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What Was to be Done? The Impact of Leadership, Ideology, and Global Forces on the Demise of the Soviet Union

by

Brenda G. Reynolds 

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Department of Political Science

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Name of Author: Brenda Grace Reynolds

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Brenda G. Reynolds

106-419c Tait Court
Saskatoon, SK
S7H 5L3

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University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled What Was to be Done? The Impact of Leadership, Ideology and Global Forces on the Demise of the Soviet Union submitted by Brenda Grace Reynolds in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Political Science.

Dr. Tom Keating

Dr. Fred Judson

Dr. David Marples

June 12, 2002

There is a great moment, when you see, however distant, the goal of your wandering. The thing which has been living in your imagination suddenly becomes a part of the tangible world. It matters not how many ranges, rivers or parching dusty ways may lie between you; it is yours now forever.

- *Freya Stark 20th-century American writer*

Abstract

The collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the twentieth century was a stunning event. Not only did the USSR fall without resistance, but its demise effectively transformed the world order from a bi-polar system riddled with ideological divisions to a current era of global interdependence. Clearly, a confluence of factors - both internal and external - contributed to the dramatic events that took place within the Soviet Union. For the purpose of this thesis I argue that three main factors – leadership, ideology and global forces – were instrumental in both the demise of the Communist system of the Soviet Union and the subsequent democratization process of its satellite states in Eastern Europe.

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Special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Tom Keating, for his advice, suggestions and patience while I completed this thesis from Saskatoon. Many thanks also to my informal supervisor, my sister Dr. Joan Reynolds, whose continual advice regarding my paper was greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank my friend, Cheryl, who had to endure many conversations concerning my thesis, and had to deal with my stress and occasional frustration.

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Introduction

"In response to a question about communism, Gorbachev answered that the Soviet experience 'has allowed us to say in a decisive fashion that the model has failed'.

- Gorbachev, 1991, following his resignation as General Secretary

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 – and by extension the defeat of Communism throughout the Eastern bloc – was one of the most profound events of the twentieth century. The breakup of the Union not only had great implications domestically, but it also transformed the global community, both politically and economically. Moreover, the demise of the USSR was not only sudden, but it was met with little resistance – from the intelligentsia, to the bureaucrats, the reformers and the CPSU itself.

My main purpose in writing this thesis is to examine the rapid dissolution of a political phenomenon whose ideology stretched across massive territory for over 80 years. Specifically, what catalysts were responsible for eradicating a socialist political and economic system that encompassed not only the Soviet Union, but Eastern Europe also? Moreover, how did these factors – both internal and external – facilitate democratic revolutions throughout the Iron Curtain?

The fall of the Soviet Empire was one of the great events of the twentieth century, and the explanation for its sudden demise is not simple. Many factors played a role in destroying not only the USSR, but the entire communist foundation on which it stood. I argue that three main factors that can be attributed to the destruction of the Soviet Union:

leadership, ideology and globalization. Gorbachev, as the Soviet leader, must share some of the blame for his country's demise – the mistakes, oversights and poor decision - did in fact play a role in how the events played themselves out. This being said, Gorbachev was working with a dilapidated system that was becoming increasingly isolated from the globalized world. How much he was to blame for destroying his own country will be further examined.

Ideology also aided in the USSR's demise, specifically the dramatic shift from Marxism-Leninism to global humanitarianism and democracy. Gorbachev's insistence on the necessity of glasnost led to a re-examination of Lenin and Stalin, challenging the belief that Lenin was perhaps not a great humanitarian. The 'negative qualities of socialism' began to surface.

And lastly, the forces of globalization were also paramount in the fall of the Soviet Empire. The creation of global markets and the revolution of communications only alienated the USSR from the rest of the world, and, because the Soviet economy was in dire straits – in part because of the arms race - radical restructuring was the only option. Once glasnost and perestroika was underway, the relaxation of censorship led to increased knowledge and a renewed sense of nationalism, particularly in the Baltics. The transformation of global communications only served to further their nationalist aspirations which spilled across the borders into Eastern Europe. And because the use of force was no longer an option for Gorbachev, the formation of opposition movements flourished in Poland and Hungary.

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Since 1991, scholars have analyzed and debated the many factors which contributed to the collapse, as well as why the Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology could not be sustained. While the question is still up for debate, certain themes throughout the scholarship can be found: first, the implementation of glasnost had unanticipated effects, such as the rise of ethnic nationalism (primarily in the Baltic region) that contributed to anti-Russian sentiment and led to calls for independence. Second, the Soviet Union's poor economic performance led Gorbachev to the realization that the USSR's economic and ideological isolation from the Western world was putting the country at a economic disadvantage. Third, the economic stagnation that had begun in the 1970s was worsening, and several factors contributed to its decline, such as conflict within the CPSU over economic reforms, and the bureaucratic nature of the system. This led to a hybrid economic system that was neither socialist nor capitalist. Fourth, two political factors can be cited: factionalism within the Communist Party over economic reform and the restructuring of the CPSU. The CPSU played a key role in the reformation process: for Gorbachev, the party was the central player that would determine the success of perestroika. But because the party was a stumbling block to the reforms, it too needed to be reformed and overhauled. The party's continual resistance to reforming itself, along with the gradual whittling away of its power and its role within society, ultimately proved to be damaging to the restructuring of society.

Lastly, it was Gorbachev himself who also played a role in his country's demise. Whether by choice or by design, the extent of Gorbachev's role in the breakup of the USSR is highly contested throughout the historiography. While some have argued that

he single-handedly brought down the USSR through poor insight and decision-making, others have taken the position that he was working with a structurally deficient system that was destined to collapse. In this thesis, I argue that while Gorbachev did execute several poor decisions in hindsight, he did so given the conditions within which he was working: a highly bureaucratized system in which the party was inextricably tied to the government, a top-down command economy that was worsening the country's economic plight, and the emergence of deep divisions within the CPSU. Clearly, Gorbachev's recognition that the USSR needed to be restructured demonstrated his insight to the problems which plagued the Soviet Union. Moreover, his insistence during the initial stages of reform that the reforms be conducted along socialist lines – was an indication of his commitment to socialism, and not toward capitalism as some have charged.

Ideology – specifically ideological shifts during the Gorbachev era - played a large role in the demise of the USSR. For example, the ideological development of Marxism-Leninism during the Leninist and Stalinist eras underwent a dramatic overhaul during the 1980s: the 'abandonment of utopia' and the transition to 'humane socialism'; rethinking Stalinism and the Marxist depiction of history facilitated by glasnost; the withering away of Lenin's cult, and the shift toward global humanitarianism and the de-emphasis of the class struggle.

There were also external factors that contributed extensively to the Soviet Union's demise: that of globalization, and - more succinctly - global democratization. The dramatic transformation of Soviet ideology spawned a new era of global relations – a 'new world order' - symbolized by the end of the Cold War. The forces of globalization – the creation of a global economy, the influence of NGOs and international agencies, the

revolution of communications, the rise in nationalism - effectively transformed the global economic, cultural and political climate. The infusion of these globalized forces into the Soviet Union, coupled with Gorbachev's plan to reinvigorate socialism by radical systemic restructuring, created an atmosphere where the flows of capital, information, goods, and communication evolved into a democratic revolution from within the Soviet Union to the 'velvet revolutions' of Eastern Europe. Such a spill-over effect – just one consequence of globalization – is demonstrative of the permeability of borders in a globalized world order.

Clearly, both internal and external factors contributed to the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union. It must be noted, however, that although Gorbachev saw the necessity to implement internal changes in order to save the Soviet system, the need to restructure the political and economic structures evolved out of the infusion of globalized forces that were slowly seeping into the Soviet system. Here we see a definitive interplay of forces at work: the injection of political and economic globalization into a centralized system that in turn led to systemic restructuring that spilled across the borders into Eastern Europe, lifting the lid on nationalist and anti-communist sentiments and facilitating a domino-effect of demands for secession. Democracy was the consequence. The eradication of the Soviet Union – and the Soviet empire – was the end result.

My thesis is comprised of three main chapters – chapter one deals with five scholars (Sakwa, Robinson, Hough, Evans Jr., and Lockwood) that specialize in Soviet politics. I have briefly summarized their work and outlined their central arguments, arguments that will be used in the body of my thesis. For example, Sakwa examines

Gorbachev and the reform process, and the role that he played in the collapse of the USSR. The role of ideology – and how ideology contributed to the failure of economic reforms – is Robinson's central focus. He traces the origins of Soviet ideology and how its decline led to the demise of the Union. For Hough, economics and the failure of economic reforms play a major role in the ultimate failure of Gorbachev's reforms. Evans Jr. looks at Soviet Marxism-Leninim – how it was constructed from Marx to Stalin to Gorbachev, and how Soviet ideology was overhauled during the mid – late 1980s. And finally, Lockwood focuses primarily on the external forces that brought down the Soviet Union, with globalization being the causal factor.

Chapter One – Literary Review

1. Richard Sakwa – Gorbachev and His Reforms 1985-90

In Richard Sakwa's book, Gorbachev and His Reforms, he examines the Soviet reform process from the mid-1980s onward, and attempts to determine the factors which brought about the collapse of the entire socialist system. In chapter one, Sakwa gives a brief overview of Gorbachev's ascent to power, and how he slowly began to lose control of the reform process that he had set in motion. In the following chapters, Sakwa focuses on communism and ideology of reform, perestroika of the economy, the new realism in foreign policy and the resurgence of nationalism throughout the Union.

With regards to perestroika, Sakwa's central position is that perestroika acted both as an agent of change and as a braking mechanism to keep the Soviet system intact. In other words, "how to change a system designed to withstand change."[1] The key question posited by Sakwa was this: was it possible for the Soviet system to undergo gradual reforms – such as economic or party reforms – while still keeping the basic structure intact, or, as many have argued, would such an attempt lead to the collapse of the system entirely? Put simply, "did the Soviet system stand or fall as one piece?"[2]

A paradigm shift in international relations – that of increased globalization and interdependence – marked a significant ontological shift in Gorbachev's thinking. By 1985, the Afghanistan war had been raging for five years with no end in sight, and relations with the West were at a low point. These factors, coupled with the Soviet

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[1] Richard Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms 1985-90 (New York: Philip Allan, 1990), p. 357.
[2] Ibid., p. 358.

Union's very slow economic growth rate, signaled the necessity of re-evaluating Soviet foreign policy. The need to restructure its foreign relations was imperative if perestroika was going to be successful.

In 1986, Gorbachev's speech to the Twenty-Seventh Congress dealt with re-establishing relations with capitalist countries, and denoted the need for global cooperation in resolving ecological problems and halting the depletion of natural resources. Unlike former leaders, Gorbachev's emphasis was on interdependence. The "ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism was played down in favour of globalism and interdependence."[3] Rather than the use of force, cooperation and disarmament became new foreign policy objectives, a marked departure from traditional Soviet ideology. This 'new political thinking' also saw a dramatic reversal in its views on the role of class in international relations. As Sakwa states, "the most radical change was to redefine and temper the concept of the international class struggle which had served to fuel the Soviet confrontation with the West."[4] For Gorbachev, the concept of class struggle diminished, as he understood that the main objective was the survival of humanity.[5] As Gorbachev stated, "the interests of one class cannot be placed above humanity as a whole."[6] Again, this radical thinking was a dramatic departure in Soviet policy, both globally and domestically.

In terms of glasnost, Sakwa argues it was an integral part of perestroika, as it lead to the re-evaluation and critical re-examination of the Soviet past. Through the relaxation of censorship, previously distorted and/or suppressed information was made public,

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[3] Ibid., p. 318.
[4] Ibid., p. 322.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.

leading to discussion. Topics once denounced publicly were now openly debated and discussed without fear of persecution. According to Sakwa, "the demise of the notion of a single truth...permitted the reconstruction of a public sphere of debate and contestation."[7]

While glasnost allowed for more discussion and public debate, Sakwa believes that glasnost's major achievement "was the reconstitution of the intelligentsia as a free-thinking and relatively independent group to act as a counterweight to the bureaucracy and the administrative system."[8] Yet herein lies the problem: because the process of perestroika was transforming the structure of society, the particular role of the intelligentsia within society began to disappear. While the intelligentsia played a prominent role during the initial phase of perestroika, Sakwa argues that it was merely a "transitional one". With respect to glasnost, it was supposed to – and in fact did – lead to a re-examination of the Soviet past while still enforcing the growing public display of criticism to stay within the boundaries of socialism. Yet controlling and containing critical discussion and public participation proved to be an impossible task: eventually, and not surprisingly, "free speech was seized from below and thus the official bounds of glasnost was breached."[9] Pandora's box had been flung open and could not be closed.

The legacy of Stalin and the roots of Stalinism, the 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact, and the invasion of Czechoslovakia – all revealed by glasnost - had a great impact on the Soviet political culture, truths that could no longer be overlooked once allowed to be openly discussed in the public arena. Clearly, "as glasnost revealed the scale and origins

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[7] Ibid., pp. 70/71.
[8] Ibid., p. 81.
[9] Ibid., p. 82

of Stalin's crimes, the country's belief in its own past was perhaps fatally eroded."[10] For Sakwa, "glasnost ultimately was the greatest guarantor of the irreversibility of Gorbachev's reforms."[11]

While perestroika attempted to transform the Soviet socialist system by introducing market-oriented mechanisms and overhauling the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), Sakwa contends – like several authors – that it failed because "it offered only an untried political and economic system to put in its place."[12] For Sakwa, this created within perestroika "the dynamic tension…it was both a series of improvisations, often based on old theoretical formulations, *and* contained new ideas on democracy and society."[13]

Sakwa points towards 'ideological restructuring' as a contributing factor to the modification of the Soviet system. In short, Soviet ideology underwent structural shifts in which both the content and form dramatically changed. For Sakwa, such a shift is directly linked to the poor economic performance and stagnation that plagued the Soviet Union, particularly in the 1970s and early 1980s. For example, there was an emphasis toward environmentalism, due to poor decision-making in the area of economic development during the 1960s as well as the nuclear accident at Chernobyl. The campaign by conservationists led to greater ecological security and heightened awareness that the Soviet Union – politically and economically – could no longer exist in isolation, giving way to a shift toward global interdependence. For Sakwa, such a transformation is denoted to be 'the social democratisation of Communist ideology'.

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[10] Ibid., p. 101
[11] Ibid., p. 82
[12] Ibid., p. 104
[13] Ibid.

Finally, Sakwa focuses on Gorbachev his decisions, and the growing factionalization of the CPSU. A contributing factor was that for Sakwa, perestroika (as a reform process) did not exist by 1990; instead it was replaced by and/or became a struggle toward democracy, as nationalist, radical and liberation movements surged forward in an attempt to dramatically overhaul a system which they believed to be eroded beyond repair. Sakwa details the 1989 elections and its aftermath, the split in the CPSU by 1990 into distinct camps, and the new constitution of 1990 that entailed the reformation of the legal system, where political freedoms were entrenched by law. For Sakwa, perestroika as an ideology and as a reform process was both triumphant and tragic. For him, "the triumph was the realisation that a new model of human and economic relations was required; the tragedy lay in the attempt to work within the confines of the Marxist and Bolshevik project while at the same time trying to transform it."[14] What emerged was a 'hybrid form of democracy' operating within a Marxist system.

For Sakwa, the irony of the Gorbachev experiment is as follows: although Gorbachev managed to achieve one of his goals – that of increasing the level of political participation within civil society – the active participants within civil society began to question, criticize and oppose the Communist Party's grip on power. Moreover, Sakwa argues that Gorbachev "was a master politician but even he could not have his cake and eat it: popular democracy but centralised party rule; glasnost, but not too much; the market, but combined with the planning system; national autonomy but not independence."[15] Clearly in the end it proved too much for Gorbachev to control, and the

[14] Ibid., p. 374
[15] Ibid., p. 382

forces unleashed through glasnost and perestroika ultimately brought down the socialist system that he had been initially trying to preserve.

2. Neil Robinson – Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System

For Robinson, his central focus is the role of ideology and how ideology contributed to the failure of Gorbachev's reforms. He begins with an in-depth critical assessment of ideology: the relationship between ideology and perestroika, how ideology is and came to be defined, and the role it played in the reformation process. Robinson then goes on to look at the power of the CPSU and the origins of Soviet ideology, phases one and two of perestroika, the failure of the Party, concluding with a chapter on ideology and the collapse of the Soviet system.

Other scholars, such as Stephen Kull and Alfred B. Evans Jr., have also focused on ideological development in the Soviet Union as well as the decline of ideology. For example, Evans Jr. looks at the historical development of Soviet Marxism-Leninism, from the Leninist period to the Gorbachev era, and how ideology contributed to the economic stagnation of the 1970s and 1980s. He suggests that it was poor Soviet leadership (ie. poor decision-making, lack of insight) that resulted in a stagnant society, both political and economical. Evans Jr.'s last three chapters dealt with the Gorbachev era: Gorbachev's goals for Soviet society, the non-antagonistic contradictions of socialism, and how the political and economic structures created by Stalin had "smothered civil society in order to absorb all social organizations and direct all citizens'

conduct,"[16] and how developed socialism had been discredited. This led to "an admission of skepticism about the Marxist depiction of history as moving deterministically through a series of stages."[17] In short, it was becoming clear to many Soviet intellectuals – both Marxists and reformers – that a communist future was far from inevitable, a huge ideological leap from Marxian theory on the inevitability of communism.

Stephen Kull, too, examines the role of ideology, focusing specifically on the myth of Lenin and how the most significant event of the last half of the twentieth century "is the collapse of Soviet Communism symbolized by the final demise of Vladimir Lenin."[18] Kull's main thesis is that while Lenin's ideology, "like a religion, fundamentally molded Soviet society and culture,"[19] the act of 'burying Lenin' constituted a revolution in Soviet ideology. He looks at how the basic tenets of Leninism were challenged by Gorbachev, such as the class struggle, and how Gorbachev's 'new thinking' was a definitive departure from Marxist theory, primarily due to the threat of nuclear war and how "for the first time ever there emerged a real...common human interest – to save humanity from disaster."[20]

While Kull provides an informative analysis on the decline of Leninism and the Lenin myth, he does not provide an in-depth historical assessment of ideology like Robinson. Evans Jr.'s account also gives a descriptive empirical analysis, and while it is analytical and informative, it does not compare to Robinson's theoretical assessment of

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[16] Alfred B. Evans Jr., Soviet Marxism-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology (Westport: Praeger, 1993), pp. 194/5.
[17] Ibid., p. 199.
[18] Stephen Kull, Burying Lenin: The Revolution in Soviet Ideology and Foreign Policy (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), p. 1.
[19] Ibid.
[20] Ibid., p. 14.

ideology, and how the decline of socialist ideology permeated and affected each Soviet institution and structure. In short, Robinson demonstrated the domino effect – how the entire communist system had been built on ideological structures, and how the system collapsed once these structures eroded and were removed.

Like Sakwa, Robinson takes the position that there were inherent contradictions within perestroika, contradictions that were built into the Soviet system and that were merely "reflected and reproduced" in perestroika. The central component to the contradictions was the CPSU itself, more specifically its vanguard role in Soviet society, and to the development of socialism. The problem, as Robinson identified, was that "the development of a political system based on the rule of law and political pluralism was held back by the continued presence of the CPSU as a vanguard party"[21] that served a particular function within the Soviet system. Such a contradiction did not evolve during the Gorbachev period, but instead its roots can be traced historically throughout Soviet history. Robinson argues that "this contradiction was derived from, essential to and contained within Soviet ideology and that perestroika, as a response to it, was driven by ideology."[22] Moreover, these contradictions within Soviet socialism served to shape and re-shape perestroika. First, however, in order to gain a better understanding of how ideology was a major factor in destroying the Soviet system, Robinson believes that "we first need to appreciate that ideology was a continuous influence on the Soviet political system and that the question of the party and its relationship to power was the key

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[21] Neil Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System (Vermont: Edward Elgar Publishing Company), p. 2.

[22] Ibid.

question within ideology."[23] This entails tracing the antecedents of Soviet ideology back to the October revolution of 1917 and working forwards, and Robinson sets out to explicate this development in chapters two and three, "attempt(ing) to show how the power of the party continually changed and how ideology, when construed in certain ways, could threaten the power that it was supposed to secure."[24]

According to Robinson, the years 1917-1953 saw the party's growing dependence on ideology for its justification for power. While Robinson concedes there were several nuances of ideology during this period, he believes that Lenin's attempts at defining the characteristics of power in his pamphlet, *State and Revolution*, was the most revealing. For it was in *State and Revolution* that Lenin "delineated the processes of revolution and socialist construction and provided for the power of a political subject other than the people, that is for the power of the party as a transcendental agent of history."[25] It follows then, for Robinson, that the reasoning of Soviet ideology is best revealed in *State and Revolution.*

As Lenin espoused, the power of the party was found within the socialist system; once the party recognized that the people were unable and/or incapable to construct socialism without a guiding force, the party was able to step in and fulfil that role, transcending the people and taking power in order to facilitate the growth of a truly socialist system. As a result, the party would now 'represent' the will of the people – as Lenin understood, socialism could not be attained *by* the people but rather the party had to intervene and rule *for* the people. This shift in thinking marked a dramatic departure for Lenin from his *State and Revolution*, where he had argued that the transfer of power

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[23] Ibid., p. 29
[24] Ibid., pp. 29/30

lay with the freedom of the proletariat. Instead, Lenin shifted his focus, and realized that the state had a new 'core' – as he announced, "We (the party) are the state."[26] As Lenin came to understand, the proletariat was getting weaker, not stronger which would only impede the growth of socialism; thus the state had to obtain a new 'core' – namely the party – and become the representative of the will of the people.

According to Robinson, the rise of the state and socialist construction occurred under Stalin. The concept 'socialism in one country' was Stalin's attempt at resolving the problems of communist construction, both the internal and external contradictions. The internal contradiction "lay between the remaining forces hostile to Soviet power and the party, between the nationalized sectors of the economy and NEP-style capitalist production, and between the progressive spirit of the proletariat and its vanguard and the regressive attitudes of the kulaks."[27] The solution, for Stalin, was the party's ability to overcome these contradictions, thus providing the party with a dominant role within society. The external contradiction of communist construction was between the socialist order in the USSR and capitalism; the only way to resolve it was the eradication of capitalism through revolution or the transformation of the Soviet system into a capitalist order.

Through 'socialism in one country', the role of the state was elevated in four ways: first, the drive toward capitalism would be halted by the state. Second, the state would take on a more dominant role in the economic sphere. Third, the increased activity in the economic sector by the state would elevate the state's power due to the intensification of the class struggle. Fourth, class enemies – for Stalin – was not merely

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[25] Ibid., p. 33
[26] Lenin as quoted in Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 49

restricted to society but could also be located within the party and within the state due to his position that any opposition to 'socialism in one country' would be branded a class enemy. Because the use of force was the primary method of recourse for Stalin against the class enemy, "violence replaced political and ideological work as the principal tool of socialist construction"[28] during the Stalinist era.

For Gorbachev, one of his immediate goals was to secure social justice, which he defined as "a harmonious relationship between the individual and the productive process, equality of access to social services, material incentives and socialist democracy."[29] As he saw it, the party would have to take on a more active role to ensure that social justice would be secured. And because 'developed socialism' effectively limited the party work, Gorbachev saw that it was necessary to extricate 'developed socialism' from Soviet ideology in order for the party to obtain more freedom within the political system. This would then pave the way for the people to become more actively involved in the social and political sphere of society, thus facilitating the further construction of socialism.

To invigorate the dynamism of socialism, Gorbachev's goals were for glasnost (openness), samoupravlenie (self-management), and increased autonomy for economic business. For example, by "increasing the mobilization of the worker through the work collective," such self-management would 'activate' the 'human factor'.[30] Clearly the implementation of such mechanisms were geared toward displacing 'developed socialism' from Soviet ideology. In order to successfully reform the Soviet system, Gorbachev argued that the party could no longer stand above society; instead the party

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[27] Robinson, p. 52
[28] Ibid., p. 57
[29] Ibid., p. 98
[30] Ibid., p. 101

needed to be involved in society on every level. Displacing 'developed socialism' was "therefore aimed at the party. It was no longer to be symbolically or practically isolated from the process of change as it had been under Brezhnev. It was necessary for the party itself to change as it changed society."[31]

By 1986, Gorbachev set about introducing the concept of perestroika into the reformation process, and associating "the term with the ultimate process of renewal, revolution."[32] Gorbachev made it clear – at least in the early stages of reform – that the implementing of perestroika was not geared toward destroying the existing system; it was merely meant to refine it in order to ensure the continued existence of socialism. Like Sakwa, Robinson, too, argues that perestroika contained within it inherent contradictions: "the more that it (ie. the party opposed to reforming itself) was opposed, the harder Gorbachev pushed the party to reform itself so that problems could be solved. This was the source of perestroika's dynamism and also one of its weaknesses."[33]

According to Robinson, one of the problems concerning perestroika was the question of the CPSU and its role vis-à-vis the people: "(w)hat it was to listen for, how far and on what issues it was to let people articulate their opinions remained open to debate."[34] While it was the party's role to not only interact with society and allow the interests of the polity to be expressed, the party was never given a clear objective to reach.

The second problem with perestroika was the prominent role of the party in the entire process of reform. According to Robinson, if the party refused to engage in

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[31] Ibid., p. 105
[32] Ibid., p. 107
[33] Ibid., p. 110
[34] Ibid., p. 117

reformist activity and refused to reform itself, perestroika as an ideology and as a process would fail. As he saw it, the success or failure of perestroika revolved solely around the CPSU – "every fault in reform, every delay and every success, was related back to the party's place in the system."[35] In short, if the party's place within the Soviet system becomes distorted and jeopardized, the entire reform process would be put into a tailspin.

Robinson goes on to outline four processes introduced by Gorbachev that would allow the party to better articulate the interests of the people and facilitate the development of socialism: 'socialist pluralism of opinions', 'socialist choice', 'the socialist law-based state' and electoral reform. According to Gorbachev, because the party misunderstood the 'true nature of society', it had become subject to dogmatism, voluntarism and subjectivism.[36] In order to overcome these tendencies, the 'socialist pluralism of opinions' and the 'socialist law-based state' would provide such a function. In turn, these two processes together would promote a more 'dynamic socialism', a goal which Gorbachev had set out to achieve in the early years of reform.[37]

The problem, as articulated by Robinson, was parallel to that of the dilemma with perestroika: while " 'socialist choice' legitimized the party's leadership of the process of socialist construction, it did not define what was being constructed or consolidated,"[38] giving perestroika "a schizophrenic quality."[39] Perestroika allowed for the emergence of

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[35] Ibid., p. 121
[36] Ibid., p. 127
[37] the 'socialist pluralism of opinions' was supposed to overcome dogmatism, voluntarism and subjectivism, yet herein lies the problem: the range of interests was limited because the plurality of opinions was predicated on socialist principles. As a result, society was still subjected to constraints of what it could and could not debate, express and articulate. In other worlds, by definition socialist pluralism was coveted/restricted with boundaries.
[38] Ibid., p. 132
[39] Ibid.

participation within civil society, yet such participation could potentially contradict socialist principles, due to 'socialist choice'.

