FINAL REPORT TO
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN RESEARCH

TITLE: THE "TRADITIONALIST" OPPOSITION
IN SOVIET POLITICS

AUTHOR: Darrell P. Hammer

CONTRACTOR: Indiana University

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Darrell P. Hammer

COUNCIL CONTRACT NUMBER: 804-02

DATE: October 1990

The work leading to this report was supported by funds provided by the National Council for Soviet and East European Research. The analysis and interpretations contained in the report are those of the author.
NOTE

All copies of this Report which are dated September 1990 on the face page, which were previously distributed, should be discarded as they lack pages 38 and 39, and contain other errors.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

American policy makers have been concerned about the possibility of a "rightward swing" in Soviet politics that would end Gorbachev's wide-ranging reform program and bring to power an extremist regime that would be dangerous to American interests. This paper deals with one such scenario: the rise of a right-wing nationalist movement that could lead to a "fascist" or even "neo-Stalinist" regime.

The general conclusion is that the prospects for such an outcome must be rated as slim to zero for the foreseeable future. But while the prospects that the "traditionalists" might come to power are considered minimal, their ideas cannot be dismissed. Potentially they could be an influential force in Soviet politics. This is true not because the Russian nationalists might seize power, but because their program could influence any conceivable government. They have raised issues which in some cases have a wide popular appeal.

Their dismal failure in the March 1990 elections is attributed to a variety of factors. Most of the Russian nationalists, although devoted to their ideals, proved to be politically unsophisticated. This is illustrated by Boris El'tsin's success in seizing the "Russian sovereignty" issue and exploiting it in the RSFSR legislature--without a backward glance at the Russian nationalists. Furthermore (as some traditionalist candidates now admit) many voters did not see a clear and sharp difference between the conservative candidates who ran on a nationalist program, and the party conservatives who still supported the CPSU. This led to paradoxical results, with Boris El'tsin (still a CPSU member) rolling up a huge majority, while traditionalist candidates who had never been party members were defeated. At least in the
eyes of the voters, the traditionalists were willing to preserve the party in order to stave off complete anarchy, while the liberal reformers were prepared to risk anarchy in order to loosen the party's grip on Soviet society.

In summary, the traditionalists' problem is a lack of effective political leadership. There is no one in the traditionalist camp who has the gift for self-publicity of a El'tsin or a Gdlian. The acknowledged leader of the traditionalist cause, the Siberian writer Valentin Rasputin, has avoided the spotlight. He is deeply interested in the issues which concern the traditionalists but he is not interested in politics--and most of the traditionalists' issues are not of immediate and intense interest to the voters.

There is, however, one possible exception--the traditionalists' determined opposition to a market economy. The traditionalists have raised the specter of a "Mafia" taking control of the economy, and even Gorbachev has been moved to warn of the Mafia danger. The traditionalists have not produced a coherent alternative to the market economy, but they warn of its dangers--high prices and runaway inflation, unemployment, and a loss of the welfare state. These warnings correspond to the deepest fears of the Soviet population, and with effective political leadership they could be translated into votes.
INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This short study summarizes some of the material which will appear in my book, *Russian Nationalism and Soviet Politics*, scheduled for publication later this year by Westview Press. In this study I have concentrated on contemporary events, and on an effort to evaluate the political prospects of the traditionalists for the immediate future. In the book, the interested reader will find a detailed discussion of the historical background of this movement, as well as a more extended discussion of some questions of political philosophy that are only hinted at here.

The research for the book was supported by two grants from the National Council for Soviet and East European Research, and I want to give my deepest thanks to the Council for this support. I also must thank the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) and the Midwestern Universities Consortium for International Activities (MUCIA), which financed several trips to the USSR in the course of my research. While in the USSR I met with several Russians active in the movement which is described here, as well as with some opponents of the traditionalist idea. I cannot name them all, but I can record my appreciation to Nina Andreeva, Leonid Borodin, Dimitry Dudko, Il'ia Glazunov, Gleb Iakunin, Vadim Kozhinov, Galina Litvinova, Aleksandr Ogorodnikov, Vladimir Osipov, Tamara Ponomareva, and Dmitrii Vasil'ev.

Finally I want to give credit to my research assistant at Indiana University, Laurie Skirkanich, for her invaluable help during the last year of the project.

_Darrell P. Hammer_
We inherited from Stalinism an imperial system with an imperial ideology, with an imperial policy of "divide and rule."
This system oppressed the large nationalities as well, and in particular the Russians, who became one of the main victims.

Andrei D. Sakharov, 1989

WHO'S RIGHT IN MOSCOW?

A specter is haunting the western world, the specter of a right-wing takeover in Moscow. In 1989 Leonid Abalkin, an economist and deputy premier, told western correspondents that if the reform program called perestroika does not succeed, then there was certain to be a "rightward swing" in Soviet society. "What form it will take is unpredictable, but it is inevitable."

Since then we have heard more warnings of a dangerous drift to the right, and there has been apprehension that the Gorbachev reforms were under threat and his regime in danger of collapse. American policy makers have taken the warning seriously, and have committed themselves to support of Gorbachev and his program.

Abalkin's statement was intended as a warning, for there was no doubt that he looked on a rightward swing as a grave danger. But some Soviet thinkers who are in favor of reform argue that the authoritarian system should be retained, at least temporarily. The historian and political scientist Andranik Migranian has argued that an authoritarian regime might be the only way to save perestroika from failure. Migranian proposes what might be called a "reformist" dictatorship. He uses the historical argument that no "totalitarian" regime has ever been successfully transformed into democracy.

What is required for this process to be successful is a transitional period of a modified "authoritarian regime." Migranian also argues that some western countries that are now regarded as models of modern democracy took a century or longer to complete the transition from authoritarianism to a constitutional and democratic state, an implicit caution that the process in Russia might also be drawn out. He gives the specific examples of France and Germany. Migranian developed his argument further in a dialogue with an economist, Igor Kliamkin, which was published under the ominous title, "Is an 'Iron Hand' Needed?" He suggested that the Congress of Peoples Deputies, instead of trying to cope directly with the country's problems, should delegate extraordinary powers to the president, who would create a "committee of national salvation" which would assume all government functions. Migranian did not shrink from the implications of his proposal: "I am for a dictatorship at the present time, for a dictator." Migranian's argument provoked immediate criticism but he stood his ground.

Migranian's proposal has a curious resemblance to Leninism. Lenin proposed a transitional "dictatorship of the proletariat"--this dictatorship would use its power to establish a democratic and socialist society, and then would quietly retire.

What precisely is the danger from the right of which Abalkin warns? Although Soviet specialists and others have also warned us of the danger, they have not been very specific. We have heard epithets like "Russian nationalist," and "military dictatorship," "fascist" or even "neo-Stalinist," to describe a possible post-Gorbachev regime. Yet there has been no serious

---

4"Nuzhna 'zheleznaia ruka'?” Literaturnaiia gazeta, Aug. 16, 1989.

study of who the conservative leaders are, what their program might be, or what their real prospects are. The right-wing threat is indeed a phantom that has never been subjected to serious and objective analysis.

As a first approximation, let me point out that the "right" includes two very disparate tendencies in Soviet politics. The very fact that the political right is so sharply divided suggests that it may be a lesser danger than it is thought to be. On the one hand, there are the conservative party apparatchiki whose leader (until his retirement) was Egor Ligachev and whose most notorious spokesman is the Leningrad chemistry teacher, Nina Andreeva.6 The leadership of this brand of conservatism has now fallen to Boris Gidaspov, the party leader in Leningrad, and Ivan Polozkov, the new first secretary of the Communist party of the RSFSR. These might be called "party conservatives."

On the other hand, the "right" also includes the traditional Russian nationalists whose recognized leader is the Siberian writer, Valentin Rasputin. The two kinds of conservatives have little in common and indeed they differ on quite fundamental issues. Rasputin is not even a member of the Communist party.

The liberals in Soviet politics are also divided. But the division on the left is structurally different from the division on the right, and would be much easier to bridge. The liberals differ principally over the speed with which the economic reform is to be carried out, although they also have differences over the details of political reform. Gorbachev, who occupies a mod-

---

6As a source for Ligachev's thought I have relied mostly on his published writings: E. K. Ligachev, Izbrannye rechi i stat' i (Moscow: Politicheskaia literatura, 1989). For Andreeva I have relied primarily on a long interview with her in Petrodvorets in June 1989. In addition to her infamous letter to Sovetskaia Rossiia of March 13, 1988, I have examined her article "Stremlenie k pravde eshche ne podavleno," Molodaia gvardiia, 1990 No. 2, pp. 244-252, and her unpublished speech in Moscow of Feb. 2, 1990 (AS no. 6453).
erately liberal position, is under constant pressure to move faster and more boldly in introducing market elements into the economy.

