge of the decontamination effort in the area of fallout from the nuclear disaster at Chernobyl' in 1986, that the city of Chernobyl' itself might have to be razed to the ground.<sup>1</sup> Three months later, a new analysis by the general director of "Kombinat" strongly suggests that the initial prognosis may have been justified. Despite couching his responses to questions from the Novosti press agency in conciliatory and mild language, the new general director of "Kombinat," Mikhail Sedov, outlines a situation that gives cause

<sup>1</sup> See David Marples, RL 503/88, "The Future of the Chernobyl' Nuclear Power Plant," November 4, 1988.

pation" of the Baltic republics and expressing support for the restoration of an autonomous Crimean Tatar state. Interestingly enough, the Siberian delegate called for political autonomy for Siberia.

In short, then, it can be seen that radicalization is taking place among dissidents concerned with the nationality question who are forced to operate on the fringes of legality. This might be partly because of the Gorbachev leadership's long delay in addressing the nationality question and partly because of some of the moves Moscow has made in recent months that have had the effect of limiting rather than broadening the rights of the non-Russian republics. With a special Central Committee plenum to review nationality policy announced for sometime this summer, it is becoming all the more important for the Soviet leadership to take account of the views of those non-Russian national rights campaigners who are still prepared to work towards reforming, rather than dismantling, existing structures. A failure at this stage to go some way towards meeting the demands of the more moderate non-Russian forces will probably only strengthen the radical wings of the non-Russian national movements and cement the common front that they are currently forming.

(RL 87/89, February 5, 1989)

for concern and is certain to be seized upon by those increasingly vociferous sectors of Ukrainian society that believe the Chernobyl' plant should be shut down, together with its Chigirin, Crimean, and South Ukraine counterparts.<sup>2</sup>

Sedov begins by maintaining that, contrary to rumors, there are no secret plans to destroy the ancient city of Chernobyl'. He notes that twelve old residential buildings have been pulled down, and a further forty-two of 2,278 buildings are to follow, largely because of their radiation contamination, sanitary or fire hazards, and other problems. Fire is a particular risk because radiation could be spread by smoke. The central streets of

<sup>2</sup> *Molod' Ukrainy*, January 17, 1989.



Chernobyl' are said to have been decontaminated, together with residential and administrative buildings and markets. The city's infrastructure, he declares, has not only been restored but considerably renovated.

This is not to say, however, that there is any possibility of residents' being able to return in the near future. There are still areas in Chernobyl', Sedov says, where radiation is ten to fifteen times the permissible level. Furthermore, the effect on people's health of long-term radionuclides such as plutonium, strontium, and cesium remains uncertain. In the area to the north of the nuclear plant, he states, the mobility of these radionuclides into the natural environment has increased, and agricultural and animal products in this territory will be unfit for consumption for a number of years.

Although shiftworkers continue to enter the 30-kilometer zone around the damaged reactor, residence there is highly dangerous. The Novosti correspondent raises the question of former residents who have returned "illegally" to their homes. Sedov admits that about 1,000 persons are currently living in the zone and that they have come back "of their own free will." These people are said to be ignorant of the dangers of radiation and scornful of its possible effects upon their health. In the past, references to them have emphasized that they are elderly, but this seems to be only partly true. Even if they are, they are visited regularly by relatives, and there were apparently some sixty children in the villages at various times during the summer of 1988.

Prevailing conditions make any return to a normal pattern of life impossible, says Sedov. In the village of Opachychi, which has 103 residents, radioactive contamination on clothing and other objects is said to be two to three times the permissible level for people working shifts at the nuclear plant. Sedov may even be referring here to the much higher norms for those engaged on cleanup work, which are stated to be as much as 25 rems per worker.<sup>3</sup> Drinking water from wells in such villages as Opachychi, Ilintsi, and Kupuvate shows levels of contamination that are considerably in excess of the approved medical limits. And even if these villages can be decontaminated, there is the problem of secondary radiation in areas that have already been cleaned up.

Sedov mentions a meeting held in Chernobyl' in October, 1988, to discuss whether it was acceptable to have people living and farming in the zone.

<sup>3</sup> In *Chernobyl': Segodnya i zavtra* (Kiev, 1988, p. 41), A. P. Kovalenko and A. A. Karasyuk note that 25 rems is the maximum permissible radiation dose for those involved in the "liquidation" of the accident's consequences.

Although a number of villages had been resettled and farming resumed in various parts of the zone, the meeting concluded that resettlement was undesirable and those who had returned should be asked to leave. In the zone around the nuclear plant, all types of activity other than research and a minimal amount of experimental farming should be prohibited. "Science has declared" that it will be impossible to live here permanently for a long time.

Even experimental use of the land brings problems because when the soil has been plowed it has been virtually impossible to prevent the spread of dust and, as a result, secondary radiation has contaminated sections that have already been cleaned up once. Moreover, any secondary plowing of the soil leads to a worsening of the situation as biochemical processes are activated. The general director of "Kombinat" concludes by stressing once more the relatively open policy adopted by the authorities at Chernobyl' and the availability of information about the zone, citing the recently issued brochure *Chernobyl': Today and Tomorrow*, all the details provided in the "Kombinat" workers' newspaper *Trudovaya vakhita*, and the telephone information service provided by "Kombinat" at the cleanup site.

The most significant aspect of the interview, the tone of which is remarkably sober, is that it refutes so many previous optimistic official statements about the situation at Chernobyl'. There is an apparent contradiction between earlier reports of the number of people who have returned to their homes and Sedov's figure of 1,000.<sup>4</sup> He may, however, be referring only to villages in the so-called special zone—i.e., within a radius of ten kilometers around the reactor. Despite the frankness of the interview, there is no mention of the most startling revelation contained in *Chernobyl': Today and Tomorrow*—namely, that the concrete mantle encasing the damaged reactor is no longer regarded as a permanent solution, being expected to last only as long as the average lifespan of a reactor—thirty to forty years. The authors of the brochure, one of whom wrote up the interview with Sedov, state that a final solution to the problem of sealing the reactor has still to be found.

Finally, Soviet scientists are likely to be concerned about the prevalence of the plutonium isotope noted by Sedov. It has generally not been considered a serious danger in scientific accounts of the fallout, and it would be interesting

<sup>4</sup> At the end of 1986, for example, it was reported that twelve villages on the Belorussian side of the thirty-kilometer zone, with a total population of 1,500, had already been legally resettled (*Izvestia*, January 17, 1987).

to know its real significance. Added to the grim account outlined above, it could spell the end of any hopes for future habitation of the Chernobyl' area, farming in this region, and, ultimately,

the nuclear plant itself, where shiftworkers are having to deal with the hazardous surroundings on a daily basis.

(RL 88/89, February 6, 1989)

## ECONOMY

# Uzbeks Requesting Further Reduction of Cotton Target

Ann Sheehy

Uzbekistan is to request a further reduction of the target set for its major crop, cotton. The reduction envisaged is relatively small, however, and is unlikely to satisfy the writers and others who have attributed most, if not all, of the ills afflicting the republic to cotton monoculture.

The decision to ask Moscow to agree to a reduction of Uzbekistan's cotton target was announced by Uzbek Party First Secretary Rafik Nishanov at a meeting in the Uzbek Central Committee on January 21 devoted to problems of the development of the agroindustrial complex. Significantly, not only Party and government officials, agricultural specialists, and farm heads were invited to take part in the meeting but writers and journalists as well. Indeed, the report on the meeting leaves the impression that it was called mainly to get the "anticotton" lobby to moderate its stand.<sup>1</sup>

Articles arguing that the root cause of all the ills in Uzbekistan lies in the undue specialization of the republic's economy in cotton have been appearing in the central and republican press for two years now. The pressure from Moscow for an increase in the production of cotton and fulfillment of the cotton plan at any price is seen as having created the conditions that gave rise to massive falsification of the plan results and widespread corruption. Other consequences were the bringing of land under cultivation before drainage systems had been laid; excessive use of the waters of the Syrdarya and Amudarya for irrigation, leading to the drying up of the Aral Sea; and serious damage to the health of the rural population from the wholesale application of toxic agricultural chemicals.

The authorities have recognized the existence of the problems caused by cotton monoculture and acknowledged the need to reduce the acreage under

cotton so that the irrigation systems can be reconstructed and proper crop rotation introduced. They are also acutely aware that the republic needs to grow more food to feed its rapidly expanding population. Moscow is not willing, however, at this juncture, to countenance a major reduction of the Soviet cotton crop (two thirds of which is grown in Uzbekistan), as this would deprive it of useful foreign currency earnings as well as disrupt the economies of the countries of Eastern Europe, which depend on the Soviet Union for their cotton supplies. As early as April last year, therefore, both the Uzbek Party first secretary, Nishanov, and the ideological secretary of the Uzbek Central Committee, Mutal Khalmukhamedov, were condemning anticotton views.<sup>2</sup>

Their strictures seem to have fallen largely on deaf ears. All four Uzbek literary figures who made oral or written presentations to the plenum of the board of the USSR Union of Writers on ecology held on January 17-19, 1989, inveighed against cotton monoculture. Adyl Yaqubov, the head of the Uzbek Writers' Union, stated:

All our troubles are connected with the domination of monoculture. . . . In the past thirty years, cotton has become the almighty deity to whom innumerable offerings are made. This deity was the main reason for the destruction of the Aral, since, suffering from unquenchable thirst, it drank up to the last gulp all the waters of our two great Central Asian rivers. To the great misfortune of our people, it—this deity named monoculture—turned out to have an insatiable appetite for toxic chemicals. In the fall of last year . . . prominent Russian scholars and

<sup>2</sup> See Ann Sheehy, RL 209/88, "Cultivation of Cotton to Remain 'Internationalist Duty' of Uzbekistan," May 18, 1988.

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, January 24, 1989.



writers openly expressed the idea that it was necessary to take at least part of the burden from the shoulders of the Uzbek peasant and to turn our land of plenty into an enormous, flourishing orchard for the country. And we, Uzbek writers, are convinced that this orchard will produce so much fruit and so much profit that it will cover many times the income received today from cotton.

The poet Muhammad Salih was even more eloquent on the subject. He complained that before the revolution a peasant could buy a cow for one kilogram of cotton, whereas today he got only enough to buy fifteen boxes of matches. He described cotton monoculture as an octopus that holds in its tentacles not only the material life of the peasant but also his consciousness. Under the tsar, he continued,

we exported to Russia all the cotton in the form of raw material, and this structure of the economy was called colonial. Today we export ten times as much of this raw material, and we do not know what to call this structure. It is time finally to recognize that the so-called cotton independence [of the Soviet Union] keeps a whole people dependent on cotton. The government of the republic knows this well. We expected it to talk about this at the extraordinary session of the USSR Supreme Soviet [at the end of 1988]. But it did not.

A third writer, Timur Pulatov, said that the program of the unofficial Birlik (Unity) movement that is beginning to gather strength in the republic is to rid the population of cotton monoculture.<sup>3</sup>

The meeting in the Uzbek Central Committee, at which Nishanov announced that the Uzbek Party and government were drawing up proposals for a reduction of the republic's cotton target, took place only two days after the plenum in Moscow. Nishanov seemed eager to demonstrate that the Uzbek authorities had not been unmindful of the interests of the republic in the recent past. He pointed out that they had already asked the central authorities twice for the target to be lowered. In 1985 they succeeded in getting the target for the Twelfth Five-Year Plan (1986-90) down from 6,250,000 to 5,750,000 tons, and in 1987 they requested a further drop of 750,000 tons but achieved only one of 500,000. Now, said Nishanov, they were asking for the plan to be reduced by another 250,000 to 300,000 tons and for it to stay at 5 million tons for one or two five-year plan periods—that is, for five to ten years. In fact, the

republic has rarely achieved a larger harvest, though it did manage to gather 5,300,000 tons in 1988.

Nishanov stated that the reduction was necessary so that more food could be grown, proper crop rotation ensured, and land improvement measures implemented. Per capita consumption of meat, milk, vegetables, and fruit in the republic was little more than half the all-Union average. (Elsewhere it has been stated that annual per capita meat consumption in the rural areas of Uzbekistan is eight kilograms, compared with the Soviet average of sixty-two kilograms.) The aim was to have cotton occupying no more than 60 percent of arable land (compared with the present 75 percent), Nishanov said. At the same time, indirectly rejecting assertions that cotton was an unprofitable crop for the farmers, he argued that, if its cultivation was properly organized, it was more profitable than other crops. "Suggestions that have been made about reducing the production of raw cotton to 4 million or even 3 million tons," he maintained, "are not justified from either the agrotechnical or the economic point of view. That could lead to an unbalancing of the development of the republic's and the country's economy."

Nishanov devoted the latter part of his speech to rejecting accusations that the republican leadership was trying to muzzle democracy and *glasnost*. He appealed for a calm, businesslike approach to problems instead of "endless exaggeration (*musstirovanie*), in sensational tones, of distorted facts and of information about the shortcomings in our development that Party documents speak about quite openly and honestly."

If the Uzbek authorities succeed in persuading Moscow to lower the republic's cotton target to 5 million tons for several years to come, this will undoubtedly be better than nothing and should allow some reduction of the acreage sown to cotton. There are those, however, who are still arguing that the target is too high. Only five days after the meeting in the Uzbek Central Committee, M. Mukhamedzhanov, an academician of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences, was calling for a lowering of the target to 4-4.2 million tons in 1989-90. He maintained that cotton had slowly but surely brought the economy of Uzbekistan's agro-industrial complex to the verge of bankruptcy. A reduction of cotton sowings, he went on to say, is

the only possibility of getting cotton-growing out of a lengthy crisis. The leaders of USSR Gosplan and Gosagroprom

<sup>4</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, January 26, 1989, and *Argumenty i fakty*, No. 3, 1989.

understand that this is an objective necessity, but they try in every way to impose their will on the republic's ministries and departments and are not willing to relieve the republic of the excessive tribute (*obrok*) of cotton, obtained at the cost of irreplaceable losses. Narrowly departmental interests are, moreover, hypocritically masked by all-state ones. Often the republican organs of administration, the agro-industrial complex, and the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR go along with "the center."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, January 26, 1989.

## CENTRAL ASIA

# Uzbek Students Call for Uzbek to Be Made the Republican State Language

Timur Kocaoglu

On December 3, 1988, around 600 students of Tashkent State University held an unofficial Uzbek language festival on the university campus. During the meeting, signatures were collected for a petition addressed to the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee demanding that Uzbek be proclaimed the state language of the Uzbek SSR. Several banners displayed at the meeting were inscribed with slogans such as "our language and heritage should not be turned into a cemetery." One of the more prominent banners displayed the three stages that the Uzbek alphabet has gone through during the Soviet period—Arabic, Latin, and Cyrillic—on a background of green. Officials of Komsomol committees and other organizations were present at the meeting, but only as bystanders. The meeting had no official backing.

The only report available in the West concerning the Uzbek language festival and the petition on the status of the Uzbek language is an article published in the Uzbek-language Komsomol organ *Yash Leninchi* on January 13. This is an Uzbek translation of an article that appeared, probably in early December, in the local Russian-language newspaper *Tashkentskaya pravda*. According to the introduction to the *Yash Leninchi* article, members of the newspaper's editorial board held a meeting with students of Tashkent State University

The republican authorities clearly find themselves in a difficult position, caught between Moscow's demands and the strong opposition in the republic to the continuing dominance of cotton in the economy. At present, they appear to be siding more with Moscow, maintaining that Uzbekistan can overcome the ills afflicting cotton-growing, continue to produce large cotton crops that will be profitable for the farmers, and at the same time increase food production. At best, however, this is going to be difficult, and it is hard not to avoid the conclusion that Uzbekistan is being asked to pay rather a heavy price for what Moscow sees as the overriding interests of the country as a whole.

(RL 89/89, February 6, 1989)

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on December 21, at which the students asked why *Yash Leninchi* had not published any information on the language festival. The January 13 article was published in response to that meeting.<sup>1</sup>

The article quoted excerpts from interviews with several students, including the organizers of the unofficial festival, Gulnaza Ernazarova and Rustam Musurmanov. The interviews disclosed that, after conceiving the idea of holding an Uzbek language festival, several of the students presented the outline of a program for the festival to the Komsomol committees of Tashkent State University and Tashkent Polytechnical Institute in early November. These official youth organizations and the local Communist Party, however, did not take kindly to this student initiative and tried to have the festival postponed. Finally the raion executive committee gave permission for the Uzbek language festival to be held on the afternoon of December 3, 1988, on an open playing field attached to the university. On the appointed day, though, students were told by the authorities that they could not use the place designated, because it had been assigned to another group. The students had no choice but to hold the festival on another university football field.

<sup>1</sup> *Yash Leninchi*, January 13, 1989, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 4, 1989.



According to the *Yash Leninchi* account, some 600 people assembled for the Uzbek language festival, including Party, government, and Komsomol officials, who "watched the festival from a distance." The students read poems about the mother tongue and performed short excerpts from plays on this topic. Signatures were then collected for a petition addressed to the Uzbekistan Communist Party Central Committee calling for Uzbek to be proclaimed the state language of the Uzbek SSR. The text of the petition was read at the end of the gathering. One of the petition's articles proposed designating the birthday of the Central Asian poet Alisher Navai on February 9 as "Mother-tongue Day" in Uzbekistan. A female student explained the reasons for holding such a festival:

We have conceived this festival as the first step in the popularization of the Uzbek language. Our language needs this now more than ever. Sharaf Rashidov once proclaimed Russian as "our second mother tongue." The result of this is that the native people of Uzbekistan do not know Russian well, and Uzbek is becoming "a language spoken only in the home." There cannot be a first and second mother tongue. There can only be one.

The author of the article inquired sarcastically whether it was a coincidence that the central banner hanging in front of the stage was green—

## ISLAM

# Soviet Muslims Demonstrate in Tashkent

Annette Bohr

Hundreds of Soviet Muslims took to the streets of Tashkent on Friday, February 3, demanding the removal of Mufti Shamsutdinkhan ibn Ziyautdinkhan ibn Ishan Babakhan, the leading representative of official Islam in the Soviet Union.<sup>1</sup> The demonstration, which a Western source reported was staged by the informal group "Islam and Democracy,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Official estimates placed the number of demonstrators at "more than 200", while the *The New York Times* said unofficial sources put the figure at about 500. TASS, February 4, 1989, and *The New York Times*, February 6, 1989.

<sup>2</sup> *The New York Times*, February 6, 1989.

the color of Islam. He also expressed astonishment that the *fatiha* (an indispensable component of the prayer ritual) was recited following the reading of the petition.

Several Central Asian intellectuals have recently called for the promotion of their mother tongues to the status of state language of their respective republics.<sup>3</sup> It now seems that Central Asian students have decided to follow this lead by trying to harness public opinion in support of this demand.

A few weeks after the publication of the report in *Yash Leninchi*, the authorities showed some signs of willingness to compromise on the language issue. In a speech that he delivered on February 2, Uzbek Communist Party Central Committee First Secretary Rafik Nishanov announced that the question had been passed for consideration to the Central Committee's Ideological Committee.<sup>3</sup> According to Nishanov, a working group within the Ideological Committee is in favor of the proclamation of both Russian and Uzbek as state languages. This group is headed by Uzbek Academician Erkin Yusupov.

<sup>2</sup> See *RFE/RL Special*, "Central Asian Intellectuals Push for the State Language Status of Mother Tongues," December 22, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> *Sovet Ozbekistani*, February 3, 1989, p. 2.  
(RL 90/89, February 7, 1989)

began after Friday prayer services at the city's Tilla-Sheikh Mosque. Blocking traffic but avoiding conflict with the police, the demonstrators marched into the center of the city calling for government intervention to expedite the head mufti's replacement. On February 6, an emergency session of the presidium of the Muslim Religious Board for Central Asia and Kazakhstan (MBRCAK) accepted the "voluntary abdication" of Babakhan as its chairman and unanimously confirmed Muhammadsadyk Mamayusupov, rector of the Imam al-Bukhari Islamic Institute in Tashkent, as acting chairman until a successor is formally elected at a congress in April. Moscow confirmed the decision

the next day.<sup>3</sup> The mass demonstration was an unprecedented act on the part of Soviet Muslims to challenge the authority of their state-sanctioned official administration. Attempts by Soviet authorities to circumscribe Islam within a delimited official establishment have long promoted the unbounded growth of unofficial religious activity, but rarely, if ever, has this "passive resistance" been transformed into direct political protest against official policy and managed to achieve such rapid results.