According to Robinson, the height of perestroika and Gorbachev's successes peaked by late 1988, and the remainder of Gorbachev's period in office was marked by a succession of failures. These failures were due to two factors: the laws and the revised role of the party. For example, the creation of the Congress of Peoples Deputies in 1988 was to embody and institutionalize the 'socialist pluralism of opinions', a symbolic legislature that was to represent the will of the people – to proceed with perestroika and the party's role as vanguard to continue. But as Robinson suggests, "if the people were not as Gorbachev imagined and/or the party did not work as it was supposed to do, the whole project of 'socialist socialism of opinions' would collapse and perestroika with it."[40] He argues that the collapse of the party, and the Soviet system along with it, was virtually inevitable – there was "nothing in the package of reforms that Gorbachev had introduced to make the party change its way of working and there was just enough room in the new laws for radical forces to defeat it in some places."[41] The March 1989 elections only served to further demonstrate the party's resistance to reform.

In conclusion, Robinson argues that while the final outcome of the political turmoil in the Soviet Union saw the demise of the system, he does not believe that the system was destined to collapse. In each period the system underwent pressures and attempts at reform; perestroika, however, was "different in that it tested the party's claims more fully than ever before."[42] And because the party failed to live up to the claims that it professed to represent, perestroika was unable to facilitate the restructuring of society

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[40] Ibid., p. 151
[41] Ibid.

into a more dynamic socialism. Robinson concedes, however, that the mechanisms within perestroika itself is a contributing factor to the collapse of the system for two reasons: Gorbachev failed to safeguard the socialist ideology from the forces created through glasnost, and he also demanded too much from the system itself. Gorbachev's pressure for the party to reform itself caused the party to buckle and splinter given that Gorbachev failed to provide the party with a sense of direction as to where it should end up. While Gorbachev initially believed that establishing a framework for the party to follow would undermine 'the socialist pluralism of opinions', he eventually conceded that the party's inability to reform itself was hampered by such lack of direction. However, such a realization came too late, and Gorbachev's efforts to reverse the party's decline ended in failure, both for the party and for the system it had tried to uphold. This being said, he also admits that the party's failure to sustain itself was due to structural and ideological deficiencies within the party itself, coupled with the party's internal imperfections and historically constructed myths. As a result the CPSU could not sustain itself when the cracks in the system became apparent and party virtually imploded.

3. Jerry F. Hough – Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, 1985-1991

Soviet economics and the failure of the economic reforms are the two main themes that dominate Hough's book. Chapter four deals specifically with what Hough sees as the 'tragedy' of economic reform, focusing on Gorbachev's plans for reforming the Soviet economy and how and why his reforms ended in failure. Hough posits two

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[42] Ibid., p. 189

scenarios regarding Gorbachev's lack of success with economic reforms: the first reason suggests that Gorbachev had no clear vision of how precisely to achieve and sustain economic reform. In the words of Anatoly Dobrynin, the former Soviet ambassador to the United States, " 'from 1986 to 1989...I never once heard Gorbachev present any broad and detailed plan for reforming the economy – whether one-year, or five-year, or some other kind of plan that had really been thought through...' "[43] A second explanation put forth by Hough suggests that Gorbachev may have believed that the conditions for a market economy would be created once the command economy was dismantled and the nomenklatura destroyed.[44]

Because economics played a major role in the fall of the Soviet Union, many scholars have examined how economics helped to transform the entire Soviet system. Stephen White and David Lockwood, for example, examined the evolution of the socialist economy and how it became transformed into a hybrid system. In White's chapter on 'Gorbachev and the politics of perestroika', he looks at the divided leadership on the issue of economic reform. While some reformers felt that while there was "still a role for central economic management...it should be of a wholly strategic kind, leaving operational decisions to the enterprises themselves."[45] On the other hand, some conservative members staunchly opposed any infusion of capitalist forces into the economy, arguing that there would not "be any copying of Western market and property forms."[46]

In White's section on Gorbachev, perestroika and socialism, he says that

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[43] Anatoly Dobrynin, as quoted in Jerry Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR: 1995-1991 (Washington: Brookings Institution Press), p. 104.
[44] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR: 1985-1991, p. 106.
[45] Stephen White, After Gorbachev (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 232.

> the economic reforms [the reformers] had promoted had attempted to combine the advantages of central planning with the disciplines of the market, but in many ways secured the worst of both worlds: control over inflationary and other processes slipped out of the hands of government, while market forces had little opportunity to exercise their supposedly beneficial influence in circumstances of shortage and monopoly. The result was 'neither plan nor market'.[47]

In White's section on 'Reforming the Planned Economy', he provides data on Soviet economic growth from 1951-1985 and how it drastically declined, and how the goal of Gorbachev's Five Year Plan was to increase the rate of economic growth "based upon scientific and technical progress, structural change and new forms of management and labour incentives."[48] He goes on to discuss the strategy of economic reform, which was the Law on the State Enterprise. Its aim? To bring "real economic independence to the enterprise...freeing it from the dictates of ministries and higher level economic bodies."[49] White details at great length on how this was to be accomplished and the results that Gorbachev expected form implementing such a law, such as – in the agricultural sector – increasing the development of family-run farms, and that state and collective farms "should become collectives of leaseholders, all of whom would have to pay their way on a profit-and-loss basis."[50] White then shifts from policies to practice, and examines whether Gorbachev's goals were successful.

Overall, White lacks a certain degree of analysis in terms of the failure of the economic reforms and the role that Gorbachev played – if at all – in the failure. This is where Hough's take on the economic reforms is successful: while White details the effects of the economic crisis on the societal level, Hough analyzes Gorbachev's role in

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[46] Ibid., p. 235.
[47] Ibid., pp. 255/56.
[48] Ibid., p. 107.
[49] Ibid., p. 112.

the decline of economic growth and prices increases, taking the position (in retrospect) that Gorbachev made several errors in judgment vis-à-vis the economy that had detrimental results – in Hough's opinion – for the future of the Soviet Union.

In Lockwood's book, economics also played a central role in the Soviet Union's demise, with the emphasis on external forces (ie. changes in the world economic system) as being the primary catalyst that led to a restructuring of national economies. In the case of the USSR, such drastic economic restructuring of a socialist economy led to the eradication of an entire centralized system as well as an entire country. Lockwood relies on Marx's theory of economics, arguing that "globalization represents a significant advance in the level of development of the productive forces."[51] And while "in the advanced capitalist economies, the dominant production relation is capital...in Soviet-type economies, however, the dominant production relation is the state. Globalization attacks the dominant relation – social upheaval ensues. Collapse is inevitable."[52]

While Lockwood provides an excellent assessment of the Soviet Union's collapse, his focus is strictly on globalization and how it re-oriented the forces of production. Hough, however, takes a more broader perspective with his analysis, focusing on Gorbachev's attempts at economic reform and why he was unsuccessful. Hough also demonstrates the rift that was developing in the leadership over the reforms, and demonstrates how the in-fighting ultimately fractured the party. So although Lockwood was useful in my section on globalization, Hough's analysis was instrumental in my leadership section – particularly in terms of the economy – because he was able to

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[50] Ibid., p. 114.
[51] David Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union: A Study in Globalization (New York: The Free Press, 1994), p. 3.
[52] Ibid., p. 4.

show how the leadership became even more divided over economic reforms, how this delay only worsened the economic situation, and how Gorbachev's several mistakes altered the course of events.

In his book, Hough outlines Gorbachev's three primary steps toward economic reform in 1985: increase discipline, resolve the problem of drunkenness in the workplace, and increase investment in heavy industry.[53] The next two years saw several laws passed that were designed to open the door to further economic reforms: foreigners were allowed to invest and own property in the USSR; some industries were allowed to exceed their planned levels of production; part-time economic activity was permitted. While such steps were means to pave the way for the introduction of more radical economic reforms, Hough acknowledges that market reforms could not be introduced without a re-education process within the Soviet polity vis-à-vis capitalist ideology. He argues that "the Soviet people had been told that for nearly seventy years that private property meant exploitation, that capitalists performed no useful function, and that the market meant only the right for producers to raise prices and make excess profits. They needed to be reeducated."[54]

Hough says that one of the mistakes made by Gorbachev and his regime was that they neglected to take into consideration the economic experiences and attempts at reform in other Eastern European communist countries such as Poland. A second mistake Gorbachev made was the continual postponement of an economic plenum. In 1986, there was opposition between Gorbachev and other Politburo members on which plenum to hold first – while Gorbachev and Yakovlev advocated a democratic plenum,

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[53] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 107.
[54] Ibid., p. 110.

Ryzhkov argues that a plenum on economic reform was more important. Due to this division within the government, the plenum was continuously postponed. Ultimately, Gorbachev was not swayed and insisted that a plenum on democracy was more urgent than an economic plenum. According to Hough, however, "no one among the reformers, let along (sic) Gorbachev, seemed to understand that democratization would redouble the political explosiveness of price increases. In any case, it was to be one of the most fateful decisions in the destruction of the Soviet Union."[55]

Hough goes on to describe the conflict between Gorbachev and Premier Ryzhkov vis-à-vis economic reform, arguing that it was during this period when Gorbachev was either dishonest on his position concerning economic reforms or confused. While Gorbachev outwardly advocated more radical economic reforms, Ryzhkov pushed for more governmental controls. Clearly the impression was that Gorbachev's attempts were continually resisted by the bureaucracy, namely the conservative members of the Politburo. But Hough offers a different take on the situation, positing that it was in fact Ryzhkov who persisted in the importance of immediate economic reforms. What this in fact suggests is that Ryzhkov was being used as a scapegoat by Gorbachev and attacked for being 'too conservative'.

In a later chapter, Hough tackles the controversy over economic reform, detailing the internal divisions within the Communist Party, specifically between the radical reformers and the conservatives. Not only does Hough demonstrate the intense battle brewing within the leadership, he also shows how Gorbachev's behavior was strange at best, and how his attempts at placating both reformers and conservatives ultimately backfired. The first plan – known as the Five Year Plan – was put together by deputy

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[55] Hough, p. 128.

P.M. Leonid Albalkin, who took the position that a functioning market system must include competition and free prices.[56] The plan was criticized, however, and this forced Ryzhkov to present a new plan to the Congress of Peoples Deputies (CPD), and again it was criticized by Gorbachev, this time for being too conservative. The irony is that because Gorbachev had prevented Ryzhkov from implementing price adjustments, Ryzhkov eliminated such adjustments from the Five Year Plan. Why Gorbachev then attacked Ryzhkov for being too conservative for eliminating price adjustments cannot be explained by any other reason except for the fact that Gorbachev wanted – and needed – Ryzhkov to be a scapegoat. Hough contends that Gorbachev was "supporting (the radical economists) behind the scenes,"[57] yet publicly denouncing their plans for dramatic price reforms. This suggests, as Hough implies, that Gorbachev deliberately chose to vacillate between the two camps in hopes that his desire for radical economic reforms would be enforced, and that the public not blame Gorbachev for the ensuing price increases due to the elimination of subsidies. In the way Gorbachev's reforms would be passed, and he still maintained power and public support.

By 1989, the battle between the conservatives and radicals came to a head, and it was clear that the removal of Ryzhkov from government was Gorbachev's goal. Two distinct camps had emerged, both advocating a plan for economic reform: the Ryzhkov/Abalkin government group (dominated by conservatives) and the Shatalin group (aka the Gorbachev/Yeltsin group), advocates of the Five Hundred Day Plan and that was dominated by radicals. Hough contends, however that the Five Hundred Day Plan did not differ much from the government's plan except on how the new Union

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[56] Ibid., p. 349.
[57] Ibid., p. 351

would look. Moreover, he argues that the deadline for the 500 day plan would be impossible to achieve, and that "it was fatally affected by the responsibility of dealing with constitutional questions."[58] And because the 500 day plan "seriously weakened the power of the central government and created the kind of financial starvation of the government that scholars associate with successful revolution,"[59] Hough takes the position that "its drafters much have wanted to break up the Soviet Union and give the Russian government many of its powers."[60]

In the final analysis, Hough points the blame directly at Gorbachev for not effectively controlling the forces unleashed by perestroika, and attempts to deconstruct Gorbachev's decisions and actions during his final years in office. He gives several examples of alternative decisions that Gorbachev could have made, and that certain actions he did take only facilitated the destruction of the Union, such as his response to the 1989 elections and the collapse of the communism in Eastern Europe. Moreover, it was Gorbachev who was ultimately responsible for not only destroying the structural framework of the CPSU but its power base as well through the abolition of Article 6 of the Constitution which had legally enshrined the party's power for seventy years.

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[58] Ibid., p. 363.
[59] Ibid., p. 367.

4. Alfred B. Evans, Jr. Soviet Marxism-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology

In his book, Alfred Evans Jr. traces the origins of communism, from Marx to Lenin through the Stalinist period to Khrushchev, Brezhnev and finally to Gorbachev, detailing how communism and socialism were transformed and constructed during each period. Evans focused primarily on ideology, and how the Soviet ideology of Marxism-Leninism underwent a dramatic overhaul during the Gorbachev period. Before delving into the Gorbachev era, Evans examines the origins of stagnation – mainly economic – and the necessity of restructuring.

While Gorbachev sought to implement changes that went further than any Soviet leader had attempted, it was already apparent during the early 1980s that there were fundamental problems in Soviet society vis-à-vis socialism. Even Chernenko intimated that " 'not all our tasks and problems have been resolved on the level of the demands of developed socialism.' "[61] Essentially, the Soviet leadership (Andropov and Chernenko) realized that there were deficiencies in the Soviet system, indicating that the Soviet Union was still moving toward 'developed socialism'. This was in direct contradiction of Brezhnev who believed that 'developed socialism' had already been attained. Thus the emphasis in Soviet society was an 'improvement and perfection' between 1982 and 1985, "reflecting the candid appreciation that Soviet society still contained serious inconsistencies and conflicts and even extending to the implication that some of those problems were actually worsening."[62] Moreover, it was during this time that both

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[60] Ibid.
[61] Alfred B. Evans Jr., Soviet Marxist-Leninism: The Decline of an Ideology , p. 153, as quoted by Konstantin Chernenko, "Na vroven' trebovanii razvitogo sotsializma" Kommunist, 1984, p. 4).
[62] Evans Jr.,Soviet Marxism-Leninism, p. 154.

Andropov and Chernenko were willing to concede that leadership errors were also responsible for worsening the problems already existing in the Soviet system.

Evans goes on to discuss the concept of 'developed socialism' and how it became discredited. The early 1980s saw the term undergo slight revisions, and it was still assumed that the new party program would continue to focus on developed socialism. Gorbachev, however, chose to drop the term from his party program as he argued it had been "colored by the self-satisfaction, complacency and conservatism of the Brezhnev leadership."[63] Instead, the term 'developing socialism' became the focus of the new party program once Gorbachev rose to power.

According to Evans, Gorbachev targeted the 'caution and inaction' of the Soviet leadership during the 1970s as being primarily responsible for the dilapidated state of the political and economic structures in the USSR. For Gorbachev, the acceleration of economic and technical advancement was necessary in order for the Soviet Union to emerge out of its moribund state, and jumpstart economic growth.

Because 'developed socialism' assumes the attainment of economic modernization, Gorbachev's goals for society were 'technological advancement' and 'social equilibrium', proof that he saw the Soviet state to be in the developing stages of socialism. Moreover, he concluded that "the acceleration of economic development in the USSR would be impossible without radical changes in the country's political and economic structures,"[64] clearly his motivation for the introduction of perestroika into the radical reformation process that the Soviet Union was about to undergo. While minor attempts at reform had been undertaken by previous leaders, Evans argues that they "had

[63] Ibid., p. 156.
[64] Ibid., p. 161.

failed to create mechanisms which would insure (sic) political support for economic change. Gorbachev sought not only to build a broad popular base of support for the economic reforms that he proposed but also to restructure the Soviet system so as to institutionalize the dynamic of constant adaptation."[65]

From the mid-1980s onward, the debate over the source of Soviet stagnation intensified between Soviet scholars. While some felt that the source could be pinpointed to a slump during the Brezhnev era, many believed that it was rooted in the Soviet system itself and that the survival of the system was in jeopardy. According to Evans, Gorbachev argued that it was during the 1930s – the years which saw the rise of Stalinist institutions – when the source of stagnation can be traced. Gorbachev believed that "when we seek the roots of today's difficulties and problems we do this in order to comprehend their origin and to draw lessons for present-day life from events that go deep into the 1930s."[66] The distinguishing feature of Stalinist institutions was 'extreme centralization' and coercive leadership that characterized the period as highly authoritarian. By 1988, however, some had gone a step further – such as Vadim Medvedev (the Politburo member who oversaw ideology) – who argued that the fallacies of Stalinism were rooted in the " 'deviation'...from Lenin's conception of socialism."[67] Such a take "suggested that some of the predominant features of Soviet society stemmed from fundamental errors in the interpretation and application of Marxist-Leninist ideological theory."[68] Whatever argument holds true, the reformers during the Gorbachev era focused on the centralized, bureaucratic top-down administrative

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[65] Ibid., pp. 161/62
[66] Gorbachev, Perestroika (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1987), p. 43.
[67] Evans Jr., Soviet Marxism-Leninism, p. 163, already cited in G.L. Smirnov's, Revoliutsionnaia sut perestroiki (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury 1987), p. 17).

structures – institutionalized by Stalin – as being the fundamental reason for the Soviet Union's current political and economic plight and the primary focus for the necessity of reforms.

Evans goes on to discuss ideological discrepancies within the system, namely the contradictions inherent in socialism. Gorbachev argued that as the Soviet economy continued to develop, it was hindered by bureaucratic mechanisms that had been put in place in the 1930s. This, coupled with the failure of the leadership from the 1950s to the 1980s to effectively implement economic change, lead to the necessity of a radical overhaul of the entire political and economic system in order to facilitate technological growth and productivity.

According to Evans, Gorbachev acknowledged that a number of competing interests were emerging in Soviet society, and several reasons can be attributed: first, the complexity of society was overlooked in prior Soviet ideological scholarship. Second, Soviet society was found to be more complex than previously analyzed and/or admitted; that in addition to class divisions, society was structured along regional, ethnic and occupational differences.[69] Third, it follows from the above that a stratified society would also contain diverse interests.

Evans cites that between 1982 and 1984, a lengthy and controversial debate ensued among Soviet social scientists vis-à-vis 'non-antagonistic contradictions' of socialist society, a debate which was once again brought into the fore by Gorbachev, who sought to resolve the debate on "whether the nonantagonistic contradictions distinctive to

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[68] Ibid., p. 163.
[69] Ibid., p. 172, already cited by A. Yegorov, Pravda, March 3, 1988.

socialism could, if neglected too long or exacerbated by the errors of political leaders, become so severe as to foster systemic instability."[70]

For Evans, of great importance during the Gorbachev era was the identification of non-antagonistic contradictions by Soviet scholars with conflicts between the interests of various groups within Soviet society.[71] In short, this lead to the analysis by Gorbachev that, given time, the growing polarization of interests between the governing institutions and the polity would ultimately result in a crisis situation for the entire Soviet system. Clearly this revealed that "the most serious contradictions of socialism were inherent in the logic of its own development and represented the clash of interests of groups whose existence was derived from the basic character of socialist society."[72]

In chapter twelve, Evans' main point of contention was that, for Soviet reformers, the highly centralized and authoritarian system created by Stalin was the main factor in subduing and restraining the activities of civil society. They contend that "the expansion of the totalitarian state had smothered civil society in order to absorb all social organizations and direct all citizens' conduct."[73] As a result, they advocated a state in which the rule of law was to be paramount.[74]As various scholars have stated, Evans, too, asserts that although Gorbachev was striving for democratization and pluralism in Soviet society, he was clear that such processes would take place within a socialist framework. In short, the pursuit of these measures was to merely revitalize the socialist system and to ensure that the dynamism of socialism be engaged. Evans argues that only when

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[70] Ibid., pp. 174/75.
[71] Ibid., p. 176, already cited in M.N. Rutkevich, Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia, 1987, p. 44.
[72] Evans Jr., Soviet Marxism-Leninism, p. 176.
[73] Ibid., pp. 194/95.
[74] Ibid., p. 195, already cited in Harold J. Berman's "The Rule of Law and the Law-Based State", Harriman Institute Forum, May 1991, pp. 1-12).

Gorbachev's espoused changes went beyond the realm of preserving socialism that he took a conservative stance and tried to control the forces of change.

Evans also outlines how Soviet ideology underwent a dramatic transformation during the Gorbachev era, and how Gorbachev came to realize these new ideological shifts. First, by discrediting the Stalinist period and the totalitarian structures that were created during Stalin's rule, Gorbachev needed to acquire a new socialist model for the Soviet Union – for him this became 'humane socialism'. Concomitantly his focus on the 'socialist choice' and a communist future for the Soviet Union had considerably lessened. This is clearly what Evans has deemed as 'the abandonment of utopia', in that some of Gorbachev's key advisors were beginning to openly refer to the idea of communism as 'utopia'.

A second ideological shift denoted by Evans is an extension of the first, in that there was "an admission of skepticism about the Marxist depiction of history as moving deterministically through a series of stages."[75] As Marx had argued, it was historically inevitable that communism would be attained. Gorbachev, however, "regarded the Communist idea as a source of values that could be put into practice only to a degree and that had to be balanced against other values."[76] This led to a growing admission from reformers that a Communist future was far from inevitable.

The third shift in ideology occurred in the realm of international relations. Traditionally, policy-makers assumed that "socialism and capitalism ere locked in an epochal struggle that would determine the fate of the world."[77] Gorbachev's 'new political thinking', however, reversed this position which "not only denied that the

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[75] Evans Jr., Soviet Marxism-Leninism, p. 199.
[76] Ibid., p. 199.

competitive aspects of peaceful coexistence had to predominate over the cooperative aspects but also called for an interaction between capitalism and socialism."[78] As a result, Gorbachev and his reformers had come to have "great appreciation for the underlying stability of capitalism,"[79] leading several scholars such as Leonid Gordon to charge that 'post-socialist development' was the Soviet Union's future.[80]

As Evans outlines, however, Gorbachev's focus on restructuring and democratization led to a dramatic polarization between conservatives (those who wished to protect the Soviet system from market forces and radical reforms) and reformers over the future of the Communist Party and the revision of property ownership. This led Gorbachev to take a centrist position, placating both the conservatives and radicals in hopes that he could attain a compromise and salvage the Soviet system. His logic backfired, however, as he further alienated the conservatives who felt the reforms had gone too far, and frustrated the reformers who believed the reforms had not gone far enough. As a result, Gorbachev "found himself in the ambiguous stance of one who defended the power of a conservative institution (re: the CPSU) while he espoused a radical program of change."[81]

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[77] Ibid., p. 200.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid., p. 201.
[80] Ibid.

5. David Lockwood – The Destruction of the Soviet Union: A Study in Globalization

The main argument proposed by Lockwood is that external forces were responsible for the collapse of the USSR, specifically economics vis-à-vis a shift in the international community toward economic interdependence and the development of a global economy. While his central objective is to determine why the Soviet Union crumbled into non-existence, Lockwood focuses specifically on changes in the world economy: how these globalized forces "have involved a major restructuring of national economies" and how "the forces that led to the destruction of the communist economic system were global ones."[82] Relying heavily on Marxist theory, he suggests that globalization impacts the development of the productive forces, and the consequence is a restructuring of the relations of production. By extension, such restructuring "undermines, and occasionally attacks, one of the strongest…of these production relations: the national state."[83] Because globalization "advances the dominant relation (capital) while attacking a non-dominant one (the state),"[84] the advance of globalization in socialist countries is problematic since "the dominant production relation is the state."[85] And because globalization attacks the dominant relation…social upheaval ensues. Collapse is inevitable."[86] Not only does Lockwood predicate the collapse with the infusion of globalized forces, he also suggests that globalization is the causal factor vis-à-vis social unrest.

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[81] Ibid., p. 205.
[82] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 1.
[83] Ibid., p. 4.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

Beginning with a chapter on the state and historical materialism – which gives a theoretical overview of Marxism and the changing role of the state within the global capitalist economy – he goes onto discuss globalization, globalization and the Soviet state, Gorbachev's plans on restructuring, and the problem of reform. His views on globalization are as follows: that the implementation of economic policies worldwide which "emphasized the importance of the private sector, of market forces and individual initiative" were by no means "coincidental nor accidental. They resulted from the emergence of a world market, and the potential for a global production system."[87]

Before assessing Lockwood's work, it is important to briefly mention that Held & McGrew, Kummel, and Kacowicz all used globalization theory as the basis of their work. Held and McGrew define globalization as a "historical process which transforms the spatial organization of social relations and transactions," and that it is "associated with the emergence of a post-Westphalian world order in which the institutions of sovereign statehood and political community are being reformed and reconstituted."[88] They identify three main tenets of globalization – military, political and economic – that have transformed the global community. For example, political globalization has meant that "political decisions and actions in one part of the world can rapidly acquire world-wide ramifications."[89] For them, the question is "whether globalization is transforming the nature of modern political community and and thus reconstituting the foundations – empirical and normative of world order."[90]

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[87] Ibid. p. 25.
[88] David Held & Anthony McGrew, "The End of the Old Order? Globalization and the Prospects for World Order", The Eighty Years' Crisis: IR 1919-1999 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 220/21.
[89] Ibid., p. 232.
[90] Ibid., p. 219.

Kummel looks at Eastern Europe, and how the interplay between internal and external factors facilitated democratization. While he argues that East European democracy came about due to changes within the Soviet Union, he stresses that "the dynamics of the international economy have to be mentioned."[91] Because the world market was built on capitalist structures,

> the market economy economic organization of the economy proved to be more efficient and more wealth-generating than the socialist command economy and this became increasingly obvious in the USSR and throughout the Soviet empire thus generating discontent among the populations and a pressure for reform.[92]

With regards to the Soviet Union, he says that "at the root of the Soviet crisis was a mismatch between Soviet command political and economic structures and the imperatives of advanced capitalist production."[93]

Arie Kacowicz takes his analysis a step further than Kummel and explores the connection between globalization and nationalism, forces that are reconfiguring world politics, and how these forces must be "captured and studied as forces relative to and overlapping one another, sometimes antagonistic and sometimes cooperative toward each other, but never harmonius."[94] Given the context of the political or economic scenario, these forces can either converge, diverge or overlap. For example, the linkages between the state and nationalism can either be that nation-states oppose globalization or that nationalism and the formation of new states are encouraged by the forces of globalization.

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[91] Gerhard Kummel, "Democratization in Eastern Europe. The Interaction of Internal and External Factors: An Attempt at Systemization." (Eastern European Quarterly, June 1998), p. 252.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid., p. 253.

While all three scholars have examined the various facets of globalization – Held and McGrew: globalization and the world order, Kummel: globalization and Eastern Europe, Kacowicz: an analysis of globalizing forces – what distinguishes Lockwood's world from the other scholars is his ability to link globalization with the crisis in the Soviet Union and its subsequent collapse. He sets up his argument – that changes in the forces of production has led to a restructuring of national economies – with a general discussion of globalization and how changes in the relations of production has led to the globalization of capital. He then looks at the history of the Soviet state and its rulers – how the Russian Revolution ultimately impeded the further development of capitalist forces by constructing a state that controlled the means of production. It is at this point Lockwood introduces the specific link between globalization and the Soviet state, and the problems of Gorbachev's reform plans due to the infusion of globalized forces. So although Held and McGrew, Kummel and Kacowicz discuss globalization, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, Lockwood is able to bring all three topics together and establish a direct correlation between globalization and the USSR, and, more importantly, that changes in the world economic structure played a major role in the Soviet Union's collapse.