This paper attempts to put together only a few pieces of the puzzle, and will focus on the Russian nationalists, or those whom Andreeva called the "traditionalists." The terminology we use to discuss contemporary Soviet politics has become extremely confusing. The familiar categories of left and right will only mislead us. In Moscow today, the most vigorous proponents of the free market are perceived as leftists: the more enthusiastically a contemporary Soviet politician supports Milton Friedman's philosophy, the more he seems to be an extreme leftist. Andreeva in particular has complained that the party loyalists are the true leftists and politicians who oppose Lenin's ideas are not entitled to this mobilize under a leftist banner. On the other hand, the appeal to protect the environment--usually perceived by Americans as an item on the liberal agenda--comes mainly from the right in the USSR. Too much western analysis has relied on this over-simplified distinction between "liberals" (who are seen as the good guys) and "conservatives" (who are presumed to be dangerous). A good example is the elusive threat from "Pamiat," which has been greatly exaggerated. The various groups that call

---


8Western observers frequently refer to the Pamiat "organization" when there is no such thing. Pamiat is a name used by a variety of different organizations. They are all anti-Semitic but have little else in common, and spend much of their energy attacking each other. The group of thugs led by Konstantin Otashvili-Smirnov which created a scene in the Central House of Writers January 18, 1990, claimed to be from Pamiat, but Otashvili-Smirnov has no connection with the major Pamiat groups--the Pamiat society headed by Igor Sychev or the Pamiat National Patriotic Front headed by Dmitry Vasil'ev. Vasil'ev has denounced both Otashvili-Smirnov (as a hooligan) and Sychev (as anti-Christian). There is no doubt that anti-Semitism has become more vocal in the age of glasnost, but it is a mistake to assume the existence of a unified anti-Semitic conspiracy with a national organization. If such a conspiracy
themselves "Pamiat" are small bands of fanatics, and we should not assume that Pamiat is the leading edge of contemporary Russian conservatism.

Andreeva's party conservatism can best be described as a modified Stalinism. That much misused term is employed here to denote the total system which Stalin created. Stalinism, it should be remembered, was not just police terror. Indeed the terror proved to be the least enduring of Stalin's political creations. What survived almost intact was the "administrative-command system" of Stalinism. It survived Khrushchev's efforts at reform and Brezhnev's eighteen years of "stagnation," and it has proved remarkably resilient to Gorbachev's perestroika. Andreeva defends the administrative-command system in the name of Marxism-Leninism. She also defends the historical achievements of the Soviet regime. And she, in turn, has supporters.

The party conservatives are not necessarily opposed to perestroika, but they fear that Gorbachev is moving too fast and in an uncharted direction. Their main concern has been saving the fundamental principle of Leninism: the leading role of the party in Soviet society. Traditionally, the leading role of the party has been expressed not only in its monopoly of power, but in the party's control over the ideology. The conservatives fear that glasnost has destroyed this ideological control, and they are right. The result has been ideological confusion (razbrod). The party conservatives also complain that the continuing exposure of past failure, the criticism of Stalin and the constant attacks on "stagnation" under Brezhnev, have undermined the party's prestige in Soviet society.

Gorbachev himself has, on more than one occasion, said that the reform can only be successful under party leadership: "the party is the true
organizer of society and its political vanguard." On this point his liberal support has been rapidly evaporating and liberal leaders like El’tsin are simply walking out of the party. So Gorbachev may eventually have to choose between the party, of which he is still the official leader, and the support of liberals such as El’tsin, Gavriil Popov, and Anatolii Sobchak. Such a development, far from undermining the party conservatives, would unleash them for a frontal attack on the reformers. So long as Gorbachev remains the recognized party leader, the conservatives (most of whom also hold party office) are bound to be restrained. Only a rank-and-file party member like Andreeva, who holds no party office, can attack Gorbachev openly.

The traditionalists support some of Gorbachev’s social policies, such as his call for social justice, the anti-drinking campaign, and the struggle against corruption and immorality. In particular, they support glasnost, which has given them a freedom to speak out which they never enjoyed before. In fact glasnost is essential to their survival. But the traditionalists complain, with some justification, that glasnost tilts toward the reformers, who have been given more freedom of expression and more access to the media than those who defend traditional values. Vladimir Osipov has complained that the democrats in fact support censorship because they call for a ban on "nationalist" publications. On the other hand, the traditionalists are quietly


10These three are the big political winners in the March 1990 elections: El’tsin became chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, and Popov and Sobchak became chairmen of the city soviets in Moscow and Leningrad.

11Vladimir Osipov, "S kakoi tsel’iu prevrashchait mukhu v slona?" (Unpublished paper, April 1990). Osipov cites the program of the Inter-regional Association of Voters (MAI), which I have not seen. The main point of this article is that the anti-Semitic threat has been grossly exaggerated, by blowing up such incidents as the affair in the Central House of Writers, and by refusing to publish such articles as this one, which asserts that the scandal was the work of a handful of hooligans.
opposed to perestroika, at least in some of its aspects. Their concern is
that perestroika will bring the westernization of Soviet society, that over-
hauling the economy will require the import of western technology, which
inevitably will bring with it the import of western values. But on one point
the traditionalists side with the reformers against the party conservatives.
They believe not only that the regime must reject the Stalinist past but that
there must be a detailed exposure of Stalin's crimes, however painful.

The traditionalists are not a monolithic group or even a single movement.
The term "Russian party," sometimes encountered in western writing, is particu-
larly misleading. In fact the traditionalists are not a party at all,
because they lack both organization and leadership. The recognized leader of
the traditionalists is the Siberian writer Valentin Rasputin, who was born in
1937 in Irkutsk, where he still lives. He is generally regarded as the most
talented of the village writers ("derevenshhchiki"), and most of his fiction
has been associated with Siberia and with the theme of rural Russian life. He
has spoken out on issues important to the Russian nationalists, and he has
published a monthly newspaper, Literaturnyi Irkutsk, which has a limited cir-
culation (10,000 issues) but is an important organ of the nationalist move-
ment. In 1989 he was elected a member of the Congress of People's Deputies.
Rasputin is not a party member, and has said publicly that he chose not to
join the party because it mainly attracts careerists, and in any case is
losing its authority in Soviet society. 12 But Rasputin is not an effective
politician. He has no mass following and he has spent much of his time pursu-
ing issues which do not have widespread support. In 1988, Rasputin was the

12Sovetskaia Rossiia, June 7, 1989.
first to attack the new craze for organizing beauty contests in the USSR, as demeaning to women and an unhealthy form of western influence.13

Before the emergence of Rasputin, the three most visible figures among the Russian nationalists were Academician D. S. Likhachev, the painter I. S. Glazunov, and the writer V. A. Soloukhin.14 None of these three has any standing within the Soviet political elite, and Glazunov and Likhachev are not even party members. They are all ranking members of the cultural establishment. To this list we could add the names of other village writers such as Vasilii Belov (a party member who was also elected to the Congress of Peoples Deputies), Boris Mozhaev, and Viktor Astaf’ev, as well as the literary critic Vadim Kozhinov. This list of leading Russian nationalists would be incomplete without mentioning two former dissidents, Leonid Borodin and Vladimir Osipov, who were subjected to brutal suppression by the Brezhnev regime. By 1989 the rehabilitation of Osipov and Borodin seemed almost complete. Both were being published in Literaturnaia Rossiia and both were allowed to travel to the west. A Moscow publishing house announced plans to produce some of Borodin’s books, hitherto forbidden literature, in Soviet edition. In June 1989 Borodin was honored with a "literary evening" in Moscow. The new editor of Nash sovremennik announced that both Borodin and Osipov would be contributing to the journal.15

Kozhinov, in particular, is a subtle writer whose contribution to the Russian cause has not been much appreciated. But neither Glazunov nor Koz-

13Sovetskaia Rossiia, a newspaper sympathetic to Rasputin, printed a letter (Aug. 27, 1989) from the reigning Miss USSR complaining about the way that the contests were managed. Still it seems clear that this is not a popular issue.


hinov has any political experience. The Russian nationalists have an outlet in two periodicals, the weekly newspaper Literaturnaia Rossiia and the monthly journal Nash sovremennik. They also have a voice in some of the regional literary journals, such as Sever and Kuban'. So the nationalists are a diverse group of individuals who share a common interest in the future of Russia, as distinct from the USSR, and they communicate through an intricate network which is difficult for westerners to see.