The group "Islam and Democracy," based in Alma-Ata, apparently gathered protesters from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to join in the rally in Tashkent, the site of the MBRCAK's headquarters. Judging by its charter,<sup>4</sup> the informal group espouses the fundamentalist ideal of "acting within the strictly established framework of the commandments of the Koran." It professes its "main tactical principle" to be the "spiritual cleansing of people from immorality and the preaching of the democratic principles of the Koran." To this end, the charter states further, "the movement 'Islam and Democracy' does not reject but, on the contrary, welcomes the participation in our movement of the clerics of the Muslim mosques"—i.e., members of the official Islamic establishment.

To judge by its declaration, members of "Islam and Democracy" do not appear content to stand aloof from government affairs, since "Islam calls for the joining of religion and state into a democratic form of people's power." Indeed, a group of twenty-five of the demonstrators managed to voice their grievances to Gairat Kadyrov, chairman of the Uzbek Council of Ministers, who told them that their complaints were outside the domain of government. TASS reported, however, that the demands of the group were transmitted to the Muslim Religious Board via the Tashkent representative of the Council for Religious Affairs, which is attached to the USSR Council of Ministers in Moscow. More than six months ago, in a remark that now hits all too close to home, Babakhan condemned the violations of the principle of separation of church and state made by this government body. He said:

In several oblasts and cities in Uzbekistan the representatives of the Council for Religious Affairs in the provinces remove and

<sup>3</sup> APN, February 7, 1989 and *The Financial Times*, February 8, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Copies of the informal group's charter (*ustav*), its declaration, and a short commentary were received in Moscow by the independent journal *Glasnost'*, which is edited by Sergei Grigoryants, in October, 1988, and have reached the West.

appoint clerics without our consent and without considering that the appointment of an imam is considered to be a purely religious act.<sup>5</sup>

Although Kadyrov claimed the government had not intervened, it seems more likely that the members of MBRCAK's presidium acted on Moscow's orders and exerted pressure on Babakhan to step down from his post, thereby nipping in the bud any further unrest on this score.

There is not much question that many Muslims regarded Babakhan as a puppet of the state who had done strikingly little towards using *perestroika* to advance the rights of believers. Western sources reported that demonstrators denounced Babakhan's alleged penchant for wine and women, with one protestor reported to have said that "his behavior was not right for a church leader."<sup>6</sup> Following Babakhan's removal, a senior official of the Council for Religious Affairs, Grey Utorbaev, announced that since the inception of *glasnost'* many Muslims had severely criticized the chairman for paying little attention to such matters as the opening of new mosques and the expansion of the country's only two training establishments for Islamic religious functionaries.<sup>7</sup>

To be sure, despite the many Soviet press articles that laud the benefits that *perestroika* has ostensibly brought to the USSR's Muslims, very little has been done to expand religious freedom. True, Soviet journalists can now publish interviews with members of the official Islamic establishment,<sup>8</sup> and a celebration this year of the bicentenary of the Muslim Religious Board for European Russia and Siberia has been promised.<sup>9</sup> But the "dozens" of mosques that are now being opened do not, by any stretch of the imagination, come close to meeting the demand for them; the number of "working" mosques is at present just over one percent of the prerevolutionary figure.

Many Soviet officials have begun to consider the advantages of opening new mosques and registering "clandestine" ones in order to put illegal activity under official control. Likewise, official Muslim clerics who are concerned that Islam in the Soviet Union is degenerating into Shamanism and superstition for lack of informed guidance are also eager

<sup>5</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, June 26, 1988.

<sup>6</sup> *The Financial Times*, February 8, 1989.

<sup>7</sup> APN, February 7, 1989.

<sup>8</sup> See John Soper, RL 265/88, "Muslim Leaders Interviewed in the Soviet Press," June 15, 1988, and *Kirgizstan madaniyati*, January 5, 1989. *Ogonek* has promised an interview with the head of the Muslim Religious Board for Transcaucasia in an upcoming issue.

<sup>9</sup> APN, September 1, 1988.



to witness an expansion of the official administration. Against this dire portrait of the state of official Islam, Babakhan's most time-consuming endeavor during his tenure as chairman seems to have been acting out his role as the government's official Islamic spokesman to foreign countries, and specifically, attempting to enhance Moscow's desired image in the outside world—and in the Muslim world in particular—as “a friend of Islam.”

The removal of the head mufti of the MRBCAK was, like the religious demonstration that preceded it, an unprecedented event. Babakhan's departure also saw the end of a mini-dynasty that has governed the MRBCAK since its inception in 1943. His grandfather, Mufti Ishan Babakhan, was the first chairman of the MRBCAK and his father, Ziyautdinkhan, became the second chairman after Mufti Ishan's death in 1957 at the age of ninety-seven. The graves of both are appropriately located within the grounds of the religious board and the adjoining Imam al-Bukhari Institute. Shamsutdinkhan's familial ties probably played no small role in his election to the position of chairman in 1982, especially since he was chosen over his father's two deputies.<sup>10</sup> The election of the new chairman in April will have special significance since the MRBCAK is the most important of the USSR's four Muslim Religious Boards and has jurisdiction over approximately 75 percent of the country's Muslims.

The reaction of the official media to the events of the past week serve as yet another reminder of the relative lack of “openness” as regards Central Asian affairs. Only after Babakhan's removal did Novosti admit that the demonstrations were in any way connected with the sudden change of leadership at the MRBCAK. When Radio Liberty queried the main republican newspaper *Pravda Vostoka* about the events, a representative of the paper responded that “our paper is not occupied with this question.”<sup>11</sup> Attempts by an editor of the Moscow-

based independent journal *Glasnost'*, Dmitrii Volchek, to extract information from a representative of the MRBCAK proved equally unfruitful. As Volchek reported:

I tried to provoke [the representative] with leading questions about the possible reasons for the removal of the mufti, but he was on his guard. “Have you read the TASS report?” he asked. “Everything is stated there.” ....But sometimes by saying nothing you can say an awful lot, and in the end both he and I knew the answers to many questions. “You understand,” he said, “that I can't tell you anything?” “Yes,” I replied, “of course I understand.”<sup>12</sup>

Despite its lack of interest in the question, two days after the demonstration *Pravda Vostoka* published a sketchy report to assure the public that “the slogans of the crowd had an exclusively religious character.”<sup>13</sup> Oddly enough, the demonstration's “exclusively religious character” may well have brought relief to a public that has been inundated lately with reports of bloody inter-ethnic conflicts, occurring both inside and outside Uzbekistan.

On New Year's Day, Afghan students attending police-training courses in Tashkent clashed with the local population, resulting in four deaths and several casualties. Furthermore, a recent brawl involving 300 students at a dormitory of the Tashkent Geological-Survey Technical Institute, while not necessarily involving inter-ethnic tensions, resulted in bloodshed and material damage.<sup>14</sup> So, while a religious demonstration may seem mild by comparison, such hard evidence of the current resurgence of Islamic consciousness, especially when coupled with the trend toward national renewal, may eventually make Moscow long for the good old days of “stagnation.”

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Radio Liberty, February 8, 1989.

<sup>13</sup> Cited in *The New York Times*, February 6, 1989.

<sup>14</sup> *Pravda Vostoka*, December 28, 1988.

(RL 91/89, February 10, 1989)

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## SPOTLIGHT ON MOLDAVIA

### LANGUAGE POLICY

## Soviet Moldavia: History Catches Up and a “Separate Language” Disappears

Jonathan Eyal\*

What is today the Moldavian SSR (also known as Bessarabia following its annexation by Russia in 1812) was part of Moldavia, one of the Danubian principalities inhabited mainly by Romanians. Passing under Russian control, it ultimately became a backwater of the Empire.<sup>1</sup> After the Russian Revolution, Bessarabia joined Romania in 1918 through an act of union which, although hotly disputed by historians, still appears to have represented the will of the majority of the local population.<sup>2</sup> One of the major aims of Romanian diplomacy until the eve of the Second World War was to obtain Soviet recognition of this union that most governments of the day had recognized.<sup>3</sup> All efforts to settle the dispute at the bilateral level failed, however.<sup>4</sup> Bessarabia was again taken from Romania in 1940 as a result of the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, recovered by Romania in 1941, and again taken by the USSR in 1944 to become the Moldavian SSR. Today the Soviet republic has a population of 4.2 million, 64 percent of whom are ethnic

Moldavians.<sup>5</sup> The remainder is composed of 600,000 Ukrainians, half a million Russians, and smaller groups of Jews, German, Bulgarians, and Gagauzi.<sup>6</sup>

### Soviet Policies in the Republic

Whenever possible, the Kremlin attempted to incorporate entire nationalities into the Soviet Union, thus eliminating irredentist demands as well as preventing the establishment of a nationalist nucleus outside Moscow's control. Partly for this reason, territory formerly belonging to Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Poland was incorporated by the USSR at the end of the Second World War. In the case of the Moldavian Republic, this policy could not be realized. The Bessarabian Moldavians are hardly distinguishable from other Romanians; they may have had different historical experiences and economic development, but they speak the same language (with differences in accent and colloquial usage) and practice the same faith. Stalin's decision to create a separate nationality was therefore a necessary justification for the possession of Moldavia. No effort was spared, vast tomes were published justifying the Moldavians' separate existence; the language was characterized as “Moldavian” and therefore quite apart from Romanian and, in order to enforce a distinction, the use of the Cyrillic alphabet was imposed at the expense of the Latin orthography used in the Romanian tongue. Deportations of Moldavians took place and

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<sup>1</sup> G. F. Jewsbury, *The Russian Annexation of Bessarabia, 1774-1828: A Study of Imperial Expansion*, Boulder, Colorado, 1976.

<sup>2</sup> See I. G. Pelivan, *The Union of Bessarabia with the Mother Country*, Paris, 1920.

<sup>3</sup> V. V. Tilea, *Actiunea diplomatică a României*, Sibiu, 1925, p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> W. M. Bacon, *Behind Closed Doors: Secret Papers on the Failure of Romanian-Soviet Negotiations, 1931-1932*, Stanford, California, 1979; Royal Institute of International Affairs, *The Balkan States*, Oxford, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> *Narodnoe khoziaistvo SSSR za 70 let*, Moscow, 1987, p. 374.

<sup>6</sup> See Roman Solchanyk, RL 131/80, “Moldavia and the Moldavians in the USSR: Nationality and Language Aspects of the Census of 1979,” April 2, 1980; *Narodnoe khoziaistvo Moldavskoi SSR, 1985*, Kishinev, 1986.



large-scale Ukrainian and Russian in-migration was encouraged. Cultural relations with Romania were severely curtailed.

As long as Romania's Communists toed Moscow's line, this policy could be sustained with little trouble, but, as the leaders in Bucharest embarked upon stridently nationalistic policies, the issue of Bessarabia was one of the first to be raised either by quoting Karl Marx's opposition to Russian imperialism<sup>7</sup> or by reference to other historical arguments.<sup>8</sup> Moscow nevertheless continued to uphold "the class analysis" of the nation and therefore persisted in trying to break every connection with Romania. Even Gorbachev's arrival in the Kremlin changed little. The local Party leader, Simon Grossu, was assumed to have strong support in Moscow (two of the Soviet Union's former leaders—Leonid Brezhnev and Konstantin Chernenko—were associated with the republic in the earlier part of their careers, Brezhnev as republican Party first secretary and Chernenko as head of the Central Committee's propaganda department). Despite profound personnel changes in the Kremlin, Grossu was left untouched. It appeared that the population of one of the smallest and most industrially backward Soviet republics was indeed compliant. The events of the last few months have dispelled such notions.

### First Cultural Concessions

The first hints of dissent appeared with one of Grossu's speeches to the republican Komsomol in February, 1987, in which "nationalist propaganda" was attacked.<sup>9</sup> His offensive was quickly followed by others.<sup>10</sup> No precise details of the issues that provoked Grossu's intervention were published but, to judge from the concessions offered, they relate to literature, a field in which some compromises were reached in the past. In 1951, for instance, the authorities accepted as valid the writings of some Romanian authors, especially those by writers who showed "class awareness," such as Mihail Sadoveanu, and other works by Romanian authors were published in subsequent years. Nevertheless, the local leadership never accepted as automatic the validity of any author working in Romania and strictly controlled the output of local writers.

<sup>7</sup> A. Oțetea and S. Schwann, *K. Marx—Însemnări despre români*, Bucharest, 1964.

<sup>8</sup> See M. Mușat and I. Ardeleanu, *De la statul geto-dacic la statul român unitar*, Bucharest, 1983, p. 560.

<sup>9</sup> See Bohdan Nahaylo, RL 32/88, "National Ferment in Moldavia," January 24, 1988.

<sup>10</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, May 12, 1987; May 31, 1987; and September 16, 1987.

The most notable victim of this policy was Ion Druță (Ion Drutse), a Moldavian nationalist author who gained a reputation in 1971 with the publication of an article in the Soviet press on the cultural life of his republic.<sup>11</sup> To most Soviet readers the article was innocuous enough, but Moldavians saw it differently.<sup>12</sup> Druță wrote about the effects of urbanization and the migration of peasants to the towns. He argued that, as a result of this migration, the towns of Moldavia and especially Kishinev (Chișinău)—the capital and traditionally the preserve of other ethnic groups—were finally transformed into centers of Moldavian culture and language. Transforming the cities into national strongholds is an old Bessarabian—indeed, East European—aspiration,<sup>13</sup> and Ivan Bodiu (Bodyul), the Moldavian Party leader at the time, promptly attacked him from the platform of the 24th CPSU Congress.<sup>14</sup> Undaunted, Druță continued to write; his "Doina" and "Clopotnița" works are particularly eloquent pleas against Russification practices and earned him continual harassment from the authorities.<sup>15</sup> In 1987, his collected works (including previously controversial writings) were published.<sup>16</sup> The authorities were surprised that the entire run sold out immediately; a larger edition is now being reprinted.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the local leadership probably reckoned that Druță could be coopted for its own needs: the author received the Order of Lenin<sup>18</sup> and came to symbolize officially accepted literature.<sup>19</sup> The authorities also allowed a Romanian national theater troupe to interpret his works in Moldavia,<sup>20</sup> evidently hoping to divert the attention of the public from the much more significant issue of language. The public was not diverted.

### The Rise of Organized Opposition

Simon Grossu's inability to offer anything more than promises prompted some intellectuals to appeal directly to Moscow. Such an appeal was made in April, 1988, by the students of the Kishinev

<sup>11</sup> I. Druță, "Khlebopashitsy v Kishineve," *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, March 21, 1971.

<sup>12</sup> M. Bruchis, *Nations—Nationalities—People*, New York, 1984, p. 91.

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, P. Halippa, *Pilde și povești*, Bucharest, 1923.

<sup>14</sup> XXIV s'ezd KPSS. *Stenografichesky otchet*, Vol. 1, Moscow, 1971, p. 375.

<sup>15</sup> See *Enciclopedia sovietică moldovenească*, Vol. 2, Kishinev, 1972, p. 378; Kodry, June, 1973; *Moldova socialistă*, September 3, 1978.

<sup>16</sup> I. Druță, *Scrieri*, 4 volumes, Kishinev, 1987.

<sup>17</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, January 4, 1989.

<sup>18</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, October 24, 1988.

<sup>19</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, November 18, 1988.

<sup>20</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 1, 1988.

Pedagogical Institute, who complained that "the historical aberrations" of Stalin persisted in their republic.<sup>21</sup> Since the Kishinev authorities refused to respond, protests continued, moving a Soviet newspaper to wonder what compelled the Moldavian leadership "to conceal the truth with such tenacity."<sup>22</sup>

In the early summer of 1988, two broad opposition movements were formed. The first was the Mateevici Literary and Musical Club, led by Anatol Șelaru and ostensibly concerned with cultural matters. The second group, which called itself the Democratic Movement in Support of Restructuring, had counterparts in other Union republics and appeared to be headed by more active nationalists, such as Gheorghe Ghimpu, who had what seems to have been a distinguished career in the local Komsomol.<sup>23</sup> The authorities responded swiftly by enforcing the new legislation on the conduct of public rallies<sup>24</sup> and by repeated warnings of "the limits to liberties."<sup>25</sup> Not only did the leaders of the two movements refuse to give up but they broadened their activities.<sup>26</sup> Particularly worrying for the leadership was the fact that most of the province's writers and linguists joined one or other of the movements and consequently the demands of the opposition came to be articulated much more clearly. First, there was a demand for the adoption of Moldavian as the official language in the republic; second, for public recognition that "Moldavian" and Romanian are one and the same language; third, for reversion to the Latin, and abandonment of the Cyrillic, alphabet. In addition, economic and social problems were also raised: bus drivers in Kishinev went on strike in July, 1988,<sup>27</sup> and the Mateevici Club began to incorporate more readings from the work of Mihai Eminescu—one of Romania's foremost poets—as well as other patriotic themes in its public meetings.<sup>28</sup>

Slowly, the Party lost control over the debate. The literary monthly *Nistru* set about publicizing evidence of past cases of corruption and nepotism and, as a consequence, saw its readership soar. In August, 1988, the weekly *Literatura și arta* organized a round table to which dissident writers and members of unofficial groups were invited. The Party daily reacted with a broadside<sup>29</sup> only to receive a defiant response in return.<sup>30</sup> Despite a

<sup>21</sup> *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, April 20, 1988.

<sup>22</sup> *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, August 30, 1988.

<sup>23</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, July 29, 1988.

<sup>24</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, August 3, 1988.

<sup>25</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, August 4, 1988.

<sup>26</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, August 25, 1988.

<sup>27</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, July 13, 1988.

<sup>28</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, September 7, 1988.

<sup>29</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, August 23, 1988.

<sup>30</sup> *Literatura și arta*, September 1, 1988.

continuation of official statements that the union of Moldavia with the Soviet Union had, by itself, already created ample opportunities for cultural development,<sup>31</sup> it was clear that further concessions were required.

### First Linguistic Concessions

The Kishinev authorities' compromise, settled on after apparent divisions within the leadership, had two aspects. On the one hand, the Party admitted that the situation of the Moldavian language was deplorable while on the other hand trying to give the impression of having conceded nothing to opposition groups. At the same time, steps were taken to satisfy some of the demands of the Moldavian intelligentsia and representatives of the republic's national minorities. Two new biweekly publications were launched, one in the Gagauz language (*Ana sözü*) and another in Bulgarian (*Rodno slovo*).<sup>32</sup> Yiddish courses were started for the benefit of the republic's dwindling Jewish population<sup>33</sup> and a new Russian-Moldavian phrasebook was published.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the Moldavian Supreme Soviet decided in June, 1988, to establish an "Interdepartmental Commission on the Study of the History and Problems of Development of the Moldavian Language."<sup>35</sup> This looked like an attempt to gain time: speakers at the session rejected most of the suggested changes and the commission was not expected to meet more than four times a year. The commission had no agenda, it was patronized by Party and state leaders and was instructed by the Supreme Soviet to "think carefully" about its responsibilities.

Demonstrations nevertheless continued and received support from unexpected quarters. With resonant rhetoric, the Party daily attacked the previous policy of destroying monasteries and historic castles: "The future will fire a cannon shot at those who discharge their pistols into our past heritage."<sup>36</sup> Moldavian intellectuals—linguists in particular—also received public support from other language specialists in the USSR, including some from the USSR Academy of Sciences. Yet again, the Party offered concessions: some Russian words were eliminated from the language and the Pushkin State Theater in Kishinev was divided into two, one for Russian language productions and one—commemorating Mihai Eminescu—for productions in the national language. As an earnest of the Party's good faith, it was the Moldavian theater

<sup>31</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, September 8, 1988.