Before delving directly into the connection between the Union's demise and the impact of globalization, Lockwood first few chapters deals with an historical analysis regarding historical materialism and the state, and how the role of the state has changed concomitantly with developments in the global capitalist economy. Citing Marx, he argues that a social revolution will occur "when the further development of the

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[94] Arie M. Kacowicz, "Regionalization, Globalization, and Nationalism: Convergent, Divergent, or Overlapping? (Alternatives, 1999), p. 527.

productive forces come into conflict with the existing relations of production."[95] In Lockwood's view, "recent developments within the global capitalist economy, and the changing role of the national state within it have brought about precisely this result."[96]

Lockwood takes the position that "the structural changes in the world economy, encompassed by the term 'globalization', constitute a significant development of the forces of production which has...brought about changes in the relations of production."[97] These productive forces – machines, tools, raw materials and people who use these tools – have led to a shift in the relations of production in the late twentieth century, namely the globalization of capital. Some examples include the increase in international trade, foreign investments and transnationalization of corporations, all of which affected the structure of world trade.

For Lockwood, the role of the state in the new economic order has also been restructured. He suggests that the "capacity of the national state to control its own destiny"[98] began to decline "from the 1970s onwards" since the "trade and investment flows of a global economy no longer corresponded to the historical boundaries between nations"[99] What this suggests is that the state – as an economic actor – has become weakened. Once "an opening to the world market was made, states were largely unable to control the flow of information, technology or capital across their borders"[100]

He says that "the greater the role of the state in economic development, the more dramatic were the effects of globalization"[101] and that globalization was probably the

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[95] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 23.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., p. 41.
[98] Ibid., p. 42.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid., p. 47.

least traumatic in the advanced economies since they were already largely externally oriented."[102] For the Soviet Union, this presented a problem: because the state remained the dominant economic actor, "there was considerable…pressure on those economies (and their political systems) to change."[103] He posits that "today, capital may need a state, but the state it needs is one of a new type. With the old state, it finds itself more and more in conflict."[104]

Turning to the Soviet state itself, in the early stages of economic growth, the priority of the state was rapid industrialization, characterized by heavy industry. Moreover, the state "protected (the emerging economy) by sealing it off from normal trading relationships with the rest of the capitalist world"[105], resulting in an "autarkic system backed up and sustained by military force."[106]

The result was that technological progress was impeded in the USSR due to its isolation from the world economy. The irony that unfolded was that the "system had survived due to its virtual economic isolation from the rest of the world. Yet its continued growth was stymied by its very survival."[107] The solution Lockwood foresaw was "a realignment of the Soviet economic structure (the production relations) in order to allow the further development of the productive forces"[108] which meant opening its borders to the world market. Such a move, however, would put the command economy in jeopardy. Yet "this is precisely what the world market demanded."[109] Moreover, these

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[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid., p. 53.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., p. 76.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid., p. 79.
[108] Ibid., p. 80.
[109] Ibid.

market forces "would weaken the economic autonomy of the national state, with potentially disastrous consequences for the ruling class."[110]

Lockwood then addresses what he argues is the main *internal* factor which sealed the Union's fate: military competition. The monetary burden on the Soviet economy to accommodate and sustain the East-West rivalry was enormous, but one which the state was willing to accept. Military spending put a great strain on the economy, which was already in dire straits given its economic isolation from the West. And because the USSR lacked the advances in technology, its weapons were second rate at best. The only solution was to increase military spending even higher in hopes of maintaining parity with the United States. Lockwood contends that for the ruling class – understanding that access to technology was imperative to attain parity with the West – it was becoming "a question of getting access to advanced technology, opening up the economy as little as possible in the process, and ensuring that it had a minimal effect on the nature of the economic system."[111]

Lockwood argues that there were many problems with reform and Gorbachev's restructuring. First, reforming the managers and the ministries presented several problems, mainly since neither one "could be trusted to carry out the reforms."[112] This is due to the managers' unwillingness toward innovation and initiative, and the ministries refusal to give up power, as its power was "based on the centrally directed economy."[113]

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[110] Ibid., p. 82.
[111] Ibid., p. 87.
[112] Ibid., p. 99.
[113] Ibid., p. 98.

He goes onto discuss the reforms, how it was a "patchwork of laws and decrees"[114] that involved the restructuring of technology, the opening up sections of the Soviet economy to the world market, introducing non-state forms of property (such as private enterprises), and the introduction of political reforms that were necessary to proceed with economic reform. Lockwood suggests that the main target of reform were the ministries and their supporters in the Party. This necessitated an alliance between Soviet rulers and the industrial managers if the reforms were to be pushed through. While some managers were still opposed, most seemed agreeable on reform.[115]

This alliance – that was to facilitate economic reform within the enterprises – proved unsuccessful. The "ambiguities [and] contradictions…of the Law on State Enterprises…resulted in the fact that enterprises remained subject to centralized control."[116]

Despite this apparent failure, Lockwood contends that the implementation of reforms had a dramatic effect on the system, such as the 'abandonment of national control' once the world market forces were allowed into the Soviet system. Even though the Soviet rulers only wanted a limited opening up of the economy to the global market, this was impossible given the nature of the market system. It was not long before there was a call for the right to private property, Comecon countries began joining international economic organizations, and Free Economic Zones (FEZs) were established. The latter was solid proof that "the intervention of world market forces into the domestic economy"[117] had become a reality.

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[114] Ibid., p. 111.
[115] Ibid., p. 113.
[116] Ibid., p. 116.
[117] Ibid., p. 121.

Clearly, as Lockwood asserts, "economic reform had meant the renunciation of autarky and self-sufficiency."[118] Moreover, the consequence of the reforms meant that "it was the world market…and not the Soviet state alone that would increasingly determine the economic future of the Soviet peoples."[119]

Lockwood gives a thorough analysis of the fall of the Soviet Union due in part to the implementation of economic reforms, the infusion of market forces and how the state had no choice to restructure itself to accommodate the demands of the world market. While other scholars discuss globalization and its effects, Lockwood analyzes it in the context of the Soviet Union and shows precisely how globalized forces can alter a state. Or even eliminate it.

[118] Ibid., p. 126.
[119] Ibid.

Chapter Two - Leadership

My main objective of chapter two is twofold: first, to examine Gorbachev's role in the collapse of the Soviet Union and second, to determine to what extent his decisions and possible oversights contributed – if at all – to the USSR's demise. This involves addressing the Soviet Union's dire economic situation prior to Gorbachev taking power, why he saw the need to dramatically overhaul the Soviet system, the tensions that erupted within the CPSU over the reformation proposals, and how the CPSU crumbled and collapsed.

It is necessary to examine each of these scenarios – as I have done in the following pages – as it demonstrates the difficulties that Gorbachev faced in reforming a centralized system that had been in decay for years. Moreover, this chapter reveals the internal factors that were at work – economic reforms, the growing divisiveness of the CPSU – that played a large role in the Soviet Union's downfall.

Finally, I will summarize what I believe to be Gorbachev's role in the collapse of the Soviet Union – that while he may have made several errors of judgment, he did so within the confines of a centralized system that was highly bureaucratized and economically depleted, operating within a world system that was becoming technologically advanced and highly globalized. In my opinion, it would have been a miracle to be successful under such conditions,

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The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 – and by extension the eradication of Communism throughout the Eastern bloc – was one of the most profound events of the twentieth century. The breakup of the Union not only had great implications domestically, but it also transformed the global community, both politically and economically. Moreover, the demise of the USSR was not only sudden, but it was met with little resistance – from the intelligentsia, to the bureaucrats, the reformers and the CPSU itself.

Since 1991, scholars have analyzed and debated the many factors that contributed to the collapse, as well as why the Soviet Marxist-Leninist ideology could not be sustained. While the question is still up for debate, certain themes throughout the scholarship can be found: first, the implementation of glasnost had unanticipated effects, such as the rise of ethnic nationalism (the Baltics, Central Asia) that contributed to anti-Russian sentiment and led to calls for independence. Second, the growing interdependence and globalization within the international arena – coupled with the Soviet Union's poor economic performance – led Gorbachev to the realization that the USSR's economic and ideological isolation from the Western world was putting the country at a economic disadvantage. Third, the slow economic growth rate that had begun in the 1970s was worsening, and several factors contributed to its decline, such as conflict within the CPSU over economic reforms, and the bureaucratic nature of the system. This led to a hybrid economic system that was neither socialist nor capitalist. Fourth, several political factors can be cited: the contradictory nature of the reforms, the unexpected effects of glasnost, leadership factionalism within the Communist Party, and inefficient party leaders. Fifth, for some scholars, the role of ideology played a large role

in the demise of the USSR. For example, Marxism-Leninism underwent a dramatic overhaul during the Gorbachev period: the 'abandonment of utopia' and the transition to 'humane socialism'; new foreign policy objectives in international relations; rethinking the Marxist depiction of history facilitated by glasnost. Moreover, ideological discrepancies within the Soviet system were slowly being acknowledged: the development of the Soviet economy hindered by bureaucratic mechanisms that had been institutionalized in the 1930s by Stalin, and the failure of the leadership from the 1950s to the mid-1980s to successfully implement economic changes. Sixth, the CPSU itself and the key role it played in the reformation process was a major contributing factor in the Soviet Union's destruction.

For Gorbachev, the party was the central player that would determine the success of perestroika. But because the party was a stumbling block to the reforms, it too needed to be reformed and overhauled. The party's continual resistance to reforming itself, along with the gradual whittling away of its power in the late 1980s and its role within society, ultimately proved to be damaging to the restructuring of society. Lastly, it was Gorbachev himself who also played a role in his country's demise. The extent of Gorbachev's role in the breakup of the USSR is highly contested throughout the historiography: while some have argued that he single-handedly brought down the USSR through poor insight and decision-making, others have taken the position that he was working with a structurally deficient system that was destined to collapse. For the purpose of this thesis, I would argue that while Gorbachev did execute several poor decisions in hindsight, he did so given the conditions within which he was working: a highly bureaucratized system in which the party was inextricably tied to the government,

a top-down command economy that was worsening the country's economic plight, and deep divisions within the CPSU. Clearly, Gorbachev's recognition that the USSR needed to be restructured demonstrated his insight to the problems which plagued the Soviet Union. Moreover, his insistence during the initial stages of reform that the reforms be conducted along socialist lines – was an indication of his commitment to socialism, and not toward capitalism as some have charged.

I. Gorbachev and Perestroika: 1985-1988

1. Coming to Power

By the mid-1980s, it was clear that the Soviet elite understood the plight of the Soviet economy and admitted that radical changes were needed before the crisis deepened. For example, the rate of economic growth continued to decrease from the 1950s to the 1980s.[120] According to White, this can be explained be several factors: first, the labour force in the industrial sector had slowed. While productivity was linked with more labour, a slowdown of labour meant that economic growth began to lessen. Second, the Soviet Union's aging population resulted in a decrease of the pool of available workers. For instance, in 1987, 13.5% of the population were over sixty years old.[121] Lastly, the gradual depletion of raw materials meant that they had to be extracted from remote areas. Not only did this translate into higher costs to provide for transportation to the outlying areas, but the lack of infrastructures in some areas made it

[120] Stephen White, After Gorbachev, p. 104.
[121] Ibid., p. 106.

more difficult and more costly to obtain. So by 1986, not only was it Gorbachev's goal to increase economic growth, but that "it must be a new quality of growth, based upon scientific and technical progress, structural change and new forms of management and labour incentives."[122]

When Gorbachev became the General Secretary of the CPSU in 1985, the Soviet Union was at a stalemate – politically, economically and globally. Economically, the budget deficit had reached R37 billion, and the pricing system was outdated – rent had not increased since 1928, the price of bread in 1985 had remained the same since 1954, and electricity rates had not risen since 1946.[123] For Gorbachev, price reforms were essential to the restructuring of Soviet society. The immediate problem, however, was how to eliminate the subsidies without causing a government backlash by the consumers.

For Gorbachev, the solution to the country's economic and political problems was radical restructuring. In his 1985 address to the Central Committee plenum, he called for "scientific-technical renewal of productive capital change in the system of labor and social relations, and deepened democracy."[124] For Gorbachev, the key to such change lay in the restructuring (perestroika) of the economy and economic relations. This included an overhaul of the central planning system – by decreasing its administrative duties and allocating economic forecasting to Gosplan, he believed the command system would function more efficiently. He also acknowledged that the country's superpower status was declining at a rapid pace, and that only a significant alteration of the Soviet economy would halt such a decline. Gorbachev's solution was a transition to " 'intensive

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[122] Ibid., p. 107.
[123] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 273.
[124] Thomas F. Remington as cited in Sylvia Woodby and Alfred B. Evans, Jr. (eds.), Restructuring Soviet Ideology: Gorbachev's New Thinking (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 47.

economic development', 'increased labor productivity' and...scientific-technical progress.' "[125] He also called for increased participation of workers through elected councils and for the 'rule of law' in order to reinvigorate the party. Lastly, he emphasized the need for 'glasnost' or 'openness' with regards to information which he argued would provide a counter-argument to the discrepancies made by the bureaucracy pertaining to the Soviet system. While these were only general goals outlined by Gorbachev, it is clear that the antecedents to his reform program could be located in this speech.

With regards to the international arena, relations with the West were at its lowest point in the early 1980s, and the war in Afghanistan had already passed the five-year mark. Gorbachev understood the necessity of re-evaluating Soviet foreign policy, as the success of perestroika depended on the restructuring of the USSR's foreign relations, primarily with the United States. This 'new political thinking' (NPT) as it became known, dealt with issues such as common security, global issues versus superpower rivalry and arms control. Unlike former leaders, Gorbachev's emphasis was on interdependence. The "ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism was played down in favour of globalism and interdependence."[126] The emphasis on global cooperation with the reduction of arms and halting the depletion of natural resources became a priority rather than fueling the ideological debate between capitalism and socialism. As Gorbachev stated in 1987,

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[125] Martin Malia, The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia, 1917-1991 (New York: The Free Press,1994), p. 412.

> Our world is united not only by internationalisation of economic life and powerful information and communication media but also faces the common danger of nuclear death, ecological catastrophe and global expansion of the poverty-wealth contradictions of its different reasons. [127]

This 'new political thinking' also saw a dramatic reversal in its views on the role of class. According to Sakwa, "the most radical change was to redefine and temper the concept of the international class struggle which had served to fuel the Soviet confrontation with the West."[128] Because Gorbachev now believed that the survival of humanity on a global scale was paramount, the concept of class struggle greatly diminished in his view. In a rare statement, Gorbachev said that "the interests of one class cannot be placed above those of society as a whole...the interests of one nation cannot be placed above humanity as a whole."[129] Such a statement is clearly indicative of the ideological shift that was occurring in the Soviet Union during the mid-1980s. Moreover, as will be expounded further in the chapter, the diminishing importance of the class struggle – the foundation of Marxism-Leninism – would later serve to erode the entire basis of socialism as well as the raison d'etre of the CPSU itself.

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[126] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 318.

[127] Moscow forum, SN (Soviet News), 1987:57; also 2 Nov. 1987 speech, SN, 1987: 401 and Pravka, 3 Nov. 1987 – as cited in Sakwa, between pp. 318 and 321.

[128] Sakwa, p. 322.

2. *Reforms – Phase One*

For Gorbachev, it was the inclusion of the masses into the reformation process that was central to the success of perestroika. He believed that the involvement of the Soviet polity in the social and political spheres was necessary in order to promote and facilitate the dynamism of socialism. This would result in the displacement of 'developed socialism' from the party's ideological platform which would allow, in theory, for political and economic restructuring.

In 1985, Gorbachev began laying the foundations for the reforms by outlining the key components of perestroika and glasnost. Gorbachev regarded perestroika as "a revolution. A decisive acceleration of the socio-economic and cultural development of Soviet society which involves radical changes on the way to a qualitatively new state."[130] Perestroika

> means overcoming the stagnation process, breaking down the braking mechanism, creating a dependable and effective mechanism for the acceleration of social and economic progress and giving it greater dynamism. Perestroika means mass initiative. It is the comprehensive development of democracy, socialist self-government, encouragement of initiative and creative endeavor, improved order and discipline, more glasnost, criticism and self-criticism in all spheres of our society. It is utmost respect for the individual and consideration for personal dignity. Perestroika is the all-round intensification of the Soviet economy, the revival and development of the principles of democratic centralism in running the national economy, the universal introduction of economic methods, the renunciation of management by injunction and by administrative methods, and the overall encouragement of innovation

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[129] Ibid.
[130] Gorbachev, Perestroika, pp. 49/50.

and socialist enterprise.[131]

Glasnost was a critical element to the success of the reforms, as it described "a broad range of policies designed to expose Soviet society to criticism and self-criticism."[132] This resulted in a critical look and a re-evaluation of Soviet history, particularly the period of Stalinism. In 1985, Gorbachev insisted that there needed to be more glasnost within the party was well as the state apparatus. Two years later he expanded the boundaries of glasnost, arguing that " 'there should not be any blank pages in either our history or our literature' but warned that 'criticism should always be from a party point of view.' "[133] Glasnost consisted of three (processes): information, discussion and participation. With regards to information, the main feature was the relaxing of censorship: statistics on economics and the party (affairs) were made public; disasters were revealed (the 1957 nuclear explosion at the Urals); new maps of the USSR were illustrated. In this stage of glasnost, literature and the arts were the initial benefactors of the new 'openness' that was encouraged from above. Films and novels such as *1984* and *Dr. Zhivago*, once banned in the Soviet Union, were released, and debate in the public arena was immediate. Essentially, Gorbachev "realized that secrecy itself was a major force holding back the development of society, undermining efficiency, isolating individuals and eroding the morale of society."[134] Glavlit, (the Main Administration of Literature and State Publishing Houses) was then stripped of its censorship functions: no longer were books or articles submitted to Glavlit for its

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[131] Ibid., p. 34.
[132] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 65.
[133] Sakwa, p. 66, as cited in Pravda Feb 14, 1987
[134] Sakwa, p. 66.

approval. In short, books were no longer examined by the state to ensure that they did not contain anti-Soviet or anti-communist rhetoric.

Concomitantly, the mechanisms of the Communist Party and the government were revealed through glasnost. First, the reports of the Central committee meetings were published. Second, in June of 1990, a Press Law was enacted, arguably a precursor toward full freedom of the press. Not only were restrictions lifted on the formation of newspapers, but the Press Law also contained a 'freedom of information' clause, which stated that not only was it mandatory for government departments to answer questions posited by journalists, but that journalists were no longer coerced to slant their stories. Through glasnost, then, the public was given greater access to accurate information.

The second process of glasnost, discussion, arose once the information had been released into the public arena. Topics once publicly denounced were now openly debated and discussed without fear of persecution. Between 1987 and1988, topics such as crime, prostitution, sexually transmitted diseases, strikes and unemployment[135] were allowed to be openly discussed and debated. Gorbachev believed that in order to stimulate political participation within the polity, they needed to be accurately informed about Soviet society. The existence of many social issues had been publicly denied for decades; for Gorbachev, admitting the truth and dealing with the issues would pave the way for a more enlightened society that would in turn lend itself towards increased participation in the political arena. Clearly, "the demise of the notion of a single truth...permitted the reconstruction of a public sphere of debate and contestation."[136] Once the public had been informed and debated the issues, Gorbachev insisted that public

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[135] John Miller, Mikhail Gorbachev and the End of Soviet Power (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), p. 94.

participation, the third process of glasnost, was necessary in a democratized society. Therefore, "glasnost was to be used as a form of public control over governmental bodies to expose bureaucratic mismanagement and corruption."[137]

Gorbachev also enlisted the aid of the intelligentsia in order to push through reforms. Therefore cultural reforms preceded economic reforms in the hopes of expanding the support of the intelligentsia as the conservative bureaucrats were attempting to derail the entire reform process. Because topics previously labeled as taboo were now open for debate, it wasn't long before the intelligentsia became divided along reformist, radical and conservative viewpoints.

3. Reforms – Phase Two

While the first phase of perestroika, according to Robinson, dealt with laying the foundation of perestroika by introducing perestroika's basic concepts and displacing the notion of 'developed socialism', the second phase grounded the reforms further into society. Not only was perestroika linked to 'revolution', but the role of the party in the reformation process became solidified. In short, Gorbachev recognized that the party was at the core of perestroika and that the success or failure of the reforms depended on the party to undergo drastic structural changes. For Gorbachev, the focus was on the party itself, and how to break its inertia. As Gorbachev argued, because the CPSU was the key to the success of perestroika, restructuring the party apparatus was critical. It is important, however, to briefly outline the political structures of the Soviet system in order

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[136] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, pp.70/71.

to gain a better understand of the difficulty Gorbachev faced in terms of party restructuring and political reforms when the party and government institutions were inextricably linked. First, the members of the Central Committee (one of the main party institutions) dominated the Supreme Soviet, a mostly decorative governmental institution. In turn, members of the Central Committee came from not only the party apparatus but from the government hierarchy as well. The Supreme Soviet's 'Council of Ministers', the highest executive and administrative organ of state power, worked together with the Central Committee. Moreover, governmental agencies are supervised by the Committee.

The primary decision-making body was that of the Politburo, the members of whom were elected by the Central Committee and was headed by the General Secretary of the Party, the most important political position in the Soviet system. Again, the most important party *and* governmental officials sat on the Politburo, thereby tightening the control over society by the CPSU. For Gorbachev, the solution lay in loosening the party's grip from the government institutions, such as overhauling the Supreme Soviet into a more democratic body that would no longer be under the control of the CPSU.

As I have demonstrated, the paradox of the reform process is as follows: in order to successfully restructure Soviet society on all levels, the reformation of the party was central to the process. Yet the difficulty, which Gorbachev clearly understood, was that the party was tightly woven into the political and socio-economic levels of society. Reducing the party's influence and extracting it from civil society would, in hindsight if nothing else, result in the further erosion of the party to the point where its raison d'etre was questioned. While this was certainly not Gorbachev's intention, it is exactly what occurred. The question which must now be answered, and what in fact is still open for

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[137] Gorbachev as cited in Sakwa, p. 72.

debate in the literature, is this: how much of the party's deterioration and subsequent collapse can be directly attributed to the role of leadership? Put simply, were Gorbachev's mistakes, poor decisions, and lack of insight causal factors in the erosion of the CPSU, or did the systemic deficiencies of the system finally give way to the forces unleashed by the reform process?

In order to come to any sort of conclusions pertaining to Gorbachev's leadership and decision-making, it is necessary to first examine the events during the late 1980s concerning the party and the role it was given during the restructuring. Only by tracing the events leading to the party's collapse, as well as looking at how the leadership played a major role in its demise, can we accurately assess the extent to which the leadership – specifically, but not confined, to Gorbachev – can be blamed for the destruction of the CPSU or whether structural imbalances within the Soviet system was a causal factor. Before these questions can be answered, it is necessary to look at Gorbachev's goals and plans for the party, and how he planned to rejuvenate a moribund institution that had become mired in bureaucracy.

4. *Radical Restructuring of the CPSU*

While the first phase of the reforms dealt with displacing 'developed socialism' and laying the foundation of perestroika, the second phase targeted the party and its role in civil society. Before Gorbachev could rejuvenate the Communist Party, he had to inject a certain amount of dynamism into socialism. It is important to stress from the

outset that Gorbachev's goal during this phase was not to erode the socialist system and replace it with capitalism and market relations. Although democratization "appeared as a logical extension of perestroika...it had to be premised on the belief that the Soviet system was essentially socialist since otherwise democratization might lead to uncontrollable conflict."[138]

The 'socialist choice' of 1917, according to Gorbachev, provided an important function in that it described what was good in society.[139] In theory, the 'socialist choice' was to guide the 'socialist pluralism of opinions' which, along with the 'socialist law based state', was to create a dynamic socialism. These three processes, along with electoral reform, were methods which would provide the party with a new approach of working and relating to the rest of society. In order for the party to focus its energies on the 'socialist pluralism of opinions', the 'socialist law-based state' was introduced, whose function it was to delegate certain functions to the party and to the state. By extracting the party from involvement in certain functions, Gorbachev argued that this would allow the CPSU to focus on its goal: that of the representation of social interests in the 's.p.o'. It "was to discover and transform these interests through its leadership of the people so that the basic unity of society became visible and acted in support of the regime and party."[140]

Yet the development and promotion of these processes created a problem, one which Gorbachev either brushed aside or mistakenly overlooked. In order to discover the 'socialist pluralism of opinions' in Soviet society, the polity needed to discuss and debate openly on particular topics. Yet this placed the party in a precarious position. While

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[138] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 126.
[139] Ibid., p. 123.

theoretically the 's.p.o' was instructed to be based on socialist principles, it is difficult to control the multitude of opinions once debate and discussion were encouraged, as this meant that the infusion of non-socialist opinions would inevitably occur. This placed the party in a precarious position: not only was it supposed to facilitate an environment that would reinvigorate political participation within civil society, but simultaneously it was to discourage non-socialist discussions. A contradiction thus emerged because the CPSU not only became the agent for change, but it also became the primary institution for engaging the people into the political process. Once this occurs the party's raison d'etre is eroded. Robinson takes it a step further, arguing that if the party "could not be everything to everyone, then its claim to be the representative of all would be publicly thrown open to question and...(t)he party would therefore begin to lose its exclusivity, its claim to superior knowledge would be seen as false if it failed to win the support that it should have had as an institution that knew the 'truth' about society and social development."[141] Was this an oversight by Gorbachev? Or did his faith in the socialist system remain unshakable and spur him on to proceed with the radical restructuring?

The conservatives in the CPSU understood the problems at hand – that the future, not to mention the existence of the party, was now on shaky ground. They acknowledged the risks involved in attempting to extract the 's.p.o' from the polity, and argued that limitations ought to be placed on the topics now allowed for public discussion. Gorbachev's refusal was based on the premise that by setting out the characteristics of the 'socialist choice' and 's.p.o.' for the party, that this "would have enabled the party to escape from its obligation to engage actively with popular interests. It would have let the

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[140] Robinson, p. 123.
[141] Ibid., p. 124.

party off the hook by telling it what to do instead of forcing it to discover interests for itself."[142] As we will later see, this was perhaps the antecedent that cause the erosion, and ultimate destruction, of the party.

II. The Fracturing of the CPSU

Between 1986 and 1987, several laws were legislated that ultimately had a great ideological impact: several enterprises (ie. agro-industrial) were allowed to exceed their planned levels of production; some small cooperatives were legalized; part-time economic activity was permitted; monopoly of the Ministry of Foreign Trade diminished as various ministries were allowed to partake in foreign trade outside the Ministry; foreign investment in the Soviet Union was permitted.[143] While Hough contends that these economic measures would hardly facilitate the drive toward the radical restructuring that was needed to alter the economy, he believes that such small steps were necessary given the seventy years of anti-capitalist rhetoric instilled by the Soviet government. Put succinctly, "it was impossible simply to introduce market reforms without ideological preparations."[144]

As well, between 1987 and 1988, several key economic measures were introduced: first, to increase the quality of production, Gorbachev assigned quality-control inspectors to fifteen hundred enterprises in January.[145] Second, a new wage

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[142] Ibid., p. 125.
[143] Jerry Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 109.
[144] Ibid., p. 110.
[145] Joseph L. Nogee & R. Judson Mitchell, Russian Politics: The Struggle for a New Order (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), p. 56, as cited by Tass, Aug. 26, '88)

policy was introduced in order to promote individual achievements in the workplace. This meant that bonuses were now distributed based on performance. Third, self-financing of sixty percent of industries was enforced. Because the goal was to eliminate those industries that were unprofitable, it was now mandatory that firms not only handle their own finances but they were also required to show a profit.