The Traditionalists: National Bolsheviks and Russophiles

Russian nationalists in turn are divided into two tendencies. In an earlier study I suggested that they could be called the Russophiles and the National Bolsheviks. Both are traditionalists, but they look back to different traditions. The National Bolsheviks admire the tradition of Imperial Russia (Rossiia) and the ideas of the Pan-Slav movement, while the ideal of the Russophiles is Holy Russia (Rus'). The National Bolsheviks' first concern is preserving the great power status of Russia (velikoderzhavnost') and holding together the multinational state, and they are more correctly described as imperialist rather than nationalist. The Russophiles, in contrast, are true nationalists whose primary concern is preserving Russian culture.

The National Bolshevik idea is epitomized in a fictitious character, Vsevolod Sergeevich Zhilinskii, in Rybakov's anti-Stalinist novel Children of

---

16Glazunov ran from a Moscow district in the RSFSR elections of March 1990, but he was defeated.

17Molodaia gvardiia is sometimes included as a "Russian nationalist" journal but it is better described as neo-Stalinist. It is Andreeva's favorite journal.

the Arbat. Zhilinskii has been exiled to Siberia for political crimes. He is one of the dictator's victims, and yet he is also one of Stalin's admirers. He had a chance to emigrate, but chose to remain in Russia. "Let's forget about the world revolution," is Zhilinskii's summation of his political philosophy, "the Bolsheviks themselves have abandoned it. The state is the religion of the Russian, and he reveres God in the ruler. And he obeys. He wants no freedom. Freedom would overflow into a bloodbath, and the people demand order.... The Bolsheviks saved Russia and saved a great power. With your so-called freedom Russia would fall to pieces."\(^{19}\) However, Zhilinskii is not a blind Stalinist, and he criticizes some of Stalin's more extreme measures. He attacks the extraordinary decree passed after the murder of Kirov, in December 1934, because it deprived the accused of the most elementary rights. It was, he said, a "law on mass illegality." "Unhappy Russia!" he complains, and yet he promises that despite trial, camps, prison, he will not leave his homeland.\(^{20}\)

National Bolshevism emerged shortly after the revolution as an appeal to all Russians for reconciliation with the Soviet regime.\(^{21}\) The assumption behind this appeal was that Communism was a temporary phenomenon, and that the Soviet government would eventually mellow into a more moderate, although still

\(^{19}\)A. Rybakov, Deti Arbata (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1987), p. 354.


\(^{21}\)The most important programmatic statement of National Bolshevism is the collection of articles by N. V. Ustrialov, V bor'be za Rossiiu (Harbin, 1920), along with some of Ustrialov's later writings. V bor'be za Rossiiu is virtually unknown in contemporary Russia, even to leading Russian nationalists. They rely on the collection of articles Smena vekh (Prague, 1921; republished in Tver', 1922), which includes some of Ustrialov's writings. For this reason National Bolshevism is commonly referred to as smenavekhovstvo. For a recent Soviet study of the origins of this idea see L. K. Shkarenkov, Agoniiia beloi emigratsii, 2d ed. (Moscow: Mysl', 1986).
authoritarian, regime. The adoption of the New Economic Policy in 1921 seemed to confirm this assumption, and National Bolshevism was most influential during the NEP period. With the abandonment of NEP this ideology nearly disappeared. But the illusion died slowly. At the height of the Stalinist autocracy, some National Bolsheviks like Aleksei Tolstoi still expected a transformation to a more moderate authoritarian regime, and a return to NEP.\(^{22}\)

Perhaps, with Gorbachev, the transformation of the regime has as last begun. National Bolshevism is an ideology that is bound have a strong appeal in the era of glasnost and perestroika. However, Gorbachev has specifically repudiated the idea of any link between his reforms and smenovekhojstvo.\(^{23}\)

The Russophiles give their loyalty to the nation and the cultural tradition it represents, rather than the state. If the National Bolsheviks are the heirs of the Pan-Slavs, then the Russophiles are modern-day Slavophiles. The most characteristic difference of opinion between the two schools—an ideological litmus test—lies in their interpretation of the revolution. For the National Bolsheviks the revolution was a natural disaster rather like an earthquake—terrible in its consequences but historically inevitable. The National Bolsheviks also emphasize the Russian roots of the revolution, which they describe by the Russian term bunt. In contrast, the Russophiles look on the revolution not only as an unmitigated disaster, but as a calamity which could have been avoided. Above all, in the Russophile view, the revolution was quite un-Russian. It was the consequence of alien ideas, specifically Marxism.

\(^{22}\)Literaturnoe nasledstvo, 1965 No. 74, pp. 345-346.

\(^{23}\)Izvestiia, Jan. 8, 1989.
The Russian Deputies Club

After the constitutional reforms of 1988 and the national elections of 1990, the liberals were the first to create an organized opposition. The "Moscow Deputies," under the leadership of Boris El'tsin and Andrei Sakharov, emerged as a cohesive group with consensus about a liberal program even before the first Congress of People's Deputies convened. The Moscow deputies and their supporters proved very adept at generating popular enthusiasm, with a number of mass meetings, usually held near Luzhinki stadium. As a consequence the Moscow deputies, and especially Boris El'tsin and Tel'man Gdlian, became well-known public figures. The Moscow deputies evolved into a larger opposition group, the Interregional Deputies' Group, or MDG (Mezhregional'naia deputatskaia gruppa). The deputies in MDG share Gorbachev's professed long-range goal of radical reform, although they regard his timetable as too slow.

The traditionalists were slower to organize. In the second half of 1989 several new, informal organizations sprang up which follow the traditionalist line, but they had no direct tie to the congress. These included most prominently Otechestvo, Edinstvo, now called Edinenie (the all-Russian Association of Lovers of Russian Literature and Culture), and the United Front of Workers of Russia (OFT). In October 1989 a group of peoples deputies came together

---

24 Gdlian, the leading investigator in the Uzbek corruption case, actually represented a district in Leningrad, but he was usually on the platform at the Luzhinki meetings. I observed a number of these mass meetings in Moscow in May and June 1989.

25 Edinstvo was renamed "Edinenie" ("Unification") to avoid confusion with two other organizations: (1) the Leningrad Edinstvo organized by Nina Andreeva, and (2) the Vilnius Edinstvo (the Social Democratic Union for the Support of Perestroika in Lithuania), an organization of Russian-speaking citizens opposed to separatism. To add to the confusion, the Latvian organization Interfront publishes a newspaper called Edinstvo, which is closely identified with the organization.
to form a traditionalist counterpart to the MDG. This was the "Russia" Club of Voters and Deputies of the USSR, or simply Russia Club.\footnote{Rossiiia [organ of the Russia Club] No. 1, November 1989.}

The professed goal of the Russia Club was to further the activization of the political life of all the people living in Russia.\footnote{Ibid.} The club also has a more directly political goal, to serve as an information resource for people's deputies. It has served several members of the USSR congress. At the same time the club was preparing for the elections to the congress of people's deputies of the RSFSR. In December 1989, the Club joined with eleven other Russian nationalist organizations in issuing a platform for the RSFSR elections.\footnote{Literaturnaiia Rossiia, Dec. 29, 1989.}

According to its constitution, any citizen of the USSR can become a member of the Russia Club. In fact, however, the club consists mostly of deputies or candidates plus a small number of intellectuals and scholars who serve as experts or resource persons. The club is supposed to convene a general assembly of all its members at least once a year. The club is in fact run, in typical Soviet organizational style, by a small group. The general assembly elects a council (twenty members), five co-presidents, and an auditing commission. Initially the five co-presidents were Veniamin Aleksandrovich Iarin, En Un Kim, Vladimir Nikolaevich Stepanov (all people's deputies and members of the USSR Supreme Soviet), Dmitrii Aleksandrovich Barabashov (an official of the Central Committee apparatus), and Anatolii Samuilovich Salutskii (a secretary of the RSFSR Writers Union and a writer on economic problems). Iarin, in addition to serving as a deputy, was a leader of the United Front of Workers (OFT). Barabashov was subsequently dropped from the
leadership and Iarin, following his surprising appointment to Gorbachev's new presidential council in March 1990, seems to have dropped out as well. By mid-1990 the principal leader of the club appeared to be Salutskii.

