

ideological profile of its regime and organization of its government, to bring back a quasi-czarist form of regime, based on what I'd characterized then as a traditional Russian "Third Rome" ideological basis. The bases would include the Soviet military, the Soviet internal security forces, the KGB, and all linked together by a nationalist entity, whose chief spokesman, and chief ideological force, would be the restored and evermore authoritative Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy.

In this process, the discrediting of Communist rule, to a large degree by economic crisis, by the food crisis, and so forth, has brought about the change now, which I indicated as in the winds back during 1983. What we are seeing is not the dissolution of Moscow, or Moscow's empire; what we are seeing is a process of transformation, a transmogrification. The Russians might prefer to say this is the emergence of the butterfly from the larval state, and, continuing the analogy, some might say that the present discomfiture of the Soviet empire, or the Russian empire, is the pupal state preparing the re-emergence of a new Russian empire, more czarist-like than the bolshevik empire, based on the elements which participated in the leadership of Soyuz, and which reflected themselves in the letter of the "53" recently, demanding a certain quality of changes in the character of the Russian state.

Those are the principal features, strategically, of 1990 to date.

The depression deepens

The year 1990 has also brought to a new degree of devolution the general worldwide economic depression, which erupted on the New York Stock Exchange and elsewhere during October 1987.

The savings and loan system, which was bankrupt already in 1982—the S&L banks were kept in place merely to be looted by George Bush's friends—that's past.

The major U.S. commercial banks, once involved in foreign business, are now on the chop. Banks around the world, those tied too closely to the American banks, for example, are on the chop. There is not a recession in the United States; there is already the onset of a deep depression, potentially far worse than that of the 1930s. And thus the world, at the end of 1990, is gripped by a new worldwide depression, affecting different parts of the world, at different rates: Japan somewhat less, and Europe, dominated by Germany, the least. But all the world is affected.

During the first part of 1991, as we face the prospect of a war with incalculable effects in the Middle East, we are also gripped increasingly by the plunge at an accelerating rate into the deepest depression of the twentieth century.

You know where I stand on these issues. If anybody were serious about avoiding a depression, or at least, if enough people were serious, I wouldn't be in prison in the first place—the prison where George Bush, the present President who made this mess, or at least who is responsible for it, who is responsible for my imprisonment, put me.

Russian triad forms dictatorship

by Konstantin George

As the decisive session of the U.S.S.R. Congress of People's Deputies, which had begun Dec. 17, drew to a close, the New Year brought to fruition a "post-bolshevik" presidential dictatorship in the Soviet Union. The imposition of this dictatorship, ratified by the Congress on Dec. 26, signifies for the short term a policy of intimidation and confrontation up to and including military intervention against the Baltic states and other independence-seeking non-Russian republics. For the medium term it denotes a policy design for the creation out of the chaos and wreckage of the present system, of a new form of Russian Empire.

The presidential dictatorship represents a power triad of the Army, KGB, and Russian national political and party elite. The Congress majority, acting as the rubber stamp for this triad, gave Gorbachov emergency powers to impose direct presidential rule over any republic or region, and to issue any emergency decrees on the economy.

But neither Gorbachov nor anybody else at the Congress advanced any economic policies that could solve the crisis. That means that the U.S.S.R. is going to explode, no matter what kind of dictatorship emerges.

The Congress also approved a measure to enlarge the Federation Council's composition to include, in addition to Gorbachov and the 15 republic presidents, the heads of the U.S.S.R.'s 20 autonomous republics, 16 of which are autonomous republics of the Russian Federation. By this charming device, the Federation Council—the one seeming concession of influence to the non-Russian republics—has now become an institution with a pro-Russian majority.

On Dec. 22, Soviet KGB head Gen. Vladimir Kryuchkov delivered a vintage Cold War-style tirade to the Congress, denouncing the reformers and hinting at the kind of transformation that is currently under way. "Although the international atmosphere has changed, foreign spies are still working against us," he said. "They are collecting information on our politics, on the Army, and on our industrial development. They are assessing how much money the Soviet Union has. Foreign agents and anti-Soviet groups abroad are constantly improving their techniques for collecting information." He charged that emigré groups are providing "moral and financial support for the nationalists." Kryuchkov explicitly identified the U.S. CIA as responsible for many of these activities.

Call for dictatorship

The state policies and the institutional power constellation—the Army, the security forces, the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy, and the Russian national political-cultural elite—behind the transformation appeared in what is called the “Letter of the 53,” a friendly appeal by the Russian military, church, and political leadership to Mikhail Gorbachov to rule ruthlessly as a dictator. The letter was circulated to the deputies at the Congress on Dec. 19, the day that Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze resigned, warning of a “dictatorship.” That evening the letter was read to the nation on the main evening television news program, *Vremya*.

