

## CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW

In the early 1980s, well before Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of openness (glasnost) and democratization sparked unofficial expression in the Soviet Union, an activist in one of the nation's few openly political, independent organizations worked to popularize a slogan with a counter-Orwellian twist: "Little Brother is Watching Back."<sup>1</sup>

Although the activist, Sergei Batovrin, among the founders of the independent peace movement, emigrated in 1983, his motto has proved prophetic. In thousands of self-starting groups of widely diverse size and orientation, Soviet citizens have begun the process of reconstituting civil society that Communist rulers had sought since 1917 to eradicate. Although still seen and felt mainly at lower political levels, these nyeformalniye ob'yedinyeniya, informal associations, are sowing seeds of democracy on harsh but not hopeless ground. Their expanding activity, among both youthful and mature citizens, is moving the Soviet public from totalitarian conformity and passivity to the kind of active pluralism that could grow to check the power of the Communist Party and the Soviet state.

The emergence of so many spontaneous, free associations since 1986 is working a significant, perhaps fundamental, change on Soviet life. What was for so long a grey and mute mass has begun to speak out in a chorus of vigorous, even dissonant voices. A society that was atomized by Stalinist terror has

begun to structure itself.

Through their membership in the groups, individuals who were powerless in the face of central authority have acquired muscle and influence. For even when they are affiliated to some degree with official institutions, the informal clubs generally operate not under the direction of those in power but on the initiative of their own members. Nicknamed nyeformaly, or "informals," to distinguish them from participants in officially organized and controlled bodies, these millions of historic preservationists, environmentalists, rock-music devotees, nationalists, human rights campaigners, body-builders, pacifists, sports fans, Afghan war veterans, hippies, political activists and others are the grassroots and sometimes the strategists of a social movement.

Far from a united movement, it is nevertheless a force for joining citizens with one another and, over time, for forcing the rulers to cede power to society. Already it has enabled dissenting intellectuals to make common cause with ordinary citizens who used to either ignore them or even applaud their persecutors. Indeed, as leaders of informal groups and, in some cases, as elected members of parliament, the once-isolated dissident avant-garde has been able to speak and act, as the Communist Party pretended to do, "in the name of the people," for the public interest.

This embryonic civil society is also making its first, as yet uncertain steps toward dialogue with the authorities. It is

eliciting responses -- also tentative, clumsy and even violent on occasion -- from the state. Neither this exploratory give-and-take nor the composition and leadership of the informal associations themselves have drawn enough informed attention and comment outside the Soviet Union. Yet the widespread phenomenon is likely to be more enduring in its impact on Soviet life and political conduct than any single figure, Gorbachev included.

The rise of the informals as activist citizens and groups poses a complex challenge to Gorbachev and his Soviet regime. In opposition, the informals can fuel social disorder and a repressive response. As allies of a reformist Party leadership, on the other hand, the informals may help write a blueprint for a more open and more democratic Soviet state with a balanced social contract between citizens and government. Whether they act as forces for short-term disruption or long-term stability, it is certain that as new factors on the Soviet scene they deserve careful study.

This report offers an introduction to the informal groups, a partial inventory of their number and activity, an incomplete evaluation of their performance and potential. Not a definitive guide -- religious groups figure only as they take part in secular activities, for instance (See Chapter 2) -- it records developments, with a few exceptions, only up to the Spring of 1989. The civil society emerging from decades of oblivion is still too much in flux to be pinned down, labeled and fully

analyzed. This report, therefore, is a work in progress, sketches for a portrait it would be premature to paint.

### Background

The wave of spontaneous civic energy and self-expression that gave birth to many of the Soviet informal associations is one that Mikhail Gorbachev released rather than ordained. Not the product of an official initiative, it is the response from below to the relaxation of pressure from above. As such it is the confirmation, in a Soviet setting, of the truth in Alexander Herzen's plea to the newly installed Czar Alexander II: "Sire, give us freedom of speech... We have so much to say to the world and ourselves."<sup>2</sup>

With varying degrees of effectiveness, Lenin and his heirs worked from 1917 till 1985 to insure that the Soviet Union spoke only with a single voice, that of the Communist Party. While some private associations managed, even under Stalin's terror, to survive that repression, their numbers were few and their lives short. In Moscow, in 1945, for example, five students were arrested soon after the party at which they proclaimed themselves to be a "Society of Poor Sybarites." Although the Society's "charter" required only that each member devise some form of cost-free entertainment for the others, the authorities characterized the group as an "anti-Soviet organization" and sentenced its young founders to labor camp terms ranging from

four to seven years.<sup>3</sup>

After Stalin's death and during Nikita Khrushchev's on-again, off-again "thaws," the social instinct began to reassert itself. According to current official sources, organizing began in the second half of the 1960s,<sup>4</sup> taking primarily non-political form as literary, cultural, scientific or sports clubs. Seeking niches where official ideology would not intrude, Soviets set up amateur groups to study philosophy, art, history, religion and folklore, to sing folk songs and to watch and discuss films. Instead of persecuting such associations as real or potential conspiracies, Soviet authorities generally left them alone. Police subjected individual non-conformists -- such as poet Joseph Brodsky, history student Andrei Amalrik, mathematician Alexander Yesenin-Volpin, writers Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel -- to imprisonment or psychiatric detention without necessarily harassing their circles of friends.

Benign neglect, however, shifted to purposeful repression when the activities of some of these early informal groups took on a political cast. Young Muscovites who had caroused together as members of SMOG, initials that stood either for nothing or for the "Society of Young Geniuses," found themselves in psychiatric wards and prison camps after they helped organize protests over the 1965 arrest and 1966 conviction of Sinyavsky and Daniel. Spokesmen for the Crimean Tartars (See Chapter 5), exiled en masse to Central Asia in 1944, were similarly punished when they

campaigned openly to recover their ancestral lands.

But as arrests followed protests of previous arrests, the small community of human rights advocates stubbornly persisted. Beginning in 1968, the editors of the samizdat publication, Chronicle of Current Events, recorded not only the oppression of others but the imprisonment of their own colleagues. Unofficial publications appeared in Lithuania, the Ukraine and elsewhere and kept circulating even as their founders disappeared into the gulag. By mid-1976, when activists in Moscow, Kiev and Vilnius -- followed by others in Yerevan and Tbilisi -- formed separate but loosely connected Public Groups to Promote Compliance with the Helsinki Accords in the USSR -- known as the Helsinki Groups -- the authorities faced a thin but wide network of civil protest.

In it Jews and Volga Germans seeking to leave the Soviet Union interacted with the Moscow intelligentsia campaigning for legal and political reforms, with Catholics and Baptists demanding respect for their religious beliefs and with nationalists from the Baltics to the Caucasus urging linguistic, cultural and, in some instances, political autonomy. The penalty for such organized temerity was harsh repression -- terms of imprisonment or internal exile for many of the leading figures in different groups, forced emigration for others. By early 1980, when Nobel laureate Andrei Sakharov was exiled from Moscow to Gorki, the multi-faceted human rights movement for which he had

been the best-known spokesman appeared decimated and moribund.

At the same time, however, independent-minded associations -- rock groups, sports clubs, amateur choirs and theaters, poetry circles and seminars on religion and philosophy -- that kept their political profiles low or non-existent managed to proliferate. And even this evidence of social energy outside official control alarmed Soviet authorities. Writing in Kommunist in 1981, the late Semyon Tsvigun, deputy chairman of the KGB under Yuri Andropov, noted gloomily that he had observed a growing tendency towards the creation of "various unions, `clubs,' theaters and seminars made up of anti-social elements, which are a counterweight to existing social associations and organizations of working people."<sup>5</sup>

#### Mixed and Muddled: The Official Response

Despite such official grumbling, the numbers of informal groups, swelling before Gorbachev came to power, have risen dramatically in recent years. In October, 1984, for instance, the Ministry of Culture counted just 29,352 amateur musical groups in the USSR. But seven months later the journal Smena reported that authorities had registered 160,00 electrical guitar ensembles and that in the Moscow region roughly one band out of three went unregistered. Apparently excluding rock bands but without precisely defining the kinds of groups it was tallying, a Pravda editorial of December 27, 1987 spoke of more than 30,000

amateur associations then in the USSR. Again without explanatory detail, a February 10, 1989 Pravda editorial gave the total as 60,000.

Even that figure is likely to be a gross undercounting. More plausible, but still far from definitive, are estimates that can be drawn from the work of various Soviet sociologists: between 800,000 and 3.15 million unofficial youth groups of which nearly ten percent can be considered political discussion or action groups with anywhere from 1.2 to 4.7 million members between the ages of 14 and 30. (For a detailed discussion of these statistics and their sources, see Appendix I, "Counting the Informals.")

Not only can Soviet authorities not determine the size of the phenomenon they face, they have also failed to find coherent responses to it. Alternating among persecution, confrontation, cooptation and collaboration, Party and government officials have most of all revealed themselves as nonplussed and defensive in the face of what the 1987 Pravda editorial admitted was "an unusual and unexpected" manifestation of initiative "from below."

While that and later editorials attempted to set criteria for treating different informal groups according to whether their work aided or undermined state institutions, the theoretical distinction has not stood up in practice.

On one hand, the 1987 editorialist for the Party Central Committee's authoritative daily urged Soviets "not to fear

popular initiative, no matter in what sphere it appears." But the Pravda line also showed how ambivalent officials really are about the informal groups. The paper criticized those "which under the banner of voluntary organizations openly conduct provocative work, advocating the creation of opposition parties, 'free' trade unions ...[which] without the consent of the authorities, organize demonstrations and at times even disorders ... [and] publish and illegally disseminate documents which are hostile to socialism."

If those strictures were meant as guidelines for official conduct, they have proved unworkable. Instead of drawing a clear line between tolerated and prohibited "initiative 'from below,'" the editorial and subsequent practice have only shown how Soviet leaders are caught between their hopes that the informal groups will help them shake society out of apathy and their fears that such free-wheeling talk and action will erase Communism's ideological monopoly and political base.

In their uncertainty, Soviet law-enforcement and ideological bodies are having to improvise their responses to the activism of the informals. Except for dropping such once-familiar punitive tools as long-term imprisonment or psychiatric detention, the authorities have developed no one identifiable strategy for differentiating among the informal groups and dealing with their leaders. Some examples of the range and variety of official response follow.

\* Arrests and Detentions: Although some political arrests have been made for unauthorized demonstrations, rather than the lengthy sentences of the past, activists who are detained -- and thousands have been during 1988 and 1989 -- have generally been released within three hours or, at worst, sentenced by administrative ruling to 10-to-15-day jail terms or 50-to-100-ruble fines, going as high as 2,000 rubles for repeat offenders. Activists have also been beaten both in police stations and on the streets.

- o In July 1987 in Moscow and on August 4, 1988 in Lvov, dogs were used to disperse demonstrations of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians, respectively.
- o On August 23, 1988, members of peace groups who protested on the 20th anniversary of the invasion of Czechoslovakia were beaten, dispersed, and detained.
- o On October 30, 1988, in Minsk, demonstrators were dispersed with rubber truncheons and gas, and several were injured.
- o On April 9, 1989, a peaceful rally was dispersed by special troops and regular army. Sharpened shovels, tear gas and another poison gas were used to disperse the crowd, and troops killed at least 20 demonstrators. (See Chapter X.)
- o Paruir Ayrikyan, a long-time political prisoner and founder of the Armenian National Unification Party, was arrested in March, 1988, in Yerevan (?) in the wake of massive popular unrest over Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. Detained until July, 1989, he was hustled in handcuffs to the Yerevan airport, then flown via Moscow under armed guard to Ethiopia, where he asked for political asylum in the United States.
- o In December, 1988, 11 Armenians, leaders of the Karabakh Committee, were arrested and held without charge or trial in a Moscow prison until their release May 31, 1989 and their return to emotional public acclaim on the streets of

Yerevan. Having been imprisoned to quash their Committee's push to transfer Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijani to Armenian rule, these activists won remarkable vindication when the Armenian Republic legislature in June officially registered the grass-roots nationalist group, the Armenian All-National Movement, acknowledging the Karabakh Committee as its founder.<sup>6</sup>

\* Interrogations/Searches: Few political cases have been prosecuted in the glasnost era, but occasionally authorities open up an investigation as a way of intimidating dissenters. House searches are less frequent, but are still used both to intimidate and confiscate "incriminating" material. The new powers granted to special Internal Ministry Troops in July 1988 allow for warrantless searches. Troops enforcing martial law in Armenia, Azerbaidzhan, Georgia, Abkhazia, and the Fergana Valley searched numerous homes and confiscated both registered and unregistered firearms; leading Georgian nationalists were detained when troops broke into their homes after the April 9 massacre.

- o One target of police harassment in many places has been the Democratic Union, a political party in embryo that was formed in May, 1988 by representatives from 27 Soviet cities to press the cause of multi-party politics and free elections. (See Chapter 4 for details.) Dozens of its young members in Leningrad -- as well as some not affiliated to the Union -- have been summoned for interrogation in connection with Case # 64, a criminal investigation opened up on Article 70 charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." In addition to undergoing searches of their residences -- which have also occurred in Sverdlovsk and Saratov -- some activists have forcibly been brought in for questioning after they refused to answer police summonses.

- o In September 1989, the apartment of the head of the Independent Psychiatric Association, a group which has exposed continued abuse of psychiatry in the Gorbachev era and has challenged the officially-recognized psychiatric organization, was searched and ransacked. Documents and

individual testimonies about abuse were confiscated.

Compared to pre-glasnost days, however, criminal sanctions or even the threat of them have been rare. What was once extremely dangerous underground activity can now go unpunished.

- o In two Ukrainian cities in Ternopol oblast, members of secret youth organizations escaped arrest when their activities -- raising the Ukrainian national flag in Chortkiv, distributing leaflets in Zbarazh -- were discovered.<sup>7</sup>

\* Confrontation: Particularly in dealing with the demands of environmental groups, local Soviet officials have been quicker to condemn the protesters than to move against the hazards the informals identify and attack. On more than one occasion, however, central government or Party figures have sided with the ecologists, even overruling officials on the scene.

- o In the Siberian city of Irkutsk, local authorities in 1987 energetically harassed citizens who tried to stop construction of a pipeline to carry untreated factory wastes into a river upstream from the city's water supply. Informals who tried to collect signatures in public on an anti-pipeline petition faced threats to their jobs, and several Party members received formal reprimands for taking part in the drive. Enterprise directors, Party and Komsomol secretaries were warned not to let protest letters be distributed in their institutions, and officials ordered work to start on the pipeline.

In response, the 30-member initiative group leading the protest called for a rally in Irkutsk's central square. Not only did the authorities try to tear down flyers announcing the meeting and warn school and factory audiences not to attend it, they also sent photographs of those who came to the public protest anyway to their places of employment so that the disobedient could be chastised. After the rally itself, activists who had set up the public stand for the original petition were detained by police.

Although the local press took the side of the city bosses, central Moscow papers backed the ecologists. The dispute was

resolved when a government commission cancelled the decision to build the pipeline, but relations afterwards remained tense between the Irkutsk informal groups and local authorities.<sup>8</sup>

o In the city of Ufa in the Bashkir Autonomous Republic, Party leaders endorsed public protests against building a chemical plant in the city in 1987 and after a "Clean Air for Ufa" rally brought out some 2,000 citizens, even made their own official request to the USSR Council of Ministers to shift the polluting enterprises. Soon afterwards, however, the local Party committee newspaper attacked the activists who had organized around the issue and accused them of "engaging in politics." The central government newspaper Izvestiya defended the Ufa informal groups.<sup>9</sup>

\* Coopt or compete While the rise of the informal groups poses a challenge to official Soviet institutions of all sorts, the League of Young Communists (Komsomol) has been the most energetic in its attempts to keep restless youth within its organizational confines. To the extent that young people have been drawn in large numbers to the informals, the Komsomol, which admits having lost 3.5 million members<sup>10</sup>, faces stiffer direct competition than the Communist Party and has resorted most often to tactics based on the maxim, "if you can't beat them, join them."

o Komsomol members packed the January, 1988 of the fledgling Federation of Socialist Civic Clubs (FSOK) and managed, at its March conference, to elect a number of Komsomol representatives to the FSOK council. That partial victory failed, however, to put the Federation or its nine constituent clubs under full Komsomol control. But this and other internal pressures eventually contributed to the dissolution of FSOK by the end of the year. (See Chapter 4 for details.)

The Komsomol has one major advantage in its dealings with the informals: ownership of the means of political production -- meeting space, presses and other technical facilities. It has used these assets in various ways to try to keep a host's control

over unruly guests.

- o In Leningrad, a Komsomol-created Center for Creative Initiative encouraged a number of cultural, ecological and social activities on which the parent organization could keep a watchful eye.

- o In Tallinn, Baku and Petropavlovsk-na-Kamchatka, the Komsomol city committees themselves organized political discussion clubs.

- o In Moscow and Leningrad, however, a similar maneuver backfired when members of internationalist youth clubs -- the Che Guevara Brigade, for one -- turned from assigned studies of the revolutionary process in new Marxist regimes in Third-World countries to reviving the ideas of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union. These clubs, by then highly critical of the bureaucratized Soviet regime, were among the ones that joined FSOK.

As well as trying to coopt the informals, Soviet authorities have also attempted to lure their members into official organizations that seem to mirror the views and goals that the independents proclaim. Thus, the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace (SCDP), a long-established Party front, tried to insert itself between Soviet peace activists and their Western counterparts. (See Chapter 3.) The SCDP also founded its own environmental group, Zelyoniy Mir (Green World), which has drawn in and given official status to several groups, including the Khortitsa Committee and Ecology and the Twenty-First Century activist informals. More recently -- in November, 1987 -- the Public Commission for International Cooperation on Humanitarian Problems and Human Rights was formed in part to preempt contacts between Soviet human rights campaigners and Helsinki Accord support groups abroad. (See Chapter 2.) Instead of taming their

rivals, however, the officially backed competitors have sometimes -- in the Baltic republics, especially -- found themselves outpaced and even taken over by public opinion that moves too fast for the authorities to control.

A Komsomol propaganda department working paper, marked "secret," but obtained in 1987 by editors of the samizdat journal, Otkrytaya Zona (Open Zone), reveals the dilemma that independent activism poses for Soviet authorities trying to deal with all informals, not just youth groups. On one hand, the paper alerts local Komsomol chapters that "uncontrolled activity of youth associations, especially those of a socio-political nature, is impermissible." On the other hand, it recommends against punitive repression of the independents, advocating instead that "highly educated, active Komsomol members" work inside the informal groups to "sever the majority of the members of socio-political clubs from the extremist-minded leaders."<sup>11</sup>

#### Conclusion: A New Civil Order

In practice, that strategy is failing. In fact, in the upper political echelons of the Soviet regime, different factions and individuals are acting as patrons and rivals for differing political and social informal organizations. In some of the Baltic and Caucasus republics, Communist Party officials are themselves openly active in support of nationalist movements, pressing the case for autonomy, even secession. In the Soviet

capital, both the right-wing nationalists of Pamyat' (Memory) and the liberal reformers of Democratic Perestroika enjoy high-level political backing. And, as already noted, environmental activists who challenge local authorities can often muster support from the national press.

One way and another, the informal groups have drawn the Soviet authorities into dialogue and thus helped put the regime and its citizens in two-way touch with each other for the first time in decades. As the vocal, visible expression of a qualitatively new Soviet society, the informals have narrowed the gap between rulers and ruled by giving the latter platforms on which to stand and demand change and levers to use in order to achieve their demands.

The relationship between the Soviet political establishment and the new civil society, however, is not yet either fully cooperative or inherently stable. The new arrangements are makeshift, and the entire structure is subject to collapse if great volatility inside the USSR were to touch off wide-scale violence and disorders. Even then, however, it is unthinkable for the Soviet Union to put on again the seemingly monolithic face it once presented to itself and the world.

The question that is often raised in the current unstable situation is: how reliable is the trend towards glasnost and democratization when it is declared "from above"? If there are personnel changes in the leadership -- if Gorbachev were to go --

will the rulers not step back from their chosen course? A pirouette of this type is certainly quite possible at the top.

Moreover, a change in the attitude of Gorbachev and his team towards the independent public movement, as well as the attitude of the informal groups towards Gorbachev can clearly be traced. In the summer of 1988, when the opponents of change were eliminated from the political arena, and the Gorbachev team concentrated power into their hands, reformers stopped needing the support from below against their opponents. They began, instead, to perceive pressure from below as a destabilizing factor aimed at them.

Not only did this shift mark the speeches of the delegates to the XIX Party Conference. It took concrete form at the end of July 1988, in decrees issued to restrict rallies and demonstrations, dangerously expanding the opportunities for the use of force against unauthorized demonstrators. And the decrees, known to and approved by Gorbachev, were followed by a whole slate of anti-democratic laws: alteration of the electoral system from direct to multi-staged; amendments to the Constitution restricting the sovereignty of the Union republics; new regulations restricting the activities of cooperatives; and finally, a new Supreme Soviet Presidium decree, issued April 8, 1989, placing limits on freedom of speech.

All these decrees and laws were aimed in the first instance against the most active part of society -- the informal groups.

If Gorbachev's supporters, who had come to power, were attacking the informal groups openly at the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, then Gorbachev had already joined them by December 1988, when he said during his post-earthquake trip to Armenia that the movement there constituted "illegal pressure on the government." He blamed "extremists," whom he linked with "corrupt elements" for everything happening in the republic. Immediately after Gorbachev's statement, officials arrested members of the Karabakh Committee and increased pressure everywhere on the informals and independent publications.

Despite such tactics, authorities cannot hope to return the society of today to its previous mute and passive status. Thus the mass movements "from below" -- more than the celebrated figures of Gorbachev and his best aides -- are the guarantee for a more hopeful future. In order for those very real social forces to be destroyed, society would have to be once again forcibly atomized; as in Stalin's day, the numerous informal groups themselves would have to be destroyed and the links connecting them broken.

Should the regime try such oppression, it would confront not only the informal groups that express political goals; the groups that are now neutral on political matters will rise up as well -- that is, virtually the whole of society. The existing network of informal groups is capable of resisting -- and it will resist. The informality of its links and the entire form of the structure

itself guarantees both its solidity and flexibility, and its elusiveness when it comes to state pressure.

Many of the informal groups, after all, do not owe their existence to Gorbachev. They were born by themselves in the gloomiest of the Brezhnev years, multiplied in the very unfavorable climate of Andropov's reign, and survived despite the counter-opposition of the apparatus of power. Since that time, they have not only increased many-fold, they have gained both ideological and organizational strength, including the sympathy of their fellow countrymen. The scale of this sympathy has been demonstrated by the events surrounding the emergence of national-democratic movements in the Baltic republics, Armenia, Georgia, Byelorussia and Moldavia, and in Russia, by the ecological demonstrations and the popular "cross-off campaigns" aimed at the Party apparatus during the 1989 elections.

In the mass nature and variety of the informal groups can be seen the major success of the process of democratization underway in the USSR, and the chief guarantee of its irreversibility and indestructibility. Informal groups will continue this process, no matter what form the resistance from above takes.

1. From Below: Independent Peace and Environmental Movements in Eastern Europe & the USSR, A Helsinki Watch Report, October, 1987, New York, p. 108.
2. quoted in Adam Ulam, Russia's Failed Revolutions, Basic Books, New York, 1981, p. 81.
3. [Original footnote 1.]
4. [Original footnote 2.]
5. [Original footnote 3]
6. Esther B. Fein, "Freed Armenian Prisoners Find Their Cause Very Much Alive," The New York Times, August 27, 1989, p. 18.
7. [Original footnote 138]
8. [Original footnotes 71 and 150.]
9. [Original footnotes 70 and 149.]
10. Note to Soviet Youth statistics table.
11. [Original footnote 139.]

CHAPTER 2  
HUMAN RIGHTS AND INDEPENDENT PRESS

Both because of their antecedents in the Brezhnev-era Helsinki Groups, their broad advocacy of measures to put legal limits on the power of the state, and their promotion of civil rights for everyone, the Soviet human rights groups are among the most important of the groups although they are few in number.

While many of the best-known human-rights campaigners of earlier years are either dead, in exile abroad or newly active as leaders of open nationalist political movements, their legacy lives on in the work of committees born in the age of glasnost to defend individual human dignity and civil rights and has found fresh expression in a range of independent publications.

Defending Political Prisoners

The first of the new breed -- groups formed by recently released political prisoners to campaign for the freedom of those still interned -- came to life in Armenia in May, 1987 and in Georgia on June 15 of that year.<sup>1</sup> The Armenian group, whose initial aim was to free Ashot Navasardyan and Azat Arshakyan from the special-regimen labor camp, changed its name after their release that summer and on August 26, 1987 became the Armenian Committee to Defend Political Prisoners. Working for all -- not just Armenians -- prisoners of conscience, the group began to publish an information bulletin in both Armenian and Russian.

After a Working Group to Defend Ukrainian Political Prisoners was formed at the start of September, the Armenian Committee and

it first coalesced into a joint body and then, together with the Georgian group, formed an Inter-republic Committee to defend Political Prisoners that met for the first time in Yerevan, January 12-14, 1988. In its first appeal to the Soviet government, the committee called for the democratic resolution of nationality questions -- the cause for which the majority of still-incarcerated political prisoners had fought. The statement specifically asked that each Union republic amend its constitutions to make its native languages its official one, to make it the language in which all state institutions -- including educational and cultural facilities -- worked and to make its study mandatory for all.

Going beyond the immediate cause of freedom for political prisoners, the Inter-republic Committee also called on Soviet authorities to restore the rights and to send back to their homelands the peoples deported under Stalin and to guarantee the right of national minorities residing in communities on the territories of other republics to reunite with their own people. Additionally, the statement appealed for a ban on building nuclear power stations and dangerous chemical plants in republics with little land and high population and for authorities to weigh the availability of local manpower before planning new construction projects that would bring in so many migrant workers as to upset the national character of the host republic.<sup>2</sup>

Even though a March 20 meeting in Tbilisi brought the Inter-

republic Committee back to its core agenda -- decisions to collect signatures calling for the release of political prisoners in the Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia, to exchange uncensored, independent publications among the three republics and to seek a direct link with Amnesty International <sup>3</sup> -- the January appeal reflected a contradiction that is not uncommon among Soviet organizations committed to both civil and national rights. The opposition to Slavic migration into the non-Russian republics, for instance, shows how emphasis on national self-determination can conflict with basic civil rights such as freedom of movement and the right to choose one's residence. Where interest groups clash, an early concern for free expression can easily lead to political struggle. That process is not inevitable, however. New associations have appeared that are concerned primarily with political prisoners.

On September 20, 1987, an Initiative Group to Conduct Demonstrations for the Release of Political Prisoners was formed in Moscow. Its members distributed leaflets with a call to hold regular demonstrations to free the political prisoners<sup>4</sup>[94]. They frequently staged such demonstrations themselves, usually with just a few participants, ranging from one-man protests to groups of five or six people. Virtually every issue of USSR News Brief, a human rights bulletin published in Munich, starting from September 1987 through 1988, has a report about such demonstrations.

The Committee to Defend Paruir Ayrikyan was also formed in

Moscow on April 18, 1988, after he gave a press conference in Moscow publicizing the victims of the violence in Sumgait and was arrested. Civil rights activists from Armenia, Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia joined<sup>5</sup>[95]. Since the formation of these committees, a number of prominent intellectuals -- some of whom went on to become deputies in the new Congress --spoke on behalf of political prisoners, particularly in defense of the imprisoned Armenian activists in the Karabakh Committee.

#### Helsinki Groups

Press Club Glasnost, a group of prominent veteran civil rights activists and former political prisoners including Larisa Bogoraz, Sergei Kovalyov, Lev Timofeyev and others held its first meeting on July 7, 1987.<sup>6</sup> [96].\* Press Club Glasnost aimed to provide a forum for expressing and discussing socially relevant problems for people with differing opinions and world views. The format of a press club, i.e. a place to hold press conferences or seminars, presupposes that the discussions would take place on the record with the press, but not in the form of an organization or program. As at most open meetings of Soviet informal societies

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\*N.B. There has often been confusion between the magazine Glasnost and the Club Glasnost; they are distinctly separate and do not work together. Although some of the members of the Club were involved in forming the journal's editorial board, they all split off in 1987, leaving the editor, Sergei Grigoryants, to publish the journal with another group of people.

Western journalists are more likely to attend than official Soviet press. In their first year Press Club Glasnost members tried but failed to attract Soviet press and public figures to the scheduled functions. While the rare mentions of Press Club Glasnost in the official press have been sharply hostile, contacts with the foreign press and public have been far more successful. Eventually, however, Press Club Glasnost members did meet several times with officials from the Foreign Ministry's Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

Two months after it was launched, the Press Club organized the Moscow International Seminar on Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights. Conceived as a permanent body, the seminar was intended to insure public participation in preparations for the CSCE-nations' conference on human rights in Moscow in September 1991, a meeting proposed by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in November 1986.

At the first session of the International Seminar in December 1987, 11 working groups tackled a wide range of humanitarian problems and human rights issues: international trust and disarmament; social and economic rights; nationalities problems; freedom of religion; freedom of speech; human contacts and emigration; humanitarian aspects of ecological problems; the rights of the disabled and other socially-dependent groups; judicial guarantees of human rights and citizens' defense of the rights of the individual.<sup>7</sup>[97]

When Press Club Glasnost publicly endorsed the idea of holding a human rights conference in Moscow, it called on the Soviet government to set the stage for the meeting by eliminating human rights violations. But as the seminar organizers began to ready materials for the conference, Soviet authorities answered their loyal, non-oppositional stance with hostility. When the organizers tried to rent halls to hold the plenary and closing sessions for all participants of the working groups, the authorities thwarted them on various pretexts. A catering hall had to be closed suddenly for purported health code violations. Another hall was suddenly locked. Such tactics forced the delegates to break up immediately into working groups and to meet in private apartments.

Nevertheless, about 400 people took part, mainly from Moscow and other cities in the USSR, with 30 foreign guests, including representatives from the International Helsinki Federation and one activist from the Czechoslovak human rights movement Charter 77, who managed to make it to Moscow. They provided about 200 varied presentations and news reports and made the seminar the first human rights event to be held on such a large scale in Moscow in the history of the Soviet civil rights movement. The papers read at the seminar were collected and abridged in a 50-page summary document -- available in English from Helsinki Watch -- which synthesized all the hopes of independent public movements in the USSR for observance of human rights.

Submitted to Soviet authorities, it was the first major joint statement on civil rights and political liberties in the glasnost era and a means of restoring the ties that the human rights movements had established before the persecution of the early 1980s. The Press Club also formed links with new informal groups that had emerged in the glasnost era and made contacts with the international human rights and peace movements. Press Club Glasnost became a part of the international citizens' Helsinki movement, and at an annual meeting in October 1987, was accepted by unanimous vote as an affiliate member of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, headquartered in Vienna, Austria.

In 1988, the seminar held a session on the nationalities issue in the USSR and produced extensive materials on the problems of nationalities and minorities in the various republics of the USSR. It also held sessions on social and economic problems, and emigration and human contact.

In July 1989, the members of Press Club Glasnost announced that they were reorganizing their group in order to reconstitute the Moscow Helsinki Group, disbanded in 1982 after the arrest of most of its members. The new Moscow Helsinki Group incorporates some of the original Helsinki monitors and continues the tradition of citizens' civil rights monitoring. The chair of the Moscow Helsinki Group is Larisa Bogoraz, widow of Anatoly Marchenko, a Helsinki activist who died in labor camp. Other

members include biologist and former political prisoner Sergei Kovalyov. In October, Moscow News carried a notice of the reopening of the Helsinki Group.<sup>8</sup> The first statement issued by the group in July urged the Soviet government to pass legislation regulating the declaration of states of emergency.

Founded on October 6, 1987, the Moscow Branch of the International Human Rights Society is an affiliate of the Gesellschaft fur Menschenrechte (International Human Rights Society) in Frankfurt-am-Main in West Germany. The Moscow Society, whose founders are Aleksandr Ogorodnikov, Valery Senderov, Kirill Popov and Pavel Slavkin-Borovsky, records human rights violations in the USSR and reports them in documents sent to various international agencies. Unlike Press Club Glasnost, the Moscow Human Rights Society categorically opposes holding the planned CSCE conference on human rights in Moscow. The Society also has a Leningrad section, whose leading member is Rostislav Yevdokimov.[99]

Besides the Press Club Glasnost and the branches of the International Human Rights Society in the USSR, other groups that participate in the Helsinki movement are the Ukrainian and Lithuanian Helsinki Groups, which were resurrected after some of their founding members were returned from imprisonment and internal exile. The Ukrainian group, for instance, announced its rebirth on March 11, 1988 as the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, subscribed to by 20 members of whom seven had not previously been

publicly involved in such work. When the Lithuanian Helsinki group reappeared in May 1988, two of its members were from the original body. (See chapter 5 for more on the activities of Helsinki activists freed from confinement.)

As a counterweight to the Press Club Glasnost, whose members include some of the best-known veteran civil rights campaigners in the USSR, on November 30, 1987, the Public Commission for International Cooperation on Humanitarian Problems and Human Rights announced its formation. Formally attached to the Soviet Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (SKEBS in the Russian acronym), the Public Commission claims that the Soviet CSCE, and by extension, the Commission itself, are "nongovernmental," independent organizations, financed by the Soviet Peace Fund, which in turn receives voluntary donations from numerous individual Soviet citizens. While formally they may be NGOs, or nongovernmental organizations, it may be more accurate to describe them as GONGOs, or government-organized NGOs.

Many groups in the West have invested an enormous amount of energy in determining whether such approved groups are in fact non-governmental by trying to learn if they are financed by government ministries, or worse, infiltrated or staffed outright by KGB agents. What really measures independence, however, is an organization's program and the degree of freedom and criticism it manifests from the official prevailing line of the government.

A rather moribund organization, the Soviet CSCE is located in

the building of the Soviet Peace Fund on Kropotkinskaya Street, but it is apparently not formally attached to either the Soviet Foreign Ministry, the Soviet of Ministers or some other body. It is one of the "organs of mass movement" without a mass movement -- an office without any accountability to the actual public. Unlike its formal counterpart, the U.S. CSCE, a hybrid executive and congressional commission, the Soviet CSCE never seemed to play a very large role in actual CSCE talks, which were staffed by Soviet Foreign Ministry aides. The fact that the head of the Soviet CSCE, Nikolai Tolkunov, who held the nominal post of speaker of the Supreme Soviet, was one of the 100 aging apparatchiks purged from the Central Committee during a special Party meeting in April 1989, may give some idea of the significance of the CSCE. Nevertheless, it is a "structure" that is still in place; the acting director, E. Silin, attends all major human rights conferences, for example, and personally handles day-to-day affairs regarding human rights.

Although the degree of dependency on the government is difficult to prove concerning the CSCE's offshoot, the Public Commission, there are a number of indications that it was first a creature of the Central Committee's Department of Ideology. Andrei Grachev, a Department division chief, but since then transferred to foreign relations was present at the founding meeting of the Public Commission and is listed as a member of the organization. The fact that his affiliation with the Central

Committee's Ideology Department was not shown in that list, where he is identified as merely "a historian," is not necessarily evidence of a wish to conceal his role. Grachev has written a number of signed articles in the Soviet press, where his title was shown, defining changes in the official Soviet position on human rights matters and contacts with Westerners on the subject.

The importance of the Public Commission is in its role as a liberal but loyal supporter of Gorbachev's campaigns. In fact, it is authorized to be about five minutes ahead of the official pace. The Public Commission is headed by Prof. Fyodor M. Burlatsky, a frequent political commentator for Literaturnaya gazeta and also a professor of the Institute for Social Science, attached to the Central Committee. One of Khrushchev's speechwriters, Burlatsky was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and also in Soviet meetings with China 30 years ago. After Khrushchev's ouster, Burlatsky fell from favor only to surface with Gorbachev as one of his one hundred or so close advisors; he is part of the foreign policy group around Georgy Shakhnazarov, an aide to Shevardnadze. Burlatsky accompanied the Gorbachev team to the Soviet-American summits at Reykjavik and Washington, D.C. and has become identified as a spokesman for the reforms and about human rights and legal issues in the press. For a time, he was a leading shaper of the public discussion in the press about human rights and general reform. But after the surge of public activism around the March elections, other establishment liberals of equal

or greater importance emerged, people like historian Yury Afanasyev or scientist Roald Sagdeyev, as well as the well-known human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov, who were elected to the Congress of Peoples' Deputies and who took more outspoken positions on a number of crucial human rights issues, such as the continuing detention of the Karabakh Committee members; the massacre of peaceful Georgian demonstrators; and the passing of a new decree restricting free speech. Nonetheless, Burlatsky demonstrated his access to power by gaining a seat in the new Supreme Soviet, elected from the Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Few other liberals were able to pass through the eye of that particular needle.

The other members of the 55-person Public Commission include prominent Soviet writers, scientists, lawyers, and church leaders.

Only a dozen or so of the 55 are active in the Commission and have met with foreigners, and some of them were not even aware that they were put on the list. Most of the 55 have what are known as "good reputations" in the Soviet Union, i.e. they may have cooperated with the system, but did not actually engage in human rights abuse. They include people like the writers Danil Granin and Vladimir Dudintsev and legal scholars Ernst Ametistov and Veniamin Yakovlev. There are two notable exceptions to this otherwise respectable roster: Georgy Morozov, former head of the Serbsky Institute, who was responsible for the detention of sane dissidents in mental hospitals; and Samuel Zivs, former head of

the Anti-Zionist Committee, a notorious apologist for repression of Jewish refuseniks.

The Public Commission has many privileges in comparison to Press Club Glasnost or any other independent human rights group. Unlike most unregistered groups, it has an office and meeting space; it can invite any public organization from the West to the USSR, and the guests invited will receive entry visas into the Soviet Union. Finally, Commission members are permitted to travel at will in the West and are constantly seen abroad. In fact, the vigorous activities of the commissioners abroad have moved some Western observers to note that for the Soviet Union, the subject of human rights seems to have gone from being purely "an internal affair" to becoming a foreign affair. Using these advantages, the Commission tries to lure away to its own programs the Western non-governmental groups who might have cooperated with independent groups like the Press Club Glasnost.<sup>9</sup>[154]

There is no question that the Public Commission is positioning itself to play the leading role among the Soviet NGOs at the conference on human rights scheduled for the fall of 1991 in Moscow. It remains to be seen how much access to public discussion it will tolerate from the numerous other independent groups that have blossomed throughout the Soviet republics, many of whom have monitored human rights far more vigorously than the Commission and have become the victims of human rights abuse themselves.

### Watching Back: Monitoring Official Misconduct

A group calling itself Civil Dignity, a phrase that had become a catch-word in the USSR to signify the new-found pride of civil society, was founded September 10, 1987, to establish public oversight of the Soviet judicial system. The leading activist is Victor Zolotaryov. Civil Dignity has tried to win review of court cases that appear fabricated, to correct judicial errors and to exonerate innocent people sentenced unjustly.

Civil Dignity had hoped to expose, and, in effect, to disbar professionally incompetent employees of the investigative and criminal justice agencies who have tolerated due process violations. Seeking restitution for material and psychological damages suffered by victims of improper judicial investigations and miscarriages of justice, the club also wanted to campaign for improvements in the current system to defend those under investigation.<sup>10</sup> [104] Very quickly, however, group members became convinced that they could not really help the victims of the Soviet criminal justice system without having an official status that would give them access to the officials responsible for either committing or rectifying legal abuse.

They then decided to band together with other informal associations, including Glasnost magazine, the Moscow Human Rights Society, the Trust Group and Freedom of Emigration for Everyone. On September 22, 1988, they formed a Committee for Social Defense

(KSZ), independent of its constituent individual organizations, to work on the same principle as Amnesty International. While KSZ members write letters to all the officials involved, urging them to deal with certain cases, they differ from Amnesty practice in working only on cases in their own country. In 1989, KSZ split into two groups. One is under the aegis of SMOT (Free Interprofessional Trade Union). The head of the other KSZ is Vyacheslav Rebrov, and the group has sections in approximately 10 Soviet cities.<sup>11</sup> Clubs active in Riga, Vilnius, Kaunas, Chelyabinsk, Novosibirsk and Vinnitsa known as Socially Active People also proclaimed their intention to investigate official misuse of authority and expose crimes committed by representatives of authorities.<sup>12</sup>[102] Civil Dignity went on to form a proto-party group called the Constitutional Democrats.

Human rights clubs also became active in Krasnoyarsk and Sverdlovsk in 1986. A group called Rally `87 emerged in Sverdlovsk in 1987, and took up the rights to freedom of association and expression in particular. These groups are also fighting for justice in the distribution of living benefits and against the special stores for the Party elite closed to the public, and so on.<sup>13</sup> [103]

The first civil rights organization to appear in the city of Gorlovka in the Donetsk Region, the Chaadayev Fund, was founded [when?] by Anatoly Glants to help those who, like him, have been victims of psychiatric repression. It recalls Pyotr Chaadayev, a

19th century Russian philosopher, declared insane by order of the tsar for his critical writings on social issues in 1836. Forbidden to publish, Chaadayev lived under virtual house arrest for many years. The Fund publishes information about politically-motivated involuntary hospitalizations and provides material and moral support to victims of psychiatric abuse and their families<sup>14</sup> [115].

### Religious Freedom

Besides the associations defending the whole spectrum of civil rights, there are groups in the USSR which focus attention on single issues, several of which defend the rights of religious believers.

The oldest of them is the Council of Relatives of Prisoners of the Evangelical Baptist Christians founded on February 23, 1964. When all Baptist prisoners were released in 1987 and 1988, this group reorganized itself on September 25, 1988, into a section of the independent Evangelical Baptist Christian Church as the Department of Intervention for Those Suffering in the Name of Christ.<sup>15</sup>

The Catholic Committee to Defend Believers Rights in Lithuania was founded in 1978. [104] Although most of the clergy among its members were arrested in the 1970s and early 1980s, it continued to publish regular reports throughout this period. Individuals associated with the Committee published the Chronicle

of the Catholic Church in Lithuania, the foremost samizdat publication on the persecution of the Church before glasnost, and one that is now printed openly.

In Latvia, fifteen Lutheran pastors -- soon joined by four others -- founded a group called Rebirth and Renewal on June 14, 1987, to defend Christians' rights. The chief purpose of the group was to oppose state interference in the internal affairs of the Lutheran Church. Rebirth and Renewal members of lobby for access by the church to state-owned radio and television and for the opportunity to publish a church newspaper, open a publishing house for religious literature and to perform charitable activity.

Although anti-religious statutes still formally prohibit such work, some authorities are taking a more lenient view of charitable activity, recognizing its necessity in impoverished Soviet society.<sup>16</sup> [105]

In 1987 in Estonia [Kamen'opory] (Cornerstone) was founded to gather information about the persecution of believers and to send it to fellow Christians abroad, as well as to defend the rights of believers and help those who wanted to emigrate because of religious persecution. The founders of Cornerstone are Leonty Veremchuk, the pastor of a Methodist church, and his parishioners.<sup>17</sup> [106]

In the autumn of 1987, Pentecostals in Estonia launched Charter 87 with the signatures of 177 founder. By the beginning of 1988, the group had grown to 220 people and stopped accepting

new members. In addition to freedom of religion, Charter '87 -- unaffiliated with the Czechoslovak Charter 77 group -- has fought for the right to emigrate from the USSR for reasons of religious persecution.<sup>18</sup> [107]

In February 1988, a Defense Committee was formed by followers of Hare Krishna to protect persecuted members. Krishna followers from Moscow, Yerevan, Chernigov, Vladimir, Kaunas, Tashkent and Sukhumi joined the group.<sup>19</sup> [108] The Krishna Committee has had some success in gaining the release of its adherents and obtaining permission for a Moscow center to function, although it has not been given a building for its ceremonies. In early 1989, a Soviet Hare Krishna delegation was allowed to travel to India for talks with fellow devotees. But since that time they have been denied travel abroad.

#### Freedom of Emigration

In the 1980s, activists in the Jewish movement to emigrate to Israel also began to form civil rights groups. The oldest of these is the Association of Israeli Citizens Temporarily Residing in the USSR Against Their Will, in existence since 1984. In December 1986, about 100 members staged a hunger strike in support of "prisoners of Zion,"<sup>20</sup> [109], Jewish activists arrested for protesting obstacles against their departure for Israel.

Besides the Association, other active groups are Jewish Women Against Refusal [110] and the Initiative Group to Establish a

Legal Procedure for Application to Emigrate from the USSR. About 40 people joined the group and since September 1, 1987, have been keeping a public book of complaints and suggestions from Soviet refuseniks. They systematically document complaints about the work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs' Administration of Visas and Registration [UVIR] (and OVIR, its local departments) to present them to other Soviet government agencies for review.<sup>21</sup> [111]

In Moscow and Leningrad, since December 1987, another group of refusenik activists, calling themselves the Poor Relatives, have been demonstrating near OVIR offices and at the homes and work places of their relatives who have refused consent for their kin to emigrate because of possible present or future claims of financial support or alimony. One of the many bureaucratic requirements for exit visa applications is parental consent, no matter what the age of the child, and regardless of the financial status of the parent.<sup>22</sup> [113]

On September 26, 1987, in Moscow, the former political prisoners Anatoly Petrunovsky and Vladimir Semenov founded the Initiative Group for Freedom of Emigration for Everyone. The group unites the Soviet citizens who would like to emigrate but who are not covered by the Jewish organizations. The founders, mainly Russian Christians, have been seeking to emigrate, but with very little success. [114] In 1988, they changed their name to Freedom of Migration for Everyone, so that they could deal not

only with emigration, but the problem of obtaining permission to travel abroad in order to work or to migrate within the Soviet Union. This issue particularly affects minorities deported from their homelands by Stalin and still barred from returning in large numbers.