While these measures helped to alter the Soviet economy, albeit briefly, it still ensured governmental control over the economy. Clearly these were piecemeal reforms at best and offered no long-term solutions to the growing economic crisis. For example, because of the emphasis on quality control, growth rates decreased without any substantial improvement of the products. Moreover, due to worker dissatisfaction over the new wage policy, their skepticism vis-à-vis perestroika only increased.

The main point of contention pertaining to the economic reforms was that of price imbalances, particularly the heavy subsidization of rent and food, both of which contributed to the growing budget deficit and inflation. While both the radicals and moderate reformers agreed that price imbalances had to be eradicated, they took opposing positions on how it was to be carried out and the time frame it should involve. While some argued that the fixed price should be adjusted, others supported the introduction of market mechanisms. Many of the radicals agreed to a compromise, allowing for the increase of the fixed price with the goal of later arguing for a lessening of the price controls. Thus the prices would more accurately reflect the demand. Others, such as Nikolai Petrakov and Nikolai Shmelev, refused to endorse an increase in prices without first introducing market mechanisms. The result was the continual postponement of price increases, and the budget deficit and inflation only worsened. Instead, the radical

economists, such as Gavril Popov, proposed that the ministries staff be reduced, that the ministries themselves be dismantled, and that Article VI of the Constitution be abolished.

The debate over economic reform was not contained between the two distinctive camps, but extended into the leadership as well, particularly between Gorbachev and Premier Ryzhkov. First, according to Hough, contrary to reports in the press it was Ryzhkov who had advocated immediate price increases from the outset (mid-80s), and that Gorbachev was opposed to such a move.[146] A second form of contention between the leadership was the content of the scheduled Central Committee plenum in 1986. While Gorbachev and other members leaned toward a plenum on political democratization, others such as Ryzhkov argued that an economic plenum should take priority. As a result, the plenum was continually postponed, and it is plausible to argue that the cause for the delay was the disagreement over which plenum should be held first as well as the on-going debate over price increases. When it was finally decided that democratization should be the main focus of the plenum, Gorbachev rejected both the proposals put forth by the economists and Central Committee officials, and the top government officials. This mean that once again price increases were stalled.

The main point of contention among the leadership was the role of the state. Put simply, what was to be the role of the state in a rejuvenated Soviet economy? According to Ryzhkov, the radicals believed that the plan for economic reform be scrapped, " 'asserting that the producers themselves would quickly understand everything and establish smooth, mutually profitable relations with each other. And nationwide tasks would be solved by themselves.'"[147] Ryzhkov had implied that the problem was

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[146] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 123.
[147] Ibid., p. 130, as cited by Ryzhkov.

Gorbachev himself – as Ryzhkov saw it, Gorbachev " 'in practice proposed to liquidate the existing mechanisms of economic administration without creating absolutely anything in their place.' "[148]

Martin Malia, however, offers a more positive take on the situation. For Gorbachev, the objective to the Law on State Enterprises was to facilitate self-management for enterprises by extracting it from the grip of Gosplan and the central ministries. This mean that the enterprises would have control over the profits and the pricing system was to be overhauled. While it may have been a small step in reshaping the economic system, it was "in this way Gorbachev hoped to progressively remove the Party from direct supervision of the economy."[149]

Nevertheless, the hostile debate among the leadership over perestroika came to a head in 1988 over a letter written by a chemistry professor, Nina Andreeva, that appeared in Sovetskaya Rossiya. Because Gorbachev continued to emphasize 'common human interests' in the new political thinking, Andreeva's concern – along with Ligachev – was that if the class interests of every social group, from the proletariat to the bourgeoisie, were 'common human interests', than "there would be no need for the party; all would be equal in politics no matter what their social origin."[150] Furthermore, they argued that "there would therefore be no difference between the party of the proletariat and any other party. Each could claim to be acting in the interest of all society."[151]

Quoting a speech given by Ligachev in 1988, Andreeva agreed that " 'the idea of the 'liberalization' of Soviet society is being mendaciously suggested to us. This is put

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[148] Ibid.
[149] Malia, The Soviet Tragedy, p. 425.
[150] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 134.
[151] Ibid.

forward...in the Western sense of the term, with the stress on the formal-procedural elements which lead to the reproduction of capitalist relations."[152]

Essentially, Andreeva's letter and Ligachev's speech questioned glasnost and all its fundamentals. Andreeva argued that the " 'socialist pluralism of opinions' had already allowed too broad a set of interests to be articulated and the party's control and exclusive command were already under threat."[153] For both Andreeva and Ligachev, if glasnost was not contained, the existence of the Soviet state - and system - was in jeopardy.

1. The 19th CPSU Conference - 1988

The Nineteenth Party Conference was significant for several reasons. First, Gorbachev realized that his main obstacle to the reforms was the party itself. And because the Central Committee was the primary party organ, it was necessary for Gorbachev to maneuver around the Central Committee. His solution was to revive the party conferences, as the last conference had taken place in 1941. Second, Gorbachev proposed the creation of the Congress of People's Deputies, a body of 2250 members, two-thirds who would be chosen in multi-candidate elections. They would meet twice a year to elect a Supreme Soviet, which would function as a legislature. Third, the Central Committee was to be re-organized, with the formation of six commissions to monitor its work. Most importantly, however, were the two proposed policy changes: a restructured Supreme Soviet and multi-candidate elections. As a result, the conference signified the first real movement toward democratization. According to Hough, the conference was to

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[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid., p. 135.

exemplify greater democracy within the Party and the first to have conference delegates elected competitively.[154]

In terms of economic reform, Abalkin announced that the economy continued to stagnate positing his theory that "the fundamental problem in economic reform...was not the resistance of the bureaucratic apparatus, but 'basic misconceptions about socialism and economics.' " [155] Finally, as some have denoted, such as Hill, the conference came to be labeled as the " 'Conference of the democratization of Soviet society', not because of the support for democracy expressed...but because of the way in which the speeches were made, because of the level of contestation that occurred"[156] particularly between Yeltsin and Ligachev. Clearly, the restructuring of the political framework, namely the creation of the CPD and the revamped Supreme Soviet, "turned out to be the most important structural change of the Gorbachev era. It provided for the legal basis for the articulation of local and national interests and created relatively autonomous structures that would ultimately serve as platforms for the dissolution of the USSR."[157]

Following the end of the Conference, Ligachev launched an explosive attack on the reformist project. His main point of contention was not about the reforms per se, but the CPSU's growing lack of control over the entire process. Ligachev feared that "reform would unleash forces beyond the control of the CPSU, which would threaten political stability."[158] His solution was for the party to regain control over the reformation process before the existence of the entire political system was threatened.

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[154] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 154.
[155] Ibid., p. 134, as quoted by Abalkin.

[156]Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, pp. 139/40.
[157] Nogee & Mitchell, Russian Politics, p. 64.

Clearly the pace and implementation of reforms is what Ligachev feared the most. Yakovlev followed with a rebuttal, arguing that the market (economic regulation) and the 'socialist law-based state' (political regulation) "were necessary to provide a 'system of feedback.' "[159] For example, he said that political and economic agencies would receive information from society via the market – together with the 'law-based state', "they were to overcome resistance to reform..."[160] Yakovlev's argument was vague, and Robinson neglects to summarize Yakovlev's position.

Nonetheless, Robinson puts forth what he sees as the paradox of the reforms by examining both Ligachev's and Yakovlev's speeches: while Ligachev feared that the establishment of a market would serve to erode the party by diminishing its control over its economic affairs, Yakovlev believed that the introduction a market into the system would "force the party to take action to ensure the continued socialism of the Soviet system."[161] In both scenarios the party was asked to do "very different things, was being pulled in different directions. This tension over the party's place in the Soviet political system was irresolvable if reform was to continue as Gorbachev intended: his position contained something of both Ligachev's and Yakovlev's."[162]

Robinson has argued that the establishment of the CPD and the ratified laws on electoral change signaled not only the height of perestroika but it also marked the end of Gorbachev's achievements in terms of reforming the Soviet Union.[163] Moreover, Robinson argues that "there was nothing in the package of reforms that Gorbachev had introduced to make the party change its way of working and there was just enough room

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[158] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 145.
[159] Ibid., p. 146.
[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid., p. 147.

in the new laws for radical forces to defeat it in some places."[164] This was undoubtedly demonstrated in the March elections of 1989.

2. *March Elections*

The elections to the CPD in March marked a turning point in Soviet politics as the CPSU was dealt a crushing blow at the polls. Not only did this have a demoralizing effect on party members, but it also transformed the dynamics of the party. For example, a number of radicals were elected in Moscow; most of the leaders in Leningrad were soundly defeated, and twenty one out of fifty five regional party first secretaries in Russia lost their posts. But most significant was what the losses signified for the Soviet public. According to Premier Ryzhkov, " 'the party...is losing authority in the eyes of the people.' "[165] Within the ranks of the party, the staggering losses were a cause for alarm: first, any losses were shocking as the party "had been above public criticism for so long."[166] Second, because many defeats occurred with only one candidate on the ballot, the capability of the party leaders was questioned. Third, the defeats signified the erosion of the party's base of support, since it was the industrial workers and the large cities who rejected the party, two groups that had always been the CPSU's strongest supporters.

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[162] Ibid.
[163] Ibid., p. 150.
[164] Ibid., p. 151.
[165] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 168, as noted in Pravda July 21/89, p.3/4).

[166] Hough, p. 168.

While the party still claimed the majority of seats, the fact that it suffered any loses at all was enough to indicate that the party's role as vanguard was indeed jeopardized. One could take it a step further and suggest that at this juncture, the party was indeed no longer the vanguard. Because the party could no longer control the emerging popular interests that had been facilitated by glasnost, the erosion of the party's vanguard role in the political arena was inevitable. Moreover, a conflict between the party and the people was also inevitable

> since popular interests could only collide with the party's view of itself as the representative of all society. No matter how weak the opposition that emerged, it was still a danger to the party since it denied that the party was truly representative and that there could be no alternative to its plans for the future. Once this happened the party's claim to power were no longer valid because its ideological hegemony could no longer be based on the absolute and exclusive right to determine the content and conduct of politics.[167]

Gorbachev, however, placed great faith in the electoral process in the 1989 elections. For him, the elections were about getting the party to function in a new way, not only in terms of electoral accountability, but by facilitating political stability and unity. Robinson argued that such a task would only be fulfilled if the party could successfully "weld together the diverse strands of opinion that existed in society under the umbrella of the 'socialist pluralism of opinions'. The party had to find a middle road between the dangers of conservatism and false radicalism."[168]

For Gorbachev, this meant that the party would have to be designated as the mediator between the various groups within society. While it would remain a ruling party, "the CPSU renounced the habits of dictating and commanding and sees its role

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[167] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 153.
[168] Ibid., p. 155.

above all in the political leadership of society."[169] He envisioned that once the party was able to be the mediator between the groups, socialism would "be consolidated and there would be unity around the party and the state."[170] The problem, however, was that the party suffered a major blow during the elections, something that had been unforeseen by the leadership. This sentiment is echoed by Hough, who argued that

> when the ballots were counted, the Communist party turned out to have suffered some stunning setbacks. Leningrad sent nearly all its leaders down to defeat; Moscow elected a number of radicals...in Russia as a whole, twenty-one of the fifty five regional party first secretaries were defeated.[171]

Gorbachev, who initially believed that the party had in fact been strengthened following the elections,[172] was mistaken.

Robinson places a great deal of emphasis on the elections and the party's role, arguing that "the entire weight of the party's vanguard role, its need to shape society as the bearer of goal rationality, fell on the electoral process."[173] But instead the elections merely reflected the underpinnings of Soviet society, both in terms of the dissatisfaction with the party as well as the emergence of anti-Communist sentiment. The people's rejection of the party at the polls was indicative of a deeper unrest: the public was not only expressing their dissatisfaction with the CPSU, but more importantly they were also rejecting the ideological foundations of the entire socialist system.

The counter-argument still persists, however, that despite "the spectacular defeats of some party officials, the Communist party won a sweeping victory" as more than 87

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[169] Gorbachev as cited in Robinson, p. 155.
[170] Robinson, p. 156.
[171] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, pp. 164, 165.
[172] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 161.
[173] Ibid., p. 159.

percent of the deputies elected to the Congress were party members."[174] To take it a step further, one could also argue that the rejection of the party at the polls could have simply been a rejection of specific candidates. While this could have been plausible, what I believe to be the most telling was the party's defeat in the large cities. The strongest supporters of the CPSU had traditionally been industrial workers, but in the 1989 election, "the traditional party candidates had done poorly in the large industrial cities...and in the coal-mining districts, while they had swept the smaller cities, the south, and the countryside."[175] The CPSU's loss of working-class support was a problem for the party. Many party officials saw the elections as a "great defeat for the Communist party."[176] The admission by a plant director shortly after the election said it all: that " 'we Communists are losing.' "[177]

For the conservatives, they understood that the party "had suffered losses because it lacked a clear purpose, a definite vision of what socialism was to be at the given conjuncture...and had consequently allowed hostile forces to enter into the political process because it had no grounds upon which to exclude them."[178] But Gorbachev firmly believed that if he had given the party direction, it would stop reforming. Thus, he pushed ahead with the elections with the vision that the outcome would generate greater unity between the party and the state, and that socialism would be strengthened. Unfortunately, the elections resulted in none of these goals, demonstrating instead the

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[174] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 166.
[175] Ibid., p. 169.
[176] Ibid., p. 167.
[177] Ibid., pp. 167/168.
[178] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 160.

pluralistic views of Soviet society, as well as providing "for the development of a legitimate opposition to the party."[179]

3. Post 1989 Elections – Growth of the Opposition

Clearly, the antecedents for the opposition movement in the Soviet political system can be located in March elections and the subsequent first meeting of the CPD in May and June of 1989. While Gorbachev placed high hopes on the success of the new congress, the CPD was plagued with problems from the onset as there was no clear mandate on procedures. How the CPD and the restructured SS would function, and what form the debates would take had not yet been addressed. Moreover, a faction within the congress had developed by the third day of the meeting, as radical deputies formed the Inter-Regional Deputies Group (I-RDG, which comprised 10-15 percent of the deputies of the CPD)[180] in protest against the division of "ideologically like-minded deputies into their regional blocs."[181] The structure of the CPD was such that all deputies were divided into regional groups (ie union republics, districts) rather than being divided according to interests, a set-up that was rejected by the radicals within the Congress. What this meant in terms of the political system was that the I-RDG effectively became the *de facto* opposition to the CPSU and heightened the likelihood of the creation of a multi-party system.

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[179] Ibid., p. 153.
[180] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 166.
[181] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 165.

Almost immediately, the I-RDG began to attack Article 6 of the Constitution that legally enshrined the CPSU as the 'leading and guiding force of Soviet society'. This in turn lead to criticisms leveled against the party's dominance over the entire political system, as the group denounced the CPSU as a " 'system of supreme power, a totalitarian structure, by origin and functions incompatible with perestroika.' "[182] The immediate result of the criticisms of the group was that the independent movements and grassroots organizations – flourishing due to the openness created by glasnost - turned to the I-RDG to channel its anti-party sentiments, thereby creating a situation where the CPSU was not only losing power, but credibility as well.

By the end of the year, in an article entitled "The Socialist Idea and Revolutionary Perestroika", Gorbachev began considering the idea of a convergence between capitalism and socialism, eradicating central planning while retaining the equality found within socialism. Gorbachev was clearly advocating a hybrid system, both economically and politically, claiming that perestroika could not only use the 'socialist choice of 1917', but also aspects of the market, similar to the New Economic Policy (NEP) advocated by Lenin and then Bukharin in the early 1920s. While the article was attempting to generate support for the party, he neglected – by choice or by mistake – to "tackle the question of what precisely socialism was to be at the present moment."[183] Moreover, he was still convinced that the party as a whole was still a functioning institution that was still the bearer of society's social consciousness. So instead of facilitating unity within the party, Gorbachev "provided both democrats and conservatives with more ammunition for their respective arguments as he reiterated the contradictory themes from which both sides

[182] Ibid., p. 166, as quoted by the I-RDG.
[183] Ibid., p. 169.

embarked on the criticisms of perestroika."[184] The paradox? That while the goal was to create unity, both within the party and between the party and the state, the party itself – the backbone of the reformation process – was beginning to implode and devolve into greater disunity, both within the party itself and within the ranks of the leadership.

4. The CPSU and the Growing Economic Debate

Between 1988 and the first half of 1989, economic reform stalled as political reform took priority for Gorbachev. Following the 1989 elections, the drive for genuine economic reform was revived as Premier Ryzhkov appointed Leonid Abalkin, an economic reformer, as chairman on the Commission of Economic Reform. One of the main issues of contention, but one that needed to be addressed, were retail price increases. While Ryzhkov argued for immediate price increases, Gorbachev believed they should be put on hold, a position held by radical reformers. Clearly the road to economic reform would be a struggle given the split within the party between the radical and conservative economists.

In November 1989, Abalkin introduced an economic reform package that advocated price increases and privatization over a six-year period. His plan, however, was rejected, not only by the conservative economists, but by Gorbachev as well, who proposed that the three draft laws for economic reform be postponed until the spring of 1990.[185] This resulted in Ryzhkov presenting a more conservative reform plan to the CPD in December. Again, however, this plan was criticized for being too conservative

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[184] Ibid.
[185] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 349.

despite the fact that the plan did not mention retail price increases. The irony - and one that suggests that Gorbachev may have wanted Ryzhkov to be a scapegoat – was that Ryzhkov's plan was deemed as too conservative as it postponed price increases. Yet it was Ryzhkov who had repeatedly pressured Gorbachev to eliminate subsidies and introduce proper prices. Ryzhkov's "retreat on price increases...was the result of Gorbachev's refusal to support the plan and such price increases."[186] It seems ironic that once Ryzhkov complied with Gorbachev and omitted increases from the plan, he was denounced by Gorbachev for being too conservative.

By late 1989, Nikolai Petrakov, the leader of the radicals, was chosen by Gorbachev as a personal assistant. He, along with Aleksandr Yakovlev, attacked the Ryzhkov government on the basis of economic reform, and instead advocated a radical reform program, such as freeing prices and abolishing the industrial ministries. The following summer, a 500 day plan was drafted by a group of young economists, a plan that was backed by Yakovlev and Petrakov. Essentially, it advocated that within five hundred days a market economy would be created. It was not long after this that Petrakov resigned as Gorbachev's advisor, citing disagreements over Gorbachev's economic policy, and began to call for Gorbachev's resignation.

Concomitantly, the Ryzhkov government was coming under fire from not only the radicals in the CPSU, but also from the media. In the spring of 1990, a reform plan was introduced to the Presidential Council by Abalkin, which stated that food prices would be increased immediately, followed by additional radical measures on January 1, 1991.[187] After being ordered to revise the plan into something 'more concrete', Ryzhkov had the

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[186] Ibid., p. 350.
[187] Ibid., p. 357.

task of presenting it to the Supreme Soviet and to a televised audience, a speech that would endorse significant price increases. Coincidentally, this speech was given prior to Yeltsin's bid to be elected chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet. Scholars, such as Hough, argue that Ryzhkov's speech was poorly timed, as it gave Yeltsin a platform with which to attack the government. The result of the speech was predictable: immediately the public, in a panic, bought bread before the ensuing price increases, lending credence to Yeltsin's criticisms of the government as he denounced the measure as an "antipeople's policy (that) Russia should not adopt."[188]

One has to question the role of Gorbachev during this period. Ryzhkov's proposal on price increases to the Presidential Council, chaired by Gorbachev, was approved and he was given May 24 as the date he would present his proposals on television. It seems more than a coincidence that his presentation would occur during the end of Yeltsin's campaign, knowing full well that the unpopular measure of price increases would only serve Yeltsin's purpose. It must be argued that Gorbachev knew the consequences of Ryzhkov's speech, yet he did not attempt to delay it. According to Hough, "Ryzhkov would never have had the authority to announce such a potentially explosive measure on his own at this crucial moment. Gorbachev had been delaying the decision on price increases for four years, and it would have been simple to postpone the announcement until after the Supreme Soviet election to avoid giving Yeltsin a popular issue."[189] Because Gorbachev had to have understood that Ryzhkov's speech would only aid Yeltsin's campaign efforts, Gorbachev "must have decided that (going ahead with

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[188] Ibid., p. 359.
[189] Ibid.

the speech) was in his interest."[190] One could surmise that the campaign to destroy Ryzhkov was right on target.

While Ryzhkov and Abalkin were setting out to devise another economic program, Gorbachev and Yeltsin created a group – the 'Shatalin group' - that included Yavlinsky, Petrakov and Shatalin. Their goal was to create a program "of transition to a market economy as the basis for the economic section of the Union Treaty."[191] When Premier Ryzhkov was approached to sign the new program, he "was horrified. He considered the document to be the product of Petrakov's antigovernment program and realized the group was dominated by radicals who opposed him."[192] Clearly, "Ryzhkov's and Abalkin's program was being dismissed as inadequate before it was even drafted."[193]

Ironically, according to Hough, there were very few differences between the 500 day plan advocated by the Shatalin group and the plan proposed by Ryzhkov's government. Pavlov argues that "90 percent of the plan was taken verbatim from one of the early drafts of the government's plan, but with the brakes taken off."[194] During this period, the Russian parliament passed a law that would set up a financial system that would work independently from the central government. The minister of finance pressured Gorbachev to suspend this law, but Gorbachev refused. Thus, because the "500-Day Plan seriously weakened the power of the central government and created the kind of financial starvation of the government that scholars associated with successful revolution, Pavlov makes the reasonable judgement that Gorbachev's refusal to sign the

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[190] Ibid.
[191] Ibid., p. 360.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid., p. 364, as quoted by Pavlov.

decree on tax collection was the key event in the breakup of the Soviet Union."[195] Hough agrees, contending that the drafters of the Plan had not only wanted to see the Soviet Union dissolve, but that they wanted to "give the Russian government many of its powers."[196]

5. *The Beginning of the End: 1990-1991*

In January of 1990, the radicals – now the 'Democratic Platform' – began to call for the break-up of the party apparat, the establishment of party organizations based on electoral districts, and parliamentary-style political parties rather than vanguard aspirations.[197] Essentially, these proposals reduced and marginalized the role of the CPSU even further.

Concomitantly, it was clear, even to Gorbachev, that the CPD had not created the unity that he had anticipated; if anything it served to further polarize the leadership within the CPSU. This resulted in Gorbachev changing his opinion on multi-party elections and he conceded that the CPSU failed in the March '89 elections.[198] It was at this pivotal point at which the CPSU was being slowly dismantled, as Article 6 was rewritten and there was a transfer of power to the presidency and the presidential councils, stripping the party of its power. Ironically, even after these events, Gorbachev steadfastly held onto the belief that the CPSU "remained the only force capable of unifying the people as it had

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[195] Ibid., p. 367.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 171.
[198] Ibid., p. 172.

'vanguard potential.' "[199] One has to question Gorbachev's line of thinking at this point, particular since the party's power and influence had substantially declined. One plausible explanation was that Gorbachev simply did not want to admit that the reforms had not only failed to unite the party, the state and society through a renewed socialism, but that the party as the impetus to reformation had failed to reform itself. It is also possible that Gorbachev still had such faith in the party and in the socialist system that he truly believed that the party still had the potential to be a unifying force. This may be why Article 6 was revised: to "change the conditions in which the party was supposed to work one more time."[200]

From 1990 to 1991, a major ideological shift took place within the party as well as the entire political system. With the formation of the executive presidency, the Russian Communist Party (RCP), and the republican elections, it was clear that the reformation process was out of Gorbachev's hands. The epicentre of political power shifted from the CPSU to the republican governments, where the battleground for political struggle could now be located, particularly since many nationalist and democratic movements had been elected.

It could be argued that the creation of the presidential post was the impetus for the power shift. This presented a problem for the party: because it lacked a definitive ideological platform, it was no longer an effective force in the political struggle that was taking place in the Soviet system. Structurally, the party was still flailing: it was still not reformed, its membership was in steady decline, it was still internally divided, and public support was waning. The party was, quite simply, a moribund institution, suspended

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[199] Ibid., p. 175, as quoted by Gorbachev.
[200] Ibid., p. 175.

between its desire for political control and its lack of an ideological platform to provide it was a sense of direction.

In early 1991, Gorbachev set out to devise a new party Programme in order to give the party a set of guidelines, apparently still not wavering – to a certain degree -in his faith for the CPSU. Again, however, there were no specifics on the party in terms of its place within the power struggle, and "the refusal (of Gorbachev) to define the enemies of the party in the struggle for power seemed to leave the party naked and unable to wield power effectively in the face of a rapidly changing polity."[201] The Programme, however, produced two outcomes: first, Gorbachev implied that "support for the 'socialist choice' of 1917 had to be generated and was not something collectively and unavoidably given."[202] Second, membership in the CPSU was no longer restricted to certain social groups. Moreover, the draft stated that the party had to act as an opposition party rather than the ruling party. A major ideological revision of the party came with Gorbachev's speech introducing the draft Programme, stating that there was no "significant difference between 'communist' ideals and those of social democracy."[203] This was significant because "the partial convergence between capitalism and socialism that had become a standard of much of economic perestroika thinking...was also applied to the party and hence to political perestroika."[204]

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[201] Ibid., p. 184.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid., p. 185.
[204] Ibid., p. 186.

III. Gorbachev's Role in the Collapse of the Soviet Union: An Analysis

The collapse of the Communist Party, and the subsequent demise of the Soviet Union, was not only of the most momentous events of the twentieth century but it was also one of the most unexpected, for both Western and Soviet scholars. The initial stages of perestroika and glasnost seemed to have instilled new life in the Soviet Union, not only within the party and political institutions, but within the political culture. Glasnost facilitated openness and discussion, ushering in an era of limited freedom while eradicating the sense of fear which had prevailed throughout the country for decades. In short, the reformation process seemed to have placed the Soviet Union on the brink of renewal: its restructured foreign policy created renewed relations with the West, and the openness created by glasnost gave rise to a 'revolution from below'. This occurred with the creation of grassroots movements and independence organizations who were now given the freedom to proclaim their specific causes. Clearly, none of this would have taken place had it not been for Gorbachev and his vision for the future of socialism and Soviet society.

This brings us to the debate in the scholarship pertaining to Gorbachev and his role in the collapse of the Soviet Union. While some scholars have argued that Gorbachev democratized the USSR, others have accused him of single-handedly destroying a seventy-year old institution due to oversights, miscalculations and poor leadership abilities. The question which must be answered is two-fold: first, how much of the 'revolution from above' can be directly attributed to Gorbachev, and how much was pre-determined? Second, would another government figure have instigated a

different outcome, or was the dissolution of the Soviet Union inevitable? Put simply, was the Soviet system reformable, or was it only a matter of time before the structural underpinnings imploded and collapsed?