The Russia Club's program is laid down in a statement prepared by a group of sixty deputies who met at a "working conference" in Tiumen in October. The conference issued an appeal to the second Congress of People's Deputies which can be read as a preliminary statement of the program of the Russia Club. The Tiumen meeting was called to discuss the many grievances of ethnic Russians in the USSR. The appeal begins with a cataclysmic warning: "The socio-economic crisis which has gripped the country is especially acute in the RSFSR, putting to question the very existence of Russia and her nations, and first of all, the Russians." It had the same sense of impending catastrophe that was to be found in Prokhanov's startling article in January. The immediate impulse for the meeting, however, was the upsurge of local nationalism in the non-Russian republics, and a sense that the Russian minority in the republics was in danger.

The Club was formed by several sponsoring organizations: The RSFSR Writers Union, Sovetskaia Rossiia, Nash sovremennik, Literaturnaia Rossiia, the Public Committee to Save the Volga, the All-Russian Cultural Fund, OFT, Sovetskaia Rossiia Publishing House, and Edinstvo (Edinenie). It may be worth pointing out the absence of Molodaia gvardiia, which is sometimes described as a Russian nationalist organ.
The March 1990 Elections

In addition to the Tiumen appeal, there are two other election documents that represent the traditionalist program. The first is a platform for the RSFSR elections, endorsed by twelve official Russian patriotic organizations. This bloc included Otechestvo, Edinstvo, OFT, and the Russia Club. The other is an election platform written by the Moscow city organization of VOOPIK, the All-Russian Society for the Protection of the Monuments of History and Culture. The latter document, although distributed widely in Moscow, was not published in the press.

These two documents represent the different tendencies in the Russian nationalist movement. The platform published in Literaturnaia Rossiia is a typical National Bolshevik document. The Moscow Platform is characteristically Russophile.

The platform of the patriotic bloc, like the Tiumen appeal, begins with a dire warning that the country is threatened with chaos. The issue in the elections is nothing less than the fate of Russia. The platform mentions no names but otherwise it pulls no punches in its criticism of the Gorbachev reform program. It accuses the authorities of deliberate "sadism" in demeaning the country's national pride. Russia might not survive the "deepening political crisis" which threatens the integrity of the state. The "economic crisis" has been caused by the senseless efforts to create a new market mechanism in the name of "modernization."


35Klub izbiratelei MGO VOOPIK, "Predvybornaia platforma patrioticheskogo dvizhenii za natsional'no-kul'turnoe vozrozhdenieRossii." Hereafter this document will be referred to as the Moscow Platform.
The traditionalists suffered almost complete defeat in the republic elections of March 1990. The defeat can be attributed to a number of factors: lack of organization, of resources, and of political experience. The defeat also made it clear that the Russian nationalist cause was not as popular as some of the traditionalists had expected. Furthermore their appeal was undermined by the appearance of a new movement, in the form of the "Democratic Russia" platform. Democratic Russia, without offering any specifics, promised to restore Russian "sovereignty" and this became a popular cause.

Vladimir Osipov, one of the losing candidates, has blamed the traditionalists' defeat on their failure to take a strong stand against the Communist party. The liberals of Democratic Russia, according to his explanation, were perceived as strongly anti-Communist, and won large majorities. This despite the fact that many of their candidates, such as El'tsin, were known to be party members. The traditionalists made a deliberate decision to downplay their anti-Communism, and as a result were defeated.

Democratic Russia emerged from the elections as the largest force in the RSFSR legislature, but without a reliable majority. According to one report, thirty-two different groups were formed by the deputies who won seats. The CPSU formed a party group which could have controlled the legislature, but


37 The USSR constitution (article 76) already proclaims that the union republics are sovereign, although this is no more meaningful than the promise of self-determination (article 70) or the right to secede (article 72). All the union republic constitutions also proclaim themselves to be sovereign (see the RSFSR constitution, article 68). Thus the recent proclamations of sovereignty by the RSFSR and other republics, legally speaking, change nothing.

38 Interview with Vladimir Osipov, April 1, 1990.
party discipline broke down. Although 917 party members were elected to the republic congress of people's deputies, only 216 joined the party group.39

THE RUSSIAN GRIEVANCES

"Mikhail Sergeevich, when are you going to find time to deal with Russia?" This question, put to Gorbachev by A. A. Kuleshov at a session of the Congress of People's Deputies,40 reflects the growing frustration of contemporary Russian nationalists at the course of government policy. The Russians believe that they suffer from serious discrimination in comparison with the other republics. When the Russia Club formulated its program it catalogued the main grievances: the first was the demographic problem--the gap in the birthrate between the Muslims of Central Asia and the Slavic peoples of the USSR; second came the problem of "Russian dependency"--the absence of distinctive institutions for the Russian republic; third, the deputies were concerned by the "resource gap"--the sense that a disproportionate share of resources is diverted from Russia into the other republics, so that Russia has in fact been subsidizing the non-Russian regions of the USSR. To these traditional concerns specified in the program another one has now been added, worry about the fate of the Russian minority in the national republics. Indeed the immediate cause for the Tiumen conference was a sense of concern about the 20 million Russians who did not live in the RSFSR, and were threatened with new laws on voting, citizenship, and language, especially in the western republics.41

39 Argumenty i fakty, 1990 No. 23.
For twenty-five years the Russian nationalists have expressed a variety of grievances about the regime. Their fundamental complaint is that the Russians have borne the major burden of transforming the country to a modern, industrialized society. In the discussion which follows I shall try to set out the principal grievances of the Russian nationalists in the USSR, as expressed in writings over the past two or three years. Some of the material cited here—and this is especially true of the election broadsides already mentioned—seems to exaggerate the problems, and the election appeals are often strident in tone. That does not mean that the problems are imaginary, for most of the complaints are based on fact.

Why should the Russians, who appear to be the dominant nationality in the USSR, complain so bitterly about their treatment by the central government? The answer is that the Russians are dominant only in the numerical sense, and even that dominance is fast disappearing. The Russians have not been able to exploit their numerical superiority for economic advantage, as we shall see below. In other respects, too, they have some justifiable grievances. Indeed one of their complaints is that their grievances are trivialized or ignored. We overlook the Russian complaints because of the common Western error of identifying Russia with the USSR; we forget that the Russians are, in fact, one of the nationalities within this multiethnic state, and like all the other nationalities they have serious grievances about their treatment by the central government.

Who Feeds Whom? The Resource Gap

People's Deputy V. N. Matiukha, speaking for the Russia Club, has claimed that the RSFSR in 1987 subsidized the other republics to the extent of 25 bil-
lion rubles, calculated in world prices. This figure is the basis for the claim that Russia has not only been subsidizing the other republics, but has been the victim of systematic plunder for the past seventy years. As we can read in another election leaflet, produced by the Russia Club:

For many decades Russia has been the object of naked plunder. Russian resources—gold, timber, agricultural products—have been pumped into other republics through the mechanism of unequal trade. This is a sort of "tribute" which Russia pays to the other republics, equal to 70 billion rubles a year, or in other words costs the average Russian family 1500 rubles. But Russians do not pay "tribute" only to the other republics. Another form of plunder of the peoples of Russia is the income of wheeler and dealers from the "shadow economy"—various kinds of thieves and speculators. Through various machinations with primarily Russian resources the speculators of the shadow economy steal no less than 2000 rubles a year from each of our families. After all this should we be surprised that among the union republics Russia has the lowest real income, the lowest standard of living, ranks last in housing, roads, and food products, and ranks first in the death rate!

Since this discussion broke into the open last year, statistics on inter-republic trade that were not available before have been published. We should treat these figures, like any other Soviet economic statistics, with a certain amount of skepticism. Nonetheless the data do support the general pattern described by Matiukha. In the speech already quoted, he claims that the subsidy has been kept hidden by the pricing system. The former premier of the RSFSR, Aleksandr Vlasov, has admitted that there is a substantial "disproportion" in the exchange of resources between the federation and the other


43"Ostanovit' grabezh Rossii."

republics. According to his figures, every year the RSFSR suffers a loss of 70 billion rubles.45

In 1987, Russia exported goods valued at 55.4 billion rubles in world prices. The internal price of this export was only 31.9 billion, or 23.5 billion rubles less. He goes on: at the same time about 42.6 billion rubles worth of goods were imported, or 12.8 billion less than Russia "earned" through exports.

I. A. Pogosov, first deputy chairman of the statistical administration (Goskomstat), has confirmed Matiukha's general argument in an interview with Argumenty i fakty. According to him, most of the republics would be at an economic disadvantage if they were forced to pay for inter-republic trade in world prices. Generally speaking, consumer products (including the food industry) are cheaper in world prices that in internal Soviet prices. On the other hand petroleum products and other raw materials, as well as heavy machinery, are traded internally at low prices compared with the world market. The result is that many of the smaller republics (especially those that are food exporters) are at a double advantage: they are able to buy raw materials and machinery at low prices, while getting higher prices for what they produce. This applies in particular to republics that profit heavily from food shipments, viz., the Baltic states, Moldavia, and Georgia.