### Independent Publications

Just as the first releases of political prisoners in February 1987 revived the human rights cause, the newly freed activists also began a revival of uncensored publishing all over the Soviet Union. Some bulletins, the very reasons why people had been imprisoned, reappeared as their former selves, but most were completely new, started by young people without a history of repression who took the release of the veteran political prisoners as a sign of a climate safe enough to tolerate such independent press activity.

These new alternative journalists did not use the word *samizdat*, or "self-publication," a word devised in the 1960s to distinguish free but clandestine periodicals from Gosizdat, or state publications. Instead, the editors and reporters preferred to use the word "independent" and to test the troubled waters of glasnost by publicizing, in most cases, the names and addresses of their editors and correspondents and by openly printing their works, often on desk-top computer printers.

Many of the publications are copied unofficially on

duplicating machines, which are still strictly controlled in the USSR. There are no commercial copy shops for the general public, although some new cooperatives can legally do duplicating jobs for certain institutions and get away with independent copying as well. Already, however, informers have on occasion read such material, with the result that it has been destroyed and its unofficial publishers questioned. Now that many more people are active, and with many more institutional connections, a lot of copying is getting done after hours in various research and academic offices as well as those of trade-unions and professional societies. Under current strict regulations, and even under one recent draft of a new press law, such moonlight publishing can lead to charges of "theft of socialist property" against by those unfortunate enough to be caught. So far no trials have taken place on such charges, but the Moscow Musical Pedagogical Institute, for example, was raided by authorities when it was discovered that workers were copying the paper of an unofficial opposition group.

In the Baltic republics, where the activity is the most developed, the alternative press editors openly give their material to state-run printers, and publish newspapers on web presses, rather than copying computer-printed material. In only a few instances have the Baltic publishers been discouraged or harassed by inspections.

Although Gorbachev's glasnost campaign unleashed a torrent of

revelatory material in the official press, that tolerance did not extend to the independents. Even if their bulletins carried the same exposes as the officially-recognized press, the mere fact that they were independent made them vulnerable to official attack, and their lack of access to official data often left them less informed and informative than Establishment journalists writing socio-economic exposes. Still, the information the independents disseminated on civil rights and society provided an important supplement to the official press, which, with few exceptions, had not broken the taboo on frankly discussing former political prisoners or on crises like the states of emergency in Armenia and Azerbaidzhan. When news blackouts were declared for the Western and Soviet official press in these areas, the independent journalists of Glasnost, Express Khronika and others were the only ones able to get the story out to the world. A writer able to publish officially asked the question "Why must we always shut off the glasnost spigot whenever there is a crisis or a catastrophe?"<sup>23</sup> The independent press is there to cover the Gorbachev era's "blank spots."

Many of the publications attached to informal groups involved with single issues like ecology or historical preservation were able to muster patronage from official bodies or institutions. But even they were not immune, and were much less protected than the liberal editors of papers like Ogonyok, Moscow News and Twentieth Century and Peace who, although they have been the frequent

targets of Stalinist or conservative venom, at least have the security of Gorbachev's backing. While the official press uses some information from informal sources, it keeps its distance from those that the authorities designate and persecute as "anti-Constitutional." In fact, it sometimes even joins in the chorus of denunciation, publishing diatribes against Glasnost and other independent journals claiming, for instance, that they are in the pay of foreign secret services.

Most independent journals devote a certain amount of space to the civil rights issues of the day, particularly those that involve their own status or problems. Since all the independent journals are manifestations or, or attempts to exercise, the primary civil right of freedom of expression and the press, they are forced to lobby for these very rights and report regularly on their violation.

Although technically they are not civil rights groups, the editorial boards of the independent human rights publications function as human rights advocates and are essentially the chief rights monitors functioning in the Soviet Union today, carrying on the torch of the Chronicle of Current Events, Helsinki groups and other early civil rights organizations. The most prominent of these are Express Chronicle (weekly, chief editor, Aleksandr Podrabinek); Referendum (bi-weekly, chief editor, Lev Timofeyev); Glasnost (monthly, chief editor, Sergei Grigoryants) and its new off-spring Daily Glasnost, a kind of guide to independent

activities issued daily at first, and now, at least once a week. These journals all operate separately and have differing views on politics and tactics in dealing with the authorities, but they all subscribe to the same principles of human rights embodied in the Helsinki accords.

Other periodicals that work on specific human rights issues like religious freedom are Bulletin of the Council of Relatives of Evangelical Christian Baptist Prisoners and Bulletin of Christian Community (editor, Alexander Ogorodnikov). The Moscow Group to Establish Trust Between the East and West, a pacifist and civil rights group, has two factions that publish, respectively, the journals Trust and Day by Day. Much of their material is about the harassment of their members and the plight of conscientious objectors and people forcibly drafted into the army. Other single-issue or nationalities' rights bulletins include the Information Bulletin of the Group of Long-Term Refuseniks; the Courier of the National Movement of Crimean Tatars; The Ukrainian Herald; the Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church; the Supplementary Materials on Freedom of Dissemination of Ideas and Information in Estonia; the first independent journal in the Latvian language, Auselis; the magazine Glasnost in the Armenian language; Annals, a Georgian-language magazine published by the Chavchavadze Society and many others.

The first congress of publishers of independent journals took place in Leningrad on October 24, 1987 with 50 people representing

20 publications from Moscow, Leningrad and Riga. A joint communique released at the end of the meeting outlined the common problems these publications faced, although they differed in style, political position and issues covered. It concluded that the difficulties encountered in distributing independent publications were largely caused by the state agencies' negative attitude towards them and the fact that Soviet legislation insufficiently protected free speech and assembly. All of these independent publications would have liked to attain the right to establish themselves as legal entities and be registered as cooperatives or some other form of public organization so that their publishers would have official legal status and the rights and privileges that go with it. One of the most important rights, crucial to independent publishing, is of course access to duplicating technology. The editors of independent publications called for an open discussion of the anticipated Law on the Press, which would consider these needs.

On May 7-8, 1988 in Moscow, the second meeting of representatives from independent journals took place with 43 people from Moscow, Leningrad, Riga, Lvov, Kuybyshev, and Pskov representing 31 publications. They passed a joint concluding communique in favor of establishing legislation to provide the right to found publishing cooperatives, of a joint legal service for independent publishing houses that would defend their interests and of the creation of common archives, libraries and

catalogues of samizdat. They decided to form an Independent Press Club to work on the practical side of these questions,<sup>24</sup> [119] uniting the editorial boards of 33 publications from Vilnius, Leningrad, Lvov, Pskov, Riga, Saratov and Sverdlovsk. The club organized the III Conference of representatives of independent publications, which was convened in Moscow on November 19-20, 1988, and attended by people from 58 publications from 10 cities.<sup>25</sup>

#### Writers and Artists

Several informal groups have also been created to promote freedom of artistic expression. The Ukrainian Association of Independent Creative Intelligentsia was established on December 8, 1987, an analogous Moscow Association of Independent Writers was started,<sup>26</sup> [116] and on December 12, 1987, Ukrainian Vyacheslav Chornovil and the Russians Sergei Grigoryants and Zoya Krakhmalnikova, all editors of independent periodicals, founded an Independent Association of Journalists. They were joined by veteran samizdat authors Feliks Svetov and Grigory Pomerants.<sup>27</sup> [117] The Independent Journalists have issued a number of statements about suppression of freedom of expression, including jailings of independent reporters and obstruction of the work of the unofficial press.

In Leningrad, an independent association of writers, poets and literary critics known as Club '81 has been operating since 1981. It was founded in a year when many independent writers were

going to jail but with the consent of the KGB, which had apparently hoped that by organizing the non-conformist writers themselves, they would make the job of watching them easier. The KGB "curators" urged the club members not to publish abroad or in samizdat, promising to get them published officially in due time.

But despite the intervention of the security forces, Club '81 managed to preserve its independence and took an active part in what is known as the cultural-democratic movement in Leningrad.

On a broader, post-glasnost scale, the founding assembly of the Independent Writers' Union took place on November 26, 1988 in Moscow. Representatives from Moscow, Sverdlovsk, Kharkov, Kiev, Voronezh, Minsk, Kalinin, Tiraspol, Krasnoyarsk and Yakutsk attended. The congress adopted a charter and elected a board and other executive bodies for the Union.<sup>28</sup>

A pre-glasnost organization, the Experimental Arts Research Guild, Tovarishchestvo eksperimental'nogo isledovaniya iskustv, known by the Russian acronym TEII, brings together independent artists and tries to protect their right to show their works. In the six years of its existence, it has organized nine art exhibits to display the works of 350 artists. These exhibits, held in either private apartments or local state-run "houses of culture" have been visited by more than 200,000 people. Sometimes, independent artists have been successful in obtaining exhibition space in buildings slated for capital repairs or demolition. TEII has not been able to register itself officially, although it has

tried many times to obtain such status. Moscow also has its independent artists' associations, such as Vernissage.<sup>29</sup> [118]

- 1.[Combine original footnotes 90 and 91.]
- 2.[Original footnote 92.]
3. [Original footnote 93.]
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.Issue 42, 1989.
9. { also include in fn On Speaking Terms and The New York Review of Books for a description of IHF meeting with Burlatsky and Timofeyev.}
- 10.
11. USSR News Brief, no. 17/18-23]
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.USSR News Brief, no. 13-9, 1988.
- 16.
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25. USSR News Brief, no 22-26, 1988.

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27.

28. USSR News Brief, no. 23-16, 1988.

29.

### CHAPTER 3

#### The Soviet Greens: Environmental and Peace Movements

Unlike the independent human rights campaigners of the 1960s and 1970s, Soviet advocates of environmental protection and world peace long lived not only with official blessing but under official control. Because the issues involved in preserving nature and historical monuments were relatively apolitical or, in the case of the peace movement, fitted Soviet propaganda, official organizations sheltered and steered open activities in both fields for many years.

While the authorities still hold the reins of two large conservation groups, the glasnost years have brought a number of independent, informal associations into being to protest vigorously against environmental abuse and the authorities who have sanctioned it. Part of their success may be due to the social base that the sanctioned nature-and-culture-preservation bodies long enjoyed. At the same time, a peace movement that challenges both Soviet military activities in Afghanistan and conscription at home has departed from the official line to make common cause with pacifists in other countries.

Even merged -- which they have not -- these two currents do not have the organizational strength of Green parties that have come into being in some West European nations. They may, however, be the forerunners of such a political force in a future Soviet setting.

#### Environmental Organizations

The All-Union Society for the Preservation of Nature, known by its Soviet acronym, VOOP, is the mass, bureaucratically run organization that was already long on the scene before the advent of Gorbachev. Organized according to the same principle as VOPIK, the architecture preservation organization discussed in Chapter 5, it is just as ineffectual and moribund. But as with VOPIK, VOOP does sponsor genuine civic volunteer patrols working to save nature. It also has groups that study and preserve rare and endangered species of animals.

The first civic patrols were organized in the early 1960s in Moscow at the biology department of Moscow University and in Estonia at Tartu University. Now there are 150 such volunteer patrols in all the oblasts except for those of Central Asia. They are chiefly involved as surrogates for government wardens in combatting the widespread cutting of fir trees to sell before New Year's Day celebrations. Authorized to detain poachers, they also inspect factories and file complaints to the directors and officials responsible for violating laws protecting the environment.

Although it is not certain how much freedom these patrols have to gain access to polluting factories, nor how effective are the complaints they file, they are quite active. One such 60-member group in Moscow has issued fines against poachers, working in cooperation with the state hunting and fishing inspection. The volunteers successfully lobbied to join the Central Council

of VOOP and have real influence on the council; in fact, they are virtually running the Moscow society. Since 1977, they have held All-Union meetings of volunteers every two years.

The environmental activists' international contacts are limited and sporadic. But in 1987, on the initiative of the ecological section of the Esperanto Society, an international subbotnik (volunteer clean-up day) was organized under the aegis of an international event called Peace Waves. Notices were sent out in Esperanto to 70 countries calling for an ecology subbotnik on October 24-25. On those days in Moscow, a clean-up was organized at the Losin Island Sanctuary in which more than 15,000 people took part.<sup>1</sup> [59] In the spring of 1988, the action was repeated, again on an international scale.<sup>2</sup> [60]

Although the consequences of ill-conceived Soviet construction projects and the decades-long practice of building industrial enterprises without determining environmental and health impact have been alarming, environmental protest has only recently gathered force. As a result of years of neglect and carelessness, the 30-million-plus people living in 50 industrial cities of the USSR face concentrations of hazardous substances in the air and water that are dozens of times higher than the permissible public health level.<sup>3</sup> [61] In response to such hazards as industrial pollution, civic committees have been springing up all over the country, lobbying for the removal of factories from urban centers and protesting against the

construction of new ones that would worsen an already precarious ecological situation.

The first such civic committee was founded in 1967 to protect Siberia's Lake Baikal from sewage waste of a planned cellulose factory that threatened to pollute the unique, pristine lake. The committee was formed by the Soviet artistic and scientific elite and included Academician Andrei Sakharov among its members. Despite the constellation of prominent people in the Committee to Protect the Baikal, as it came to be called, not only was the factory built, but so were others that generated harmful sewage. Now run by the well-known Russian "village" writer Valentin Rasputin, noted for his rural themes, the committee finally brought enough pressure on the government in 1986 to obtain a regulation requiring that reliable anti-pollution devices be installed at Baikal factories. But to this day, that decision has been only partially implemented. Moreover, the cleaning apparatus that was installed functions inadequately.<sup>4</sup>[63] Thus, despite repeated references in the Soviet press to having "saved" Lake Baikal, the job is not yet finished.

Like most citizens' efforts in the USSR, ecological activists face a two-part task: first, to obtain official backing to close or forgo building a destructive factory or to install effective anti-pollution devices, and second, to insure that such decisions are followed through in reality.

Before 1985, informal groups succeeded in crossing the first hurdle only in a few cases. But in the glasnost era, pressure by civic groups has more often resulted in action to close factories that are harmful to the public health or which threaten nature.

The most impressive victory of this sort was the decision in the spring of 1985 to drop plans to divert the flow of northern rivers so that their waters would irrigate Central Asian cotton fields. But the numerous informal groups that took an active part in this ultimately successful campaign were not just the ecological informals; also involved was the prestigious Soviet Cultural Fund, headed by Academician Dmitry S. Likhachev and made up of many prominent writers and scientists. Activists gathered hundreds of thousands of signatures on petitions to stop the project. Although various ministerial bureaucracies are still studying the plan, it appears to have been delayed indefinitely.

In the winter of 1987, a plan to build an atomic power station near Krasnodar was scuttled after a campaign launched by the local ecological society. On its initiative, rural meetings were held at which the majority of village people near the affected site voiced opposition to the construction of a nuclear plant.

Leningrad has been particularly noted among Soviet cities for civic action on the environment. Perhaps this is because the city, built by Peter the Great on pylons driven into a swamp, is in the middle of a delicate eco-system. It is criss-crossed with

canals feeding into the Neva River, which in turn flows into the Bay of Finland. A number of informal associations interested in protecting the environment are based in Leningrad: Ecology of Culture, Delta, For Preservation of the Environment, the Bureau of Ecological Planning, Peterburg, and other, smaller groups.

All these associations are united in the Cultural Democratic Movement (KDD) to which groups involved in preserving cultural and historical monuments are also affiliated, including Salvation, World (Mir), the Experimental Song-Writing Guild (ETAP), associations of independent artists, Club-81, the editorial board of the magazine Roksi (short for "rock system," which refers to the hippie network called sistyema), and many more -- about 1,000 people in all.<sup>5</sup> [65] With Delta taking the lead, other KDD members have joined in opposing a dam being built in the Neva River delta.

The ecological informal groups are usually not very large in number -- from at least a dozen to about 50 people of varied social status and age. Thus, in Armenia, the group called Survival includes well-known scientists, journalists and writers, middle-aged people and even senior citizens. In Kazakhstan, some 80 people, including writers, scientists, and even heads of ministries and institutions,<sup>6</sup> [66] joined the Committee to Save the Aral Sea. The presence of such officials, of course, strains the definition of "informal," but civic initiatives organized horizontally along issue lines, rather than run vertically by the

Communist Party, are important signs of health for Soviet society.

In Ryazan, an environmental volunteer's group consisting of students, graduates and workers is registered in the Radio Technology Institute as the Voluntary People's Corps, with a program to "preserve nature."<sup>7</sup> [67] Of the 150-odd members, most are over 25 years of age. The group campaigns against connecting new city housing to sewage collection pipes that empty into floodheads of the Oka River and turn them into clogged swamps. The Ryazan activists were able to collect 9,000 residents' signatures in support of their protest against such construction.<sup>8</sup> [68]

A rally took place in Kazan on June 5, 1987, against the construction of a huge biochemical plant in a park zone of the city used by 200,000 people annually. Some 70,000 city residents signed a petition calling for the cancellation of the plan.<sup>9</sup> [69]

In Nizhny Tagil in the Urals on February 13, 1988, more than 20,000 people assembled to demand the closing of two sections of a coke plant that had no modern anti-pollution controls. On this occasion, the Komsomol city committee took the side of an informal club against the will of the local Party leaders, an action enthusiastically described by Komsomolskaya Pravda.

After informal experimental ecological groups were founded in plants in Nizhny Tagil and joined by Komsomol rank-and-file and even leaders, the Komsomol city committee dared to lead a

protest and city-wide rally against urban air pollution. Participants in the rally sent their demands, with 8,5000 signatures, to the Minister of Black Metallurgy, calling on him to close down the dangerous plants. The minister met the protesters half-way by promising to close down the plants that were considered to be the most harmful to the environment.<sup>10</sup>[144]

### Peace Movement

While there have long been self-starters among Soviet environmentalists, the peace movement in the USSR did not develop independent expression until early in this decade. From the 1940s onward, in fact, all such concerns had been monopolized by the regime through the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace (SCDP), or Soviet Peace Committee, for short.

A typical, bureaucratic Soviet front group, masquerading as a civic organization, the SCDP actually takes its direction from the Party Central Committee's Propaganda Department and its leadership from the top ranks of the Soviet ideological apparatus. Described by the press agency TASS on March 14, 1988 as "the headquarters of Soviet peace fighters," the SCDP's large office building on Moscow's Prospekt Mira is the center for what TASS characterized as "widespread propaganda among the public of the peace-loving policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the government of the country."

Financed through all-but-compulsory workplace<sup>11</sup> and church contributions to a parallel front group, the Soviet Peace Fund,

the SCDP typically sent approved speakers abroad to attack Western -- but not Soviet -- armaments policy and mobilized demonstrations at home by relying on Party and Komsomol organizers to commandeer the services of Soviets in factories and offices as walk-ons for well-organized public demonstrations. With no control exercised by its members, the SCDP is a classic Soviet "public" association in which the public has no say.

The first challenge to the official fiction -- the first stirrings of an independent peace movement in the USSR -- took the form of small groups like the seminar started in 1980 which came to be known as the Peace and Social Research seminar located in the Moscow suburb of Dolgoprudny, an area closed to Soviets and foreigners because of classified research. It brought together physicists, economists and biologists to present papers and discuss proposals for disarmament and reduction of East-West tension. Although they even managed on occasion to publish their papers in the Soviet press, they never openly identified themselves as seminar organizers, for fear that the authorities would persecute those who attended. They also shunned foreign publicity as a threat to the seminar's survival.

In June 1982, however, when most outspoken dissidents were already in labor camp, several members of the Dolgoprudny seminar, together with young pacifists and Jewish refusenik scientists took part in a risky experiment based on an idea that had been discussed at the seminar. At a press conference June 4,

they announced the formation of the Moscow Group to Establish Trust Between the USSR and the USA. Later, as its contacts in Europe expanded, it changed its name to "Moscow Group to Establish Trust Between East and West."<sup>12</sup> [78] It became known simply as the Trust Group.

The main idea of the Trust Group was "four-sided dialogue," that is, discussion not only among the governments of the two super-powers, but inclusion of ordinary citizens on an equal footing with officials in the dialogue. Just as the American public could have its say on disarmament, the group held that ordinary Soviet people should be able to speak their minds freely about arms issues. By publicizing its existence and desire for foreign contact, the Trust Group not only set itself apart from the Dolgoprudny seminar but assumed also the position of a rival to the SCDP. In the early years of the Group's work, the danger involved in such competition was only potential.

Against the repressive backdrop of the years when Andropov stepped up the KGB's activities in repressing dissent and then became the Party's General Secretary, the appearance of any above-ground group, especially one oriented towards contacts with international citizens' movements, was an act of desperate civic courage. It is no wonder that the founders of the Group weighed each word in every appeal to the West extremely carefully and stubbornly insisted that they were not "dissidents." In fact, none of the Trust Group members had been involved in the human

rights movement or in any dissident political activity.

The KGB, nonetheless, immediately detected a potential threat from the independent group and persecuted even its most innocent actions, whether planting a "peace garden" or gathering citizens' signatures on peace appeals which, containing no direct criticism of Soviet policy, were difficult to distinguish from the official rhetoric generated by the Soviet Peace Committee. Since people in the North American and European peace movements became aware of the group and defended it, police action to destroy it would have compromised Soviet leaders in foreign eyes.

Accordingly, the authorities made only "selective" arrests, which did not put a complete stop to the group's activity and actually contributed to the rapid growth of the group's prominence in the West.

In 1983, the Peace Research Seminar, made up of about 15 people, withdrew from the Trust Group and renamed their group Friendship and Dialogue. The seminar participants focused on research and educational work on such topics as pacifism, ecology, history and culture in various countries. Later, a discussion club within Friendship and Dialogue widened its focus to include the social and economic changes which began in the USSR after Gorbachev came to power.

Hippie pacifists and various religious movements interested in the peace cause (Pentecostals, Krishna followers, etc.) cooperated with the Trust Group and with Friendship and Dialogue,

as did nationalists in the Baltic republics. In 1981, Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians had issued a joint call to establish a nuclear-free zone for the Baltic Sea basin, including the territories of the Baltic republics. Trust Group affiliates also appeared in various other cities and remain active in Leningrad, Lvov, Kuybyshev and Riga.<sup>13</sup> [79]

While the government did not succeed in crushing it, the peace movement did not expand significantly until 1986 when the climate for civic action grew more tolerant in the USSR. On April 5, 1987, two young activists of the Trust Group, Nikolai Khramov and Alexander Rubchenko, spoke to 200 people at a meeting in the House of Architects of the Moscow intellectuals' club known as Common Cause Conference, an unofficial association with ecological, religious and philosophical interests. After Khramov and Rubchenko described the purposes and activities of the Trust Group, 15 more people joined it.<sup>14</sup> [80] Their talk was the first that the group had been able to give to a Soviet audience without interference, and without intervention by foreigners on their behalf, as had occurred in the past and was required again at a international peace conference in May 1987.

Ecological problems draw the concern of informal groups whose interests extend beyond environmental issues. In Kharkov, Ukraine, a cultural ecological club was created that links the two problems.<sup>15</sup> [73] At its very first meeting the Culturological Club in Kiev dealt with the question of building new atomic power

stations, along with questions of culture.<sup>16</sup>[74] The Vremya (Time) Club in Novokuznetsk in Western Siberia began lobbying for sobriety but then took up the problem of preserving monuments and protecting the environment. Later, and to the great dissatisfaction of the local authorities,<sup>17</sup>[75] it moved into the political arena. Members of a club in Moscow called The Champions, whose members are "heavy metal" fans, also became involved with environmental projects.<sup>18</sup>[76] In Georgia, the Chavchavadze Society deals with ecological issues along with cultural problems; in particular, the group has protested that the construction of a Transcaucasian Railroad would cause environmental and cultural damage to the peoples of the Caucasus.<sup>19</sup>[77]

At the May 1987 SCDP-sponsored conference, called the IV Meeting Dialogue in Moscow, representatives of the Western peace movement, peace activists from the U.S., Britain, Australia and West Germany insisted that the official organizers give the floor to a Trust Group representative. Under pressure, Genrikh Borovik, the new chair of the SCDP (a former Writers' Union official who had replaced conservative commentator Yury Zhukov), was forced to agree to the request, although he set a condition that only one Group member could speak, and only for about 10 minutes. The Group delegated Irina Krivova, who gave a short presentation to the working groups of the meeting.<sup>20</sup> [155]

Despite the promised permission, it still took the

intervention of a Westerner to see that she actually took the floor. She outlined the Group's purposes (the "four-sided dialogue" among citizens and government leaders East and West), and mentioned some of the Group's criticisms of the authorities and its difficulties. For example, the Group members -- like other Soviet citizens -- could not freely travel abroad even to build "bridges for peace." And not only could they not gain easy access to Western literature, even peace movement publications, Trust Group members also were excluded from the satellite hook-ups known as "space bridges" between the U.S. and the USSR, although the idea for such live, face-to-face televised shows between Soviets and Americans was actually first proposed by the Trust Group shortly after its founding in June 1982. When the Group proposed the idea, it had in mind free access to the television audiences by any ordinary Soviet citizen, not a selection "from above" of ideologically-reliable people.

As both the independent peace movement and its contacts with international peace movements grew, its interests and demands expanded and its ideology became more defined. By May 1987, the group had more clearly and definitively formulated human rights demands as essential for authentic and free participation by Soviet citizens in the four-sided dialogue on peace. This development brought the Trust Group's position closer to that of the "dissident" human rights activists, and the Group openly and decisively embarked on a rapprochement with civil rights

activists. In December 1987, Irina Krivova spoke at the Press Club Glasnost's International Seminar on Humanitarian Affairs and Human Rights with a much broader and more concrete program based on the statement that had been formed in April 1987 as the Group's Declaration of Principles. The group outlined the main program for their own country including withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan; opposition to the militarization of the consciousness of Soviet citizens, in particular, an end to the widescale military patriotic training conducted in all the schools and legal guarantees for the right to an alternative to universal compulsory military service for those who are conscientious or religious objectors.<sup>21</sup>[81]

The Moscow Trust Group began to hold demonstrations promoting this program, followed by similar rallies by the Leningrad, Lvov and Riga groups. Usually, the demonstrations were small in number -- from 20 to 30 people -- but they were fairly frequent.

The Trust Group surged tremendously in the summer of 1987. A seminar was organized within the group called Democracy and Humanism, coordinated by Valeriya Novodvorskaya. Other new members included some of the newly-released political prisoners, who returned to Moscow and began looking for activity they could join. These veteran activists, hardened by their labor camp experiences sophisticated in dealing with repression, had an influence on the young people in their 20s and 30s, many of whom

either had no experience in public activism or who had been active but escaped lengthy imprisonment. No doubt these old hands influenced the decision to include human rights in the Trust Group's programs. They may also have led younger members began to take part in demonstrations that went beyond strictly peace slogans. It was Alexander Rubchenko and Nikolai Khramov, however, two young but long-time members of the Group, who drafted the new principles. Presumably, human rights issues were always on the minds of peace activists, but only when the climate was more tolerant of frank speech, did they feel able to espouse them.

During 1987 the Trust Group staged at least 30 demonstrations, 17 with peace slogans and 13 with human rights banners (for the release of political prisoners, acceleration of perestroika, for memorializing the victims of Stalinist terror and for self-determination in the Baltic republics.)<sup>22</sup>[82]

Also that year, a new, mainly religious peace group appeared called the Christian Independent Movement For Peace. It is made up of Pentecostals,<sup>23</sup> [83] most of whom believed that they could only gain religious freedom if they emigrated. Other similar groups included the Hare Krishna devotees, who consider themselves involved in the pacifist movement; Fellowship of Dialogue; Peace Watch; and Religious People for Peace.<sup>24</sup> [85]

Members of these groups, which have grown in number, have been holding joint actions together more frequently. On February

23, 1988, on Soviet Army Day, they staged a demonstration against the militarization of Soviet society at the Moscow City Council building. About 40 people took part in the demonstration from the Trust Group, Fellowship of Dialogue and another human rights organization, Freedom of Emigration for Everyone. Swiss and Swedish pacifists who happened to be in town joined them. Their main slogan was a call for the end to the war in Afghanistan. Another banner read "In 1945-- Liberators; in 1988-- Occupiers," a reference to the role of the Soviet Union during World War II in fighting Nazi Germany in 1945 and to Afghanistan in 1988. The demonstrators were detained by the militia but released within three hours.<sup>25</sup>[86] On the same day, a similar demonstration was staged by the Riga Trust Group in Latvia.

The obvious spread of the independent peace movement and its increased activization forced the SCDP to change its attitude towards such informal groups. Instead of ignoring them or denying their existence, it tried to pry the new groups away from the Trust Group and bring them under the wing of the SCDP. In October 1987, the editorial board of the SCDP's journal, Twentieth Century and Peace, invited a number of groups in for discussion: Friendship and Dialogue, Peace Watch, Religious People for Peace, and Fellowship of Dialogue. The SCDP spokesmen offered to cooperate with the groups and promised to publish their articles in the magazine.<sup>26</sup> [156] To some extent, this promise was fulfilled, in that subsequently, Twentieth Century

and Peace began to publish articles on the history of the human rights movement, interviews with figures like veteran civil rights activist Larisa Bogoraz and information about an imprisoned conscientious objector. It even incurred the censors' intervention by publishing Solzhenitsyn's essay Live Not By the Lie in the spring of 1989. A number of people, such as Gleb Pavlovsky, Vyacheslav Igrunov, Andrei Fadin, Grigory Pelman and Viktor Zolotaryov, originally involved in 1987 in the political informal groups, gravitated to Twentieth Century and Peace as editors and contributors.

As it pursued a kind of outreach to the informal groups, the SCDP simultaneously set about energetically forming groups under its aegis which were completely subordinate to it: Teachers for Peace, Rock Musicians for Peace, Peace for the Children of the World, Green World, Ecology and the Twenty-First Century, among others.

In 1987, the SCDP also opened a discussion club called Peace and Human Rights, which began to hold regular open meetings and debates where both members of the "coopted" and independent informal groups as well as foreign guests would meet and discuss current issues. At the end of 1987 and the beginning of 1988, several discussions took place where informals made speeches.<sup>27</sup>[157] While the SCDP began to dally with the informal groups, it retained its hostile attitude towards its chief competitor, the Trust Group. The Trust Group itself was split on

how to deal with the SCDP; some members wanted contact so as not to become isolated from other, new groups; others feared being coopted. Some members came to the SCDP meetings, but stopped attending when they seemed to be leading nowhere. In June 1987, when the Trust Group sought SCDP help in getting visas to attend the European Nuclear Disarmament Convention in Coventry, England, the SCDP immediately set conditions: the Trust Group had to submit detailed activity reports and a statement of its purposes, and had to agree to join in support of the official SCDP aims by denouncing Star Wars and other Western arms programs, while remaining silent about Soviet armaments. The Trust Group refused these conditions as patently unacceptable. The SCDP responded by bringing to Coventry a woman whom they claimed falsely was a mandated representative of the Trust Group. In fact, she had been offered the return of a job she had lost if she played along with the farce. She did, but was exposed by Western peace activists at the conference who had been alerted to the ruse.

In the spring of 1988, the Trust group divided into two sections or factions. This split was partly the result of the influence of the seminar Democracy and Humanism, which radicalized some and repelled others. Each faction put out its own periodical. The section grouped around Yevgeniya Debryanskaya of the Democratic Union publishes Day By Day<sup>28</sup> [88]; Alexander Rubchenko and Nikolai Khramov, veterans of the Trust Group, were also identified with this grouping. They also joined

the Moscow section of the European Radical Party, based in Italy.

The other faction was led by Andrei Krivov, who edited the bulletin Trust<sup>29</sup> [89] until he emigrated to Paris in 1989.

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## CHAPTER 4

### CHAPTER 4 POLITICAL ACTIVISM: FROM

#### LEFT TO RIGHT

Where the pre-Revolutionary Russian Empire had seethed with political activity and unrest, Soviet rulers until Gorbachev succeeded in imposing an iron mask of civic conformity. Dissent that was not utterly repressed lived a perilous underground life, beginning to emerge as samizdat publications of both liberal and nationalist sentiment primarily in the mid-to-late 1960s.

The advent of glasnost, however, has shown that the ferment was never completely extinguished. Indeed, as Gorbachev has encouraged open discussion of the nature of Soviet socialism and the need for changes in it, political associations of various stripes have burgeoned. Soviet sociologists have found that one in every ten of the informal groups surveyed in the large European cities of the USSR were founded on the basis of common political interests. Not only do most of these clubs' programs either espouse socialist or social-democratic ideals or, at the least, do not directly oppose them, but almost three out of four also seek either official recognition or cooperation. While one quarter reject both as infringements on their independence, about one third want recognition and 40 percent are willing to cooperate with Soviet authorities.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter examines the range of emerging political activism, looking first at the democratic and socialist groups and last at the right-wing Russian nationalists. While it is too

simplistic to see the spectrum purely in terms of the historic divide between Westernizers and Slavophiles, the new Soviet politicians and their theories do reflect some of that 19th-Century schism. The first to find their voices under Gorbachev leaned to the West and socialism.

#### Club of Social Initiatives and Perestroika Club

The first political clubs in Moscow were the Club of Social Initiatives, which emerged at the beginning of 1986, and the Perestroika Club, founded in the Spring of 1987. Members of socialist underground groups arrested in 1982 but released in 1983 without being tried played a large role in transforming fairly amorphous groups into clearly defined political coalitions. The young socialists included sociologists Boris Kagarlitsky, Pavel Kudyukin, Andrei Fadin and Gleb Pavlovsky, who returned from exile at the end of December 1985 and had formerly co-edited the samizdat journal Poiski (Searches).

Under their influence, both Social Initiatives and Perestroika decided to make an active contribution toward social and political change in the direction of democratic socialism. Perestroika Club eventually split into two clubs, Perestroika '88 and Democratic Perestroika, but for a time it was the largest and most important discussion club in Moscow for a wide range of intellectuals.

Like the word glasnost, Gorbachev's economic restructuring campaign has become synonymous with reform and democratization in

the USSR and is frequently used in the names for various discussion clubs and movements. Following a 1987 Supreme Soviet statute that authorized amateur clubs if they agreed to attach themselves to official institutions, Perestroika was registered with the Central Economics and Mathematics Institute (known by its Russian acronym TsEMI). Its members are on the staff of a number of the prestigious academic institutes in Moscow, including the Institute for the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and the Institute for Culture. Taking as their task the job of prodding Gorbachev's perestroika toward full-scale democratic socialism, they reject both announced plans to inject market-economy elements into the Soviet system without full structural reforms and ideas advanced by such noted technocrats as Abel Aganbegyan, Tatyana Zaslavskaya and Nikolai Shmelyov for using capitalist-style incentives - higher prices and differentiated salaries -- to extract greater effort and efficiency from labor and management.

They favor redistributive measures to obtain social justice and to preserve food subsidies with democratic oversight of their distribution. They view the experience of the Scandinavian social-democracies as the most appropriate for contemporary Soviet conditions and Soviet social culture.<sup>2</sup>[126]

In the glasnost era, there is a fairly wide sector of the Moscow intelligentsia which sympathizes with such views. In the last two years, however, the name, New Leftists, has all but

vanished, and a number of competing programs have developed through the various political clubs.

### The Left Coalesces

In August 1987, the leading socialist clubs of the time held their first joint conference, a review of leftist forces, similar to the Moscow International Human Rights Seminar of December 1987 for liberal civil rights activists. The organizing committee for the socialist seminar included representatives of Perestroika, the youth group Obshchina (Community) and KSI, later dissolved into the Moscow Popular Front. More than 300 representatives of 52 informal associations from 12 cities convened at the seminar - - socialist clubs as well as kindred-spirited environmental, cultural and pacifist groups. The conference took place in the Novator House of Culture, a fitting venue, since novator means "innovators" in Russian. The Brezhnev District Party authorities provided the meeting hall and had their representatives present at all the meetings, to control the organizing committee, among other things, by selecting the informal associations represented in it.

Following is a list of some of the clubs that were present at the conference: (from Moscow) Perestroika; KSI; Community; Direct Speech, a creative union attached to the Satire Theater; the Council on the Environment; Democracy and Humanism Seminar; Friendship and Dialogue; the sistyema, or hippie network; the Working Group on Problems of Extremism; the youth

internationalist clubs such as the Farabundo Marti Brigade, the Che Guevara Brigade, the Forest People, the Communards, the Young Internationalist; the All-Union Pen Club of Socialist and Political Initiatives; the Group to Establish Trust Between East and West; (from Leningrad) the Adelaide Historical Political Club; and Epicenter, a coalition of 12 Leningrad groups mainly involved with the environment and culture, which are Club '81, the Experimental Art Research Guild [TEII], the Experimental Song-Writers Guild [ETAP], Salvation, New World, the Bureau of Ecological Projects [BER], the Delta Ecology Society, Roksi, the hippie group, Aly parus [Red Sails], the political ham radio club and the Leningrad Perestroika Club (a separate movement).

Workshop topics at the conference included ecology, production initiatives, artistic initiatives, leisure activities, problems of the work of political clubs, information flow and coordination of the work of voluntary associations and problems of extremism in the youth informal movement.

The most important achievement of the conference was the organization of the majority of the participants into the Koltso obshchestvennikh initsiativ or Coalition of Civic Initiatives, based on the common principles of refusal to accept violence, fascism, Stalinism and any other form of pressure on popular initiative. The groups that joined the Coalition agreed to exchange information about their activities and to form an ad-hoc committee for joint projects.

In addition, nine of the clubs, including KSI, Perestroika, and Community joined into a Federation of Socialist Civic Clubs, Federatsiya sotsialisticheskikh obshchestvennykh klubov, known by the Russian acronym FSOK, on the basis of a declaration of common principles. The members of FSOK stated that their chief aim was to support perestroika. As confirmed advocates of socialism, they see it as a return to the ideals of the October Revolution, the building of a classless society and the withering away of the state through the development of social self-management to displace administrative bureaucratic structure.

FSOK stated that it recognized the Constitutional (i.e. leading) role of the Communist Party, but was prepared to support only its "healthy and progressive elements" and would struggle against both the Party's monopoly on information and decision-making and reactionary informal groups. As immediate aims, FSOK sought to create effective mechanisms for workers to participate in the management of Soviet society and production, to grant voluntary associations legal status and the right to propose legislative initiatives, a democratic system of elections and the abolition of censorship. In the economy, FSOK favored some price increase for in commodities but with social justice -- full employment, guaranteed minimum standard of living, pension plans -- preserved. FSOK also advocated the transfer of factories and plants to a system of rental by collectives of self-managing enterprises.<sup>3</sup>[127]

FSOK sections began work on several concrete projects. A section on industrial self-management led by Moscow University instructor A. Buzygin drafted a system for elections of councils of work collectives and helped to adapt it to the Moscow factories Moskva and Kauchuk and to three publishing houses.<sup>4</sup>[128] A club called Alliance, which joined FSOK after the August 1987 conference, began publishing a newspaper to be posted on bulletin boards to help formulate the views of senior high school students concerning perestroika and democratization and to steer them away from extremism and fascism. Another FSOK section on the social defense of youth focused on problems of social justice arising with economic reform.<sup>5</sup>[129]

In January and again in March 1988, FSOK held its own conferences, but again through contacts with official agencies -- this time, the Komsomol. In exchange for obtaining a meeting hall, FSOK organizers promised not to invite foreign reporters or representatives of groups from other Soviet cities to the conference and to permit Komsomol representatives would to take part. As a result, so many Komsomol representatives packed the January conference that it almost turned into a Komsomol meeting. Nonetheless, at the March conference there was a discussion of the impending Law on Informal Associations. FSOK protested against the bureaucratic, secret and anti-democratic way that the law was being drafted. A committee was founded at the conference to draft alternatives to raising food prices, which were being

planned for the coming years. The group discussed the draft Law on Youth, opportunities to publish FSOK documents, the problems of registering informal associations and methods to educate school children in an anti-fascist manner. At the end of the conference, elections to the FSOK Soviet, or council, brought representatives from the Komsomol Central Committee and Moscow City Committee into the group's leadership.<sup>6</sup>[130]

Despite the Komsomol presence, an article appeared during the January 1988 conference in Komsomolskaya pravda, crudely attacking the leading activists of the socialist clubs, Boris Kagarlitsky, Gleb Pavlovsky, and Oleg Rumyantsev, an activist of the Perestroika and then Democratic Perestroika Club.<sup>7</sup>[131] The article also attacked Democracy and Humanism activist Valeriya Novodvorskaya, and compared her with the leftists, although she is in a completely different political tendency which condemns socialism and advocates democracy and capitalism. Kagarlitsky later sued the newspaper for slander and won a favorable decision, compelling Komsomolskaya pravda to print a retraction.

Apparently, the next step contemplated after inserting Komsomol leaders into the FSOK Council was to displace the previous leaders from the Federation. After the FSOK conference, a press conference at APN, the official Soviet feature service, presented the Komsomol members of FSOK almost alone, along with officials from the Komsomol Central Committee and the Moscow City Committee, who dominated Soviet press coverage of the conference.

That was one of the reasons why FSOK eventually became defunct.

A faction fight also split the Perestroika Club sometime in early 1988. Some of the more radical members who rejected Party interference split off from the group, calling themselves Perestroika '88. Eventually, they seem to have merged with another independent association, the Democratic Union (DU), and then went on to become the social-democratic faction of the DU. The more moderate faction of Perestroika, willing to cooperate with Party authorities but committed to independent initiatives, took the name Democratic Perestroika (DP), and has remained active under that name with about 60 members.

Both KSI and DP continued to hold meetings regularly throughout 1988 and 1989 and made public statements jointly with other political associations, against anti-democratic restrictions on holding demonstrations and against the Supreme Soviet Presidium Decree of April 8, 1989 concerning anti-state crimes, which restricted free speech. Democratic Perestroika proposed its own theses for discussion at the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, and theses for the electoral campaign for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which began in December 1988.

On November 20, 1988, Democratic Perestroika held a rally attended by 500 people on the rehabilitation of political prisoners of the "stagnation" era.<sup>8</sup>[132] Activists of Democratic Perestroika took an active part in the electoral nomination campaign to the Congress of Peoples' Deputies and supported

independent candidates like Boris Yeltsin, Academician Bogomolov, the young historian Sergei Stankevich and others. During the Congress, Democratic Perestroika activists helped the deputies' radical democratic caucus know as the Inter-Regional Group as a kind of group of experts' think tank for drafting laws and speeches. In the summer of 1989 Democratic Perestroika was the initiator of the Social Democratic Association which united 24 clubs and groups from 5 republics.

Beginning in August 1987, the Memorial Initiative Group emerged within the still-unified Perestroika Club when several activists began a signature campaign to gain support for a proposal to build a memorial center in memory of the victims of Stalinism.<sup>9</sup>[133] Afte/r Gorbachev endorsed the general idea in a speech to the June 1988 Party Conference, the Establishment liberals had the green light to join -- and eventually lead -- what had begun as a more radical, grass-roots campaign.

Activists collecting signatures outside movie theaters and on the streets conducted opinion polls as to which prominent public figures people would like to see leading the committee to build a memorial, and names like Party boss Boris Yeltsin, physicist Andrei Sakharov, poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Yegor Yakovlev, the editor of Moscow News, and author Alexander Solzhenitsyn repeatedly appeared. A telegram was sent to Mr. Solzhenitsyn in Cavendish, Vermont, but he declined to join, saying in effect that he did not think it was appropriate to

become involved in a civic initiative to rehabilitate Stalin's victims when his own works had not yet been "rehabilitated."<sup>10</sup> Sakharov, Yury Afanasyev, rector of the Institute for Historical Archives, and other prominent liberal figures -- but not Yakovlev -- joined the board of Memorial. A number of publications and officially-recognized professional unions of people in the arts also joined: the Union of Theater Workers, the Union of Cinematographers, Literaturnaya gazeta; the Union of Architects, the Union of Designers and Moscow News. The Union of Writers applied to join somewhat belatedly and was rejected.

In a sense, the movement changed hands. But the tensions between grass-roots radicals and more moderate liberals did not go away: in meeting after meeting, dissidents proposed that the effort to rehabilitate victims be extended backwards to the time of Lenin, and forwards to the time of Gorbachev. Sakharov suggested a compromise wording in describing the mandate of the movement: Memorial would commemorate the victims of Stalinism, which would mean both remembering the victims of Stalin and the continuing struggle against the Stalinist forms of government and repression. Crimean Tatar leaders who attended the meetings urged that entire peoples, not just individuals, be rehabilitated -- a number of Muslim and other nations had been brutally deported by Stalin during World War II.

By the end of 1988, Memorial had grown into a mass movement of some 15,000 to 20,000 active supporters and had spread to many

other cities in the Russian Republic, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Byelorussia and elsewhere. After some struggle with the authorities, including an effort by one Party official to coopt the idea of a memorial by unilaterally announcing that a design for a monument -- without the memorial complex -- had already been adopted, the All-Union Memorial Society, as it was now called, was finally able to hold its official founding meeting on January 28-29, 1989. Representatives from 103 cities attended the conference. Ex-political prisoners from both the Stalin era and the post-Stalin era were there, as was the Soviet intellectual elite, young and old, and people representing all the nationalities of the USSR. In terms of representing the great variety of people in the USSR, Memorial is probably unique among the informal associations in the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, the authorities continue to hinder its work. Memorial is still not registered, so that it is forbidden a bank account, for instance, in order to draw some of the large public contributions it has received but which have been frozen by the authorities.