<sup>32</sup> *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, August 7, 1988.

<sup>33</sup> TASS, September 5, 1988.

<sup>34</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, October 5, 1988.

<sup>35</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, June 11, 1988.

<sup>36</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, September 4, 1988.



that retained the Order of the Red Banner previously conferred upon the Pushkin Theater.<sup>37</sup> But the concessions may have come too late.

### The Party Theses

It is clear in retrospect that by November, 1988, the situation in Moldavia was becoming critical. Party offices were being picketed by protesters, mainly students from Kishinev State University. Literary magazines received more than a hundred thousand signatures petitioning for linguistic changes in general, and the adoption of the Latin alphabet in particular. It was obvious that what was required was something much more radical than the concessions already attempted.

The Party Theses, "Concrete Steps to Affirm *Perestroika*," published on November 11, 1988, were a gamble. Presented as emanating from the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers, they were undoubtedly intended to convey the official position. The first two parts of this lengthy document<sup>38</sup> dealt with economic matters and were ignored by all. The third part dealt with language questions. After outlining all the efforts already undertaken to safeguard "the free development of the Moldavian language" and the correction of its present "deplorable" state, the Theses went on to oppose all the popular demands expressed in the republic. Moldavian could not be adopted as the state language because this would offend other nationalities. The Theses accepted that

there is little doubt that Moldavian and Romanian belong to the same Romance group of languages. Indeed, there is little difference between them. But the recognition of the similarity, even identity, with other languages from the Romance group cannot serve as a pretext for renouncing [Moldavian] in favor of another language....The Moldavian tongue has its own history, present, and future....

In other words, Moldavian and Romanian are identical but, nevertheless, separate. Finally, the Theses rejected the adoption of the Latin alphabet with the argument that Cyrillic was "uniquely" adapted to Moldavian and that, anyway, such a change would render the entire population illiterate and would cost vast sums of money that were in any case unavailable.

In an attempt to preserve the status quo, the authorities were tying themselves up in linguistic knots, and this was the cause of great hilarity among intellectuals. Letters poured in to republi-

can papers. Some wondered whether their leadership could explain how languages could be simultaneously identical and separate; others proposed a public collection in order to supply the state with the money required for a change of alphabet.

Very quickly, however, the mood turned grim. The Writers' Union published an appeal to "All Men of Good Faith" with a request for help. Tens of thousands of signatures supporting the appeal followed. The day after the publication of the Theses, the students of Kishinev again demonstrated. A week later, they rejected their local union and established a "League of Democratic Students." Demonstrations and isolated incidents of violence were reported from various parts of the republic. There could be little doubt that Simon Grossu's gamble in publishing the Theses had backfired badly. As a result, Party leaders were dispatched to clarify the Theses in person. The press reported one such meeting, held at the Academy of Sciences by Ivan Kalin, the republican premier, in which he asked for "calm and clarity" in tackling language issues.<sup>39</sup> Within days, members of the Academy published a petition in which they denounced Kalin's meeting as a sham from which academicians were deliberately excluded and accused Kalin of refusing to answer questions.<sup>40</sup> A meeting of local Party leaders was convened in Kishinev in order to issue fresh instructions. Within days, members of the Writers' Union revealed these facts to the public amid great outcry.<sup>41</sup> It did not matter that Grossu ultimately retreated, claiming that the Theses were only a framework for discussion rather than a statement of the official position;<sup>42</sup> the demonstrations continued, culminating in a large meeting in Kishinev on December 25, 1988. The time for serious decisions had arrived.

### A Total Victory for the Opposition

As a result of the turmoil occasioned by the publication of the Theses, the Interdepartmental Commission was galvanized into action and went into almost permanent session. Furthermore, its membership was enlarged to include leading dissidents and specialists in language matters. It operated in three sections, each dealing with one of the dissidents' demands. This was partly the result of a promise given by Grossu to the leaders of the protest movement in return for their help in preventing further demonstrations.<sup>43</sup> The Commission met for its final session on December 28, 1988, and its recommendations represented a

complete victory for the opposition. The previous official position was repudiated tenet by tenet. The Commission declared that Moldavian should be adopted as the state language "while ensuring at the same time the rights of the Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, and Gagauz languages." It further declared that "it is necessary to give up the concept according to which two Eastern Romance languages exist, recognizing the identity of Moldavian and Romanian." Finally, conversion to the Latin alphabet was urged.<sup>44</sup> The minutes of the meeting, published subsequently, left little doubt that any further argument was envisaged; members of the Commission demolished every official argument previously accepted as sacred. They pointed out, for instance, that the transliteration of many words into Cyrillic had always caused problems, and they poked fun at "vulgar distortions" of their history and language.<sup>45</sup> While the Commission was empowered only to recommend changes, such recommendations should be accepted by the Supreme Soviet if only because the Moldavian President was also chairman of the Commission. The question is how long it will take the authorities in Kishinev to act on the recommendations. Predictably, Grossu seems to have chosen a slow and gradual implementation.<sup>46</sup>

### Conclusions

The significance of the events in Kishinev can hardly be overstated. A mass popular action—which went mostly unreported in the West—

<sup>44</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 30, 1988.

<sup>45</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 31, 1988.

<sup>46</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 29, 1988.

succeeded in destroying the pillars of Soviet nationality policy in the republic. How was it done? It is likely that Simon Grossu was spared Gorbachev's critical attention precisely because he promised to contain Moldavia's ethnic troubles. These are not trifling: Moldavia is the only Soviet republic that feels bound to a clearly defined and universally accepted nation-state outside the USSR's frontiers. Furthermore, that nation-state, Romania, is also a quarrelsome member of "the Socialist community." Nationalist strife presents a multitude of problems for the Kremlin and threatens to trigger a reaction in Ukraine. Grossu's political survival is, therefore, a balancing act that seeks to grant as little as possible in order to prevent such an outburst. By December, 1988, it appeared that concessions on language issues—unthinkable only a month previously—were a small price to pay for halting a protest movement which combined social, economic, and nationalist demands. Grossu opted for compromise. Whether this will ensure his survival remains to be seen. His deputy—by tradition a Russian—has already been replaced<sup>47</sup> and an official Soviet attack on nationalism in Moldavia has appeared—characteristically—in the Soviet Army daily.<sup>48</sup> Clearly, Soviet Moldavia has entered 1989 in a less than calm atmosphere.

<sup>47</sup> By Vyacheslav Konstantinovich Pshenichnikov (*Moldova socialistă*, November 6, 1988). Pshenichnikov's predecessor, Viktor I. Smirnov, was arrested in Moscow on January 11, 1989, in connection with "the Uzbek affair" (*Trud*, January 12, 1989).

<sup>48</sup> *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 6, 1989.

(RL/92, January 24, 1989)

## DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

# The Moldavian Democratic Movement: Structure, Program, and Initial Impact\*

Vladimir Socor

A spontaneous, grass-roots democratic movement, in some ways analogous to those operating in the Baltic republics, has

taken shape in recent months in Soviet Moldavia. The emergence of the Moldavian Democratic Movement in Support of Restructuring has gone virtually unreported in the Western media. Its growing strength and public impact, however, could be inferred from the Soviet Moldavian antireformist media's rapidly escalating criticism of the movement

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<sup>37</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, November 11, 1988.

<sup>38</sup> *Literatura și arta*, January 6, 1988.

<sup>39</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, November 23, 1988.

<sup>40</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, November 26, 1988.

<sup>41</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 9, 1988.

<sup>42</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 13, 1988.

<sup>43</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, December 17, 1988.



toward the end of 1988, which was capped by a broadside in the Soviet Army daily *Krasnaya zvezda* on January 6, 1989, and a lengthy commentary of a more evenhanded and relaxed tenor in *Izvestia* on January 31 of this year.

The Moldavian Democratic Movement serves as a vehicle of political expression for the Moldavian nationality, which, according to the Soviet census, makes up 64 percent of the Moldavian SSR's population of 4,200,000, and whose members feel ethnically, linguistically, and culturally Romanian. The movement combines demands for Moldavian national emancipation with demands for democratization of the Soviet state and society and an acceleration of restructuring. The movement operates in a republic whose leadership is emblematic of Brezhnevian stagnation and remains a bastion of bureaucratic resistance to reform. Consequently, the movement seeks to mobilize support from below for reforms promoted by Moscow that are being resisted by the leaders in the Moldavian capital Kishinev (Chişinău) and at the same time to advance Moldavian national demands. The Moldavian Democratic Movement describes itself as democratic and international before being national, in the sense that it regards national rights as flowing from democratic rights and that it seeks to appeal to all the ethnic groups in the republic through a program of democratic and nationality rights for all.

Information about the movement's program and activities was provided in the course of extensive telephone interviews with four members of the organizing committee of the movement in Kishinev. They are Iurie Roşca, a 27-year-old senior research associate of the Literary Museum of the Moldavian SSR; Mihai Fusu, a 28-year-old actor from the State Youth Theater in Kishinev; Anatol Şelaru, a 29-year-old physician who is a scientific researcher at the Epidemiological Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Moldavian SSR; and Vasile Năstase, a 26-year-old reporter with the Moldavian Komsomol daily *Tinerimea Moldovei* (Moldavia's Youth).

#### Formation and Structure

The Moldavian Democratic Movement was founded at a meeting of representatives of the creative unions in Kishinev on June 3, 1988. The meeting elected an organizing committee of some 25 people, for the most part writers, journalists, and scholars, and mostly ethnic Moldavians, but including several Jews, Ukrainians, and Russians; the committee was given a mandate to launch a Moldavian Democratic Movement in Support of Restructuring and to draft a program. The movement was born, according to the telephone interview, at a public rally in downtown Kishinev on June 27, "as an

expression of frustration over the obstruction of restructuring by the republic's bureaucracy." The Moldavian Democratic Movement is an informal body that hopes to gain acceptance as a "socio-political organization" at a congress it plans to hold in March, 1989. Permission for the congress has not, however, so far been received from the authorities.

Adherents of the movement join its "support groups" at their place of work or in villages or neighborhoods. The Kishinev-based organizing committee has apparently succeeded in setting up support groups throughout the republic at the raion level; and these, in turn, have fanned out to establish local groups. According to the organizers, more than 300 such groups were in existence in January, 1989. At least some of them appear to have taken advantage of an attitude of benevolent neutrality on the part of local-level Moldavian officials.

A support group may have anything from five members to more than one hundred, depending on whether it is in a farm brigade or an entire kolkhoz, a cultural institution or an industrial enterprise, a rural hamlet or a large town. In larger cities with a multiethnic population, the organizers of support groups are making special efforts to attract Ukrainians, Jews, and Russian-speaking people in general. Some support groups have also been set up in cities outside the Moldavian SSR by Moldavians who work or study in those cities. The movement's draft program, which has been disseminated throughout the republic in the last few months, contains an appendix providing detailed instructions to adherents about how to form support groups and how to seek their legal registration. To date however, the authorities have not granted legal registration. In their recent attacks on the Moldavian Democratic Movement, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* and *Krasnaya zvezda* noted with disapproval the proliferation of the support groups at the city, raion, and local levels.

#### Draft Program

A draft program worked out by the organizing committee has recently been circulated in typed form, in both Moldavian and Russian. It originated from an earlier, shorter statement of purpose which was then expanded by incorporating suggestions from experts associated with the Democratic Movement and proposals from the grass roots transmitted through support groups. The document consists of eight chapters and is to be finalized at the planned constitutive congress. The organizing committee as well as some Moldavian-language periodicals have asked that the document be published, but the authorities have refused.

#### General Principles

The movement defines itself as aspiring to bring about recognition of universal democratic principles and "a state based on the rule of law," within "a USSR that would become a federal union of genuinely sovereign states." Membership in the movement is declared "incompatible with national chauvinism and with any form of violence." Members shall work "exclusively through legal and constitutional methods," in accordance with those provisions of UN and CSCE documents and the constitutions of the USSR and the Moldavian SSR that define the rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of citizens.

#### The Democratization of the State

Under this rubric the program introduces a concept of federalism designed "to fulfill the Moldavian SSR's rights as a sovereign national republic." It wants the constitutions of the USSR and the Moldavian SSR to "define with maximum precision the authority of the federation and that of the republic and to specify clearly where one ends and the other begins." It seeks a right of veto on legal matters deemed to be "of vital importance for the republic" and wants the republic to have the right "to maintain direct links with other states and with international organizations" (presumably contacts with Romania are meant more than anything else). The movement also advocates a reform of the political institutions of the Moldavian SSR so as to make possible "public control over how the state and the soviets discharge their mandate" and "to enable society to become a real political force."

#### Economics and Migration

The program calls for a "radical transformation" and "humanization" of the economic system by replacing "command mechanisms," "ministerial fiat," and the state's monopoly with enterprise self-management, market mechanisms, and a "pluralism of property forms." This, it asserts, is "the only way to ensure a proper supply of goods to society." The movement considers that the transition from state to cooperative and individual forms of property has been too slow in the Moldavian SSR and wants it to be speeded up. At the same time, the program calls for "a devolution of the main economic levers from union to republican authority." It demands, above all, "a rigorous control of migration processes"; a more open policy on the allocation of labor and on employment in general in the republic, to prevent "the unnecessary importation of manpower" into the Moldavian SSR from other areas of the USSR; and the prior review of all new industrial projects to determine their impact upon the local population's ethnic composition and way of life. Noting that indiscriminate industrialization and mass immigration have already generated complicated social

problems in the republic, the document says that concern over these problems cuts across ethnic lines. The movement also wants agriculture to be treated as a "high-priority area" in the republic's economic planning, and favors the return of the land to the peasant both on principle and for reasons of economic efficiency.

#### Cultural Policy

The movement demands that Moldavian be made the state language of the republic, a return to the Latin script (which was replaced by the Cyrillic under Stalin), and official recognition of the unity of the Moldavian and the Romanian language (official Soviet doctrine treats Moldavian as a separate language from Romanian). This is perhaps the most urgent of the movement's demands at present and it appears on the verge of attainment following an extensive mobilization of support at the grass roots.

Starting from the premise that "the automatic amalgamation of nations leads to the degradation and disappearance of their cultures," the document defends the right of Moldavians and of "all ethnic groups in the republic" to have educational and cultural institutions of their own. It calls for the abolition of "mixed" schools (which have parallel classes in Russian and a nationality language) and for the opening of an adequate number of schools at all levels, from nursery schools to institutions of higher education, as well as cultural institutions and periodicals, for the Moldavian, Ukrainian, Jewish, and other ethnic groups. (The members of the organizing committee interviewed by telephone commented critically that that there were large Ukrainian rural and urban communities in the republic that did not have Ukrainian schools and that the Jewish population had no schools or cultural institutions of its own).

The program also urges recognition of the right of all ethnic groups—including Moldavians, Ukrainians, Jews, and others—to have unimpeded cultural contacts with their kinsmen in other countries. In reference to relations between the Moldavians and Romania, the document calls for "dismantling the Great Wall of China between the two cultures" and for the initiation of "close ties of cultural cooperation."

#### Human Rights

The program calls for adequate legal guarantees to ensure the authorities' observance of the rights of association and assembly; the inviolability of the person, domicile, and correspondence; freedom of conscience, opinion, and expression; and other civil rights nominally provided for by the USSR and Moldavian SSR constitutions but mostly not honored in practice. It also seeks the rehabilitation of those who were sentenced for their political or religious



convictions. The movement also demands the annulment of the judicial sentences and administrative decisions deporting people from Moldavia during the 1940s. It urges the publication of the names of those who ordered and carried out the deportations and of the names of the victims; it wants public monuments erected in memory of the victims; and it calls for defining all the mass repressions that were carried out before, during, and after World War II as crimes against humanity that cannot be subject to prescription or a statute of limitation.

### Approach to Nationality Questions

Demanding a "radical revision of the current, essentially Stalinist and neo-Stalinist policy toward nationalities" in the republic, the program calls for legal and institutional guarantees to stop the "assimilation of smaller nationalities through uncontrolled immigration and encroachment on their rights." The guiding principle of policy toward all ethnic groups, the program says, must be the preservation of their identities and cultures."

### Political Ethics

According to the program, careful consideration of ethical factors in politics "is of the essence in a state that has experienced the crimes of Stalinism and neo-Stalinism." The movement wants to see politics brought into line with moral principles, and it calls for due recognition by the state of "the important role of religion in guiding man's spiritual development."

### Ecology

A lengthy section of the program draws attention to the advanced degree of pollution of the air, water, soil, and plants, which is doubly damaging to a republic whose chief economic resource is its agriculture. Blaming this on the Union and republican economic ministries, which have "misused our nature without any thought for tomorrow," the program demands stringent measures for environmental protection, with public control of their implementation at the republican level. It calls for, among other things, severe financial penalties for industrial polluters; mandatory environmental studies before any new economic project is undertaken; a halt to "forced industrialization"; and the shifting of investment away from industry toward agriculture and related sectors.

### Other Proposals and Public Actions

**Republican boundaries:** The Democratic Movement's program does not include claims to the raions that have been detached from Soviet Moldavia and incorporated into the Chernovtsy, Odessa, and

Nikolaev Oblasts of the Ukrainian SSR. The organizing committee takes the view, however, that the public is "fully conscious of the unfair nature of the present boundaries of the republic." The movement calls for cultural autonomy for the Moldavians in those three oblasts, while at the same time advocating cultural autonomy for Ukrainians and other ethnic groups in the Moldavian SSR.

**Agrarian reform:** The agrarian question is one on which the Moldavian Democratic Movement draws in part on the intellectual heritage of Bessarabian agrarian populism. The agrarian question continues to be bound up with the nationality question in Soviet Moldavia since the peasant class is still overwhelmingly of Moldavian nationality. The movement's activists on the whole lean toward "peasant ownership of the land" as a matter of social justice as well as a prerequisite to any future revitalization of agriculture. The movement has not yet advanced formal proposals on peasant ownership but it is closely following the discussion in the USSR on long-term lease of the land to peasants and, particularly, the proposals in the Baltic countries on reviving family farms.

**Language question:** Together with the Mateevici Club (see below), the Democratic Movement has spearheaded in recent months the upsurge of public support for the demands of the Moldavian intelligentsia on the language question. On this matter more than on any other, the movement has functioned as a vital link between the intelligentsia and the public at large. Intellectuals associated with the Democratic Movement have been active in organizing scholarly and literary symposia attended by large numbers of ordinary citizens at which the demands on the language question were aired and endorsed. The movement has also been instrumental in conducting the campaign of petitions and open letters to the authorities and the media, during which tens of thousands of signatures have been collected in support of the demands for state-language status and the Latin script. Using their contacts in academic and literary circles in Moscow, Leningrad, and the Baltic republics, intellectuals of the Moldavian Democratic Movement have successfully enlisted the participation of some Russian and Baltic philologists and literary historians in symposia held in the Moldavian SSR at which these non-Moldavians presented papers supporting the Moldavian case on language issues. Underlying this effort is the widely held view among the Moldavian intelligentsia—as the interviewees summed it up—that "either we return to the Latin script and get the state language, or else we shall disappear as a language and as a nationality."

Awaiting the resolution of the language question, some intellectuals associated with the Democratic Movement have begun teaching classes in literary Romanian for non-Moldavians as well as for those Moldavians who have not had an opportunity in the republic's school system to familiarize themselves with the literary Romanian language. Using a method developed by the linguist Schechter, a group of language teachers headed by the journalist Alla Mândăcanu are offering at a language school in Kishinev intensive three-month courses of literary Romanian and are training new teachers in the process.

### Public Rallies

The Moldavian Democratic Movement has been able to hold four authorized mass rallies in Kishinev in support of its demands. In addition, supporters of the movement gathered on several occasions for unauthorized rallies and demonstrations in downtown Kishinev but agreed each time to disperse at the request of the movement's leaders. The latter have thus far consistently shunned unauthorized rallies.