When inter-republic trade is calculated in world prices, according to Pogosov's figures, all the republics except the RSFSR show a negative trade balance. This can be taken as another measure of the subsidy provided by the RSFSR, in world prices. Pogosov gives some other specific examples. In 1987, the Lithuanian republic paid 489 million rubles for petroleum products from

---

45Izvestiia, Sept. 1, 1989. Vlasov was calculating the value of the resources lost in world prices.
other Soviet republics. In world prices Lithuania would have paid 1.82 billion rubles.

V'iunitskii has compared Russia to an older sister, forced to sacrifice her own needs to care for her younger brothers and sisters. Now that younger members of the family are grown and able to care for themselves, they are not only lacking in gratitude but expect continued help from their impoverished sister.46 In a less colorful vein, Litvinova argues that the efforts of Russia to eliminate economic and cultural inequalities among the republics have both succeeded and failed: most of the republics are ahead of Russia on several indicators of the quality of life, and the old inequality has been reversed.47

The Russian Minority in the Republics: The Refugee Problem

More than 20 million ethnic Russians live in the non-Russian republics. In addition several million citizens of other nationalities belong to the "Russian-speaking" community in these republics. One of the grievances of the Russian nationalists has been discrimination, or the threat of discrimination, against this minority. S. V. Vasil'ev, one of the organizers of the Tiumen meeting, commented as follows: "In certain regions of the country, in my view, some of the formal and informal leaders have ignored the civil rights of Russians. The reality is that 20 million Russians who live outside the RSFSR are concerned about their status. In Estonia and Moldavia they have already been forced to defend their rights by extreme measures. If this problem is not resolved by parliamentary methods, the people will find other methods of

46Vladimir V'iunitskii, "Rossiia i 'tsentr,'" Literaturnaia Rossiia, Dec. 8, 1989.

struggle..." 48 In the Baltic republics and Moldavia laws on citizenship, voting rights, and language have been published which, if enforced, would appear to threaten the basic rights of the Russian-speaking minority. 49 The laws would limit citizenship to members of the eponymous nationality or to settlers who have been there for a prescribed number of years, and also would establish a long residence requirement for voting. The language laws would require all residents to know the local language in order to hold certain jobs. It has been suggested that the principal aim of the language laws is not to force Russian settlers to learn the language, but to force them to leave.

These laws are directed not only against Russians. For example, the draft of a language law published in Moldavia would have forced Jews to use the traditional Judaic form of the second name, although nearly all the Jews living in the republic have traditionally used the Russian form of the patronymic. 50

The law on citizenship proposed for Latvia would require ten years of residence in the republic in order to have citizenship. The law does not make it clear whether it would take away the rights of present citizens who do not meet the residence requirement, but the Russian-speaking settlers have complained that it would. 51 The law drafted in Lithuania would require ten years of residence plus a knowledge of the Lithuanian language. 52 The Estonian


51 Edinstvo (Riga), Sept. 8, 1989.

52 Edinstvo (Vilnius), September 1989.
election laws also provide a long residence requirement. To be elected a people's deputy, the candidate must have lived in the republic for ten years. The Estonian legislature also has considered a law which places strict controls over immigration into the republic.

The platform of the patriotic bloc promises to protect the rights of these Russian-speaking settlers. In particular, it proposes the establishment of RSFSR agencies in each republic to protect the Russian-speaking minorities. If any of the settlers is subject to discrimination, Russia should then take whatever legal measures might be necessary. The Tiumen appeal demands that the right to "national self determination" be guaranteed to the minorities within the republics, while at the same time voicing opposition to laws which distinguish the indigenous from the non-indigenous population. Members of Otechestvo have called on that organization to support the Russian-speaking population in the republics. The Edinenie organization is committed to the same goal.

Litvinova has argued that in theory there is a simple solution to the problem of the Russian settlers, at least in the Baltic republics. Most of them went to the Baltic in search of economic betterment. Improve the quality

---


54Interdvizhenie Estonii, 1989 No. 7.

55Otechestvo: Materialy konferentsii, p. 15.

of life in the RSFSR, Litvinova argues, especially in the regions bordering on the Baltic republics, and most of the settlers would leave.57

The Tiumen appeal, which was written more than two months before the crisis in Baku, also anticipated the problem of refugees fleeing from some of the republics. Since January, thousands of Russian-speaking refugees have fled from the southern republics. There are between 50,000 and 80,000 refugees in the Moscow region alone.58 Altogether about 500,000 refugees are now scattered through the Russian republic. Most of these people are ethnic Russians who fled from Azerbaidzhan in January, often leaving all their possessions behind, and now present a real human tragedy for Moscow and other cities in the RSFSR. Ryzhkov has acknowledged the importance of the refugee problem and has argued that they are the responsibility of the republics whence they fled.59 But Ryzhkov discussed the refugee problem only in response to an interviewer's question. Otherwise the government has kept silent. Indeed one of the Russian nationalists' complaints is not only that the government is doing too little, but that it has suppressed information about the problem.

The Russia Club has organized a Committee for Russian-Speaking Refugees (KRB), but the committee lacks legal status as well as resources.60 The refugees in the Moscow region have been settled temporarily in children's camps and rest homes, but they were threatened with eviction as the summer season approached.

Russian Dependency

Russian nationalists frequently complain that the RSFSR lacks the institutions of statehood (gosudarstvennost’) which exist in all the other republics. The problem is broader than the word statehood implies, and it is sometimes described as the problem of dependency (nesamosostoiatel’nost’). The RSFSR has no Russian academy of sciences, no Russian conservatory of music. There is also no separate Russian capital, because the Russians are obliged to share Moscow with the central government. Until 1990, the Russian republic did not have its own Communist party. This problem has its origins in the conflict of the early 1920s over the form of the federal union, between Lenin’s proposal for “federalism” and Stalin’s plan for “autonomization.” Stalin was forced to back down in the face of Lenin’s opposition, but ultimately Stalin managed to realize his own plan. In the process of carrying out this scheme, Russian institutions were transformed into federal organizations, and in some cases no Russian counterpart survived. Thus the Russian Academy of Sciences became the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and the Russian Communist Party became the All-Union Communist Party.

It is easy to dismiss these Russian complaints as trivial, especially the complaint about the Communist party organization. In the perception of the minority nationalities, the party’s organizational structure merely confirms the fact of Russian dominance. However, so much emphasis has been placed on the promotion of national cadres in the apparatus of the republic party organizations, that it is natural for the Russians to question why they have no

61 It might also be noted that there is no Russian KGB, but I have never heard a complaint on this point.

62 A. A. Prazauskas, "Filosofskie problemy teorii i praktiki natsional’nykh otnoshenii pri sotsializme: materialy 'kruglogo stola,'" Voprosy filosofii, 1988 No. 9, p. 45.
organization of their own. The central party apparatus is structured so that the affairs of the Russian republic could fall under the supervision of non-Russians.

Another problem, related to the dependency issue, is that of "proportional representation." Since the creation of the Supreme Soviet in the Stalin constitution, all the union republics have been entitled to the same number of representatives in the Soviet of Nationalities. This principle of equal representation has been preserved in the radical constitutional changes that were made in 1988, when the Congress of Peoples' Deputies was created. Thus Estonia, which has only about one percent of the population of the RSFSR, is entitled to the same number of representatives as the Russian federation.

Now so long as the Supreme Soviet remained a rubber-stamp parliament, no one paid serious attention to the distribution of votes. The notion of "one man, one vote" had no meaning. With the appearance of a quasi-democratic parliament where votes may really count, it has become a major source of controversy. In the next session of the Congress of People's Deputies it could produce a serious confrontation between the RSFSR and the other republics. The election platform of the patriotic bloc demands "proportional representation" in precisely this sense of the word. On the face of it, the system of representation in the Soviet of Nationalities, where the RSFSR is entitled to the same number of deputies as tiny Estonia, does seem unjust. On the other hand all the autonomous republics and other national-territorial units in the RSFSR are also entitled to representation in the Soviet of Nationalities. This does not assure proportional representation, but it redresses the balance to some extent.


64The same comment can be applied, of course, to the United States Senate.
The problem of dependency is not just a matter of national pride. Filipova, in the article cited earlier, points out that there is no research institute devoted to the study of the Russian economy, although institutes of economics exist in all the republic academies. Such a research institute could, presumably, defend Russian economic interests.