Within the literature, several common themes are found that points towards several miscalculations on the part of Gorbachev that lead to the destruction of the USSR. First, because his main concern was political restructuring, the nationalities question was – by and large – ignored by Gorbachev. According to Rasma Karklins, "the program of perestroika was developed without any attention to nationality issues, yet political democratization and national awakening have been closely intertwined."[205] For Gorbachev, the implementation of glasnost was key if Soviet society was to be rejuvenated. The loosening of restrictions regarding free speech lead to a re-examination of Stalinism and Stalin's reign of terror. Not only did Gorbachev encourage democratic movements (aka 'Popular Movements for Perestroika') in Lithuania and Ukraine,[206] but he also allowed open discussions the circumstances surrounding the Baltic incorporation into the Soviet Union, namely the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. This had a crucial impact in the Baltic republics as it was revealed that they were annexed by force through a deal reached by Stalin and Hitler. While Gorbachev believed that such discussions would only serve to strengthen the reform process, it had the opposite effect in the Baltics. Gorbachev was encouraging pluralistic attitudes in Soviet society, and "in a multi-ethnic state, political pluralism and the empowerment of society necessarily implies

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[205] Karklins quoted in A. Jones and D.E. Powell (eds.), *Soviet Update* 1989-1990 (Boulder: Westview Press), p. 75.

[206] Ibid., p. 78.

ethnic autonomy and self rule."[207] By this we may conclude that he did not anticipate the link between democratization and ethnic autonomy.

With regards to the Baltics, the success of the reforms was predicated – in part – by Baltic support for perestroika. As a result, ethnic uprisings over Baltic independence in the mid- 1980s were not suppressed by officials for fear that it would result in the denunciation of Baltic support for perestroika and glasnost. Had this occurred, the implementation of the reforms would have been jeopardized. Evidently, "the central authorities saw changes in the center-periphery relationship as both inevitable and beneficial, *if these changes were kept within certain bounds.*"[208] Due to Gorbachev's insistence on public discussions and openness, the unconstitutional components of the Hitler-Stalin pact were revealed, resulting in mass protests concerning the illegal incorporation of the Baltics into the USSR. One particular demonstration, a four hundred mile human chain, was a significant event because the Baltics were directly protesting Soviet rule, and their resentment concerning Soviet domination. Moreover, this protest "challenged the government to live up to the realization of glasnost and sparked the flame that within a year became a wildfire of national liberation."[209]

Clearly, Gorbachev and the center were eager to allow concessions to the Republics in exchange for full support of the reformation process. But because he neglected to foresee that a move toward sovereignty could evolve out of their support of perestroika, he was faced with the reality that the ethnic uprisings were becoming uncontrollable. Once the Baltics began to challenge the authority of the centre, the

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[207] Ibid., p. 75.

[208] Gregory Gleason, Federalism and Nationalism: The Struggle for Republican Rights in the USSR (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 120 – note: italics mine)

changes between the centre and the periphery were no longer confined to the boundaries set by the centre. Consequently, the centre's authority was challenged by the growing nationalist movements demanding political and economic autonomy from the USSR. Ironically, it was Gorbachev's misjudgments vis-à-vis Soviet society that prevented him from addressing the nationalities question sooner. His misplaced belief in the cohesiveness of Soviet society, despite the numerous nationalities that existed within the Union, led him to ignore the ethnic problems in the republics in order to focus on economic restructuring. Ultimately, this was a grave error, as the openness revealed the existence of anti-Soviet sentiment and resentment of Soviet domination.

Sakwa, too, argues that Gorbachev's mishandling of the nationalities question only served to further divide the Soviet Union, contributing to its collapse. For Sakwa, he believes that "one of Gorbachev's gravest mistakes was to underestimate the force of nationalism."[210] The problem was that while "Gorbachev assumed that nationalist aspirations were compatible with his definition of perestroika...it became increasingly clear that perestroika was only the gateway through which the nationalist movements tried to bolt from the Soviet stable."[211] Nogee and Mitchell take a similar position, arguing that "one of his greatest miscalculations concerned the nationalities."[212] They argue that Gorbachev incorrectly assumed that "the Soviet-nationalities policy had succeeded to the extent that the non-Russian ethnic groups gave voluntary adherence to the Soviet regime. But the non-Russian nationalities turned out to be far more anti-Soviet

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[209] (Vardys quoted in G. Smith, The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union (London: Longman, 1990), p. 79.
[210] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 257.
[211] Ibid.
[212] Nogee & Mitchell, Russian Politics, p. 67.

than pro-perestroika."[213] Moreover, because nationalities issues were not a priority until the summer of 1989, "it was too late to stop the avalanche of forces."[214]

Evans, too, takes the position that not only did Gorbachev miscalculate the ethnic tension in the republics, but he also underestimated the various pluralist configurations which emerged within the numerous groups that were formed as a result of glasnost. Evans suggests that Gorbachev "felt confident of the stability of an underlying consensus on the basic principles of 'socialism' in the USSR. He was proved incorrect on that assumption and was visibly appalled by the breadth and bitterness of the controversies that raged by the early 1990s."[215] This resulted in "the rapid expansion of the boundaries of the legitimate expression of conflicts in Soviet society so that, within a few years, as the boundaries of permitted debate widened, issues involving divisions of previously treated as non-legitimate were raised openly."[216]

Jerry Hough, however, has a different take on the nationalities question. He argues that while Western scholars have concluded that Gorbachev did not "have an inkling of the explosiveness of nationalist aspirations,"[217] Hough posits that Gorbachev did indeed understand the tensions within the republics over nationalism. For example, while he wanted the Pope John Paul II to come to the Soviet Union and celebrate the anniversary of the introduction of Christianity into Russia, Gorbachev refused the request that the Pope visit Lithuania (which was predominantly Catholic) as it would most certainly destabilize that country.

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[213] Ibid.
[214] Ibid.
[215] Evans Jr., Soviet Marxism-Leninism, p. 217.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Hough, Democratization and Revolution in the USSR, p. 145.

Nevertheless, it is clear that Gorbachev's intentions – that of freer discussions and debates in order to rejuvenate Soviet society – did not include Baltic demands for secession. He had presumed that a more open society would lead to a more strengthened Soviet society in spite of nationalistic aspirations. What he did not count on was the suppression of anti-Soviet sentiment. And when Gorbachev realized that such sentiment existed, it was too late: the drive toward Baltic independence was unstoppable.

A second theme in the literature - one that lends credence to the belief that Gorbachev made several errors – is Gorbachev's postponement of an economic plenum and his lack of vision on achieving and sustaining economic reform. According to Hough, "economic reform required that careful consideration be given to the incentive system under which officials and the public operated. Economic incentives needed to be created that would push officials in the same direction that the exhortations were leading. Political incentives needed to correspond to economic incentives. Steps needed to be taken in careful sequence so that a new incentive system would be in place as the only one was destroyed. This was never done."[218] Moreover, the controversy over price reform was further dividing the party, as the main issue of contention was not whether price increases should be enforced, but by which method they would be introduced. While some in the Politburo argued that the state should adjust the fixed prices, others believed that prices should be altered only when market mechanisms were put in place.

Clearly, however, it was the continual postponement of the economic plenum that led to the stalling of genuine economic reform. In late 1986, there was already dissent within the Party as to which plenum would be held first: one on democracy or one on economic reform. The plenum was postponed several times, once due to an outbreak of

rioting in Kazakhstan. Gorbachev felt that because price increases would only facilitate more rioting, he decided that it was not the proper time to adjust prices.[219] Hough argues that this decision propelled Gorbachev to choose the plenum on democracy rather than economic reform. He cannot

> have wanted attention to be focused on an aspect of reform on which his resistance to price increases would be criticized in the West as the conservative one and Ryzhkov's considered the desirable one. The change to the plenum on democratization refocused attention on a matter on which Gorbachev had no problem claiming his position was in the forefront of the reform movement. This concern with image may have been decisive. No one among the reformers, let along (sic) Gorbachev, seemed to understand that democratization would redouble the political explosiveness of price increases. In any case, it was to be one of the most fateful decisions in the destruction of the Soviet Union.[220]

Clearly the infighting between Gorbachev and Premier Ryzhkov over price reforms only exacerbated the divisiveness within the Party, as well as prolonging the economic stagnation. Moreover, Hough says the real "mystery is why [Gorbachev] decided in 1988 to push through a democratization that would give the population the easier option of voting against price increases and other economic pain."[221] In the final analysis, Hough contends that Gorbachev "had no theory of economic transition and something – including …an exaggerated sense of the power of the bureaucracy – led him to hope that a market would automatically come into being if the old system were destroyed."[222] The problem, however, was that Gorbachev neglected to replace the economic and political structures that he was destroying, leaving a hybrid system that

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[218] Ibid., p. 103.
[219] Ibid., p. 127.
[220] Ibid., p. 128.
[221] Ibid., p. 138.

was neither socialist or democratic, and neither command economy or market, but one that had remnants of both systems. This made the system unworkable and unmanageable, particularly given that the centre was completely eroded. The fact that the influence of the CPSU in society had deteriorated only made the situation more dire.

This sentiment is echoed by Hough, who also argues that Gorbachev wanted to inject dramatic changes within the system while attempting to make the transition as smooth as possible. But this proved extremely difficult, particularly in the context of price reforms, as Gorbachev had to placate the radicals, the conservatives, and the Western world. While he understood the need for price adjustments, he also knew that this would lead to new levels of violence and protest, a precarious predicament given that perestroika and glasnost were changing the configuration of the nation and ethnic violence was reaching new levels. As Hough puts it, "all evidence suggests that although Gorbachev had rejected all alternatives but shock therapy, he was determined not to have the shock."[223] Given the shape of the economy, only severe measures could be implemented to remedy the inflation...clearly the idea of 'shock therapy without the shock' was unrealistic and merely a pipe dream given the economic condition of the Soviet system. It is difficult to determine whether such a position taken by Gorbachev was due to naïvete or denial of the seriousness of the situation, but it is obvious that he miscalculated the necessity of immediate economic action, a decision that would have severe consequences for the USSR.

This being said, I would also argue that Gorbachev's decision-making was carried out within the confines of an outdated and economically depleted system that was

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[222] Ibid., p. 139.
[223] Ibid., p. 133.

suffering the consequences of restructuring such as inflation, prices increases and unemployment. Moreover, it was a system in which anti-Soviet sentiment was bubbling to the surface, adding fuel to the nationalist fire in the Baltics. Gorbachev's situation was complicated even further by the growing divisiveness of the CPSU and the factions that were developing among the top bureaucrats. It appears that he attempted to appease both sides, but failed in appeasing neither one. According to several authors, Gorbachev never intended to de-stabilize or destroy the Soviet Union; instead he saw the necessity of rejuvenating a stagnant system by reinvigorating socialism through a series of reforms. His intention was to strengthen socialism, but unfortunately the end result was not what Gorbachev had in mind.

Chapter Three – Ideology

The decline of ideology plays a large role in the Soviet Union's collapse, and this chapter sets out to examine how Gorbachev's reforms failed – in part – due to ideology, and how ideology contributed to the USSR's demise. This involves giving a brief overview on the development of Soviet ideology from 1917-1953, from Lenin's 'State and Revolution' to Stalin's 'socialism in one country', and how these were key ideological developments. For Lenin, the role of the party was crucial in the development of ideology (ie. the construction of communism), because the party was seen as society's 'agent of change' that would guide society towards a communist state. But as we will see later, the party's entrenchment in the economic and political spheres of society became problematic when it became increasingly fractured over glasnost, perestroika and the proposed economic reforms.

Because the party depended on ideology and power, the decline of Leninism not only chipped away at the party's influence, but it also is a major ideological factor that contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union. I have identified four main elements that resulted in the decline of Leninism: the cult of Lenin, global humanitarianism and the de-emphasis of the class struggle, the rethinking of Stalinism, and the abandonment of Leninism. This re-evaluation of Leninism and Stalinism, brought on by the infusion of glasnost, demonstrated an ideological shift within the Soviet system, from that of Leninism to a more pluralistic and global emphasis. Clearly, not only did ideology help to create the Soviet system, but it also had a hand in tearing it down.

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Several major ideological shifts occurred during Gorbachev's rule that dramatically reshaped the Soviet system. These include the 'abandonment of utopia' and emphasis on humanitarianism and global issues; extracting the party's role from the state and economic planning with the emphasis on reinvigorating civil society; rethinking the Marxist depiction of history vis-à-vis Stalinism; the de-emphasis on class struggle, and the admission that there were inherent contradictions within socialism.

Despite these dramatic ideological shifts, the central question is this: how did ideology contribute to the failure of Gorbachev's reforms and to the collapse of the Soviet Union? In order to come to any clear conclusions, we must first examine the evolution of Soviet ideology in its historical context, albeit briefly, between 1917 and 1953. By tracing the ideological development during this era, we will be able to see how the party came to play an exclusive role in society and how it became dependent on ideology. While at first this may not seem to be relevant to my paper, the evolution and development of the party during the Leninist and Stalinist periods has great ramifications during Gorbachev's rule, particularly when Leninism begins to wither away and the party begins to lose hold on society once its place within the Soviet system is threatened.

For the purpose of this paper, I will argue that two ideological factors contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union: a) the party's dependence on ideology and power, and b) the withering away of Leninism.

I. Ideological Development: 1917 – 1953

During this period, according to Robinson, there were three key moments in ideological development: Lenin's State and Revolution pamphlet, his beliefs concerning power and the party, and the development and effect of Stalin's 'socialism in one country'. In order to fully explicate these three factors, it is first necessary to examine what was, specifically, Soviet ideology and how it was conceptualized and deployed during the Leninist and Stalinist eras. Prior to perestroika and glasnost, ideology in the Soviet Union was described as either:

> consisting of an official body of doctrine covering all the vital aspects of man's existence to which everyone living in that society is supposed to adhere, at least passively; characteristically focused and projected toward a perfect final state of mankind, that is to say it contains a chiliastic claim, based on a radical rejection of existing society and conquest of the world for a new one[224]

or as "the body of doctrine which the Communist party teaches all Soviet citizens, from school children to the higher party leadership."[225] Schull has defined ideology as

> a set of resources, deployed by its adherents with varying intentions and a varying degree and pattern of belief, which nonetheless imposes certain commitments on them: it is an instrument with the power to influence the use that is made of it.[226]

Robinson takes this a step further, suggesting that – in part – ideology was structured on the idea that "the USSR was on a specific historical course of

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[224] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet Union, p. 14, as quoted by Friedrich & Brzezinski

[225] Ibid., as quoted by Meyer.

[226] Ibid., p. 20, as quoted by Schull.

development,"[227] namely that of the construction of communism. And it was the party, as society's agent of change, that would mould society and guide it toward its goal of a communist society. In order for the party to accomplish this task, not only was it necessary for the party to attain power, but it also had to be the most powerful entity in society in order to successfully build a communist state. Because, as Robinson attests, the party's power was constructed in ideology, he argues that the evolution of ideology must be examined. Then and only then will it become clear as to the role of ideology in the collapse of the Soviet Union.

1. Lenin's State and Revolution

According to Sakwa, Leninism "can be reduced to six major aspects:

> a theory of the organization of the party and its leading role in society; a theory of imperialism and international revolution; the building of the first socialist state based on the dictatorship of the proletariat; the practice of development socialism...and a theory of participatory democracy outlined in State and Revolution which can now be called commune democracy.[228]

For McNeal, State and Revolution presents Lenin's views of a post-revolutionary government, an "optimistic picture of the new, postrevolutionary (sic) society, in which the masses were to install a rule of equality and humanity quite spontaneously."[229] Robinson, however, disagrees with this statement that he labels as 'vague' and 'utopian'. Instead, he insists that it was in State and Revolution that

> Lenin delineated the processes of revolution and socialist construction and provided for the power of a political subject other than the people, that is for the power of the party as a

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[227] Ibid., p. 20.
[228] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 110.
[229] Robert McNeal, The Bolshevik Tradition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1975), p. 37.

transcendental agent of history, in socialist construction.[230]

To put it succinctly, State and Revolution "shows most clearly the logic of Soviet ideology."[231] Lenin's vision of a participatory form of democracy represented an alternative to liberal democracy, as well as an attempt to "justify the destruction of the embryonic liberal democratic achievements of the February revolution and to develop a framework for the conduct of post-revolutionary politics."[232] In order for Lenin to achieve his goal, Lenin states that two events must transpire: the revolutionary transfer of power, and socialist and communist construction. In State and Revolution he presents separate theories of the two events which he based on a political and an economic model from Marx and Engels.

For Lenin, State and Revolution was premised on his belief that the imperialist state was destined to collapse.[233] He argues that because imperialism "exacerbated the structural imbalances in the world system," imperialism "created the momentum and conditions for popular liberation through socialist revolution."[234] And because imperialism "divided the proletariat through economic bribery and fostered 'opportunism' in the labour movement,"[235] Lenin surmised that the shift from imperialism to communism would require "the creation of solidarity within the working class as well as the overthrow of the imperialist, capitalist order by the revolutionary forces of the proletariat."[236]

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[230] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 33.
[231] Ibid.
[232] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 112.
[233] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 34.
[234] Ibid.
[235] Ibid., as quoted by Lenin.
[236] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 34.

Lenin's theory of the revolutionary transfer of power was based largely on Marx's political model of socialist organization. This model, based on the Paris Commune of 1871, portrays people with a heightened political consciousness as being "able to manage their own affairs and create institutions with which to build communism without the aid of any outside agent."[237] The Commune of 1871, according to Marx, "had transformed political relations by abolishing the barriers between the masses and political life."[238] One example is that the functions of the state (legislature, executive and judicial) "had been merged in the institution of the commune."[239] Lenin's adoption of Marx's political model of socialist organization for this theory of the revolutionary transfer of power "presented the event of revolution as a simple mechanical overthrow of the old order, followed by the installation of popular rule."[240]

In State and Revolution, Lenin presented two models of socialist organization: a political model – the Paris Commune of 1871 (that led to his theory on the revolutionary transfer of power) and an economic model – the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. He also provided two theories of revolution and socialist construction: the first being the revolutionary transfer of power, and the second theory based on the concept of the 'bourgeois right', which administered "the continued unequal distribution of surplus product...by controlling the means and relations of production."[241] But in spite of the people's defeat of capitalism, "the need to maintain and manage 'bourgeois right' implied that...the people had not developed, indeed could not develop, a social and political

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[237] Ibid., p. 35.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Ibid., as quoted by Marx in 'The Civil War in France', in The First International and After: Political Writings Vol 3, p. 208-210
[240] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 37
[241] Ibid., pp. 37,38.

consciousness sufficient for communism."[242] This meant that society would still be in a transitory phase – as Marx attests, "we are dealing here with a communist society not as it has developed on its own foundations, but on the contrary, just as it emerges from capitalist society."[243]

There was, however, a problem: State and Revolution "offered very different guides as to how the transition from capitalism to communism was to be conducted,"[244] due to Lenin's usage of two models of socialist organization and the two differing theories of revolution that he extracted from them. For Lenin, "overcoming imperialism by both revolution and the transformation of sections of the proletariat"[245] were problematic during this period.

Thus, a type of vacuum seems to have emerged, as the effect of combining two models of socialist organization to produce two incompatible theories of the: a) revolutionary transfer of power and b) communist construction produced "a space for the leading role of the party and to ensure that there was ultimately nothing able to oppose it."[246] Because Lenin saw the need for regulation in his theory of communist construction, this also helped to create a space for the party to take a leading role. The party would have to become a 'knowledgeable elite aware of how the people should act under communism."[247] Moreover, Lenin's theory of socialist construction "provided for

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[242] Ibid., p. 34.
[243] Ibid., p.38, as quoted by Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Programme' in The First International And After, p. 346-7
[244] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 40.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid.
[247] Ibid., p. 41.

the power of the party because the party alone possessed knowledge of how to get to the telos thanks to its command of Marxism."[248]

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With regards to the Leninist system, several key elements can be identified that provided the framework for Lenin's vision of a new state. The party,

> whose authority...stemmed from its ability to take society forward to a society of justice, equality, and plenty, was seen as the moral guarenter of the political system: it controlled the means of coercion, the greater part of the means of communication and some of the economic resources.[249]

Moreover, the party would guide the soviets and trade unions with the administration of policy and educating society, and although the party would "oversee the state apparatus...(it) would not interfere with its work."[250] For McAuley, this poses several problems for the party. First, how was the party to agree on what constitutes society's interests, and second, how was the party to guide and lead while not interfering in government administration?

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[248] Ibid. (*note: definition of 'telos' by Robinson is as follows: the idea that the USSR was on a specific historical course of development – ie. to fully developed communism)
[249] Mary McAuley, Soviet Politics: 1917-1991 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 33
[250] Ibid.

2. *The Stalinist era – 'Socialism in one country'*

While the Stalinist period followed the Leninist era, we must be careful as to how much one can attribute to Stalinism as an extension of Leninism, a debate which still exists in the current literature. Regardless of whether there was a line of continuity between Stalinism and Leninism – an argument supported by such scholars as Robert H. McNeal and Robert V. Daniels – or whether there was a definitive break between the two ideologies, as argued by Stephen Cohen and Robert Tucker, what *is* clear is that Soviet ideology underwent a dramatic shift with Stalin's concept of 'socialism in one country'. In order for a fully communist society to be constructed, Stalin believed that specific internal and external contradictions must first exist. The internal contradictions

> lay between the remaining forces hostile to Soviet power and the party, between the nationalized sectors of the economy and NEP-style capitalist production and between the progressive spirit of the proletariat and its vanguard and the regressive attitudes of the kulaks.[251]

For Stalin, the party was the agent that could overcome these contradictions, therefore providing "the party with a role, a purpose, and thus justified its power."[252] In short, the contradictions were necessary because it provided the party with a role to fulfill in society.

Moving from socialism to communism was problematic for Stalin, however, given the external contradiction – that socialist and communist construction in the USSR was evolving and emerging *within a capitalist world*. The only solution Stalin foresaw was a revolution that would transform the capitalist order into a socialist order *or* the

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[251] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 52.

destruction of socialism by capitalist forces. Both scenarios would prove difficult for the party to prevent because protecting the USSR from outside intervention by capitalist forces would be a nearly impossible task.

Stalin's use of coercion set in motion a reign of terror that would characterize this period in history. For Stalin, the intensification of class struggle would occur concomitantly with the building of socialism:

> the advance towards socialism cannot but cause the exploiting elements to resist the advance, and the resistance of the exploiters cannot but lead to the inevitable sharpening of the class struggle.[253]

By extension, this led Stalin to conclude that not only did class enemies exist in society, but also inside the party and the state. He argued that

> class position signified either total support for or total hostility to the socialist system under construction and failure to comprehend this equalled (sic) a culpable sympathy with the enemies of socialism both inside and outside the USSR.[254]

Robinson calls this a 'logic of contagion' within 'socialism in one country': that "all who disagreed with the call to build socialism...became class enemies."[255] Such an ideological shift not only precluded an era of terror, industrialization and collectivization, but it also had great ramifications for the party. Because it was the role of the party to act as the catalyst in the construction of socialism, any divisiveness or factionalism within society posed a problem for the party. Stalin believes that such factionalism would occur

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[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid., p. 56, as quoted by Stalin.
[254] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 56.
[255] Ibid., p. 57

if there was "a lack of appreciation on the nature of class"[256] and if one's proper class position' was ignored. By extension,

> factionalism...represented the creation of an aperture in the monolithic unity of the party, a breakdown in the 'unity of the will' that the party was to represent; it was a violation of the struggle for the unity that had dominated the party...and a blow to the party's ability to lead the process of socialist construction and fight alien class attitudes because it would weaken the party's potential to act as a monolithic force.[257]

For Stalin, punishing the opposition was the solution.

Stalin's contributions to the system – a centrally planned economy with an emphasis on heavy industry, the use of coercion in the enforcement of policies and state ownership – combined with Leninism to create 'socialism'. The emerging state apparatus consisted of centralized institutions that were responsible for the economy, culture, and law and order, and it was the responsibility of the party apparatus to hold these institutions together. It would do so by providing leadership and using party officials to communicate orders to the institutions. Yet for the party to be successful, not only was it necessary for its leadership to agree on policies, but its members needed to work together. Essentially the party needed to be unified.

The problem was Lenin's vision for the party, and how the evolution of the Stalinist system made Lenin's vision impractical and impossible. McAuley cites that "what was at fault was the concept of a vanguard party, pure and knowledgeable, able to

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[256] Ibid.
[257] Ibid.

stand apart and yet be in charge. There was no way it could do this."[258] She says this is because at some point party officials

> responsible for the use of resources, involved themselves in their management, identified with the sectors they were answerable for, and became part of a party-state apparatus. Regional officials identified with regional interests...[259]

So although the party was

> an elite with an esprit de corps, its members, by virtue of being responsible for running all society's activities repeatedly found themselves sucked into the institutional structures that cast an administrative web over the whole. The Leninist arrangements became more difficult to maintain as the political realm made itself directly responsible for managing all society's resources, and drew into itself all the conflicts of interests.[260]

While I will not go into a lengthy discussion, the development of ideology during the Khrushchev period is also important to address in order to understand how ideology shifted yet again following Stalin's death, and how this led to ideological changes in the Soviet Union. What seems clear is that Khrushchev "had remained a true believer in the Leninism of his youth, in that ideological commitment to socialism as the 'radiant future' that Stalin had attempted to replace, through the purges, with blind obedience to his own 'cult' in the present."[261] With Stalin gone, his "aim was to purge the Party of Stalinist... 'distortions', and return it to its true Leninist principles."[262] For example, Khrushchev's "ambition was to prepare the transition from the 'socialism' that had already been

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[258] McAuley, Soviet Politics, p. 45
[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Malia, The Soviet Tragedy, p. 319.
[262] Ibid.

achieved to...full 'communism'...by the same token, he wanted to release the system's creative potential in order to demonstrate definitively its superiority over 'capitalism'."[263]

According to Robinson, the revision of ideology under Khrushchev can be seen with "the gradual reassertion of the power of the party as Khrushchev slowly reinterpreted Soviet ideology in order to establish and ground the claim that progress towards communism was possible despite the continued existence of capitalism."[264] With regards to Stalin, for Khrushchev to have "moved more forcefully against Stalinism would have undermined the entire Soviet order, including the party."[265] Thus, Khrushchev "had to attack Stalinism in a piecemeal fashion, amending those aspects of Stalinist ideology that blocked the power of the party and the proclamation of the start of communist construction, whilst preserving the idea that the USSR had, largely, correctly developed as a socialist state under the party's benign leadership."[266]

Ideological development during the Leninist, Stalinist and Khrushchev period, therefore, set the foundation for the socialist system that Gorbachev ultimately inherited. Lenin's vision for the party as the monolith of society and the guiding force of socialism created for the party a specific role it was to play in society vis-à-vis communist construction. But herein lies the problem: despite Lenin's insistence that the party not interfere in government administration, this proved to be an impossible task given that the party was responsible for the functioning of society. To ask the party to take on such a role while simultaneously asking it to not interfere in the affairs of the state apparatus was impossible.

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[263] Ibid.
[264] Robinson, Ideology and the Collapse of the Soviet System, p. 68.
[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid.

Ideological development went a step further under Stalin with the introduction of 'socialism in one country'. While his goal, too, was the construction of communism, his use of coercion distinguished his leadership and ideology from that of Lenin's. Stalin's belief in the existence of class enemies and the need to eradicate them set the tone for the era, creating a society where coercion and punishment were the means to an end: unity within the party and within society would foster the building of socialism.