The movement held a rally attended by some 5,000 people on June 27, 1988, to urge public support for the decisions of the 19th plenum of the CPSU Central Committee on restructuring and for their implementation in Soviet Moldavia. It held another rally on July 6, attended by an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 people, to commemorate the mass deportations that began on July 6, 1949, and to demand the rehabilitation of the victims of Stalin's terror and the publication of truthful accounts of the events. The authorities neither discussed the demands nor allowed them to be published and turned down all subsequent applications for public rallies until the movement's leaders managed to obtain support from Moscow for a rally in support of *perestroika* on November 12. At the rally, which was held in Kishinev's open-air Summer Theater, an estimated 10,000 people passed resolutions calling for openness and restructuring in Soviet Moldavia; this time at least some points of the resolutions were published in the Moldavian cultural press.

The largest rally to date, which was requested for December 10, 1988, to mark Human Rights Day but was not allowed to take place until January 15, 1989, was attended by an estimated 15,000 people in the Summer Theater. The rally voted by acclamation a resolution demanding, among other things, the return to the Orthodox Church of church and monastery buildings taken over by the state; urgent governmental measures to stop the decay of long-neglected Moldavian historical monuments; unimpeded visits to Moldavian historical sites and monuments on the territory of Romania; and the

replacement of several media executives and Party officials in the republic who had recently published "defamatory" statements about the Democratic Movement and the Mateevici Club while denying them the right to reply. The rally welcomed the recommendations of the Moldavian Supreme Soviet's advisory commission on the Moldavian state language and the Latin script in the republic and demanded that the Moldavian Supreme Soviet meet no later than March and enact the recommendations. These demands have not been granted nor have the authorities allowed them to be published.

### Cooperation with

#### Other Informal Moldavian Groups

The Moldavian Democratic Movement often consults and sometimes undertakes joint actions with the Kishinev-based Alexe Mateevici Literary and Musical Club, an informal group that includes some of Soviet Moldavia's best known cultural figures and journalists from the main cultural periodicals and has several thousand active members and supporters in the republic. Two of the leaders of the Mateevici Club—the scientist Anatol Șelaru and the literary critic Dinu Mihail—are at the same time members of the movement's organizing committee.

A small environmental group called the Moldavian Greens was established toward the end of 1988. Its main spokesman is the journalist Vasile Nastase, who is also a member of the Moldavian Democratic Movement's organizing committee. The Moldavian Greens sent a delegation to the founding meeting in Moscow of the informal, USSR-wide Social Ecological Union and joined it late last year. The Moldavian Greens oppose "the forced industrialization" of the republic, demand the cancellation of existing plans to build a nuclear power plant in Soviet Moldavia, and hope to organize joint ecological actions with Western Greens; one such project involves joint monitoring by Moldavian and Western Greens of cross-border pollution on the river Prut, which forms the border between Soviet Moldavia and Romania.

### Links with Other

#### Independent Movements in the USSR

Representatives of the Moldavian Democratic Movement readily admit to having drawn on the experience of the independent movements in the Baltic Republics and Armenia as regards program and organization—"even if they are a bit more radical than us." The Moldavian movement's activists have attended conferences of the independent movements in Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, and Leningrad, at which they compared notes with their Baltic hosts, with representatives of



independent Armenian groups, and with Russian activists of the Democratic Union. The Moldavians say that they are in almost permanent communication with these groups and that this is only natural, since "our platform is essentially the same: restructuring, support for the Party line on democratization, and the creation of a state based on the rule of law."

#### The Reaction of the Authorities

The Moldavian authorities have sought from the outset to contain the Democratic Movement through means short of a police crackdown. They have maintained a complete blackout on factual information about the movement in the republic's media and have turned down almost all the requests by Moldavian cultural journals to print news about public meetings or conferences organized by the movement, the resolutions or petitions adopted there, and the movement's program. At the same time, the mass media have kept up a polemical barrage against the Democratic Movement, branding it "extremist," "nationalist," and "destabilizing" while denying it the right to reply and, indeed, all access to the media. The authorities of the republic have also stonewalled the movement's applications to hold public rallies; it appears that the four rallies held thus far in support of restructuring were authorized only after the authorities in Kishinev had been overruled from Moscow. Some of the movement's activists have been indicted on charges of calling unauthorized rallies. Most of the indictments thus far have been quashed by higher judicial instances for lack of evidence, but fresh indictments on similar charges are currently being pressed in the courts by the republic's prosecutor against several members of the organizing committee. The strategy of the authorities in Kishinev toward the movement is being described as one of "asphyxiation through denial of *glasnost*." This strategy has probably succeeded only in slowing down the movement's growth but not in stopping it.

The movement's increasing impact appears to have induced the authorities to initiate discussions with it. On December 15, 1988, a meeting was held at the Moldavian Party's Central Committee headquarters between the Buro and a delegation of the Democratic Movement's organizing committee. The discussion lasted more than seven hours; a bland and uninformative announcement about it was published in the republic's media. According to members of the organizing committee who were present at the session, the movement's delegation said that it regarded cooperation with the republic's leadership as "welcome and necessary." The CC Buro in turn called for "constructive cooperation" and invited specific proposals from the movement

on ecological, economic, and other issues. The two sides mainly aired their differences at this session. Further meetings are expected to be held.

At the December CC meeting and more recently in the media, the authorities have intimated that any substantial concessions on their part may prompt the republic's Russian and other Slavic ethnic groups to form a countermovement for resisting alleged Moldavian nationalism. In fact, an "Internationalist Front" composed mainly of ethnic Russian employees in the republic began to take shape in January, 1989. Its organizing committee includes the chief editor of the Moldavian CP daily *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, several factory directors, and a number of middle-level Russian officials in administrative institutions. The Democratic Movement and other reformist forces in the republic regard the Front's initiators essentially as bureaucratic holdovers from the stagnation period who are preparing to use the Front for resisting liberalization in general and the restructuring of nationality relations in particular. Without opposing outright the decision on making Moldavian the state language, the Internationalist Front opposes the reintroduction of the Latin script for that language and demands that Russian also be made a state language of the Moldavian republic. (Russians make up 12 percent of the republic's population, according to the Soviet census).

It is unclear at this stage whether or not the Internationalist Front has active support from Moscow and the highest authorities in Kishinev. The Front may prove useful to those authorities if they should move to dilute the concessions to the Moldavian language and weaken the legislation on the language question that is due to be enacted by the Moldavian Supreme Soviet in March. If intended as a counterweight to the Democratic Movement, however, the Front's potentialities seem poor. Its present base of support is narrow both socially and ethnically and its chances to broaden it are hampered by its antiliberal and Russian nationalist tone, its reputed ties to the Moscow-based organization "Pamyat," and its ideological borrowings from "Pamyat," including anti-Semitic overtones reportedly being heard at the Front's meetings. Although the Front is attempting to enlist non-Russians in a campaign to annul the Moldavian gains on the language question, it will find it difficult to win allies as long as the Moldavian activists and public persist in supporting the right of the republic's Ukrainians—its largest Slavic group, making up 14 percent of the population—and of other ethnic groups to have schools and cultural institutions in their own languages.

The activists of the Moldavian Democratic Movement point out that they have "a vital interest" in the advancement of Soviet restructuring and

openness, on which the existence of their movement depends, and that the eventual attainment of their agenda is in turn bound up with the future of Soviet reforms. Consequently, they are determined to continue cooperating with reformist forces within the CPSU and the Moldavian Communist Party.

#### PERESTROIKA

## Moldavia on the Barricades of Perestroika

Grigore Singurel\*

The summer of 1988 in Moldavia was remarkable for the upsurge of national self-awareness, the most important since the "liberation" of Bessarabia by Soviet troops in June 1940. Crowded meetings organized by informal unions were held in the parks of Kishinev (Chişinău), the city's bus drivers went on strike, and relations between the local intelligentsia and the *nomenklatura* grew strained. The Moldavian writers and their newspaper *Literatura şi arta* caused acute uneasiness among the local leaders. The Moldavian-language weekly broached topics such as national culture and language, including restoration of the Latin script, filling in the "blank spots" in Moldavia's history, reconstructing destroyed churches, the sad legacy of "Bodiulism," and the ineffectiveness of the present Kishinev leadership in solving the problems of *perestroika*. By year's end the republican Party leadership and most of the Moldavian intelligentsia found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades, particularly over the main issue, the language. In collective letters to *Literatura şi arta*, almost 50,000 Moldavians demanded that their native language be made official in the republic, that the Latin alphabet be reinstated, and that the Moldavian and Romanian languages be recognized as identical.

Simon Grossu, the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia, is hardly a keen supporter of *glasnost*. *Sovetskaya kul'tura* recently acknowledged that few would agree with Grossu's opinion expressed at the Nineteenth CPSU Conference that "the press itself is guilty of causing all the problems and difficulties

The movement's activists add, however, that they reserve the right to appeal to international forums and public opinion "if the Soviet reforms should eventually be torpedoed or if our rights and our people end up being trampled underfoot."

(RL/93, February 9, 1989)

that exist today in the republics, including national conflicts."<sup>1</sup> Earlier the well-known Moldavian writer Ion Druţă (Ion Drutse) had written in *Literaturnaya gazeta* that *glasnost* and *perestroika* were isolated and unprotected phenomena in Moldavia.<sup>2</sup> Last year the same newspaper maintained that the cadre system of the republic had changed little in form or content since the times of Ivan Bodiul, the former Moldavian Party secretary.<sup>3</sup>

In their "Appeal to the All-Union Party Conference" the Moldavian writers wrote: "Even now the spirit of the period of stagnation reigns in our republic—in other words, a renewed stagnation."<sup>4</sup> Grossu can find supporters even among the creative intelligentsia of Moldavia. One of them, the composer Evgenii Doga, compared *glasnost* with the morning sun in whose rays various poisonous snakes come out to bask.<sup>5</sup> In Moldavia today, the bureaucracy is battling with these "snakes." The organs of the Moldavian Party Central Committee and the newspapers *Moldova socialistă*, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, and *Vechnii Kishinev*, have declared open war on the Moldavian writers' weekly. What then is *Literatura şi arta* guilty of?

#### "A Crisis of Confidence"

The "Appeal to the All-Union Party Conference" published in *Literatura şi arta* was addressed to Mikhail Gorbachev. The text was approved on May 28, 1988, at a general meeting of the Moldavian Writers' Union; all 176 members voted in favor. The writers declared that as a result of poor

<sup>1</sup> *Sovetskaya kul'tura*, July 9, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, July 29, 1987.

<sup>3</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, May 18, 1988.

<sup>4</sup> *Literatura şi arta*, June 9, 1988.

<sup>5</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, May 18, 1988.

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administration the economy had become unprofitable, in-migration had gotten out of control, and the danger of an ecological disaster was growing—all against a background of rising popular discontent.

The Appeal also touched upon more general issues such as the question of citizenship of the Union republics, abridgment of rights and duties of citizens in connection with citizenship, granting full cultural autonomy to each nation and people of the USSR, the right to use the native language of the republic and to be educated in it, the right of each republic to manage its national resources, and the right to self-finance and self-support. The writers further requested

that our appeal be considered a collective request to bring criminal suit against citizen Ivan Ivanovich Bodiul and his partners, all the more so since the vicious methods of "Bodiulism" still prevail in our republic.... It is becoming more and more evident that the local organs are unable to handle complex political, socioeconomic, cultural, and national processes. These circumstances, in addition to the lack of democracy and *glasnost*, have brought the republic into an open crisis of confidence.<sup>6</sup>

No one spoke about Ivan Bodiul at last summer's Party conference, but then not a single Moldavian writer attended. Mikhail Gorbachev mentioned stagnation in Moldavia only in the agricultural sphere. A documentary about Bodiul and his comrades-in-arms was printed in the monthly journal *Nistru* last year. Working from the diary of Police Colonel Anatoli Bazilevich, former boss of the UBKhSS (Administration for Combating Theft of Socialist Property and Speculation) of the republic, the author described the luxurious life Bodiul enjoyed and continued, "He turned Moldavia into a platform for all-Union experiments: he poisoned it with toxic chemicals, desiccated its land, devastated its villages. He also tinkered with national culture. His name is hardly uttered in the republic in awed tones anymore."<sup>7</sup>

The Moldavian writers' Appeal touched off a storm of organized protest in the republic. The Party newspapers *Moldova socialistă*, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, and *Vechernii Kishinev* soon fell upon *Literatura și arta*. One Moldavian Central Committee official called the document "tendentious and unrepresentative of public opinion."<sup>8</sup> He said that

<sup>6</sup> *Literatura și arta*, June 9, 1988.

<sup>7</sup> Novomir Limonov in *Nistru*, No. 5, 1988. The Russian-language Kishinev magazine *Kodry* refused to print the story.

<sup>8</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, June 21, 1988.

Communists were disturbed by the writers' action. N. Bondarchuk, the republic's ideology secretary, suggested that the Appeal was written under the pernicious influence of Estonian nationalists.<sup>9</sup>

#### Rallies and Meetings

At present there are two informal organizations in Moldavia: "The Democratic Movement in Support of Restructuring" and the "Mateevici Literary and Musical Club." *Literatura și arta* supports both. Since June of last year members of these voluntary organizations have been gathering on Sundays in Pushkin Park or in one of the glades around Komsomol Lake in Kishinev. At one meeting on July 6, thousands of people rallied to mark the anniversary of the mass deportation of the population of Soviet Moldavia.<sup>10</sup> Holding lighted candles, those assembled heard about the suppression of the rights of the people, the persecution of the intelligentsia, and the demeaning of Moldavian national self-esteem under leaders like Koval, Brezhnev, and Bodiul. Speakers demanded that local authorities take immediate measures to reinstate the national language, history, and culture of the Moldavian people. Placards with slogans in Moldavian were held aloft: "We want to know the truth about the deportations and famine!"<sup>11</sup>

This rally and others like it in Kishinev on June 29 and July 29 were soon attacked in a *Moldova socialistă* article true to the spirit of the Zhdanovshchina:

The Mateevici Club has strayed from the literary-musical mainstream into the mode of doubtful politics, playing on the mood of the public....

<sup>9</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, June 24, 1988. It is probably true that Moldavians look to Estonia as a sort of barometer, and this is irksome to the officials. Last year Moldavians participated in the constituent meeting of the National Front in Support of Restructuring in Tallinn, where they spoke of the status of *glasnost* and *perestroika* and the informal unions in their republic.

<sup>10</sup> During the night of July 7, 1949, almost 200,000 Bessarabians were thrown into goods wagons and sent off to Siberia.

<sup>11</sup> *Literatura și arta*, July 9, 1988. The reference is to the terrible drought of 1947, when the local authorities took the last crusts of bread from the Moldavian peasants and swollen corpses of the dead lay at the crossroads of the devastated villages. The author E. Bukov, who was then deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Moldavian SSR, stated that between 1946 and 1947 approximately 350,000 people perished in Moldavia. This was the time when, according to Nikita Khrushchev and Wanda Wasilewska, trains loaded with Moldavian wheat were being sent to Poland (Nikita S. Khrushchev, *Memoirs*, New York, 1979, pp. 67-70).

At these meetings attempts were made at psychological persuasion and sowing the seeds of national dissension. Some people collected signatures on the language problem and heated up the atmosphere of discussions on the history of the Moldavian people.... Some of those at the meeting declared that if national politics does not change Moldavia could become "a second Karabakh."<sup>12</sup>

*Sovetskaya Moldaviya* devoted a whole page to the Kishinev meetings. Candidate of Philosophical Sciences V. Efremov wrote that the Democratic Movement "is perceived by us as a temporary form of assistance to the Party during the transitional stage of *perestroika* and nothing more."<sup>13</sup> The newspaper viciously attacked three leaders of the meeting, Mihai Moroșanu, Alexandru Usatyuk, and Gheorghe Ghimpu. Moroșanu, son of a kulak, was deported in 1949 with his family to Kurgan Oblast. Moroșanu returned to Kishinev in 1960 but in 1964 was expelled from the Polytechnic Institute for "speculation in national sentiments." Two years later he was arrested and sentenced to three years in prison on charges of "nationalism" for insisting that he be addressed in Moldavian in public.

Gheorghe Ghimpu was a teacher at the Kishinev Pedagogical Institute in 1967 when he was arrested together with Alexandru Usatyuk, a market researcher, allegedly for trying to create a national patriotic front. In fact Ghimpu had written an open letter to the Soviet government protesting the shoddy treatment of Moldavians by the local authorities. Usatyuk wrote in a similar vein to Romanian President Ceaușescu, who promptly passed the letter on to the Kishinev KGB. Ghimpu and Usatyuk got six and seven years in strict-regime camps respectively.<sup>14</sup> Their long involvement in the national movement put them in good stead at the Kishinev meetings last year.

The official newspapers portrayed the three as the direst enemies of the Moldavian republic, but, remarkably, Moroșanu, Usatyuk, and Ghimpu decided to sue for slander the authors of the newspaper articles as well as the editorial boards of *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, *Moldova socialistă*, and four other publications. At the end of November, 1988, the people's court of Lenin Raion heard the case, and, to their credit, the judges ruled in favor of the three activists. The newspapers were ordered to take back their fabrications and apologize to the three activists.

<sup>12</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, June 26, 1988.

<sup>13</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, July 27, 1988.

<sup>14</sup> Nicolae Lupan, *Basarabia și Bucovina*, Brussels, 1980.

The local authorities have now all but stopped granting permission for such meetings, but members of the Democratic Movement and the Mateevici Club continue to gather in the Kishinev parks, even though they risk being detained or paying large fines.

Spontaneous protest demonstrations also occurred at the republican Supreme Soviet and the Council of Ministers over a set of theses on language and orthography issues. On November 12, more than five thousand people gathered in the Summer Theater of the city park to declare that the Theses effectively precluded any democratic solution of the language issue and were an affront to historical and scientific truth. On November 16, the plenum of the board of the Union of Moldavian Writers stopped work as a sign of protest against the Party Theses. The following morning, groups of Kishinev students gathered on Pobeda Square, the main square of the city, to express their opposition. More than thirty students were detained. At one o'clock that afternoon more than two thousand students assembled in front of the Kishinev University building, again to express their complete disagreement with the Theses of the Moldavian *nomenklatura*. At this meeting a decision was taken to form a league of students of Moldavia.

#### The Bus Drivers Go on Strike

On the morning of July 12, 1988, more than one thousand bus drivers in Kishinev and its suburbs went on strike. Almost 500 passenger buses failed to come into service, and public transport in the Moldavian capital, with a population of 630,000, was paralyzed. A strike bus with a loudspeaker system blocked the doors of the depot while the initiative group distributed leaflets outlining the strikers' demands: an increase in drivers' pay from 2.35 to 3 rubles per hour, abolition of the system of crew contracts, and an improvement in working conditions. The drivers further demanded relief of social problems; for example, they sought to direct attention to the fact that many people must wait fifteen years or more for housing.

About two hours after the strike began, the official Volga sedan of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia rolled up to the depot. A short time later the basic economic demands of the drivers had been met. The order was signed on the spot, and the drivers got back into their buses.

The apparent victory of the drivers was put into perspective a few days later, however, when *Pravda* wrote,

When vehicles are not in service in a strike, working hands are idle—this is not just stagnation, it is paralysis. Problems, either



one's own or someone else's, do not just disappear at the flick of a wrist. We have to resolve them for ourselves. For this, collective determination, courage, and work are needed, not group hysteria.<sup>15</sup>

The republican Central Committee resolution on the drivers' strike was printed in *Moldova socialistă*. The strike, they said, "gave rise to a wave of public discontent and indignation," and the demands of the Kishinev drivers "cannot serve as a basis for strike action."

The drivers obviously had not grasped the process of democratization that is going on in today's Moldavia.<sup>16</sup>

On July 23, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* printed an account of a later Party meeting that took place at the depot. The Communists, most of whom were drivers, promptly committed the depot administration to renege on the July 12 order.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, the drivers are again receiving two rubles and thirty-five kopeks an hour. Probably now they understand the kind of democratization going on in Moldavia.