#### Moscow Tribune and Others

Other than Memorial, the informal political group that has captured the most attention is Moskovskaya tribuna, Moscow Tribune, which opened on October 12, 1988, to bring together the capital's prominent liberal intellectual elite to discuss problems of perestroika and glasnost. The initiative group was

launched by Andrei Sakharov, who was reinstated as a physicist at the Lebedev Institute after his six years in exile; Yury Afanasyev, rector of the Institute of Historical Archives, who had become associated with the campaign to remove the "white spots" or blank areas of Soviet history and had been the first to speak the truth about such tragedies as the Soviet murder of Polish army officers in the forest of Katyn; social scientist Tatyana Zaslavskaya, noted for her critiques of the Soviet economy, and Roald Sagdeyev, former head of the Soviet space program and a Soviet director of the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity. Some 100 people took part in the founding meeting, and at least 60 more joined in the ensuing months. Leonid Batkin, a medical historian and philologist, has emerged at the center of the leadership. While Party affiliation is not a criterion for acceptance, applicants need two personal recommendations from current members in good standing. Although meetings were apparently only open to members, Moscow Tribune also invited such outsiders as former political prisoners and activists, including Lev Timofeyev, to participate in discussions.

The purpose of Moscow Tribune is to unite the leading intelligentsia around the cause of spiritual and moral renewal of the country to promote radical economic reform and the democratization of the political system. The club members wished to build a constructive or loyal opposition to the current

leadership by proving professional expertise and proposing solutions to the problems of the day. Two resolutions adopted at the founding meeting called for the immediate release and exoneration of all prisoners of conscience and for a review of the July Decrees of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet that restricted demonstrations and rallies and authorized using special Internal Affairs Ministry troops for crowd control. Subsequently, *Moscow Tribune* drafted appeals in defense of the arrested members of the Armenian Karabakh Committee and on the new draft amendments to the Constitution.

Not only did the Soviet government not react at all to the appeals; the official Soviet press, except for a brief mention in *Moscow News*, gave no coverage to the club's work. In the pre-election period, *Moscow Tribune* was active in drafting the program for what could be called the radical democratic caucus in the new Congress of People's Deputies. On April 23, 1989, *The New York Times* reported that sociologist Galina Starovoitova, a *Moscow Tribune* member and an expert on nationalities problems who had travelled to Armenia, announced that a ginger group calling itself the "March Coalition" was forming to gather support for liberal causes within the Congress, including revamping the electoral laws and repealing legislation restricting free speech. Starovoitova was elected as a deputy to the Congress as were a number of other prominent *Tribune* members.

Other less-known but important clubs are also involved in

shaping the political discussion in Moscow and the provinces.

The All-Union Social Political Club (VSPK) was founded in 1986, and reaching residents of 15 cities. They corresponded among themselves on the most urgent political issues of the day and discussed the cardinal problems of Marxist theory. From time to time, they met to discuss these subjects at club rallies, such as those held in May and September 1987 and again in January 1988. Eventually, the more radical section of the group broke off to work on its own; some members went into the Democratic Union, and VSPK, where only Orthodox Marxists remained, became less active.<sup>11</sup>[134]

Numerous political clubs have sprung up in the provinces of Russia and the other republics. From the reports of the independent Moscow weekly Express-Chronicle on rallies, samizdat and repression in the other Russian cities, it appears that very large numbers of people are involved in political reform. The majority of the clubs in the Russian Republic are under the aegis of the Komsomol and do not attempt to display organizational or theoretical autonomy. An example of a group that ran counter to this trend was the Vremya (Time) Club of Novokuznetsk<sup>12</sup>[135]. No doubt influenced by Gorbachev's anti-alcoholism campaign, it began by criticizing local authorities for lassitude in the struggle against drunkenness. Gradually, however, it began to hold discussions on theoretical issues that a local press report described as "subversive," straying beyond the approved cause of

the anti-alcoholism campaign.

Where informal associations have become active in major cities, a number have formed joint information centers, so that they can stay in touch with each other and exchange information. The centers serve as a kind of alternative to the official press, which rarely reports on the informals, or if it does cover them, does so in a distorted and tendentious manner. This function of creating internal cohesion is probably the most important role samizdat plays today. A leading information center is the Moscow Information Exchange Bureau (MBIO) which is part of the academic research cooperative Perspective attached to the Academy of Sciences. MBIO collects and analyzes the flood of news on the informal movement coming from all over the USSR. Several periodicals, including Chronograph and Panorama, leading surveyors of the movement are published under the aegis of MBIO.

Another example is the Gorky Information Center, which coordinates the activities of the independent political party Democratic Union, the local chapter of Memorial, the Council on Ecology and Culture and the Nizhegorodsky Society to Promote Perestroika. In Ryazan, there is an Information Center attached to the movement called the Civic Promotion of Perestroika. In Siberia, the Vienna Committee created a Siberian Information Agency (SIBIA).

Local clubs often create Soviets of Clubs, and even parties made up of smaller groups, or factions of organizations. Thus,

in Saratov, there is the Soviet of Informal Clubs, which represents the area's independent groups. In Sverdlovsk and Nizhny Tagil in the Urals and in Ukraine informal associations joined together to form a Communist Workers' Party.

On April 3, 1988, the group in Sverdlovsk calling itself Meeting '87, founded to promote free public rallies, held a rally in memory of the victims of Stalinism. About 300 people came to the meeting carrying signs with statements like "Political Pluralism is a Guarantee Against Stalinism," "Make the Stalinist Lackeys Answer," "Never Again!" and holding drawings of the Soviet flag's hammer and sickle wrapped in barbed wire. One of the speakers called for the dismantling of the KGB and for an investigation of the "criminal activity of the punitive agencies;" another spoke of the advantages of a multi-party system and a market economy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was read aloud, and examples were cited rights violations in Sverdlovsk. A leader of Meeting '87, Sergei Kuznetsov, editor of an independent journal called Glasnost Courier, was arrested on December 11, 1988, a day after holding a rally on U.N. Human Rights Day, and, charged with slandering local officials. He is still awaiting trial.<sup>13</sup> [136]

#### Popular Fronts

Unquestionably, the most widespread form of informal political association are the Popular Fronts or the Movements for Perestroika which become city-wide organizations. In addition to

the Baltic Republics' movements (see Chapter 5) that have become the best-known in the USSR, there are similarly-structured fronts or movements operating in Leningrad, Yaroslavl, Tomsk, Arkhangelsk, Irkutsk, Ufa, Kazan, Apatity and elsewhere. They can be found in the Ukrainian cities of Odessa, Kiev, Kharkhov, Lvov; in Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia; in Kishinyov, the capital of Moldavia; in Kazakhstan; in Georgia and in Baku, the capital of Azerbaidzhan. There have also been attempts, although so far unsuccessful, to mount such movements in the Russian cities of Vladivostok and Gorky.

The Moskovski narodniy front, Moscow Popular Front, founded in the summer of 1988, apparently sought to unite all the Popular Fronts of the USSR under its aegis, but failed, given the long-standing provincial distrust of movements run out of Moscow. The Moscow Front did not become the large coalition that it originally planned, but it did gain the support of a number of the informal political clubs of Moscow and went on to play an important role in the elections.

One of the leaders of the Moscow Front is 33-year old sociologist Boris Kagarlitsky, author of The Thinking Reed. He is widely known among Western Marxist scholars, leftist movement activists and liberal Soviet emigres, who had been in touch with him long before Gorbachev came to power. In 1982, Kagarlitsky and a group of other young scholars known as the "young socialists," involved in samizdat leftist reform journals, were

detained by the KGB, held for many months in investigation prisons and interrogated about their "anti-Soviet activity." Leftists in Western Europe including some Euro-Communist leaders came to their defense and urged Soviet leaders to release them. Most of the group were freed after agreeing to cooperate with authorities and refrain from independent activity, but two men -- Mikhail Rivkin and Aleksei Shilkov -- who refused to submit to pressure served lengthy labor camps until the Supreme Soviet decreed their release in 1987.

Beside getting its member Sergei Stankevich elected as a deputy to the Congress, the Moscow Popular Front backed Yeltsin during the electoral campaign and helped to organize rallies and meetings of voters, distribute pre-election flyers, etc. In several Moscow districts, the MNF support groups quadrupled their membership during the election.<sup>14</sup>

On May 20, 1989, the Moscow Popular Front elected a Coordinating Council of 13 people (Sergei Stankevich, Mikhail Malyutin, Boris Kagarlitsky, Vitaly Urazhtsev and others) and adopted a program demanding movement toward a market economy with guarantees of social justice and against unemployment. It also called for a radically democratized Soviet system to preserve its socialist goals.

#### Democratic Unions

A year earlier, May 7-8, 1988, the first Democratic Union, Demokraticheskiy soyuz (DS) was launched. The DS is a federation

of groups and individuals with widely differing political beliefs united, however, in their struggle to replace the one-party system in the USSR with a multi-party structure.

The organizers of its founding congress were the legal commission of the group Perestroika '88 and another group called the Democracy and Humanism Seminar, which started in 1986 as a working group of the pacifist organization, the Moscow Trust Group (see Chapter 3). Democracy and Humanism had political aims, including a call for changes in the Soviet Constitution to bring about authentic democracy. Members of the DS organizing committee included Valeriya Novodvorskaya, Viktor Kuzin, Yevgeniya Debryanskaya and Yury Mityunov, most of them people who had either served terms of political imprisonment in the 1970s and early 1980s, or who had come into conflict with the authorities and suffered some sort of harassment, such as job dismissal.

Despite discouragement from authorities, the DS attracted about 150 people from 27 cities to the opening of the founding meeting. Correspondents from the newspaper Moskovskaya pravda and the weekly Party agitator's newspaper Argumenty i fakty attended.

Because the organizers were not able to rent a hall, the congress took place in three different private apartments, and was thus divided into three sections: political and legal reforms; social, economic and cultural problems and DS organizing principles. All three apartments were surrounded by the police,

and many of the conference-goers who tried to leave the apartments were detained. Nevertheless, the congress formally created the Democratic Union and elected a coordinating center of 14 people. The DS's declaration of principles calls for free elections, a multi-party system, a separation of functions between the Party and the state, a mixed, market economy and independent trade unions.

Many informal groups and leading independent figures like Sakharov have advocated virtually the same type of program as the Democratic Union, and some scholars with access to the official press even put some of these ideas in print. Doing so, Boris Kurashvili, however, was careful to qualify his proposal for a multi-party parliament by specifying that it would take place "within a socialist framework." The Democratic Union stands apart in that most of its members have been outsiders and it has moved from mere discussion or advocacy of these ideas to action.

It has actually founded a separate party that seeks to break the monopoly of the Communist Party. This radical move to start a multi-party system without asking for permission, coupled with the sharp outspokenness of leaders on all current issues, and finally, their willingness to back up their ideas with street demonstrations, are the reasons why the authorities have cracked down on the DS more than any other political group in the Russian Republic.

Despite intensive persecution (detentions, heavy fines, bans

on demonstrations, crude attacks in the official press, dismissals from jobs, searches, interrogations, confiscation of printed matter and on), by the beginning of 1989, the DS had started branches in 27 cities and had increased the membership of many of these branches. However, it frequently happened that after they are formed, some local chapters (such as those in Chelyabinsk, Ukraine and Siberia) announced that they withdrew from the DS,<sup>15</sup> and turned into independent associations with their own programs and names, often close to the original DS program.

In Leningrad, the most influential political association is Perestroika Club.

During 1988 cultural, ecological and pacifist groups united in Epicenter (approximately 1,000 participants), which grew markedly more political. Beginning in summer 1988, new associations appeared. Those active throughout 1988 in Leningrad including Perestroika Club; North West Regional Democratic Union; Social-Democratic Union; Chelovek [Human] Christian-Democratic Union; Popular Front Initiative Group; Adelaide, a historical and political club; Alternative; the Organizing Committee for a Public Protest Campaign on the Decree on Rallies; the Anti-Zhdanov Committee (which sought to change the name of all towns, streets and public places bearing the name of Stalin's cultural commissar); the Leningrad branch of Memorial; the Psychic Culture Club and the Club for the Democratization of Trade Unions and

several other groups. The Psychic Culture Club had begun as a group for urban intellectuals interested in reducing stress through gymnastics and various psychological training methods. As they progressed in their work, they found that it was not so much their personal problems as the society and social system in which they lived that causes stress by stifling individual initiative. The members then began to discuss ways in which the system could be reformed.

The Klub za demokratizatsiyu profsoyuzov, Club for the Democratization of Trade Unions [KDP], has both Party members and non-Party activists, including disgruntled workers who had been fired without cause. They work to restore employees unjustly dismissed and to break the stranglehold on workers maintained by the official trade unions and the workers' councils created from above. Some of the club members publish a samizdat journal called Rubikon. All of the movements cooperated during the election campaign for Congress of Peoples' Deputies. In spring 1989, a joint organization was created called Election '89. In July 1989, they coalesced into the Leningrad Popular Front.

On November 6-7, 1988, representatives of social-democratic associations from Leningrad, Lvov, Kharkov, Kuybyshev, Orenburg, Volgograd and Gorky met in Leningrad and drafted a declaration on the formation of a Social-Democratic Confederation. A second conference in Leningrad on February 4-5, 1989 brought together 39 delegates from 14 cities and heard the Social-Democratic Party

formally announced. It never really got off the ground. In July 1989 other organizers including Muscovite historian Oleg Rumyantsev formed the Social Democratic Association in order to lay the groundwork for a social democratic party. They persuaded those in the Social Democratic Confederation to join them, and the Social Democratic Association now has chapters in dozens of cities.

### Pamyat

The association that has probably received the most notoriety is the Historical Patriotic Memory Society, known by its Russian name Pamyat, which means "memory," or "remembrance."

One of Pamyat's original leaders, Dmitry Vasilyev, claims that the society has about 20,000 followers in Moscow alone, and has many more in Leningrad and 30 other cities.<sup>16</sup>[121]

His claims are probably exaggerated. Reliable sources report that besides Moscow and Leningrad, there are affiliated Pamyat organizations in just nine other towns: Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Kalinin, Kursk, Taganrog, Riga, Yermak and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk.<sup>17</sup>[122]

Pamyat, according to its charter, is involved in arranging public events for writers, artists and historians as well as film and slide shows educating people about the history of Russia, its culture, and natural landscape. It also organizes week-end volunteer days, known as subotniki, to help in restoration work on buildings. It would seem that Pamyat should be placed in the

category of associations involved in preserving national identity [samobytnost]. But from the very beginning, Pamyat contained many chauvinists and anti-Semites. Glasnost spotlighted this feature of Pamyat in particular: its anti-Semitic leaders, such as V. Yemelyanov, V. Pashkin and F. Uslov, turn any meeting on any subject into a hysterical campaign against the "Zionists" and the "Masons" who have purportedly staged a "secret plot" against the Russian people and Russian culture.

Attacks on the "dominance of the Zionist-Masons" are based on clear-cut program to transform the USSR into a national-bolshevist state, something like the Nazi program of national socialism. Something similar was proposed more than a decade ago by Yemelyanov in a memorandum dated January 10, 1977, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. In order to avert a supposed Zionist takeover of the world by the end of the century, Yemelyanov proposed forming a "World-wide Anti-Zionist and Anti-Masonic Front." Arguing that Zionism and capitalism are identical enemies of the Russian people, Yemelyanov associates victory over the "Yid-Masons" with the original goals of the bolsheviks -- a world-wide revolution of the proletariat. Moreover, he and other Pamyat ideologues link a whole range of human rights groups and organizations with an international perspective, particularly civil rights and charitable groups, together in the so-called "Zionist-Masonic Conspiracy." The notion differs little from the official Soviet propaganda

broad­sides aimed at the human rights movement and other dis­sid­ent groups in the 1970s and 1980s. But throughout 1988, some of the lead­ers of Pamyat including Vasilyev rejected the bolshev­ist phraseology and began to speak as racist anti-communists while pressing the anti-Semitic foundation of their previous ideology.

During the electoral campaign at the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989, Pamyat supporters appeared at public nomination meetings and heckled those candidates that it claimed were part of the "Yid-Masonic Conspiracy." Pamyat activists thus opposed Andrei Sakharov and Vitaly Korotich, the editor of Ogonyok, a popular liberal monthly journal. Although not members of Pamyat, the celebrated Russian writers Viktor Astafyev, Valentin Rasputin and Vladimir Belov have spoken favorably about it and allowed anti-Semitic statements to surface in their public statements. All of these cultural figures take an active part in preservation of historical and cultural monuments and in saving the Russian land, but they are all tainted by anti-Semitic<sup>18</sup>[124]. Pamyat itself frequently attacks other informal associations that work to restore historical monuments but do not share Pamyat's xenophobia.

After the March-May 1989 elections of deputies to the Congress of People's Deputies, it became evident that Pamyat does not have a broad social basis: not a single candidate openly supported by Pamyat was elected as a deputy.

Pamyat, in any case, enjoys noticeable backing "from above."

After particularly stormy meetings in the fall and winter of 1985, about which many official Soviet newspapers wrote with outrage, Pamyat was stripped of its registration and the Party committee of the Kiev District of Moscow demanded that the society's offices be removed from the Gorbunov House of Culture, where Pamyat had been located.

Pamyat continues to hold meetings in official halls, moving to a different location on each occasion. And its reputation for official patronage goes back to the time several years ago when Pamyat was closely linked with the leadership of the officially-recognized Soviet conservation society known by the acronym VOOPK.

In May 1987, Pamyat twice organized demonstrations in the center of Moscow demanding restoration of its official status and protesting against city plans to reconstruct without proper regard for the architecture of old Moscow. During the second demonstration, the marchers were received by the Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, Boris Yeltsin.<sup>19</sup>[148] Yeltsin later said in an interview reported in The New York Times in June 1989 that he met Pamyat merely because his position at the time demanded that he receive public demonstrations.

The Moscow intelligentsia believes that it is not Yeltsin who is supporting Pamyat, but in fact Yeltsin's conservative opponent in the Politburo, Ligachev -- as well as the KGB. Both liberal establishment figures and radical activists have made the

point that the KGB may artificially support Pamyat in order to discredit any spontaneous civic organizing and have a ready excuse to crack down on any informal activity.

In the words of historian Roginsky, a secretary of the historical committee of Memorial and an ex-political prisoner himself jailed during the early 1980s for gaining unauthorized access to closed historical archives, there are two movements fighting for the soul of Russia: Pamyat and Memorial. Pamyat is the Russian word for "memory;" the original Russian word for Memorial is the same Latin-based word, memorial, with the stress on the last syllable. One could say that the two movements for historical memory roughly represent something of the eternal struggle of the Slavophiles and the Westernizers in Russian life, in that Pamyat is singularly Russian nationalist to the point of anti-Semitism and xenophobia, while Memorial has a liberal, international perspective and counts many Jews and other minorities among its leading activists.

Beginning in mid-1988, "national-patriotic associations" of a new type began to appear in addition to Pamyat' and analogous groups. Among the founders of these new patriotic groups are writers Valentin Rasputin, Vladimir Belov, Viktor Astafyev and scientists, military men and other public figures known for their nationalist beliefs. The groups include Tovarishchestvo russkikh khudozhnikov (Russian Artists' Guild); Otechestvo (Fatherland, whose full name is the Moscow City Voluntary Fatherland Society

of Russian Culture); KLIO, the acronym of Klub lyubiteley istorii oteschestva (Club of Lovers of the Fatherland's History); Soyuz dukhovnogo vozrozhdeniya otechestva (the Union for Spiritual Renewal of the Fatherland) and so on. Furthermore, a number of patriotic associations were established by official organizations and foundations -- for example the Foundation for Slavic Letters and Slavic Cultures has as its sponsors the Russian Union of Writers and the Academies of Science of the Ukraine and Byelorussia as well as the Russian and Old-Rite Orthodox Churches.

Although these organizations have some differences in their cultural and educational programs, they all proclaim that their purpose is to preserve the integrity of the Soviet multi-national state. They speak out against the independence of the Union republics and foster the strengthening of the military spirit of the people and Army ("military-patriotic education"). They all obtain official registration with unusual ease, are recognized as legal entities and can rent space -- a sign that the authorities' are well-disposed towards them. [footnote: Moskovskiy literator, no. 49/50;, December 16, 1988, p. 3; Literaturnaya Rossiya, March 17, 1989, pp. 4-5.]

All these associations, together with Pamyat' and analagous groups, could be considered a "Russian Right" in formation, with Pamyat' as the extreme right or fascist wing. These groups have a solid base in the imperial ideology shared by a significant

number of Russians. In the future, the Russian Right may become a serious threat to the democratic development of the Soviet Union.

- 1.[Original footnote 153, from page 205.]
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- 8.[Add to note 132 USSR News Brief, 1988, no. 22-28.]
- 9.
- 10.
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- 12.
- 13.Add to 136 USSR News Brief, 1988, 24-3.
- 14.[fn to AS no. 6386, no. 20/89]
- 15.Chelyabinsk, Ukrainian and Siberian
- 16.
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- 19.

CHAPTER 5  
NATIONALISM AND CULTURE

The fight for a nation's soul -- its historical past and political future -- is not limited to Russia. In the Soviet Union, even before Gorbachev's rise, Uzbeks and Armenians, Balts and Ukrainians, as well as Russians, had invested great amounts of energy in preserving their local cultures, their historical monuments and, in the case of the non-Russians, their languages and separate ethnic identities. What some Westerners tend to identify with extremism -- Muslim fundamentalists' nationalism, in Iran, or Moluccan separatism in Indonesia, for example -- long had a different connotation in the Soviet setting.

There, especially in the later Brezhnev years, nationalist activity was a search for cultural and historical roots. It was an activity that gave thinking citizens an outlet for civic energies the regime excluded from other social and political expression but would allow -- on a long leash -- to operate in the field of culture. One evidence of the depth of such feeling was the outpouring of early glasnost-era newspaper articles by noted writers and cultural figures about the ruinous state of historical monuments and the need and means to restore them.

Informal associations that had multiplied in the 1970s and early 1980s rode the wave of Gorbachev's call for public discussion. And while some of the groups retained their primary focus on culture, others turned quickly to political action.

In the non-Russian populations, where the word, "national,"

identifies distinct linguistic, ethnic or cultural entities regardless of their political autonomy or lack of it, the search for historical status often predates Soviet rule. Minorities only in contrast to the Russian population of the Soviet Union, many of these peoples lost their sovereignty to the Czars. Others lost their land and cohesion to Stalinist terror and mass deportation. In most of them, however, national feelings run deep and very strong. Their emergence, in the informal groups that are discussed in the bulk of this chapter, has often been stormy, occasionally violent and is conceivably the greatest threat to Gorbachev's rule and proclaimed reforms.

As a political force, however, nationalism in the Soviet Union -- including its manifestation among Russians who have long complained of repression, symbolized by the lack of such separate, influential institutions as their own Communist Party and Academy of Sciences -- could be an instrument of democratization, rather than dissolution. If Soviet leaders and people find a way to transform a repressed and restive empire into a working federation or a community of sovereign states linked voluntarily by treaty, the new political authority could become the guarantor, instead of the oppressor, of civil liberties and the rule of law.

### Russia

Russian nationalism of the conservative, even chauvinistic brand typified by Pamyat (see Chapter 4) is far from the only

form such feelings take. Aside from the ecological and preservationist groups discussed in Chapter 3, Moscow and Russia's provincial cities abound with clubs that focus more on political reform and cultural and environmental conservation than on nationalism.

In the RSFSR, people of all ages join groups involved in preserving national identity. The dance and song groups and folklore ensembles created at the end of the 1970s by young enthusiasts continue to attract young people but they have also retained their original, now older membership. Thus the Dmitry Pokrovsky Folklore Ensemble in Moscow, meeting since the beginning of the 1970s, remains active and is now officially recognized under the leadership of a founder now past his 40th birthday. In the Moscow suburb of Lyubertsy, along with the strange body-building clubs known as the "Lyubery," there is a folklore group called Rossiyanochka [which translates as something like "nice Russian girl."] About 60 people belong to its collective, all families of workers at a large Lyubertsy factory who had once come from Russian villages. Rossiyanochka unites four generations among these families: people in their 40s and 50s and their parents, adult children and grandchildren who live with them either in Lyubertsy or in the villages. The ensemble members learn the old songs and dances from their elders and sew the old-fashioned costumes according to their instructions.

The Mitki movement was initiated in the mid-1980s in Leningrad by a young man named Dmitry Shagin, the plural of whose nickname -- Mityok -- gave the group its name as it spread to surrounding cities. Dmitry is a proponent of the preservation of Russian national roots and a return to simple forms of the Russian national way of life. Mitki sport long beards and wear clothes styled in the manner of the Russian costume of the 19th century. They prefer simple food like shchi, a type of cabbage soup, and kasha, or buckwheat cereal. They preserve the patriarchal way of life with its traditional morals, stressing the value of the family and association with friends.

In both Moscow and Leningrad a widespread movement of independent seminars has operated in private apartments for more than a decade to bring together people with such interests as Russian religious philosophy, ancient Russian music, architecture and painting. At their meetings, both amateurs and professionals unable to publish because of their non-conformist views read papers and reports. Now, some of these seminars have begun to conduct public meetings in district libraries and houses of culture, and the Soviet official press even covers their meetings from time to time. Among the first public events, organized in 1987, was a reading on Soviet history at the Moscow Historical Archives Institute. These topics began to be discussed at meetings of discussion clubs which formally have long existed at various institutions but which really only began to become active

under glasnost.

Interests in preserving "roots" emerged in the movement to save and restore historical and cultural monuments. The All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Monuments of History and Culture (VOOPIK) has been operating for decades. While millions of Soviet citizens are members of VOOPIK, most are limited to paying minimal membership dues -- 1.20 rubles a month, about one percent of an average worker's salary. Out of the millions of rubles collected from these contributions, restoration projects are financed on a scale too small to prevent the spiraling destruction of historical and cultural monuments and nature preserves. Like other All-Union and All-Russian societies with an official status, VOOPIK is more a typical Soviet bureaucratic entity than a real public interest group.

More vigorous is the Soviet Cultural Fund, created in 1986 and headed by Academician Dmitry S. Likhachev, who is widely believed to act as a patron of various independent literary and ecology efforts. Dr. Likhachev, now living in Leningrad, is a survivor of the notorious Solovki concentration camp, opened during Lenin's reign to punish political deviants. Raisa Gorbachev, the wife of Mikhail Gorbachev, is a member of the Cultural Fund's Board of Directors. As a glasnost era effort to stimulate genuine popular initiative, the Fund works to revive traditions of charity, to raise funds for the development of culture, to open museums and monuments, to restore historical and

cultural sites and to organize art exhibits.

In its first year, the Soviet Cultural Fund collected more than 13 million rubles in donations and 2.5 million dollars in in-kind gifts. In addition to the Moscow and Leningrad offices, branches of the Fund were opened in all the 15 Union republic as well as 135 local departments in the autonomous republics and oblasts or regions. The Fund designated financial support for the restoration of the Moscow home of Fyodor Chaliapin, the famous turn-of-the-century Russian singer, and is developing it as a center to help gifted vocal artists. It has also collected money to build a statue in honor of Vasily Tyorkin, one of the Soviet people's most popular literary creations from a poem by Aleksandr Traidonsky

In addition, the Fund has raised money for a museum in memory of the nationally popular singer and songwriter Vladimir Vysotsky,<sup>1</sup> [27] an accomplished actor better known for the street-wise ballads he wrote and sang. When Vysotsky died at the age of 40 in 1980, his funeral attracted thousands of weeping fans who knew his voice from underground tape recordings (magnitizdat). His grave in Moscow, graced not only with flowers and his photograph but also with the packs of cigarettes and vodka bottles the poet loved too well, is still a place where fans regularly meet to swap tapes.

Historical preservation also has its Russian enthusiasts, among them a handful of VOPIK activists -- students of the

Moscow Bauman Higher Technical School -- who managed in the spring of 1986 to hold off the destruction of the Shcherbakov Houses on Bauman Street. Scheduled for demolition under an urban renewal plan, the Shcherbakov Houses are among the oldest surviving private buildings in Moscow. The freshman students, led by Kirill Panferov and Vladimir Gurbolikhov, occupied the building and organized a round-the-clock vigil, as bulldozers stood ready nearby. The news of the threatened demolition and the student's picketing ended up in the press,<sup>2</sup> and after the publicity, Boris Yeltsin, then still secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, ordered the demolition canceled. Even so, Panferov was expelled from the technical school after the protest and stripped of his title of public inspector for VOOPIK.<sup>3</sup>[28] But an association formed after the rescue of the Shcherbatov Houses, called Sloboda (Workers' Settlement), is still active in preserving monuments.

In Leningrad, also under the auspices of VOOPIK, a small organization called Mir (World), has been operating since 1984. Made up of volunteers who donate their time on weekends as assistants to restorers of architectural sites, Mir has helped at more than a dozen restoration projects.

Another small (20-member) Leningrad group called Spaseniye (Salvation) has been active since 1985. Salvation waged an unsuccessful battle, including three days of picketing, to keep the wreckers' balls from the Hotel Angleterre, where in 1925, the

popular folk poet Sergei Yesenin committed suicide. Although the Hotel was razed, Salvation has managed to prevent the destruction of several other old buildings, including places where Fyodor Dostoyevsky lived at various times and the home of the poet Anton Delvig, a friend of the most celebrated Russian poet, Aleksandr Pushkin.

The Center for Creative Initiative, attached to the City Committee of the Komsomol, registered Salvation as a society under its aegis. Despite its official status, Salvation has still managed to acquire some enemies among Leningrad's Party leaders, and not just because of clashes with city planners who want to tear down old buildings. In the summer of 1987, Salvation tried to run one of its leaders as a candidate in the City Council elections, a 23-year-old guide at the Suvorov Museum named Aleksei Kovalyov.<sup>4</sup> [29] This effort, although unsuccessful, apparently did more to provoke the wrath of the Party than the picketing of buildings scheduled for demolition. Kovalyov was denied admission to graduate school after the Komsomol called his political views unstable. In the Summer of 1989, Salvation was one of the groups that formed the Leningrad Popular Front.<sup>5</sup>

### Ukraine

In Ukraine, former political prisoners were the founders of the Ukrainian Culturological Club, at the first meeting of which on August 6, 1987 in Kiev about 200 people gathered. The topic for discussion was "Ukrainian Culture: Facade and Reality." The

next meetings of the club were devoted to discussing the relationship between Church and state in Ukraine, the legacy of the 18th century Ukrainian philosopher Hryhory Skovoroda, ecological problems in Ukraine; and the problem of preserving Ukrainian cultural monuments and history. Each meeting attracted a large and sympathetic audience. After holding open-air meetings in the park in the summer and fall, the club moved indoors. Forbidden to rent space, however, the members broke up into different sections devoted to literature, culture, philosophy and history and began to hold meetings in private apartments.

On April 26, 1988, the second anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, members of the Culturological Club staged a demonstration with the banners "Chernobyl Must Never Be Repeated," "Make Ukraine a Nuclear-Free Zone," "Ukrainian Culturological Club Against Nuclear Death." About 60 people turned out for the demonstration before police and KGB officers as well as young Afghanistan war veterans from the Kiev branch of the officially-organized Soldiers Internationalists Association broke up the march.

A separate Culturological Club called "Friends of the Lion" was founded in the city of Lvov at the end of 1987, headed by a former Kiev University student, Fyodor Konyk, a worker.<sup>6</sup>[33] Almost simultaneously, the Ukrainian Association of Independent Creative Intelligentsia was founded with branches in both Kiev

and Lvov by 14 well-known intellectuals -- mainly poets, artists and writers whose past imprisonment on political charges had kept them out of jobs that matched their education and qualifications.

The association said its goal was to promote increased exposure for the works of its members (even in samizdat form or in exhibits in private apartments) and to provide them moral and artistic support.<sup>7</sup> [34]

At the beginning of 1988 the club Legacy was born, whose board members included prominent scholars who are members of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences.<sup>8</sup>[35] The club's purpose is to restore the cultural heritage destroyed during the Stalin and Brezhnev eras.

The struggle to preserve Ukrainian culture also led to the formation of an unofficial group in Zaporozhe known as the Khortitsa Committee. A nearby island in the Dnieper River where ancient Russian merchants and Scandinavian Vikings stopped on their way to Byzantium, Khortitsa was a center for the Zaporozhe Cossacks. It was also the site that Zaporozhe municipal architects planned in mid-1987 to use for a pedestrian bridge across the Dnieper to new residential areas, a project threatening irreparable damage to the island's nature preserve. The Khortitsa Committee, chaired by journalist Konstantin Sushko, led a fight against the project and was enthusiastically supported by the residents of the city. After numerous essays in the press criticizing the plan, city authorities finally turned

it down and opened up public discussion of other plans for the foot bridge that would leave Khortitsa untouched.<sup>9</sup>[36] The Khortitsa Committee itself later joined the larger ecological group, Green World, gaining a measure of protection from local authorities.

In September 1987, a group of former political prisoners headed by Vyacheslav Chornovil announced the reopening of the independent journal Ukrainskiy vistnik (Ukrainian Herald) which Chornovil had published from 1970 until his arrest in 1972 resulted in a six-year labor camp term followed by three years of internal exile.<sup>10</sup>[37] In December 1987, the editors of Ukrainskiy vistnik announced that they would serve as the organ of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, the revival of which was discussed in Chapter 2.

At the end of 1987, a charitable fund opened in Donetsk to aid prisoners of psychiatric hospitals and their families, and the following informal associations were founded during 1988 in Ukraine: in Rovno, the pacifist Trust Group, associated with the Moscow Trust Group; in Kiev, the ecological society Goloseyevo-88, and also civic clubs: Gromada (Civic Society), Spadshchina (Heritage), Noosphere, Ukrainian Democratic Union, the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, the Initiative Group to Hold Rallies, the Group For Citizens' Rehabilitation, and the Ecology Union; in Donetsk the social-political club, Pluralist; in Lvov, the Society of Friends of Ukrainian Art and Literature and in Odessa,

the Ecology Club.

Throughout 1988 and the beginning of 1989, several conferences met to try to strengthen cooperation among kindred associations. At a June 12, 1988, conference in Kiev attended by 500 people, an Organizing Committee for the creation of a Popular Union to Promote Perestroika was founded. All of these associations frequently cooperate in organizing conferences, rallies and other joint activities. Thus in Kiev, on Human Rights Day, December 20, 1988 the Ukrainian Democratic Union and the Ukrainian Helsinki Union applied for permits to hold rallies which the authorities refused. Thousands of people gathered at these joint rallies. In Lvov on June 21, 1988, however, 50,000 people gathered at the call of informals to hear a discussion of the decisions of the XIX Party Conference. And in December 1988, in response to a call by the Ukrainian Union of Writers, the Initiative Group to Support the Creation of a Popular Front in the Ukraine was formed. Twenty-three people took part -- representatives of the Ukrainian Writers Union; the Ukrainian Helsinki Union; the Ukrainian Culturological Club; Spadshchina; Gromada; and Noosphere. In general, in Kiev and Lvov officially-recognized associations have tended to cooperate with more active and popular informal groups, and similar efforts toward organizational unity in other cities include the recent coalition of several informal groups as the United Union to Promote Perestroika in Odessa, the creation of cells of the Popular Front

in Kharkov; and branches of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union, the Popular Front and Memorial in many other Ukrainian cities. In September 1988, all of these organizations joined in the Ukrainian Movement for Perebudova (Perestroika) called Rukh (Movement) with an estimated 280,000 members.

### Byelorussia

In Byelorussia, long known as one of the most conformist and repressed republics, public life sprang up as protest against the fall-out from the Chernobyl nuclear accident and against the legacy of Stalinism. In 1987, the reports of informal associations that began to appear in the official press mentioned experimental theatrical studios such as Krug (Circle) in Minsk, numerous rock groups and also societies interested in national history and culture. Among such societies are the Uzgorye (Translation) club in Vitebsk, Pakhodnya (Torch) in Grodno, Povyaz (Ties Across Time) in Orsha, Talaka (Mutual Aid) in Gomel and Minsk and Maladzii (Youth) in Polotsk. The best-known groups are Talaka and Tutayshiye (Locals), an association of young literary people who operate in Minsk under the aegis of the official Byelorussian Union of Writers. Having initially provided them meeting space and even publishing facilities, authorities later tried to put the two groups under Komsomol control.<sup>11</sup>

In striving to curb youth associations, the Byelorussian Komsomol Central Committee founded a musical information center

in 1987 in Minsk called Orientir as a device to coopt rock groups. In addition, a republic youth center was created, attached to the Railway Workers' Palace of Culture and Sports, as a place where more than 50 different youth associations were supposed to function. The center, however, remains idle and empty.

On November 1, 1987, Tutayshiye and Talaka organized a dzyady, a traditional Byelorussian day of memorial. Although the authorities refused to give permission for such ceremonies, about 200 people involved in Tutayshiye and Talaka, as well as members of the Byelorussian intelligentsia they invited gathered as planned in the morning at the statue of Janka Kupala, the famed Byelorussian poet. Party and Komsomol workers ended up coming as well.

After laying flowers at the foot of the statue, participants read their own verses and those of dead poets as well as the names of the leading figures of Byelorussian culture who had been killed -- and not only those who had been canonized by Soviet ideologues. Particular emphasis went to memorializing the victims of Stalinist purges, when the flower of Byelorussian intelligentsia and nation was massacred in what several called a genocide. Again and again, speakers persistently urged both that the memory of Stalin's victims be restored to the national consciousness and that the names of their executioners be made public as examples of the misuse of power.

During the ceremony, Party and Komsomol workers tried in their own remarks to dilute the seditious speeches with official ideology. The problems raised at the dzyady were subsequently discussed by the Byelorussian press, which presented both points of view<sup>12</sup> [31].

Talaka and Tutayshiye grew rapidly in popularity and in the crowds drawn to their rallies -- over 5,000 on June 19, 1988 in memory of the victims of the Stalinist terror. On October 30, a day that has been commemorated for 15 years as Soviet Political Prisoners' Day but also the eve of All Saints' Day, when the Christian martyrs and other saints are commemorated, Talaka and Tutayshiye applied to hold their next dzyady at the cemetery gates, but authorities refused them a permit. Public outrage at the denial was particularly acute because during the summer before, in Kurapaty near Minsk, a mass grave had been opened that contained the remains of 300,000 victims of the Stalinist purges of 1937-41. With 10-15,000 marchers, the rally took place despite the ban, though not, as proposed, at the gates of the cemetery, but on the outskirts of the city, on the road to Kurapaty. Although their rally was peaceful and orderly, police dispersed the gathering using billy clubs and tear gas. Fourteen demonstrators were detained, including well-known scientists and writers. The event gained attention throughout and beyond the Soviet Union. Both the Byelorussian and the central Soviet press wrote about the unprovoked and brutal dispersal of the peaceful

demonstration.

In addition to Talaka and Tutayshiye, in the fall of 1988 another group was formed called Martirolog Byelorusi, or Martyrs' Roll of Byelorussia, to commemorate the victims of Stalinism. With branches in Minsk and other cities of the republic, Martitolog cooperates with the Memorial Society discussed in Chapter 4. At about the same time in Minsk, representatives of several informal associations of Byelorussia convened to create a Popular Front, an initiative, like Martitolog, that Republic authorities answered with press attacks on the groups' activists.

Despite such opposition, a conference to unite the groups took place. Since Byelorussian officials refused permission for the meeting, it was held in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where conditions were more liberal, in a meeting hall that Lithuanian sympathizers provided free of charge. Even after the Byelorussia Popular Front drew more than 40,000 people to its first rally in January 1989, its subsequent congresses have met in Vilnius, and a film critical of police conduct at the October 30 march was refused distribution by Goskino, the official Soviet film agency.

#### Moldavia

Among the several informal associations active in Moldavia, in the southwest Soviet Union, most focus their efforts on winning sovereignty for the republic, official government status for the Moldavian language and flag and restoration of the Latin alphabet used before Moldavia was annexed from Romania to the

USSR and had the Cyrillic alphabet imposed. The most popular associations are the Aleksei Mateyevich (a 14th century poet) Literary Musical Club and the Democratic Movement of Moldavia, which cooperates with the Mateyevich Club.

Since the beginning of 1989, these organizations have held weekly rallies on Sunday in the center of Kishinev, where as many as 25,000 people hear speeches in their native tongue and sing Moldavian songs. In February 1989, the republic leadership and city authorities tried without success -- and occasionally with police force -- to stop these usually peaceful rallies. After four people who had been active in organizing the rallies were arrested in March for "disturbing public order," a Committee to Defend the Arrested was founded on April 9, 1989, and at rallies people called for the release of those arrested.

A North District Popular Front of Moldavia and the Reneshtere (Renewal) Society also support the Mateyevich Club and the Democratic Movement, while a unity society unites non-Moldavians and opposes granting government status to the Moldavian language. The Gagauz Khalky Society was created by the Gagauz, a small Turkish-speaking ethnic group in Moldavia, who advocate creating a Gagauz Autonomous Republic. They held their first congress on May 24, 1989, with more than 500 delegates from towns and villages in southern Moldavia and appealed to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet to establish an autonomous Gagauz region within Moldavia.<sup>13</sup>

The "green" movement is particularly active in Moldavia because of the tragic ecological situation in the republic; negligent use of chemicals has become a serious health hazard, particularly for children.

Moldavia also has a League of Unemployed, not a common organization in the USSR, which opposes the migration of outside workers into the republic. It also advocates government welfare for the unemployed -- theoretically unnecessary in a society supposed to provide jobs for all -- and draws about 30 people to its regular meetings in Victory Park.

On May 1, 1989, 3,000 people attended a rally in Kishinev's Freedom Square in front of the Moldavian Academy of Sciences to commemorate the victims killed in Georgia on April 9. The crowd swelled to 10,000 and proceeded to Kishinev Prison, where they demanded the release of imprisoned members of their movement. The next day 20,000 people gathered at the Green Theater at a rally organized by the Democratic Movement, from which participants sent a telegram of sympathy to the Georgian people.

About 2,000 assembled at the monument of Stefan the Great on May 14 to discuss the draft laws on Language and Citizenship, and officially permitted rallies on the same subject took place in Kantemir, Dubossary and Orgeyev. They constitute the background against which the Moldavian Popular Front -- combining nine informal associations -- opened its inaugural congress on May 20, 1989, at the Writers' Union building in Kishinev. Leaders were

elected and a 22-point program was adopted, calling for the introduction of economic self-management; for Moldavians -- and only Moldavians -- to do their military service in the republic; for annulment of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact; for the restoration of the Latin alphabet; and for the creation of a Moldavian Autocephalous Orthodox Church independent of the Russian Orthodox Church. A draft law was published May 21 on converting to the Latin alphabet between 1990 and 1995.<sup>14</sup>

### Baltic Republics

Although large popular front movements now dominate public life in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, they did not grow in a vacuum. Smaller groups were active in 1986 and 1987 -- some of them veterans of harsh persecution -- and played an important role in launching the first mass public rallies. Helsinki '86, for example, was founded in the Latvian city of Liepaya in July 1986 by Linard Grantinsh, 26, an amber jeweller; Raimonds Bitenieks, 42, a chauffeur, and Martins Barris, 39, a laborer. Although Helsinki groups had been founded in Lithuania and other non-Russian republics in the 1970s, Latvia had not had such a human rights monitoring group.<sup>15</sup>[51]

Soon after the founding, eight new people joined the group, including Juris Vidinsh, chief physician of the Rezeknek District Central Hospital. He was immediately expelled from the Communist Party, fired from his job and stripped of his title of deputy to his district soviet. In February 1988, a youth section called

Fatherland and Freedom was founded under Helsinki `86 and 10 people joined<sup>16</sup>[52] despite official reaction that included drafting some of the group's members into the army and forcing others to emigrate.

In various documents Helsinki `86 defined national self-determination and the national rights of Latvians as its goals. It protested in-migration to Latvia of citizens of other nationalities, erosion of the Latvian language by Russian and the offering of apartments in Riga and other cities to newcomers at the expense of Latvians. In the summer of 1987, about 5,000 Latvians answered a Helsinki `86 call to mark the anniversary of the mass deportations of Latvians to Siberia on June 14, 1941, by laying flowers at the Statue of Liberty in Riga.<sup>17</sup>[53] It also organized rallies on the anniversary of the proclamation of Latvia's independence in February 1918, and in March on the anniversary of the deportation of Latvians to Siberia in 1949.<sup>18</sup>[55]

In Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, former political prisoner Tiit Madisson, eventually forced into exile in Sweden, founded the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact in August 1987. The groups's goals involved chiefly independence for Estonia, and thus it called for glasnost on the secret protocols precisely in order to prove the unlawfulness of the Soviet presence in Estonia.<sup>19</sup>[56]

The Free Independent Youth Column No. 1, numbering about 100

members, held its founding meeting on December 20, 1987, in the Estonian city of Viru as an organization to preserve the national historical memory. Youth Column published a bulletin called Public Opinion and according to testimony by Tiit Madisson, was joined by 30-40 similar groups by the summer of 1987.<sup>20</sup>[57].

Estonia's National Independence Party was founded on January 21, 1988, but several of its organizers, including former political prisoner Heiki Ahonen, were promptly threatened with drafting into Chernobyl clean-up service, and then forced to leave the USSR and forfeit their citizenship. The NIP's program called for a revival of the Estonian language; observance of civil rights; establishment of a market economy; army service by residents of Estonia only on the territory of Estonia; representation for Estonia within the United Nations; and in general, "defense of the interests of the Estonian people...until the restoration of the independence of the Estonian government."

This document was signed by 14 people and sent to the Estonian Soviet of Ministers and to Estonian newspapers. The National Independence Party now numbers 300 active members, one third of whom are estimated by organizers as aged 16-22.

The Lithuanian Helsinki Group, tied to the national movement and the Catholic Church when it was founded in 1977, was decimated by arrests of its members by the early 1980s. In May 1988, however, former members of the original group, Vitautas Vaicunas and Mecislavas Jurevicius, announced the resumption of

its work.<sup>21</sup>[58] The original chairman of the group, Viktoras Petkus, served a lengthy labor sentence and was not released from exile until September 1988, when he returned to Vilnius and formally reopened the Helsinki Group with new members.