II. The Withering Away of Leninism

"The significant of a myth lies not in its truth but in its vitality."
- Robert H. McNeal

The withering away of Leninism is the second ideological factor that contributed to the Soviet Union's collapse. I have identified four elements that resulted in the decline of Leninism:

1. The Cult of Lenin

The cult of Lenin is an interesting aspect of Soviet history, yet extremely significant with regards to the collapse of the Soviet system. According to Robert McNeal, "the historical Lenin was a political genius who founded a party, provided it with a body of dogma, maneuvered it into power, and transformed it into an effective

dictatorship."[267] But the "mythological Lenin is beyond human talent and historical truth. For Communist believers he is the Savior."[268] McNeal cites several examples: "to the intellectual (Lenin) is the brilliant and versatile scholar...to the peasant he is their champion against the landowners...to the patriot he is an outstanding Russian who saved his country from foreign invasion...to the schoolchild he is the benevolent 'uncle'."[269]

For some scholars, the creation of this myth can be directly attributed to Lenin's successors. According to McAuley, it was a tactic deployed by Stalin shortly after Lenin's death to prevent the CPSU from splitting. Although the party portrayed itself to be highly unified and homogeneous, there was a great deal of disunity within the higher echelons of the leadership. McAuley argues that "the very difficult economic situation, towards which the party had no agreed policy, was necessarily going to result in intense debate."[270] The solution? They "paid homage and tried to bind the party together by invoking its now mystical leader. They needed a symbolic authority to which they could appeal, and which could be presented to the party. A Lenin cult emerged with poems, pictures, oaths, and incantations."[271] In effect, Lenin became "that symbol of unity so desperately needed to mask the disunity that existed at the top of the party."[272]

When Gorbachev took power in 1985, the cult of Lenin remained the cornerstone of Soviet society, not only in terms of statues and icons, but also in terms of the economic, the cultural and the political. In short, Lenin was "the spiritual center of Soviet society."[273] While scholars are still debating whether or not Gorbachev's 'new

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[267] Robert McNeal, The Bolshevik Tradition, p. 70
[268] Ibid.
[269] Ibid., p. 69
[270] McAuley, Soviet Politics, p. 35.
[271] Ibid., p. 36
[272] Ibid.
[273] Steven Kull, Burying Lenin, p. 1

thinking' is a definitive break from the past, I would argue – as does Kull – that the "cornerstone of new thinking is its challenge to the orthodoxy of Lenin."[274] And as we will see later, once Lenin's cult collapses due to the infusion of glasnost, it was only a matter of time before Leninism was abandoned. Clearly a revolution in Soviet ideology.

2. Global Humanitarianism and the De-emphasis of the Class Struggle

The recognition of global humanitarianism, I will argue, has also led to the withering away of Leninism. This shift within the domestic and international arena toward such humanitarianism, greatly impacted the future of the Soviet Union. By 1985, the Soviet economy had stagnated, relations with the West were at a low point, and the war with Afghanistan showed no signs of ending. The new ideology espoused by Gorbachev – that which emphasized global concerns and humanitarianism – was a response, in part, to the "realisation that Soviet isolationism was economically and politically detrimental, thus giving greater prominence to the notions of globalism and interdependence."[275] Sakwa calls this the "social democratisation of Communist ideology."[276] Gorbachev realized the necessity of re-evaluating Soviet foreign policy, as perestroika's success depended upon – among other factors – the need to restructure the Soviet Union's foreign relations.

Gorbachev's emphasis on humanitarianism can be directly traced to the growing likelihood of nuclear war and the destruction of humanity. This threat was "seen as

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[274] Ibid., p. 11
[275] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 117

generating a universal human interest in survival, an interest that transcends class interests."[277] He states that

> (s)ince time immemorial, class interests were the cornerstone of both foreign and domestic policies...Acute clashes of interests have led to armed conflicts and wars throughout history...But now, with the emergence of weapons of...universal destruction, there appeared an objective limit for class confrontation in the institutional arena: the threat of universal destruction. For the first time ever there emerged a real, not speculative and remote, common human interest – to save humanity from disaster.[278]

Consequently, this 'new political thinking' saw dramatic shifts taking place within the arms industry. The idea of a nuclear holocaust altered the dynamics within the international system from an arms race to the idea of arms reduction and disarmament. The realist position that nuclear weapons stabilized the international arena was eradicated in favour of the position that " 'nuclear weapons cannot be a means of achieving political, economic, ideological or any other goals.' "[279] What was so astounding was that the conventional views of war and peace was being turned on its head, with *global* security becoming paramount. The arms reduction not only had an international component but a domestic angle as well, namely economic restructuring. Gorbachev realized that in order to boost the Soviet economy, arms expenditure had to be radically reduced. This notion came to be known as 'disarmament for development'.

It must be stated that the Chernobyl disaster in 1986 also impacted the Soviet Union vis-à-vis the environmental and physical effects from the radiation. The Soviet leaders realized that not only did they need outside help in cleaning up the area, but that the after-effects of a nuclear attack would result in similar damage, albeit on a much

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[276] Ibid.
[277] Kull, Burying Lenin, p. 14
[278] Ibid.

larger scale. Moreover, the Soviet Union could no longer ignore the fact that they were at technological disadvantage compared to the West: Chernobyl revealed the dilapidated state of Soviet nuclear facilities and that other similar accidents were likely to occur if no solutions were found. The leadership needed new technology, and improved relations with the West was necessary.

Clearly, then, the 'new political thinking' set in motion the mechanisms that effectively ended the Cold War and the bipolarity that had shaped and ideologized the international system for decades. As Gorbachev believed, "the world should no longer be seen through the prism of US-Soviet relations."[280] This led to the signing of an INF treaty in Washington in 1987 that dealt with the elimination of nuclear weapons, and the signing of the START treaty (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) in Moscow. Concomitantly, the demilitarization of Eastern Europe had begun, with 50 000 troops and 5000 tanks removed.[281]

This call for an end to violence – nuclear violence in the Soviet example – was in direct contradiction to Leninism because for Lenin, the promotion of the class struggle was predicated on the existence of violence and war. As Lenin argued, "socialists cannot be opposed to all war in general and still be socialists...[Disarmament] is tantamount to complete abandonment of the class struggle point of view, to renunciation of all thought of revolution."[282] For Gorbachev the class struggle *had* to be abandoned, as the survival of humanity depended on it. Sakwa argues that the "most radical change was to redefine and temper the concept of the international class struggle which had served to fuel the

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[279] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 40 as quoted by Gorbachev
[280] Ibid., p.326
[281] Ibid., 343
[282] Kull, Burying Lenin, p. 16, as quoted by Lenin.

Soviet confrontation with the West."[283] The growing emphasis on global concerns led Gorbachev to conclude that "the interests of one class cannot be placed above those of society as a whole...the interests of one nation cannot be placed above humanity as a whole."[284] This was a dramatic ideological shift, not only in terms of Soviet foreign policy, but also in terms of the Marxist ideology that had been the backbone of the Soviet system. For the first time, the notions of class and class struggle was subordinated to the interests of humanity on a global scale.

In addition to the threat of nuclear war, other global issues took primacy for Gorbachev. In a 1986 report to the 27th Congress, Gorbachev spoke of re-establishing relations with capitalist countries, denoting the need for global cooperation in halting the depletion of natural resources and solving other ecological problems. Unlike former leaders, Gorbachev's emphasis was interdependence – in this case, "ideological struggle between capitalism and socialism was played down in favour of globalism and interdependence."[285] The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) with its emphasis on interdependence, gave rise to the notion of international security. Moreover, a new concept of security came to the fore, such as economic, ecological and human security. Not only did Gorbachev propose an NIEO and a reduction in debt, but he also stressed the need for the international community to become more involved in defending personal, political and social rights.

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[283] Sakwa 322
[284] Sakwa 322

3. *Rethinking Stalinism*

Rethinking the Marxist depiction of history vis-à-vis Stalinism demonstrated the changing ideology within the Soviet system resulting in Lenin's decline. While Gorbachev espoused the need for Soviet society to be exposed to criticism through glasnost, the issue of Stalinism ultimately proved to be the major catalyst that unraveled the entire communist foundation. According to Sakwa, glasnost "was accompanied by a renewed challenge not only to Stalin's legacy but to the roots of Stalinism itself."[286]

This, however, was not the first time Stalin's legacy was challenged. In 1956, Khrushchev's speech "attacked Stalin for this vanity, arbitrariness, brutality, and blundering." According to McAuley, Khrushchev felt that it was "only with the period of the cult of personality, somewhere in the middle of the 1930s, that things began to go wrong", but with "Stalin and the secret police gone, socialism would show its paces. The faults and the errors were due to Stalin and the rule of terror; now the sky was the limit."[287]

The effects of Khrushchev's speech were immediate, and despite the Central Committee's attempts at damage control, Stalin's cult of personality "could not really be restored; and the deleterious consequences of this immediately made themselves felt at the system's weakest link, Eastern Europe,"[288] specifically the protests in Poland and Hungary. Moreover, McAuley argues that while Khrushchev "in his bid to strengthen the party's authority, [he] had perhaps won a temporary victory, but, by denouncing Stalin

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[285] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 318
[286] Ibid., p. 90
[287] McAuley, Soviet Politics, p. 65.
[288] Malia, The Soviet Tragedy, p. 321.

and some of his policies, he had opened the way for present and future Communists to query the Stalinist dogma that Soviet practices were only the true form of socialism."[289]

In the late1980s it was because of glasnost that the issue of Stalinism was once again brought to light and denounced. Stalin's crimes and the consequences of his rule came to the fore (mostly through the cultural intelligentsia) who took up the debate following the release of several films and renewed discussions in literary journals, and the publication of books that dealt with the ramifications of Stalinism. The result? As "glasnost shed more light on the past it became clear that the accomplishments diminished steadily, while the crimes rose to become a veritable mountain of evil."[290]

The implications of destalinisation are considerable, one of which was the subsequent underpinning of the entire structure of Soviet society. The problem was that because "the dominant consciousness of...Soviet society was shaped by the conceptions of Stalinism,"[291] the dismantling of the Stalinist ideology ultimately set in motion a paradigm shift that created a new consciousness, one that is devoid of Stalin and what he had come to represent. Instead, this invariably led to a further critique of Soviet society, exposing more cracks in the system and lending further credence to the notion that the foundation of the entire system was falling apart. According to Sakwa, "destalinisation emerged as one of the central 'organising principles' of the reform process, a position it shares with nationalism and possibly religion. However, as glasnost revealed the scale and origins of Stalin's crimes, the country's belief in its own past was perhaps fatally eroded."[292]

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[289] McAuley, Soviet Politics, p. 66.
[290] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p.95.
[291] Evans Jr. in Woodby & Evans (eds.) Restructuring Soviet Ideology, p. 85
[292] Sakwa, Gorbachev and His Reforms, p. 101

The nationalities question - the uprisings, the tensions, and the subsequent demands for independence - demonstrated the changing Soviet ideology during the Gorbachev period. Under Lenin, the nationality policy was based upon the notion "national in form, socialist in content."[293] That is, while "complete assimilation of all national groups was the desired goal, it was deemed necessary to erect a façade of equality and sovereignty."[294] Lenin's "nationalities policy was necessarily transitional, since while nations would be allowed to remain distinct, they would be eventually assimilated. Where nations did not exist, they were created..."[295] Moreover, although the nationalities policy allowed for secession *in theory*, in reality neither Lenin nor any of the Soviet leaders that followed ever had any intention of allowing the republics to secede.

Under Khrushchev, Soviet ideology was geared toward creating a 'homogeneous social community', whereby "the structure of society was largely determined by the relations between social classes, and that when class differences were removed, society would become homogeneous."[296] While the traditional assumption equated increasing modernity with a decrease in national identity, Gorbachev declared that the reverse was true – that "in the course of modernization of each region of the USSR, the national self-consciousness of each nationality was growing."[297] But despite his insight to the growing ethnic tensions, what was problematic – and ultimately proved destructive – was Gorbachev's deliberate postponement of finding adequate solutions that would accommodate both the demands of the republic and the centre without breaking up the

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[293] Ian Brenner in Brenner and Taras (eds.) Nations and Politics in Soviet Successor States (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 10.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.

Union. By the time he realized that "nationalism was a threat to the integrity and functioning of the Soviet state,"[298] nationalist sentiment had already taken on a life of its own. This will be further expanded upon in chapter four.

4. Leninism to Pluralism – A Radical Shift

Throughout the scholarship, the one question that is still up for debate is this: what, specifically, provided the impetus for the radical paradigm shift away from Lenin and the victory of socialism to a more pluralist and humanitarian emphasis in Soviet society as well as within the international arena? According to Kull, four main factors can be cited: first, television programs in the early 1980s on the effects of nuclear war had a great societal impact, particularly because of the escalation of tensions between the two superpowers during this period. Moreover, the nuclear accident at Chernobyl also impacted the country, as they experienced first-hand the effects of radiation.

The second factor that altered the public consciousness was the growing realization that the global economy was becoming increasingly interdependent, and with their sluggish economy continuing its downward spiral, it was clear to many that the Soviet Union was too isolated and had been shut out of the economic loop. Third, the realization that terrorism and instability in the Third World did not arise from the competition between the superpowers, and that in fact cooperation was necessary to combat these threats to the global world. And finally, the main factor which influenced

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[296] Evans Jr, in Woodby & Evans (eds.) Restructuring Soviet Ideology, p. 67
[297] Ibid., p. 79, as stated by Gorbachev

the Soviets to challenge Marxist-Leninist theories was purely economical – the failure of the economy to compete with the West.[299] Reaching such a synthesis was in part Lenin's own doing, as he believed that "labor productivity was the crucial criterion of socialism."[300] And because productivity was significantly lower in the Soviet Union, North Korea and Eastern Germany than in the West, this "called into question the entire socialist paradigm and the belief that the world will ultimately move toward socialism."[301]

The abandonment of Leninism, which I would argue began in 1989, was caused by a revolution in Soviet ideology. It can be argued that the destruction of Lenin's cult did not trigger an ideological revolution within the Soviet Union but in fact the reverse was true – that the revolution set in motion a chain of events that caused the cult of Lenin to be destroyed along with the Soviet state and the entire communist system. With the ideological shifts that flew in the face of Leninist doctrines came with it the end of Lenin's personality cult. Initially, Gorbachev publicly assured the Soviets that glasnost and perestroika were an extension of Leninism, and that the reforms would in no way impede or contradict Lenin's philosophy or vision. For example, he argued that " 'the great perestroika revolution is the direct successor of the works of October (1917) and that deeds of Lenin'" and that " 'perestroika brings us closer to Lenin, and brings Lenin closer to us.' "[302] Many Soviet intellectuals, however, have argued that Gorbachev's motives – linking Leninism to the 'new thinking' – were primarily self-serving and

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[298] Gleason, Federalism Nationalism, p. 7
[299] Kull, Burying Lenin, p. 19
[300] Ibid., p.20, as cited by academic Oleg Bogomolov in Pravda, Oct 3,'89, p. 2
[301] Kull, Burying Lenin, p. 20

[302] Trevor J. Smith, "The Collapse of the Lenin Personality Cult in Soviet Russia, 1985-1995." Historian, Winter 1998, p. 327.

politically motivated. More succinctly, he may have been "trying to accommodate major elements in Soviet society loyal to Lenin."[303]

But it was the implementation of reforms that set the stage for the fall of Lenin – with the gradual loosening of censorship within the media, the content of newspapers, radio and tv programs began to undergo a change. According to Smith, because the cult of Lenin was based on myths, it could only survive as long as the state enforced strict controls to ensure the longevity of the myth of Lenin. Once Gorbachev loosened these controls, "some of the myths that shrouded [Lenin's] memory were peeled away to provide a glimpse of the historical figure who lurked beneath."[304]

A second incident in the chain of events that led to a re-evaluation of Lenin was Stalin and the roots of Stalinism. The novel, Gulag Archipelago, by Solzhenitsyn was published for the first time in Russia in 1989; while Stalin was the primary villain, Solzhenitsyn "unmistakably identified Lenin as Stalin's spiritual father. The myth that canonized Lenin as a great humanitarian...was seriously challenged for the first time."[305]

But for Smith, it was Lenin's own documents that only served to further erode the Lenin myth. Documents discovered in 1989 at the Central Party Archives revealed to the Soviet public another side of Lenin, one who was involved in cruelty and terror, including the campaign against the kulaks. For example, Lenin admitted that " 'we [the Bolsheviks] didn't like peasants...[T]hey have fallen behind and are strong supporters of the land owners. It is necessary to take the attack to such people.' "[306] Such writings helped to convince many that perhaps Stalinism *was* in fact an extension of Lenin, and

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[303] Kull, Burying Lenin, p.47
[304] Smith, Historian, p. 328.
[305] Ibid., p. 330.
[306] Ibid.

that Lenin just might be " 'the true father of the Bolshevik concentration camps, the executions, the mass terror...' "[307] This in turn created the belief that " 'the negative qualities of socialism arose not only because of the influence of Stalin's personality cult and his administrative-bureaucratic system...but had already developed in the activities of Lenin."[308]

In summation, the manifestation of ideology in the Soviet system – politically, historically, culturally and economically – was deeply entrenched in society. Following the Russian Revolution, Lenin created a role for the party – an agent of change – in order to reach his goal of a purely socialist state. Not only did the party have to be the most powerful social entity but it also needed to sustain its power if it was to mould all aspects of Soviet society into a socialist frame of mind and to guide it toward creating a communist state. With Stalin, the focus was on the nature of class and class position, and the threat that factionalism within society could have on the entire system. For Stalin, factionalism would be detrimental to the process of state building. He believed that if society could appreciate class and class position, this would hinder the development of factionalism. Therefore, it was the party's responsibility to facilitate what function and role class position was to have; if it could not do so, society would become divided, the party would be weakened, and a weakened party meant that the development of socialism would slow down or cease altogether. With both Stalinism and Leninism, the party's role within society was paramount for the construction of a communist state.

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[307] Ibid.
[308] Ibid., pp. 330/331.

Chapter Four – Globalization

My final chapter, globalization, deals with the globalized forces that aided in the USSR's demise. I begin with a general overview of what constitutes economic and political globalization before applying it to the end of the Cold War, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. I argue that globalization, along with leadership and ideology, is a major catalyst in the fall of the Soviet Union. The increase in global trading and the emergence of global markets only served to further alienate the Soviet Union from the rest of the world. Politically, the spillover effect of globalization has had dramatic consequences, facilitating the democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe that spilled back across the borders into the Soviet Union. The spread of ideas, political decisions and information is one example of how the revolution in global communications has contributed to political globalization.

My main focus of this chapter is globalization and the Soviet Union, and globalization and nationalism. Beginning with a brief overview of the development of the relations and forces of production in the twentieth century, I argue that by the 1960s, the USSR's isolationist stance was becoming problematic, as a shortage of labour, raw materials, and the lack of access to modern technology only led to a decline of the GNP. For example, while economic "growth rates of GNP were generally above 5 per cent during the 1950s…they had fallen to below 3 per cent by the latter half of the 1970s."[309] The Soviet economy eroded even further with large portion of the budget allocated for the military industry. But without the infusion of globalized technology, the Soviet Union was shut out from the outside world and competing with the West was futile. It was this

attempt to open the door, just a little, for the introduction of global technology that was a factor that led to changes in the command economy by market forces.

With regards to nationalism and globalization, I applied Kacowicz's arguments on regionalization, globalization and nationalism to the Baltic states, arguing that nationalist tendencies were both encouraged by the forces of globalization and opposed to it. In Lithuania, the globalization of technology allowed for the mobilization of support for an independent homeland. On the other side of the coin, the surge in nationalism due to the identity-eradicating effects of globalization has also come into play, the desire to retain one's culture and language in an increasingly connected world would serve as a catalyst for the Baltic secessionist movement. This will be demonstrated in this chapter.

The 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe is a clear example of the spill-over effect of the forces of globalization that spread throughout the communist bloc. Both internal and external factors led to changes in Eastern Europe, and the interplay between them is crucial in understanding the course of events that culminated in the end of communism and the beginning of democracy. I have cited some examples of external factors, such as the political and economic turmoil in the Soviet Union, as well as internal factors, specifically grassroots activism that existed in Hungary and Poland.

Finally, I examine in depth both the internal and external factors that facilitated the democratic revolutions in Poland and Hungary, and how these factors – coupled with the events in the USSR – brought about the collapse of the Union. Moreover, the events in Eastern Europe triggered a spillover effect into the Soviet Union, which set in motion a chain of events that effectively brought down the Iron Curtain. Clearly globalization plays a key role in the destruction of the USSR.

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[309] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 78.

While it is clear that leadership and ideology were major factors in the destruction of the Soviet Union, it is impossible to analyze the chain of events in the USSR without the inclusion of an emerging 'new world order' that is characterized by globalization and the end of the Cold War. According to Claude Ake, both these phenomena have triggered an 'identity crisis', leading to a "frantic search for collective identity framed by...political ethnicity."[310] He says that the "ideological solidarity and the discipline that came from soldiering in the Cold War crumbled, leaving in their wake a confusing freedom and a blurring of self-definition."[311]

In order to better assess the emerging new world order – and the role of globalization in this process – it is necessary to first examine "the powerful historical forces of integration and disintegration"[312] and how these forces are "shap(ing) modern political life." To do this, Held argues that one must look at "the key domains of power"[313] – the economic and the political - and examine the pattern of globalization in these two spheres:

a) Economic Globalization

The dramatic increase in global trade – coupled with a shift in trading patterns – is an example of how economic globalization has altered the world order. Held suggests that the world trading system "is defined by both an intensive network of trading relations embracing virtually all economies and evolving global markets for many goods and

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[310] Claude Ake in Hans-Henrik Holm & Georg Sorensen (eds.), Whose World Order? (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), p. 2.
[311] Ibid.
[312] David Held and Anthony McGrew in Dunne, Cox & Booth (eds.) The Eighty Years Crisis: IR 1919-1999 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 219.
[313] Ibid., p. 219

services."[314] He says that this shift to a global market "has been facilitated by the existence of worldwide transport and communications infrastructures, the promotion of global trade liberalization through the institutionalization of a world trade system, and the internationalization of production."[315] This globalization of finance – which includes the volatility of financial markets – demonstrates how sensitive national economies have become to global monetary fluctuations and economic crises in other countries. Held says that "in a 'wired world', high levels of enmeshment between national markets mean that disturbances in one very rapidly spill over into others."[316]

b) Political Globalization

Acknowledged as political changes on a global scale, political globalization is understood as "the shifting reach of political power, authority and forms of rule,"[317] where political decisions and actions in one corner of the world affects the political, economic and/or social developments in another region or country. Moreover, states share the stage with other powerful actors – NGOs, IGOs and international agencies – that also influence and impact decision making in the global arena.

The revolution in communications has also contributed significantly to political globalization. David Held asserts that microelectronics, information technology and computers "has established virtually instantaneous world-wide links which, when combined with the technologies of the telephone, television, cable, satellite and jet

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[314] Ibid., p. 228.
[315] Ibid.
[316] Ibid., p. 229
[317] Ibid., p. 232

transportation, have dramatically altered the nature of political communication."[318] These forms of communication transcend physical borders and allow for the spread of ideas, values and ideologies from one region to the next, creating contacts between groups or individuals that may have been impossible prior to the technological revolution.

With respect to globalization, the first disputed area is its definition. For Barry Hughes, it is "the growing of cross-national interconnectedness of interests and the intrusion of ideas from abroad (which) challenge that state-centric system."[319] He also argues that there has been a shift to a global economy, one driven by capital flows rather than trade. For others, globalization is synonymous with modernization – according to James Mittelman, "globalizing structures interacting with individuals, households and communities are delivering modernity to some...people formerly far removed from meaningful flows of capital, knowledge information and consumer goods."[320] He says that the manifestations of globalization include

> the spatial reorganization of production, the interpenetration of industries across borders, the spread of financial markets, the diffusion of identical consumer goods to distant countries, massive transfers of population within the South as well as from the South... and an emerging worldwide preference for democracy.[321]

For others, such as Bretherton, globalization is comprised of four main elements: technological change, the creation of a global economy, political globalization and a globalization of ideas.[322] Some scholars, such as Hurrell, have expanded on Bretherton's

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[318] Ibid., p. 233.
[319] Barry Hughes in C.Roe Goddard, John T. Passe-Smith & John G. Conklin, International Political Economy (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p. 509.
[320] James H. Mittelman, Globalization (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), p. 1.
[321] Ibid., p. 12.
[322] Bretherton as cited in Ian Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation: International Relations in the

position: first, he says we are witnessing a dramatic increase in the 'density' and 'depth' of economic interdependence. Second, information technology and the information revolution are playing an especially critical role in diffusing knowledge, technology and ideas. Third, these developments increase the material infrastructure for the strengthening of societal interdependence...Fourth, this is leading to an unprecedented and growing consciousness of 'global problems'...and of belonging to a single 'human community'.[323]

While Ake contends that defining globalization poses some difficulties, he contends that there is an agreement of globalization's basic elements:

> among other things, globalization is the march of capital all over the world in search of profit, and process reflected in the reach and power of the multinational corporation. It is about growing structural differentiation and functional integration in the world economy; it is about growing inter-dependence across the globe; it is about the nation-state coming under pressure from the surge of transnational phenomena, about the emergence of a global mass culture driven by mass advertising and technical advances in mass communication.[324]

Ake further expounds the definition of globalization, asserting that not only is it an uneven process, but that it is the "hierarchization of the world – economically, politically, and culturally – and the crystallizing of a domination. It is a domination constituted essentially by economic power."[325] For David Lockwood, his assessment of globalization is based strictly on economics, defining it as "changes in the world

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Twentieth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 20.
[323] Hurrell as cited in Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation, p. 20.
[324] Ake as cited in Holm & Sorensen, Whose World Order?, p. 22
[325] Ibid., p. 23.

economy" that "have involved a major restructuring of national economies which has left no part of the world untouched."[326]

One debate in the scholarship is whether globalization is a unifying process or whether it has fragmentationalist tendencies. Those who see globalization to be a unifying process argue that the transglobal linkages – such as the form of technology, flows of information, foreign investments or transnational companies (TNCs) – have resulted in a more integrated global economy, a strengthened civil society, and a global awareness of ecological and human rights issues. In short, globalization is purported to be a process which is integrating the world on political, cultural, economic and social levels.

Others, such as Ake, take an opposing view, claiming the globalization has destructive elements and is far from being a unifying process. He argues that

> it causes orientational upheaval, anxiety and identity crisis. It produces changes on a monumental scale...for instance, globalization is challenging the much-cherished idea of national sovereignty and the organization of the world into nation-states... Globalization produces many losers...it alters economic and political relations in the local space, it threatens cultures. Some are universalized, but even this is a threat, for in universalizing, it also transforms. It eradicates some, museumizes others...In universalizing certain values, globalization can exacerbate scarcity, competition and conflict.[327]

In terms of economic globalization, one of the fundamental problems currently debated in the scholarship is what, exactly, are "the driving forces within the international

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[326] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 1.
[327] Ake, Whose World Order?, p. 23.

political economy"?[328] According to Hirst and Thompson, many supporters of economic globalization take the position that

> whatever role great powers may have played historically in establishing the political context for economic activity, there is now a sense in which economic globalization follows its own rationale: this is the notion that 'economics and politics are pulling apart' or that 'economic laws finally prevail over political power'[329]

Ake seems to take a similar position, contending that while the wave of democracy in Eastern Europe and the tyranny of the Soviet empire can be factored into the USSR's demise, he argues that these were minor factors which ultimately did not play a major role in the destruction of the Soviet Union. For Ake, the "collapse came mainly because the Soviet Union failed to prosper economically, and the main lesson of this great historical event is the centrality of economic management performance in the determination of the feasibility of regimes."[330]

Although Ake correctly links together the collapse of the Soviet Empire with its economic failure, David Lockwood takes an different approach: he argues that forces in the global market forced the Soviet Union to abandon its economic isolationist stance in favour of a system that was oriented – politically and economically – to a market driven system. Lockwood contends that globalization "represents a significant advance in the level of development of the productive forces. Consequently it has necessitated (and is bringing about) a restructuring of the relations of production."[331] The state itself, Lockwood contends, is subsequently undermined by this restructuring. He says that

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[328] Ian Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation, p. 187.
[329] Ibid.
[330] Ake as cited in Holm & Sorensen, Whose World Order?, p. 23.
[331] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, pp. 3,4

while "in the advanced capitalist economies, the dominant production relation is capital...in Soviet-type economies, however, the dominant production relation is the state. Globalization attacks the dominant relation – social upheaval ensues. Collapse is inevitable."[332]

For Lockwood, then, the Soviet economy was destined to fail once there was an opening for market forces to infiltrate the Soviet system, thus rendering Ake's argument moot because a correction of economic management by the Soviet elite would not have brought the economy out of its downward spiral. Any infusion of market forces – as did happen as early as 1986 – would prove to be the catalyst that would destroy the command economy.