These missing institutions are now being created. The Russian republic now has its own television channel, and a republic police ministry (MVD) has appeared. A new republic Communist party has been created for the Russian federation.\(^{65}\)

The government has also approved, in principle, the creation of a separate academy of sciences for the RSFSR. The scientific bureaucrats who manage the academy are under orders to create a new institution, but the orders are vague. Discussion within the academy has ranged from one extreme to the other—from a suggestion that the all-union academy simply be abolished and all its research institutes transferred to the Russian academy, to a proposal that the Russian academy should be quite limited in scope, supervising research on Russian history, literature, and folklore but little else.\(^{66}\)

\(^{65}\)The regime tried to meet this demand, at the end of 1989, by establishing a separate "Bureau" to supervise party organizations in the RSFSR. A similar bureau existed under Khrushchev from 1956 to its abolition in 1966. Khrushchev's bureau, however, had its own administrative apparatus. The bureau created by Gorbachev was to use the administrative services of the central party apparatus. There were immediate objections from Russian party leaders that the bureau did not meet the republic's needs. Boris Gidaspov, a member of the Russian Bureau, was among those who insisted that the measure did not go far enough.

The Demographic Problem

The demographic problem, as is well known, is a code word for what used to be called the Yellow Peril—the vision of Asiatic hordes sweeping over a depopulated Russia. The problem doubtless has been over-dramatized by contemporary Russophiles. The statistics on birth rates and death rates, however, are undeniable. The Russophiles believe that if present trends continue, the number of Russians in the world will be halved by the middle of the twenty-first century.

Cultural factors account in part for the differences in birth rates, but only in part. In a 1985 survey of women of child-bearing age, each respondent was asked how many children she planned to have. The modal response for Slavic women was two, while the corresponding figure for women from the Central Asian republics was six.67 In fact more than fifty percent of Russian families have only one child, regardless of the mother’s plans. This difference between plans and reality suggest that cultural differences are only part of the explanation for the gap in the birth rate. The economic differences between the republics are also to blame. Litvinova, who has been a tireless collector of statistics on the demographic problem, has discovered that in the RSFSR, 23.2 percent of families are living in inadequate housing by Soviet standards. The corresponding figure for Uzbekistan is only 11.8 percent.68 This too must be a contributing factor to the low Russian birth rate.

For several years there has been a running debate over solutions to the demographic problem. Russian nationalists have favored giving more assistance


68 Nash sovremennik, 1989 No. 7, p. 16.
to families in the regions with low population growth—meaning the Slavic republics and the Baltic states. Litvinova, who in the past has favored such proposals, has said that such differentiated family assistance should continue until the typical Russian family is producing two or three children. In the past, all such proposals have been met with the argument that they would be flagrantly discriminatory, and intolerable in a socialist state. The appearance of "republic khozraschet" now provides an answer to such objections. It has been proposed informally that family assistance should be put on the republic budget, so that each republic can make its own rules. This would allow the RSFSR to pay much higher family subsidies, provided it did so out of its own resources. If (this argument runs) the Russian subsidy to the other republics is reduced, then these resources can be found.

The Paradox of Russophobia

An open letter which circulated in samizdat complained of cultural and political discrimination against the Russians. Russian culture, their letter goes on, is under constant attack, often in the guise of a struggle with religious or racial prejudice. Russian patriotism is denounced as chauvinism or worse, while the patriotism of smaller nationalities is actively encouraged. The result is "Russophobia": a widespread distrust of Russians and Russian culture.69

In its crudest form, Russophobia is a pattern of prejudices and national stereotypes about ethnic Russians. But Russophobia also takes on a more sophisticated form, as a philosophy of Russian history.70 Russophobia, in


70 Vadim Pigalev, "Chто oni ischut u slavianofilov?" Nash sovremennik, 1986 No. 10, pp. 156-162.
this usage, is an adaptation of the concept of a "special path" for Russian history, i.e. the view that Russia has developed social and political institutions that are fundamentally different from institutions in western Europe. Senderov argued that this pseudo-scientific brand of Russophobia has practically been forgotten, but in fact it is well established in Western Soviet studies. Shafarevich has provided a long list of scholarly works, some of them highly respected, which he accuses of Russophobia.

This concept of the unique character (samobytnost') of Russia in turn provides an explanation for what is perceived to be the aggressive character of the Russian state, and its single-minded devotion to territorial expansion. The extreme cruelty of the Muscovite princes created the unique Russian national character, deferential, slavish, and subordinate to authority. This is a paradoxical view, because it is consistent with the Slavophile view of history. This Russophobic interpretation, generally hostile to the Slavophile tradition, nonetheless follows the typically Slavophile idea of samobytnost'.

Is the Russophobic interpretation of Russian history the correct one? Karpovich dealt with this question years ago. He argued that the formation of the Muscovite state paralleled, in many ways, the development of nation states in the contemporary West. There was no basis for the idea that the Muscovite grand dukes were more aggressive than their Western contemporaries, or in some sense more cruel than absolute monarchs in the West. There are, of course, significant differences--just as there are important differences in the his-

---

72 I. R. Shafarevich, Russophobiia (Munich: Rossiiskoe natsional'noe ob"edinenie, 1989).
73 For a discussion of this view of Russian character see the interview with Shafarevich, "Vse okazalis' na pepelishche," Slovo, 1990 No. 1, 7-11.
torical development of the individual West European states. One of these differences is the economic backwardness of Russia after the beginning of the industrial revolution in the west, which contributed to political and social backwardness. As a consequence, political absolutism survived longer in Russia than in the West, but that fact does not make the Russian state qualitatively different. Another distinction is that Russian expansion was into neighboring territory and not over the oceans, and this gave the Russian Empire a different structure than the colonial empires of the Western powers. But Karpovich's general conclusion seems correct: "The rise of Moscow is a chapter in the modern history of Europe as a whole." 74

The most flagrant recent example of Russophobia is the work of the Estonian publicist and people's deputy, Tiit Made. 75 Made is a professor of law who has published a number of works on international organizations. He is also the author of a Russophobic book, Empire at the Crossroads, recently published in Finland. His writing seems to be a patchwork of familiar prejudices and a simplistic Freudianism:

It is rare to find a pleasant, friendly, good-natured Russian. They almost do not exist. The Tatars and Mongols once invaded the Russian villages, destroyed the male population or took it captive, and assaulted the Russian women. For this reason today the Russian nation is mixed with those who once ravished Russian women. This is the cause of that aggressiveness, the need to demonstrate power and to show off others' successes as one's own.

Russians want to be better than others, to create a "friendship," to dictate their style of life. Even in love, this aggressiveness and


75 See Interdvizhenie Estonii, 1989 No. 7.
force makes its appearance. After raping the women comes a time for love and sweetness.76

Furthermore Made says that the Russians have fallen into the habit of living well at the expense of others, and have lost the instinct for hard work.

With Russians you need to speak in the language and the manner that they understand.... In dealing with them you need to use the whole lexicon of strong expressions, be threatening, be ready to inform on them, pound your fist on the table. Then they will begin to listen to you and respect you. The communication of Russians with each other has an aggressive and cruel character.

The Russians created their empire by seizing the land of their neighbors. This predatory character [zakhvatnichestvo] lies deep in the cultural and historical roots of the Russians, in their music, literature, and national customs.77

This cruder form of Russophobia, if applied to almost any other ethnic group, would immediately be dismissed as mindless bigotry.

To see the influence of the Russophobic theory of history, we need look no further than the United States Congress, and the Captive Nations resolution adopted in 1959.78 We receive an annual reminder of this resolution because it designates the third week of July as "Captive Nations Week," and for thirty years the President has dutifully issued a proclamation to this effect.79

What interests me is not this annual ritual, but the theory which underlies it. According to the original enactment, "Communist Russia" has subjugated a

76Sovetskaia Rossiia, Aug. 5, 1989 (this is a Russian translation of an article, "Great Russian Nationalism," originally published in Svenska Dagbladet, July 24, 1989).

77This passage comes from Made's Finnish book, Imperiumi tienhaarassa (Empire at the Crossroads) (Helsinki: Kirjayhtymä, 1989); the quotation comes from a Russian translation in Sovetskaia Rossiia, Dec. 22, 1989.

7873 Stat. 212.

79Most recently, the Proclamation of July 6, 1989, Federal Register, vol. 54, No. 130, pp. 28993-28994.
series of nations, including twelve of the other republics of the USSR. Russia, in other words, is the oppressor and not, herself, a captive nation. The Captive Nations resolution runs counter to one of the deeply held beliefs of contemporary Russian nationalists, viz., that Russia was the first victim of Communism and the victim that has suffered the most. Russophobia, or so it is alleged, conceals this basic fact and blames Russia herself for her problems.