At the heart of Baltic politics is the issue of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of August, 1939, the secret protocols of which gave Stalin sanction to occupy and annex the three nations. As wartime conquests of the Soviet Union and victims of brutal purges by the occupying Red Army, the peoples of these once-independent states still yearn deeply to regain complete freedom from Moscow's rule. Setting the historical record straight through full publication of the 1939 protocols is the demand around which the informals began their activities with public demonstrations in all three Baltic capitals on August 23, 1987.

[54] But even before that demand was partly met by official publication -- a year afterwards in Estonia and Lithuania, and later in Latvia -- the agitation expanded to include demands for the Soviet Union to repudiate the pact itself, withdraw its troops and grant the Baltics autonomy. Informal groups that had organized the 3,000 people who called for freedom and sang Lithuanian national songs at the 1987 rally near St. Anne's Cathedral in Vilnius and at the smaller demonstration in Tallinn merged into broad popular fronts, genuine political movements.

In Latvia, the Movement for the Independence of Latvia was

the main group pursuing secession and independence. Other groups included the Environmental Defense Club, the Ancient Monuments' Preservation Club, the Socially Active People and the Democratic Union of Riga. In Lithuania, the Lithuanian Freedom League, the Lithuanian National Confederation and the Movement for Lithuanian Independence have all proclaimed their goal of seceding from the USSR. They have been joined by the National Youth Council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Sobriety Movement, the Public Committee to Save Lithuanian Political Prisoners, the Association of Lithuanian Former Political Convicts, the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, the Lithuanian Olympic Committee, the Society of Lovers of the Lithuanian Language, the Lithuanian Democratic Party, the Kaunas Workers' Union, the Exiles' Club and others.

In Estonia, groups with similar agendas were founded, including the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the National Independence Party of Estonia, the Independent Youth Forum, the Estonian National League, the Independent Estonian Information Agency, the Tallinn Independent Voluntary Militia, the Olympic Committee of Estonia, the Environmental Defense Society. The majority of Balts, however, know that the goals of complete independence or secession are not attainable at the moment, or even in the foreseeable future. Therefore, despite the large turn-outs (thousands and tens of thousands of people) at demonstrations organized by the above-mentioned groups and despite the fact that

these rallies were generally not persecuted and it was generally perceived that it was now safe to express these national aspirations, these were not the groups that won nation-wide support.

Instead, a movement developed which sought authentic sovereignty, but within the framework of the USSR, as a republic within a federation or confederation, but certainly with the hope of secession at some point in the future. If former political prisoners made up the avant-garde of the movement for independence, then the avant-garde for the movement to expand the rights of the republic within the present framework was led by the intellectual establishment, many of them members of the Communist Party and even occupants of prominent official state and party posts. There is the first such Soviet movement, rallying officials behind a more moderate and immediate set of political goals that none had previously voiced without punishment. The nature of their demands and of the people involved, as well as the general mood of the entire three nations, have reminded some observers of the Prague Spring of 1968 in Czechoslovakia.

Events in the Baltics picked up pace with the selection of delegates to the June 1988 XIX Party Conference. In the course of these elections, a plenary meeting of the Estonian Arts Workers Union expressed its lack of confidence in Karl Vaino, First Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee of

Estonia, a Moscow appointee. The chief newspaper of Estonia published the resolution of the Arts Union, and Communists from many of the production collectives endorsed it. As a result, Vaino lost his leadership post to Vaino Valjas, Estonian-born and Estonian-speaking, who went as the First Secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee to the XIX Party Conference. Both Valjas and the chairman of the Estonian Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Arnold Rutel were confirmed advocates of broader sovereignty for the Union republics. They encouraged leading specialists of the Estonian Academy of Sciences and the Tartu University to draft a plan for a complex transfer of the economy to complete self-government and cost-accounting, abolishing central Soviet authority over Estonia's factories. According to this draft plan, Estonia would participate in the USSR economy only through strictly limited payments from the state treasury, with all sales of Estonian products to other Soviet republics at prices fixed by agreement between suppliers and purchasers. Everything earned above the payments to the Soviet central government would remain under local control to be spent at the discretion of republican authorities who would also set prices on items manufactured and wages paid in Estonia. On this economic reform basis, advocates of sovereignty hoped to receive full autonomy in all internal affairs, leaving to the central authorities in Moscow only foreign policy and defense.

Events unfolded in Lithuania and Latvia along the similar lines. In Lithuania, the demand for the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, Gintaras Songaila [spell?], to retire escalated sharply after he authorized special Internal Affairs Ministry troops to disperse a rally organized September 28, 1987, by the Lithuanian Freedom League. The organizers had not obtained permission from the authorities to hold the rally, but 10,000 marched anyway. After being barred from Gedieminos Square, where the rally had been planned, people marched to another location, but police used force to break up their peaceful rally. Protests about the brutal dispersal were declared not only by informal associations, who sent 2,000 picketers to stand outside the Central Committee building, but by the official Lithuanian Republic Council of Trade Unions. A government commission created to investigate the incident declared the police actions lawful, but condemned the use of force. After this, Songaila went into retirement, along with the Minister of Internal Affairs who had executed the order to break up the demonstration. Algirdas Brazauskas replaced Songaila and, of all high-ranking Party officials, came the closest to actual Lithuanian public sentiment.

Public outcry in Latvia also cost Boris Pugo his job as First Secretary on October 4, 1988. The cause was his secret message

-- soon disclosed -- to the Central Committee in Moscow, warning

that the Latvian Central Committee had lost control of events and hinting that the Party needed military reinforcement. Pugo was recently promoted to the Politburo by Gorbachev.

In all three republics, during the run-up to the election of the delegates to the June 1988 XIX Party Conference and the drafting of mandates for them, mass movements emerged. In Estonia and Latvia they were called Popular Fronts (Rahvarinne, the Estonian Popular Front (EPF) and the Popular Front of Latvia (PFL)), and in Lithuania, the Lithuanian Movement for Perestroika, known by the name Sajudis, which is the Lithuanian word for "movement." By April 1988, the EPF had 800 branches throughout the republic and counted about 40,000 supporters. On June 17, 150,000 turned out for an EPF rally organized in Tallinn, that is, more than 15 percent of the Estonian population of the republic, and that number doubled for a September demonstration. On October 1-2, 1988, the EPF held its formal founding congress, attended by 3,000 delegates chosen by 60,000 members.

The Popular Front of Latvia held its founding congress a week later in Riga, bringing together 1,083 delegates from 2,300 support groups of 115,000 members in all. The Sajudis congress in Vilnius on October 22-23, assembled 1,021 delegates from more than 1,000 local branches of Sajudis, linking 180,000 people, almost as many as the 200,000 people who joined a demonstration Sajudis called in Vingis Park outside of Vilnius on August 23,

1988, the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

The EPF, the PFL and Sajudis have broadly similar structures as conglomerates of local groups with no real officially recognized leaders. These groups select delegates to the founding congresses, where a program is passed, along with by-laws for the movement and resolutions on the most important political issues of the day. At these congresses, the leading boards or councils are also chosen.

According to the charter of the EPF, the basic kernel of the movement is the support group, and the main structural unit is the regional popular front lead by a Soviet of Mandated Representatives. The highest governing body of the EPF is the Congress. The Communist Party participates in the EPF only through individuals who are members of both. Although four members of the seven-person EPF board are Communists, the EPF operates outside Party control. On the board of the EPF are [check English spellings]: Heinz Valk, Rein Veidemann, Kostel Herndorf, Lembit Koik, Marina Lauristin, Egraf Savisaar, and Mamu Hint.

The founding congress of the Popular Front of Latvia elected a Duma (or parliament) to run the organization in between congresses. It also elected a chair, the 34-year-old journalist Dainis Ivans, and a board including Valdis Shteins, Ilmars Bishers, Elmars Grens and Yanis Lucan. Sajudis, according to its charter, is governed by a Sejm, or parliament, between

congresses, made up of 220 people, headed by a soviet or council of 35 people. The elected head of the council is Vytautas Landsbergis.

The educated middle class -- the intelligentsia -- plays the leading role in all three mass organizations in the Baltic republics. This includes that part of the intelligentsia that had successful careers before glasnost and had never openly confronted the authorities. Thus, in the Soviet of Mandated Representatives of the EPF, 28 percent, or almost a third, are members of the Communist Party. In Sajudis, 17 members out of 35 in the Soviet of the Sejm are Party members.<sup>22</sup> This fact has to be understood, of course, against the backdrop of the history of the Baltics under communism. Many people joined the Communist Party to advance their careers, in an attempt to do something for their nation from within the power structure. The Communist members now within ruling bodies of the mass movements are there because they have been active in movements for autonomy and have won public support. They are elected. Their presence does not indicate a grudging compromise with the elements of the Party which were subservient to Moscow or outright Stalinists; they beat these type of people in the elections. Most do not have high-ranking posts. In many ways, the mass movements and the special history of this area means that the Communist Party itself has been transformed, so it can no longer be run out of Moscow.

Along with the communists in these organizations can be found former political prisoners, and, in the capacity of collective members, informal groups with more radical programs than the mass movement. Thus, the Lithuanian Freedom League has supported Sajudis, as has the Lithuanian Christian Union, the Vilnius Council of Students in Support of Perestroika, the Kaunas Hyde Park Group, the Greens (the ecology movement) and many other types of groups. The board of EPF includes members from the Ancient Monuments Preservation Society (19 percent of the members); the Greens (ten percent), religious societies (two percent), the Estonian National Independence Party and the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (the last two are 0.2 percent combined).<sup>23</sup>

The chief planks of the EPF program are as follows: "the EPF considers that it does not correspond to the international democratic experience to have one political organization with a monopoly on governing the state and public life;" "for the sake of developing democracy, it is necessary to legalize the activities of any associations, including political organizations;" "the EPF supports a plurality of forms of property, including the free development of cooperative, personal and private property;" "private property...requires Constitutional safeguards." As for the political arrangements of the USSR, the EPF supports "the principles of federalism and an unambiguous confirmation of the priority of Union republics over

the Union as a whole." The EPF program demands the removal from the Estonian criminal code of articles that restrict the freedom of speech and assembly. Added to the program are regular resolutions passed by the founding congress: supporting the Communist Party's course towards perestroika; clarifying the Constitution of Estonia to establish the right of the republic to the autonomous organization of its own economic and internal political life; demanding abolition of all privileges of the nomenklatura; exonerating those sentenced "in the period of stagnation" for political reasons and for so-called economic crimes (meaning free market activity, not such crimes as embezzlement) and denouncing USSR Supreme Soviet restrictions of July 1988 on holding rallies and demonstrations and the using special internal forces against demonstrators.

The PFL's program and the program of Sajudis are similar to the EPF's. The PFL also proposes passing a new law on elections, guaranteeing the free competition of various viewpoints and would grant the Union republics the right to veto All-Union decisions affecting their interests.

The program of Sajudis states that its goal is the "restoration of the political, economic and cultural sovereignty of Lithuania." It declares that Sajudis is not dependent on any other organs of power and also that "no party has the right to usurp political power in the republic." The program calls for removal of all articles in the Lithuanian Criminal Code which

have been used to punish dissent, and to proclaim Stalinism as a crime against humanity. The program calls for the creation of Lithuanian national military formations and despite the vow to leave foreign policy and military matters to Moscow, a prohibition against citizens of Lithuania taking part in military actions that have been condemned by the U.N. -- no doubt a result of the casualties that Lithuanians suffered fighting in the Afghanistan war.

Although the EPF, the PFL and Sajudis are impressive mass movements, they all have a common weak point: most of their members, both rank-and-file and leaders, belong to the native populations of the Baltic republics, although each of these nations has a significant population (particularly large in Estonia and Latvia) of migrants, mainly Russians. Latvians, only 40 percent of the population, have become a minority in their republic while Estonians make up approximately 50 percent of the population of Estonia and Lithuanians, more than 80 percent of that republic's population.

The non-native population has grown alarmed about the explosion of national feelings among the Balts and those who speak only Russian have become concerned about the elevation of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian languages to the status of official republic languages. Such a change would put political, economic and business life into tongues that the majority of the migrants do not know and threaten the Russian-speakers with

possible job loss. The PFL, for example, has called for a requirement that all non-Latvians must learn to speak Latvian within three years if they have jobs where they deal with the public. A law was recently passed in Latvia that if factories hire non-Latvians from outside the republic, they must pay a stiff fee to the local government. An immigration service has been formed to deal with those who want to settle in Latvia.

In response to the formation of the Baltic movements and the accompanying high emotional level of public life, the Russian-speaking population of the Baltic republics have united in counterpart popular movements. In Estonia, they are called Interdvizheniye, or International Movement; in Latvia, Interfront and in Lithuania, Yedinstvo, or Unity. Unlike the numerous associations throughout the Baltics that are involved in preserving their national identity and developing the cultures of national minorities (the Balto-Slavonic Society in Latvia, the Russian Center in Lithuania, Svetych (Beacon), a Russian language culture center in Estonia, as well as Byelorussian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Armenian, Crimean Tatar and Polish societies in all three republics), Intermovement, Interfront and Unity are political associations which promote the interests and privileges of the Russian-speaking minorities in the Baltics. Ostensibly, the programs of these associations affirm respect towards all nations, including the native populations of the Baltic republics, and welcome international cooperation on the basis of

socialist principles. But in practice, these associations mount harsh confrontations with the mass movements in the Baltic republics, accusing them of nationalism and Russophobia. Either they oppose recognizing the language of the native population as the state language of a given republic, or, as a compromise, they would grant the Russian language the status of the official government language as well (bilingualism).

The number of people involved in Intermovement, Interfront and Unity cannot be exactly determined. They are able to make themselves felt, but they were not able to succeed in the March 1989 elections; in every case, the native movements triumphed. While the PFL counts at least 115,000 members, the founding congress of the Interfront in Riga, Latvia on January 7-8, 1989, claimed to have delegates sent by 318,000 supporters. But this figure is obtained by counting as "supporters" the entire workforce of certain factories controlled by Russian bosses in the Interfront. The Interfront delegates included 535 Russians, 26 Latvians and 239 people of other nationalities.

Unity, the Lithuanian organization, has 112 branches in Vilnius, where the majority of the non-Lithuanian population is concentrated. At a Unity conference there in January 1989, 593 delegates from 381 primary groups were represented. Most of them were workers, chiefly Russians, who are employed at large factories serving the entire USSR.

In Estonia, on initiative of groups of cultural figures, a

Forum of the Peoples of Estonia was founded on September 24, 1988, in order to resolve ethnic tensions. EPF representatives and representatives of 17 national groups in Estonia attended, but no one came from Interfront, which refused to take part in the Forum. In Riga on December 11, at an analogous Forum for the peoples of Latvia, of the 909 delegates from 23 national groups, 49 percent were Latvians and 30.4 percent were Russians, that is, roughly equivalent to the percentages in the total population. The Forum helped the national groups to take the first steps towards understanding each other, but it did not change Interfront's position.

In Vilnius on December 17, 1988, a conference was organized of representatives of informal associations of Lithuania on the inter-ethnic relations in the republic. A delegation from Sajudis took part as well as the Russian Cultural Center and the societies and clubs of groups residing in Lithuania: Armenians, Poles, Jews, Byelorussians, Estonians, Ukrainians and Tatars. Together, these groups founded the Lithuanian International Coordinating Association, but Unity did not send delegates to the meeting and did not join the association.

Although tensions run high, the Soviet regime has so far avoided as full, open confrontation with the Baltic republics. Relying on the Balts' help to improve the Soviet economy, Soviet officials are also aware of the impossibility of concealing from the West the political consequences of a conflict with mass

public organizations in the Baltic republics. Therefore, up to the summer of 1989, the central press kept mostly silent about the events in the Baltics or provided distorted coverage that drew repeated protests from EPF, NPF and Sajudis.

One way or another, the authorities will have to come to terms with the support the overwhelming majority of the Baltic population gives to the national movements. As the March 1989 elections made clear, the Communist Party is losing its influence. Sajudis candidates landed 36 seats out of 42 provided for Lithuania in the Congress of People's Deputies; the EPF in Estonia received 26 seats out of 30, and the PFL won 24 out of 29 Latvian seats.

### Georgia

The drive for autonomy in the Caucasus has not achieved the organizational cohesion found in the Baltics. In Georgia, however, the separatist instinct is deeply rooted in cultural consciousness and now openly, stridently voiced. Its first post-glasnost form came in the Chavchavadze Society, founded on December 1, 1987, and named after a widely respected writer and democrat of the beginning of the 20th century. The purpose of the group is to "defend the interests and rights of the Georgian nation, promote concern for the preservation of the cultural heritage and strengthen the national consciousness of the Georgian people." The society's activists use the slogan "Language, Faith, Fatherland."

At the time of its founding, the Chavchavadze Society numbered more than 300 people, but within a year, its membership had mushroomed to 50,000. Among the group's members are both former political prisoners (Zviad Gamsakhurdiya, Merab Kostava,<sup>24</sup> Tamara Chkheidze, Georgy Chanturiya and others), some of whom were involved in the Georgian Helsinki Group, and well-known writers and scholars. Soon after its creation, 600 students of Tbilisi University held a meeting February 24, 1988, in support of Society protests against military maneuvers near the ancient monastery of David-Garedzh that threatened to damage this greatly valued example of Georgian architecture. The students obtained assurances from the authorities that in the future, the maneuvers would be conducted in other places. But this promise was not kept, and the students repeated their demonstrations on September 21 and 22, when an American delegation participating in a U.S.-USSR exchange program known as the Chautauqua Initiative came to Tbilisi. Police broke up the demonstration as the foreigners looked on in surprise.<sup>25</sup> [39]

Soon, the Society itself split into several other organizations. There were at least three tendencies: moderates, who insisted on cooperation with the authorities in order to achieve the Society's goals; liberals, represented by the Georgian Helsinki Group and radicals, who formed the National Democratic Party (NDP) of Georgia (Georgy Chanturiya and others). The NDP announced that its aim was secession of Georgia from the

USSR.

In March 1988 in Tbilisi, the Shota Rustaveli Society, named after another Georgian writer and headed by an officially-recognized poet, Irakly Abashidze, came into being with a broader mandate: a center not only for Georgian culture, but for the cultures of the other 80 ethnic groups that inhabit Georgia. Among the founders of the Rustaveli society are Abkhazes, Osetians, Russians, Armenians, Azerbaidzhanis, Ukrainians, Kurds, Assyrians, Greeks and many more.<sup>26</sup>[40]

In the fall of 1988, rallies were organized in many Georgian cities by the Chavchavadze Society, or separately, by the National Democratic Party of Georgia, which continued to belong formally to the Society. Among the largest of the rallies was one on November 12 in Tbilisi, organized by the NDP, in which 100,000 people took part. The slogans for the rally were "End Russification!" and "Long Live Independent Georgia!" On November 13, the NDP mobilized, as the Baltic groups had, to protest against draft Constitutional amendments, officially published for public discussion, that would sharply curtail the rights of the republics of the Soviet Union, including the right to secede.

About 100,000 attended the NDP rally, while a more moderate sector of the public, also concerned about the draft amendments, organized a meeting four days later to discuss the question of organizing a Georgian Popular Front as a counterweight to the NDP.

Representatives of the Rustaveli Society attended this November 17 session with members of the Georgian Academy of Science, Tbilisi University and several other informal associations. These included the Union for National Justice, a group formed two weeks earlier that advocated respect for human rights and sovereignty for Georgia within the framework of the USSR. Founders included Avtandil Imnadze, Irakly Shengelaya and others.

Those attending the exploratory popular front meeting also criticized the new draft amendments. On November 23, when the session of the Georgian Supreme Soviet opened, at which the draft amendments were debated, all the informal associations took part in a rally of 200,000 people outside the legislative building to object to the adoption of the draft Constitutional amendments. This unanimity apparently had some influence on the Supreme Soviet, since it finally rejected the proposed draft.

While the decision satisfied most of the rally participants, the radical segment among the informals demanded that the Georgian deputies speak definitively against the draft in Moscow as well, at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. This demand was backed up by a mass hunger strike at the Supreme Soviet building. About 900 people fasted, continually surrounded by sympathizers numbering about 25,000 people, until November 29, when the Supreme Soviet of the USSR rejected the disputed Articles 108 and 119.

After these tumultuous events, however, the Chavchavadze Society fell apart. The National Democratic Party split off from the group, from the remnants of which emerged the Society of St. Ilya the Just, which the Georgian Helsinki Group joined. Georgian authorities meanwhile resorted to old methods of searches, detentions and even arrests to put a stop to the rallies. In the town of Kutaisi, four people who had not obtained permission from the authorities to hold a rally and had started it in spite of a ban were arrested and sentenced to terms ranging from one to two years' of imprisonment in labor camp. The sentence was suspended for a period of two years. A wave of protest against these arrests and sentences spread throughout Georgia.

The next round of mass rallies were touched off all over Georgia after March 29, when the National Democratic Party of Georgia held a meeting demanding independence. On April 1, there was a demonstration by 2,000 Abkhazes in Sukhumi demanding secession from Georgia. The Abkhazes are a Muslim ethnic group, a minority in Abkhazia, a territory within Georgia. The Abkhaz demand, although it had been voiced as early as 1978 in a petition to Moscow, angered ethnic Georgians, who viewed it as a provocation engineered by central authorities to disrupt the Georgian national movement for independence. In many towns of Georgia protest demonstrations against the Abkhaz demands began to grow. They turned with little warning into large rallies

demanding independence for Georgia. On April 4, at the initiative of the Chavchavadze Society and the National Democratic Party, 158 people staged a sit-in hunger strike in front of the Government Building in Tbilisi demanding independence while as many as 300,000 people kept a rally going around the hunger strikers.

On April 4, strikes also erupted at several Tbilisi enterprises, also calling for secession and spread rapidly to other cities. By April 8, the rally in front of the Government Building had grown to 500,000 people. Three kinds of troops were brought into the city that day -- special-assignment units known as spetsnaz, including many Afghan veterans; Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) troops; and the regular army. Despite their presence, the rally kept on through the night, with people singing folk songs, dancing, reading poetry at the loudspeakers, and praying. At midnight, Ilya, the patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church came out to the crowds to warn them about danger from the troops, who actually surrounded the square at 4:00 a.m., when only a few thousand people remained. People began to mill around in confusion, but instead of allowing demonstrators to leave, the troops began beating them with clubs, cracking their skulls with sharpened shovels, and spraying them with tear gas and, as it was later determined, other much stronger chemicals which caused serious injuries.

The fact that the troops pushed the crowds towards the

building gave rise to reports later that some government officials had deliberately forced the crowd to enter the Government Building, so that it could appear as if a mob was making an attempt to take over the government. Telegrams to this effect were reportedly sent to Moscow, and some believe that the maneuver was staged to justify the use of force. Independently-made video tapes of the events show the troops, some of whom were dressed for chemical warfare, crushing the crowd against the building and not allowing people to leave the square.

According to official reports, 20 people were killed, mostly women, by troops attacking the peaceful demonstrators. Independent reports put the number of deaths at 37 or more. Hundreds of people were injured by shovels or poison gas and were hospitalized. A team of American doctors determined that chloropicrin, a rodent fumigant not intended for use in crowd control, had been sprayed directly on some people.

On the morning of April 9, six of the leading activists in the informal groups were arrested on charges of organizing the demonstration. By the end of May, they were released pending trial after signing statements that they would not leave town. Outrage at the killings and injuries was so widespread that Georgian officials proclaimed April 11 an official day of mourning, and thousands massed to lay flowers on the steps of the Government Building. The Georgian Popular Front called for protest strikes that turned into a general strike. The Union of

National Justice, led by Irakly Shengalaya, demanded the formation of a commission to investigate the April 9 events, the dismissal of the Georgian leadership, and the secession of Georgia from the USSR.

Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevarnadze, himself a Georgian national who, as First Secretary of the Communist Party, had been forced to meet demonstrators in the same square 10 years ago when the official status of the Georgian language had been threatened, flew to Tbilisi to calm the Georgians. He met with the representatives of informal groups on April 12. Incensed at Shevarnadze's indefinite and evasive replies, however, the informal groups walked out of the hall. On the next day, the Georgian Independence Party, the National Democratic Party, the Society of St. Ilya the Just, the Society of St. David the Builder, the Union of Georgian Christians and the strike committees of several institutes and factories in Tbilisi joined the demand to secede from the USSR.

The First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee was removed from his post, along with the chairman of the Council of Ministers and the chairman of the Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet. An official commission was formed in the Georgian Supreme Soviet to investigate the April 9 events, as was a public commission with Andrei Sakharov and other members of the Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Thousands of informal associations all over the country expressed their sympathy for

the Georgian people and the families of the killed demonstrators, and held their own protests against the barbaric actions of the military. In Moscow, about 50 people were detained at a rally in Pushkin Square reportedly numbering some 3,000 protesters.

### Armenia

In Armenia, Georgia's neighbor in the Caucasus, the issue that has brought informal groups to the fore and elicited massive public support is not independence from Soviet rule so much as reunification with Armenians outside the Republic's borders, especially with the approximately 130,000 living under Azerbaidzhani rule in the nearby Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO).

As a conflict between Armenian Christians and Muslim Azerbaidzhanis, it is something of a replay of Armenian history.

It reopens wounds unhealed since the mass killings of Armenians by Turks in 1915. Those massacres, part of the civil strife that marked the death throes of the Ottoman Empire, left an estimated 1.5 million Armenians dead in Eastern Anatolia, what is now Western Turkey, and swelled the world-wide diaspora of Armenians, 3.5 million of whom now live in their Soviet Republic as compared to 4.5 million elsewhere in the USSR and abroad.

It is also an open form of the campaign begun underground by the National Unification Party (NUP), founded in 1966 by Paruir Ayrikyan and others, almost all of whom subsequently served terms

in Soviet labor camps.<sup>27</sup>[43] The NUP's original program, beyond seeking legal status for itself, called for reunification with Armenia of both the mountainous Nagorno-Karabakh enclave that Stalin in 1923 had made autonomous inside Azerbaidzhan and the ancient Armenian territory of Nakhichevan, under Azerbaidzhani rule although outside that Republic's borders.

While some NUP leaders also advocated eventual secession from the USSR and others thought of expanding Armenia westward into Turkey, reunification was the goal on which all agreed and which became the call that huge numbers of Armenians took up in early 1988. Before then, however, NUP members released from prison formed the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners Ashot Navasardyan and Azat Arshakyan in May, 1987<sup>28</sup>[44] (See Chapter 2) at the same time that Ayrikyan reconstituted the NUP, of which he had been secretary, as the Association for National Self-Determination.<sup>29</sup>[45] The Association called for restoration of "the violated rights of Armenians and ... a worthy place in the community of nations," freedom, in other words, to establish diplomatic ties with foreign nations independent of those maintained by the USSR. Advocating a referendum on secession, Armenian independence in domestic and foreign policy and a seat in the United Nations, the Association set "national self-determination" as its final goal on the grounds that "the USSR has not warranted the hopes of the Armenians for justice."<sup>30</sup>[46]

This call, however, was swamped by the rise of the Nagorno-

Karabakh controversy and the emergence of an informal group that commanded intense support inside Armenia and attention around the world. Starting in 1985, along with the Yerevan-based Committee to Reunite Nagorno-Karabakh with the Armenian SSR (the Karabakh Committee), under the early chairmanship of Igor Muradyan, it was the first to appear. By the fall of 1987, the Karabakh petitioners had obtained about 75,000 signatures on a "mandate" that was sent to the Party Central Committee in Moscow and to which another 15,000 added their names later. With virtually the entire adult Armenian population of the oblast backing the idea, the region's governing council on February 20, 1988 and the full local Party Committee the next day voted, 110 to 17, for the territory to be transferred from Azerbaidzhan to Armenia.

Responding to this unprecedented expression of popular will, Soviet authorities fell back on familiar tactics. The press repeatedly accused the Karabakh Committee of nationalist "extremism." Starting in December 1988, the Committee was also accused of corruption and power-seeking. The Committee, in fact, had concentrated its efforts on a constructive drive to find an acceptable resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, to keep the Armenian national movement a peaceful one, to promote the security of Armenians in and in flight from Azerbaidzhan and to balance the selective, often distorted information about the issue in the Soviet press, by collecting and disseminating accurate accounts of events as they unfolded.

The Committee itself was not the organizer of the spontaneous mass demonstration in Yerevan that began on February 20, 1988, the day of the scheduled Karabakh oblast council's vote on reunification. The actual precursor to that and the huge rallies that followed seems more likely to have been the October 17, 1987 protest some 2,000 people staged near a Yerevan rubber plant they wanted shut down because of its air-polluting discharges. That protest, in turn, was the product of work by Survival, an informal environmental association, whose activists had met, demonstrated and written articles in the local and central Soviet press warning that chemical producers in Armenia were literally choking the atmosphere. The ecology movement had stirred authorities, not to reform, but rather to interrogate its organizers, who included school and university students.

Whatever their antecedents, the Yerevan rallies were extraordinary events that brought first 20,000, then on successive days 200,000, 300,000, 500,000 and, on February 25, over a million people into Yerevan's main square and streets. Although spontaneous and leaderless at first, the demonstrators soon created their own system of government, an Organizing Committee that frequently changed its name and make-up, as its attempts to register its legal existence with authorities were rebuffed.

As it grew to include some 1,200 leaders of the local committees that sprang up in virtually all Yerevan enterprises

and took the name Karabakh Committee for itself, it held to its original demand that Armenia incorporate Nagorno-Karabakh, and historian Igor Muradyan -- the only one of the earlier 11-member Karabakh Committee to join the new Committee -- continued to play a leading role. The Central Organizing Committee formed a presidium of 11 out of the more than 100 full members, most of them from the educated middle class in their 30s and 40s, many of them Communist Party members. On its honorary presidium appeared the most prominent and respected people in Armenia, some of them associated with the environmental movement that had arisen in the previous year: the poetess Silva Kaputikyan; the journalist Zorya Baloyan; the president of the Armenian Academy of Science, Viktor Ambartsumyan; the director of the theater in the chief city of Nagorno-Karabakh, Stepanakert, Vacho Sarukhanyan.

The peaceful democratic revolution from below virtually became the government of the republic. Armenians simply forgot about the official authorities, and the former apparatus of power effectively ceased to operate.

During these days of the public rallies, Grigory Demirchyan, then First Secretary of the Armenian Party's Central Committee, appeared only once, to make a television appeal for Armenians to "be patient, patient, patient" or things would go badly for them.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the republic called in sick as the demonstrations began and remained ill until the situation clarified. The militia also did not make

their presence felt, particularly because the Karabakh Committee, and the entire population of Armenia, acting upon its requests, was exceptionally disciplined. Both the Deputy Procurator General of the USSR and the Minister of Internal Affairs of Armenia admitted later on television that during the days of the rallies in Armenia, there was no incident of robbery or other major disturbance of the peace.

Nor was there any central or local Soviet media coverage of these exceptional events until after Moscow reacted to the demonstrations

-- approximately a week after they began. Since the official Communist authorities in Armenia were completely powerless, Gorbachev invited Silva Kaputikyan and Zorya Baloyan from the Karabakh Committee's honorary presidium to talk with him in Moscow. He asked them to stop the demonstrations, so that a decision could be taken about the NKAO in a calm atmosphere.

Returning to Yerevan to fulfill Gorbachev's request, they went on television (which had failed to show the rallies in the first place) and called for an end to the rallies. On February 27, the Karabakh Committee appealed to the Armenian people to suspend the demonstrations for a month, until 2:00 p.m. on March 26. If a decision was not taken by that date, the people at the rally voted that rallies should resume to decide on future actions.

Incredible as it may seem, the Armenians were using these

large meetings in Opera Square in Yerevan, with thousands of people in attendance, as a kind of experiment in direct democracy, peacefully making proposals from the speakers' platforms, getting public reaction, and building a consensus on how to proceed further. When the leaders spoke of resuming rallies, they meant not merely staging a general protest, but holding rallies to decide democratically how to proceed.

While order returned in Yerevan, anti-Armenian violence erupted February 29, in the Azerbaidzhan city of Sumgait. Bands of Azeris, including Azerbaidzhan refugees from the city of Kafan in Armenia and trade school students, murdered at least 31 Armenians, according to an official count. The phrase used by the Soviet press was pogrom, a word that implies persecution, terror and massacre, and that suggests, along with the actual circumstances, that the killings were meant to intimidate Armenians and to warn them that the Armenian population of Azerbaidzhan would be held hostage to the development of events in the NKAO and Armenia.

In Armenia, a universal conviction prevails that the anti-Armenian position of two members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow, Vladimir Dolgikh and Anatoly Lukyanov, who were dispatched to Azerbaidzhan and to Armenia for talks, as well as the carefully-directed disinformation about the events in Armenia in the Soviet press, played a decisive role in sparking the Sumgait tragedy. A number of Russian intellectuals also

believe that the KGB deliberately provoked hoodlums in Sumgait to attack Armenians as a way of damaging the Armenian cause, associating it with violence, but little evidence can be supplied to prove these allegations. No analysis of the events in the Caucasus -- indeed in any area of the USSR -- can overlook, however, the widespread belief of much of the Soviet population, based on historical precedents, that Soviet rulers have always pursued a policy of "divide and conquer, rule or ruin" and have both provoked historic enmities and played the "ethnic clashes" card to discourage democratic movements and maintain a monopoly on power.

In an appeal to the Central Committee in Moscow, the Karabakh Committee wrote about the bias of Dolgikh and Lukyanov and the biased press coverage. In protest against the Sumgait massacre, a three-day strike swept through Armenia as rallies resumed. The Karabakh Committee was not united on the issue, but when demonstrators called for a protest strike, the Committee leaders urged that manufacturing that involved cycles that could not be interrupted without damage, as well as all medical and food facilities, should remain in operation. The participants of the rallies agreed to these conditions, and virtually all types of enterprises outside the designated areas ceased functioning.

On March 18, 1988, the Karabakh Committee proposed as a possible solution of the NKAO issue annexing the territory to the Russian Republic, with the status of an autonomous republic, or

transferring the NKAO to government by the Council of Ministers of the USSR. But on March 23, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR categorically refused to change the status of the NKAO in any fashion, and the next day, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia announced the disbanding of the Karabakh Committee, which it characterized as "illegal." It also passed regulations restricting rallies and demonstrations in Armenia. By March 26, 1988, the original deadline for resolving the Karabakh crisis, army troops were sent into Yerevan and Stepanakert in the NKAO, a military response to the political cause taken up by the Armenian people.

The Karabakh Committee as it was constituted at that time obeyed the order to disband. But a new committee with a slightly different name, Committee of the Karabakh Movement of Armenia, immediately arose in its place to coordinate the mass rallies that once again arose. The new committee began lobbying for the Supreme Soviet of Armenia to convene and accept the NKAO into the republic of Armenia. As rallies and strikes became daily affairs not only in the capital of Armenia, but throughout the republic, even officials began gradually to support the demands of the people concerning the NKAO. At the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, the Armenian delegation proposed three different variations of a solution for the NKAO crisis, all drafted by the new Karabakh Committee and supported by the people at rallies. Gorbachev sharply rejected the proposals.

On June 15, 1988, the next session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet opened. The deputies fulfilled the will of their constituents, appealing to the Supreme Soviets of Azerbaidzhan and of the USSR with a request to respect the expression of the will of the Armenian people about Karabakh. But both bodies abruptly rejected the request, reflecting both the authorities natural tendency to suppress any democratic decision-making and the real conflict of interest that the dispute had raised. Nothing in the Soviet Constitution or in practice provided guidance on handling clashes between republics. Granting the secession of the NKAO to Armenia could have led to mass disorder and bloodshed by angry Azeris, who resented having territory that they had come to perceive as their own removed from their jurisdiction.

Refusing to accommodate Armenian wishes, however, meant that the general strike in Armenia continued, despite the presence of numerous troops, supported by tanks and helicopters. In essence, Armenia was as much an occupied nation as Czechoslovakia has been after the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion. Troops were also sent into Baku and the NKAO to quell unrest.

Nonetheless, tens of thousands of people continued to gather in Yerevan twice a day, morning and evening, to decide on starting or ending strikes. As before, they were led by a Karabakh Committee, confirming itself again as the actual authority of Armenia. It had the trust of the people and

maintained order by doing everything it could to prevent confrontations between soldiers and the population, although the troops reportedly provoked clashes frequently.

The authority won by the Karabakh Committee is illustrated by the fact that in two electoral districts of Armenia, where primaries were held October 2, 1988, for the Armenian Supreme Soviet, Karabakh Committee members were elected: activist Ashot Manachuryan, the faculty head of Elementary School No. 183 in Yerevan, and Hachik Stamboltsyan, chairman of a charitable association associated with the Karabakh Committee called Charity, which was aiding Armenian refugees fleeing Azerbaidzhan.

Together with the other members of the Karabakh Committee, they led the campaign to open a session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet and unilaterally accept the NKAO into the republic of Armenia.

The Presidium of the Armenian Supreme Soviet, however, refused to convene a session ahead of schedule, and only on November 30, 1988, did the legislature meet and ratify all the demands of the demonstrators. This action immediately led to mass demonstrations in Baku. Under the pretext of maintaining order, Arkady Volsky, member of the USSR Central Committee of the CPSU, suspended the session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet "until the situation stabilizes."

With this act, he defied not only the will of the Armenian people, but the highest organ of authority in Armenia, as well as violating the Soviet Constitution. It was a clear-cut act of the

Russian imperial center exercising fiat over a recalcitrant province. Under Soviet law, Volsky had no right to suspend a session of a Supreme Soviet. A "special situation," essentially a state of emergency, was declared first in some Azerbaidzhan towns, then declared in Yerevan. The areas were put under martial law, with curfews, summary detentions and house searches without warrants conducted by the special forces of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which, by the special and controversial decree of the Supreme Soviet in July 1988, had been granted more powers to search and seize without warrants and to use crowd-control measures.

On December 7, an earthquake erupted that flattened the Armenian towns of Leninakan and Spitak, killing at least 20,000 people and injuring many thousands more. The existing problem of the refugees fleeing from Azerbaidzhan was compounded by the victims of the natural disaster. In the wake of the earthquake, the Karabakh Committee put forward four demands: 1) revoke the curfew which had been imposed throughout Armenia; 2) close the nuclear power station outside Yerevan as well as other major chemical plants in Armenia; 3) resettle in the NKAO some of the refugees who had fled into Armenia from various towns in Azerbaidzhan; 4) not exploit the tragedy to declare an All-Union construction project in Armenia, in other words, not use the occasion to send mass brigades of workers of differing nationalities into Armenia to upset its ethnic balance and hand

decisions about its future to central, rather than local, authorities. Frequently, Soviet rulers impose their will on the provinces by creating work brigades, declaring an artificial "friendship of nations" to cover up conflicts between ethnic groups and with the Russian-dominated center. Much of the early television coverage of the earthquake featured the "friendship of nations" in responding to the tragedy rather than the actual scenes of the damage.

One of the Karabakh Committee's demands was met, although not until three months later; the nuclear power station was shut down. On December 10, at a regular meeting of the Committee at the Union of Writers' building, the discussion focused on rescue work in the earthquake-stricken areas and about the fate of children who had been orphaned. But during the meeting, Albert Makashov, Military Commander of Yerevan during the state of emergency, ordered the participants to disperse. On his orders, six members of the Committee were detained and sentenced to 30 days of administrative arrest on charges of violating the terms of the state of emergency.

By December 15, 1988, the number of detainees active in the Karabakh movement reached 150 people, among them Krunk Committee head Arkady Manucharov. All the members of the Karabakh Committee itself were taken, including the Armenian Supreme Soviet deputies Ashot Manachuryan and Hachik Stambolstyan, who turned out not to have immunity from arrest as deputies. By the

end of the 30-day jail term given to the first detainees, all 11 members of the Karabakh Committee and a 12th supporter, Stamboltsyn, were arrested for investigation, apparently on charges of organizing disturbances in public places, an offense that is punishable by up to three years of labor camp. Under Soviet law, they were held in isolation in preventive detention, and were denied access to counsel and family members. They were transferred to Moscow prisons in January, and held through the March elections and the May convening of the new Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Despite the fact that they were all under arrest, they were all nominated in absentia in their electoral districts, but could not run for election from their jail cells.

They were finally transferred to Yerevan and released to public acclaim during the first week of June 1989, pending trial on unspecified charges.

The treatment of the Karabakh Committee was the first Gorbachev-era instance when an informal association's leadership was arrested en masse and the first case of mass, politically-motivated arrest of persons who had peacefully assembled not to advocate violence but to voice -- on behalf of a society finding its voice and its civic courage -- the cause of ethnic reunification and identity.

#### Crimean Tatars

Where Armenians seek reunification and Balts push for sovereignty, the oldest civil rights associations in the USSR,

the Initiative Groups of the Crimean Tatar Movement to Return to the Homeland, pursue the righting of a historical wrong -- their 1944 deportation from the Crimea to Central Asia. They arose in the second half of the 1950s and have led the Crimean Tatar nation's movement to return to the lands they occupied for centuries before Stalin ordered them exiled on May 18, 1944. Beyond pressing for a return to its homeland, the movement seeks establishment of a Crimean Autonomous Republic.

In the activities of the initiative groups, as in those of Helsinki Groups in the non-Russian republics, human rights and nationalist aims are organically intertwined. Arranged along territorial lines, the network includes initiative groups in various cities, associated in turn in oblast (regional) groups and governed by the Central Initiative Group in Tashkent, capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan where the majority of Crimean Tatars continue to live.

Although the movement nearly died out at the end of the 1970s, glasnost reinvigorated it, when the Central Initiative Group arranged a July 1987 demonstration in Moscow's Red Square.

The Crimean Tatars who came to the capital to demand return to their homeland staged what amounted to the first large Gorbachev-era rallies in the capital and earned not only publicity abroad but prompt Soviet official response.

Under pressure from the public protests, a government commission was formed headed by the late veteran Soviet

politician Andrei Gromyko, then chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, who twice received representatives from the Crimean Tatars' Central Initiative Group during the demonstrations. Afterwards, however, the demonstrators -- who had no residence permits for Moscow -- were forced out of town, and a crackdown began against the Crimean Tatar movement, focusing on the Central Initiative Group, whose members began to be vilified in the Soviet press as "extremists." As a counterweight to the Central Initiative Group, in Uzbekistan, a Public Commission on the Crimean Tatar Question was formed by the authorities and staffed with specially-selected people who had been coopted by the government. Through this commission, the authorities tried to influence the Crimean Tatar masses, by-passing the initiative groups which for more than 30 years had led the Crimean Tatar movement and had been selected democratically by their own people.<sup>31</sup>[41]

Initiative Groups nonetheless continued to organize numerous demonstrations in various cities of Uzbekistan, Krasnodarsky Krai (Territory) and the Crimea -- in all the places where Crimean Tatars have been scattered. Thousands of Crimean Tatars turned out for the demonstrations to demand the return of their people to the Crimea and the release of political prisoners who have participated in the Crimean Tatar movement. Although the meetings are dispersed and participants persecuted, the demonstrations have not stopped.

The Gromyko commission, however, did little to assuage their demands. Its resolution passed on June 8, 1988 declared that the reestablishment of an autonomous republic was not "expedient." But the resolution did acknowledge that Crimean Tatars could resettle in the Crimea "under standard conditions" as any other Soviet citizen. Such permission is meaningless, since under the terms of the Soviet internal passport system, citizens cannot move to new residences without offers of housing or jobs. Local authorities in the Crimea, therefore, would have to arrange for a sufficient number of jobs and homes to accommodate the influx, but those same local officials are the ones who have constantly blocked Crimean Tatars, even in an individual capacity, from returning to their homeland. Of those who did return to the Crimea -- 47,000 as of mid-1989 according to official statistics -- many had trouble getting work and housing permits and gaining permission to buy houses, even when local Russians and Ukrainians were willing to sell to them. Some who managed to obtain permission to stay were given the most barren land to work and only minimal construction materials for building primitive homes. Those who attempted to stay in the Ukraine without the necessary bureaucratic permits were harassed and in some cases even detained for short periods.

In response to these injustices, Crimean Tatars continued to stage large rallies; one march in Krasnodarsky Krai in July 1988 was particularly brutally dispersed and a number of people

injured and detained. Leaders and participants in rallies and striking workers -- hundreds of men and women in all -- were punished through job dismissal or other harassment.

The notion of forming an autonomous region -- the goal of the Crimean Tatar movement -- is not being considered by the government despite repeated demands of human rights and political associations in Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic Republics and Central Asia, which support the plea of the Crimean Tatars to be returned to their homeland.

- 1.
2. "Senselessness," by Yury Nagibin, Sovietskaya kultura, May 30, 1986
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- 4.
5. [140 - from p. 191.]
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11. 158 - from page 219.
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13. USSR News Brief, no 9/10-7.
14. USSR News Brief, no. 9/10-7.
- 15.
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- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.
22. USSR News Brief, no. 19-20, items 2-4, 1989.
23. Ibid. (i.e., USSR News Bulletin, no. 19 - 20, item 2.)

24.Killed in a car accident in October 1989.

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## Chapter 6 Pop Music and Non-Conformist Youth

More amorphous than any of the nationality movements but also far more widespread is the rebellion of young Soviets against the cultural orthodoxy of the past. While it takes the form of a craze for rock music, of special jargon and fashions in dress and hair style, it goes deeper than many similar generational conflicts in the West to search for and live by a system of values irreconcilable with official Soviet ideology and therefore hostile to it. Its success has created the first Soviet generation to win its spiritual freedom from both the Komsomol and the ruling Party that stands behind it.