Lockwood contends that the locus for the emergence of globalization can be found in the changes of the productive forces in the twentieth century. There has been a shift from "basic processing of raw materials towards technologically advanced manufacturing...from growth limited by the supply of raw materials and labour to growth limited only by technological ingenuity."[333] These changes in the productive forces led to changes in the relations of production – the globalization of capital and the manufacturing system – indicated by an upsurge of trade, foreign direct investments (FDIs) and transnational corporations (TNCs).

This theory is supported by Cox, but he takes it a step further by narrowing down the time frame, suggesting that a global economy began to shape between 1968 and 1975. He identifies three main elements of this period: first, inflation was now seen by business as detrimental to investment. Fiscal management by governments now became a priority.

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[332] Ibid., p. 4.
[333] Ibid., p. 25.

Second, production was restructured from that of plants producing goods based on mass production by a large number of workers to production based on a core-periphery structure.[334] Because the periphery is linked to the production process (see Cox for more discussion), "restructuring into the core-periphery model has facilitated the use of a more precariously employed labor force segmented by ethnicity, gender, nationality or religion...Restructuring has thereby accelerated the globalizing production."[335] Third, in terms of the role of debt, as more countries receive loans from the IMF and World Bank, the payments for debt servicing have lead governments to be "more effectively accountable to external bond markets than to their own publics. Their options in exchange policy, fiscal policy, and trade policy have become constrained by financial interests linked to the global economy."[336]

I. The End of the Cold War

The end of the Cold War is denoted by many scholars (ie. Samuel Huntington, Ian Clark) to be the benchmark of a new era, not only with regards to the de-ideologized international arena, but as an event that has possibly contributed to the fragmentation of the international system. Clark poses the question succinctly: with regards to the increase of 'fragmentationalist tendencies' in the 1990s, were these "simply the result of the end of the cold war or a reaction to longer-term and more fundamental processes of historical change: were they...an effect of the end of the cold war or a symptom of the

[334] Robert Cox, Approaches to World Order (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 299.
[335] Ibid.
[336] Ibid.

transformations which swept it away?"[337] Norton (see Clark p. 189) takes the position that it was the loss of cold war structures – specifically East-West bipolarity – that was a causal factor in the fragmentation of the international arena.[338]

But Clark says that pinning *all* fragmentationist tendencies on the end of the Cold War is "too simplistic,"[339] suggesting that one needs to look at the rise of ethno-nationalism or religious uprisings that have also become powerful forces in the global arena. Clark cites several other arguments that attempt to explain the fragmentation of the global system: first, Clark says that one argument suggests that "the political fragmentation of the globe is less the consequence of the loosening of superpower security controls than the side-effect of the removal of the universalist ideological parameters which the cold war had instated."[340] The argument suggests that given the bi-polarity of the system, world nations had to identify with the capitalist West or the Communist East. But by removing this "ideological overlay…questions of national identity (have) 'come to the fore' ".[341]

A second argument that attempts to explain global political fragmentation is that it is a reaction against globalization. Bretheron and Ponton have suggested that "cultural particularism has been reinvigorated precisely by the long post-war exposure to the attacks upon it from the homogenizing forces of cultural globalism."[342] For David Held and Samuel Huntington, "globalization evokes an equal but opposite reaction in the direction of fragmentation precisely because it forces cultures into mutual awareness and

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[337] Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation, p. 188.
[338] Ibid., p. 189.
[339] Ibid., p. 190.
[340] Ibid.
[341] Ibid.
[342] Ibid., p. 191.

thereby accentuates the identity of difference."[343] What this suggests, perhaps, is that globalization produces identity-eradicating effects, and nationalism may be conceptualized as a way to counterbalance these effects.

II. Globalization and the Soviet Union

In terms of globalization and the Soviet Union, Lockwood analyzes the historical development of the relations and forces of production in the twentieth century, arguing that the antecedents for the isolationist position of the USSR following the Bolshevik victory can be traced back to the 19th century. For Lockwood, Tsarism was the main hindrance to the development of the productive forces in Russia. This is because the Tsarist autocracy "beholden to the landowners and the state bureaucracy, had proved incapable of modernizing agriculture, unwilling to allow the development of the bourgeosie, and determined not to reform itself."[344] Following the Bolshevik victory, the bourgeoisie had virtually vanished, and it was the state that would take on the task of developing relations of production. This involved the state "substitut(ing) itself for the missing classes in the Soviet Union: the working class...and the capitalist class."[345]

But because it was a minority class – the urban workers – which swept the Bolsheviks into power, the Bolsheviks needed the Party to have a firm rule over society. As Zinoviev articulated, " '...without the iron dictatorship of the Communist Party, the Soviet government would not have retained the power for three weeks, let alone three

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[343] Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation, p. 191.
[344] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 60.
[345] Ibid., p. 63.

years.' "[346] Not only did the Russian Revolution succeed in expelling the vestiges of feudalism but it also "constructed a state which not only protected the economy from the rest of the world, but controlled the means of production."[347] Moreover, any possibility of market capitalism within the Soviet Union was crushed with the removal of the bourgeoisie. The end result? The "dominant production relation was the state, and therefore in the end it would be the state's interests that predominated: military competition with other states, together with a state-controlled economy...and the emphasis on heavy industry."[348]

With regards to the emerging Soviet economy following the 1917 revolution, in order to ensure that the economy "should not be economically overwhelmed, the state protected it by sealing it off from normal trading relationships with the rest of the capitalist world."[349] The consequence "was an attempt to replicate the world economy within the Soviet borders, and a refusal to partake in the international division of labour."[350]

But it was during the late 1960s that a dramatic shift in the economy took place, as the Soviet Union experienced a shortage of both labour and raw materials. This lead to a decline of economic growth rates despite an "array of new technologies that moved from invention to innovation during the mid-1970s."[351] The solution? Production had to improve, and the usage of modern technology was paramount. But for Lockwood, the nature of the economic system made it difficult to create and implement technological advances because the Soviet Union had isolated itself from the international environment

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[346] Ibid.
[347] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 64.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Ibid., p. 76.

for decades. As Berliner succinctly states, " '(b)ecause of the international nature of technological advance, any country that does not participate fully in that international intercourse suffers a disadvantage in the promotion of technological progress.' "[352] Clearly, the decades of Soviet isolationism had taken its toll, and the level of technology that existed in the USSR demonstrated the consequence of such an exclusion.

One could argue that this is precisely where globalization is factored into the equation; although "Soviet-type economies had developed huge industrial sectors which were good for the process of industrialization...(o)utside the context of the national economy, however, they 'made little sense from the point of view of the world market as a whole.' "[353] This resulted in the need for a drastic shift in Soviet policy, particularly in terms of its relationship with the West and the international community. As for technology, one could argue that the Soviet government had no choice but to look outside its borders, and this meant the Soviet Union had to enter the world market. And in order to do so, it "required a dissolution of the rigidities of the statist system which was hard to contemplate."[354]

Perhaps – in part - this is the cause of economic stagnation that afflicted the Soviet Union in the 1970s – the Soviet leaders' lack of desire to implement any sort of economic reform, radical or otherwise. Even though "this was precisely what the world market demanded,"[355] ultimately it meant the restructuring of the entire command

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[350] Ibid.
[351] Ibid., p. 80.
[352] Ibid., p. 78.
[353] Ibid., p. 79.
[354] Ibid.

[355] Ibid., p. 80

economy which would – in turn – unravel the entire social and political communist structure, a consequence that the leaders were perhaps trying to avoid and ignore.

In fact, from 1978-1985, economic growth ceased, and the gap in technological development between the Soviet Union and the USA increased substantially: in 1987 there were 200,000 computers in the USSR compared to twenty five million in the USA.[356] This lack of modernization, one could argue, would be impossible to sustain, given the encroachment of globalization on nation states. In 1990, W.W. Rostow warned that "in a world of modern weapons, communication and technology...societies that deny themselves modernization also leave themselves open to intrusion, and soon or late they may be driven to accept the world of modern technology."[357]

While Lockwood takes the position that globalization was the external factor that brought down the Soviet Union, he also suggests that there was a primary *internal* factor that contributed to its demise – the military industrial complex (MIC). The development of superior weaponry – only one sector of the MIC – was an area of development that the Soviet Union was forced to maintain. This can be seen in the budget allocated for the military and military spending – while Gorbachev stated that it comprised eighteen percent of the GNP, a Hoover Institute Conference put it as high as thirty percent.[358] As a result, the USSR did in fact achieve parity with the US vis-à-vis the quality and superiority of its weapons. But sustaining this parity not only began to economically affect other areas of Soviet life, it also began to take its toll on the military industry itself. Because it was

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[356] Ibid., p. 81
[357] Ibid., p. 82.

> a branch of production like any other, military industry did not escape the need for intensive growth, the urgency of technological innovation, nor the requirements of globalization. The fact that the Soviet economy was isolated from global technology and had been weakened as a result of military demands had a direct affect on the quality of military production. It began to decline.[359]

The causal explanation for this decline was due to globalization and the isolationism of the Soviet Union: technological development had far surpassed that of the USSR. This resulted in higher levels of military spending in an attempt to compete with the US. Thus a domino effect was put in motion: the more the US developed sophisticated weaponry, the higher the percentage of the Soviet economy was allocated to the military. This meant that "the only way to sustain the burden of advanced weapons production was by 'draining away resources needed for the development of high quality output in the rest of the economy.'"[360] Such a scenario has come to be described as " 'the monstrous deformation of the economic structure.' "[361]

But simply pouring more money into the military complex was a useless undertaking because the problem was inherently systemic: the military industry was confined to the Soviet bloc due to the isolationist structure of the Soviet system. Without access to the international community, the military – along with the entire country – would remain at a technological disadvantage and the ability to maintain parity with the USA would be impossible.

Because the source of the military's downfall was its isolation from 'globalized technology', the solution was the need for technological development. But the dilemma,

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[358] Ibid., p. 83.
[359] Ibid., pp. 84/85.
[360] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 86.
[361] Ibid.

however, was this: how to open the door for the infusion of globalized technology without allowing the market forces to afflict change on the command economy and the entire economic structure. The solution for the Soviet leaders was to import the technology. And although such a feat was attempted, Lockwood cites four reasons why it failed: first, he argues that the Soviet economy was too large for imported technology to have made a significant impact. Second, it was not suited to the Soviet environment because the technology "was adapted to the level of technical/managerial skills and knowledge of its place of origin."[362] And third, it was apparent that a region could not become a technological powerhouse simply by its imports. Lastly, Lockwood says that the imported technology was making the Soviet Union more dependent on the West rather than the intended outcome, which was to improve the Soviet economy.

The access to money was also becoming a problem in the Soviet Union. While oil exports initially provided the funds to import technology, the fall in oil prices in the 1980s meant that other products would have to be exported. But because Soviet products had always been produced for the bloc, the quality of these products were not up to par to be sold on the world market. According to a 1987 estimate, only seventeen to eighteen percent of Soviet exports were of a world standard, and the quality was declining.[363]

This demonstrates how the forces of globalization were already at work in the Soviet Union, because "to allow the world market to start determining the quality of Soviet goods was an affront to the economic autonomy of the statist system."[364] The solution? The "system was to become a source of technological innovation itself."[365]

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[362] Lockwood, The Destruction of the Soviet Union, p. 88.
[363] Ibid., p. 89.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Ibid.

Lockwood argues that both these factors – exporting to import and the need to develop technology within Soviet borders – "pushed the Soviet economy in the same direction. They both necessitated a complete overhaul of the system with all the attendant dangers for its rulers."[366]

It can be argued, as Lockwood does, that the Soviet economic structure – as it existed in the early 1980s – was about to undergo radical changes once there was an opening for the infusion of market forces. This aperture was created once "a proportion of Soviet goods were to be judged by globally determined standards of commerce rather than politically determined decisions of the Soviet state."[367] The economy was becoming more difficult to manage "as a centralized single unit when parts of it were running according to globalized commercial rhythms rather than military-prioritized Gosplan ones."[368]

III Globalization and Nationalism

Concomitant to these economic changes in the Soviet system was the growing nationalist sentiments in the Baltic region, particularly in Lithuania where the first movements for independence was formed. But before assessing Lithuania's nationalist surge and its demands for secession, it is imperative to examine the linkages – if any – between globalization and nationalism, and how these two forces contributed to the Baltic's demands to sever ties with Moscow and achieve independence.

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[366] Ibid.
[367] Ibid.
[368] Ibid.

While there is an abundance of information regarding globalization, as well as articles on Soviet nationalism, the main problem I encountered was the lack of scholarship that demonstrates a linkage between globalization and the surge of ethnic nationalism in the Soviet Union at the end of the twentieth century. The correlation between these two forces have been alluded to, yet most scholars have yet to make a solid connection. Arie M. Kacowicz's article, "Regionalization, Globalization, and Nationalism: Convergent, Divergent or Overlapping?" best captures the linkages, and purports that their "inherent importance is relative to one another through dynamic linkages of convergence, divergence, and uneasy coexistence or overlapping."[369] His thesis suggests that given a set of particular historical, economic, political or cultural variables, globalization and nationalism can either converge, diverge or overlap. In any event, they are connected in the 'new world order'. Although in his article he uses Latin America as an empirical example, I will apply his arguments and theories to the case of the Soviet Union in order to demonstrate how globalization – in part – helped to induce nationalist tendencies in the Baltics which in turn only further destabilized the region and assisted in the eventual collapse of the Union.

In today's world order, Kacowicz argues that the three primary forces shaping world politics are regionalization, globalization and nationalism.[370] He suggests that these forces cannot be analyzed independently from one another, but in fact they should be "captured and studied as forces relative to and overlapping one another, sometimes antagonistic and sometimes cooperative toward each other, but never harmonius."[371] With regards to globalization and nationalism, Kacowicz lists seven linkages that are

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[369] Arie M. Kacowicz, Alternatives, 1999, p. 550.
[370] Ibid., p. 527.

possible to make once nationalism and the role of the nation-state is factored into the equation. For example, "nation-states oppose globalization; nationalism and the formation of new states are encouraged by the forces of globalization; nation-states oppose the forces of regionalization; nationalism and the nation-state can be strengthened through regionalism...".[372] While these are only a few of the possible linkages that may occur in a given region, I will focus on: 1) how nation-states and nationalism oppose processes of globalization, and 2) how globalization has encouraged nationalism and the formation of new states through a process that Kacowicz has identified as "technical dissemination."[373] In the case of the Soviet Union, there could be a convergence of globalization and nationalism, "through a new (global) revolution of 'rising expectations', which encourages states to cope with and to manage the forces of globalization."[374] Paradoxically, however, he suggests that while state sovereignty is undermined by globalization, "technological changes might also improve the material conditions for the enhancement or resurgence of nationalistic trends."[375]

It is possible, however, that while globalizing forces are encouraging nationalist tendencies, at the same time nation-states and nationalism are opposing the forces of globalization. As Kacowicz asserts, disintegration, fragmentation and autarky all stem from globalization, in which case "the blossoming of statehood may be a response to the homogenizing forces of globalization."[376] In this case, the surge in nationalism "can be regarded as a response to the alienating forces of the global market, by relocating or

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[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid., p. 534.
[373] Ibid., p. 535
[374] Ibid.
[375] Ibid.
[376] Ibid., p. 535.

bolstering legitimacy and loyalties at the national…levels, in direct contradiction to the transnational…logic of economic globalization."[377]

In the case of the Soviet Baltic states, I would argue that nationalist tendencies were both *encouraged* by the forces of globalization and *opposed* to it. The global technological revolution enabled ethnic Lithuanians to mobilize support for not only an independent homeland, but also to keep their language and culture alive. Due to the Soviet and Nazi occupations of Lithuania in WWII, 50 000 Lithuanians – primarily educated professionals – fled to North America, joining the 508 000 Lithuanians who had emigrated to the USA between 1867 and 1914.[378] Not only did this second wave of migrants create language schools for their children, but they also formed cultural associations in order to guarantee that their culture and language be sustained abroad. In 1988, with the founding of the Lithuanian Reconstruction Movement (Sajudis) in Lithuania, Canadian and American Lithuanians worked for Sajudis as translators and liasons with the Western media. Fax machines and computers were given to Sajudis by Lithuanian organizations in North America, facilitating more lines of communication with the outside world regarding Lithuania's fight for democracy and independence. Moreover, the advances in technology assisted in bringing together ethnic Lithuanians, Jews and Russian dissidents to form several social movements that opposed Soviet rule, such as the Lithuanian Freedom League and Sajudis. With regards to Lithuania, the forces of globalization – such as "a technological revolution, with social

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[377] Ibid.

[378] Richard Krickus in Ian Bremmer & Ray Taras (eds.) Nations and Politics in the Soviet Successor States (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 163, 166.

implications...(and an) intensification of...political, social and cultural relations across borders"[379] demonstrates how nationalist tendencies were encouraged by these forces.

On the other hand, I would also argue that the surge in nationalism was a direct response to the identity-eradicating effects of globalization. This lends itself to an important question: to what extent has the concept of national identity been transformed in the global era? If we accept Kacowicz's definition that globalization intensifies economic, political, social and cultural relations, and that globalization "implies not only a significant intensification of global connectedness, but also a consciousness of that intensification, with a concomitant diminution in the significance of territorial boundaries,"[380] then it only makes sense that nations or regions would attempt to retain their culture and language in an increasingly interconnected global environment, particularly one in which the fluidity of borders is becoming the norm.

1. Baltic Independence

In the late 1980s, the Soviet Union was in a crisis – the command economy had become a hybrid economic system that was neither socialist nor capitalist; the GNP had plummeted to a record low; the effects of glasnost were creating dramatic ideological shifts, such as the withering away of Leninism. The Soviet Union was in a lose-lose situation: it had to give into the globalizing forces and modernize its economy and political system or it would continue its downward spiral, inviting political upheaval as the economy continued to worsen. It was in this setting that the Baltics found

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[379] Kacowicz, Regionalization, Globalization, and Nationalism, p. 529
[380] Ibid.

themselves, struggling to achieve independence for two reasons: first, to retain their culture and language in a globalized environment, and second, to create a country that was no longer economically tied to the rest of the Union.

Following the attainment of Lithuanian independence in 1991, many scholars attempted to explain why the Baltics was the first region to initiate the movement for independence. Several historical factors appear to have been the catalysts for the Baltic nationalist movement – particularly Lithuania - such as a history of independence and statehood, and a shared history of subjugation. These factors, coupled with a strong religious faith, the failure of the Soviet nationality policy, the economic downturn in the USSR and infusion of glasnost all culminated in growing nationalist sentiment and the drive toward separation from the Soviet Union.

Unlike most of the Soviet republics, Lithuania's history dates back to the 13th century, when it became a centralized political state in 1236, known as the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In 1387, not only did it adopt Roman Catholicism from the Poles, but it also entered into a political union, establishing the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1589.[381] Between 1558 and 1795, Sweden, Russia and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth battled it out for control of the Baltics, with Russia declaring victory in 1795. The policies of russification and subjugation by the Tsar only served to bind the Baltic peoples together as they fought to maintain their cultural identities in the face of Russian hegemony.

Lithuania's drive for independence can be traced to the 19th century as national movements began to form, protesting Russian domination. It was only in 1918, following the defeat of Russian and Germany, that the Baltic states finally achieved

independence. In their "brief twenty years of freedom...the republics made impressive strides. They developed viable economies and modern educational systems, participated fully in European culture, enjoyed political stability graced by laws for the protection of ethnic minorities...and encouraged vibrant civil societies."[382] But in 1939, after the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, Baltic independence ended and they were unconstitutionally incorporated into the Soviet Union.

However, the twenty-two years of independence the Baltics had enjoyed was a second factor which assisted the revival of the nationalist movement in the 1980s. Because they had established strong economies, political regimes and national symbols (flags, anthems), it is evident that "the two decades of independent statehood were pivotal. Past independence provided a national symbol for mobilization around the separatist cause," as well as giving the Baltics an "experience of democracy."[383] According to Horowitz, "by the fact that they were incorporated into the USSR only in 1940," as well as their "stronger political culture,"[384] it should not have been surprising that the Baltics were the first of the republics to initiate demands for self-government.

Third, the decline of ethnic culture and language – due to the russification policies – is also responsible for the rise of nationalism. Once the Baltics were stripped of their independence, there was an immediate infusion of Russian language and culture into the three republics. From 1940 onward, Russian domination was implemented and enforced by Stalin, who encouraged the return of Russian symbolism to promote Russian

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[381] Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, "As Go the Baltics, So Goes Europe." Orbis, Summer 1995, p. 389.
[382] Ibid., pp. 389/90
[383] Riina Kionka as cited in G. Smith (ed.) The Nationalities Question in the Soviet Union (London: Longman, 1990), p. 51
[384] Jones & Powell (eds.) Soviet Update, p. 92.

nationalism. For example, Russian schools were built and the use and teaching of Russian was enforced.

The russification of the republics continued for the next four decades. Khrushchev still insisted that Russian be taught in the schools in the Baltics, but there was no enforcement for ethnic Russians residing in Estonia and Latvia to learn the native language. This resulted in mounting tension between the Russians and the natives in the republics, who felt they were slowly losing their ethnic and cultural identity due to the policies of russification.

The 1960s and 1970s saw a number of dissent movements come to the fore in each of the three Baltic republics over environmental and religious concerns. These small, yet significant issues indicated an awareness of cultural identity, and that their preservation of their language and ethnic traditions were essential for their culture to survive. For example, in Lithuania, "the first and most impressive sign of organized mass resistance to Soviet Rule materialized with the Catholic human rights movement."[385] Because Stalin associated the Catholic Church with Lithuanian nationalism, all religious orders were banned and churches were destroyed. This anti-religious campaign was kept alive for decades, until devout Catholics in the 1960s realized that organized religion would be eliminated if the campaign continued. With the circulation of petitions and the publication of articles denouncing the government's anti-Catholic campaign, the activists had managed to attract a larger base of support for their cause. As a consequence, the question of independence began to be raised by young Lithuanians.

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[385] Krickus in Brenner and Taras (eds.) Nations and Politics in Soviet Successor States, p. 169.

Likewise in Estonia, a dissent movement sparked the reform movement due to environmental damage from the heavy industrialization. Moscow's plan to enlarge a phosphorite mine would have involved the importation of 30 000 Russians into Estonia, thereby making Estonians the minority in their own republic. Moreover, in 1978, a new policy from the centre was implemented that would see an increase in Russian language being taught in non Russian Soviet Republics; in 1981, Russian was taught in the first grade in Estonia's schools. Clearly this "threat of cultural Russification to the Estonian language and national identity"[386] provided the catalyst for Estonian demands for freedom.

What this suggests is that "widespread concern about cultural survival is responsible for the broadening of the social base of dissent in the late 1970s."[387] So while the debate in Estonia began in the form of environmental concerns and language issues, "it was actually national in content."[388] What seemingly began as ecological outrage, religious fervor, and the threat to language led to nationalistic feelings pertaining to the preservation of the Estonian and Lithuanian culture.

In the 1980s, the implementation of glasnost and perestroika were two factors that propelled Baltic nationalism into full swing. Because of Gorbachev's commitment to inject more openness into Soviet society, independence movements like Sajudis in Lithuania and the People's Front movements in Estonia and Latvia were tolerated by Moscow, both voicing support for perestroika. Moreover, partial access to the media was allowed and censorship was lifted, allowing for the publication of materials pertaining to

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[386] Riina Kionka as cited in ed. Smith, The Nationalities Question in the Post Soviet States (London: Longman, 1996), p. 135.
[387] Kionka as cited in ed. Smith (1990), The Nationalities Question , p. 46/47
[388] Ibid., p. 48.

the inefficiencies of Marxism to the call for Baltic separation from the Union. Demonstrations were not crushed and petitions were allowed to circulate, bringing together environmentalists, human rights activists and nationalist groups to fight for independence. Because of glasnost, a loose coalition of groups now came together as a forceful unit. In Latvia, by October 1988 at the People's Front Congress, they called for economic and state sovereignty, and the following month saw the reinstatement of the Latvian language, flag and national symbols. Clearly, "the Popular Front has emerged to play an important de facto policy shaping role in ensuring that the Latvian republics remains at the cutting edge of Gorbachev's reforms."[389]

Nationalist sentiments – for the most part suppressed by the communist regime through terror, coercion and the nationality policy – exploded upon the implementation of perestroika and glasnost. Movements which began over environmental concerns and issues of religious expression grew into organized political movements demanding the right to economic and political autonomy from the Soviet Union. The USSR's declining economy was an additional important catalyst that convinced the Baltics that the top-down administrative system was no longer effective. In Estonia, central authorities – not republic authorities – had major control over the republic's production plans. By the mid 1980s, "central control over the republic's industrial output exceeded 90 per cent."[390]

In Latvia, a relatively healthy economy existed compared to the rest of the Union. For example, by 1988, over 28 per cent of Latvia's population earned 200 rubles or more per month, while the average was 17.2 per cent.[391] However, the problem was the need and demand for outside labour, resulting in an influx of ethnic Russians. This in turn led

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[389] Smith (1990), The Nationalities Question, p. 66.
[390] Smith (1996), The Nationalities Question, p. 134.

to the spread of the Russian language, so much so that Latvians deemed it to be "the greatest threat to the nation."[392] Consequently, political independence was seen as the only viable option available in order to ensure the survival of the three republics.

Before examining Eastern Europe, it must be stated that nationalities issues existed throughout the Soviet Union and not solely in the Baltics. In Ukraine, for example, Ukrainian nationalism was sparked in the late 1960s with the formation of a human rights movement "protesting against the repression of intellectuals."[393] This evolved from the publication of several books (ie. Ivan Dzyuba's Internationalism or Russification, in 1965) that attacked Russification, particularly the imposition of the Russian language. In 1972, in an attempt to contain Ukrainian nationalism, Moscow replaced First Secretary Petro Shelest in favour of Volodymryr Shcherbyts'kyi. This led to the purging of Shelest supporters from the Party leadership, and the use of Russian "was stepped up in the Press, the schools and even the nursery schools. Numerous historical studies in the Ukrainian language...were denied publication."