#### On the Brink of Ecological Catastrophe

In 1988, *Literatura și arta* and also *Izvestia* and *Lit'eraturnaya gazeta* published a number of articles about the alarming ecological situation in Moldavia. Aleksei Yablokov, a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, in an open letter to *Literatura și arta*, called the situation "perhaps the most menacing in the country." The Moscow scientist described the environmental protection plan adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Moldavian SSR as superficial and completely unrealistic in light of the "absolutely catastrophic" state of affairs.<sup>18</sup> The poisoning of the earth with toxic chemicals has led to a sharp decline in soil productivity. Agricultural yields dropped by 6.22 percent from 1986 to 1987 according to official statistics.<sup>19</sup>

Much of the responsibility for this situation must be placed upon the former secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia and sometime veterinary assistant, Ivan Bodiul. Under his leadership, Moldavia was the first republic in the Soviet Union to introduce industrial technology to the production of apples, sugar beets, and sunflowers. At Bodiul's orders huge tracts of fertile land were given over to vineyards and large-scale gardens. Crop-dusters sprayed 22.5 kilograms of pesticides per hectare—ten times the

USSR average. "With every passing year the earth is becoming more vulnerable, like a sick person living on injections and tablets. The destruction of the biosystem means that the plants, like drug addicts, can no longer live without toxic chemicals."<sup>20</sup> The first-class Moldavian chernozem is being degraded. In recent years 205,000 hectares of fertile land have been taken out of crop rotation. Soil erosion is worsening daily, and almost 100,000 hectares of water meadows have turned into swamps. There are almost no birds left in Moldavia. The population of beneficial insects has fallen by 95 percent, and in the giant Dnestr plantations, where chemicals are applied fourteen to sixteen times a year, it has been destroyed completely.

The water resources of the republic have been destabilized. The water supply is ten times worse than the Soviet average. Drinking water is in acutely short supply in the southern raions of Cagula, Ciadâr-Liung, Comrat, and elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> The majority of villages in Moldavia lack sewage systems, and fouled wells and springs are a typical phenomenon. Further, poorly-stored agricultural chemicals have gotten into the lakes and rivers. Physicians are alarmed: tens of thousands of people working with pesticides fall ill every year.<sup>22</sup> "It is no secret to anyone," Ion Druță wrote in *Literatura și arta*, that "since all this enthusiasm for pesticides began there have been births of mentally subnormal children in Moldavia."<sup>23</sup>

Chairman of the Moldavian Council of Ministers Ivan Kalin admits that the use of toxic chemicals in the republic has gotten out of control and says that too many economic planners are ignorant of what is actually going on.<sup>24</sup> But when *Literatura și arta* spoke out about the ecological situation, Simon Grossu accused the writers of trying to lay the blame for agricultural ignorance on the present leadership. Grossu, himself an agronomist, became secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia back in 1980 and until recently vigorously continued the actions started by his predecessor. Aleksandr Zhuchenko, president of the Academy of Sciences of Moldavia and a Bodiul protégé, turned on the writers' weekly, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, *Moldova socialistă*, and the magazine *Agricultura Moldovei* began running "exposés" written in the vein of the period of stagnation. Thus, the *nomenklatura* tried to heap "intellectual garbage" over those who were beginning to express concern about the poisoning of the Moldavian land and population.

#### Destruction of Monasteries and Churches

In the past forty years the Moldavian Party has destroyed, abandoned, or turned into storehouses, sports halls, kolkhozes, or museums nearly one thousand churches and monasteries. That is almost all that the Orthodox Church had built between the rivers Dnestr and Prut in the course of a millennium. Poet Grigore Vieru wrote:

The problem of my people's faith affects me directly, because in the wake of its eradication our people, once industrious and pure-hearted, are now being destroyed morally and spiritually at an unbelievable speed. That which had been nurtured over the centuries for the inner beauty of man in the name of the nation's existence was destroyed in a few decades—destroyed by the satanic will of a small group of people who lined their pockets with gold prised from the domes of our monasteries and churches, and with the gold from the hearts of the people, whose gentle and unfanatic faith never was an impediment to scientific and technical progress as our local so-called atheists have been trying to convince us in their talentless pamphlets.<sup>25</sup>

In order to understand the pain of the poet (and not his alone), one should remember that in 1981 the Kishinev Eparchy numbered 192 parishes and one monastery.<sup>26</sup> Before 1940—i.e., before the occupation—there were 1,120 active Orthodox churches in Bessarabia, including 29 monasteries. Ten years ago only 300 remained.<sup>27</sup>

Architecturally unique structures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—the monasteries of Saharna, Chițcani, Suruceni, Capriani, Hâncu, and others—have been reduced to pitiful ruins. In the Nisporen region near Kishinev stand the remains of the Vărzărești Monastery, founded in the fourteenth century by the Moldavian lord Alexandru the Good. The monastery buildings that remain are now used by the "Road to Communism" kolkhoz as storehouses, workshops, and stables. In the 1950s, an uprising by the monks of the Hâncu Monastery was cruelly put down. The Tabar Monastery in the north of Moldavia was seized by forces

of the militia and Party activists led by Fedor Vidrashko, former chairman of the republican committee for television and radio.<sup>28</sup> Here and elsewhere priceless icons disappeared and rare frescoes were smashed with hammers. *Literatura și arta* related how a Moldovafilm crew ripped out the window casings in the seventeenth-century Butuceni Monastery because they were unsuitably narrow for artistic shots. The locals dragged off the gravestones from the monastery courtyard.

*Literatura și arta* has described how the nuns live now in the Japca Convent, the only monastery left in Moldavia. Of the fifty women, only one is under thirty. They wear heavy shoes and dark habits reaching to the ground. They live crammed by twos and threes into inhospitably tiny cells. Since there is no electric light, they use candles and wick lamps, just as they did when the monastery was founded in the fifteenth century.<sup>29</sup>

The historic churches of Bessarabia are also being destroyed.<sup>30</sup> In the Orgiev region the remains of a sixteenth-century Moldavian church in the village of Trebujet disappeared without trace. The wooden church at Cotești was bulldozed. In recent years the churches of Edineț, Călăraș, Dondiușeni, Criuleni, Suvorov, Râșcani, and many other regions of Moldavia have been turned into museums of scientific atheism or the like. For instance, the church in the village of Cobâlăna, the oldest church in Moldavia, built on the orders of Ștefan the Great to celebrate a victory over the Turks, has been turned into a kolkhoz museum. It was restored in the last century in the style of the

fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but atheist slogans, portraits of outstanding workers, and photos of the local Tkachenko kolkhoz now grace its walls.<sup>31</sup> On average, only one working church remains for each twelve to fifteen large villages. Many

raions of Moldavia, which has a population of over 4,200,000 and was always famous for its many churches, are now without any churches at all.

The situation is equally appalling in the towns. The 1824 Church of St. Dmitrii rises near the center of the town of Soroca. Its three large domes are rusted, and the rain comes through gaping holes onto the remains of the altar. The support piles are in ruins and the walls are dilapidated. The barred

<sup>15</sup> *Pravda*, July 18, 1988.

<sup>16</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, July 21, 1988.

<sup>17</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, July 23, 1988.

<sup>18</sup> *Literatura și arta*, February 11, 1988.

<sup>19</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, March 24, 1988.

<sup>20</sup> *Izvestia*, February 13, 1988.

<sup>21</sup> *Agricultura Moldovei*, No. 12, 1987.

<sup>22</sup> *Literatura și arta*, July 29, 1987.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, April 15, 1988.

<sup>25</sup> *Literatura și arta*, July 14, 1988.

<sup>26</sup> *Zhurnal Moskovskoi Patriarkhii*, March, 1981.

<sup>27</sup> *Viața românească* (USA), August, 1981. This number includes Evangelical, Catholic, Baptist, and other churches.

<sup>28</sup> *Moldavskaya entsiklopediya*, Kishinev, 1979.

<sup>29</sup> *Literatura și arta*, August 11, 1988.

<sup>30</sup> *Literatura și arta*, September 19, 1985.

<sup>31</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, June 3, 1985.



windows have no glass, and the stone wall is destroyed. A crude lavatory made out of planks stands outside. The interior is piled up with drawers, boxes, and bicycles; it is being used as a town warehouse. Nearby is the Cathedral of the Assumption, which is to be turned into a young technicians club. The Church of St. Mary is supposed to become an archaeological museum, but finding money for its restoration is proving difficult.<sup>32</sup>

The capital city of Moldavia could boast fourteen Orthodox churches in 1924, not counting the Greek and Armenian churches.<sup>33</sup> Today there is only one working church, the Church of the Holy Trinity (Ciuplea). The Kishinev cathedral complex dedicated to the saint and martyr Fedor Tiron, which dates from the 1830s, stands in the center of the city. First it was made into a concert hall, then an exhibition hall. There were two large bell towers, which, together with the cathedral and the triumphal arch,

formed a classical architectural complex. In 1962, on Bodiul's orders, the larger tower was blown up. The bells, which were cast from cannons captured during the Russo-Turkish war, were broken up for scrap metal.<sup>34</sup> "Year after year," the writer Ion Hadărcă (Ion Khadyrke) laments in *Literatura și arta*, "our monuments are being destroyed. The cathedral complex in the center of Kishinev is a good example. They have defaced it, covered it in lime from top to bottom, and have left no evidence of the faith of the people who created it."<sup>35</sup>

Recently an exhibition devoted to the millennium of the Christianization of Rus' entitled "Moldavian Art of the XVI-XVII Centuries" opened in the former cathedral. *Literatura și arta* described how the visitors held lighted candles before the icons and prayed. Groups of believers gathered in front of the cathedral, sang psalms, and invited people walking in the cathedral park to pray with them. The playwright Gheorghe Malarchuk, religion correspondent of *Literaturnaya gazeta*, wrote:

The time has come to render unto God God's, and unto Caesar Caesar's....For years axioms were drilled into us that we are now ashamed of. We were told that the soul does not exist; that the soul is mysticism, idealism. Suddenly we find ourselves lacking a soul, lacking shame, lacking

self-esteem. The hour has come for returning to Man his soul and faith and to believers what belonged to them and always will belong: the cathedral complex, the bell tower, and the peal of bells ringing out across Kishinev and all the Moldavian land.<sup>36</sup>

The year 1988 marked a turning point in the spiritual life of Moldavia. Student volunteers have started restoring the Capriani Monastery and several other architectural monuments following a campaign in *Literatura și arta*. Moreover, fifty-two Orthodox churches began their activities anew, and at year's end ten more were opening their doors.

**"Suddenly we find ourselves lacking a soul, lacking shame, lacking self-esteem. The hour has come for returning to Man his soul and faith and to believers what belonged to them and always will belong: the cathedral complex, the bell tower, and the peal of bells ringing out across Kishinev and all the Moldavian land."**

—Playwright Gheorghe Malarchuk

To be sure, the local authorities have put various obstacles in the way, but the leadership of the Kishinev Eparchy still expects the number of active churches in Moldavia will soon double to almost four hundred.<sup>37</sup>

#### The Question of National Education

Education was on the agenda at the plenum of the Moldavian Party Central Committee that took place in April, 1988. I. Kapitonov, chairman of the CPSU Central Auditing Commission, addressed the plenum and acknowledged, "a lot is being done in your republic to improve work with the growing generation." But he added, "Moldavia figures last among the Union republics in sensitive educational indicators. You have the fewest citizens per thousand of the population over ten years old with completed or uncompleted higher and secondary education." He went on to say that a third of the schools in Moldavia must run two and three shifts, and that many fewer students are enrolled in evening classes than in any other republic.<sup>38</sup>

Simon Grossu also spoke at the April, 1988, plenum, and made the point that Moldavians can choose the language in which their children are educated. This may be technically true, but few Moldavian schools exist (see below). Moreover, Ukrainians (14 percent of the population of the republic), Gagauzi and Bulgarians (5.5 percent), and Jews (2 percent) who live in Moldavia and, naturally, want to preserve their languages and cultures, lack even this opportunity because they do not have their own schools. Only the Russians (12 percent) enjoy adequate education.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, April 27-30, 1988.

<sup>39</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, April 16, 1988.

Last year 384 students of the Frunze Agricultural Institute (where 92.5 percent of the 3,500 students are Moldavians) wrote to *Literatura și arta*:

We do not know the history of our country, we stutter in search of words in our own language. We, who must return to the villages after our studies, do not know the most elementary terminology in our field, for not a single subject is taught in Moldavian at our institute. We students declare that we want all subjects to be taught in our mother tongue.

M. Marchenko, rector of the institute vowed, however, that "not one subject, not a single subject will be taught in Moldavian."<sup>40</sup>

#### A Lesson of History

Before the first half of the fifteenth century the whole land of Romania was called "Bessarabia," from the name of the local lords, the Bassarabs. Later "Bessarabia" came to denote that part of Moldavia comprising the lands between the rivers Prut and Dnestr. In 1812, after its victory over the Ottoman Empire, Russia incorporated Bessarabia, or, in other words, the Turks ceded to Russia a territory not their own, without asking the Moldavians. Friedrich Engels described the situation as "common robbery."<sup>41</sup> In 1918 Bessarabia was reunited with Romania. Twenty-two years later, in 1940, as a result of the Hitler-Stalin pact, the Nazi German leader once again handed over territory that was not his own to the Communist dictator, and Soviet tanks occupied the lands between the Dnestr and the Prut.

Regime historians stubbornly stick to the official version: in 1812 imperial Russia freed the Moldavians from the Turkish yoke; in 1918, although Soviet power was victorious in Bessarabia, the Romanian noblemen and interventionists seized it; and finally, in 1940, the territory was united with the motherland.<sup>42</sup> But what really happened in Bessarabia in 1918?

Bolshevik declarations about the inalienable right of self-determination of nations and peoples living in annexed territories undoubtedly gave rise to the national consciousness of the indigenous population of Bessarabia. But they also accelerated the process of drawing away from the motherland (or rather, "step-motherland"). In just one year, from March 1917 to March 1918, political, economic, social, and cultural organizations sprang up demanding autonomy for the province. The

Moldavian National Party, for instance, campaigned for broad administrative, economic, religious, legal, and educational autonomy. The Assembly of Cooperative Associations made similar demands. Some 10,000 Moldavians serving in the tsar's army called for democratic elections, while the First Assembly of Bessarabian Peasants demanded agrarian reforms. In July-August 1917, the Moldavian Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Council of Commissioned Officers and Soldiers sought the creation of a central democratic body—the Sfatul Țării (Council of the Country).

Contemporary documents testify to the feverish search for practical ways to realize national claims. The call of the leaders of the United Moldavian Students, dated the beginning of 1918, is typical: "Under Russian rule, we had no schools, no church, no language. We had none of the essentials a people needs to make progress."<sup>43</sup> Significantly, today, seventy years later, the students of Kishinev are making the same declarations.

The establishment historian I. Sytnik, in an article, "An Act of Treachery," talks about a triumph of Soviet power in Bessarabia on January 1, 1918. But there was in fact not even a Bolshevik organization there. He probably means Sfatul Țării, which founded the Moldavian Democratic Republic on March 27, 1918.<sup>44</sup> Sfatul Țării was formed on democratic principles. Its 150 deputies were chosen on the basis of proportional representation of the social strata and ethnic groups. The composition of the state council was 70 percent Moldavian—105 delegates, 44 of whom were chosen by the assembly of Moldavian soldiers, and 31 of whom were peasants; the rest were representatives of trade unions and cultural and social organizations. The national minorities of Bessarabia were represented as well: 15 Ukrainians, 14 Jews, 7 Russians, 2 Germans, 2 Gagauzi, one Armenian, and one Greek. Eight-six deputies to the Sfatul Țării voted for the union of the Moldavian Democratic Republic with Romania, 36 abstained, and 3 opposed.<sup>45</sup>

*Pravda* was silent about these developments at the time, but ten years later, in January, 1928, it wrote:

The Soviet Union has stated on several occasions that it has once and for all declined any claims on Bessarabia based on the fact of its having formerly been part of the Russian Empire. However, the Soviet Union categorically refuses to accept Romanian sovereignty over Bessarabia. The Soviet

<sup>43</sup> Nicolae Iorga, *Adevărul despre Basarabia*, Bucharest, 1940, pp. 56-58.

<sup>44</sup> G. Chirenescu, *Aspekty rusko-rumynskikh ot-noshenii*, Paris, 1967, p. 113.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Literatura și arta*, November 28, 1985.

<sup>33</sup> *Literatura și arta*, September 1, 1988.

<sup>34</sup> *Orizontul*, No. 8, 1988.

<sup>35</sup> *Literatura și arta*, August 11, 1988.



Union is proposing a free plebiscite of the population whereby the Bessarabian people can express their sovereign will about the constitution of their land.<sup>46</sup>

Of course, the Soviet-style "plebiscite" took place on June 28, 1940, when tanks bearing the red star crossed the Dnestr. But earlier, on August 23, 1939, in Moscow, foreign ministers Vyacheslav Molotov and Joachim von Ribbentrop had signed a secret protocol that, among other things, stated: "With regard to Southeastern Europe, attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas."<sup>47</sup>

### "Blank Spots?"

Recently two historical questions were put to the newspaper *Moldova socialistă* by one of its readers:

First, why can't we view the Declaration of March 27, 1918 as a concrete case of a nation realizing its right to self-determination as declared by the October Revolution? Poland and Finland availed themselves of this right when they founded independent states. Why couldn't Moldavia do so too? Second, in 1812, as a result of the agreement between Russia and Turkey, part of the territory of Moldavia—Bessarabia—was annexed to Russia. Moldavia did not even formally participate in the talks, so the annexation of Bessarabia presumably occurred against Moldavia's will. So why can't the Declaration of March 27, 1918, be looked on as the reunification of Moldavia?<sup>48</sup>

The popular poet and playwright Dumitru Matcovschi wrote in an article entitled "The Burden of History":

Bodiul took their history away from the Moldavians, drove a wedge between the people and their national culture, and disfigured their mother tongue. The Moldavian language was expunged from all institutes of higher education....The national theater was destroyed, as was the national film studio; folklore ensembles were disbanded; Moldavian television was turned into a reactionary institution that distorted our language and demeaned our customs.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>46</sup> *Pravda*, January 26, 1928.

<sup>47</sup> *Tvorchestvo* (Estonian SSR), No. 8, 1988, 113; English text from Alvin Z. Rubinstein, ed., *The Foreign Policy of the Soviet Union*, New York, Random House, 1966, p. 152.

<sup>48</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, August 27, 1988.

<sup>49</sup> *Literatura și arta*, March 17, 1988.

Matcovschi was reprimanded by the Frunze Raikom for the "apoliticalness" of his article, and the editors of *Literatura și arta* were spoken to as well. Establishment historians launched their attack on the Moldavian writers' weekly as scholars like I. Sytnik, I. Isac, and others contended that there are, in fact, practically no blank spots in Moldavian history. The prose writer, Serafim Saca, summed up the situation in *Literatura și arta*: "Something is historically rotten in the state of Denmark."<sup>50</sup>

### Contacts with Romania

The only country that Soviet Moldavia borders on the west is Romania. Recently, the climate of trust between these two Socialist republics that share a language has significantly improved. At the beginning of 1988, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Moldavian SSR declared that a number of restrictions on contacts across the Prut would be lifted.<sup>51</sup> The nearly eighty percent of Moldavians who claim relations on the right bank of the river Prut now have the opportunity to meet more often with families and friends living in Romanian Moldavia. This is especially important for those villages that were cut in two when the Prut became the border between Romania and the USSR in 1940.