Built, first of all, on a passion for rock music that reached the Soviet Union at about the same time that it appeared in the West, the youth counter-culture was initially persecuted. Long-haired, exotically dressed young people were expelled from school and sometimes even beaten by militia and detained in psychiatric hospitals in the 1960s and 1970s -- largely with the approval of the older generation. Soviet broadcasters shut rock music off the radio and television, but the music spread both on tapes recorded from Western transmissions and through the performances of bands that practiced and played either hidden in cellars or, defying authorities, in student and factory clubs.

By the mid-1980s, officialdom had to admit defeat. Rock bands began to make television and concert appearances, to record in official studios, even to stage festivals at home and tours

abroad. The fans themselves even divided into distinct sub-cultures -- punky, metallisti, nostalgisti -- depending on their preferences for punk music, heavy metal performances or "golden-oldy" tunes from the 1950s.

Soviet sociologists have found, as well, that members of these sub-sets account for a significant number of juvenile delinquents, including drug abusers.<sup>1</sup>[18] Starting in 1987 in Moscow, at least, the punks and metallisti, readily identifiable by the high-priced, black-market leather and metal fashion accessories they sport, came into often violent conflict with an aggressive youth group called Lyubery after the Moscow industrial suburb of Lyubertsy where they became well-known as passionate body-builders and wrestlers. Wearing their own uniform -- close-cropped hair, baggy, checked pants, white shirts, black ties -- the Lyubery made a point of terrorizing the Western-style rock fans. Although there were repeated episodes of street beatings and robberies, the punks and metallisti tend not to report to such incidents to the militia whose dislike they take for granted.<sup>2</sup>[24]

In a joint leaflet issued in early 1987 with another Moscow cultural minority, the hippies, the rock fans declared, "More and more often, perfectly innocent Muscovites have become the victims of Lyubertsy vandals....They swagger around Moscow with the arrogant expression of bosses....We, the Moscow metallisti, declare a ruthless war against the Lyubery throughout the entire

city and oblast. On February 22, 1987, about 1,000 adolescents, from the age of 12 up, held a street demonstration under the banner: "We Will Defend Moscow from the Lyubery!"<sup>3</sup>[25] After that demonstration, several Soviet newspapers published stories on the Lyubery, and, although their organization as a self-styled "office" continues to exist, their raids on Moscow have subsided.

Allied with but far more political than the rock music fans are groups of hippies, whose origins -- according to a samizdat essay, "The Ideology of Soviet Hippies," signed by the Initiative Group of Hippies of Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Lvov and Other Cities -- goes back to 1967. The Initiative Group explained the appearance of hippies in the USSR as a form of protest against the world of adults, their morals, their "square," ordinary, every-day lifestyle.

From the very beginning pacifist sentiments were strong among hippies. For their first demonstration, held on Children's Day, June 1, 1971, about 150 demonstrators marched in Moscow with a banner written in English: "Make Love Not War." Heading off toward the American Embassy, however, they were seized by waiting militia even before they left the university courtyard. Since the middle of the 1970s groups of hippies from various places around the country have managed to gather in the Baltic republics every year at the end of May and then in the summer months for festivals in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia and at a youth pacifist camp on the river Gauya in Latvia. In both Estonia and

Latvia the hippies are constantly dispersed or harassed by the militia and sometimes detained or fined.<sup>4</sup>(14)

Back in the mid-1970s, the hippies divided into two camps, the "old generation," and the sistyema. The "old generation" consists mainly of students and what is known in Soviet parlance as the "creative intelligentsia," that is, people in the arts who live a kind of bohemian or alternative life-style. This group is distinguished by its rejection of social action and its escapism, characterized by its slogan "In a world without freedom you can acquire freedom only in your soul." Mysticism is widespread among the "old generation" and many are attracted to Buddhism and, more recently, Hare Krishna, yoga and meditation -- belief systems considered exotic in the Soviet Union. There are also a number of drug users and addicts among the "old generation." Using mostly types of marijuana and heroin, illegal but available from Central Asia.

The sistyema people, by contrast, come from all walks of life and social groups starting with school children from the age of 14, university students, people in the arts, the scientific and technical intelligentsia and the working class, and their allegiance is to the informal network, (sistyema) of contacts they have built up all around the Soviet Union -- a kind of "underground railroad." Even when they do not overly identify their affiliation by dress or hair style, it is not uncommon for hitch-hiking hippies, arriving in a strange city, to find quickly

the "crash pads" where young people can stay, called flaty by the Soviets after the British word for "apartment."

Sistyema people are noted for their kindness and tolerance towards those around them and their striving for friendly relations, particularly to close and constant contact within the sistyema. They reject, however, the notion of "free love" or promiscuous sexual relations because they advocate a purity of relations. Unlike the "old generation," they refrain from drugs because they want to actively affirm their ideals. According to their samizdat manifesto, "The ideal of the hippies is a society of equality and fellowship where there are no differences between nations and where love is the main factor in relations between people."

In pursuit of that ideal, some hippies became active in the Soviet peace movement (see Chapter 3). Hare Krishna devotees or Russian Orthodox believers, in some cases, they have also endorsed expanded contacts between nations, better mutual international understanding and compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, particularly the articles about the free flow of people and information regardless of frontiers and the right to leave and return to one's country freely.

Sistyema people, who now make up the main adherents of the pacifist group known as the Group to Establish Trust Between East and West, also have declared themselves supporters of perestroika and advocates of public groups formed to monitor the conduct of

Soviet authorities. The sistyema publishers of the samizdat journal Roksi, along with other hippies, took part in the August 1987 organizing conference of social-political clubs in Moscow's Club of Innovators and joined the associations formed at that meeting.

A loose formation of hippies and pacifists called Svobodnaya initsiativa (Free Initiative), founded in 1982 in Moscow and later with affiliates in other cities, began holding annual demonstrations on the birthday of John Lennon using the slogan "Lennon Lived, Lennon Lives and Lennon Will Live," a parody of the official slogan about Vladimir Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, recited by strict adherents to Communist ideology.

On Children's Day, June 1, 1987, Free Initiative members scattered leaflets against the death penalty and the war in Afghanistan. Activists Yury Popov and Sergei Troyansky paid for this action with prolonged internment in psychiatric hospitals. After protest on their behalf in both the Soviet Union and among Western sympathizers, prosecutors tried to pin drug charges on them as a justification for continuing psychiatric detention. It is difficult to know if there is any evidence for the charges since they were not tried in court. Popov was released in 1988, and Troyansky is apparently still being held.

Although they have reconciled themselves to rock music and the exotic appearances of rock fans, Soviet authorities have not accepted the pacifist struggle of the sistyema nor pacifists per

se and their political activity. Their demonstrations are dispersed, and they are vilified in the Soviet press.

Recently, however, a few statements of interest indicated some reconsideration about pacifism and the military. Officials of the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace have told Westerners that they are willing to use "quite diplomacy" to raise the issue of conscientious objection; the lawyer Vladimir Savitsky<sup>5</sup> from the Institute of State and Law has repeatedly called for recognizing the idea of conscientious objection and providing alternative civilian service; and a junior military officer who ran in the 1989 elections on a platform advocating a move to a professional, volunteer army, won a seat in the new Congress. These statements, while indicative of a more tolerant climate for discussion of pacifism, are no substitute for actual legal protection and change in practice. The Peace Committee's official organ, Twentieth Century and Peace, which is considerably more liberal than the Committee itself, published a number of articles and statements in 1989 favoring pacifism and alternative service. But as before, dozens of conscientious objectors have been jailed for lengthy terms in 1988 and 1989, and senior military authorities have publicly rejected the notion of a professional army as premature.

More to the authorities' taste are the Afgantsy, veterans of the war in Afghanistan who have formed an informal military-athletic association. Like Vietnam veterans, The Afgantsy

experience difficulties in readjusting to a society, from which their combat experiences alienated them. They feel society does not understand or accept them, and the hostile public reaction to the appearance of young veterans at the head of food lines (under the veterans' preference system) gives credence to their perception. To protect their interests and to oppose society's rejection collectively, they have started their own organizations. They are continuously involved in military and athletic training in order to keep in shape and maintain their military practices, in the hope that their military skills will come in handy in the future.<sup>6</sup>[26] In fact, there are reports that Afgantsy, particularly those in spetsnaz, or special assignment troops, cooperate with military and militia authorities in putting down riots and demonstrations, particularly in the non-Russian republics.

Supported in some instances by the Komsomol and used on occasion by military and law enforcement agencies to disperse unwelcome public demonstrations, the Afgantsy broke up a demonstration of the Ukrainian Culturological Club in 1988; on August 25, 1988 in Moscow against demonstrators protesting the occupation of Czechoslovakia; on April 9, 1989 in Tbilisi when demonstrators were killed. They are constantly sicced on the hippies and pacifists in the Moscow Trust Group and related groups.

Party and Komsomol organizations and military authorities

also use the Afgantsy to educate and train pre-draft age youth in the schools. Military training is mandatory in the Soviet education system. Frequently, Afghanistan war veterans occupy the position of directors of military-patriotic clubs, sports schools for pre-draftees, and so on.<sup>7</sup>[146] By encouraging the Afghan veterans to stay involved in military training and maintain their physical fitness, authorities maintain ties with the veterans' informal associations, which are joined to official organizations (and they are happy to be coopted in this way) such as the Komsomol and DOSAAF, the Russian acronym for the Voluntary Society to Promote the Army, Air Force and Navy. Perhaps, by backing the Afghan veterans, someone at the top hopes that they will be useful not only in the training of the pre-draft-age youth today, but will come in handy in the future, as shock troops to put down "insurrectionists" during government crises.

Least political of all the youth sub-culture are the informal sports clubs that began to appear in the early 1970s and spread widely over the next ten years. These clubs must be distinguished from the movement of sports fans, mainly soccer fanaty as they are called in Russian who were characterized by one samizdat source, "Fascism in the USSR,"<sup>8</sup>[19], as a "semi-organization, semi-gang." According to this document, sports fans' organizations exist in many large cities (Moscow, Leningrad, Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius, Minsk, Kiev and Tbilisi) with popular soccer teams. The samizdat document notes:  
They make banners, t-shirts, and buttons with sport slogans

and often write these slogans with indelible paint in places where it is hard to wash them off: on the top floors of residential and official buildings, on statues, etc.... They are full of enthusiasm and determination to defend the honor and glory of their favorite team....moreover, they are well-organized. Each member of a sports organization pays monthly membership dues of about five rubles. Each organization has its leadership and subordinate sections (organizational, financial, house-keeping, etc.). The most active, exceptional fans are sent on "business trips" to other cities to cheer their teams there, in order to make connections. They are supplied with expense money and the addresses of "colleagues." The principle for selecting people for the organization is usually simple: you must fervently believe in your team and active cheer for it; unconditionally follow the leaders' orders; and recruit your friends into the organization.

Most fans are from 12 to 17 years old. There are not actually that many true soccer buffs among them; most come to the games for an emotional release -- to shout a little and demonstrate their undying loyalty to their team. The fans' behavior is often affected, hysterical and aggressive. They often instigate mass brawls between fans of different teams, usually after a soccer match.

Separate from the sports fans are members of informal athletic groups dedicated to the martial arts -- karate, kungfu, ushu, judo -- and body-builders. The physical exercises involved acquaint the students with ruthless battle and propagate submission to the club leaders, usually, the most successful and active members of the group. It is not uncommon to hear that athletic club members, under orders of a ring-leader, become gangs that commit robbery and other violent crimes, using in their "operations" the methods they learned in the gym.<sup>9</sup>[20]

Athletic club members are frequently found among the oldest form of Soviet informal associations, in which teen-agers from the same block, street or neighborhood band together and have fights with similar groupings of adolescents from nearby blocks or neighborhoods. The Soviet press frequently writes about the spread of such gangs and the urban terrorism practiced by them. The press has also attacked the so-called "rockers," motorcyclists who band together and roar through the streets of towns in the middle of the night, waking sleeping residents.

Finally, on the fringe of the youth sub-culture are informal groups who admire Hitler -- the Soviet Nazis, about whom samizdat has been reporting since the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>10</sup>[22] The Soviet Nazis have their hair cut extremely short and wear Nazi uniforms -- black jackets, high boots with pointed toes, dark glasses and sometimes pendants with swastikas. In the first half of the 1980s, each year on April 20, Hitler's birthday, they held demonstrations in public squares, including ones in Moscow, Leningrad, the three Baltic republics, Byelorussia, Ukraine, Georgia and also large Russian cities like Rostov-na-Donu, Kurgan and Sverdlovsk. The Soviet fascists are responsible for vandalizing Jewish cemeteries and the graves of those who died in World War II. They also have attacked and beaten medal-wearing veterans and are even accused of murder. The reported credo of the fascists is "strong government, iron discipline, a powerful nation cleansed of Jews, `rotten intellectuals,' and in general

all whiners, pacifists and traitors. They welcome the creation of anti-Zionist committees, the introduction of martial law in Poland, and the invasion of Afghanistan." The majority of people in this movement are students of technical schools [PTU] and young workers.<sup>11</sup>[23] The Soviet press has repeatedly written about this movement, expressing alarm at its growth, but by the glasnost era, it had virtually died out.)

What may most merit official alarm about Soviet youth in the Gorbachev years is not the extreme forms that its alienation takes but the diversity of its passions and affiliations and the absence, among them, of enthusiasm for orthodox Communist ideas or idealism. After more than seven decades of propagandizing, instructing, organizing and punishing non-conformity, the leaders of the USSR face a younger generation that is far from the model of the "new Soviet man" that ideology once promised to produce.

Instead, Soviet citizens -- young and not so young -- are emerging as individuals. And in their quest for identity and a future, as they give their loyalty to various informal groups instead of to the Soviet State and Communist Party, they are creating a civil society where none had been tolerated. That process may prove to have no future. Alternatively, it may prove to be the future for the USSR.

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## Appendix A: Counting the Informals

Until 1985, it was only the KGB (Committee for State Security, or secret police) had statistics on the number of informal associations in the USSR and their memberships. Even these figures were incomplete; they were compiled from reports by informers and investigative agencies. According to the testimony of Soviet sociologist E. E. Levanov<sup>1</sup>[4], a researcher at the Academic Research Center of the Higher Komsomol School, proper public surveys began to be conducted only in 1985, and thus the first statistics about such associations have been gathered by scholars in the last four years. These statistics are startling.

A December 27, 1987 editorial in Pravda, entitled "Democracy and Initiative" asserted that there were then more than 30,000 amateur associations in the USSR. Since the publication of that editorial, this figure became a kind of established fact, and began to appear regularly in the Soviet press.

Soviet sociologists unanimously maintain that the size of most of these associations is not large -- about 10 to 15 people in each. For example, according to the information gathered from polls cited by sociologist Levanov (TASS, May 28, 1988), 45 percent of the informal groups have no more than 10 members; another 26 percent have no more than 20 members; and only a small number of those surveyed belonged to groups with more than 100 members.<sup>2</sup> Proceeding from this, it can be calculated, based on

the number supplied by Pravda, that the number of people involved in informal associations is roughly 30,000 times 10 to 15: 300,000 to 450,000 people.

However, a comparison of these figures with the statistics published by Soviet sociologists from 1985 through 1987, before the "established" figure was provided by Pravda, suggests that Pravda may have reduced the figures for amateur associations by a factor of 10, and perhaps even by 100, depending, of course, on the interpretation of the term "informal." In the December 27, 1987 editorial, Pravda said that it counted amateur associations which "are engaged in the organization of leisure, the preservation of nature and monuments, and the study of native culture and other matters."

The vagueness involves "other matters." Moreover, what is meant by "the organization of leisure" is also not clear. This could mean, for example, any group of neighbors, for example, who meet fairly regularly to play dominoes. Clearly, such groups are not included in Pravda's 30,000, since in a country with a population greater than 280 million, with widespread participation in this form of leisure, the number of such groups is far greater. Most likely, Pravda also excluded the rock bands and sports clubs that Soviet sociologists consider to be the most typical and widespread form of amateur society in the first half of the 1980s. The fact that Pravda did not specifically mention rock groups among the 30,000, and the views generally expressed

in the Soviet press about rock groups, make it likely that such groups were excluded from the count.

Statistics about the numbers of rock bands were first cited in the journal Smena (Change) in 1985 (no. 4). Smena wrote that there are "hundreds of thousands" of such rock groups. Judging from the letters of readers published in youth newspapers, as early as 1985, there were large numbers of rock bands in the major cities and even in the small towns and remote villages. Levanov reported<sup>3</sup>[5] on the results of surveys taken using Gallup Poll methods, with samples of between 1,000 and 1,500 people in Moscow, Leningrad and several other major cities (Rostov-na-Donu, Kherson, Stavropol, Baku, and Kaunas.) In three years (1985 through 1987), the number of informal groups doubled; unfortunately, Levanov does not tell us from what to what, nor does his article supply any base numbers for the entire population of Soviet youth and the break-down of age groupings within this population.<sup>4</sup> A combination of deep-rooted Soviet secrecy, censorship and unfamiliarity with sociological methods has hampered efforts to establish the dimensions of the informal groups.

By referring to other official Soviet press sources, the pieces of the puzzle may be assembled, however. On October 1, 1984, Pravda wrote that according to statistics from the Ministry of Culture, there were 29,352 amateur musical groups in the country with 230,000 members. Six months later, that is, by

April 1985, Smena (no. 4, p. 7) reported that in the USSR, "there are 160,000 registered electric guitar ensembles alone." That means that there were actually many more, since not all young people went to the trouble of registering their bands, thereby bringing themselves under official or adult scrutiny. Moreover, Smena cited a ratio for registered to unregistered bands for the Moscow oblast or region: approximately one third were not registered. (Smena did not provide the figures for this geographical area, however.) As early as December 1984, Sovietskaya profsoyuzy (Soviet Trade Unions) reported (Vol. 1, no. 23, p. 12) that in Leningrad, only 20 of 1,390 rock bands were trusted enough to perform in cultural and educational institutions. The rest had to play in private apartments or recreation halls in large apartment complexes.

Even there, the groups sometimes ran into obstacles. A visitor to Moscow in 1985 attended a rock concert deep in a sub-basement of a housing complex, guarded by phalanxes of youths who checked identities to keep out the secret police, and who had completely covered the basement walls with egg cartons to muffle the sound of their unorthodox rock music.

Other information about the informal groups also indicates that Pravda is underestimating the number of such societies. Thus, in 1982 -- five years before the appearance of the editorial -- Solomon Volkov, a prominent Soviet emigre musicologist living in the United States, wrote about the

millions of rock group members in the USSR. When he cited this estimate, he had in mind not just fans and concert-goers, but only composers and performers of rock music.<sup>5</sup>[6]

Even more sensational information about the numbers of informal groups was reviewed at a Soviet-Bulgarian conference of philosophers and sociologists in Minsk, Byelorussia in the fall of 1987. A scholar reported in a paper there that the informal groups included 70 percent of Soviet youth.<sup>6</sup>[7]

When Soviet sociologists use the term "youth," they usually mean the age group from 14 to 30. According to extrapolations based on the 1979 census of the USSR, in 1987, the age group 15-30 included 67.5 million people.<sup>7</sup>[9] (A break-down of the category of the age groups 14-30 or 14-15 is not available from the official census book.) Seventy percent of 67.5 million is 47.25 million. This is more likely to be the true number of informal group participants in the USSR, using the statistics provided by the Soviet sociologists at the Minsk conference.

A much more modest estimate is provided by Moscow social scientist Mikhail Malyutin, who has recently emerged as an expert on the informal groups. In an article in a ground-breaking anthology called Inogo ne dano (There is No Other Way) (Politizdat, 1988), distributed at the June 1988 Party Conference, Malyutin said that 45 percent of urban youth in cities with a population of more than one million are involved in informal groups, that is, approximately 12 million young people.

Clearly, given such differing estimates and methods of calculation by officially-published sociologists, the true number of groups simply cannot be determined at this time. Our task is further hampered by the lack of an official definition of the very term "informal." At times, Soviet sociologists may be referring to organizations under the aegis of the Komsomol or other state authorities. While these may be credited with independent initiatives, they are under some degree of control. It is safe to say, however, that the informal group members number in the tens of millions.

Using the figure from the Minsk conference to determine the approximate number of informal groups -- that is 47.25 million -- and dividing by 15, we obtain the figure 3.15 million voluntary associations. This is more than 100 times the "established" number printed in Pravda! If we use the lower figure cited by Malyutin (12 million) and divide by 15, we would get a figure of 1.25 million informal groups -- still well over the estimate provided by Pravda.

Supposing that Pravda did not include rock bands and sports clubs -- which are almost as numerous -- in its figure of 30,000, and had in mind only associations with clearly-defined socio-political aims, it would still be impossible to account for the officially established figure given the statistics cited by the other sources. According to Levanov, the surveys of 1985-87 showed that despite continuing enthusiasm for rock music, for the

majority this was no longer a reason to form a group as had been the case until the mid-1980s. Of the total surveyed (samples of 1,000 to 1,500 in various cities in the European part of the USSR), 9.7 percent of those who said they were involved in informal groups stated that they discuss political issues. (The base numbers, and the percentage of those polled who are involved in informal groups were not provided.) Levanov places politics in first place among the interests binding people into clubs. The ranking that he found was: political issues (9.7 percent); sports (9.1 percent); family problems (the term is not clear but may refer to marriage or youth counselling) (5.3 percent); technical crafts (4.2 percent); preserving national identity or native ways of life (3.5 percent); protecting the environment (3.1 percent); restoring historical and cultural monuments (0.3 percent).<sup>8</sup>[10] There is another interesting corollary to his findings: when Pravda cited its figure of 30,000 it said the voluntary associations were involved in preserving monuments, promoting culture, and organizing leisure. More threatening matters such as politics and national identity were not mentioned, but have been revealed by the sociologists.

Another sociologist, I.M. Ilyinsky, confirms the widespread interest of informal groups in political problems. He notes that, according to public opinion polls in 1987, more than 30 percent more young people than five or seven years ago admitted the need to increase their political knowledge.

Among politically active young people there has appeared a kind of "avant-garde," that is, those who discuss political problems not on assignment, but on the promptings of their own hearts. They do this everywhere an acute situation arises that requires intervention from a politically-literate person who is not indifferent to the fate of our society. And there are not just a few of these people! Among the young people surveyed, there were about 40 percent. This is a remarkable phenomenon which we had not observed before! However...the interest of young people in the classes offered Komsomol political education clubs is extremely limited.<sup>9</sup>[11]

From this, it follows that young people satisfy their interest in politics in the informal associations.

Proceeding from the statistics cited above, it could be estimated that unofficial clubs with political interests numbered about 300,000 in 1987 (9.7 percent of 3.15 million), or ten times more than the figure cited for all clubs in the Pravda editorial.

Using Malyutin's figure of 12 million, there would be about 120,000 groups with political interests. Despite the paucity of data available on the numbers of informal groups and their members, and despite the dubiousness of extrapolating from official Soviet sources, in sum, it is possible to say that Pravda presented a misleading picture. This has been borne out by a subsequent editorial about informal groups in Pravda on February 10, 1989, which cited a new figure without explanation -- 60,000 -- thus doubling its figure of December 1987! While it is always possible that the number of informal groups precisely doubled within the course of a year, it is likely that even the figure now cited of 60,000 is simply too low.

1.

2. The Soviet sociologists used samples of 1,000 to 1,500 people, as do Western pollsters, but it is not clear how they weighted their samples. Their questionnaires were distributed in the major urban centers of the European part of the USSR, for example, which must be factored in -- clearly, the extent of informal activity varies widely from Tallinn (Estonia) to Moscow, to Perm (in the Ural Mountains), to Kokand (Uzbekistan).

3.

4. These missing pieces reflect the fact that traditionally, the entire field of sociology was discredited and was undeveloped until recently. Before 1985, the use of public opinion polls was virtually unknown or at least they were not published in the official press. It is often the case that when Soviets release statistics, they do not provide base numbers. A well-known example was Gorbachev's announcement that the military budget would be cut by 12 percent, many months before he announced a figure for the entire military budget figure; and even that number was said by Soviet specialists to be understated.

5.

6.

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8.

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## NATIONAL AND CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS

Informal associations dedicated to preserving national ways of life, historical and cultural monuments, that is, groups involved in preserving "roots" and distinctive national traits, are active all over the USSR, both in territories and regions with Russian populations and in the non-Russian republics. They began to grow rapidly in number and to become more active at the end of the 1970s and the early 1980s. During the period of "stagnation," as the Brezhnev period is known, society was alienated from participation in decision-making not only in political and social matters but in agricultural and economic affairs as well. Society's untapped energy was rechannelled into preserving cultural treasures, to save them from destruction, and searching for cultural and national "roots," which is a method available to Soviet citizens to barricade themselves off from the reality of the intrusive Party and state "guidance," while securing themselves the possibility of a spiritual and intellectual life. After the accession of Gorbachev to power, when the opportunity was made available for writers and cultural figures to express themselves they primarily spoke about the necessity of restoring the monuments of the past -- not of the needs of the day. The newspapers were filled with discussions about the deplorable state of monuments, about the means of restoring ancient buildings and so on. This is just what a significant part of the intelligentsia had been living for in the preceding years. The informal societies founded in those years continue to survive and operate.

Informal associations interested in preserving national

identity and saving historical and cultural monuments are more prolific in the non-Russian republics; the majority of such groups are outside Russia. In the non-Russian republics, because of the acutely sensitive nature of nationalities problems there, virtually every informal group involved in any sort of social protest or with any importance for the public interest is part of the nationalist movement. It is difficult and at times impossible to distinguish groups involved in preserving national identity from human rights, political or environmental associations, since these causes are often inseparable in the minds of the members of these groups, or at least are colored in some way by nationalist sentiments.

In discussing the national movements, it is important to understand that in describing themselves, such groups do not use the word "nationalist" in their own languages or in the Russian language; they use the word national. By this they do not mean "national" in the sense it is meant in the United States, where "national" is a neutral word meaning "federal" or "throughout the country" or "in every state" as opposed to "local." In the Soviet Union, when people want to refer to the entire country, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, meaning all the republics together, they use the word "All-Union." When Soviet citizens use the word "national," they refer to their own republic, or to their own linguistic, ethnic or cultural group, regardless of whether they have republic status, or are recognized as a distinct nation by the Soviet central officialdom. For Westerners, "national" movements or the cause of nationalism sometimes evokes

connotation of extremism, chauvism, terrorism, etc., such as German nationalism under the Nazis or Iran under the Ayatollah Khomeini. But for the Soviet ethnic groups, nationalism is associated with the cause of freedom and justice, and separation from Great Russian domination. Entire nations, some with populations larger than West European countries, have been swallowed up first by the Russian czars and then by the Soviet commissars. Many of the people in these nations, some of which once had their independence, continue to view themselves as sovereign countries that are unlawfully and unjustly held captive by the Russian-dominated center. Since Stalin decimated many of the non-Russian groups during the purges, the passage of time and the neutralizing effects of Russian in-migration and the moving of students and workers from one republic to another has suppressed nationalist sentiment but not hardly eliminated it. As recent events have shown, for example, in the Armenian enclave of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaidzhan, and in the republic of Georgia, nationalist movements are deep-rooted and are a powerful organizing force in society.

It is incorrect to characterize these movements of the nationalities as "minorities" -- they are only minorities when contrasted to the Russian population in the Soviet empire. They cannot rightfully be considered "minorities" when they are in the majority in their own countries; it also must be taken into account that in some cases nations were forcibly made minorities through massacres or through the artificial dilution of their population by migration of other nationalities, mainly Russians

and other Slavs.

Such movements are often branded as "separatists," yet this perjorative term fails to take into account first that the Soviet federation is held together by force (and occupying armies in some cases) and secondly that the Soviet Constitution legally allows for secession. Surely in the Soviet case, "separatism" has a different connotation for countries that were sovereign and had their independence as recently as 40 or 60 years ago, and "lost" their independence against their will. {Federalism in the American mind is associated with positive development such as economic aid plans and the enforcement of civil rights; individual states, for example, which discriminated against black schoolchildren and barred them from white schools could be compelled by federal agencies to observe federal civil rights law and integrate schools. In the Soviet model, however, the All-Union government is associated with the repression -- not the enforcement -- of civil liberties, and the suppression of national sovereignty, as well as the plundering of local economies for the benefit of the Union.}

{It is often said that the nationalist movements constitute the gravest threat to Gorbachev's rule and hence to the achievements of perestroika, such as they are. But it could also be said that the only fault of these movements is that they took glasnost seriously; they are an organic part of perestroika, not a threat to genuine reform, and without them, perestroika is not possible. The Soviet Union will be compelled to transform itself from a multi-national empire, which is how it must be

characterized now, to a federation or confederation or perhaps even a community, in the fashion of the European Community, of nations linked voluntarily by treaty. This process is the most important and necessary condition for democratization, without which, in turn, perestroika is not possible.}

It is also important to understand that many ethnic Russians consider their nation also to be among the repressed nationalities, despite the fact that their republic is the largest of the Soviet republics and "first among equals." Russian nationalists perceive their culture and identity as having become repressed and distorted under Soviet Communist rule. [Luda: why did you cut the following? It's what all the Russian nationalists say, and it is also true; I think it helps people to understand how Russians could possibly feel oppressed themselves.] They point out that unlike other Soviet nationalities, they do not have their own Communist Party (the Central Committee of the USSR Communist Party is in Moscow, but there is no Russian Communist Party as such) or Academy of Sciences. (There is a USSR Academy in Moscow, but no Russian Academy, although there have been recent announcements of intentions to form one.)

The Western press often superficially treats the question of the Soviet nationalities in terms of "ethnic conflicts" -- creating the impression that the Soviet nationalities are primitive, warring tribes that fight ancient blood feuds. In some cases, this is relevant. But a more complete understanding is gained by taking into consideration the fact that each nationality has a history of suppression first by Tsarist Russia, secondly by

Communist totalitarianism and finally by Russification. Now, these nations are trying to break out of this repression, opposing central control as well as the corrupt local Communist Party rule.

### Russia

{As the dominant republic, the questions of Russian nationalism and culture are special ones. In some sense, all types of clubs active in the RSFSR have varying degrees of visible or latent nationalism. But because politics continues to be concentrated in Moscow, the clubs in Moscow and Russia's provincial cities tend to be preoccupied with political reform, and cultural and environmental conservation, rather than nationalism. Thus, the notorious conservative and anti-Semitic movement Pamyat, although it has a cultural and historical program is included in the chapter on political clubs. Other organizations involved in ecology, which are often related to an interest in Russian history and ancient monuments, are included in the section on environmental clubs.}

In the RSFSR, unlike the rock bands and sports clubs, people of all ages join groups involved in preserving national identity.

The dance and song groups and folklore ensembles created at the end of the 1970s by young enthusiasts continue to attract young people but they have also retained their original membership, that is, people who are already no longer young. Thus the Dmitry Pokrovsky Folklore Ensemble in Moscow, meeting since the beginning of the 1970s, remains active and is now officially recognized. The founder of this group who is now its leader is more than 40 years old. In the Moscow suburb of Lyubertsy, along the strange

body-building clubs known as the "Lyubery," there is a folklore group called Rossiyanochka [which translates as something like "nice Russian girl."] About 60 people belong to its collective, all families of workers at a large Lyubertsy factory who had once come from Russian villages. Rossiyanochka unites four generations among these families: people in their 40s and 50s and also their parents, adult children and grandchildren who live with them in Lyubertsy or who continue to live in the villages. The ensemble members learn the old songs and dances from them and sew the old-fashioned costumes according to their instructions.

The Mitki movement was initiated in Leningrad by a young man named Dmitry Shagin and the movement bears his name: Mityok is a familiar nick-name based on the name Dmitry, and the plural form of Mityok is Mitki. From Leningrad, the movement spread to surrounding cities. Dmitry is a proponent of the preservation of Russian national roots and a return to simple forms of the Russian national way of life. Mitki sport long beards and wear clothes styled in the manner of the Russian costume of the 19th century. They prefer simple food like shchi, a type of cabbage soup and kasha, or buckwheat cereal. They preserve the patriarchal way of life traditional morals, stressing the value of the family and association with friends.

In Moscow and Leningrad, for more than 10 years now, there is a widespread movement of independent seminars that operate in private apartments. They bring together people with such interests as Russian religious philosophy, ancient Russian music, architecture, painting, etc. At their meetings, both amateurs and

professionals unable to publish because of their diversions from the officially-permitted views read papers and reports. Now, some of these seminars have begun to conduct public meetings in district libraries and houses of culture and the Soviet official press even covers their meetings from time to time. In 1987 a reading was organized on Soviet history at the Moscow Historical Archives Institute. These topics began to be discussed at meetings of discussion clubs which formally have long existed at various institutions but which began really only became active under the conditions of glasnost.

Interests in preserving "roots" emerged in the movement to save and restore historical and cultural monuments. The All-Union Society for the Preservation of Monuments of History and Culture, known by its Russian acronym VOOPIK, has been operating for decades. Millions of Soviet citizens are members of VOOPIK. Most of them, however, are limited to paying a very low sum of membership dues -- 30 kopecks a month, or about \$.50. Out of the millions of rubles collected from these 30-kopeck contributions, restoration projects are carried out, however this is hardly enough to prevent the wide-spread catastrophically rapid destruction of historical and cultural monuments as well as nature preserves.

Like all such All-Union societies with an official status, VOOPIK is more like a typical Soviet bureaucratic office than a real public interest group, which in idea and name it should be.

The Soviet Cultural Fund was created in 1986, headed by Academician Dmitry S. Likhachev, an elderly scientist originally from Siberia and now working in Leningrad, who is widely believed

to act as a patron of various independent literary and ecology efforts. Dr. Likhachev is a survivor of the notorious Solovki concentration camp, opened during Lenin's reign to punish political deviants. Raisa Gorbachev, the wife of Mikhail Gorbachev, is a member of the Cultural Fund's Board of Directors.

The Soviet Cultural Fund is one of the glasnost era efforts to create an All-Union society which would really be capable of stimulating initiative from the masses for the purposes proclaimed by the Fund: a revival of the traditions of charitable activity and fund-raising for the development of culture, opening of museums and monuments, the restoration of historical and cultural sites, and the organization of art exhibits.

In the first year of its activity, the Soviet Cultural Fund collected more than 13 million rubles in donations and 2.5 million dollars in in-kind gifts. In addition to the Moscow and Leningrad offices, branches of the Fund were opened in all the 15 Union republic as well as 135 local departments in the autonomous republics and oblasts or regions. The Fund designated financial support for the restoration of the Moscow home of Fyodor Shalyapin, the famous turn-of-the-century Russian singer, and is developing it as a center to help gifted vocal artists. The Fund has also collected money for a statue to be built in honor of Vasily Tyorkin, one of the Soviet people's most popular literary heroes, a figure from a poem by Aleksandr Tvardovsky, the celebrated editor of the literary magazine Novy mir from the thaw era of the 1950s and 1960s. This magazine played a large role in the intellectual and spiritual emancipation of Soviet society

after the death of Stalin.

In addition, the Fund has raised money for a museum in memory of the nationally popular singer and songwriter Vladimir Vysotsky, [27] an actor of the Taganka Theater who played Hamlet, but who was better known as a bard who sang street-wise ballads, which were something like Bob Dylan or Leonard Cohen or even Tom Waits.

Vysotsky died at the age of 40 in 1980. His funeral attracted thousands of weeping fans who carried tape recorders and home-made cassettes of his songs, which had spread rapidly through magnitizdat, or the underground recorded tape culture. To this day, people still travel to his grave, which, in the Russian tradition, is graced not only with flowers but with his photograph and with the packs of cigarettes and vodka bottles the poet loved but which led to his untimely death. Fans still regularly meet to swap tapes near his grave or in front of the Taganka Theater. Eight years after his death an official Soviet publicity house issued a biography.

Small societies of enthusiasts interested in ancient monuments are fairly numerous in the USSR. Thus, in the spring of 1986, a handful of VOPIK activists -- students of the Moscow Bauman Higher Technical School -- managed to hold off the destruction of the Shcherbakov Palaces on Bauman Street, which was scheduled for demolition under an urban renewal plan for Moscow. The Shcherbakov Palaces are among the oldest civilian buildings in Moscow to have survived into the present day. The freshmen student, lead by Kirill Panferov, occupied the building and organized a round-the-clock vigil, since bulldozers were standing

at the ready nearby. The news of the threatened demolition of the Shcherbakov Palaces and the student's picketing ended up in the press ("Senselessness," by Yury Nagibin, Sovietskaya kultura, May 30, 1986). Thus the story received some publicity, and Boris Yeltsin, then still secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, gave the order to cancel the demolition. Even so, Panferov was expelled from the technical school after the protest and stripped of his title of public inspector for VOPIK. [28] But an association formed after the rescue of the Shcherbatov Palaces, called Sloboda [?], is still active in preserving monuments.

In Leningrad, also under the auspices of VOPIK, there is a small organization called Mir, which means both peace and world in the Russian language, and is the word that was used by peasants in the old days to mean community. Mir has been operating since 1984 and is made up of volunteers who donate their time on weekends as assistants to restorers of architectural sites. Members of Mir have taken part in more than a dozen restoration projects.

In Leningrad since 1985 a small (20 members) group called Spaceniye [Salvation] has been active. Salvation waged an unsuccessful battle to keep the wreckers' balls from the Hotel Angleterre, where in 1925, the popular folk poet Sergei Yesenin committed suicide. Despite a three-day picket in front of the hotel, activists failed to stop the razing of the old building. Nevertheless, Salvation has managed to prevent the destruction of several other old buildings, including places where Fyodor Dostoyevsky lived at various times, and the home of the poet Anton Delvig, a friend of the most celebrated Russian poet, Aleksandr

Pushkin.

The Center for Creative Initiative, which is attached to the City Committee of the Komsomol [Young Communist League] registered Salvation as a society under its aegis. Despite its official status, Salvation has still managed to acquire some enemies among Leningrad's Party leaders, and not just because of clashes with city planners who want to tear down old buildings. In the summer of 1987, Salvation tried to run its own candidate in the City Council elections, a 23-year-old guide at the Suvorov Museum named Aleksei Kovalyov. [29] This effort, although unsuccessful, apparently did more to provoke the wrath of the Party than the picketing of buildings scheduled for demolition.

control of the local Communist Party.

### Ukraine

The first meeting of the Ukrainian Culturological Club took place on August 6, 1987 in Kiev. About 200 people gathered for the first meeting of the club, founded by a small group of Ukrainian intellectuals who had formally been political prisoners. The topic for discussion was "Ukranian Culture: Facade and Reality." The next meetings of the club were devoted to discussing the relationship between Church and state in the Ukraine; the legacy of the [century?] Ukrainian philosopher Hryhory Skovoroda; ecological problems in the Ukraine; and the problem of preserving Ukrainian cultural monuments and history. Each meeting attracted a large and sympathetic audience. In the summer and fall, the club held open-air meetings in the park. As

the weather grew colder, the club moved indoors. But since they were not allowed to rent space, they broke up into different sections (devoted to literature, culture, philosophy, history, etc.) and began to hold meetings in private apartments.

On April 26, the anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, members of the culturological Club staged a demonstration with the banners "Chernobyl Must Never Be Repeated"; "Make the Ukraine a Nuclear-Free Zone"; "Ukrainian Culturological Club Against Nuclear Death." About 60 people turned out for the demonstration but it was broken up by authorities. Along with police and KGB officers, young Afghanistan war veterans, known as Afgantsi, from the Kiev branch of the officially-organized Soldiers Internationalists Association, helped to disperse the marchers.

A separate Culturological Club called "Friends of the Lion" was founded in the city of Lvov at the end of 1987, headed by a former student of Kiev University, Fyodor Konyk, a worker. [33] Almost simultaneously, the Ukrainian Association of Independent Creative Intelligentsia was founded with branches in both Kiev and Lvov. The founders were fourteen intellectuals well-known in the Ukraine-- mainly poets, artists and writers who had been political prisoners and were thus denied opportunities to work commensurate with their education and qualifications. The association proclaimed its goal to promote increased exposure for the works of its members (even in samizdat form or in exhibits in private apartments) and to provide moral and artistic support. [34]

At the beginning of 1988 the club Legacy was born, whose

board members included prominent scholars who are members of the Ukaranian Academy of Sciences. [35]

The struggle to preserve Ukrainian culture led to the formation of an unofficial group in Zaporozhe known as the Khortitsa Committee. Khortitsa is an island in the Dnieper River near the city of Zaporozhe where in ancient times Russian merchants and Scandinavian Vikings would stop on their way to Byzantium. For that reason, the island was a center for the Zaporozhe Cossacks.

In mid-1987, it was learned that Zaprozhe architects were planning to start construction on Khortitsa as part of a pedestrian bridge across the Dnieper to new residential areas. the plan would have caused irreparable damages to the nature preserve on the island. The Khortitsa Committee, chaired by journalist Konstantin Sushko, led a fight against the project and was enthusiastically supported by the residents of the city. After numerous essays in the press criticizing the plan, city authorities finally turned it down and opened up public discussion of other plans for the foot bridge that would leave Khortitsa untouched. [36]

In September 1987, a group of former political prisoners headed by Vyacheslav Chornovil announced the reopening of the independent journal Ukrainskiy vistnik [Ukrainian Herald] which had been published by Chornovil from 1970-72. Chornovil had been arrested in 1972 for the magazine and sentenced to 6 years of labor camp and 3 years of internal exile. [37] In December 1987, the editorial board of Ukrainskiy vistnik announced that they

would serve as the organ of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, which had been founded in November 1976, and crushed by authorities by the beginning of the 1980s, but which had never officially ceased its activity. On March 11, 1988, the Ukrainian Helsinki Group released a statement, announcing the public resumption of its work under a new name, the Ukrainian Helsinki Union. A statement about the revival of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union was signed by 20 members; of these, seven are new people who were not previously involved.

At the end of 1987, a charitable fund was opened in Donetsk to aid prisoners of psychiatric hospitals and their families. In 1988, in the Ukraine, the following informal associations were founded: in Rovno, the pacifist Trust Group, associated with the Moscow Trust Group; in Kiev, the ecological society Goloseyevo-88, and also civic clubs: Gromada, Spadshchina, Noosphere, {translations?}, Ukrainian Democratic Union, the Shevchenko Ukrainian Language Society, the Initiative Group to Hold Rallies, the Group For Citizens' Rehabilitation, and the Ecology Union; in Donetsk the social-political club, Pluralist; in Lvov, the Society of Friends of Ukrainian Art and Literature, and in Odessa, the Ecology Club.

Throughout 1988 and the beginning of 1989, several conferences were held for the purpose of strengthening cooperation among kindred associations. At a June 12, 1988, conference in Kiev attended by 500 people, an Organizing Committee for the creation of a Popular Union to Promote Perestroika was founded. All of these associations frequently cooperate in organizing

conferences, rallies and other joint activities. Thus in Kiev, on Human Rights Day, December 20, the Ukrainian Democratic Union applied for a permit to hold a rally, as did the Ukrainian Helsinki Union (the rally was not permitted by the authorities). Thousands of people gather at these joint rallies. Among the first largest rallies was called by the informal associations took place in Lvov on June 21, 1988. Fifty thousand people gathered to hear a discussion of the decisions of the XIX Party Conference. In December 1988, in response to a call by the Ukrainian Union of Writers, the Initiative Group to Support the Creation of a Popular Front in the Ukraine was formed. Twenty-three people took part -- representatives of the Ukrainian Writers Union; the Ukrainian Helsinki Union; the Ukrainina Culturological Club; Spadchina [translation?]; Gromada [translation?]; and Noosphere. In general, it became characteristic of Kiev and Lvov that officially-recognized associations cooperate with more active and popular informal groups. Cooperation in activities and a striving towards organizational unity can be observed in other cities of the Ukraine: the recent formation of the United Union to Promote Perestroika in Odessa, which unites several infomral groups; the creation of cells of the Popular Front in Kharov; a branch of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union and the Popular Front in many other cities of the Ukraine.

BYELORUSSIA

In Byelorussia, public life, virtually unknown for many years, is once again thriving. Byelorussia was known as one of the most conformist and repressed republics. Protest against the Chernobyl cloud and the anti-Stalinist movement changed all that.

In 1987, reports of informal associations began to appear in the official press. They include experimental theatrical studios (for example Krug [Circle] in Minsk, numerous rock groups and also societies interested in national history and culture. Among such societies are the Uzgorye club in Vitebsk; Pakhodnya in Grodno; Povyaz in Orsha [translations?]; Talaka [Mutual Aid] in Gomel and Minsk; and Maladzii [Youth] in Polotsk. The most well-known groups are Talaka and Tutayshiye [Locals], an association of young literary people who operate in Minsk under the aegis of the official Byelorussian Union of Writers.

In striving to place youth associations under ideological control, the Byelorussian Komsomol Central Committee founded a musical information center in 1987 in Minsk called Orientir in order to co-opt the rock groups. In addition, a republic youth center was created, attached to the Railway Workers' Palace of Culture and Sports. More than 50 different youth associations were supposed to function within the framework of this center. But this plot has failed to work as yet -- the center is idle and empty.

On November 1, 1987, Tutayshiye and Talaka organized a dzyada, a traditional Byelorussian day of memorial. The authorities refused to give these groups permission to hold the ceremonies. Nevertheless, on the day it had been planned, about

200 people involved in Tutayshiye and Talaka, as well as members of the Byelorussian intelligentsia invited by them (writers, artists and scientists) gathered in the morning at the statue of Janka Kupala, the famed Byelorussian poet. That meant Party and Komsomol workers ended up coming as well.

The ceremony began with the laying of flowers at the foot of the statue. People read their own verses and those of dead poets.