The list of signatories to the letter is a who’s who of the empire’s Russian-national institutional elite. Among them: Chief of the General Staff Gen. Mikhail Moiseyev; Deputy Defense Minister and Ground Forces Commander-in-Chief Gen. Valentin Varennikov (an old protégé of retired Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov); Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Aleksei II; Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy Adm. Vladimir Chernavin; former Warsaw Pact Commander-in-Chief Marshal Viktor Kulikov; the commander of the Soviet Interior Troops, Gen. Col. Yuri Shatalin; the Communist Party Central Committee Secretary in charge of military industry, Oleg Baklanov; and three of the most prominent arch-Russian nationalist writers, Yuri Bondaryov, Vasili Belov, and Aleksandr Prokhanov.

The document called on Gorbachov to declare war against any non-Russian republic refusing to support the “new Union Treaty” and remain in the empire. It demanded that Gorbachov declare a state of emergency in the “zones of big conflict, should constitutional methods of combating separatists and criminal elements, and insurrectionist organizations that are continuing to shed the blood of the people, prove inefficient.” There is great danger, the authors stated, that the social order that has been created in the past 70 years “under the highest casualties and sacrifices” may be abolished under the flag of reforms. “These forces hostile to the people and to socialism are committed to the utmost” to destabilize the country, the 53 leaders of the Army and church charged.

A state of emergency, the 53 said, would be backed by the “workers and peasants, the creative and technical intelligentsia, the self-reviving Communist Party.” Three days earlier, on the eve of the Congress, *Pravda* published a call by Ivan Polozkov, head of the Russian Communist Party and political front-man for the Army, for the founding of a “Union for the Salvation of the Fatherland.” Polozkov stated that this new organization should “unite the patriotic and democratic forces so that they can acquire control over the process of social transformation and prevent a transition to the market economy behind the backs of the working people.”

Baltic states under siege

Moscow has decided to go ahead with an all-out confrontation against the Baltic republics, having set in motion there

a process termed by Baltic patriots a “creeping coup,” to contain and then destroy the patriotic independence forces of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The policy may confine itself to a “low-intensity,” pinpointed type of use of force, or may escalate into mass, bloody repression. The latter colonial variant is especially possible under conditions of America going to war in the Gulf. With the bulk of U.S. and NATO forces tied down in a senseless imperial war, Moscow would take the occasion to unleash the Red Army domestically.

The Red Army leadership is certainly looking for a Baltic “Hungary.” On Dec. 26, the day Gorbachov received his emergency powers, Adm. Vitali Ivanov, Baltic Fleet commander, addressed the Congress, issuing his third declaration in as many weeks that the Armed Forces were ready to use force to crush the Baltic states. On the same day, TASS published a statement by Lt. Gen. Anatoli Vodopyanov, Baltic Military District chief of staff, saying that “present developments are pushing us unavoidably to the critical line.” These statements, just a sampling of many from Army generals during December, are eerily identical in tone to charges made by Moscow under Stalin in the spring of 1940 about the “threat” to Soviet troops based in the Baltic republics under the October 1939 agreements. Said “threat” became part of the pretext for the June 1940 occupation of the Baltic republics.

Over the Christmas weekend, Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis had warned of the danger of a Russian military takeover, dissolving the Baltic governments. In Lithuania, starting Dec. 25, Sajudis Parliament deputies began a rotation, where every night a group of them sleeps in the Parliament building. Should the Russian Army occupy the Parliament, members of Lithuania’s Parliament must be arrested in the process, thus creating a much greater international outrage. Similar measures are being considered by parliamentarians in Latvia and Estonia.

Moving into the New Year, the “creeping coup” escalated. In Lithuania, the son of Deputy Prime Minister Romualdo Ozolas was murdered. On Jan. 2, special “Black Beret” units of the Soviet Interior Troops arrived in Latvia, and one unit occupied the Latvian press publishing house. The provocation “justified” an ominous “fact-finding” visit to Latvia the next day of newly appointed First Deputy Interior Minister Gen. Boris Gromov, ex-commander of Soviet forces in Afghanistan, and an ardent advocate of crushing the republics by military means. In a Jan. 3 interview with Radio Free Liberty, the vice chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council, Andrejs Krastins, was asked whether the occupation of the press center was the first step toward a Soviet military crackdown: “Today Soviet Deputy Interior Minister Boris Gromov will arrive in Latvia along with the commander of the Interior Troops” Gen. Col. Shatalin, one of the “53.” “Their visit is perhaps tied to repressive measures,” he said.