The sphere of cultural contacts is growing daily. In March 1988, Romanian writers Ioan Alexandru, Arcadi Donos, and Mircea Tomuş were warmly greeted by their fellow writers in Kishinev, where they participated in the celebrations of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Bogdan Petriceicu-Hajdău, whose literary heritage belongs to both banks of the Prut. Two of the guests are the compilers of an anthology of Moldavian poets—*The Constellation of the Lyres*—that was published at the end of last year. *Literatura și arta* devoted a whole page to the visitors, publishing reviews, annotations, and fragments of their work. The Moldavian poet Grigore Vieru wrote about his Romanian colleague Ioan Alexandru:

[Alexandru] clearly continues the national tradition of poetry, especially that which belongs to the thousand-year-old hearth of Transylvania, ever an integral part of the national essence. Ioan Alexandru has won his right to a special place in the context of contemporary lyric poetry. His art represents the apex of Romanian verse.

Vieru's reference to the "thousand-year-old hearth" was clear: he meant Bessarabia.

<sup>50</sup> *Literatura și arta*, November 12, 1987.

<sup>51</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, March 19, 1988.

At the beginning of September, the well-known Romanian poet Mircea Dinescu spoke in the big hall of the Writers' Union in Kishinev. "I have been in Moscow many times," said the guest, "but this is the first time I have been allowed to see Kishinev.... I can tell you that I am one of many Romanian writers who are supporters of *glasnost*' and *perestroika*."<sup>52</sup>

An anthology of Romanian poetry is being prepared for publication in Kishinev. Ion Druță and Grigore Vieru have visited monasteries on the right bank of the Moldavi-Putna and Voroneț and met with the Patriarch of Romania as well as, of course, with its writers. This year Druță's book, *The Bell Tower*, came out in Iași. The interest of Romanians in Moldavian *perestroika* is tremendous. Many of them see in *perestroika* a way out of the blind alley into which the "family socialism" of Ceaușescu has led them. More and more Romanians are subscribing to the Kishinev newspaper *Literatura și arta*, although its Cyrillic script makes reading it difficult. Here is but one example of the many letters that paper has received from Romania:

I follow with great interest and attention what is being printed in the newspaper *Literatura și arta*. Articles about the level of knowledge of the native tongue in villages and the problems of the protection of nature made an especially deep impression on me. In the issue of December 10, 1987, the writer Ion Druță suggested setting up a memorial to the anonymous poet, the author of *Miorița*. This idea touched me deeply. I am writing to you to offer my widow's mite towards the construction of this memorial....<sup>53</sup>

The Kishinev national ensemble "Miorița" has recently performed in Bucharest, Brașov, Bacău, Piatra-Neamț, and Iași. Margareta Ivănuș, soloist with the Moldavian Philharmonic, has sung concerts in the Romanian capital. Sofia Vicovianca, the famous performer of Romanian folk songs, gave eight concerts at the Octombrie Palace in Kishinev at the end of September accompanied by the Moldavian ensemble "Lautarii," and the poet Grigorie Vieru gave a reading before her concerts. They were an outstanding success, and even *Moldova socialistă* printed a highly positive review.<sup>54</sup>

Such open manifestations of fraternal feelings upset the republican leadership. *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* advised the Party Central Committee: "Under the conditions of a growing climate of trust between states, it is vital to think through measures that will allow us to maintain vigilance." A. Munteanu,

<sup>52</sup> *Literatura și arta*, September 8, 1988.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, September 25, 1988.

deputy republican KGB chairman, worried about negative influences from guests that might arouse nationalist manifestations: "Our enemies are trying to pervert history and certain important stages in the life of the Moldavian people. The historical unification of Bessarabia with Russia is being subjected to sophisticated falsification."<sup>55</sup> But it will likely be difficult for the "competent organs" of the republic to halt the process of spiritual union of both banks of the one Romanian river. In his article mentioned above, Matcovschi wrote that "we have been uprooted from our culture for years. One should be amazed at the fact that anything at all has been preserved of our national culture."<sup>56</sup>

### The Moldavian Language

The language issue is the touchstone of the democratic reform movement. Because of public pressure, the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers adopted two decrees dedicated to improving the study of Moldavian. The first states that "many people, especially town dwellers, have a weak knowledge of their native language," and that it is vital to "adopt measures to improve the study of Moldavian for schoolchildren, students, and the adult population of the republic." The second decree states that the first decree is not being fulfilled and that, starting in 1989, a magazine, *Moldavian Language in the Schools*, should be published.<sup>57</sup>

How is it that Moldavians don't know their own language? In 1824, after the first occupation of Bessarabia, the governor-general ordered that, "since education in 'Lancasterian' schools was conducted mainly in Russian, Moldavian will be taught only as an option in addition to Russian." After 1824 the teaching of the Moldavian language was gradually cut back as a faculty subject, so that eventually, in 1867, in accordance with the decree of the Minister of National Education "On the Russification of Minorities," Moldavian was excluded from all schools in Bessarabia.<sup>58</sup> In 1870 the Russifiers banned religious services in the native language and, in order to remove temptation, all religious books in Moldavian were burned.<sup>59</sup> In 1908, the Council of Ministers in Moscow banned the opening of a one-room school in the village of Cioplena that was to have taught in Moldavian.<sup>60</sup>

The first Soviet blow to the national language was the decree of the Moldavian Council of People's Commissars of May 16, 1941, "On the Confirmation

<sup>55</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, March 19, 1988.

<sup>56</sup> *Literatura și arta*, March 17, 1988.

<sup>57</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, July 6, 1988.

<sup>58</sup> O. Andrus, *Ocherki po istorii shkol Bessarabii*, Kishinev, 1952, p. 7.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *Istoriya Moldavskoi SSR*, Kishinev, p. 617.



of the Basic Rules of Orthography of the Moldavian Language," in accordance with which the Latin alphabet of the only Romance language in the Soviet Union was replaced with Cyrillic. Meanwhile, Stalin's linguists were gathering evidence that the Moldavian language is not Romanian at all. Simon Cibotaru, later a member of the Moldavian Academy of Sciences, wrote "Romanian and Moldavian are two different languages. They developed in different directions and their historical and social functions are different."<sup>61</sup> The authorities banned the sale of Romanian books, magazines, and newspapers. Moldavians were denied access to Romanian films, theater, folk and performing arts groups and art exhibitions. This policy continued to the end of 1987, but even today the broadcasting of Romanian music on radio and television is forbidden and the ban on performance of Romanian songs and dances by groups of the Moldavian Philharmonic has not been lifted.

Today all signs in public places—on buses and trolleys, at stations and stadiums—are exclusively written in Russian. Factory and kolkhoz meetings, assemblies, school councils, and Supreme Soviet sessions are all conducted in Russian. The main city streets and regional centers all have Russian names. The names of firms and products, even those made locally, are rarely translated into Moldavian. Even Russians are struck by this national self-effacement. *Izvestia* told how at a meeting of writers in Kishinev, "a poet, who was famous throughout the land, mounted the platform in a state of agitation. But he had only spoken his first few phrases in his native language when a voice from the back of the hall called out, 'Speak in Russian!' This sort of attitude toward the native language was, for the past leadership, an expression of 'genuine internationalism'.<sup>62</sup> Not only for them, perhaps, since today's leadership makes the same demands, while the native language of the Moldavian declines further. So while the language has been uprooted and the bureaucrats in Kishinev keep waving the flag of bilingualism, the number of Russian schools is deliberately being increased—at the expense, of course, of the Moldavians. Russians in Moldavia comprise 13 percent of the population, but 40 percent of the secondary schools and over half the kindergartens are reserved for them.<sup>63</sup>

At the 1988 Central Committee plenum, Simon Grossu declared that "it might be thought that certain individuals do not realize the consequences of their judgments on the language problem."<sup>64</sup> He felt it necessary to warn those who make "negative

statements" in regard to the language. Grossu's proposals were that children should learn their own language simultaneously with Russian from a very early age<sup>65</sup> and that the network of Russian-Moldavian schools in the republic should be expanded.

*Literatura și arta* responded by printing a page of opinions about Grossu's ideas. Cozma Aramă, a Kishinev electrician, wrote "In order for the people to understand their native language, they must be taught in it." Another reader added, "most doctors, agronomists, engineers, and cultural workers don't know terminology in Moldavian." Dr. Nicolae Rakoviță from Benderi wrote:

Of the sixteen schools in town, only one, a mixed school, teaches in Moldavian. There are forty preschool institutions in Benderi, but only a few of these groups attached to the Russian kindergartens are for Moldavians. This is where school problems start. A child who has attended a Russian kindergarten for many years cannot then go to a Moldavian school, the more so because there is only one in Benderi. Parents have to send their children to the nearest Russian-language schools, which they soon regret. The children don't know their native language and feel alienated. Some of them even stop thinking of themselves as Moldavian.

Nicolae Ciobanu, a former teacher from Kishinev, put it more categorically:

It is absolutely clear that, if you don't open Moldavian kindergartens, then Moldavian schools will not be necessary....I think Russian-Moldavian schools should be gradually disbanded. The pupils at these schools speak a mishmash of a language. In Kishinev's Sovetsky Raion only one school of the fifteen is Moldavian. The silting up of a river starts with the closing off of its sources.

One more of the twenty-six letters printed in *Literatura și arta* was that of Sergiu Iacaban:

For us Moldavians, our language is not just a means of daily communication. The native language perpetuates and develops our national culture, and this is something neither Russian nor any other language can do.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> The consequences of enforced bilingualism from early childhood, especially in less intellectual families, are well-known. The thought process in the native tongue is thought to be slowed down, expression of complex thoughts may cause stuttering, and the child feels alienated from his native tongue. See, for example, M. Khint, "O bilingvizme," *Raduga* (Tallinn), 1987.

<sup>66</sup> *Literatura și arta*, May 5, 1988.

The raw facts are as follows. For the 25,000 Moldavians in the city of Tiraspol there is not a single Moldavian school. In Kishinev, where the Moldavian population has shrunk to 42 percent, there are 198 kindergartens, but only eighteen of them are Moldavian. The capital city has sixty secondary schools, only seven are Moldavian. Frunze Raion lacks even a single national school. In all nine institutes of higher education of the republic, with a very few exceptions, instruction is totally in Russian.<sup>67</sup> As one engineer wrote in *Literatura și arta*:

**"For us Moldavians, our language is not just a means of daily communication. The native language perpetuates and develops our national culture, and this is something neither Russian nor any other language can do."**

—Letter to *Literatura și arta*

Moldavian is a second-class language in the Moldavian republic. It is not used as a state language....It is not directly utilized in sociopolitical and socioeconomic matters (assemblies, conferences, seminars, etc.) at the raion, city, or republican level, nor are official records of Moldavian village councils or kolkhozes kept in it.<sup>68</sup>

The recent superficial and self-serving Central Committee decrees on language were met with coolness. Ion Druță, honorary president of the Union of Moldavian Writers, said:

It was a great shock for me to read the long-awaited government decree and learn that many things are to be done to develop the Moldavian art of oratory. What art of oratory? Bring oratory to a people that has lost the origins of its language? We don't need the art of oratory, but rather hundreds of kindergartens using the Moldavian language. Let's begin from the beginning if we want to get somewhere!<sup>69</sup>

The attitude of the Kishinev leadership to the language issue came out in an article by Vasile Stati, an international relations specialist, in the journal *Komunistul Moldovei*: "sometimes in the republic certain people allow themselves to assert, for instance, that the individuality of Moldavian culture is being suppressed and that there is an element of 'Russification' going on. But the culturo-linguistic reality of Soviet Moldavia belies these evil fabrications." The author is upset that 47 percent of Moldavians know Russian only superficially and worries that "the Russian language is not widespread enough for the real

needs of the population."<sup>70</sup> (Of the *nomenklatura*, perhaps, since the real need of the people is to be able to speak their own tongue correctly.)

Gheorghe Sângereanu, from the village of Gura-Galbene, wrote in *Literatura și arta*, "Brothers, it is not the Russians who speak bad Moldavian, it's the Moldavians!"<sup>71</sup> The Kishinev school teacher Postolache agreed: "The people still speak the language badly, with many foreign words used ungrammatically, whether it's Moldavian or Russian. The language indeed belongs to the people and not to the academics and assistants."<sup>72</sup>

### The Latin Alphabet on Trial

In the second half of 1988, the question of changing the Cyrillic to Latin script burst to the fore in Kishinev. The question was mooted at meetings of informal organizations, in public and private discussions, and on the pages of the journal *Nistru* and the newspaper *Literatura și arta*. At the same time, politicians and establishment linguists were still nattering about the "special conditions" of the Moldavian SSR, showing mostly that Latin letters have more to do with politics than linguistics. They succeeded in proscribing publication of a resolution by the Moldavian Writers' Union that called for creation of a committee of philologists and literary specialists to establish once and for all that Moldavian is a Romance language.<sup>73</sup>

After many obstacles, much abridged and with a negative afterword added, an article appeared in *Nistru* by the philologist Valere Mândăcanu<sup>74</sup> in which he asked the key questions, "are Romanian and Moldavian identical or are they different languages? Which alphabet, Latin or Cyrillic, is more suitable for a language of the Romance group?"<sup>75</sup> Mândăcanu's article was bowdlerized because N. Bondarchuk, the Moldavian ideological secretary, was adamantly opposed to replacing Cyrillic in the republic.<sup>76</sup> Meanwhile, a Moscow paper pointed out that copies of Mândăcanu's article in its original form were selling for a high price around Kishinev.<sup>77</sup> Mândăcanu was also attacked by

<sup>70</sup> *Komunistul Moldovei*, No. 4, 1988.

<sup>71</sup> *Literatura și arta*, February 4, 1988.

<sup>72</sup> *Literatura și arta*, August 25, 1988.

<sup>73</sup> *Literatura și arta*, June 9, 1988.

<sup>74</sup> V. Mândăcanu, "Veșmântul fiintsei noastre," *Nistru*, No. 5, 1988.

<sup>75</sup> *Literatura și arta*, June 9, 1988.

<sup>76</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, April 5, 1988.

<sup>77</sup> *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 23, 1988.

<sup>61</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, October 25, 1988.

<sup>62</sup> *Izvestia*, March 15, 1988.

<sup>63</sup> *Literatura și arta*, February 4, 1988.

<sup>64</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, April 30, 1988.



Moldova socialistă, which accused him of distorting the role of local academics, and *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, which called the raising of these questions "immoral."<sup>78</sup> "The poor old Latin alphabet," Nicolae Vieru lamented in *Literatura și arta*, "as old as the world itself, has become a 'political problem' too."<sup>79</sup>

The alphabet is indeed politics. Recently the pedagogical newspaper *Învățământul public* published an article by Professor Borshch entitled "The Slavonic Written Language of the Eastern Romance Peoples."<sup>81</sup> It was immediately reprinted by *Moldova socialistă* and *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, indicating



Cartoonist Dumitru Trifan portrays the Cyrillic-Latin orthographical debate in anatomical terms. *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* (December 8, 1988), reprinted from the latest issue of *Literatura și arta*.

Gheorghe Sângereanu gave examples of how the lack of an adequate alphabet is expressed in place names:

Cojocaru has become "Kozhokar," Călugăreanu—"Kalagaryan," Slănină—"Slanin," Copaceanu—"Kapachyan," Smochină—"Smokin." Andrei Măță from Sarata-Galbenă has six children. According to the birth certificates issued by the village authorities these children cannot be brothers. Their family name is written differently: "Mytsy," "Mytsi," "Mitsu," and one of them even "Matsa."<sup>80</sup>

<sup>78</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, June 4, 1988; *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, June 19, 1988.

<sup>79</sup> *Literatura și arta*, July 10, 1988.

<sup>80</sup> *Literatura și arta*, February 4, 1988.

that it expressed the official point of view. The aim of this tendentious piece was to prove the superiority of the Slavonic written language and the dependence of Moldavian upon it, the inability of the Latin alphabet adequately to express the phonetic system of the Eastern Romance languages, and the Romanians' "historical mistake" in adopting it.

*Literatura și arta*, of course, did not remain silent for long. In a lengthy article C. Tenase and V. Bahnaru discussed the language of the Dacians after their inclusion in the Roman Empire in 106 A.D. The authors mentioned that 2,500 inscriptions in Latin have been found. They cited documents establishing that as early as the fourth century local inhabitants used the Latin alphabet. Slavonic was culturally important in medieval Moldavia principally as a religious cult language.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> *Învățământul public*, August 13, 1988.

<sup>82</sup> *Literatura și arta*, August 25, 1988.

### Moldavia: To Be or Not to Be?

The cultural and political battle between the republican Central Committee and the Moldavian writers heated up in 1988, especially after August 18, when the proceedings of the writers' round table were printed in *Literatura și arta*. The writers Vladimir Beșliaghe and Ion Ciocanu, the poet Leonida Lari, and the playwright Gheorghe Malarchuk said that patience had run out and accused the *nomenklatura* of not being prepared to look the truth in the eye.

Here is a short chronology of how the polemics unfolded. On August 23, *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* came out with a crushing article entitled "If Not Possible, Then Still Desirable" and a day later with a riposte, "We Weren't Born Yesterday." On September 1, *Literatura și arta* defended itself by printing some very strong material under the headline "A Colleague's Answer." On September 8, an editorial, "A Captive of Emotion," appeared in *Moldova socialistă*. Then *Literatura și arta* reminded the Party organ (to quote the headline), "There's No Alternative to *Perestroika*." On September 15, *Literatura și arta* printed an angry article entitled "Experts," returning on September 22 and 29 to the topic of the round table, which had so distressed the Moldavian leadership at the outset.

What problems did the bureaucrats have with the writers' newspaper? First, they accuse it of being leftist and extremist and of showing extreme impatience. "Left-wing *perestroika*—an infantile disorder" can have serious consequences, even victims, they warned. Second, they said the Moldavian writers were using *glasnost* to inflame nationalist feeling.<sup>83</sup> But third—the greatest sin of the Moldavian literati—consisted of daring to speak disrespectfully of the local leadership. *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* wrote that "an anarchic attempt is being made to alienate the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia and prevent it from carrying out its duties."<sup>84</sup> *Moldova socialistă* added that "some authors dispute the right of people who have occupied their positions since before 1985 to continue to fulfill their duties."<sup>85</sup>

What did the establishment find so distressing about this round table? Poetess Leonida Lari proposed separating Moldavian from Russian schools, opening Moldavian kindergartens and schools in all densely populated areas of the republic, publishing textbooks on the real history of Moldavia, writing into the Moldavian constitution that Moldavian is the official language of the republic.

<sup>83</sup> Note, however, that the circulation of *Literatura și arta* doubled over the past year to 24,000 copies and is still rising, whereas the circulations of *Sovetskaya Moldaviya* and *Moldova socialistă* have fallen significantly.

<sup>84</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, August 27, 1988.

<sup>85</sup> *Moldova socialistă*, September 8, 1988.

lic, bringing back the Latin alphabet, stopping immigration, and expanding rights in the republic. Lari said that even in a fantasy no one would dream up two languages out of one. In her opinion, all Moldavia's troubles are rooted in its history. She asked, "which people in high places know about the suffering of our land and people? I think the Moldavian SSR leadership is incapable of solving the problems we have."<sup>86</sup>

Ion Ciocanu agreed:

A younger leadership is vital. People who are untainted by the times of stagnation must be in the first rank....How long will we continue to believe the current establishment, which assures us, tries to convince us that all is well and that we're really getting there. Let's not hide from the facts: our denationalization is programed. How much more can we endure?<sup>87</sup>

At the round table, Gheorghe Malarchuk said he found the state of affairs depressing: the June plenum had detailed the terrible situation in agriculture; social problems are not being solved; Moldavia has the fastest growing crime rate in the USSR. "Under normal circumstances," Malarchuk said, "a bankrupt leadership would retire."<sup>88</sup>

Vladimir Beșliaghe said that Moldavians live in a part of the country where the retrograde element is still in control:

In judging our present position, we should begin not with 1960, when Bodiul came along, nor from 1949 or 1918, but from 1812. History clearly shows that the Moldavian people was divided in two, then the colonization of the area between the Dnestr and the Prut began. This policy continued after the October Revolution and became dominant under Bodiul. It is especially alarming that this policy is continuing even today in the epoch of *perestroika*. The position of the authorities and the existence of a political plot is quite apparent. The battle has, in fact, only just begun.<sup>89</sup>

The Moldavian writers insisted that their round-table discussion be published in the Russian-language press of the republic. This was not done; instead, at a Central Committee meeting a month later the idea was broached of liquidating *Literatura și arta* entirely.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>86</sup> *Literatura și arta*, August 18, 1988.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Literatura și arta*, September 22, 1988.