They read off the names of the leading figures of Byelorussian culture who had been killed -- and not only those who had been canonized by Soviet ideologues. Particular emphasis was made on memorializing the victims of Stalinist repressions, when the flower of Byelorussian intelligentsia and nation was massacred, as several speakers noted, calling this annihilation a genocide. Again and Again, speakers persistently urged that the memory of the victims of Stalinist repression not only be restored to the national consciousness, but that the names of their executioners be listed, so as to analyze the mechanism of misuse of power, which made it possible to unleash mass persecution of the best representatives of the Byelorussian people.

During the ceremony, Party and Komsomol workers also took the floor in order to "water down" the seditious speeches with sententious remarks in line with official ideology. The problems raised at the dzyadi were subsequently discussed by the Byelorussian press, which represented both points of view [31].

The popularity of Talaka and Tutayshiye grew rapidly, as could be seen by the growing number of people attending their rallies. On June 19, 1988, at a rally organized by Talaka in

memory of the victims of the Stalinist terror, more than 5,000 people were present. On October 30 (on a day that has been commemorated for 15 years as Soviet Political Prisoners' Day, but which was also a day before All Hallow's Eve, or Halloween, the holy day before All Saints' Day, when the Christian martyrs and other saints are commemorated), Talaka and Tutayshiye applied to hold their next dzyady, but authorities refused them a permit. This provoked universal outrage, which was particularly acute because during the summer before, in Kurapaty near Minsk, a mass grave had been opened that contained the remains of 300,000 victims of the Stalinist terror of 1937-41. The rally took place despite the ban, but not at the gates of the cemetery, which had been proposed in the application, but on the outskirts of the city, on the road to Kurapaty. About 10,000 to 15,000 people took part in the march. Although their rally was peaceful and orderly, police dispersed the gathering using billy clubs and tear gas. Fourteen demonstrators were detained, including well-known scientists and writers. The event gained attention throughout the Soviet Union and even world-wide. Both the Byelorussian press and the central Soviet press wrote about the unprovoked and brutal dispersal of the peaceful demonstration.

In addition to Talaka and Tutayshiye, in the fall of 1988 another group was formed called Martirolog Byelorusi, or Martyrs' Roll of Byelorussia, to commemorate the victims of Stalinism. Martirolog has branches in Minsk as well as other cities of the republic, and it cooperates with the All-Union Historical Education Memorial Society (see below). About this time in Minsk,

representatives of several informal associations of Byelorussia convened to create a Popular Front. However, both the idea of Martirolog and the Popular Front were rebuffed by republic authorities who began to harass the activists of the informal groups through attacks in the press. Despite the resistance of the authorities, a conference to unite the groups took place, but not in Byelorussia, where permission could not be granted, but in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, where conditions were more liberal. The mass Lithuanian movement known as Sajudis (see below) gave the Byelorussian informal groups a meeting hall free of charge. At the first rally of the Byelorussia Popular Front in January 1989, more than 40,000 gathered. Subsequent congresses of the Byelorussian Popular Front were also held courtesy of Sajudis in Vilnius.

In January 1989, the authorities were forced to permit a rally organized by the Byelorussian Popular Front. About 40,000 people gathered and approved the BPF program and demanded its implementation. Despite continued resistance from authorities, the BPF was formally founded and continues to remain active.

{In 1989, Countersuit, a critical documentary film about the police crack-down on the Byelorussian rally was aired at private screenings in the USSR, and then at the Glasnost Film Festival in the U.S. The driving force behind the film was Byelorussian author Ales Adamovich, a liberal writer who has now become a deputy to the Congress. Adamovich, based in Moscow, played a key role in defending the popular movements in his home republic of Byelorussia. The official state film agency, Goskino, made a

decision not to permit Countersuit to be distributed through its auspices. Apparently the Leningrad Film Studio has contracted to distribute the controversial film.}

### Moldavia

There are several informal associations active in Moldavia. Their chief demands are to grant the Moldavian language official government status; the recognition of the national flag of Moldavia as the official state flag of the Moldavian SSR; sovereignty for the republic of Moldavia; and restoration of its alphabet to the Latin letters in which it was written before Moldavia was annexed to the USSR and its alphabet converted to Cyrillic. The most popular associations are the Aleksei Mateyevich Literary Musical Club (Mateyevich was a famous Moldavian poet of the x century) and the Democratic Movement of Moldavia, which cooperates with the Mateyevich Club.

Since the beginning in 1989, these organizations have held weekly rallies on Sunday in the center of Kishinyov. At these events, attended by as many as 25,000 people, they speak in their native tongue about the needs and sing Moldavian songs. In February 1989, the republican leadership and the city authorities of Kishinyov tried to stop these rallies but their attempts to ban them were unsuccessful. There were several occasions when people attending the rallies clashed with police, but usually the rallies were peaceful.

In March 1989, four people who had been active in organizing the rallies were arrested for "disturbing public order" under Art.

190-3. On April 9, 1989, a Committee to Defend the Arrested was founded and at rallies, people call for the release of those arrested.

Besides the Mateyevich Club and the Democratic Movement of Moldavia, there is also a North District Popular Front of Moldavia and the Reneshtere [Renewal] Society, which support the Mateyevich Club and the Democratic Movement. There is also a Unity Society, which unites non-Moldavians and which opposes granting government status to the Moldavian language. The Gagauz Khalky Society was created by the Gagauz, a minority ethnic group in Moldavia which advocates creating a Gagauz Autonomous Republic. They held their first congress on May 24, 1989, which was attended by more than 500 delegates from towns and villages in southern Moldavia. They appealed to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet to establish an autonomous region for the Gagauz within Moldavia. [fn to USSR News Brief, no. 9/10-7]

The "green" movement is particularly active in Moldavia because of the tragic ecological situation in the republic; negligent use of chemicals has become a serious health hazard, particularly for children.

Moldavia also has a League of Unemployed, not a common organization in the USSR, which opposes migration into the republic in the belief that this causes unemployment. It also advocates government welfare for the unemployed -- {something that is not organized in the USSR since theoretically, there was no supposed to be any unemployment, and those without jobs were either not acknowledged or arrested for parasitism. The League

meets regularly in Victory Park and about 30 people attend.}

{On May 1, 1989, 3,000 people attended a rally in Kishinyov's Freedom Square in front of the Moldavian Academy of Sciences. The event was held to commemorate the victims of the Georgian massacre of April 9. The crowd swelled to 10,000 and proceeded to Kishinyov Prison, where they demanded the release of imprisoned members of the movement. On May 2, 20,000 people gathered at the Green Theater at a rally organized by the Democratic Movement. Participants sent a telegram of sympathy to the Georgian people.

About 2,000 rallied at the monument of Stefan the Great on May 14 to discuss the draft laws on Language and Citizenship. Officially-permitted rallies on the same subject took place in Kantemir, Dubossary and Orgeyev.

The Moldavian Popular Front opened its inaugural congress on May 20 at the Writers' Union building in Kishinyov. Nine informal associations joined the Popular Front. Leaders were elected and a 22-point program was adopted, including the introduction of economic self-management in the republic; the formation of nationally-based troops; the annulment of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact; the restoration of the Latin alphabet and the creation of a Moldavian Autocephalous Orthodox Church which would not be under the dominion of the Russian Orthodox Church. A draft law was published May 21 on converting to the Latin alphabet between 1990 and 1995. [fn to USSR News Brief, no. 9/10-7.]}

### Baltic Republics

[Luda: I am leaving in some of the paragraphs you cut

because it seems these groups should get some credit, and because I know from interviewing Parek that the Independence Party is very active although it may pale now compared to the Popular Front.]

Before the formation of the large popular front movements in the Baltic republics, smaller groups were active in 1986 and 1987 -- some of them veterans of the harsh persecution of the 1970s and early 1980s -- which played an important role in launching the first mass public rallies. Helsinki `86 was founded in the Latvian city of Liepaya in July 1986 by Linard Grantinsh, 26, an amber jeweller; Raimonds Bitenieks, 42, a chauffeur; and Martins Barris, 39, a laborer. Although Helsinki groups had been founded in Lithuania and other non-Russian republics in the 1970s, there had not been such a human rights monitoring group in Latvia prior to this time. [51]

Soon after the founding, eight new people joined the group, including Juris Vidinsh, chief physician of the Rezeknek District Central Hospital. He was immediately expelled from the Communist Party, fired from his job and stripped of his title of deputy to his district soviet. In February 1988, a youth section called Fatherland and Freedom was founded under Helsinki `86 and 10 people joined. [52] Authorities responded to the forming of the group by drafting some of its members into the army and {forcing some to emigrate?}.

The documents released by Helsinki `86 stated that its goal is to promote national self-determination and the national rights of Latvians. It has protested the in-migration to Latvia of citizens of other nationalities; the erosion of the Latvian

language by Russian; the offering of apartments in Riga and other cities to new-comers at the expense of Latvians, and so on.

In the summer of 1987, Helsinki '86 called on Latvians to mark the anniversary of the mass deportations of Latvians to Siberia on June 14, 1941, by laying flowers at the Statue of Liberty in Riga. About 5,000 people responded to the call. [53]

Rallies were also organized on the anniversary of the proclamation of Latvia's independence in February 1918, and in March on the anniversary of the deportation of Latvians to Siberia in 1949. [55]

In Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, former political prisoner Tiit Madisson founded the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Madisson was eventually forced into exile in Sweden. The groups's goals chiefly involved independence for Estonia, and thus it called for glasnost on the secret protocols precisely in order to prove the unlawfulness of the Soviet presence in Estonia. [56]

The National Independence Party was founded on January 21, 1988. Several organizers, including former political prisoner Heiki Ahonen, were promptly threatened with drafting into Chernobyl clean-up service, and then forced to leave the USSR and forfeit their citizenship. The NIP's program called for a revival of the Estonian language, observance of civil rights, establishment of a market economy, army service by Estonians only on the territory of Estonia, representation for Estonia within the United Nations and in general "defense of the interests of the Estonian people...until the restoration of the independence of the

Estonian government." This document was signed by 14 people and sent to the Estonian Soviet of Ministers and to Estonian newspapers. The National Independence Party now numbers 300 active members, one third of whom are estimated by organizers as aged 16-22.

The Free Independent Youth Column No. 1, numbering about 100 members, held its founding meeting on December 20, 1987, in the Estonian city of Viru [spelling?]. Its purpose was to preserve the national historical memory. Youth Column published a bulletin called Public Opinion. According to testimony by Tiit Madisson, who was forced to emigrate, by the summer of 1987, there were about 30 or 40 such groups in Estonia. [57].

[Is this the same thing as Independent Youth Forum?]

The Lithuanian Helsinki Group, which cooperated with the the national movement and the Catholic Church in Lithuania, was founded in 1977. It was destroyed through the arrests of its members by the early 1980s. Two former members of the original Lithuanian Helsinki Group, Vitautas Vaicunas and Mecislavas Jurevicius, announced the resumption of the Group's work in May 1988. [58] The original chairman of the group, Viktoras Petkus, served a lengthy labor sentence and was not released from exile until September 1988, when he returned to Vilnius and formally reopened the Helsinki Group with new members.

In August 1987, in all three Baltic capitals, there were demonstrations to mark the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the agreement between Hitler and Stalin which contained secret protocols that provided the opportunity for the Soviet Union to

occupy the Baltic states. [54] In Vilnius, there was a rally near St. Anne's Cathedral which lasted for four hours and was attended by 3,000 people. Speakers called for the liberation of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, and demonstrators cried "Freedom! Freedom!" and sang Lithuanian national songs. The rally ended with the crowd singing the national anthem of independent Lithuania. Although the demonstration was not dispersed, people were photographed by agents in plainclothes.

In Tallinn, there was a demonstration of 2,000 people called by the Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. The demonstration was held with permission from the authorities, who coordinated the route with the organizers of the march, and it proceeded without obstruction.

The variations in the treatment of demonstrators on August 23 by the authorities in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia is apparently explained by the fact that in the Baltics, the resolution of the problem of mass demonstrations was assigned to republic authorities. Despite the fact that rallies continued on various issues, the most widespread form of restraining protesters was to detain them for a few hours and then release them. From time to time, authorities resorted to sending the most active demonstrator organizers into the army reserve. Twice (once in Lithuania and once in Latvia), young organizers were handed six-month labor camp sentences for refusing to serve in the army. The harshest measure against organizers was exile from the USSR; this technique was employed several times in Latvia and Estonia.

The informal groups' campaign and public pressure were

finally successful in getting the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and its secret protocols published in the official Estonian and Lithuanian Communist press in August 1988. As the anniversary approached in the summer of 1988, the authorities feared even larger demonstrations and decided to publish the Pact and the secret protocols. This was done at the same time in Lithuania and Estonia, and then somewhat later, in Latvia. But the group still aims to have the Pact published in full in the central Soviet press, and in fact to have it repudiated, and the troops that were brought in under it withdrawn. After the publication of the Pact, the group was essentially absorbed into the National Independence Party, and continued to work for complete freedom for Estonia.

Most Balts hold deep in their hearts the desire to secede from the USSR and obtain complete independence and sovereignty for their nations. Unlike the other Soviet republics, which were incorporated into the USSR in the 1920s, or were long ago annexed to Tsarist Russia, the memory of Baltic independence between the wars, and the brutal occupation of the Red Army is still quite fresh. Many people are still alive who survived the purges. These factors have given birth in all three Baltic republics to very active informal associations whose aim is full independence and secession from the USSR. Naturally, the tactics for achieving these universal goals and the pace for launching the demands are disputed among various groups with differing political tendencies.

In Latvia, the Movement for the Independence of Latvia and the Informal Popular Front, which was renamed at the beginning of 1989 as the Radical Section of the Popular Front of Latvia, were

the main groups pursuing these aims. Other groups are affiliated to these organizations, and sometimes make joint statements with them, including the Environmental Defense Club, the Ancient Monuments' Preservation Club, the Socially Active People, the Democratic Union of Riga and other groups. In Lithuania, the Lithuanian Freedom League, the Lithuanian National Confederation and the Movement for Lithuanian Independence have all proclaimed their goal of seceding from the USSR. They have been joined by the National Youth Council of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Sobriety Movement, the Public Committee to Save Lithuanian Political Prisoners, the Association of Lithuanian Former Political Convicts, the Lithuanian Helsinki Group, the Lithuanian Olympic Committee, the Society of Lovers of the Lithuanian Language, the Lithuanian Democratic Party, the Kaunas Workers' Union, the Exiles' Club and many other associations.

In Estonia, groups with similar agendas were founded, including the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, the National Independence Party of Estonia, the Independent Youth Forum, the Estonian National League, the Independent Estonian Information Agency, the Tallinn Independent Voluntary Militia, the Olympic Committee of Estonia, the Environmental Defense Society. The majority of Balts, however, know that the goals of complete independence or secession are not attainable at the moment, or even in the foreseeable future. Therefore, despite the large turn-outs (thousands and tens of thousands of people) at demonstrations organized by the above-mentioned groups which articulated the struggle for

independence, and despite the fact that these rallies were generally not persecuted and it was generally perceived that it was now safe to express these national aspirations, these were not the groups that won nation-wide support. Instead, a movement developed which sought authentic sovereignty, but within the framework of the USSR, as a republic within a federation or confederation, but certainly with the hope of secession at some point in the future, if relations with the USSR would not be satisfactory to the majority of the population. If former political prisoners made up the avant-garde of the movement for independence, then the avant-garde for the movement to expand the rights of the republic within the present framework was led by the intellectual establishment, many of whom were members of the Communist Party. Among them are even people who occupy prominent official state and party posts. This was the first Soviet experience with this type of movement, that is, a movement with a more moderate and immediate focus, and which includes many officials. In the Baltics, the unfolding of events, the nature of the demands and the type of people involved, as well as the general mood of the entire three nations, is reminiscent of the Prague Spring of 1968 in Czechoslovakia.

Events picked up pace when elections for delegates to the June 1988 XIX Party Conference were held. In the course of these elections, a plenary meeting of the Estonian Arts Workers Union expressed their lack of confidence in Karl Vaino, First Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee of Estonia, who had been openly placed in his post by Moscow. The chief newspaper of

Estonia published the resolution of the Arts Union, and Communists from many of the production collectives declared solidarity with it. All of this led finally to the removal of Vaino from the leadership of the republic. [fn?] Valas [spelling in English?] replaced Karl Vaino as the First Secretary of the Estonian Communist Party Central Committee, and went in his place to the XIX Party Conference. All of this was quite reminiscent of the fall of Novotny and the accession to power of Alexander Dubcek in January of 1968. Both Valas and the chairman of the Estonian Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Arnold Rutel [spelling in English?] were confirmed advocates of broader sovereignty for the Union republics. The leading specialists of the Estonian Academy of Sciences and the Tartu University drafted a plan for a complex transfer of the economy of the republic to complete self-government and cost-accounting, with the condition of complete abolition of the authority over the local factories of Estonia by the All-Union Ministries controlled from Moscow. According to this draft plan, Estonia would participate in the USSR economy only through deductions in the state budget within strictly-agreed upon limits, with delivery of products manufactured by Estonian firms to other republics of the USSR at prices fixed by agreement between suppliers and purchasers. Everything earned above the deductions to the Union budget would remain in the Estonian republican budget and would be spent at the discretion of republican authorities who would obtain the full right to dispose of these means, set prices on items manufactured in Estonia as well as wages in Estonian factories. This was to be the economic

basis for establishing sovereignty. On this basis, advocates of sovereignty hoped to receive full autonomy in all internal affairs, leaving to the central authorities in Moscow only foreign policy and defense.

Events unfolded in Lithuania and Latvia along the same lines. In Lithuania, the demand for the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, R. [fn] Songaila [spell?], to retire, escalated to a mass level after he authorized the special MVD troops to disperse a rally organized September 28 by the Lithuanian Freedom League. The organizers had not obtained permission from the authorities to hold the rally, but 10,000 marched anyway. After not being allowed on to Gedieminos [spell?] Square, where the rally had been planned, people marched to another location. The demonstrators did not disturb the peace, and the break-up of their peaceful rally with billy-clubs and forceful measures was completely unjustified. Protests about the brutal dispersal were declared not only by informal associations, who sent 2,000 picketers to stand outside the Central Committee building, but by the official Lithuanian republic Council of Trade Unions. A government commission created to investigate the facts surrounding the use of force declared the police actions lawful, but condemned the use of force. After this, Songaila wound up in retirement, along with the Minister of Internal Affairs who had followed his order to break up the demonstration.

Songaila's place was taken by Algirdas Brazauskas, who, of all high-ranking Party officials, became the closest to the public sentiment of Lithuanians now surfacing.

Upon public demand, in Latvia, Boris Pugo, First Secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, was removed October 4, 1988. The public had grown outraged after learning of a secret message he had sent to the Central Committee in Moscow, where he wrote that events in the republic had flown out of the Latvian Central Committee's control, and expressed a wish to have the necessary reinforcement of military-back-up for the ruling party.

In all three republics, during the run-up to the election of the delegates to the June 1988 XIX Party Conference and the drafting of mandates for them, mass movements emerged. In Estonia and Latvia they were called Popular Fronts (the Estonian Popular Front [EPF] and the Popular Front of Latvia [PFL]), and in Lithuania, the Lithuanian Movement for Perestroika, known by the name Sajudis, which is the Lithuanian word for "movement." By April 1988, the EPF had 800 branches throughout the republic and counted about 40,000 supporters. By the summer of 1988, these movements were gaining nation-wide support and organizing large rallies. On June 17 at a rally organized in Tallinn by the EPF, 150,000 people turned out, that is, more than 15 percent of the Estonian population of the republic, which now numbers less than a million. On October 1-2, 1988, the EPF held its formal founding congress, which was attended by 3,000 delegates chosen by 60,000 members. Supporters of the EPF numbered at least 300,000 by that time, judging by the fact that on September 11, an EPF rally attracted 300,000 people, that is, one in three of every Estonian.

The Popular Front of Latvia held its founding congress on October 8-9 in Riga, which was attended by 1,083 delegates from

2,300 support groups, which united 115,000 members. The Sajudis congress took place in Vilnius on October 22-23, with 1,021 delegates from more than 1,000 local branches of Sajudis, linking 180,000 people. More than 200,000 people came to a demonstration called by Sajudis in Vingis Park outside of Vilnius on August 23, 1988, the anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

The EPF, the PFL and Sajudis have broadly similar structures. They are conglomerates of local groups which have no real officially-recognized leaders. These groups select delegates to the founding congresses, where a program is passed, along with by-laws for the movement and resolutions on the most important political issues of the day. At these congresses, the leading boards or councils are also chosen.

According to the charter of the EPF, the basic kernel of the movement is the support group, and the main structural unit is the regional popular front lead by a Soviet of Mandated Representatives. The highest governing body of the EPF is the Congress. The Communist Party participates in the EPF only through individual members of the Communist Party who belong to the EPF. {Although four members of the seven-person board are Communist Party members,} the EPF does not operate in subordination to Party organs. The board of the EPF is made up of seven people elected at the founding congress [check English spellings]: Heinz Valk, Rein Veidemann, Kostel Herndorf, Lembit Koik, Marina Lauristin, Egraf Savisaar, and Mamu Hint.

The founding congress of the Popular Front of Latvia elected a Duma (or parliament) to run the organization in between

congresses. It also elected a chair, the 34-year-old journalist Dainis Ivans, and a board of [x] including [x,y,z].

Sajudis, according to its charter, is governed by a Sejm, or parliament, between congresses. It is made up of 220 people, headed by a soviet or council of 35 people. The elected head of the council is Vytautas Landsbergis.

The educated middle class -- the intelligentsia -- plays the leading role in all three mass organizations in the Baltic republics. This includes that part of the intelligentsia that had successful careers before glasnost, and which had never openly confronted the authorities. Thus, in the Soviet of Mandated Representatives of the EPF, 28 percent, or almost a third, are members of the Communist Party. In Sajudis, 17 members out of 35 in the Soviet of the Sejm are Party members. This fact has to be understood, of course, against the backdrop of the history of the Baltics under communism. Many people joined the Communist Party to advance their careers, in an attempt to do something for their nation from within the power structure. The Communist members now within ruling bodies of the mass movements are there because they have been active in movements for autonomy and have won public support. They are elected. Their presence does not indicate a grudging compromise with the elements of the Party which were subservient to Moscow or outright Stalinists; they beat these type of people in the elections. Most do not have high-ranking posts.

In many ways, the mass movements and the special history of this area means that the Communist Party itself has been transformed, so it can no longer be run out of Moscow. {Nevertheless, the

presence of Communists in the leading posts of the popular fronts has drawn criticism from more radical groups which point out that such people could be vulnerable in a crunch to the calls of party discipline or manipulation from the center.}

Along with the communists in these organizations can be found former political prisoners, and, in the capacity of collective members, informal groups with more radical programs than the mass movement. Thus, the Lithuanian Freedom League has supported Sajudis, as has the Lithuanian Christian Union, the Vilnius Council of Students in Support of Perestroika, the Kaunas Hyde Park Group, the Green movement for ecology and many other types of groups. The board of EPF includes members from the Ancient Monuments Preservation Society (19 percent of the members); the Green movement (10 percent), religious societies (2 percent), the Estonian National Independence Party and the Estonian Group for the Full Publication of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (the last two are 0.2 percent combined).

The chief planks of the EPF program are as follows: "the EPF considers that it does not correspond to the international democratic experience to have one political organization with a monopoly on governing the state and public life"; "for the sake of developing democracy, it is necessary to legalize the activities of any associations, including political organizations"; "the EPF supports a plurality of forms of property, including the free development of cooperative, personal and private property"; "private property...requires Constitutional safeguards." As for the political arrangements of the USSR, the EPF supports "the

principles of federalism and an unambiguous confirmation of the priority of Union republics over the Union as a whole." The EPF program demands the removal from the Estonian criminal code the articles which restrict the freedom of speech and assembly, the Estonian equivalents to the notorious Art. 190-1 and Art. 70 -- Art. 194-1 and Art. 68 -- respectively, "anti-Soviet slander" and "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." Added to the program are regular resolutions passed by the founding congress: on the support of the Communist Party's course towards perestroika; on a clear definition in the Constitution of Estonia of the right of the republic to the autonomous organization of its own economic and internal political life; social justice (a demand to abolish all the privileges of the nomenklatura); exoneration of those sentenced "in the period of stagnation" for political reasons and for so-called economic crimes (meaning free market activity, not such crimes as embezzlement); criticism of the anti-democratic July 1988 Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet on procedures for holding rallies and demonstrations and the use of special forces against demonstrators, and others.

The PFL's program and the program of Sajudis are similar to the EPF's. The PFL also indicates that it opposes any monopolization of power, and proposes passing a new law on elections, guaranteeing the free competition of various viewpoints. The PFL also proposes granting the Union republics the right to veto All-Union decisions affecting their interests; demands the creation in the republic of an "independent legal system" and economic sovereignty for the republic. To bring this

about, it proposes transferring the enterprises with an All-Union significance located in Latvia to the control of Latvian authorities. The resolutions passed at the PFL's founding congress were taken as follows: on the founding of a newspaper as an organ of the PFL; on supporting the course of the Communist Party for renewal; on economic sovereignty for the republic; on social justice (abolition of privileges); against the Decree of the USSR Supreme Soviet on demonstrations; on de-Stalinization, and others.

The program of Sajudis states that its goal is the "restoration of the political, economic and cultural sovereignty of Lithuania." It declares that Sajudis is not dependent on any other organs of power and also that "no party has the right to usurp political power in the republic." The program calls for removal of all articles in the Lithuanian Criminal Code which have been used to punish dissent, and to proclaim Stalinism as a crime against humanity. The program calls for the creation of Lithuanian national military formations and despite the vow to leave foreign policy and military matters to Moscow, a prohibition against citizens of Lithuania taking part in military actions that have been condemned by the U.N. no doubt a result of the casualties that Lithuanians suffered fighting in the Afghanistan war.

Although the EPF, the PFL and Sajudis are impressive mass movements, they all have a common weak point: most of their members, both rank-and-file and leaders, belong to the native populations of the Baltic republics, although each of these

nations has a significant population (particularly large in Estonia and Latvia) of migrants who are mainly Russian. The situation in Latvia and Estonia is different than in Lithuania, since the demographics are different: Latvians make up only 40 percent of the population, and thus have become a minority in their republic, although they are still the largest ethnic group.

Estonians make up approximately 50 percent of the population of Estonia; Lithuanians make up more than 80 percent of the population of Lithuania.

Thus, out of 1,083 delegates to the founding congress of the PFL, only 65 were Russian. (The Popular Front used the word "Latvian" rather than "Lettish" in its name to indicate that it was a popular front of the republic of Latvia that could include Russians born in Latvia as well as native Letts or Latvians.) There was a similar proportion of Baltic to Russian delegates at the founding congresses of PFL and Sajudis.

The non-native population has grown alarmed about the explosion of national feelings among the Balts. People with the Russian language only have become concerned about the elevation of the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian languages to the status of official republic languages. This means the transfer of all political, economic and business life to languages which the majority of the migrants do not know. In the new situation, the lack of knowledge of the native Baltic language threatens the Russian speakers with the possibility that they may lose their jobs. It could also make daily life extremely difficult, for example, in obtaining goods and services. The PFL, for example,

has called for a requirement that all non-Latvians must learn to speak Latvian within three years if they have jobs where they deal with the public. A law was recently passed in Latvia that if factories hire non-Latvians from outside the republic, they must pay a stiff fee to the local government. An immigration service has been formed to deal with those who want to settle in Latvia. {Citizenship laws are being passed in all the Baltic republics.} The fears of the non-Baltic population and the fact that both sides on the issue have been unrestrained in expressing their emotions has aggravated the inter-ethnic relations of the Baltics considerably.

In response to the formation of the Baltic movements, the Russian-speaking population of the Baltic republics have united in corresponding movements. In Estonia, they are called Interdvizheniye, or International Movement; in Latvia, they are called Interfront and in Lithuania, they are called Yedinstvo, Unity. Unlike the numerous associations throughout the Baltic which are involved in preserving their national identity and developing the cultures of national minorities (the Balto-Slavonic Society in Latvia; the Russian Center in Lithuania; as well as Byelorussian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Armenian, Crimean Tatar, and Polish societies in all three republics), Intermovement, Interfront and Unity are political associations which promote the interests and privileges of the imperialist minority in the Baltics. In the programs of these associations, the principles of internationalism are ostensibly affirmed, declarations are made about respect towards all nations, including the native

populations of the Baltic republics, and statements are made about welcoming international cooperation on the basis of socialist principles. But in practice, these associations mount harsh confrontations with the mass movements in the Baltic republics, accusing them of nationalism and Russophobia. Claiming the principle of internationalism, they have promoted the following demands: refusal to recognize the language of the native population as the state language of a given republic, or, as a compromise, granting the Russian language the status of the official government language as well (bilingualism); introducing into the republican Soviets a Soviet of Nationalities, where all the republic's nations would be represented with an equal number of deputies for each nation. Such a Soviet of Nationalities would be empowered to decide all questions regarding the internal life of the republic. Essentially, Intermovement, Interfront and Unity oppose expanding the rights of the republics and oppose their sovereignty, that is, they are for preserving Moscow's complete power over the entire territory of the USSR.

The number of people involved in Intermovement, Interfront and Unity cannot be compared to the numbers involved the EPF, the PFL and Sajudis. The exact membership of the non-native movements cannot be determined. They are able to make themselves felt, but they were not able to succeed in the March elections; in every case, the native movements triumphed, showing that the figures given out for the number of supporters of the non-native movements must have been inflated. The PFL counts at least 115,000 members, judging from the delegates to its October 1988 founding congress,

who were elected democratically to represent districts. The founding congress of the Interfront in Riga, Latvia on January 7-8, 1989, claimed to have delegates sent by 318,000 supporters. But this figure is obtained by counting as "supporters" the entire workforce of certain factories controlled by Russian bosses. The Interfront delegates included 535 Russians, 26 Latvians and 239 people of other nationalities.

Unity, the Lithuanian organization, has 112 branches in Vilnius, where the majority of the non-Lithuanian population is concentrated. According to Sovietskaya Litva of December 8, 1988, the Vilnius branches of Sajudis have about 27,000 members, compared to about 180,000 people represented at the Sajudis founding congress in October 1988. The total figure for Unity membership has not been published, just as with the totals for Interfront in Estonia and Latvia. At a Unity conference in Vilnius in January 1989, 593 delegates from 381 primary groups were represented. Most of them were workers, chiefly Russians, who are employed at large factories serving the entire USSR.

In Estonia, on initiative of groups of cultural figures, a Forum of the Peoples of Estonia was founded on September 24, 1988, in order to resolve ethnic tensions. EPF representatives and representatives of 17 national groups in Estonia attended, but no one came from the Interfront, since it had refused to take part in the Forum. In Riga on December 11, there was an analogous Forum for the peoples of Latvia (909 delegates from 23 national groups).

Of the 909 delegates, 49 percent were Latvians and 30.4 percent were Russians, that is, roughly equivalent to the percentages in

the total population. The Forum helped the national groups to take the first steps towards understanding each other, but it did not change the aggressive position of the Interfront.

In Vilnius on December 17, a conference was organized of representatives of informal associations of Lithuania on the inter-ethnic relations in the republic. A delegation from Sajudis took part as well as the Russian Cultural Center and the societies and clubs of groups residing in Lithuania: Armenians, Poles, Jews, Byelorussians, Estonians, Ukrainians and Tatars. Together, these groups founded the Lithuanian International Coordinating Association, but Unity did not send delegates to the meeting and did not join the association. (Western readers should recall that Soviet nationalities do not consider themselves "minorities" or "ethnic groups" but nations. Thus, when they use the word "international," they are not necessarily referring to foreign contacts, but cooperation among the nations within the USSR.)

Interfront, Intermovement and Unity are openly supported by the Baltic republics' newspapers in the Russian language. (The leader of Unity, A. Gelbak, is deputy chief editor for the newspaper Sovietskaya Litva [Soviet Lithuania], published in the Russian language. These associations are also supported by the Moscow central press. But unlike the press, the authorities of the Baltic republics are more frequently inclined to cooperate with the EPF, the PFL and Sajudis. Thus, the Supreme Soviets of all three republics passed laws making the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian languages the official languages of the corresponding republics. They agreed to exchange the Soviet symbols and anthems

for these republics to the symbols, flags and national anthems they had during the times of their national independence. But on questions of changing the republics' constitutions in order to ratify greater independence from Moscow, the governments of the Baltic republics have behaved differently, despite the unconditional demands of the majority of the population and the mass organizations to reject the amendments to the USSR Constitution proposed in the fall of 1988, which restrict the rights of the republics, and to pass instead amendments to the republic constitutions statutes spelling out the relations between republic and All-Union laws. The greatest passions were inflamed by the amendment to the Constitution passed by the Estonian Supreme Soviet that All-Union laws can take effect on the territory of Estonia only after being ratified by the Estonian Supreme Soviet, and that the Estonian Supreme Soviet is obligated to veto any All-Union law directed against the sovereignty of Estonia.

In Lithuania, Sajudis gathered more than a million signatures against the draft amendments to the All-Union Constitution that violated the rights of the Union republics. In Estonia, various enterprises and public groups sent 420 statements, signed by 861,890 residents of Estonia. Only 10 of the 420 statements with a total of 605 signatures expressed approval of the amendments. Of 21,480 personal letters sent to the Estonian Supreme Soviet, only 3 approved the amendments to the All-Union Constitution. The deputies of the Estonian Supreme Soviet acted on the mandate of their constituents and rejected the draft amendments, meanwhile

passing appropriate amendments of their own to the Estonian Constitutions.

When the USSR Supreme Soviet opened in Moscow on November 26, 1988, the amendments proposed for the Estonian Constitution were turned down, including the right to veto All-Union laws that the Estonians had viewed as protection of their freedom. The Estonian delegation responded by not recognizing the lawfulness of the USSR Supreme Soviet's rejection. Sajudis and the PFL demanded that their republics' Supreme Soviets support Estonia, but the Latvian Supreme Soviet, which approved the draft republic Constitution given them by its Presidium, did not even place on its agenda the question of making various amendments to the Latvian Constitution.

The Lithuanian Supreme Soviet which convened November 17 opposed the amendments to the All-Union Constitution and advocated economic sovereignty for the republic. But it limited its actions to establishing a commission to draft amendments to the Lithuanian Constitution. Like the Latvian Supreme Soviet, the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet did not put on the agenda discussion of the right of the republic Supreme Soviet to veto All-Union laws directed against the sovereignty of the republic. As a sign of protest, the members of Sajudis walked out of the meeting hall, and when the Supreme Soviet deputies left the building, they were met by 2,000 Sajudis picketers shouting "Shame!"

On November 20, the Sajudis's Council of the Sejm, or Parliament, demanded a convening of an extraordinary session of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet to ratify the right to veto All-Union laws and change the Constitution of Lithuania. Fifty-five

delegates of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet signed this demand, but according to the regulations, in order to convene an extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet, the signatures of 117 deputies are required. On November 21, in support of this demand put forth by Sajudis, public transportation in Vilnius stopped running for 10 minutes. In response, the Lithuanian Procurator opened up a criminal case against the initiator of this action on charges of disturbing public order, but the authorities backed down from pushing the case. At the December 5 session of the USSR Supreme Soviet in Moscow, out of five deputies who voted against the amendments to the All-Union Constitution, four were Lithuanian deputies. So far, Moscow central authorities have not wanted to confront the Baltic republics openly, either through their Supreme Soviets or their informal associations, since they are relying on them to improve the Soviet economy. They are also aware of the impossibility of concealing from the West the political consequences of a conflict with mass public organizations in the Baltic republics. Therefore, the central press keep silent about the events in the Baltic republics or provides fairly distorted coverage, which has repeatedly provoked protests from EPF, NPF and Sajudis. In Lithuania, a series of searches were made on January 9, 1989, at Sajudis publishing houses -- police actions which were officially called "inspections," and not searches. Some Sajudis publishes were placed under control of censors. The authorities, however, have to come to terms with Sajudis, since the overwhelming majority of the republic's population supports the movement even as the Communist Party is clearly losing influence,

as was made vividly apparent during the March 1988 elections. Sajudis candidates landed 36 seats out of 42 provided for Lithuania in the Congress of People's Deputies; the EPF in Estonia received 26 seats out of 30 allotted; and the PFL won 24 out of 29 seats for Latvia.

### Georgia

The Chavchavadze Society was founded on December 1, 1987, and was named after a writer and democratic of the beginning of the 20th century who was widely respected in Georgia. The purpose of the group is to "defend the interests and rights of the Georgian nation, promote concern for the preservation of the cultural heritage and strengthening of the national consciousness of the Georgian people." The society's activists use the slogan "Language, Faith, Fatherland." At the time of its founding, the Chavchavadze Society numbered more than 300 people, and within a year, its membership had mushroomed to 50,000 people. Among the group's members are both former political prisoners (Zviad Gamsakhurdiya, Merab Kostava, Tamara Chkheidze, Georgy Chanturiya and others), some of whom were involved in the Georgian Helsinki Group, and well-known writers and scholars. Soon after the founding of the Chavchavadze Society, on February 24, 1988, 600 students of Tbilisi University held a meeting in support of protests by the Society against military maneuvers near the ancient monastery of David-Garedzh. The military action threatened to damage this greatly valued example of Georgian architecture. The students obtained assurances from the

authorities that in the future, the manuevers would be conducted in other places. But this promise was not kept, and the students repeated their demonstrations on September 21 and 22, when an American delegation participating in a U.S.-USSR exchange program known as the Chautauqua Initiative [check exact name] came to Tbilisi. Police broke up the demonstration as the foreigners looked on in surprise. [39]

Soon, the Society itself was split into very factions. There were at least three tendencies: moderates, who insisted on cooperation with the authorities in order to achieve the Society's goals; liberals, represented by the Georgian Helsinki Group, and radicals, who formed the National Democratic Party (NDP) of Georgia (Georgy Chanturiya and others). The NDP announced that its aim was the secession of Georgia from the USSR.

In March 1988 in Tbilisi, the Shota Rustaveli Society, named after another Georgian writer, was created, headed by an officially-recognized poet, Irakly Abashidze. The Rustaveli Society had a broader mandate in that it was conceived not only as a center for Georgian culture, but for the cultures of the other 80 ethnic groups which inhabit Georgia. Among the founders of the Rustaveli society are Abkhazes, Osetians, Russians, Armenians, Azerbaidzhanis, Ukrainians, Kurds, Assyrians, Greeks and many more. [40]

In the fall of 1988, rallies were organized in many Georgian cities by the Chavchavadze Society, or separately, by the National Democratic Party of Georgia, which continued to belong formally to the Society. Among the largest of the rallies was one on November

12 in Tbilisi, organized by the NDP, in which 100,000 people took part. The slogans for the rally were "End Russification!" and "Long Live Independent Georgia!" On November 13, the NDP organized a rally in protest against the draft of new Constitutional amendments which had been published in the official Soviet press for public discussion. The NDP's chief objection to the new draft was found in Arts. 108 and 119, which sharply curtailed the rights of the republics of the Soviet Union, including the right to secede from the USSR itself. About 100,000 attended this rally as well. Apparently, a more moderate sector of the public, which was also concerned about the draft amendments, organized a meeting on November 17 to discuss the question of organizing a Georgian Popular Front as a counterweight to the NDP. Representatives of the Rustaveli Society were present as were members of the Georgian Academy of Science, Tbilisi University and several other informal associations, including a group formed November 3, 1988, called the Union for National Justice which advocated sovereignty for Georgia within the framework of the USSR, and respect for human rights. Founders included Avtandil Imnadze, Irakly Shengelaya and others. Those attending this meeting also spoke critically against the new draft amendments. On November 23, when the session of the Georgian Supreme Soviet opened, at which the draft amendments were debated, a rally 200,000 strong took place outside the building of the Supreme Soviet, in which all the informal associations took part, from the radicals to the moderates. All of them objected to the adoption of the draft Constitutional amendments. This unanimity

apparently had some influence on the Supreme Soviet, since it finally rejected the proposed draft. This decision satisfied most of the rally participants, but the radical segment among the informals demanded that the Georgian deputies speak definitively against the draft in Moscow as well, at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. This demand was backed up by a mass hunger strike at the Supreme Soviet building. About 900 people fasted, continually surrounded by sympathizers numbering about 25,000 people. The hunger strike continued until November 29, when it was learned that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR had rejected the new draft of Articles 108 and 119. But after these tumultuous events, the Chavchavadze Society fell apart. The National Democratic Party split off from the group and from the remnants was formed the Society of St. Ilya the Just, which the Georgian Helsinki Group joined. Georgian authorities resorted to their tried-and-true methods of searches, detentions and even arrests to put a stop to the rallies. In the town of Kutaisi, four people who had not obtained permission from the authorities to hold a rally and had started it in spite of a ban were arrested and sentenced to terms ranging from one to two years' of imprisonment in labor camp. The sentence was suspended for a period of two years. A wave of protest against these arrests and sentences spread throughout Georgia.

Starting in April 1989, there was a wave of large rallies all over Georgia. On April 1, there was a demonstration of 2,000 Abkhazes, demanding secession from Georgia. The Abkhazes are a Muslim ethnic group whose population makes up a minority of

Abkhazia, a territory within Georgia. {The Abkhaz demand angered ethnic Georgians, who viewed the minority's demand as a provocation engineered by central authorities to disrupt the Georgian national movement for independence.} In many towns of Georgia demonstrations in protest against the Abkhaz demands began to grow, and turned into large rallies demanding independence from Georgia. On April 4, at the initiative of the Chavchavadze Society and the National Democratic Party, 158 people staged a sit-in hunger strike in front of the Government Building in Tbilisi demanding independence. Crowds numbering at times as high as 300,000 people kept a rally going around the hunger strikers.

On April 4, strikes were begun at several Tbilisi enterprises, also calling for the secession of Georgia from the USSR. The strikes spread rapidly to other cities. By April 8, the rally in front of the Government Building had grown to 500,000 people. Troops were brought into the city that day -- special-assignment units known as spetsnaz, MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] troops and the regular army. {The rally kept on through the night, with people singing folk songs, dancing, reading poetry at the loudspeakers, and praying. The head of the Georgian Orthodox church [name] came out to the crowds to warn them about the presence of the troops.} At 4:00 a.m., when only a few thousand people remained on the square in front of the Government Building, troops surrounded the square. People began to mill around in confusion. The troops did not allow the demonstrators to leave the square, and began beating them with clubs, striking them with sharpened shovels, and spraying them with tear gas and,

as it was later determined, other much stronger chemicals which caused serious injuries. {The fact that the troops pushed the crowds towards the building gave rise to reports later that some government officials had deliberately forced the crowd to enter the Government Building, so that it could appear as if a mob was making an attempt to take over the government. Telegrams to this effect were reportedly sent to Moscow, and it was believed to be staged to give justification for the use of force. Independently-made video tapes of the events show the troops, some of whom were dressed for chemical warfare, crushing the crowd against the building and not allowing people to leave the square.} According to official reports, 20 people were killed, mostly women, by troops attacking the peaceful demonstrators. Independent reports put the number of deaths at 37 or more. Hundreds of people were injured by shovels or poison gas and were hospitalized. A team of American doctors determined that chloropicrin, a rodent fumagent not intended for use in crowd control, had been sprayed directly on some people.

On the morning of April 9, six of the leading activists in the informal groups were arrested on charges of organizing the demonstration. By the end of May, they were released pending trial after signing statements that they would not leave town. Outrage at the massacre and injuring of peace demonstrators was universal. On April 11, an official day of mourning was declared and thousands massed to lay flowers on the steps of the Government Building. The Georgian Popular Front called for protest strikes and they turned into a general strike.

The Union of National Justice (led by Irakly Shangalaya) demanded

the forming of a commission to investigate the April 9 events, the dismissal of the Georgian leadership, and the secession of Georgia from the USSR. Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, himself a Georgian national who, as First Secretary of the Communist Party, had been forced to meet demonstrators in the same square 10 years ago when the official status of the Georgian language had been threatened, flew to Tbilisi to calm the Georgians. He met with the representatives of informal groups on April 12. Incensed at Shevardnadze's indefinite and evasive replies, the informal groups walked out of the hall. On April 13, the Georgian Independence Party, the National Democratic Party, the Society of St. Ilya the Just, the Society of St. David the Builder, the Union of Georgian Christians and the strike committees of several institutes and factories in Tbilisi, joined the demand to secede from the USSR. The First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party Central Committee was removed from his post, along with the chairman of the Council of Ministers and the chairman of the Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet. An official commission was formed in the Georgian Supreme Soviet to investigate the April 9 events, as well as a public commission with Andrei Sakharov and other members of the intellectuals club, Moscow Tribune. Thousands of informal associations all over the country expressed their sympathy for the Georgian people and the families of the killed demonstrators, and held their own protests against the barbaric actions of the military. In Moscow, about 50 people were detained at a rally in Pushkin Square reportedly numbering some 3,000 protesters.

## Armenia

The National Unification Party [NUP] has existed from 1966 in the underground. Its immediate aims were to obtain legalization for itself and to "resolve the Armenian question" by uniting with Armenia the territories where a majority of Armenians were settled, that is, Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave designated in 1923 by Stalin as a autonomous republic within the neighboring republic of Azerbaidzhan, another ancient Armenian territory, and Nakhichevan, which is also now included in the territorial jurisdiction of Azerbaidzhan, although it is not contiguous with it. The "Armenian question" boils down to the fact that eight million Armenians do not have the space to reunite within the official borders of the tiny Soviet republic of Armenia, where some 3.5 million people resided before the earthquake and the flood of refugees. The remaining Armenians are in diaspora in the USSR and throughout the world.