The catalyst of Ukrainian nationalism clearly rested with the Ukrainian intellegentsia, whose continual demands on Shcherbyts'kyi (following the implementation of glasnost) included "the publication of banned works; an investigation into the 1932-1933 famine; the defence of the Ukrainian language; opposition to the expansion of nuclear power; and permission for the formation of a Popular Front, along the lines of those existing in the Baltic republics."[394]

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[391] Ibid., p. 153.
[392] Ibid., p. 155.
[393] Peter J.S. Duncan as cited in Smith (1996), The Nationalities Question, p. 192.
[394] Ibid., p. 193

While the preservation of the Ukrainian language was a major issue that stirred nationalist sentiment, a second issue that "inflamed Ukrainian national feelings was the plan to expand the generation of nuclear power, in spite of the Chernobyl catastrophe."[395] Writers and scientists in 1987 protested against the plan to build new nuclear sites, and in 1988 the unofficial Ukrainian Culturological Club organized a petition to protest nuclear power "bearing 4000 signatures. Since the nuclear power industry is run from Moscow, not Kiev, the issue pitted the Ukrainian intellectuals directly against the centre."[396]

In 1987, two major events occurred: first, many political prisoners were returned to the Ukraine 'in the spirit of glasnost' which resulted in the formation of unofficial organizations. Second, the *Ukrainian Herald* resumed publication. The Ukrainian Culturological Club was featured in the first issue, siting their concerns over language, the environment, and Ukrainian history, particularly the famine.

The following year saw the re-establishment of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (UHU). Using the *Herald* as its mouthpiece, the UHU "called for a new constitution for the USSR and the republics, with the aim of transforming the Soviet Union into a confederation of independent States. Ukraine would have its own citizenship and immigration controls and Ukrainian would be the official language."[397]

The summer of 1988 saw the formation of unions in Kiev, Odessa and Lvov in support of perestroika, but after three mass meetings, the authorities made large-scale arrests. Shcherbyts'kyi made it clear that Ukrainian popular fronts based on the Baltic model would not be permitted. This only served to further inspire the organizers to create such a movement.

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[395] Ibid., p. 195.
[396] Ibid.

The year 1989 saw wide-sweeping changes in Ukraine. First, the Draft Programme of the 'Popular Movement (Rukh) of Ukraine for Perestroika' was published, which "recognized the leading role of the Communist Party, but demanded that Ukrainian be given the status of the state language of the republic and called for religious freedom."[398] Second, the March elections to the CPD saw the election of a few Ukrainian radicals. Third, in September, the Ukrainian leadership finally consented to a founding conference of the Rukh, and fourth, Shcherbyts'kyi was replaced by Vladimir Ivashko.

March 1990 was a turning point for Ukraine with the elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Rada (Supreme Soviet), when Rukh won a quarter of the seats in the Supreme Rada.[399] As a result, "Gorbachev's decision to end the 'leading role' of the Communist Party in the USSR...legitimised political pluralism in Ukraine, promoted the disintegration of the CPU and gave a major boost to the national-democratic movement."[400]

In the Ukraine, as in Latvia and Estonia, language issues - as well as environmental concerns - were the catalysts for nationalist movements and the demand for independence. As I have stated, the Baltics were merely a part of nationalities issues that existed throughout the Soviet Union; clearly each republic had its own unique experience with issues of nationality. My primary focus on the Baltic region of the Soviet Union for this paper, however, was due to the fact that the Baltics were the first region to initiate the movement for independence.

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[397] Ibid.
[398] Ibid., p. 196.
[399] Ibid., p. 197.
[400] Ibid.

IV Eastern Europe – The Velvet Revolutions

The forces of globalization did not just affect the Soviet Union from within, but they also spilled across the borders to the entire Communist bloc, facilitating the revolutions of 1989 that culminated in the spread of democracy throughout Eastern Europe. The end result not only brought down the Iron Curtain, but it effectively transformed the international arena from that of a bi-polar environment to a world system where ideology no longer divided the globe into communist and capitalist camps. Instead, the 'new world order' that emerged from the ideological ruins could be characterized as one of globalized interdependence – economically, politically, environmentally and culturally.

The events of 1989 not only altered East-West relations with the demise of the Cold War, but it changed the face of Eastern Europe. Moreover, the revolutions also affected the course of events in the Soviet Union that would culminate in its destruction, demonstrating the spill-over effect of the globalizing forces throughout the communist bloc. But before analyzing the impact of globalization and nationalism on the 1989 revolutions, I will first discuss the interplay between internal and external factors that led to systemic changes in Eastern Europe.

As Gerhard Kummel as observed, there are extensive studies throughout the scholarship on democratic transitions, yet the impact of the international dimension on these transitions is under-researched.[401] While some interpretations suggest that in " (re)-

[401] Gerhard Kummel, "Democratization in Eastern Europe. The Interaction of Internal and External Factors: An Attempt at Systematization." East European Quarterly, June 1998, p. 243.

democratization processes external factors may, at best, play 'a secondary role' ",[402] others suggest that "democratic transition and consolidation are guaranteed or determined by external factors."[403] Kummel finds fault with these suppositions, as do I, because they "leave out the specific...internal political, socio-economic, historical and political-cultural conditions and aspects in the relative countries."[404] The argument goes as follows: both internal and external factors played important roles in the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the spread of democracy. External factors alone – such as the political and economic turmoil in the Soviet Union, the pressure toward a market economy – does not ensure a successful democratic revolution. Internal factors must also exist "which support the democratizing effects of favorable external conditions."[405] Nevertheless,

> the international dimension does play a significant and, at times, decisive role in the transition to and consolidation of democracy. Developments in the international economic as well as in the international political system, changes in the relationship between prominent actors as well as the existence and the functioning of international institutions are important external political as well as macro-economic frameworks affecting democratization. Therefore, we can expect prospects for democracy to be best when favorable internal conditions meet with a favorable external environment.[406]

It is important to state from the outset that the events in Eastern Europe in 1989 did not occur in a vacuum; while specific antecedents had to exist throughout the region, the internal crisis within the Soviet Union played a key role in the chain of events that led to the end of communist control of Eastern Europe. This argument is also echoed by

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[402] Ibid., p. 245.
[403] Ibid.
[404] Ibid.
[405] Ibid.

Ferenc Mislivetz, who says that these "revolutions surfaced as a result of the confluence of the crises in the societies and political systems of the region."[407] This is evident in Soviet history where Soviet hegemony was enforced by terror and force; any attempts to protest communist imperialism (ie. Hungary 1956, Czechoslovakia 1968) were forcibly crushed by the USSR. In this regard, according to Kummel, "a genuine transition to democracy within Eastern Europe had to meet with Soviet tanks. Only changes within the Soviet Union itself could realistically open a 'window of opportunity' for democratization in Eastern Europe."[408] Without a dramatic *internal* transformation the USSR, the Soviet grip on Eastern Europe would not likely have been loosened.

1. Poland and Hungary – The Initiators of Reform

"History has taught us that there is no bread without freedom."
Solidarity, 1981

a) Internal Factors

As already stated, while certain external factors needed to exist to restructure the East European countries, such restructuring could only have been successful if specific internal factors were also present. I would argue that three main internal factors existed in some East European countries (if not all to a certain degree) that culminated in the successful overthrow of Soviet rule: the existence of revolutionary elements and grassroots activism; internal party reform, and the performance of the economy.

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[406] Ibid.
[407] Ferenc Miszlivetz, Social Research, Winter 1991, p. 784/85.
[408] Kummel, East European Quarterly, p. 252

Specific antecedents found in Hungary's and Poland's past – primarily grassroots activism and the seeds of revolutionary outbursts – is a main internal factor that initiated the '89 revolutions. During Soviet rule, the 1956 uprising in Hungary was seen as "(m)ore an emotional outburst of rage against the Soviet Union rather than a calculated effort to achieve an attainable goal."[409] But with the infusion of glasnost and the loosening of censorship, the events of 1956 were legitimized by a party panel since they concluded that it was " 'a popular uprising against an oligarchy which was humiliating the nation.' "[410] As Jonathon Valdez suggests, the uprising "had gotten out of control to develop into a 'counter-revolution',"[411] an admission that had never been made public. Not only did this lead to a symbolic reburial of Imre Nagy, the Hungarian Prime Minister who was executed by the Soviets following the uprising, but it also was a turning point in Hungarian history as a renewed determination to end communist rule was invoked. Moreover, this led to the beginning of a Hungarian opposition in the late 1960s, that originated in the 'Budapest School', comprised of Marxist theorists and philosophers who "were foremost among those who found the basis for their critical stance in young Marx."[412]

While many emigrated and became foreign dissidents, the existence of the Budapest School revealed that there was opposition to communist repression. In the 1970s, an actual opposition movement was beginning to form: what began as an essay on housing quickly turned into discussion circles and regular Monday night talks, resulting

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[409] Gale Stokes, The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 46

[410] David Mason, Revolution and Transition in East-Central Europe (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), p. 54.

[411] Jonathon Valdez, Internationalism and the Ideology of Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 119.

[412] Stokes, The Walls Came Tumbling Down, p. 88.

in the printing and publication of 'oppositional literature' that was discussed, dispersed and sold in Budapest apartments.[413] This in turn led to the creation and publication of an opposition journal, Beszelo, in 1981, the key player being Janos Kis of the Budapest School. His goal for the journal was "the encouragement of civil society, which he believed was the only sound basis of genuine democratization."[414] The activists involved in the journal, along with a small peace movement "constituted a new phenomenon in Hungary...a democratic opposition,"[415] a classic example of how an underground opposition movement evolved into grassroots activism that became a politicized opposition, setting the tone for 1989.

Grassroots activism in Hungary played a prominent role in political reform, particularly because it was the forum used by the democratic opposition to challenge the government and its policies. For Gale Stokes, "three major campaigns created the psychological substrate of their success"[416] - an environmental movement opposed to a dam project, concern over Hungarians living in Romania, and the struggle to control Hungarian symbols of the past (see Stokes for more in-depth discussion). The dam issue was important for the democratic opposition "not only because it was one they could believe in but because they found that a significant number of people otherwise unwilling to enter into political debates...were willing to come forward on this issue."[417] It resulted in a street demonstration of 30 000 people in September 1988.[418] A backlash against a village reconstruction plan in Romania brought out a similar number of demonstrators in Budapest in June of 1989. Lastly, thousands of people began turning out for

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[413] Ibid., p. 89.
[414] Ibid.
[415] Ibid., pp. 89,90.
[416] Ibid., p 94

unauthorized holidays commemorating anti-Soviet uprisings in Hungary's history.

In 1988, numerous clubs and associations came into existence with the 'new openness' such as the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz), and the Alliance of Young Democrats (FIDESz). These groups not only, "became the nuclei of the three main political parties of post-1989 Hungary,"[419] but they also "represented an unprecedented flourishing of political pluralism in Hungary."[420]

In Poland, revolutionary elements could also be located in Poland's past. Indicative of this fact were the disturbances of 1956, 1968, 1970 and 1976. But it was the crisis of 1980/81 that was different because "it was led and organized primarily by workers, going to the very heart of the legitimacy of Soviet-style socialism. What is more, the notion of free trade unions provided an alternate center of power and legitimacy outside of party control."[421]

The unrest and strikes in the shipyards began as a response to price increases over meat in 1980 by the Polish government. The workers, led by Lech Walesa, organized into a group called Solidarity, that called for tree trade unions and the right to strike. Although Solidarity and the PUWP (Polish United Workers Party) reached an agreement on several demands, the strikes continued due to a stalemate between the conservative and liberal forces within PUWP. And although Solidarity became a legal labour union, it was only a matter of time before it became a politicized movement. But the friction between Solidarity and the government continued to escalate, resulting in the imposition

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[417] Ibid., pp. 94,95
[418] Ibid., p. 95
[419] Ibid., p. 98
[420] Ibid.
[421] Valdez, Internationalism and the Ideology of Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe, p. 93

of Marshall Law in an attempt to "put the lid back on Polish society,"[422] effectively ending Solidarity's grip on society. Despite their apparent failure, Solidarity had succeeded in mobilizing millions of Polish workers to strike for better conditions, such as independent unions, freedom of expression and the right to strike. The numerous strikes that frequently immobilized Poland "was a remarkable demonstration of the breakdown of the government's hold over its citizens."[423] Moreover, it proved that revolutionary elements existed in Poland, and that – given the right external conditions – these elements would resurface in 1989.

Party reform was a second internal factor that led to the revolutions of 1989. In Hungary, party leader Janos Kadar – in power since 1956 – was replaced by Karoly Grosz in 1988. Grosz, who was of Gorbachev's generation, was more accepting of economic reforms and political liberalization. In Czechoslovakia, seventy-eight year old party leader Gustav Husak stepped down in 1987, with Milos Jakes taking over the party leadership. With the replacement of the old guard, a new road was paved for Hungary and Czechoslovakia as the new leadership was more receptive to Gorbachev's reforms.

A third factor that helped set the stage for revolution was the faltering economy throughout the communist bloc. By the late 1980s, every East European country was in the stages of an economic disaster. In Poland, not only were they experiencing a high rate of inflation, but their hard currency debt in 1988 was forty billion dollars.[424] Rising prices led to public unrest in the form of protests and strikes. In Hungary, rising prices, the falling real value of wages and the lay-offs of thousands of workers began to take its toll: there was a realization that major systemic changes needed to be put in place in

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[422] Stokes, The Walls Came Tumbling Down, p. 43.
[423] Ibid., pp. 40,41

order for the economy to get back on its feet. Most likely, these changes included a drastic re-organization of the economic relationship between Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

b) External Factors

While the existence of specific antecedents in the Eastern European countries contributed to internal changes, the events of 1989 could not have happened without the influence of external factors, such as the changing of leadership in the Soviet Union, the opening of the borders with the West, and economic globalization.

In hindsight, the appointment of Gorbachev as General Secretary in 1985 was a turning point, not only for the Soviet Union, but for the international arena as well. Gorbachev's insight to the inefficiencies of the system led to the injection of glasnost that in turn reinvigorated civil society. Just as important, this change in attitude also led to an ideological shift, away from the use of force and repression to more cordial and open relations with the West.

Accompanying the Soviet Union's insistence of economic restructuring was the end of the Breshnev Doctrine, the ideological underpinning of the system. For Mark Kramer, "Soviet policy has loosened so much, and the opportunities for internal reform have expanded so significantly, that the Breshnev Doctrine, with its emphasis on internal conformity, has largely dissipated."[425] While the Breshzev Doctrine stressed strict adherence to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, limited sovereignty and the use of

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[424] Mason, Revolution and Transition in East-Central Europe, p. 52.

force, Gorbachev's commitment to glasnost and perestroika meant that the concept of limited sovereignty would have to be rethought. This led to a reorientation of Moscow's policy toward the affairs in Eastern Europe, which had shifted toward the notion of "non-interference" given Gorbachev's assertion that " 'all [communist] parties are fully and irreversibly independent.' "[426] This new stance translated into a deviation of power from the centre to the parties of each country; for Gorbachev, " 'the independence of each party, its responsibility to its people, the right to resolve questions of the country's development in a sovereign way – for these are indisputable principles.' "[427]

Thus the use of force was becoming irrelevant in light of the reformation process. Gorbachev understood that he could not open the door to reforms, and then forcefully clamp down on the after-effects if it snow-balled out of control. This was best illustrated in Poland in 1988/89, where strikes, protests and the demand for the legalization of Solidarity led to considerable tension and unrest in Poland. The Soviet Union had two choices: it could "either follow a traditional or 'business as usual' approach and ...intervene in Poland by force, or open the possibility of a non-communist government taking over political power in Warsaw."[428] Gorbachev's decision to opt for the latter not only led to electoral victory for Solidarity, but it was also indicative of the changes that were ideologically transforming the Soviet Union. By refusing to use force, Gorbachev demonstrated to Eastern Europe – and to the world – the seriousness of his desire for systemic change. Moreover, it sent a message to the other East European countries that a

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[425] Kramer, "Beyond the Brezhnev Doctrine: A New Era in Soviet-East European Relations?" International Security Winter 1989/90, p. 25.
[426] Valdez, Internationalism and the Ideology of Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe, as cited by Gorbachev, p. 112
[427] Mason, Revolution and Transition in East-Central Europe, p. 49, as quoted by Gorbachev in a 1987 speech in Prague
[428] Kummel, East European Quarterly, p.254

democratic movement was possible given that the use of force was no longer an option for the Soviet Union.

As Kummel articulates, Gorbachev's refusal to use force in Poland "constituted *the* major turning point in the course of events because Gorbachev's decision exerted a fundamental demonstration effect on the region and led to significant shifts in the power political relationships in the Eastern European countries."[429] This decision "implied that the USSR would, to a very large extent, refrain from military means of intervention in the Soviet block which was nothing less than a 'gate opening to democratic efforts' "[430] since it "amounted to an act of 'dehegemonization.' "[431]

The events in Poland – followed by Gorbachv's response – triggered a spillover effect, a consequence of political globalization, where the events in one country facilitated a similar response in another. Held and McGrew call this " 'overlapping communities of fate'; that is, a state of affairs in which the fortune and prospects of individual political communities are increasingly bound together."[432] I would argue that this phenomenon could be applied to the East European countries also, given the linkages of the political and economic systems between the eastern bloc and the Soviet Union, as well as the nature of their relationship.

In Hungary, independent noncommunist political parties were legalized in 1989, and – just twelve days after the elections in Poland – a Polish-style series of negotiations were held that resulted in the creation of a multi-party system and free parliamentary

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[429] Ibid.
[430] Juan Linz & Alfred Stepan Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post-Communist Europe (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 73
[431] Kummel, East European Quarterly, p.254
[432] Held & McGrew, The Eighty Years Crisis, p.237

elections in 1990.[433] According to Mason, "the pace of change in Hungary had picked up...precisely because of the roundtable talks and the elections in Poland. Poland pushed the limits of the possible, and the Hungarians charged forward,"[434] a classic example of the domino-effect – beginning with the changes in the Soviet Union – that was just starting to work its way through the rest of Eastern Europe.

Another external factor that was a catalyst for the '89 revolutions was the opening of the borders with the West. Mason theorizes that while Poland and Hungary were a model for the other communist countries, "no others at that point were quite prepared to follow suit."[435] He believes that had Hungary not opened its borders to the West in May of 1989 that "perhaps the internal changes in Poland and Hungary would have been confined to two countries."[436] Such speculation will never be proven, but what is known is that an open border had far-reaching consequences. It touched off a mass exodus from Hungary of East German tourists through Austria and finally into West Germany. Once East Germany shut down travel to Hungary, many East Germans fled by means of Poland and Czechoslovakia in hopes of reaching West Germany.

Clearly the domino-effect had now touched East Germany, as the mass exodus "opened some old wounds in the country and focused the spotlight once again on the Berlin Wall."[437] Moreover, it created a dilemma for the East, as its population was quickly diminishing. Gorbachev's visit during this chaotic period only fueled the fire, as demonstrations grew larger, and demands for the resignation of Honecker and the

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[433] David S. Mason, Revolution and Transition in East-Central Europe (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), p.55
[434] Ibid.
[435] Ibid.
[436] Ibid.
[437] Ibid., p. 56

legalization of New Forum grew louder.[438] Travel restrictions were loosened and once again East Germans left their country in droves. In order to remedy the situation, the government lifted all travel bans and opened the Berlin Wall in November, 1989.

In Bulgaria, the spill-over effects of political globalization could be found in the environmental arena, where Eco-Glasnost had formed to advocate environmental change. Like other groups in Eastern Europe, what started out as advocacy for ecological improvements led to rallies for democracy. It appears that the "revolutionary movements sweeping through the rest of the region...gave courage to dissident groups in Bulgaria, and their demands became increasingly political."[439] In November 1989, Eco Glasnost organized a pro-democracy rally that attracted 9000 demonstrators. During the following months, "a combination of Hungarian-style reform from above and East German-style 'people power' led Bulgaria toward democratization."[440] One could surmise that the attainment of democracy may not have occurred so quickly in Bulgaria had it not been for the spillover effect of democratization in other countries of the communist bloc.

Economics was a third external factor that led to the events of 1989, specifically economic globalization, economic crises in the 1970s and 1980s, and the introduction of market forces into Eastern Europe. Because Soviet exports consisted primarily of petroleum and natural gas, the sharp drop in world petroleum prices in the 1980s affected the USSR's export earnings.[441] Military spending in the Soviet Union reached new levels in the 1980s, with the figure estimated to be $300 billion annually.[442] These two factors resulted in a decreased standard of living, and led to the realization that in order to

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[438] *New Forum was a coalition of opposition forces that came out of the protests
[439] Ibid., p.59
[440] Ibid., p.60
[441] Ibid., p. 42

develop a more efficient and modernized economy, Moscow would have to "expand trade, attract technology, reduce military spending and cut back on aid to other countries."[443] Restructuring the command economy was essential to meeting these goals, as well as creating "a more relaxed international atmosphere and...an improved relationship with the United States."[444]

An overhaul of the economy meant that Eastern Europe also needed to be restructured and reformed if the Soviet Union was to be successful in its quest to reinvigorate the entire socialist system. In short, if the Soviet Union failed to reform Eastern Europe, it would not successfully reform itself. Gorbachev proceeded to implement economic reform programs in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia in 1988.[445] In addition, "hoping to expose Eastern Europe to market pressures from the West, the Kremlin encouraged Romania and Bulgaria to enter the IMF and Hungary, Poland, Romania and Czechoslovakia to join GATT."[446] Such action demonstrates the effect of economic globalization: by encouraging these countries to join GATT and the IMF, there was now an infusion of market forces into the Eastern bloc, allowing the doors to the West to be flung wide open. This dramatically altered the dynamics of the communist system, as these countries were now accountable to entities other than the state, kickstarting what was to be the beginning of the loosening of the Soviet noose over the affairs of Eastern Europe.

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[442] Ibid.
[443] Ibid., pp. 46,47.
[444] Ibid., p. 47
[445] Ibid., p. 48
[446] Ibid., p.49

Conclusion

Dissecting the confluence of factors that culminated in the democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the Soviet Union is a difficult task, given the interplay of the forces involved and the change of dynamics in the international arena. What has become clear is that while each factor – Gorbachev's leadership, ideology and globalization – contributed to the disintegration of the Soviet empire, they cannot be analyzed independently of each other. The infusion of glasnost, for example, made possible the publication of oppositional literature and the formation of democratic movements, yet it most likely would not have occurred without the ideological shift in Soviet foreign policy, which was slowly embracing liberalized market reforms and the notion of interdependence with the West. Similarly, the implementation of economic reform programs in Eastern Europe was made possible with the 'new thinking' embraced by the Soviet Union, but it was the forces of globalization that permeated its way into the USSR that allowed for the ideological transformation vis-à-vis Soviet domestic and foreign policy.

The transformation of the global communication system, the integration of financial markets, political upheavals that spill across borders – all of which constitute globalization – played key roles in the Soviet Union's demise. The dire economic situation the USSR found itself in in the 1980s had evolved out of years of economic isolation from the West, inefficiencies of the command economy itself, and an ideological belief that socialism was fundamentally superior to capitalism. The USSR – in its battle for economic and political supremacy over the West – began to experience a

steep decline in its GNP and its standard of living, given the large percentage of the GNP allocated to the military sector. Gorbachev realized that the only way to transform Soviet society was to restructure the command economy, and this meant that a shift toward the global market economy was inevitable, thereby ending Soviet isolationism.

This calls into question the role of leadership in the demise of the USSR. Two dominant viewpoints can be found in the literature: those who argue that Gorbachev's miscalculations and lack of insight resulted in the collapse of the Union, and those who believe that forces beyond Gorbachev's control – the power of nationalism, the pervasiveness of globalizing forces – put the last nail in the Soviet coffin. I would argue that while Gorbachev's misjudgments (ie.the deep nationalist sentiments in the Baltics) had serious consequences, his main goal was to revitalize the system, not destroy it. It appears he had the mindset of 'having it all': he wanted the Soviet Union to become a participant in the global market, but still wanted to retain the centralized economy, and he wanted to reinvigorate civil society by allowing openness, but he still wanted to keep these changes within certain bounds.[447] In the end, a pandora's box of forces was unleashed and took on a life of their own, and Gorbachev was incapable of containing them.

Ideology – specifically the decline of Leninism – was also an important factor in the collapse. Yet ideological shifts do not occur in a vacuum, and the Soviet Union was no exception. The historical development of ideology is important to take into consideration, given that ideology played an exclusive role in society until the withering away of Leninism. Once this occurred, the Soviet Union was void of an ideological

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[447] Gregory Gleason, Federalism and Nationalism: The Struggle for Republican Rights in the USSR (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 120.

underpinning and this created a precarious situation, because the political and economic basis of the entire system was suddenly de-legitimized. This set off a resurgence of nationalist sentiment – both within the USSR and throughout Eastern Europe – that demanded democracy, independence and the severing of ties with the centre which was now internally divided and on the verge of collapse.

The role of nationalism is also a difficult phenomenon to assess, particularly with regards to globalization. As I have stated, the interplay between nationalism and globalization is under-researched; however, some scholars such as Kacowicz, has attempted to demonstrate how these two forces could converge or diverge given a particular set of internal and/or external factors. With regards to the Baltics, the transformation of global communications allowed Lithuanians access to Lithuanian associations and communities abroad, thereby keeping their language and culture alive, as well as sustaining the idea of an independent homeland. Moreover, if one agrees with the theory that globalization produces fragmentationalist tendencies, then David Held's theory could be applied to Baltic nationalism, that "globalization evokes an equal but opposite reaction in the direction of fragmentation because it forces cultures into mutual awareness and thereby accentuates the identity of difference."[448] This would only have become exacerbated with the introduction of glasnost because it eventually led to the revelation that the Baltics had been illegally incorporated into the Soviet Union during WWII. This knowledge would have clearly heightened the sense of difference between the Baltics and the rest of the USSR, resulting in a renewed nationalism and demands to reclaim its independence.

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[448] Ian Clark, Globalization and Fragmentation: International Relations in the Twentieth Century (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 191.

In Eastern Europe, intense nationalism did in fact exist – German, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, Polish[449] - but as Peter Liberman points out, the passivity toward Soviet hegemony (up until the late 1980s) "can only be explained by coercion and repression."[450] Once Soviet ideology began to shift towards liberal reforms and interdependence, the use of force was no longer a viable option and the veil of terror was lifted from East European societies. The formation of opposition movements in Poland and Hungary was the catalyst that spawned the democratic revolutions throughout the region by way of a 'spill-over' effect across the borders, an example of the "enmeshment of national political communities in regional and global processes."[451] In this instance, globalization facilitated a domino-effect whereby the drive for democracy did not halt at the borders; rather, it demonstrated the permeability of intra-regional borders when dealing with globalized forces.

There is no question that the break-up of the Soviet Union evolved from a confluence of factors, both internal and external, domestically and globally. While I divided the role of leadership, ideology and globalization into three separate sections for the simplicity of this thesis, the importance of the interplay and overlap between these three factors cannot be overstated enough. Moreover, I would also add that while globalization contributed to the USSR's destruction, it appears that the disintegration of the political and economic structures occurred under a globalized framework; that not only did forces of globalization filter into the Soviet system, but that leadership, ideology and globalizing forces played themselves out under a globalized framework.

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[449] Peter Liberman, Does Conquest Pay? (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 135
[450] Ibid.
[451] Held & McGrew, The Eighty Years' Crisis, p. 237

The post-Cold War has been characterized as a 'new world order' where global ideological divisions between the communist east and the capitalist west no longer set the tone for international politics. Instead, the demise of the Soviet empire ushered in an era of global interdependence where the growing transnational nature of terrorism, the drug trade, and environmental degradation requires international cooperation. The creation of the Soviet Union ushered in an era of East-West hostility and communist containment; the end of the Soviet Union will hopefully be the start of a more peaceful and cooperative era. Only time will tell.

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