Contemporary Russian nationalists tend to regard Russophobia not simply as stupid prejudice, but as part of a deliberate campaign, organized by "left-radical" groups such as the Interregional Deputies Group, the Democratic Union, and the popular fronts in the Baltic republics, and designed to stir up hostility to ethnic Russians. It is true that Russophobia is not far removed from Sovietophobia, but that is a result of the perceived identification of Russia with the "center." However erroneous, it is an easy trap to fall into. Since 1917 it is the center which has given orders and run the USSR, and now it is the center which must take the blame for the catastrophe which threatens to overwhelm the country. Geographically, the "center" means Moscow--and Moscow is the traditional center of Russia as well as the capital of the USSR. Yet it is Russia, more than the other republics, which has suffered most from the despotism of the center.

80 For some reason, Belorussia and Moldavia are not on the official list of captive nations. The list does include such entities as Cossackia, Idel-Ural, and White Ruthenia.


THE TRADITIONALISTS AND THE ECONOMIC REFORM

The platform of the patriotic bloc says that the peasant must be the complete master of the land. The platform opposes Gorbachev's leasing proposal: the peasant should possess the land in a form of permanent lease, although he would not be allowed to sell or rent it. Popov has criticized this platform for not really coming to grips with the agriculture problem. He argued that giving the peasants land will of itself accomplish nothing. There must also be a guarantee of a free market, where the peasant can sell what he produces on his land.83

Some of the traditionalists in fact have a serious and major criticism of the planned economic reform. It should begin with the countryside, and as a social rather than an economic reform. In 1990 the village writer Vasilii Belov told the Supreme Soviet what many Russians had said privately before, that collectivization was a new form of serfdom and there could be no real progress toward economic reform until the peasants were set free.84 The Russian peasantry should be lifted out of its forlorn state and given the incentive to produce---and the country could again become a grain exporter, as it was before 1917. It is probably true that the transition to a market economy would be quicker in agriculture than in industry--if the government chooses to start with agriculture.

The traditionalists do not deny the need for economic reform but they see perestroika as too radical, too fast, and too western. The concentration on technological development focuses on a few key industries and overlooks the agricultural problem. Some of the traditionalists have openly favored a restoration of the New Economic Policy--and the connection between NEP and the

83Ogonek, 1990 No. 10, p. 4.
84Literaturnaia Rossiia, Mar. 9, 1990.
National Bolshevik idea has already been noted. A few of the traditionalists now have a new hero, Petr A. Stolypin, the tsarist prime minister who tried to carry through a radical agrarian reform before he was assassinated in 1911.

The most prolific traditionalist writer on economic affairs has been Mikhail Antonov, a Russophile who in the 1970s contributed to the samizdat journal Veche, and now is on the staff of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). His extensive writings on current problems of economic reform quote not only from Lenin but from Likhachev, Belov, and Rasputin. Antonov attacks both the advocates of economic reform (whom he refers to as the "merchants") and conservatives who defend the command economy (the "cavaliers"). Both the reformers and the conservatives seem interested only in economic man, while Antonov insists that the individual must be treated as a social and moral being. He advocates a third course, based on the cooperative movement, which would avoid both the over-centralization of the command economy, and the transformation of the country into a second America. "What we need is not a second America but an indivisible union of free peoples united around Great Russia [velikaia Rus']."


For Antonov's earlier Russophile writings, see: "Учение славянофилов-вьшшii vzlet narodnego samosoznaniia v Rossi v doleninskii period," Veche No. 1 (AS no. 1013), Veche No. 2 (AS no. 1020), Veche No. 3 (AS no. 1108).

omy is not only an international, but also a national science, and it inevitably carries the indelible marking of the character of the people among whom it has developed.... Political economy cannot remain neutral to moral issues, because under contemporary circumstances that would transform it into an immoral science.\textsuperscript{87} Antonov is opposed to acquiring foreign technology ("capitulation") and to mass purchases of foreign goods (unpatriotic consumerism). Technology, he argues, is less a product of a society than a product of a national culture--so that Russian technology will necessarily differ from American technology. He is particularly shocked by the proposal to create free economic zones, which is "personally insulting to me as a Russian and as a Soviet citizen."\textsuperscript{88} In an attack on Abalkin, Antonov calls for going beyond economics to solve the country's problems: he wants to begin by cleaning up the environment and raising the moral and spiritual level of Soviet society. These are all issues central to the traditionalist ideology.

The reader may have noticed in the list of Antonov's articles that his writings have appeared in newspapers and literary journals, but not in professional economic journals. Both Salutskii and Aleksei Sergeev have complained that economists who have traditionalist views are kept out of the mainstream economic journals: "Among economists there are diametrically opposed points of view on the causes of our current situation, and on the solution. But unfortunately, only that group of economists who propagate the principles of a market economy have access to the media. I would dare to say that even in the time of Stalin our economic science did experience such a cruel 'lack of glas-
ncest. 

Sergeev, the author of this statement, is professor of economics at the Higher School of the Trade Union Movement in Moscow.

Sergeev argues that the "administrative-command system" so roundly criticized by the reformers is partly a straw man. The problems of the economy were caused by incompetence, over-centralization, and bureaucracy. The principle of economic planning should not be abandoned in the name of criticizing these shortcomings. Sergeev charges the free-market advocates with going to far, with embracing the discredited "night watchman" theory of free enterprise and denying the state any role in the management of the economy. And he warns that if the remedies of the free-market advocates are really put into effect, it is the workers who will pay the cost. The workers, in effect, will be severely punished for the incompetence of management and the hare-brained schemes of certain economic theorists. Sergeev says that the reformers threaten the workers with mass unemployment, uncontrolled inflation, and an intense class struggle. He also warns that the reforms threaten a loss of benefits the workers have acquired under socialism, such as free medical care and low-cost housing. The result will be a depressed standard of living for the working class and the rise of a new Soviet bourgeoisie.

In his other writings Sergeev has identified the origins of this new bourgeoisie; it is the cooperative movement, which is nothing more than a legalization of the "shadow economy." According to Sergeev's figures, at

89"Zavtra ili pozavchera?" Nash sovremennik, 1989 No. 11, p. 102. This article takes the form of a dialogue between Salutskii and Sergeev. See also Anatolii Salutskii, "Moskva, kolonnyi zal...," Literaturnaia Rossiia, Dec. 8, 1989.

90Nash sovremennik, 1989 No. 11, p. 105.

91Ibid., p. 107.


37
the beginning of 1990, 20 million Soviet citizens were involved in the cooperative sphere, and it accounted for 20 to 25 percent of the country's national income. But this is nothing less than underground capitalism, "shadow" capitalists in league with a Soviet Mafia. Sergeev, apparently, is the author of a proposed currency reform which would bankrupt these criminal elements. He proposes that new Soviet currency be issued and that a conditional limit be placed on the amount that any individual be allowed to exchange for the new notes. He suggested a limit of 10,000 or 15,000 rubles. A citizen who wants to exchange a larger amount of money would have to prove that the funds were acquired legally. This proposal appeared in the election platform of the patriotic bloc.

There is no doubt that Sergeev and the traditionalists who supported the platform have hit on a potentially explosive subject. There is a widespread belief that a new Mafia is growing out of the cooperative movement, racketeers and swindlers who should be eliminated from Soviet society. This Mafia is supposedly exploiting the Soviet consumer for huge profits. The Moscow Platform promised "democracy of the workers and for the workers," which would root out exploiters and parasites, the criminal cooperatives and the Mafia. Gorbachev himself has said that there is a "real Mafia" involved in the shadow economy, and without explaining why, he has blamed this Mafia for the spread of ethnic violence.93

THE TRADITIONALISTS' PROGRAM

For Russians as for smaller nationalities, nationalism is a defensive reaction by a people who feel their culture to be under threat. The Russians, no less than the minority nationalities, have a fear that their cultural

---

93Pravda, Feb. 6, 1990.
heritage will be swallowed up in a multinational Soviet culture. The
defensive character of Russian nationalism is frequently overlooked by western
analysts because of the perception that the Russians are the dominant nation-
ality in the USSR. For many Russian nationalists, "it is an obvious fact"
that the standard of living of the Russian people is lower than the standard
of living of the other union republics, and within the union, the Russian fed-
eration is an unequal partner. Russians also believe that village life in
the republics has not been disrupted as it was in Russia. In all the repub-
lies, agriculture is officially collectivized. However, in the perception of
the Russians, the villages in the non-Slavic republics have not seen their
social order destroyed by collectivization, as it was in Russia.