Beyond the immediate reunification question, the NUP's further plans varied from program to program. Some of its leaders saw a final resolution of the Armenian question in having Armenia secede from the USSR, something technically possible to do legally under the Soviet Constitution, or in annexing Western Turkey to Armenia, which comprises a third of Turkey's current territory. Historically, Western Turkey had been settled by Armenians until they were driven out in 1915 through genocide in which about 1.5 million Armenians perished.

Almost all the members of the NUP have passed through Soviet

labor camps. [43] After some members were freed during the Supreme Soviet's political prisoners early release program in early 1987, the Committee to Defend Political Prisoners Ashot Navasardyan and Azat Arshakyan was founded in May 1987. [44] At that time the former secretary of NUP, Paruir Ayrikyan, announced the formation of the Association for National Self-Determination, which essentially constituted a modernized NUP. [45] The purpose of this association was "to restore the violated rights of Armenians and grant Armenia a worthy place in the community of nations" (in particular, to establish diplomatic ties with all the countries of the world; to discuss freely the question of secession from the USSR by holding a referendum; to obtain independence in domestic and foreign policy, to be accepted for membership in the U.N.) The final goal of the Association was "national self-determination," that is independence for Armenia, since "the USSR has not warranted the hopes of the Armenians for justice." [46]

But, as in other Soviet republics, although chronologically it appeared on the scene first with the most radical program, it was not the National Unification Party that sparked the events in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh in February 1988. Other people who had also long advocated the transfer of Karabakh from the republic of Azerbaidzhan to Armenia initiated the mass demonstrations and rallies. Two new major informal associations that emerged in 1985 were to draw worldwide attention. The first, the Committee to Reunite Nagorno-Karabakh with the Armenian SSR, known as the Karabakh Committee, operated in Yerevan, the capital of Armenia

and was chaired for a time by Igor Muradyan; the second, the Krunk Committee (the Armenian word for a type of bird known as crane in English) was founded in Karabakh. For more than a year before the mass rally, they had collected signatures among Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh for a "national mandate," or referendum, to reunite with Armenia.

Armenians make up approximately 76 percent of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [NKAO], whose total population is 174,000. By the fall of 1986, about 75,000 signatures had been collected and the "mandate" had been sent to the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow. The signature-collecting continued, and 90,000 names were garnered in all, that is, virtually the entire adult Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh. Massive support for the Karabakh Committee's "mandate" stimulated an unprecedented event in the history of the Soviet Union: on February 21, 1988, the Oblast Soviet, or local governing body, of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast, and then the plenary of the Oblast Party Committee voted by an overwhelming majority of votes -- 110 to 17 -- for the transfer of this territory from Azerbaidzhan to Armenia.

From that moment, the Karabakh problem became the key issue, not only for the population of this small region, and not even just for Armenia as a whole. Because in reality, in this case, the current Soviet leadership should have answered the following question: is it prepared to fulfill the clearly expressed will of an entire people, or, as has always been the case, will nationalities problems be resolved in Moscow, without out

consideration of the will and interests of the nations that make up the USSR?

The Soviet government chose as its tactic in dealing with the crisis to accuse the Karabakh Committee and the entire Armenian national-democratic movement of "extremism," of nationalist selfishness and even of corruption and striving to seize power. Meanwhile, an analysis of the events in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) and Armenia illustrate that the role of the Karabakh Committee in these events was very constructive. The chief directions of its activity were efforts to find an acceptable solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, support for the peaceful nature of the Armenian national movement, concern for the security of the Armenian population of Azerbaidzhan and Armenian refugees from Azerbaidzhan, collection and dissemination of accurate information about events, as a counterweight to the Soviet press, which gave very selective, tendentious and even at times false information.

The precursor to the enormous resurgence of the Armenian nation in 1988 could be said to have been the mass movement launched to save the environment in Armenia. An informal association with the name Survival led the movement. In meetings and demonstrations and through articles in the local Armenian press as well as the central Soviet press, Survival activists demanded that the chemical factories which are literally choking Armenia be removed. On October 17, 1987, Yerevan residents staged a protest of some 2,000 people near a rubber plant that was polluting the air, calling for immediate shut-down. A

demonstration occurred at the same time where Azeris and Armenians clashed over tensions in the NKAO. Authorities retaliated against some of the organizers of the Yerevan ecology movement by summoning school and university students for questioning and reprimanding party leaders.

In Yerevan on February 20, 1988, on a day when a vote was to take place in a session of the Oblast Soviet of Nagorno-Karabakh, demonstrations began in support of a motion to reunite with Armenia, numbering 20,000 people. The rallies began spontaneously, and there was no organization. But very soon an Organizing Committee was formed which demanded that the Supreme Soviet of Armenia convene an extraordinary session to review the NKAO Soviet's appeal to be incorporated into the republic of Armenia. The make-up of the Organizing Committee changed several times which happens under such circumstances, when sometimes people wind up in such organization just off the street. The organizers also changed the name frequently, as each attempt to register the group formally was rebuffed. The rallies grew even larger: 200,000 people, then 300,000, then 500,000, and finally, on February 25, more than a million people were assembling peacefully on the streets. At these rallies, in a matter of days, a system of popular self-government was created spontaneously, just as in the Paris Commune in the last century and just as Poland's Solidarity organized in our time. The original group of people who made up what came to be known as the Karabakh Committee then dissolved into new associations; only one of its previous 11 members, Igor Muradyan, a historian who had a position at one of

the Yerevan academic research institutes, continued to play a leading role. Then, a new committee was formed with the name Karabakh. This nation-wide committee included about 1,200 leaders of local committees which appeared in virtually all the enterprises or institutions in Yerevan, in each enterprise at the other major cities of Armenia, and even in some villages. In the central committee, there were more than 100 members and a presidium (or board) of 11 people. This central committee was mainly drawn from the educated middle class -- professors, journalists, musicians, public figures. In general, they were young people, mainly in their 30s and 40s. Many of them were members of the Communist Party. There was also an honorary presidium of the Central Organizing Committee, which was joined by the most prominent and respected people in Armenia, some of them associated with the environmental movement that had arisen in the previous year: the poetess Silva Kaputikyan, the journalist Zory Baloyan, the president of the Armenian Academy of Science, Viktor Ambartsumyan, the director of the theater in the chief city of Nagorno-Karabakh, Stepanakert, Vacho Sarukhanyan. In structure and social composition, the Karabakh Committee exceeded the Popular Fronts of the Baltic republics, which are now better known in the Western press, but which actually began to be formed later, in the summer of 1988. But in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, the peaceful democratic revolution from below went further than in the Baltic republics. The Karabakh Committee, as an executor of the will of the people expressed at rallies, virtually became the government of the republic. The Karabakh Committee performed all the

functions that were supposed to be done by the authorities, but at that moment in Armenia, people simply forgot about the official authorities: the former apparatus of power simply ceased to operate. The Central Committee of the Armenian Communist Party made itself scarce during these days, and there was only one public appearance, a speech by Grigory Demirchyan, the First Secretary of the Central Committee, who said on television that Armenians must "be patient, patient, patient" or things would go badly for them. The Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the republic had called in sick already by February 21, and remained ill until the situation became more clear. The police also did not make their presence felt, particularly because the Karabakh Committee, and the entire population of Armenia, acting upon its requests, was exceptionally disciplined. Both the Deputy Procurator General of the USSR and the Minister of Internal Affairs of Armenia admitted this later in television broadcast, saying that during the days of the rallies in Armenia, there was no incident of robbery or other major disturbance of the peace. But the most surprising was the behavior of the press and television, which simply failed to cover these exceptional events in Yerevan and throughout Armenia, and ran the usual reporting and broadcasts which had been planned long before the February demonstrations. Moscow reacted to the demonstrations approximately a week after they began. Since the official Communist authorities in Armenia were completely powerless, Gorbachev invited for a discussion the representatives of the actual governors of Armenia at the time, the members of the

honorary presidium of the Karabakh Committee, Silva Kaputikyan and Zoryan Baloyan. He asked them to stop the demonstrations, so that a decision could be taken about the NKAO in a calm atmosphere. Upon returning to Yerevan, these two representatives of the Armenian people fulfilled Gorbachev's request by going on television {which had failed to show the rallies in the first place} and calling for an end to the rallies. On February 27, the Karabakh Committee appealed to the Armenian people to suspend the rallies for a month, until 2:00 p.m. on March 26. If a decision was not taken by that date, rallies should be resumed in order to make a decision about future actions.

Incredible as it may seem, the Armenians were using these large meetings in Opera Square in Yerevan, with thousands of people in attendance, as a kind of experiment in direct democracy, peacefully making proposals from the speakers' platforms, getting public reaction, and building a consensus of how to proceed further. When the leaders spoke of resuming rallies, they meant not merely staging a general protest, but holding rallies to decide democratically how to proceed.

Unlike the students' demonstrations in the spring of 1989 in Peking, which also grew to one million strong, the large rallies of Yerevan in the late winter of 1988 did not get saturation Western media coverage. For one, Soviet television had a black-out on the rallies. Secondly, foreign correspondents are located far away, in Moscow, and have to obtain permission for visits outside the capital from the authorities, who, despite glasnost, still tend to keep foreign reporters on a short leash. Secondly,

Western media coverage continues to maintain a bias in favor of covering the drama of Gorbachev himself, rather than the numerous social movements that press upon him. And finally, the Western press was governed by a persistent prejudice that nationalities' affairs in the USSR are essentially a negative phenomenon, to be referred to as "ethnic clashes" seemingly based on obscure and unreasonable racial or religious conflicts. But the phrase "national liberation movements" may be a more accurate way to describe them, since they generally function as peaceful democratic initiatives appealing to an authoritarian empire for more freedom -- not as the undisciplined, hate-filled mobs implied by the expression "ethnic clashes." Western media adopts this prejudice partly because it is often the official Soviet government position, put out to conceal the true nature of events, and that official position is often all that is available during the press blackouts that occur at each Soviet major nationalist uprising. But this portrayal is also because in general, Westerners understand nationalism as a negative phenomenon.

But a careful study of the sequence of events in Armenia illustrates that the "ethnic clashes" that led to deaths in Sumgait -- a town in neighboring Azerbaidzhan far from Yerevan -- occurred after the huge peaceful rallies in Yerevan, after the recognized authorities of the area -- the Oblast Soviets -- had made a democratic vote to change the status of NKAO and had appealed to the center; and after the official Communist leadership collapsed. To be sure, the rallies were begun in the first place because of intolerable conditions in the NKAO -- which

even Soviet Prime Minister Ryzhkov admitted -- which were a mixture of communist corruption and a perception of Azerbaidzhani persecution. And to be fair, after Sumgait, enraged Armenians in provincial areas outside the squares of Yerevan committed atrocities against Azerbaidzhanis -- by the account of one leading Azerbaidzhani intellectual, 70 Azerbaidzhanis were killed. [fn to Guardian article]. But these developments should not distract from the essential point of the nature of the Armenian movement. Further, it is important to stress that the crisis in the NKAO also led to the emergence of Baku popular front initiatives, which pledged to use democratic, non-violent methods to resolve the issues.

Some of the Western reporters' coverage of "ethnic conflicts" was motivated by desire to be objective and to report both sides of the problem without assigning blame. Americans in particular, coming from the ethnic "melting pot" and the scourge of black and white racial tensions in urban centers, were eager to be fair to both sides. The liberal Soviet press, and the Russian intelligentsia (coming from a Christian heritage) tended to identify with the Armenian Christian culture rather than the Muslim Azerbaidzhanis (particularly given the Russian historical memory of the Mongol Yoke), But with few exceptions (the British Guardian, some entries in USSR News Brief), little news has been gathered either from the West or Soviet press from the other side in Baku -- perhaps for lack of sympathy, perhaps because of travel difficulties. Thus, we are compelled to emphasize here that our examination of the informal movements in the Caucasus is

severely limited.

On February 29, in the Azerbaidzhan city of Sumgait, local bands of Azeris murdered Armenians. The phrase used by the Soviet press was pogrom, a word that implies persecution, terror and massacre. From the very beginning, the circumstances of the pogrom, in which at least 31 people were killed according to official figures, led one to believe that it had been provoked in order to intimidate Armenians, as a warning that the Armenian population of Azerbaidzhan will be treated as a hostage to the development of events in the NKAO and Armenia. In Armenia, a universal conviction prevails that the anti-Armenian position of two members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow, [fn] Dolgikh and [fn] Lukyanov, who were dispatched to Azerbaidzhan and to Armenia for talks, as well as the carefully-directed disinformation about the events in Armenia in the Soviet press, played a decision role in sparking the Sumgait tragedy. A number of Russian intellectuals are convinced that the KGB deliberately provoked hoodlums in Sumgait to attack Armenians as a way of damaging the Armenian cause, associating it with violence.

We might add that this could achieve the effect of discrediting Azerbaidzhanis as violent, also. Of course, little evidence can be supplied to prove these allegations. But any analysis of the events in the Caucasus -- indeed in any area of the USSR -- cannot overlook the widespread belief of much of the Soviet population, based on historical precedents, that Soviet rulers have always pursued a policy of "divide and conquer, rule or ruin" and have both provoked historic enmities and played the "ethnic clashes"

card to discourage democratic movements and maintain its own monopoly on power.

In an appeal to the Central Committee in Moscow, the Karabakh Committee wrote about the bias of Dolgikh and Lukyanov and the biased press coverage. In protest against the Sumgait massacre, a three-day strike swept through Armenia. A call for a strike was sounded at rallies, which once again began assembling. The Karabakh Committee was not united on the issue, but when the people at the rallies decided to stage a strike, the Karabakh Committee leaders urged that manufacturing that involved cycles that could not be interrupted without damage, as well as all medical and food facilities, should remain in operation. The participants of the rallies agreed to these conditions, and virtually all types of enterprises outside these areas ceased functioning.

On March 18, the Karabakh Committee proposed as a possible solution of the NKAO issue annexing the territory to the RSFSR (the Russian republic), with the status of an autonomous republic, or to transfer the NKAO to government by the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR. But on March 23, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR categorically refused to change the status of the NKAO in any fashion. ON March 24, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia announced the disbanding of the Karabakh Committee, since it was characterized as "illegal," and passed regulations restricting rallies and demonstrations in Armenia. By March 26, 1988, which was the Karabakh Committee's original deadline given Gorbachev to resolve the Karabakh crisis, army troops were sent

into Yerevan and Stepanakert in the NKAO. That was Gorbachev's answer to the Armenian people.

The Karabakh Committee as it was constituted at that time obeyed the order to disband. But a new committee with a slightly changed name immediately arose in its place. The mass rallies that were once again organized needed a coordinating body of some kind, and a new Karabakh Committee was pressed into service. The new committee began lobbying for a convening of a session of the Supreme Soviet of Armenia, in order to accept the NKAO into the republic of Armenia. Rallies and strikes became daily affairs not only in the capital of Armenia, but throughout the republic. Gradually, even official authorities began to support the demands of the people concerning the NKAO. At the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, the Armenian delegation proposed three different variations of a solution for the NKAO crisis, all of which had been drafted by the new Karabakh Committee and supported by the people at rallies. Gorbachev sharply rejected the proposals.

On June 15, the next session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet opened. The deputies fulfilled the will of their voters: they appealed to the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaidzhan and to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR with a request to respect the expression of the will of the Armenian people about Karabakh. But both the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaidzhan and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR replied with an abrupt refusal.

The Soviet central authorities rejected these proposals because their natural tendency is to suppress any democratic decision-making done without them in the provinces. But they also

had a real conflict of interest on their hands with no proper mechanism to adjudicate it. There was nothing in the Soviet Constitution or in practice that could guide them in handling conflicting desires of republics. Granting the secession of the NKAO to Armenia could have led to mass disorder and bloodshed by angry Azeris, who resented having territory that they had come to perceive as their own removed from their jurisdiction.

After these rejections, the general strike in Armenia continued, despite the fact that numerous troops had been brought into Armenia by that time, supported by tanks and helicopters. In essence, Armenia, a member republic of the USSR, was occupied by troops made up of the other nationalities of the USSR, just as Czechoslovakia was occupied in 1968 by its socialist allies in the Warsaw Pact. Troops were sent into Baku and the NKAO as well to quell unrest. Strikes in occupied Armenia began and ended by decisions made at rallies attended by tens of thousands of people, who had begun to gather twice a day, morning and evening, to resolve the crises of the republic. As before, they were led by a Karabakh Committee, which finally confirmed itself again as the actual authority of Armenia. It was the Karabakh Committee that had the trust of the people, and which maintained order. It did everything to prevent confrontations between soldiers and the population, although the troops reportedly provoked clashes frequently. The authority won by the Karabakh Committee is illustrated by the fact that in two electoral districts of Armenia, where primaries were held for the Armenian Supreme Soviet, Karabakh Committee members were elected: Ashot

Manachuryan, the faculty head of Elementary School No. 183 in Yerevan, an activist of the Karabakh movement, and Hachik Stamboltsyan, chairman of a charitable association associated with the Karabakh Committee called Charity, which was aiding Armenian refugees fleeing Azerbaidzhan. Together with the other members of the Karabakh Committee, they led the struggle for the chief demand at that stage, which was a call to open a session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet and unilaterally accept the NKAO into the republic of Armenia. The Presidium of the Armenian Supreme Soviet refused to convene a session ahead of schedule, since it was obvious that the majority of deputies would vote in accordance with the will of their electorate. When the next session opened November 30, 1988, it ratified all the demands of the demonstrators. This immediately led to mass demonstrations in Baku. Under the pretext of maintaining order, Arkady Volsky, the chairman of the USSR Central Committee of the CPSU, suspended the session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet "until the situation stabilizes." With this act, he violated not only the will of the Armenian people, but the highest organ of authority in Armenia, not to mention the Soviet Constitution. It was a clear-cut act of the Russian imperial center exercising fiat over a recalcitrant province. Under Soviet law, Volsky had no right to suspend a session of a Supreme Soviet. A "special situation," essentially a state of emergency, was declared first in some Azerbaidzhan towns, then declared in Yerevan. The areas were essentially under military law, with curfews, summary detentions, house searches without warrants, etc., conducted by the special forces of the Ministry of

Internal Affairs, which, by special decree of the Supreme Soviet in July 1898, had been granted more powers to search and seize without warrants and to use crowd-control measures.

On December 7, an earthquake erupted that flattened the Armenian towns of Leninakan and Spartak, killing [x] number of people and wounding [y]. The existing problem of the refugees fleeing from Azerbaidzhan was compounded by the refugees fleeing the natural disaster. When the earthquake hit, the Karabakh Committee immediately responded with the following three demands:

- 1) revoke the curfew which by that time had been imposed throughout Armenia because of the previous unrest;
- 2) close the nuclear power station outside Yerevan as well as other major chemical plants in Armenia;
- 3) resettle some of the refugees who had fled into Armenia from various towns in Azerbaidzhan into the NKAO;
- 4) not exploit the tragedy to declare an All-Union construction project in Armenia. (What the leaders meant by this last demand was that the central Soviet authorities should not use the occasion to send in mass brigades of workers of differing nationalities from various republics, which would not only upset the ethnic balance of the small republic of Armenia but would mean that work decisions would be made centrally, rather than locally.

Frequently, central authorities impose their will on the provinces by creating work brigades, declaring an artificial internationalist "friendship of nations" which covers up conflicts between nations and with the Russian-dominated center. Much of the early television coverage of the earthquake featured the "friendship of nations" in responding to the tragedy rather than

the actual scenes of the damage.)

One of the Karabakh Committee's demands was met, although not until three months later: the nuclear power station was shut down.

On December 10, at a regular meeting of the Committee, the discussion focused on rescue work in the earthquake-stricken areas and about the fate of children who had been orphaned. But during the meeting, Albert Makashov, Military Commander of Yerevan during the state of emergency, ordered that the meeting, which was going on in the Union of Writers building, be stopped. On his orders, six members of the Committee were detained and sentenced to 30 days of administrative arrest on charges of violating the terms of the state of emergency introduced by Moscow authorities. By December 15, the number of detainees active in the Karabakh movement reached 150 people. All the members of the Karabakh Committee itself were taken, including the Armenian Supreme Soviet deputies Ashot Manachuryan and Hachik Stambolstyan, who turned out not to have immunity from arrest as deputies. By the end of the 30-day jail term given to the first detainees, all 11 members of the Karabakh Committee and a 12th supporter, Stamboltsyn, were arrested for investigation, apparently on charges of organizing disturbances in public places, an offense that is punishable by up to three years of labor camp. Under Soviet law, they were held in isolation in preventive detention, and were denied access to counsel and family members. They were transferred to Moscow prisons in January, and held through the March elections and the May convening of the new Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Despite the fact that they were all under arrest, they were all nominated

in absentia in their electoral districts, but could not run for election from their jail cells. They were finally transferred to Yerevan and released during the first week of June 1989, pending trial. They have still not been notified of the formal charges under which they may be tried nor are they sure whether those charges may be dropped.

The arrest of the Karabakh Committee was the first instance of an arrest of an informal association in the Gorbachev era, and in general, the first case of mass, politically-motivated arrest of persons who had peacefully assembled and had not advocated violence. The fact that the Karabakh Committee members were held for nearly six months without public announcement of formal charges testifies to the uneasiness of central authorities about the obvious fact that {even} in occupied Armenia, the Karabakh Committee leaders would have undeniably been elected to the new Congress of Peoples Deputies, to the Supreme Soviet of Armenia, and also to the USSR Supreme Soviet as delegates from Armenia, since they had a proven track record of representing the will of the people.

### Crimean Tatars

The Initiative Groups of the Crimean Tatar Movement to Return to the Homeland are perhaps the oldest civil rights associations in the USSR. They arose in the second half of the 1950s. They have led the Crimean Tatar nation's movement to return to its historic homeland in the Crimea, from where the Crimean Tatars

were brutally deported on Stalin's orders on May 18, 1944. The movement has called for a return to its homeland and the establishment of a Crimean Autonomous Republic.

In the activities of these groups, as in those of Helsinki Groups in the non-Russian republics, human rights and nationalist aims are organically intertwined. The network of initiative groups among Crimean Tatars is arranged along territorial lines. initiative groups of various cities are associated in oblast [regional] groups, and these in turn are governed by the Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan where the majority of Crimean Tatars continue to live today, in the same places where they had previously been forced into exile.

The initiative groups nearly died out at the end of the 1970s, but were reinvigorated with the onset of the glasnost era. By decision of the Central Initiative Group and according to a plan worked out by its members in July 1987, a demonstration was staged in Red Square in Moscow by Crimean Tatars who came to the capital to demand resolution of the national question-- the return of their homeland, the Crimea, to the people. The large demonstrations near Moscow's Red Square were among the first large rallies in the glasnost period and made the front pages of all the major Western newspapers. Under pressure from these protests, a government commission was formed headed by veteran Soviet politician Andrei Gromyko, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. During the demonstrations, Gromyko twice received representatives from the Crimean Tatars' Central Initiative Group who spoke on behalf of the demonstrators.

Afterwards, however, the demonstrations were forcibly ended, the demonstrators -- who had no residence permits for Moscow -- were forced out of town, and a crackdown began against the Crimean Tatar movement, focusing on the Central Initiative Group, whose members began to be vilified in the Soviet press and tarred as "extremists." As a counterweight to the Central Initiative Group, in Uzbekistan, a Public Commission On the Crimean Tatar Question, was formed by the authorities and staffed with specially-selected people who had been coopted by the government. Through this commission, the authorities tried to influence the Crimean Tatar masses, by-passing the initiative groups which for more than 30 years had led the Crimean Tatar movement and had been selected democratically by their own people. [41]

Initiative Groups organize numerous demonstrations in various cities of Uzbekistan, Krasnodarsky Kray [Territory] and the Crimean-- in all the places where Crimean Tatar have been scattered. Thousands of Crimean Tatars turn out for the demonstrations and demand the return of their people to the Crimea and the release of political prisoners who have participated in the Crimean Tatar movement. The demonstrations are dispersed and participants persecuted but this has not stopped them.

The official government commission headed by Andrei Gromyko passed a resolution [date?] stating that the reestablishment of the Crimean Autonomous Republic was not "expedient," but that Crimean Tatars could resettle in the Crimea "under standard conditions." But this decision was completely unsatisfactory for the Crimean Tatars, since under the terms of the Soviet internal

passport system, in order to resettle to a new area, citizens need to have offers of housing and jobs. That means that local authorities in the Crimea would have to arrange for a sufficient number of jobs and homes to accommodate the influx. Since the Crimean Tatar people had been forcibly deported in 1944, and had been deprived unlawfully of homes and property, it seemed fair to expect that the government should provide the material means to resettle the population. However, in reality, even those who returned simply in an individual capacity were confronted with obstacles created by local officials. They had difficulties getting work and housing permits and had trouble gaining permission to buy houses, even when local Ukrainians were willing to sell to them. Some who managed to obtain permission to stay were given the more barren land to work and only minimal construction materials for building primitive homes. Those who attempted to stay in the Ukraine without the necessary bureaucratic permits were harassed and in some cases even detained. Two Crimean Tatar men have been sentenced for "violation of the passport regimen" and their families have been evicted from the Crimea; two others are now facing trial.

In response to these injustices, Crimean Tatars continued to stage large rallies; one march in July 1988 was particularly brutally dispersed and a number of people injured and detained. Both leaders and participants in rallies as well as striking workings were punished through job dismissal or other harassment; this has affected hundreds of men and women throughout the areas where the Crimean Tatars were resettled. One Crimean Tatar leader

who met with Helsinki Watch representatives was fired after authorities learned that he had tried to appeal to foreigner public opinion. Although a few families have been permitted to migrate back to the Crimea, they face great bureaucratic obstacles in getting housing and jobs and are given the most barren land to work. Two men have already been handed jail sentences for "violation of the passport regimen" and families are being evicted; at least two others were detained on the same charges and released after protests.

{According to official statistics, 47,000 people have managed to return to the Crimean. Unofficial estimates, which add in the numbers of recent Crimean Tatar refugees fleeing violence in Uzbekistan, put the number at 50,000. But many families still find difficulties in processing the necessary permits, and local officials continue to obstruct purchase of homes and granting of work permits. The notion of forming an autonomous region -- the goal of the Crimean Tatar movement -- is not being considered by the government. Plans were made to resume an official Crimean-language version of Pravda, and an editor was found, Sabriye Seutova, a popular Crimean Tatar journalist who had suffered beatings and detentions in the past for her work in defense of the Crimean Tatar people. Although she has been able to get a residence permit, authorities continued to obstruct her efforts to start the newspaper.}

## Political Associations

According to the statistics of Soviet sociologists, one in ten informal associations surveyed in the large European cities of the USSR were founded on the basis of common political interests.

The majority of these clubs' programs are expressed in terms of socialist or social-democratic ideals, or at least are not directly hostile to such ideals.

The history of the informal socialist associations within the USSR began in the last century and encompasses the entire Soviet period. Socialist groups with ideologies that did not confirm to the official ideology existed even in the years of the Stalinist era, however in the last half century, right up until the current glasnost period, they could only operate in the underground, and could express their non-conformist socialist views only privately, among friends, or in samizdat. But now, the discussion about changing the nature of Soviet socialism is taking place at Party meetings and in "non-Party" audiences and in numerous discussion clubs around the Soviet Union. Although a few political clubs began to function semi-officially and very cautiously in the early 1980s in some institutes, most of these political clubs began to be founded openly in 1986, within various state institutions, research institutes, houses of culture, etc. The sphere of interests and the educational level of the activists of the discussion clubs and their followers are quite varied. The range of topics open for candid public discussion is constantly and fairly rapidly expanding; at the same time, the depth of critical analysis, both in the Soviet press and in the discussion clubs, is

growing as well. The degree to which the clubs' discussions are free from the cliches of official ideology is determined to a large extent by geographical location, with the more remote groups tending to use the cliches more unconsciously. The developmental trend of the clubs in Moscow and the Russian provinces, as well as the other national republics, tend to run parallel. But at any given moment, glasnost is deeper and broader in Moscow, Leningrad, and the Baltic republics than in other parts of the USSR, with the glasnost level descending as one gets farther East from the capital.

Among the first well-known Moscow political informal groups to emerge was the Perestroika Club (now called Democratic Perestroika), called after the campaign for economic restructuring launched by Gorbachev which, like the word glasnost, has become synonymous with reform and democratization in the USSR and hence was frequently used in the names for various discussion clubs. Perestroika is attached to the Central Economics and Mathematics Institute (known by its Russian acronym TsEMI), and its members are in the staff of a number of the prestigious academic institutes in Moscow, including the Institute for the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) and the Institute for Culture. Some of the leaders of Perestroika include the young sociologists Oleg Rumyantsev and Andrei Fadin. Another well-known club was Klub sotsial'nikh initsiativ, the Club for Social Initiatives, known by its Russian acronym KSI, which was attached to the House of Cultural Workers in the Construction Industry, but which dissolved into the coalition that later formed the Moscow

Popular Front. Both DP and the Moscow Popular Front (known by its Russian initials MNF) were started by what have been called the "New Leftists" in the USSR, who were forced out of society during the Brezhnev era, as well as successful staff members of scientific research institutes who did not suffer persecution during the "era of stagnation" as the Brezhnev era is now termed.

According to the leading thinkers of the "New Leftists," this movement does not recapitulate any of the other leftist movements of the past known as "new." The movement and its ideology have in fact not yet crystallized completely, but its passing through a stormy process of ideological and organizational formation. The New Leftists strove to synthesize various leftist tendencies in the USSR and the West in order to work out a "broad, non-sectarian" leftist tendency, in order to find solutions to contemporary Soviet problems which have no analogies in the West or even in the Russian past. The New Leftists do not base their theoretical inquiries on Marx, but on his contemporary followers: Gramsci, Marcuse, Sartre, and the Yugoslav, Hungarian and Czechoslovak "revisionists."

The New Leftists do not view the present Soviet system as a socialist system, believing that the socialist system still has yet to be born on the earth. The revolution that must precede this birth cannot occur in the West, since in the modern world, the Western nations are the countries that are the most stable in the political and economic sense. The Third World can also not be the arena for socialist revolution, since in these countries, the negative rather than the positive aspects of the contemporary

world system have accumulated. The revolutionary potential, according to the New Leftists, is the greatest in the USSR, which is now suffering its own crisis independent of the West. The beginning of the contemporary revolutionary process were the events in Czechoslovakia in 1968 and in Poland in the beginning of the 1980s. But the revolutions suffered defeat in those countries. In the USSR, so the theory goes, there is more hope for the revolution's success: there is no Big Brother to squelch revolutionary impulses, since the Soviet Union itself is the Big Brother.

The New Leftists see their task in prodding the Gorbachev perestroika towards the realization of a complete model of democratic socialism. They criticize the bureaucratic plan for reform -- the introduction of elements of the market economy in order to compensate for miscalculations in bureaucratic management, without structural reforms in the state sector. The New leftists also oppose the "technocratic theory of reform" (Aganbegyan, Zaslavskaya, Shmelyov, Lisichkin and others), whose plan, in the interpretation of the New Leftists, is to subordinate state enterprises to the criteria of capitalist efficiency and intensify material inequality in the hope that the gap will stimulate labor efforts not only of the successful workers, but those squeezed underneath. In this view, those who have not been successful will begin to struggle harder in order to clamber upwards. The New Leftists are against raising prices and increasing material inequality. They believe that this will not stimulate intensified competition, as the "technocrats" hope, but

social apathy, and even open protest. A real stimulus for raising labor effort can only be the expansion of work-place democracy, the right of workers to control their own organization of labor. The New Leftists place emphasis not on the differentiation of incomes but on the democratization of planning and management, on participation of workers in decision-making at both factories and planning agencies, through the delegation of their own workers' representatives. The New Leftists favor redistributive measures to obtain social justice and to preserve food subsidies with democratic oversight of their distribution. They view the experience of the Scandinavian social-democracies as the most appropriate for contemporary Soviet conditions and Soviet social culture. [126]

In the glasnost era, there is a fairly wide sector of the Moscow intelligentsia which sympathizes with the New Leftists, {although in the last two years, they have not really been called by that name, and a number of competing programs have developed through the various political clubs.}

In August 1987, the leading socialist clubs at that time held the first joint conference of informal political groups. This conference was the same kind of review of forces of the leftist groups as the Moscow International Human Rights Seminar of December 1987 was of the Soviet liberal civil rights activists.

The organizing committee for the socialist seminar included representatives of KSI, Perestroika, and the youth group Obshchina [Community]. More than 300 representatives of 52 informal associations convened at the seminar -- socialist clubs as well as

those kindred to them in spirit, such as environmental, cultural, pacifist, etc. groups. The conference took place in the Novator House of Culture, a fitting venue, since novator means "innovators" in Russian. The Brezhnev District Party authorities provided the meeting hall. Naturally, representatives from the district Party Committee not only were present at all the meetings, they also exercised control over the organizing committee, among other things, by selecting the informal associations that were represented in the organizing committee.

{The organizing committee was not without its squabbles and faction fights, and several times it seemed as if the conference was off for both reasons of internal and external pressures. A small but timely notice in a supplement to Komsomolskaya pravda called Sobesedik [Interlocutor] helped to keep official conservative forces who were against the conference at bay by ratifying the event in print in an official press organ.}

The following is a list of some of the clubs that were present at the conference: (from Moscow) Perestroika; KSI; Community; Direct Speech, a creative union attached to the Satire Theater; the Council on the Environment; Democracy and Humanism Seminar; Friendship and Dialogue; the sistyema, or hippie network; the Working Group on Problems of Extremism; the youth internationalist clubs such as the Farabundo Marti Brigade, the Che Guevara Brigade, the Forest People, the Communards, the Young Internationalist; the All-Union Pen Club of Socialist and Political Initiatives; the Group to Establish Trust Between East and West; (from Leningrad) the Adelaide Historical Political Club;

and Epicenter, a coalition of 12 Leningrad groups mainly involved with the environment and culture, which are Club '81, the Experimental Art Research Guild [TEII], the Experimental Song-Writers Guild [ETAP], Salvation, New World, the Bureau of Ecological Projects [BER], the Delta Ecology Society, Roksi, the hippie group, Aly parus [Red Sails], the political ham radio club; and the Leningrad section of Perestroika Club.

Some of the workshops at the conference were as follows: ecology; production initiatives; artistic initiatives; leisure activities; problems of the work of political clubs; information flow and coordination of the work of voluntary associations; legal aid and social justice for the activities of voluntary collectives; problems of extremism in the youth informal movement.

The most important achievement of the conference was the organization of the majority of the participants into the Koltso obshchestvennikh initsiativ or Coalition of Civic Initiatives based on the common principles of refusal to accept violence, fascism, Stalinism and any other form of pressure on popular initiative. The groups that joined the Coalition agreed to exchange information about their activities and to form an ad-hoc committee for joint projects (such as the Memorial project to build a monument in memory of the victims of Stalinism.)

In addition, nine of the clubs, including KSI, Perestroika, and Community joined into a Federation of Socialist Civic Clubs, Federatskiya sotsialisticheskikh obshchestvennykh klubov, known by the Russian acronymn FSOK, on the basis of a declaration of common principles. The members of FSOK stated that their chief aim was to

support perestroika. As confirmed advocates of socialism, they see socialism as a return to the ideals of the October Revolution, the building of a classless society and the withering away of the state. The path towards this society would be achieved by developing social self-management and through this, displacing administrative bureaucratic structure. FSOK stated that it recognized the Constitutional (i.e. leading) role of the CPSU, but was prepared to support only its "healthy and progressive elements" and would struggle against the monopoly on information and decision-making, and also against reactionary informal groups. The immediate aims of FSOK were to create effective mechanisms for workers to participate in the management of Soviet society and production; to grant voluntary associations legal status and the right to propose legislative initiatives; a democratic system of elections, and the abolition of censorship. In the economy, FSOK favored an increase in the commodity-monetary ratio, but with a preservation of social justice (full employment, guaranteed minimum standard of living, pension plans, etc.). FSOK also advocated the transfer of factories and plants to a system of rental by collectives of self-managing enterprises. [127]

FSOK sections began work on several concrete projects in accordance with the group's aims. A section on industrial self-management led by Moscow University instructor A. Buzygin drafted a system for elections of councils of work collectives and helped to adapt it to the Moscow factories Moskva and Kauchuk and also three publishing houses. [128] A club called Alliance, which joined FSOK after the August 1987 conference, began publishing an

intermural newspaper to help formulate the views of senior high school students concerning perestroika and democratization, and to steer them away from extremism and fascism. Another FSOK section on the social defense of youth focused on problems of social justice under the conditions of economic reform. [129]

In January and again in March 1988, FSOK held its own conferences. This again required making contacts with official agencies -- this time, the Komsomol. In exchange for obtaining a meeting hall, the promise was extracted that the organizers would not invite foreign reporters or representatives of groups from other Soviet cities to the conference, and that Komsomol representatives would take part in the conference. As a result, so many Komsomol representatives packed the January conference that it almost turned into a Komsomol meeting. Nonetheless, at the March conference there was a discussion of the impending Law on Informal Associations. FSOK protested against the bureaucratic, secret, and anti-democratic nature of the drafting of the law. A committee was founded at the conference to draft alternatives to raising food prices, which were being planned for the coming years. The group discussed the draft Law on Youth; opportunities to publish FSOK documents; the problems of registering informal associations; and methods to educate school children in an anti-fascist manner. At the end of the conference, elections to the FSOK Soviet, or council, were held. Representatives from the Komsomol Central Committee and Moscow City Committee were included in the Soviet. [130]

Despite the Komsomol presence, an article appeared during the

January conference in Komsomolskaya pravda, crudely attacking the leading activists of the socialist clubs, Boris Kagarlitsky, Gleb Pavlovsky, and Oleg Rummyantsev. [131] {(The article also attacked Democracy and Humanism activist Valeriya Novodvorskaya, and compared her with the leftists, although she is in a completely different political tendency which condemns socialism and advocates democracy and capitalism. Kagarlitsky later sued the newspaper for slander and won a favorable decision, so that Komsomolskaya pravda was compelled to print a retraction.))} Apparently, the next step contemplated after inserting Komsomol leaders into the FSOK Council was to displace the previous leaders from the Federation. After the FSOK conference, at a press conference at APN, the official Soviet feature service, the Komsomol members of FSOK were represented almost exclusively, along with officials from the Komsomol Central Committee and the Moscow City Committee, which was reflected in the coverage of the FSOK conference in the Soviet press. Nevertheless, FSOK continued to function as it had originally intended after the conference, as did the various informal groups that made up its federation.

Towards the end of 1988, FSOK gradually waned, and eventually became defunct. Perestroika Club had a faction fight sometime in early 1988. Some of the more radical members who rejected Party interference split off from the group, calling themselves Perestroika '88. Eventually, they seem to have merged with another independent party called the Democratic Union (DU), and then went on to become the social democratic faction of the DU. The more moderate faction of Perestroika, willing to cooperate

with Party authorities but committed to independent initiatives, took the name Democratic Perestroika (DP), and has remained active under that name with about 60 members. Both KSI and DP continued to hold meetings regularly throughout 1988 and 1989, and made public statements jointly with other political associations against the anti-democratic draft law on informal associations; against the anti-democratic decrees about procedures for holding demonstrations and about the Internal Affairs Ministry troops; and against the Supreme Soviet Presidium Decree of April 8 concerning anti-state crimes, which provided for severe restrictions on free speech. Democratic Perestroika proposed its own theses for discussion at the XIX Party Conference in June 1988, and theses for the electoral campaign for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (which began in December 1988). On November 20, 1988, Democratic Perestroika held a rally attended by 500 people on the rehabilitation of political prisoners of the "stagnation" era. [132] [Add to note 132 USSR News Brief, 1988, no. 22-28.]

Beginning in August 1987, the Memorial Initiative Group emerged within the Perestroika Club (before it had split into factions). Club activists began a signature campaign to gain support for a proposal to build a memorial center in memory of the victims of Stalinism. [133] When Gorbachev gave the nod to the idea of building a memorial in a speech at the June 1988 Party Conference, the establishment liberals had the green light to join -- and eventually lead -- what had begun as a more radical, grass-roots campaign. Activists collecting signatures outside movie theaters and on the streets conducted opinion polls as to which

leading public figures people would like to see leading the committee to build a memorial, and names like Andrei Sakharov, Yegor Yakovlev, the editor of Moscow News, and Alexander Solzhenitsyn repeatedly appeared. A telegram was sent to Mr. Solzhenitsyn in Cavendish, Vermont, but he declined to join, saying in effect that he did not think it was appropriate to become involved in a civic initiative to rehabilitate Stalins' victims when his own works had not yet been "rehabilitated." Sakharov, Yury Afanasyev, rector of the Institute for Historical Archives, and other prominent liberal figures joined the board of Memorial. A number of publications and officially-recognized professional unions of people in the arts also joined: the Union of Theater Workers, the Union of Cinematographers, Literaturnaya gazeta; the Union of Architects, the Union of Designers, and Moscow News. The Union of Writers joined somewhat belatedly.

In a sense, the movement changed hands. But the tensions between grass-roots radicals and more moderate liberals did not go away: in meeting after meeting, dissidents proposed that the effort to rehabilitate victims be extended backwards to the time of Lenin, and forwards to the time of Gorbachev. Sakharov suggested a compromise wording in describing the mandate of the movement: Memorial would commemorate the victims of Stalinism, which would mean both remembering the victims of Stalin and the struggling against the Stalinist forms of government and repression, which of course, remain to this day. Crimean Tatar leaders who attended the meetings urged that entire peoples, not just individuals, be rehabilitated -- a number of Muslim and other

nations had been brutally deported by Stalin because he feared that they would be disloyal during World War II.

By the end of 1988, Memorial had grown into a mass movement of some 15,000 to 20,000 active supporters and had spread to many other cities in the republic of Russia. After some struggle with the authorities, including an effort by one Party official to coopt the idea of a memorial by unilaterally announcing that a design for a monument -- without the memorial complex -- had already been adopted, the All-Union Memorial Society, as it was now called, was finally able to hold its official founding meeting on January 28-29, 1989. Representatives from 103 cities attended the conference. Ex-political prisoners from both the Stalin era and the post-Stalin era were there, as was the Soviet intellectual elite, young and old, and people representing all the nationalities of the USSR. In terms of representing the great variety of people in the USSR, Memorial is probably unique among the informal associations in the Soviet Union.

In the words of historian Arseny Roginsky, a secretary of the historical committee of Memorial and an ex-political prisoner himself jailed during the early 1980s for gaining unauthorized access to closed historical archives, there are two mass movements fighting for the soul of Russia: Pamyat and Memorial. Pamyat is the Russian word for "memory"; the original Russian word for Memorial is the same Latin-based word, Memorial, with the stress on the last syllable. One could say that the two movements for historical memory roughly represent something of the eternal struggle of the Slavophiles and the Westernizers in Russian life,

in that Pamyat is singularly Russian nationalist to the point of anti-Semitism and xenophobia, while Memorial has a liberal, international perspective and counts many Jews and other minorities among its leading activists. But to make these distinctions could be misleading, since these movements are not (yet) about the future of the Soviet Union -- they are a struggle for possession of the nation's memory. Who controls the past, controls the future, as Orwell wrote in 1984.

Other than Memorial, the informal political group that has captured the most attention is Moskovskaya tribuna, or Moscow Tribune. Moscow Tribune was opened on October 12, 1988, to bring together the capital's prominent liberal intellectual elite to discuss the problems of perestroika and glasnost. The initiative group was joined by Nobel-Prize winner and celebrated rights campaigner, Andrei Sakharov, who was reinstated as a physicist at the Lebedev Institute after his six years in exile; Yury Afanasyev, rector of the Institute of Historical Archives, who had become associated with the campaign to remove the "white spots" or blank areas of Soviet history and had been the first to speak the truth about such tragedies as the Soviet murder of Polish army officers in the forest of Katyn; social scientist Tatyana Zaslavskaya, noted for her critiques of the Soviet economy; Roald Sagdeyev, former head of the Soviet space program and a Soviet director of the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity; and Arkady Vaksberg, a legal commentator for Literaturnaya gazeta who had led the exposure in the Soviet press of Stalin's Chief Procurator Vishinsky in the Soviet press.

The leading figure in the group appears to be Leonid Batkin, a sociologist. About 100 people took part in the founding meeting, and at least 60 more joined in the ensuing months. {Reportedly, in order to be accepted as a member in the group, Party affiliation is not important. But two personal recommendations are needed from an existing member in good standing.} Although meetings were apparently only open to members, Moscow Tribune also had a system of invitation, whereby such former political prisoners and activists as Lev Timofeyev were invited as guests to participate in discussions.}

The purpose of Moscow Tribune is to unite the leading intelligentsia around the cause of spiritual and moral renewal of the country to promote radical economic reform and the democratization of the political system. The club members wished to build a constructive or loyal opposition to the current leadership by proving professional expertise and proposing solutions to the problems of the day. Two resolutions were adopted at the founding meeting: on the necessity of immediately releasing and exonerating all prisoners of conscience and on reviewing the anti-democratic July Decrees of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on procedures for demonstrations and rallies and on the special Internal Affairs Ministry troops used for crowd control. Subsequently, Moscow Tribune drafted appeals in defense of the arrested members of the Armenian Karabakh Committee and on the new draft amendments to the Constitution. But the Soviet government did not react at all to the appeals, nor were they covered in the official Soviet press. {News of the clubs's

meetings and resolutions was carried in Lev Timofeyev's journal Referendum.) Finally, Moscow News did make some mention of the club's work. In the pre-election period, Moscow Tribune was active in drafting the program for what could be called the liberal caucus in the new Congress of People's Deputies. On April 23, 1989, The New York Times reported that sociologist Galina Starovoitova, a Moscow Tribune member and an expert on nationalities problems who had travelled to Armenia, announced that a ginger group calling itself the "March Coalition" was forming to gather support for liberal causes within the Congress, including revamping of the electoral laws and abolition of new legislation restricting free speech. Starovoitova was elected as a deputy to the Congress.