### Recent Developments: Theses and Antitheses

The Party and government on November 11 issued a set of theses entitled "Concrete Actions to Affirm *Perestroika*." The Theses are now being discussed by Party, trade union, and Komsomol organizations, and, in compliance with the Central Committee's instructions of November 15, general and unanimous approval is anticipated. Section 3 of the Theses reads in part:

Recently, the question of granting the Moldavian language official status has arisen. Groundless statements, purportedly in the name of the people, are clouding the discussion. A hasty decree could lead to more difficult relations between nations. In any case, national-Russian bilingualism must be developed, bearing in mind the fact that bilingualism allows one to study in depth and know one's native language as well as Russian.<sup>91</sup>

In short, the native language of the Moldavians cannot be recognized as the official language of Moldavia; Russian is more suitable.

Further we read that "the Moldavian tongue is independent and has its own history, present, and future. Doubtful allegations to the contrary are scientifically groundless and slanderous to the people."<sup>92</sup> Or again,

The Cyrillic alphabet corresponds uniquely to the phonetic character of Moldavian. Other national groups living in the republic use Slavonic script. Changing to the Latin alphabet would upset the equilibrium of the population, reflect negatively on its spiritual development, and render it illiterate for a long time.<sup>93</sup>

A long article entitled "Antitheses" by playwright Dumitru Matcovschi appeared in *Literatura și arta* in December. He concluded that the leadership has decided to end differences of opinion once and for all and abandon the aspirations of Bessarabians.

The Turks, who robbed our country for three centuries, never Turkicized our language. But the Russian tsars and after 1924 the "father" of our country Stalin did everything to make our language vanish completely. They smashed its skull with their boots and pursued one aim—to liquidate us as a people.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>91</sup> *Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, November 11, 1988.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> *Literatura și arta*, December 8, 1988.

Matcovschi demanded that the authorities retract the Theses, calling them clear evidence of the gulf that exists between the elite from the banks of the Bâk and the Moldavian people. He chided the leadership further by asking them, "Do you want the people to curse you as they cursed Shchelokov, Brezhnev, Bodiul, Chernenko, Stalin? The people will not forgive you your sins either."

### The Commission

It cannot be said that the republic's leadership completely turned its back on the catastrophic language situation. In July, 1988, an Interdepartmental Commission of the Presidium of the Moldavian Supreme Soviet headed by the Presidium Chairman Alexandru Mocanu, was formed to study the question. Key seats were filled by establishment linguists such as Borshch, Mokryak, *et al.*—the same kind who for decades had been supporting the official lie with their scholarship.

The alarm again was raised by the Moldavian intelligentsia. Collective and private letters rained down on the Commission from all corners of the republic. Tens of thousands of people demanded that the Commission membership be broadened.<sup>95</sup> Furthermore, a meeting of the Scientific Council of the Moldavian Academy of Sciences held on November 1 and attended by the most important philologists of the Soviet Union adopted a resolution calling upon the Interdepartmental Commission to admit the necessity that Moldavian be given the status of official language, acknowledge that Romanian and Moldavian are the same language, and recommend the return to the Latin alphabet. In the last days of 1988, the commission published its decision to give the national language of the Moldavian SSR the status of official language and to return to the Latin alphabet.<sup>96</sup>

While this was surely a great victory for the Moldavian intelligentsia, would be premature to rejoice. Interdepartmental Commission chairman Mocanu cautioned that the Commission's recommendations must be verified and ratified by higher authorities, i.e., the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Moldavia. It is still too early to know what that body will decide.

The battle lines are drawn at the barricades of *perestroika*—and the fight will surely be of more than merely local significance.

<sup>95</sup> *Literatura și arta*, November 10, 1988.

<sup>96</sup> *Reuters*, December 31, 1988.

(RL/94, January 15, 1989)

# The USSR This Week

Vera Tolz

Saturday, February 11

### New Treaty of Cooperation between Iraq and USSR

TASS reported from Baghdad that Soviet and Iraqi delegations had signed a protocol on economic cooperation that will be of major importance to Iraq. The USSR will cooperate in the construction of major oil, gas, and energy installations, as well as irrigation projects.

### Volga Canal Project Goes Ahead, Protest Meetings Held

Soviet television said that construction of the controversial Volga-Chograi canal was continuing, even though a body of government experts had recommended that work be halted. The report said concerned citizens held rallies in several Soviet cities today to protest against the project. The report complained that the Ministry of Land Reclamation and Water Resources and the State Agroindustrial Committee, which began the project jointly, had ignored the experts' advice.

### Draft Law on Consumer Protection Submitted for Public Debate

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet has submitted for public debate draft legislation on protection for Soviet consumers. TASS said the legislation opens the eyes of manufacturers and tradespeople to the fact that they have in the past often exercised "a monopolistic *diktat*." TASS said a consumer protection society and customers' legal advice agencies had been set up in the USSR. It said the policy of *glasnost* had helped citizens to know their rights and demand recognition of them.

### Soviet Writers Form Pressure Group to Support Reforms

A group of prominent liberal Soviet writers, including Vladimir Dudintsev, Anatolii Pristavkin, and Bulat Okudzhava, announced the formation of a special committee to support Gorbachev's reform process. A letter to the latest issue of *Ogonek* from twenty-six writers said the new committee, called "Writers in Support of *Perestroika*," is aimed at strengthening the influence of the literary community "on all spheres of life." On February 13, TASS announced the creation of another informal group, called the Russian (*Rossiysky*) Popular Front for the Support of *Perestroika*. According to TASS, the proclaimed goals of the Front are the promotion of democracy and opposition to "any sort of nationalism."



**Almost One Fifth of Belorussia's  
Farm Land Contaminated**

Belorussian Prime Minister Mikhail Kovalev said nearly one-fifth of the republic's farm land was contaminated to some degree by fallout from the Chernobyl' disaster. In an interview in *Pravda*, Kovalev said the contamination was more extensive than originally thought.

**Soviet Embassy Official in Bangkok  
Defects to US**

A spokesman at the US embassy in Thailand said two Soviet citizens had defected to the United States in Bangkok. The spokesman said the two people, whom he did not identify, had been granted asylum and had flown to the United States. According to the *Bangkok Post* newspaper, the defectors are the medical officer at the Soviet embassy in Bangkok, Vladimir Zhila, and his wife Olga (AFP, Reuters, February 11).

*Sunday, February 12*

**Invasion of Afghanistan Condemned  
as Catastrophic Stupidity**

The *Baltimore Sun* quoted a Soviet official as sharply condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. The newspaper said Leonid Mironov, who was *Pravda's* first correspondent in Afghanistan, described the invasion as "a catastrophic stupidity" at a meeting of the Soviet Peace Committee. He said: "It seems our marshals believed that, in this little area [Afghanistan], we could show the Americans, the imperialists, that we knew how to fight. . . . It did not turn out that way . . . the decision to invade in 1979 was wrong from the beginning."

**New "Open Dialogue" Column  
in Pravda**

*Pravda* started a new column entitled "Open Dialogue" for its readers. It is to carry letters and "polemical notes" from Soviet and foreign readers. The first column was devoted to Afghanistan.

**Sakharov and Bonner Criticize  
Election Procedures**

At a press conference in Ottawa, Elena Bonner sharply criticized Soviet election procedures. Bonner's comments, if accurately reported, suggest that—at least in Moscow's electoral district No. 1—attempts are being made to prevent Sakharov from addressing district residents. On February 17, while Sakharov is out of the country, the district electoral commission will hold its meeting to vote on who will stand for election on March 26. Bonner told the media that this meeting would be the only opportunity that Sakharov would have to address the local population. If this is true, it flies directly in the face of what is written in the electoral law—namely, that candidates are free to meet with voters as often as they like and wherever they like (RFE/RL *Special*, February 13). Meanwhile, protests over the failure of the USSR Academy of Sciences to nominate Sakharov as a candidate for the Council of People's Deputies con-

**Jewish Cultural Center Opens  
in Moscow**

tinue to be published in the Soviet press. *Ogonek* (No. 5) carried such a letter written by Doctor of Physics B. Bolotovskiy.

A Jewish cultural center bearing the name of Solomon Mikhoels opened in Moscow. The World Jewish Congress said that it was the first such officially sanctioned center in the Soviet Union. The center's namesake was a prominent actor who was also the universally recognized leader of the Soviet Jewish community. He died in 1948 in a traffic accident that is thought to have been arranged by the security services. On February 13, TASS, in English, reported that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had met with the president of the World Jewish Congress, Edgar Bronfman, who is in Moscow in connection with the opening of the Jewish center. Shevardnadze and Bronfman discussed a number of topics, including Jewish culture, religion, emigration, and the plight of Jewish refusedniks.

**Sakharov on Perestroika**

Andrei Sakharov told a news conference in Ottawa that the first priority of *perestroika* should be the democratization of the Soviet Union, and the Soviet government should welcome the participation of unofficial groups in the political process. (Lately, the Soviet media and officials have launched several sharp attacks on informal groups.) In remarks to a news conference, Sakharov said the *perestroika* program was moving too slowly, but he noted that Gorbachev's policies were bearing fruit especially in foreign affairs. Sakharov cited as one of Gorbachev's successes the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan (RFE/RL *Special*, February 12).

**Another Demonstration  
in Moldavia**

Another mass demonstration was reported to have taken place in Kishinev. According to AFP (February 14), about 10,000 people gathered in the Moldavian capital today to demand official status for the Moldavian language and the introduction of the Latin script. Several dozen demonstrators were arrested. The Knight-Ridder news service reported that "several thousand" people were dispersed by the police. This is the second demonstration in Kishinev in three weeks. On January 22, the A. Mateevici Club organized a rally that was subsequently condemned in the Party press (*Sovetskaya Moldaviya*, January 27). The disturbances point to continued dissatisfaction in the republic, in spite of the steps that have recently been taken to meet the language demands of the Moldavian intelligentsia.

**There Are Still Problems in NKAO**

In an interview with Radio Moscow, a Party official from Nagorno-Karabakh, Robert Kacharyan, said there must be "urgent and rapid changes" in the life of the NKAO or "everything could return to what it was before." (Kacharyan is the Party secretary at the Stepanakert silk mill, the region's



largest industrial enterprise.) The official said the majority of residents of the NKAO wanted the administrators sent from Moscow to take action. He said the sooner people feel they are really being governed from Moscow, the calmer things will become and the more work will be done (*Radio Moscow-2*, 1830, February 12).

#### Soviet Television Criticizes Ayatollah Khomeini

The Soviet television program "Mezhdunarodnaya panorama" criticized Ayatollah Khomeini and the executions of political prisoners in Iran. One commentator of the program said Khomeini has reneged on promises he made when the Shah was ousted ten years ago and operates on the basis of the idea that "Islam is a tree that can only grow if it is watered by young blood."

#### Chief of Staff Says Volunteer Army Would Cost Too Much

The Soviet Armed Forces chief of staff said it would cost too much for the Soviet Union to switch to a volunteer, professional army. Colonel General Mikhail Moiseev told Soviet television the change would require at least a five-fold increase in the defense budget. He said he opposes such a change now or in the immediate future.

#### Latvian Journalists' Union Criticizes Central Press

*Moscow News* (No. 7) carried a report on an extraordinary (*uneocherednoi*) congress of the Latvian Journalists' Union, which discussed, among other things, the coverage of events in Latvia by the central press. Echoing the evaluation of the central press by Estonians, the Latvian journalists expressed dissatisfaction with what central newspapers write about *perestroika* in Latvia and condemned central press coverage as one-sided. *Moscow News* said that the congress adopted a special resolution to this effect. The newspaper said the congress also adopted a resolution stipulating the publication in Russian of a digest of the most interesting articles from the Latvian-language press. In addition, the congress called for the publication of a Latvian version of *Moscow News*.

#### "Moscow Tribune" Holds Inaugural Meeting

According to *Moscow News* (No. 7), an informal group of Moscow intellectuals called "Moscow Tribune" held its inaugural meeting on February 4. The group, which was formed by Academician Andrei Sakharov; Yuri Afanas'ev, rector of the Institute of Historical Archives in Moscow; the writer Ales' Adamovich; and a number of other reform-minded intellectuals, will discuss topical issues of sociopolitical life in the Soviet Union. *Moscow News* reported that "Moscow Tribune" will work in cooperation with employees of institutes of the USSR Academy of Sciences, where unofficial seminars have been held to discuss topical aspects of *perestroika*.

#### New Regulations for Soviet Journalists

*Izvestia* carried an interview with the chief of the press bureau of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), Colonel Mikhailov, who commented on the "Regulations on the Procedure for Representatives of the Mass Media to Be Admitted to, and to Remain in, Localities Where Measures to Ensure Public Order Are in Operation," which were issued last month. The regulations stipulate that journalists will be given access to rallies, meetings, and the scene of emergencies (for instance, accidents) only with special passes issued to them by the MVD. If journalists attempt to cover any of the above-mentioned events without a special pass, they will be regarded as being in breach of the law. Mikhailov attempted to justify the measure by saying that it had been introduced for the journalists' own safety. The *Izvestia* correspondent, however, expressed the fear that, as a result of the regulations, "every commonplace situation will be turned into an emergency, that a journalist will not be able to get to where he should be without a pass, and that the police will simply refuse to talk to people without special passes." *Izvestia's* fears were confirmed by Belorussian Minister of Internal Affairs V. Piskarev, who said that journalists will need passes to cover any event.

#### Ukrainians Call for Restoration of Ukrainian as State Language

The founding conference of the Taras Shevchenko language society ended in Kiev with a call for the restoration of official status for the Ukrainian Language. Radio Kiev said the meeting was attended by Ukrainians from other parts of the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the West. The radio quoted Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Mariya Orlik as saying the presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet supports the idea of making Ukrainian an official language. The radio said the conference closed on February 12 after adopting a charter and electing poet Dmytro Pavlychko as chairman of the society (*Radio Kiev*, February 12 and 13).

#### Backlash in Lithuania against New Language Law

Reuters reported that tens of thousands of Russian and Polish speakers had demonstrated in Lithuania against a decree making Lithuanian the language of business and government in the republic. The agency quoted local journalists as saying the protest in Vilnius was organized over the weekend by a movement of mainly non-Lithuanians called "Edinstvo" (Unity). On February 10, Radio Vilnius, in English, reported that the governing soviet in the small Rukainiai district of the Vilnius region, which is inhabited mostly by Poles, had declared itself a "Polish National Administrative District" not subject to laws requiring use of the Lithuanian language. Radio Vilnius said the action was illegal under Lithuanian law.) On February 14, Lithuania's Party First Secretary Algirdas Brazauskas said on Soviet television that giving official status to the Lithuanian language does not infringe on the rights of other nationalities in the republic.



### **Izvestia Criticizes Ban on Environmental Group**

*Izvestia* criticized the authorities in the industrial town of Nizhnii Tagil for barring an independent environmental organization from spreading information and staging demonstrations. The newspaper said the smog in Nizhnii Tagil, in the Sverdlovsk Oblast, is so bad that people can hardly breathe. *Izvestia* said the informal group, called "Ochishchenie" (Clean-up), had been trying to tell people that industrial planners and not the industries themselves were responsible for the smog. The newspaper said "Ochishchenie" was barred from staging a demonstration in October and a march in November and was barred from putting up posters and giving lectures in plants. It said an attempt had been made to take the leaders of the organization to court.

**Tuesday, February 14**

### **MVD Releases Crime Statistics**

For the first time since 1933, the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs released crime statistics for the Soviet Union (TASS, February 14). Major General Anatolii Smirnov, the chief of the MVD's Main Information Center, described the figures to journalists as "not consoling." The overall number of reported crimes in the USSR rose to 1,867,223 in 1988—an increase of almost 4 percent over 1987. Premeditated murders were up (16,710 in 1988 versus 14,651 in 1987), as were rapes (17,658 versus 16,765), violent robberies, break-ins, hold-ups, and cases of assault and battery. In 1987, the MVD started releasing information on the number of convictions for various crimes; this is the first time, however, that the actual number of reported crimes has been made public.

### **More News on Election Campaign**

According to Novosti (February 14), there have been no punishable violations of the electoral law thus far. Punishable violations include the use of bribery or force to influence voters or officials and tampering with election returns. Bureaucratic obstacles erected by local electoral commissions do not count as violations. Many Soviet citizens are mistrustful of the local commissions and are contacting the central authorities directly. According to *Pravda* (February 7), the Central Electoral Commission has received 2,300 letters and telegrams since February 1 containing all manner of questions.

### **First Issue of "Memorial" Newspaper**

The first issue of *Vedomosti Memoriala*, an eight-page newspaper published by the "Memorial" society to honor the victims of political repression, has been obtained by Radio Liberty's *Samizdat* Department. The issue was prepared on the eve of the society's founding congress and is dated January 28. The newspaper is printed by the "Kniga" Publishing House on the presses of *Gudok*, the railway workers' publication. Its print run is only 5,000 copies, making *Vedomosti Memoriala* a bibliographic rarity from the

start. Among the contributors to the first issue are prominent reformist intellectuals, including Anatolii Rybakov, Yakov Etinger, Grigori Baklanov, Lev Razgon, Evgenii Evtushenko, Yurii Afanas'ev, and Marieta Chudakova, as well as former *samizdat* "best-selling" authors such as Andrei Sakharov, Grigori Pomerants, Larisa Bogoraz and Mikhail Geffer. Aleksandr Daniel, son of Bogoraz and the late writer Yulii Daniel, and the former political prisoners Arsenii Roginsky and Vyacheslav Igrunov were among those who put together the first issue. There is no indication in the newspaper of how often it will appear.

### **Gorbachev Appeals for Support of Working Class**

Mikhail Gorbachev appealed to Soviet workers to hold out through "this most difficult period" and to be patient with the difficulties and problems created as his reforms go into effect. He begged people to believe that the purpose of the reforms is "to heal our society" and improve the way of life of ordinary people. At the same time he dismissed the idea of a multi-party system as "nonsense." He said what was needed were democratic institutions that enabled people to exercise genuine control. Gorbachev was addressing a special meeting in the Moscow headquarters of the Party Central Committee. The meeting was attended by leading workers from all over the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's opening and closing speeches were shown on Soviet television on February 14. On February 15, Soviet television broadcast excerpts from the speeches of some twenty-five workers' representatives.

### **Latvian Leaders Decide to Block Immigration**

The Council of Ministers of the Latvian SSR has decided to block immigration from the rest of the Soviet Union into the republic. The decision is expected to be made law within a month. (It is not clear how it will be implemented.) The Council of Ministers reached the decision after intense debates on February 13. Sources told RFE/RL that Justice Minister Viktors Skudra and Council Chairman Vilnis Brezis strongly supported the measure. Latvian sources also said the immigration decision will probably be followed by a proposal to introduce distinct Latvian citizenship. (Last year, during his visit to Latvia and Lithuania, Politburo member Aleksandr Yakovlev opposed the idea of introducing republican citizenship.) The ministers also agreed that Latvia should move its clocks one hour behind Moscow time, starting in the spring (*Reuters*, February 14).

### **Lushev Interviewed by TASS**

The new commander of the Warsaw Pact Armed Forces General Petr Lushev said in an interview with TASS that international tensions were relaxing but there was no guarantee this would continue. Lushev said that was why the Warsaw Pact Armed Forces would remain combat-ready while they were being restructured. TASS said this was Lushev's first interview since taking command of Warsaw Pact forces from Marshal Viktor Kulikov earlier this month.