Russia as Victim:
The Russophile Ideology

The general sense of victimization is expressed in the open letter which
has already been quoted:

...at the present time, and for a long time past, Russians have been
in an unequal situation compared with other nationalities. The results
of the 1979 census showed very clearly that the Russian Federation is in
last place in all the important socio-economic, cultural, and
demographic indicators. ... Yet in 1917 Russia was the most developed
country among those which later united around her in the USSR.
Today Russia has fallen to last place in such basic indicators as
birth rate, material standard of living, education, housing, roads and
transport.95

The Russophile program can be found in two documents that appeared, per-
haps coincidentally, in December 1988. The first was an open letter from the
Irkutsk writers' organization to the Soviet government, and shows the clear

influence of Rasputin. The second was an appeal, addressed to the "intelligentsia of all the nations of the USSR," issued by a conference which took place in Moscow. The conference, which studied the topic "The Nation and the Renewal of Society," included such well-known Russophiles as Vadim Kozhinov and Galina Litvinova.

The Irkutsk writers' letter concluded with ten basic points:

1. Each republic should be financially self-sufficient, with an end to subsidies from the all-union budget.
2. The regime should assure normal population growth for the Russian republic by improved housing, financial assistance, and reducing the incidence of alcohol and drug abuse.
3. All nationalities should be assured of proportional representation in employment at all levels. In particular this principle should be observed in appointment of scientific workers and artists, and in the mass media.
4. The USSR constitution should be amended to assign to the Chamber of Nationalities [sic] the responsibility of guaranteeing equality among the republics in questions of economics and employment.
5. The Russian republic should be allowed to create missing institutions: a republic party organization, KGB, Academy of Sciences, Academy of Arts, and a Russian conservatory, which were to be organized on the basis of proportional representation of nationalities.
6. An end to Russophobia.
7. In order to strengthen patriotism, introduce the teaching of Russian history and history of the regions of the RSFSR.

8. Enact laws which would put an end to the destruction of historical monuments.

9. Strengthen the laws on protection of the environment.

10. Increase control over radio and television to suppress "musical narcomania" in the form of rock music. Restore Russian traditions in the arts by ending the constant propaganda of western pop culture.

The appeal issued by the Moscow conference contains the same points, but it acknowledges that in the past serious errors were made in nationality policy, and that glasnost, by opening up discussion of the problems, has also opened the way to petty nationalism and Russophobia. It adds that ethnic Russians were among Stalin's first victims, and that it is unfair to attribute Stalin's crimes to Russians or to equate Russophilism with Stalinism.

CONCLUSION

We can see at least three possible scenarios for the development of an authoritarian regime: (1) the party conservatives come to power and carry through a modified Stalinist restoration, (2) a regime dominated by the Russian nationalist idea, which would continue the dismantling of the Stalinist system but would not necessarily lead the country toward democracy on the western model, and (3) a reformist dictatorship along the lines suggested by Migranian. This study has focused on the traditionalist program, and has not tried to gauge the prospects for the first or third alternatives. Our material, however, allows us to conclude with a judgment about the traditionalists. Their prospects for taking power in the foreseeable future must be rated as slim to zero.

But while their prospects for coming to power may be very slim, it would be a mistake to dismiss the traditionalist idea as an influential force in
Soviet politics. They have raised issues which have a wide popular appeal, especially among ethnic Russians, and they certainly cannot be ignored. Their failure in the 1990 elections, as has already been suggested, can be attributed to a variety of factors. To be politically successful the traditionalists must become more sophisticated in the art of winning votes. But it is probably true, as Osipov suggested, that the difference between the traditionalists and the party conservatives is not completely understood by the voting public. To be more successful the traditionalists must separate themselves clearly and finally from the Communist party. Many of the traditionalists were vocal opponents of the ruling party, long before the age of glasnost. Osipov, for example, spent two terms in labor camps (1962-1968, 1974-1982) for the crime of anti-Soviet propaganda. Yet the traditionalists' own pronouncements have taken an equivocal line on the party. The Moscow Platform, for example, says the following:

**Attitude toward the CPSU.** Without relieving the CPSU of responsibility for all the consequences of its leading role in the country since 1917, we nonetheless take account of the fact that today the party is no longer the evil "order of sword-bearers" which ruled the country for the first forty years [sic]. The evidence for that is the very fact of our perestroika. Furthermore, in soberly evaluating the political situation, we have to recognize that today there is still no political force able to save the country from breakup and anarchy, although they are undoubtedly growing in the roots of our society. The transfer of power into the hands of the Soviets demands a certain period of time. And during that period the CPSU has the time and the historical chance to show itself in a new capacity, as one of the forces which can support the national and cultural rebirth of the country. In our view this is the only chance which can save it from an inevitable internal and external collapse. The task of the present day is to bring the activities of the CPSU under the control of the Soviets. . . .

The traditionalists seem willing to save the party temporarily in order to stave off anarchy. The liberals, in contrast, are prepared to risk anarchy in order to loosen the party's grip on Soviet society and move forward with their reforms.

42
This equivocation toward the party is the more surprising when we reflect that most of the traditionalists—whether of the National Bolshevik or Russophile persuasion—have never been party members. ⁹⁸ The leading reformers—with the outstanding exception of Academician Sakharov—have all belonged to the Communist party. Some, like El’tsin, Popov, and Sobchak, have left the party. In one case (Roy Medvedev) a reformer has rejoined the party he left twenty years ago. A few, like El’tsin, have had long experience in the party apparatus.

These facts may account for the success of the liberals and the failure of the traditionalists in the elections. The liberals, without exception, are political individuals. They were involved in the political life of the country long before glasnost, when the acceptable form of political activity was party membership. In the radically new conditions created by the constitutional reforms, they have left the party but they have not left politics. On the contrary, they have found a more open and congenial field for political activity. Their deep personal commitment to politics, and perhaps even the political skills acquired as party members, have helped them in the new game of electoral politics.

The traditionalists' careers seem to be living evidence of the Slavophile myth about the "non-political" character of the Russian people. ⁹⁹ Except for Rasputin none of the traditionalist leaders has emerged as a public figure.

⁹⁸The significant exceptions are the two writers, Soloukhin and Belov. Neither has had any connection with the apparatus, although Belov has been a member of the Vologda obkom.

⁹⁹On this point it is interesting to compare Konstantin Aksakov's famous memorandum to Aleksandr II, "O vnutrennem sostojanii Rossii" (1855), with Osipov's 1974 essay "K voprosu o tseli i metodakh legal'noi oppozitsii." Aksakov's memorandum will be found in Teoriia gosudarstva u slavianofilov (St. Petersburg, 1898), pp. 22-44. Osipov's article is in his book Tri otnosheniiia k rodine (Frankfurt: Posev, 1978), pp. 181-193.
As for Rasputin, although he was elected a people's deputy he did not try to compete for public (or television) attention with El'tsin or Iurii Afanas'ev. Even in his new role as a member of the presidential council, he seems content to render his advice and stay out of public view. There is no one in the traditionalist camp who has the gift for self-publicity of a El'tsin or a Gdlian. The one dramatic figure that might seize the leadership of the Russian traditionalists is still living in exile.

The question of sovereignty illustrates this difference in approach and in the ability to exploit an issue. The problem of Russian dependency, as we have seen, has long been a grievance among the Russian nationalists. For years they have complained about the lack of institutions in the Russian republic. But only in the past year has this become a public issue with the regime taking specific actions to solve the problem. Then Boris El'tsin turned it into the issue of sovereignty for the republic. Here is a single term that neatly summed up the problem, and El'tsin transformed it into a significant political victory in the RSFSR congress. Never mind that the RSFSR was already (according to the constitution) sovereign, and that the congress's decision changed nothing. El'tsin was able to exploit the Russians' deep sense of injustice without ever referring to the nationalists who had been grieving about it for years.

On the other hand in their statements on the economic problems of the country, the traditionalists may have found an issue that can be transformed into mass support. It would be too much to say that the traditionalists have an economic program. Even the professional work of Sergeev does not offer a clear alternative to the reforms called perestroika. The Moscow Platform promises "popular socialism" (narodnyi sotsializm) but with no details.

In many parts of the Soviet population there is a sense not only that the country is moving in the wrong direction, economically, but that Gorbachev is not
the leader to show the country the way out of the crisis. The question of the "criminal cooperatives" and the Mafia is certainly an issue that can win votes. It remains to be seen if the traditionalists have the skill to use it.