### Two Officials Retire in Lithuania

Radio Vilnius said Lithuania's Cultural Minister, Jonas Bielinis, and the head of the republican radio and television system, Juozas Kuolelis, had retired early. The report said Bielinis retired after twelve years on the job. No reason was given and no successor was mentioned. According to the report, Kuolelis retired last week "after having compromised himself." The report said Kuolelis had been replaced as radio and television chief by Domas Sniukas, the Lithuanian correspondent of *Pravda*. Sniukas was elected last month as chairman of the Latvian Journalists' Union (*Radio Vilnius*, 0400, February 15).

### Eight Economists Defend Zaslavskaya and Aganbegyan

*Sovetskaya kul'tura* carried a letter from eight Soviet economists, including Bogomolov, Shatalin, and Petrakov, defending Academicians Tat'yana Zaslavskaya and Abel Aganbegyan against attacks leveled against them by conservative writers at the plenum of the RSFSR Writers' Union at the end of last year. The economists pointed out that the main critic of Zaslavskaya and Aganbegyan, A. Salutsky, sharply distorted the views of the academicians in order to prove that they were responsible for the degeneration of Soviet villages in the 1970s.

Wednesday, February 15

### Withdrawal from Afghanistan

TASS reported this morning that the last Soviet soldier to walk over from Afghanistan into the Soviet Union across the "Friendship Bridge" was, as planned, Lieutenant General Boris Gromov, the Soviet military commander in Afghanistan. Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadii Gerasimov suggested in an article in *Sovetskaya kul'tura* that Afghanistan could easily turn into another Lebanon. He blamed the perilous situation in Afghanistan on its long history of isolation and hostility toward outsiders. "Even the presence of a common enemy...could not unite the warring factions," Gerasimov wrote. The same day, the Soviet media for the first time reported an atrocity committed by Soviet troops during the war. *Literaturnaya gazeta* printed a story of the apparent execution of a carload of Afghan civilians, including two children, by Soviet troops simply because they refused to stop at a highway checkpoint. *Pravda* also carried a commentary on Afghanistan, assuring its readers that the USSR has not pursued and is not pursuing any expansionist ambitions in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar confirmed that the USSR had completed the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan. The Soviet authorities issued two statements following completion of the withdrawal. A government statement, carried by TASS, called for an immediate ceasefire between the warring Afghan factions and for an end to all foreign arms shipments to Afghanistan. The second statement was a message of thanks from the CPSU and the Soviet government to Soviet soldiers returning home "after fulfilling their patriotic and international duty" in Afghanistan.

### Report Says Sakharov Has Withdrawn All Candidacies

TASS quoted the upcoming issue of *Moscow News* as saying Andrei Sakharov had withdrawn from the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies. Sakharov is at present in Canada, where he and his wife Elena Bonner were awarded honorary doctorates by the University of Ottawa on February 14. TASS said that, according to *Moscow News*, Sakharov had decided that if he could not be a candidate of the USSR Academy of Sciences he did not want to run for office. Sakharov's nomination was rejected by the academy on January 18. (It has been reported that the academy will hold a special session in March to reconsider its decision.) He has since been nominated in a number of other constituencies. TASS quoted *Moscow News* as saying Sakharov has withdrawn from all these nominations and appealed to those who nominated him to vote for "the genuine and constant supporters of restructuring."

### Demonstrations in Lithuania

Thousands of Lithuanians gathered in Kaunas to open a celebration marking the anniversary of the proclamation of Lithuanian independence in 1918. For the first time the celebrations were official. Many of the participants gathered in front of a city theater to listen to a reading of the declaration of independence at a meeting of the Lithuanian Popular Front (AFP, February 15). US Secretary of State James Baker sent greetings to the people of Lithuania on the independence anniversary (RFE/RL Special, February 15). On February 16, the celebrations continued in Vilnius and Kaunas. Many of the festivities were broadcast by Lithuanian television, including a call by a leader of the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement for "autonomy in Lithuania" (Reuters, February 16). The same day, an assembly of the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement approved a resolution calling for economic independence and state sovereignty for Lithuania (Reuters, February 17).

### Working Group on Expanding Rights of Soviet Republics

There was a meeting in Moscow of a working group set up to draft proposals on expanding the rights of individual republics in the economic, social, cultural, and legal spheres. The group was formed by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. TASS said many speakers stressed the need for stronger guarantees of the rights of republics in using their natural resources. They also discussed the need to set up legal mechanisms to settle possible conflicts in areas such as environmental protection, health care, and education. TASS said the working group instructed its editorial commission to continue work on proposals for the redistribution of power between the central authorities and the republics.

### Economist Says Paying More Would End Grain Shortage

Ukrainian economist Ivan Lukinov said the Soviet Union could end its grain shortages by paying farmers more for their products. Lukinov wrote in the latest issue of the CPSU CC journal *Kommunist* that the USSR paid 150 dollars on the international market for one ton of grain. At the same time,



he said, the government paid state and cooperative farms only 100-140 rubles per ton. Lukinov said production costs had increased so much that USSR farms no longer make a profit on grain. Lukinov is the director of the Kiev Economics Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.

#### **Moscow News on Aftermath of Chernobyl'**

Western agencies quoted the coming issue of *Moscow News* as saying that the cancer rate had doubled in the region affected by the Chernobyl' disaster and that an abnormally high number of animals with congenital defects had been born in the last three years on a kolkhoz near Zhitomir. A veterinarian interviewed by *Moscow News* pointed out that fodder for the kolkhoz's cattle is grown on contaminated fields. The *Moscow News* report was summarized by Reuters, AFP, and Austrian television.

#### **Changes in Military Leadership**

Radio Moscow announced personnel changes in the higher military establishment. The former commander of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, Lieutenant General Boris Gromov, has been appointed commander of the Kiev Military District; Army General Valentin Varennikov, first deputy chief of General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces, who has been responsible for the Soviet troop withdrawal from Afghanistan, becomes the new commander in chief of the USSR Ground Forces and USSR deputy minister of defense (replacing Army General Evgenii Ivanovsky). After the promotion of Army General Konstantin Kochetov to the post of USSR first deputy minister of defense, Lieutenant General Nikolai Kalinin has been nominated commander of the Moscow Military District. Kalinin had been commander of Soviet Airborne Troops since 1987. Another important change was made in the command of Chemical Troops. Colonel General Vladimir Pikalov, who had been commander of the Chemical Troops since 1969, has now been replaced by Major General Stanislav Petrov—former head of the Chemical Troops of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. In addition to these changes, it was announced that the newly appointed chief of General Staff, Mikhail Moiseev, the new chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact Joint Forces, Vladimir Lobov, and the commander of the Belorussian Military District, Vladimir Shuralev, had all been promoted to the rank of Army General.

*Thursday, February 16*

#### **Vorontsov in New Delhi**

Reuters reported from the Indian capital that Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Yulii Vorontsov, who is also Moscow's ambassador to Kabul, had arrived in India for unannounced talks on Afghanistan with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. An Indian spokesman said Vorontsov also met with Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao. The spokesman said

India wanted to see an independent and nonaligned Afghanistan following the Soviet military withdrawal (UPI, AFP, February 16).

#### **Eleven Injured During Incident at Pop Concert in Moscow**

Eleven people were reported to have been injured in Moscow after a pop concert by an Italian singer "got out of control." TASS quoted *Moskovskaya pravda* as saying the injuries took place when thousands of spectators poured onto the dance floor near the stage to catch a glimpse of the star, an Italian pop singer named Sabrina.

#### **Shevardnadze Says He Will Take "New Ideas" to Middle East**

Eduard Shevardnadze told TASS he would carry some "essentially new ideas" with him to the Middle East this week. (Shevardnadze leaves on February 17 on a tour of five countries—Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, and Iran. TASS quoted him as saying that "no dramatic results" should be expected from his trip. He was quoted as saying: "we are convinced that it is time for vigorous actions" to try to end the conflict in the Middle East.

#### **Physicians Lose Jobs over AIDS Cases in Elista**

Radio Moscow reported that *Sovetskaya Rossiya* and *Trud* carried articles on the spread of AIDS through a children's hospital in the Kalmyk capital of Elista, where twenty-nine children and five mothers were infected. The radio quoted *Sovetskaya Rossiya* as saying the chief physician at the hospital and his deputy had been fired and a prosecutor was investigating the case. The newspaper quoted RSFSR Minister of Health Elenora Negovitsina as saying the original source of infection was apparently a man who caught AIDS while serving in the military in Africa. She said his wife became infected and then their child, who was treated at the Elista hospital. The official said the disease spread when other children were injected with unsterilized syringes (*Radio Moscow-1*, 0900, February 16).

#### **New Revelations on Katyn Massacre**

The official Polish weekly *Odrodzenie* published evidence that the Soviet Union was responsible for the massacre of thousands of Polish officers in the Katyn forest near Smolensk. The weekly carried a wartime Polish Red Cross report that concluded that the massacre occurred in the spring of 1940. That was more than a year before Germany invaded the Soviet Union. "The text... is an important historical source so far unknown either to researchers or to the broader public," Maciszewski, the chairman of the Polish side of the Soviet-Polish historical commission, said (AP, February 16). The Soviet-Polish commission was appointed in 1987 to investigate "blank spots" in Soviet-Polish relations, including the Katyn massacre. The commission has yet to publish its conclusions, and Polish officials have said the Soviet side is responsible for the delay. The Polish government said earlier this week



that the stand of the Polish historians on the panel may soon be made public without waiting for the conclusions of the Soviet side.

#### **USSR Signs First Foreign Investment Protection Accords**

TASS said the Soviet Union had signed agreements with two Western countries—Finland and Belgium—on protecting capital investments by foreign business partners. TASS said the agreements were the first of their kind and would be ratified this summer. It said a similar agreement was being negotiated with Britain.

#### **Popular Front Proposed in the Ukraine**

A Popular Front—similar to those in the Baltic states—has been proposed in the Ukraine. Radio Kiev said the draft program for the Popular Front had been published in the literary journal *Literaturna Ukraina*. Formation of a popular front has been urged by Ukrainian writers but has run into official opposition. Radio Kiev also reported that an official commission charged with rehabilitating and honoring victims of Stalin's repressions in the Ukraine had held its first meeting. The radio said the commission was headed by retired Ukrainian Prime Minister Oleksandr Lyashko and composed of representatives of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, the government, and the public.

#### **Soviet and Chinese Scientists Sign Cooperation Pact**

A pact calling for direct cooperation in research work between Soviet and Chinese scientists was signed in Beijing. China's Xinhua news agency said it would cover about seventy projects in fields such as study of the oceans and the atmosphere, water resources, and environmental protection.

#### **Documentary on Party Conference Delayed**

TASS reported that the USSR State Committee on Cinematography had delayed the premiere of a documentary on last summer's Nineteenth Party Conference. The film, entitled *Pluralism*, was made by Moscow director Aleksandr Pavlov. A secretary of the USSR Cinema Workers' Union told a group of Soviet and foreign journalists who attended the premiere that the documentary, which TASS said gives an objective picture of the sharp debates at the conference, was apparently not to the liking of officials on the committee.

**Friday, February 17**

#### **Draft Law on Freedom of Conscience Prepared**

Novosti press agency reported that on February 14 representatives of various religious confessions gathered at the Council of Religious Affairs to become acquainted with the text of the draft law on freedom of conscience before it is published for nation-wide discussion. Meanwhile, *Sovetskoe gosudarstvo i pravo* (No. 2, 1989) carried the text of "recommendations" on

#### **Akhromeev Nominated in Moldavia, Novelist Changes District**

the draft law on freedom of conscience, written by a lawyer at the Institute of State and Law, Yurii Rozenbaum. Rozenbaum was one of the few Soviet lawyers who, as early as at the beginning of the 1980s, started to advocate the idea of giving "the right of a person in law" to religious communities. (Lenin's decree of 1918 "On the Separation of Church and State" and Stalin's legislation "On Religious Associations" of 1929 emphasized that religious communities did not enjoy "the right of a person in law." See RL 332/86.) The law on freedom of conscience is intended to alter Stalin's legislation on religion and juridically confirm the new status of religious communities as bodies enjoying "the right of a person in law."

TASS said former Soviet Chief of Staff Sergei Akhromeev had been registered as a candidate for the Congress of People's Deputies from a district in Moldavia after a prominent Moldavian author withdrew from the race. TASS said Akhromeev won more than 95 percent of the votes in an election meeting in the city of Balti (Beltsy) where he has been the Supreme Soviet deputy since 1984. TASS said Akhromeev will run for election on March 26 against a Balti Party secretary. TASS said Moldavian novelist Ion Druta had planned to compete against Akhromeev for the Balti district seat but withdrew to seek nomination in another district. Druta has lived in Moscow since the early 1970s when he fell out of favor with the Moldavian authorities. In his writings Druta has sought to promote Moldavian culture and has criticized the influx of non-Moldavians into the republic.

#### **Official Historian Says Hitler-Stalin Pact Was Mistake**

Colonel General Dmitrii Volkogonov, who is working on the first Soviet official biography of Stalin, said the nonaggression pact that the USSR signed with Nazi Germany in 1939 was "a great political mistake." Volkogonov, who heads the Institute of Military History at the USSR Ministry of Defense, was interviewed by Radio Moscow. He said his institute was studying documents that had been inaccessible for a long time and that cast more light on the 1939 pact. He did not elaborate (*Radio Moscow-1*, 1000, February 17). Meanwhile, the latest issue of *Moscow News* (No. 7) carried an interview with Volkogonov and another Soviet writer on Stalinism, Roy Medvedev. In *Moscow News*, Volkogonov explained why he had decided to write a biography of Stalin.

#### **Former Moldavian Party Chief Defends His Actions**

Former Moldavian Party First Secretary Ivan Bodiul (Bodyul) said his administration had not ignored the interests of Moldavians in favor of dictates from Moscow. In fact, Bodiul said, he had opposed orders from Moscow. Novosti press agency, which reported his comments, said "a different opinion prevails" in Moldavia, where Bodiul is considered "an apologist of stagnation." It also said Bodiul was "very close to Brezhnev." Novosti said Bodiul defended his administration in an interview with a reporter from the Moldavian-language



magazine *Nistru*. It said Bodiul on that occasion denied an accusation by intellectuals that he had created obstacles to the development of the Moldavian language and literature and to the cultural development of other nationalities in Moldavia. In an interview with *Ogonek* (No. 6), another Party official of the Brezhnev era, Nikolai Egorychev, tried to reject the generally held opinion of him as a Stalinist. (Egorychev was Moscow Party chief until 1967, later serving as Soviet ambassador to Denmark and Afghanistan.)

#### **USSR Warns Pakistan against Afghan Intervention**

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yurii Vorontsov accused Pakistan of deploying artillery in Afghanistan and warned that Moscow could not remain indifferent if Pakistan intervened militarily to back the Afghan resistance. He accused Pakistan of deploying artillery to aid resistance forces surrounding the eastern Afghan city of Jalalabad, a charge that Pakistan denies. Vorontsov was speaking at a press conference in New Delhi (*Reuters*, February 17). Soviet First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh said Mikhail Gorbachev had sent messages to world leaders seeking cooperation to end the fighting in Afghanistan (TASS, in English, February 17).

#### **Lawyers Say Directives Fail to Protect Psychiatric Patients**

Novosti press agency quoted two Soviet lawyers as saying directives issued to protect Soviet psychiatric patients are too vague and do not do the job. The lawyers, Boris Protchenko and Aleksandr Rudyakov, were quoted by the coming issue of *Kommunist* as saying that, despite the new rules, psychiatrists still have too much authority over psychiatric patients. It said the lawyers criticized one rule that allows physicians to order involuntary psychiatric examination for citizens who violate "the rules of conduct in a Socialist society." Novosti said the lawyers wrote that the record of the use of psychiatry as a weapon against dissidents shows what can happen when such power gets into the hands of dishonest politicians. Novosti said the lawyers also criticized the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Ministry of Health for issuing the directives in 1988 without consulting with ordinary psychiatrists or lawyers.

#### **TASS Urges Cooperation in Evaluating 1956**

A TASS commentary said Hungary should cooperate with the USSR in evaluating the 1956 uprising in Hungary. Commentator Aleksandr Kondrashov said it was necessary to look objectively at all the reasons behind the Soviet leadership's decision to make such an "extreme move" as to use armed forces to stop "a counterrevolution" in Hungary in 1956. Kondrashov's comments come amid continuing debate in Hungary about the true nature of the events of 1956. The Hungarian Central Committee earlier this week described the events as a genuine popular uprising that later took on the characteristics of a counterrevolution. Kondrashov said it was impossible to push aside such obvious factors as Western inspiration of antigovernment actions

#### **Czechoslovak Prime Minister in Moscow**

and the participation in them of "reactionary emigrant circles." He also said the evaluation of events given by other Socialist countries, including Yugoslavia and China, should be studied.

Mikhail Gorbachev met in Moscow with visiting Czechoslovak Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec. TASS said they discussed restructuring in their countries and ways to improve Soviet-Czechoslovak cooperation. It said Adamec told Gorbachev that plans for a faster transition to new forms of economic management in Czechoslovakia were not proving easy to implement. But he said there was no other way to overcome longstanding economic and social problems. TASS said Gorbachev described problems in Soviet restructuring. Adamec met earlier the same day with Soviet Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov (TASS, in English, February 17).

#### **Founding Congress of Independent Group in Tatar Republic**

TASS said a new informal group called the Tatar Public Center was holding its founding congress in Kazan, the capital of the Tatar Autonomous Republic. TASS said the new association will form the core of an informal movement started by artists and other intellectuals in Tataria. The group's platform, published earlier, says Union republics and autonomous republics in the USSR do not have equal conditions for economic and social development. The platform said the Tatar Public Center will work to remove these differences.

#### **USSR Appoints Ambassador to EEC**

The Soviet Union has appointed an ambassador to the European Community. He is Vladimir Shemyatenkov, an economics specialist. The announcement came as the EEC and the USSR ended two days of exploratory talks in Brussels over a possible trade agreement. The EEC commission said in a statement that the talks had been positive and should now quickly be followed by concrete proposals. The commission said it should soon be possible to ask member governments for a mandate to begin formal negotiations with the Soviet Union on a trade and cooperation agreement. Comecon formally recognized the EEC last year. Since then, Hungary and Czechoslovakia have signed trade agreements with the EEC (AP, *Reuters*, February 17).

#### **Pravda Reports Narcotics Seizures in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan**

*Pravda* reported major narcotics seizures in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. The newspaper said more than 118 kilograms of marijuana had been discovered in one cache in the Chuisk valley, which is in Kazakhstan and Kirgizia. The newspaper said this was the largest amount of narcotics ever to have been found in that area. The newspaper also reported that narcotics had been seized in Azerbaijan. The newspaper called for the establishment of special antinarcotics units within the Ministry of Internal Affairs.



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**USSR Conducts Nuclear Test**

The Soviet Union exploded a nuclear device underground at the Semipalatinsk test range in Kazakhstan. TASS said the blast was designed to test the results of research into the physics of nuclear explosions.

**El'tsin Calls for Nationwide Referendums**

Boris El'tsin said nationwide referendums, not just nationwide discussions, should be held on important issues. He also said political struggle should be made a part of normal life rather than something in which people risk being labeled "enemies of the people" if they get involved. Western reports said El'tsin was speaking after a meeting at which he was nominated by Moscow's Kuntsevo election district as a candidate for the Congress of People's Deputies. El'tsin has already been nominated for a congress seat in Moscow and a number of other districts around the Soviet Union. He reiterated that he had not yet made up his mind in which constituency to run. Western reports said he spoke in general terms about the undemocratic nature of the election and the need for a strong and active parliament but offered few concrete proposals (*La Repubblica*, February 17).

**Argumenty i fakty on Assassination of Kirov**

*Argumenty i fakty* (No. 6) carried an article by V. Lordkipanidze, whose father worked in Stalin's NKVD, on the assassination of Sergei Kirov in 1934. In his article, Lordkipanidze said that, before Leningrad resident Nikolaev assassinated Kirov, it was well known in the NKVD that Kirov's life was in danger. Lordkipanidze said it was most probable that Stalin participated in the organization of the assassination of Kirov, although there are no documents to prove this.

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