Other less known but important clubs are involved in shaping the political discussion in Moscow and the provinces. The All-Union Social Political Club (known by its Russian acronym VSPK) was founded in 1986 and involved residents of 15 cities. They corresponded among themselves on the most urgent political issues of the day and discuss the cardinal problems of Marxist theory. From time to time, they met to discuss these subjects at club rallies, such as those held in May and September 1987, and again in January 1988. Eventually, the more radical section of the group broke off to work on its own; some members went into the Democratic Union, and VSPK as such became less active. [134]

Numerous political clubs have sprung up in the provinces (of Russia and the other republics. (The Moscow bulletin Express-Chronicle carries packed reports of rallies, samizdat and

repression in the other Russian cities that indicate enormous numbers of people are involved in political reform.} In Russia, the majority of these clubs are under the aegis of the Komsomol and do not attempt to display organizational or theoretical autonomy. An example of a group that ran counter to this trend was the Vremya [Time] Club of Novokuznetsk [135]. No doubt influenced by Gorbachev's anti-alcoholism again, it began by criticizing local authorities for lassitude in the struggle against drunkenness. Gradually, it began to hold discussions on "subversive" theoretical issues, at least, that is how they were described in a local press report attacking the group for straying beyond the legitimate cause of the anti-alcoholism campaign.

In each major city, dozens of informal associations have become active. In many cities and regions, the first step they take to increase the level of their activity is to create joint information centers, so that they can stay in touch with each other, exchange information, and serve as a kind of alternative to the official press, which rarely reports on them, or if it does cover them, does so in a distorted and tendentious manner. This function of creating internal cohesion is probably the most important role samizdat plays today.

An example of such an information center is the Gorky Information Center, which coordinates the activities of the independent political party Democratic Union, the local chapter of Memorial, the Council on Ecology and Culture, the Nizhegorodsky Society to Promote Perestroika and others. Local clubs often create Soviets of Clubs, and even parties made up of smaller

groups, or factions of organizations. Thus, in Saratov, there is the Soviet of Informal Clubs, which represents the area's independent groups. In Sverdlovsk, in the Ural Mountains, and in the Siberian cities of Krasnoyarsk, Nizhny Tagil and others, informal associations joined together to form a Communist Workers' Party as well as a broader association called the Siberian Information Agency.

On April 3, 1988, the group in Sverdlovsk calling itself Meeting '87, founded to promote free public rallies, held a rally in memory of the victims of Stalinism. About 300 people came to the meeting carrying signs with statements like "Political Pluralism is a Guarantee Against Stalinism," "Make the Stalinist Lackeys Answer," "Never Again!," and holding drawings of the Soviet flag's hammer and sickle wrapped in barbed wire. One of the speakers called for the dismantling of the KGB and for an investigation of the "criminal activity of the punitive agencies"; another spoke of the advantages of a multi-party system and a market economy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was read aloud, and examples were cited afterwards of ways in which these rights were violated in Sverdlovsk. A leader of Meeting '87, Sergei Kuznetsov, editor of an independent journal called Glasnost Courier, was arrested on December 11, 1988, after holding a rally on U.N. Human Rights Day, December 10, on charges of slandering local officials. He is still awaiting trial. [136]  
[Add to 136 USSR News Brief, 1988, 24-3.]

But certainly the most widespread form of association of various political groups are the Popular Fronts or the Movements

for Perestroika which become city-wide organizations. In addition to the well-known Popular Fronts of Estonia and Latvia and the Movement for Perestroika in Lithuania, known as Sajudis, which have become the best known of such movements in the USSR, there are similarly-structured fronts or movements operating in Leningrad, Yaroslavl, Tomsk, Arkhangelsk, Irkutsk, Ufa, Kazan, and Apatity. They can be found in the Ukrainian cities of Odessa, Kiev, Kharkhov, Lvov; in Minsk, the capital of Byelorussia; in Kishinyov, the capital of Moldavia; in Kazakhstan, and in Baku, the capital of Azerbaidzhan. There have also been attempts, although so far unsuccessful, to mount such movements in the Russian cities of Vladivostok and Gorky.

The Moskovsky narodniy front, the Moscow Popular Front, was founded in the summer of 1988. It apparently sought to unite all the Popular Fronts of the USSR under its aegis, but failed, given the long-standing provincial distrust of movements run out of Moscow. The Moscow Front did not become the large coalition that it originally planned, but it did gain the support of a number of the informal political clubs of Moscow and went on to play an important role in the elections. It backed the Yeltsin campaign and supported the liberal deputy Sergei Stankevich, who is a member of the Front.

One of the leaders of the Moscow Front is 33-year old sociologist Boris Kagarlitsky, author of The Thinking Reed. He is widely known among Western Marxist scholars, leftist movement activists, and liberal Soviet emigres, who had been in touch with him long before the access of Gorbachev to power. In 1982,

Kagarlitsky and a group of other young scholars known as the "young socialists," involved in samizdat leftist reform journals, were detained by the KGB, held for many months in investigation prisons, and interrogated about their "anti-Soviet activity." Leftists in Western Europe including some of the Euro-Communist party leaders came to their defense and urged Soviet leaders to release them. Most of the group were released after agreeing to cooperate with authorities and refrain from independent activity, but two who refused to submit to pressure served lengthy labor camps until the Supreme Soviet decreed their release in 1987.

Beside getting its member Sergei Stankevich elected as a deputy to the Congress, the Moscow Popular Front backed Yeltsin during the electoral campaign, and helped to organize rallies and meetings of voters, distribute pre-election flyers, etc. In several Moscow districts, the MNF support groups quadrupled their membership during the election. [fn to AS no. 6386, no. 20/89]

On May 20, 1989, the Moscow Popular Front held a founding conference and adopted a program and elected a Coordinating Council of 13 people (Sergei Stankevich, Mikhail Malyutin, Boris Kagarlitsky, Vitaly Urazhtsev and others. [Luda: can you give one or two lines on that program?])

On May 7-8, 1988, Demokraticheskiy soyuz (DS), the Democratic Union (DU), was launched in Moscow at a dacha leased by Glasnost magazine in the suburbs of Moscow.) The DU is a federation of groups and individuals with widely differing political beliefs but who are united in their struggle to replace the one-party system in the USSR with a multi-party structure.

The organizers of the founding congress of the DU were the legal commission of the group Perestroika '88 and another group called the Democracy and Humanism Seminar. Perestroika '88 had split off from the organization known simply as Perestroika, founded in 1987 within some of the prestigious academic institutions in Moscow and now called Democratic Perestroika. Democracy and Humanism was started in 1986 as a working group of the pacifist organization called Moscow Group to Establish Trust East and West (see above). Democracy and Humanism had political aims, including a call for changes in the Soviet Constitution to bring about authentic democracy. Members of the DU organizing committee included Valeriya Novodvorskaya, Viktor Kuzin, Yevgeniya Debryanskaya, Yury Mityunov, and others. Most of the founders are people who had either served terms of political imprisonment in the 1970s and early 1980s, or who had come into conflict with the authorities and suffered some sort of harassment, such as job dismissal. Despite discouragement from authorities, the DS proceeded to hold its founding congress. About 150 people from 27 cities were present at the opening of the founding meeting. Official Soviets came to the conference as well -- correspondents from the newspaper Moskovskaya pravda and the weekly Party agitator's newspaper Argumenty and fakty. Because the organizers were not able to rent a hall, the congress took place in three different private apartments, and was thus divided into three sections: political and legal reforms; social, economic and cultural problems, and organizing principles for the DU. All three apartments were surrounded by the police, and many of the

conference-goers who tried to leave the apartments were detained.

Despite interference from the authorities, the congress did not conclude until a resolution was passed on the creation of the Democratic Union, and an organizing committee of 14 people was elected. The DS's declaration of principles calls for free elections, a multi-party system, a separation of functions between the Party and the state, for a mixed, market economy and independent trade unions.

Many informal groups and leading independent figures like Dr. Andrei Sakharov have called for virtually the same type of program as the Democratic Union, and some scholars with access to the official press even advocate some of these ideas in print (although [fn] Kurashvili, for example, was careful to qualify his proposal for a multi-party parliament by specifying that it would take place "within a socialist framework"). But what is different about the Democratic Union is that first of all, most of its members have been outsiders, and secondly, it has moved from mere discussion or advocacy of these ideas to action in the form of actually founding a separate party that seeks to break the monopoly of the Communist Party. This radical move to start a multi-party system without asking for permission, coupled with the sharp outspokenness of the DS leaders on all the current issues, and finally, their willingness to back up their ideas with street demonstrations, are the reasons why the authorities have cracked down on the DS more than any other political group in the republic of Russia.

Despite intensive persecution (detentions, heavy fines, bans

on demonstrations, crude attacks in the official press, dismissals from jobs, searches, interrogations, confiscation of printed matter and on), by the beginning of 1989, the DS had started branches in 27 cities of the USSR and had increased their membership of many of these branches. However, it frequently happens that after they are formed, these local chapters of the DU announce that they are withdrawing from the DS, and then turn into independent associations with their own programs and names, which are often close to the original DS program.

In Leningrad, a political organization was founded called Soyuz demokratischeskikh sil [SDS], the Union of Democratic Forces, on the initiative of the Leningrad Perestroika Club, a group similar in complexion to Democratic Perestroika in Moscow, but with as much influence as Moscow Tribune, in that its members include a number of prominent scientists, engineers, and people in the arts. The initiative was also supported by the independent groups that were joined in the coalition called Epicenter, which together make up about 1,000 people. The SDS planned to run candidates in the elections.

A number of informal political groups were active throughout 1988 in Leningrad, including Pamyat, Perestroika Club, North West Regional Democratic Union; Social-Democratic Union, Chelovek [Human] Christian-Democratic Union; Popular Front Initiative Group; Adelaide, a historical and political club and Alternative; the Organizing Committee for a Public Protest Campaign on the Decree on Rallies; the Anti-Zhdanov Committee (which sought to change the name of all towns, streets, etc. bearing the name of Zhdanov, who

was Stalin's cultural commissar); the Leningrad branch of Memorial; the Psychic Culture Club; and the Club for the Democratization of the Trade Unions. The Psychic Culture Club had begun as a group for urban intellectuals interested in reducing stress through gymnastics and various psychological training methods. As they progressed in their work, they found that it was not so much their personal problems as the society and social system in which they lived that causes stress by stifling individual initiative through bureaucracy. The members then began to discuss ways in which the system could be reformed.

The Klub za demokratizatsiyu profsoyuzov, Club for the Democratization of the Trade Unions [KDP] has both Party members and non-Party activists, including disgruntled workers who had been fired without cause. They work to restore employees unjustly dismissed and to break the stranglehold on workers maintained by the official trade unions and the workers' councils created from above. Some of the club members publish a samizdat journal called Rubikon.

On November 6-7, 1988, representatives of social-democratic associations from Leningrad, Lvov, Kharkov, Kuybyshev, Orenburg, Volgograd, and Gorky met in Leningrad and drafted a declaration on the formation of a social-democratic party. A second conference was held in Leningrad on February 4-5, 1989, attended by 39 delegates from 14 cities; there the Social-Democratic Party was formally announced. Like many such endeavors, it cannot be determined as yet how viable the association is.

The association that has probably received the most notoriety

is the Historical Patriotic Memory Society, known by its Russian name Pamyat, which means "memory," or "remembrance." One of Pamyat's original leaders, Dmitry Vasilyev, claims that the society has about 20,000 followers in Moscow alone, and has many more in Leningrad and 30 other cities. [121]

Most likely, he is exaggerating. It is known from reliable sources that besides Moscow and Leningrad, there are affiliated Pamyat organizations in just nine other towns: Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, Kalinin, Kursk, Taganrog, Riga, Yermak, and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk. [122]

Pamyat, according to its charter, is involved in arranging public events for writers, artists and historians as well as film and slide shows educating people about the history of Russia, its culture, and natural landscape. It also organizes week-end volunteer days, known as subotniki, to help restorators work on buildings. It would seem that Pamyat should be placed in the category of associations involved in preserving national identity [samobytnost]. But from the very beginning, Pamyat contained many chauvinists and anti-Semites. The expansion of the possibilities of glasnost with the coming to power of the Gorbachev Administration spotlighted this feature of Pamyat in particular: its anti-Semite leaders turn any meeting on any subject into a hysterical campaign against the "Zionists" and the "Masons" who have purportedly staged a "secret plot" against the Russian people and Russian culture. A certain type of people flocks to these meetings and furiously applauds such speeches. The anti-Semitic speeches of Pamyat leaders such as V. Yemelyanov, V. Pashkin and

F. Uglov are widely known.

Cries about the "dominance of the Zionist-Masons" are based on clear-cut program to transform the USSR into a national-bolshevist state, something like the Nazi's program of national socialism. It was proposed more than a decade ago by Yemelyanov in a memorandum dated January 10, 1977, to the Central Committee of the Communist Party. This program evolved from the notion that "world Zionism" is purportedly intending to establish its final reign over the world by the year 2,000, and this supposedly threatens "all Goyim, regardless of race, religion or party affiliation." In order to avert this catastrophe, Yemelyanov proposed forming a "World-wide Anti-Zionist and Anti-Masonic Front."

Further, he claims that since purportedly 80 percent of the world's capital belongs to the Zionists, triumph over the "Yid-Masons," which is what Pamyat perjoratively calls people whom it believes to be the enemies of the Russian people, whether or not they are Jewish (they include Ukrainian editor Vitaly Korotich and many major Western political figures). Such a triumph would be the "final victory over the whole system of capitalism on a world scale." Thus, Yemelyanov links victory over the "Yid-Masons" with the original goals of the bolsheviks -- a world-wide revolution of the proletariat.

In the USSR, according to Yemelyanov's program, conditions must be established for a widespread study of Zionism and Masonic thought and the ideas of "scientific anti-Zionism and anti-Masonry" should be disseminated and membership in Zionist and

Masonic organizations should be severely punished. Further, he clarifies what is meant by such organizations, although he does not always have their correct names: the "Sakharov Committee," by which he means the long-defunct Committee for Human Rights in the USSR, founded in 1970 by Academician Andrei Sakharov and human rights advocates Valery Chalidze and Andrei Tverdokhlebov; the "Committee to Observe Compliance With Human Rights Declarations," apparently the Moscow Helsinki Group, founded in 1976 and forced to disband in 1982 (its original name in Russian was the Group to Promote Observance of the Helsinki Accords); the Solzhenitsyn Fund to Aid Political Prisoners in the USSR, a charitable group funded by the royalties from Solzhenitsyn's The Gulag Archipelago which helped prisoners' families during the 1970s and early 1980s before it was destroyed by the arrests of its managers); the Soviet section of Amnesty International (another short-lived committee whose members were all arrested); various "International Seminars on Questions of Jewish Culture" (a number of international scientific and cultural seminars have been organized by Jewish refuseniks) and "other self-promoting organizations," as Yemelyanov calls the proliferating informal associations. [123] In other words, in the minds of Pamyat's ideologues, international organizations, or groups with an international perspective, particularly civil rights and charitable groups, are lumped together in the so-called "Zionist-Masonic Conspiracy," a notion that differs little from the official Soviet propaganda broadsides aimed at the human rights movement and other dissident groups in the 1970s and 1980s.

The celebrated Russian writers Viktor Astafyev, Valentin Rasputin and Vladimir Belov have allowed anti-Semitic statements to surface in their public statements. They are not members of Pamyat, but they speak favorably of the organization. All of these cultural figures take an active part in the salvation of historical and cultural monuments and in saving the Russian land, but they are all tainted by anti-Semitism [124].

During the electoral campaign at the end of 1988 and the beginning of 1989, Pamyat supporters appeared at public nomination meetings and heckled those candidates that it claimed were part of the "Yid-Masonic Conspiracy." Pamyat activists thus opposed Andrei Sakharov and Vitaly Korotich, the editor of Ogonyok, a popular liberal monthly journal.

Because of its pogrom-like anti-Semitic and xenophobic reputation, Pamyat is constantly warring with other informal associations involved in the effort to restore monuments that do not share these negative traits with Pamyat.

In its present form, Pamyat is a serious bid of Russian nationalists for a political role in society. A samizdat author signing himself with the initials V.P., writing in an essay entitled "Moscow in the Year 1986 A.D.," sees in Pamyat' the "embryo or an organizational structure of national-bolshevism as a mass movement." [125] It is possible that Pamyat is an embryonic future Russian fascist party in the USSR. But after the March-May 1989 elections of deputies to the Congress of People's Deputies, it began evident that Pamyat does not have a broad social basis. {Although Pamyat members were evident as hecklers and disrupters

of nomination meetings,} not a single candidate supported by Pamyat was elected as a deputy. First the Soviet press, and then the Western press following suit, give Pamyat far more attention than the informal associations with democratic tendencies, even though the democratic movements unquestionably make up the majority of the informal political groups in the USSR and the national groups as well. Moreover, the majority of the democratic political organizations are groups with a socialist and democratic outlook.

## RELATIONS BETWEEN INFORMAL ASSOCIATIONS AND AUTHORITIES

In its definitive editorial of December 27, 1987, on the informal groups, Pravda seems to approve of the explosion of this "creativity of the masses," emphasizing how "unusual and unexpected was this form of display of initiative `from below.'" But as for the question of how it viewed the activities of these groups, however, Pravda replied that "it is impossible to give an unambiguous answer to this question." But from the text of the article, it follows that the criteria for how each group is treated by the authorities is whether or not a given association is working to help state bodies or whether it is striving to "undermine" them. The Soviet Lenin Children's Fund is cited as a positive example of a voluntary society. The Children's Fund is made up of "representatives of public organizations and labor collectives, Party and Soviet workers, teachers and cultural figures," is dedicated to social and moral support for children who have been orphaned. The head of the Children's Fund was appointed "from above" and receives a salary for serving this function. Negative examples are less specific. The "bad" informal associations are "groups which under the banner of voluntary organizations openly conduct provocative work, advocating the creation of oppositional parties, `free' trade unions, and propogate surrogates of culture [apparently a reference to non-conformist cultural expression like rock music]....[Such groups] without the consent of the authorities, organize demonstrations and at times even disorders. They publish and illegally disseminate documents which are hostile to

socialism." Pravda urges readers "not to fear popular initiative, no matter what sphere in which it appears." Yet, the fact that Pravda deliberately lowered the estimate of the number of informal groups -- and then doubled its estimate a year later -- reveals Pravda's uneasiness about about the "excessiveness" of this energy in the masses. The ambivalent attitudes towards informal associations is explained by the fact that the Party leadership, on the one hand, hopes with the help of the informal groups to shake up society and break it out of its apathy, but on the other hand, is afraid to lose control of society, and is afraid of the ideological competition that would come from the informal groups.

In this new situation, the ideological and law-enforcement agencies are playing it by ear, trying to develop a new strategy of a differentiation approach to the informal groups, clearly trying to avoid the previous methods of numerous arrests and psychiatric commitment, which cost the Soviet Union enormously not only in loss of prestige with the world community, but distrust from its own intelligentsia.

After Gorbachev consolidated his position in January 1987, the first time when the authorities resorted to their habitual method of stopping spontaneity -- arrest -- was in the case of Paruir Ayrikyan, an Armenian activist and long-time political prisoner who had originally founded the National Unification Party, before the current wave of unrest in Armenia. He was arrested in March 1988 and detained until July when he was unceremoniously taken to the airport in handcuffs, sent with an armed guard on the plane to Ethiopia, and finally left to find his

way to the U.S. interests' section to ask for political asylum.

Rather than the long-term sentences of the 1960s through early 1980s, now short-term detentions are widely used. Activists are generally released within three hours, or at worst sentenced by administrative ruling to jail terms of 10 to 15 days, or fined 50 or 100 rubles (or as much as 2,000 rubles for some repeat offenders). Throughout 1988 and 1989, there were frequent detentions or finings of activists involved in informal associations, as well as beatings in police stations and beatings on the street by plainclothesmen who demanded that the activists stop their undesirable activity. In December 1988, activists in the Armenian associations were detained after a state of emergency was declared in the republic and the members of Georgian informal clubs were rounded up after the massacre on April 9, 1989. In Leningrad, Sverdlovsk, and Saratov, there have been a series of house searches and in Leningrad a criminal investigation, Case No. 64, has been opened up on charges of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" under Art. 70. Dozens of young people have been summoned for interrogation in connection with the case, mainly those involved in Democratic Union. Many have refused to answer their summonses, and some have been forcibly brought for questioning.

In most cases, club activists who have been involved in independent activities have been relatively unscathed. By the old pre-glasnost canons, taking such public positions would have meant inevitable arrest. Now, with few exceptions, such activity does not lead to arrest, that is, to formal charges, trial, and

imprisonment. Even underground, clandestine activity -- extremely dangerous before 1985 -- does not necessarily lead to arrest. Thus, for example, when two underground youth organizations were discovered in the Ukraine in the cities of Chortkiv and Zbarazh in Ternopol oblast, the members were not arrested. In Chortkiv students of a local pedagogical institute had raised the Ukrainian national flag, and in Zbarazh, they had distributed leaflets. [138] These are the last recent examples of underground organizations to come to light.

Since the informals generally consist of young people they are naturally the major competitors to the Komsomol [Young Communist League]. Even before Gorbachev, it was known that factions and interest groups were forming among Komsomol members, and that grass-roots initiatives were straining at the boundaries of the officially-sponsored events. At camp sing-alongs, for example, young people would sing songs they had composed to the lyrics of Joseph Brodsky's poetry, at that time still banned in the USSR. After Gorbachev, young people who managed to find their way out from under the repressive tutelage of the Komsomol have flocked into the informal associations. Until very recently, the Komsomol leadership either ignored their existence or persecuted them, often in collusion with the KGB. Now, the official youth press is filled with the assurances of Komsomol leaders of various ranks that the informals are not at all enemies of the Komsomol; on the contrary, the majority of them are really very nice kids, it's just that we have to find a common language and try to understand them. In Leningrad, for example, the Komsomol solved

the problem of the informal groups by creating a Center for Creative Initiative, with local branches that meet in various Houses of Culture. It encouraged a number of cultural, ecological, and social initiatives to take place within this framework. Thus the control is somewhat decentralized, but the groups are still kept within bounds. The Komsomol, after all, has something to offer that informal groups desperately need: meeting space, technical facilities, and press. But by its own admission, the Komsomol has lost something like two million members [ck 6 million according to Katrina vanden Heuvel], and the attrition rate has continued to climb through the glasnost period. The Communist Party's youth arm has simply lost control over the next generation and is understandably alarmed at the thought that the continuity of Communist ideas is thus endangered.

A working paper drafted by the propaganda department of the Central Committee of the Komsomol designed to provide practical guidelines for work with the informals proceeds from the old-style perspective that the "creative quests of youth" must be kept "mainly in the framework of existing Komsomol organizations and committees" and "there is no need to create alternative organizations." This document, with an official "secret" designation, was obtained by the editors of the samizdat magazine Otkrytaya zona [Open Zone], published by the club Democratic Perestroika, was noted in The New York Times by Moscow correspondent Bill Keller in an article published August 11, 1987.

A Soviet sociologist, Leonty Byzov, a member of a Party study commission on informal groups, explained to Keller that "the

Komsomol does not foster a freedom of discussion" and that "many Komsomol leaders fear that they will lose out to the informal associations." Keller confirms that the document he obtained "reflects the horror that has seized one of the major Soviet organizations confronted with an independent youth movement."

The document proposed that local Komsomol chapters be alerted that "uncontrolled activity of youth associations, especially those of a socio-political nature, is impermissible." It recommends taking control over them without resorting to "direct administrative action," a euphemism for punishment of varying degrees. Instead, it is recommended that "highly-educated active Komsomol members" be sent to the meetings of independent clubs as well as "specialists on political subjects" who would be able to "sever the majority of the members of socio-political clubs from the extremist-minded leaders." [139] [Where does this quote begin?]

Just such a strategy was used with regard to FSOK (see the section on FSOK above). Moreover, without the ability to really "win over" the FSOK leaders, in order to "sever them" from the others, the authorities had to use direct pressure, including slander in the press, rather than theoretical debates.

FSOK is not the only example of the Komsomol leadership's strong-arm tactics against its informal competitors. Thus, Aleksei Kovalyov, a leader of the Leningrad cultural and ecological group Salvation (a group that was able to register itself officially but operates independently), was not accepted into graduate school, after the local Komsomol characterizes his

political views as "unstable." Kovalyov had been run as a candidate in a local election for the Leningrad City Soviet. [140]

The Komsomol also utilizes the tactic of displacing or replacing informal associations with their own groups that ostensibly have the same interests, but which are led by "their" people. Thus, in many cities, it is the city committees of the Komsomol that are creating the political discussion clubs (for example in Tallinn, Petropavlovsk-na-Kamchatka, Baku, etc.) But this method has its dangers for those who seek to control initiatives: often, these clubs formed "from above" select their own independent leader and escape from the control of the Komsomol. This happened, for example, with several so-called internationalist youth clubs in Moscow and Leningrad with names like the Che Guevara Brigade, etc. They were organized within Komsomol city committees in order to communicate with young people from third-world countries who were going through the establishment of Marxist regimes. The organizers of these Komsomol clubs had hoped through them to inspire revolutionary romanticism among the Komsomol ranks. To their consternation, the young people who joined the internationalist clubs gradually moved away from studying the revolutionary process in their "adopted" countries and began reviving the ideas of the October revolution in their own country, criticizing those who had forgotten it and attacking the bureaucratized Soviet regime, which provided a striking contrast to the original revolutionary slogans. In August 1987, these were the clubs that joined FSOK. [141]

In order to bring young people back under its wing, the

Komsomol would either support or organize itself organizations which had nothing to do with "politics," but which were useful in an economic sense, such as science and technology experimentation clubs, computer clubs, youth residence cooperatives, and also various "harmless" associations like clubs involved with youth fashion or contemporary dancing. The Komsomol even tried to bring the rockers under its control by organizing motorcycle clubs. Clearly, the criteria for "harmlessness" had to be greatly expanded in recent years when it came to including youth culture like the rock groups, for example. The Komsomol began to provide the groups with space for rehearsals and helped them to acquire musical instruments. They organized concerts and festivals for them, and even advertised them in the press. [142] If you cannot beat them, join them.

The Komsomol was prepared to help even some of the more off-beat organizations like The Gullivers, for example, a club for tall men and women who feel more comfortable when socializing with people like themselves, or a seminar founded for enthusiasts of the hunt for the giant "Snow Man" of Siberian lore. [143]

Sometimes, the Komsomol leaders bend over backwards in their efforts to coopt, taking steps to support informals that are surpris, given their official positions. Komsomolskaya pravda which would normally express horror at such an incident, described enthusiastically a case where a Komsomol city committee took the side of an informal club against the will of a local Party committee in Nizhny Tagil in Siberia.

After informal experimental ecological groups were founded in

plants in Nizhny Tagil, which were joined by Komsomol rank-and-file and even leaders, the Komsomol City Committee dared to lead a protest against city air pollution by industrial factories, and a city-wide rally was staged under the leadership of the Komsomol City Committee. Participants in the rally sent their demands, with 8,500 signatures, to the Minister of Black Metallurgy, calling on him to close down the dangerous plants. The minister met the protesters half-way by promising to close down the plants that were considered to be the most harmful to the environment. [144]

Of course the Komsomol encourages all the associations whose aims easily dovetail with the aims of official ideology by supplying material and technical assistance and by providing meeting space and complementary articles in the press. Such organizations are the "military-patriotic education" societies. Under the rubric of "military-patriotic education" fall the so-called "search brigades," which consist mainly of senior high-school and college students. They explore the World War II battle sites of 1941-1944, looking for the unburied remains of dead soldiers. They then try to determine the deceaseds' identities and give them a proper burial, and then search for relatives, in order to inform them of where the graves are located. They also care for abandoned potters' fields from the war era, and sometimes reinter bodies if the graves are threatened with destruction. [145]

The Afgantsi -- the Afghanistan war veterans -- occupy pride of place among the military-patriotic associations. Not only are

they supported by the Komsomol, the military and law-enforcement agencies back them enthusiastically and even use them to disperse demonstrations of the informals they dislike. Thus for example, the Afgantsi were used to break up a demonstration of the Ukrainian Culturological Club and they are constantly sicked on the hippies and pacifists in the Moscow Trust Group and related groups, causing the peace groups to implore the police to reign them in.

Such confrontations between widely differing social groups create special problems for civil-rights monitoring groups in the USSR and abroad. When independent groups are clearly victimized by the KGB and the police, the human rights violations are readily identifiable as the fault of a repressive state. When the police, KGB, and army covertly aid or abet gangs of toughs against groups they dislike, or if such groups spontaneously decide to harass others, it is harder to document. Sometimes it is not even necessary to have groups like the Afgantsi "whipped up" by official agencies. Their harsh training and experience alone is enough to set them against other groups in society. In a country where the press is controlled by the Party, unfavorable or slanderous articles can unleash such spontaneous and uncontrollable popular rage at unprotected minority groups that the KGB does not even need to incite -- even though by the standards of international law, it ought to intervene to protect all citizens from harm. In the glasnost period, there have been some cases when the police has stepped in to protect demonstrators from hostile public responses, or to keep diametrically opposed

demonstrating groups from coming to blows. But the notion of police protection for civil liberties is so undeveloped in the USSR (given the deplorable history of abuse of civil rights by police agencies) that the practice of protecting demonstrators is not well established. It is sometimes the case that local police will protect demonstrators against the KGB and special Internal Affairs Ministry (MVD) troops. When MVD troops attacked peaceful demonstrators in Tbilisi in April 1989, local Georgian police escorted tear-gassed demonstrators away from the square and sought to protect them from the bludgeoning of the enraged troops. This was well-documented on video tapes of the demonstration made by independent film-makers.

Party and Komsomol organizations and military authorities also use the Afgantsi to educate and train pre-draft age youth in the schools. Military training is mandatory in the Soviet education system. Frequently, Afghanistan war veterans occupy the position of directors of military-patriotic clubs, sports schools for pre-draftees, and so on. [146] By encouraging the Afghan veterans to stay involved in military training and maintain their physical fitness, authorities maintain ties with the veterans' informal associations, which are joined to official organizations (and they are happy to be coopted in this way) such as the Komsomol and DOSAAF, the Russian acronym for the Voluntary Society to Promote the Army, Air Force, and Navy. Perhaps, by backing the Afghan veterans, someone at the top hopes that they will be useful not only in the training of the pre-draft-age youth today, but will come in handy in the future, as shock troops to

put down "insurrectionists" during government crises. The fact that some people at the top are hatching plots involving shock troops is evident from the fascist groups that have sprung up on the public scene. Compared to other informal groups, such neo-Nazi groups have been accorded fairly tolerant treatment, which seems paradoxical, given that they would seem to be ideologically unacceptable for the authorities, who are still keeping the memory of the victory of the Nazis in the Great Patriotic War very much alive.

A samizdat document entitled "Fascism in the USSR," published in the Russian emigre [why can't we call this an emigre journal] journal Strana i mir [Country and World] in Munich, West Germany [No. 1, 1984] focuses attention on the amazingly soft treatment the police and KGB gave the fascists. [Luda: this is all in the past tense since it seems the info only comes from this 1984 articles]. There were only a few isolated cases where such people were sentenced to labor camp terms, and even these terms were for criminal offenses unrelated to their fascist demonstrations, and their sentences were quite light. In most cases, "educational chats" were held with the fascists and they were shown films which expose and condemn the fascism of the past. The anonymous author of "Fascism in the USSR" surmised that somewhere at the top (in the KGB? in the Komsomol leadership?) there were those who were ready to use these adherents to a "hard order" in the same way as Mao Zedong made use of the Hunweibins [check spelling in English] during the Cultural Revolution.

The notion of preparing fighting brigades of "patriotic

youth" was expressed, albeit cautiously, in the Soviet press, with regard to the informal groups known as Lyuberi, after the Moscow suburb of Lyubertsy known for its body-building clubs. Vladimir Yakovlev, author of an article in the liberal magazine Ogonyok, noted that the police [Luda: what does potakat' mean -- please find synonym. Backing? Inciting? Shielding? ?] the Lyuberi and explained this phenomenon by saying that some force was backing them, organizing and directing them, which was a delicate hint that it was probably the KGB or the police. Major General V. Goncharov, deputy chief of the Main Administration for Criminal Investigation of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs was quoted in the press [147] as denying that the Lyuberi were organized in some way or were ideologically managed behind the scenes to fight the metallisti and the punks. He even cast doubt on the existence of the Lyuberi as a phenomenon beyond body-building, claiming that it was all a myth.

Pamyat' enjoys the same kind of backing "from above." After particularly stormy meetings in the fall and winter of 1985, about which many official Soviet newspapers wrote with outrage, Pamyat' was stripped of its registration and the local Party committee demanded that the society's offices be removed from the Gorbunov House of Culture, where Pamyat' had been located.

But Pamyat' continues to hold meetings in official halls, moving to a different location on each occasion. This could only be explained by the fact that Pamyat' has support from someone powerful, although there are no clear indications of any Pamyat' connections with any highly-placed officials. But these type of

allegations about official patronage arise, because the ability of Pamyat' to keep bobbing back to the surface cannot be explained otherwise.

[Luda: I know that this is ancient history now, but why not leave in? It's quite helpful in understanding Pamyat'. Even if it is out of date, it's relevant.] It is known, however, that several years ago, Pamyat was closely linked with the leadership of the officially-recognized Soviet conservation society known by the acronymn VOOPIK (see above). The former chair of the Moscow branch of VOOPIK, V.A. Vinogradov, and several members of the soviet of the Moscow branch of VOOPIK were members of the Pamyat soviet. But they all lost their positions in VOOPIK, {and it seems that VOOPIK has reformed and Pamyat' has moved elsewhere for cover.}

In May 1987, Pamyat' twice organized demonstrations in the center of Moscow, demanding the restoration of the official status of the Pamyat Society and protesting against city reconstruction plans that would be fatal for the architecture of old Moscow. During the second demonstration, the marchers were received by then secretary of the Moscow Party Committee, Boris Yeltsin. [148]

Yeltsin later said in an interview reported in The New York Times in June 1989 that he met Pamyat' merely because his position as at the time demanded that he receive public demonstrations. The Moscow intelligentsia believes that it is not Yelstin who is supporting Pamyat', but in fact Yeltsin's conservative opponent in the Politburo, Ligachev -- as well as the KGB. Both liberal establishment figures and radical activists have made the point

that the KGB may artificially support Pamyat' in order to discredit any spontaneous civic organizing, and have a ready excuse to crack down on any informal activity.

The attitude at the top towards organizations involved in preserving cultural and historical monuments and the natural environment is quite friendly. But at the local level, bureaucrats are irritated by the informals' interference on their turf. As a rule, Party and government agencies at the local level ignore the demands of the informals, and often vigorously discipline them, even personally taking activists to the police station, getting them fired from their jobs, and even arranging beatings by "unknown persons." But the appeals of persecuted activists to central Moscow newspapers sometimes help to keep the local officials in check. It sometimes happen that local Party and Komsomol agencies support the demand of the informal groups. Thus in the city of Ufa in the Bashkir Autonomous Republic, authorities did not obstruct demonstrations against harmful factories. The chairman of the Party City Committee spoke at a rally and on local television, and invited members of an initiative group for discussions at the city Party headquarters. After the demonstration, the Party city executive committee appealed to the USSR Soviet of Ministers with a request to remove the dangerous manufacturing of polycarbonites to beyond city limits. However, soon afterwards, the newspaper of the local Party committee attacked the activists who organized the rally, claiming that they were "engaged in politics." The central newspaper Izvestiya came to the defense of the Ufa informal groups. [149]

In the Siberian city of Irkutsk, local authorities began to persecute activists who had set up a stand to collect signatures against the construction of a pipeline. The activists were threatened with job dismissal and several workers who were Party members were subjected to Party reprimands. Directors of enterprises and Party and Komsomol secretaries were warned that they would be personally responsible if a letter protesting the pipeline were to be distributed in their institutions. Meanwhile, officials ordered that trees be felled to cut a path for the line, pipes were hauled in, and workers' brigades arrived.

The initiative group leading the protest responded by calling for a rally on the central square of the city. The activists were forced to guard very carefully each flyer about the meeting, since authorities tore them down. At schools and factories, meetings were held to warn people that if they took part in the rally they would suffer reprisals. When the rally took place in spite of these threats, the participants were photographed and the photographs were then sent around to their workplaces so that they could be "re-educated." The people who had set up the signature stand originally were detained after the rally and sent to the police station. The local press took the side of the bosses. The central Moscow papers, however, took the side of the Irkutsk citizen activists. A government commission was formed which cancelled the decision to build the pipeline. [150] After this victory, relations between Irkutsk informal groups and the local authorities remained tense.

Generally, since the beginning of 1987, mass protests about

the environment have often ended in victory for the demonstrators, especially when the cause involved stopping the construction of new factories, but not when it meant closing or transferring operating plants to other localities.

In 1987, an organization called Zelyoniy mir [Green World]; [fn the Russian word mir can be translated either as "peace" or "world," but in this case, it means "world"] was started within the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace in order to coopt the informal ecology movement. The Soviet organization Green World officially represents the environmental movement in the USSR at international conferences. Several local associations joined Green World, for example the Khortitsa Committee in Zaporozhe, which after it accomplished its goal of stopping a pedestrian bridge over the Khortitse Island, reoriented itself towards ecological problems and gladly merged with Green World, which gave the Khortitsa Committee official status and thus protected it from revenge from local officials. This suggests that not every group that seems to be "coopted" has necessarily lost its independence, especially when it is a case of a provincial group joining a Moscow organization. One of the most active associations attached to the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace is Ecology and the Twentieth Century, which unites both ecological and cultural concerns.

The approaches taken with political informal associations, as with ecological groups, is apparently determined by local Party authorities. In Moscow, Pamyat', Democratic Perestroika, the Moscow Popular Front and other clubs have their patrons as well as

their enemies in the Party agencies and the press. Thus the status of these groups to some extent fluctuates depending on the correlation of forces above at any given moment, and subject to the career successes or failures of the backers. Sometimes, the attitude of the authorities towards an informal group changes from negative to positive if the official line catches up with the independent group which has outstripped it. Thus the Initiative Group to Build a Memorial to the Victims of Stalinism at first met with confrontation from the authorities. When activists tried to collect signatures to a petition about a plan to build the memorial the police stopped them and arrested the petitioners. "Chats" were held with them at the Moscow City Party Committee where they were urged to postpone the project until perestroika could yield some tangible successes in the economy. But after Gorbachev himself "matured" enough to accept the idea of the Initiative Group about the necessity of rehabilitating the victims of Stalinism, and after the press grabbed the idea, the Memorial Initiative Group ceased to be persecuted. [151]

The struggle was not over, however, as the activists continued to fight for the soul of their project. Once it was approved by none other than Gorbachev at the Party Conference of June 1988, the idea was in danger of being watered down and domesticated. Independent organizers, including Dr. Andrei Sakharov, fought for idea of a whole memorial complex, not just a statue, and proposed that the Stalinist method of government also be condemned, thus finding a way to link the rehabilitation cause to present problems. Party leaders tried to undercut the

grassroots movement by suddenly announcing approval of a proposal for a monument that was not the one promoted by the original organizers. But the real Memorial wrested the idea back again, managing to surmount a number of bureaucratic obstacles in order to hold their first founding conference in January 1989.

But in the provinces and the non-Russian republics, the fate of political informal associations depends most of all on the attitude of the first secretary of the Party City or Regional Committee.

The method typically used by local authorities with the informal political groups is to attempt to tame the members by offering them some sort of bribes, and if that does not work, to harass them. In Krasnoyarsk, for example, after a local Committee for the Promotion of Perestroika had made some strong speeches exposing the special secret store stocked with scarce goods for the local bosses, the shop was closed. One of the Committee members who had been fired from his job for voicing criticism about the store was restored to his position; another who had been in line for housing and had been passed over was given a good apartment. But when the Committee still did not settle down after these gestures, O. Shenin, First Secretary of the Krasnoyarsk City Committee attacked the members in an article in Pravda. From his article, it was clear what worried him and the publishers of the newspaper, which is the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party: the informals which are actively fighting for social justice and criticizing local officials acquire an immense popularity and become a kind of appeals mechanism. People turn to

them with complaints about the local authorities' unfair decisions, about their lack of attention to the needs of townspeople, and so on. Shenin writes with great umbrage that the good deeds of the Krasnoyarsk Territory Party Committee are now interpreted as having been made under pressure from the Committee to Promote Perestroika. No, he objects, "it was the Party that conceived of perestroika, and not these 'committees' that are watching from the sidelines. It was the Party people who took it upon themselves to put into action, and not merely promote perestroika, which is what the 'Promotion Committee' has inscribed on their banner...." [152]

Sometimes the informals are not prepared to embark on cooperation with the authorities, in order to preserve their independence. According to statistics from Soviet sociologists, about 40 percent of the informals are willing to cooperate with officials; approximately 33 percent want to have official recognition, and roughly 25 percent reject both cooperation and recognition in order to preserve independence. [153]

The most widespread method the authorities use against the informals that do not want to cooperate with them, or that are unacceptable for such cooperation because of their ideological positions, is the creation of a "tamed" public organization. This artificially-created organization then duplicates the function of the real informal association which officials could not bring under control.

This method is particularly practiced with regard to the independent groups that become well-known abroad, and is designed

to steer foreigners away from the more authentic and independent groups towards the acceptable, sanctioned organizations.

The Press Club Glasnost (see above) apparently provoked the alarm of authorities when it was formally voted as an affiliate to the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights in Vienna in October 1987, and began to expand contacts with other independent citizens' groups in the West and Eastern Europe. Thus, as a counterweight to the Press Club Glasnost, whose members included some of the best-known veteran civil rights campaigners in the USSR, on November 30, 1987, the Public Commission for International Cooperation on Humanitarian Problems and Human Rights announced its formation.

As can be seen from its stationery, the Commission is formally attached to the Soviet Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (the Soviet acronym for Soviet CSCE is SKEBS). The Public Commission claims that the Soviet CSCE, and by extension, the Commission itself, are "non-governmental," independent organizations, financed by the Soviet Peace Fund, which in turn receives voluntary donations from numerous individual Soviet citizens. While formally they may be NGOs, or non-governmental organizations, it may be more accurate to describe them as GONGOs, or government-organized NGOs.

Many groups in the West have invested an enormous amount of energy in determining whether such approved groups are in fact non-governmental by trying to learn if they are financed by government ministries, or worse, infiltrated or staffed outright by KGB agents. Needless to say, this effort is fruitless for

Western citizens' groups -- they can never really learn the truth about such matters. Even a Soviet organization that is able to show voluntary donations may have some secret government subsidies or perks that are easy to conceal from foreigners. Pointless efforts to ferret out who the KGB informers or agents also distract from the more useful effort of seeing what such groups actually do or say. In the final analysis, when determining independence, it is not so important to trace the funding or Party/KGB affiliation of a given Soviet organization as it is to examine its program and the degree of independence and criticism it takes in both speech and action from the official prevailing line of the government. By their fruits ye shall know them.

The Soviet CSCE was always a rather moribund organization. It is located in the building of the Soviet Peace Fund on Kropotkinskaya Street, but it is not clear whether it is formally attached to either the Soviet Foreign Ministry or the Soviet of Ministers or some other body -- apparently not. It is one of the "organs of mass movement" without a mass movement -- an office without any accountability to the actual public. Unlike its formal counterpart, the U.S. CSCE, a hybrid executive and congressional commission, the Soviet CSCE never seemed to play a very large role in the actual CSCE talks, which were staffed by Soviet Foreign Ministry aides. The fact that the head of the Soviet CSCE, Nikolai Tolkunov, who held the nominal post of speaker of the Supreme Soviet, was one of the 100 aging apparatchiks purged from the Central Committee during a special Party meeting in April 1989, may give some idea of the

significance of the CSCE. Nevertheless, it is a "structure" that is still in place; the acting director, E. Silin, is present at all major human rights conferences, for example, and personally handles day-to-day affairs regarding human rights.

Although the degree of dependency on the government is difficult to prove concerning the Public Commission, there are a number of indications that it was first a creature of the Central Committee's Department of Ideology. Andrei Grachev, at that time chief of a division of that Department (he has since been transferred to foreign relations), was present at the founding meeting of the Public Commission, and is listed as a member of the organization. His affiliation with the Central Committee's Ideology Department was not shown in that list, where he is identified as merely "a historian." But this is not necessarily evidence of a wish to conceal his role, since Grachev wrote a number of signed articles in the Soviet press, where his title was shown. These were definitive pieces about the changes in the official position of the Soviet Union on human rights matters and contacts with Westerners on the subject. Grachev also played a guiding role in the first meeting of the Public Commission abroad with a number of prestigious Western clergy and public figures in De Burtg, the Netherlands, in January 1988; he was also present at a meeting with Mrs. Roslynne Carter and other prominent figures in Moscow in January 1989.

The importance of the Public Commission is in its role as a liberal but loyal supporter of Gorbachev's campaigns, and in fact a supporter that is authorized to be about five minutes ahead of

the official pace of Gorbachev's programs. The Public Commission is headed by Prof. Fyodor M. Burlatsky, a frequent political commentator for Literaturnaya gazeta and also a professor of the Institute for Social Science, which is attached to the Central Committee, that is, to the Party's network of research institutes, which are distinct from the Academy of Sciences' institutes. Burlatsky was one of Khrushchev's speechwriters, was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, and also in Soviet meetings with China 30 years ago. After Khrushchev's fall, Burlatsky fell from favor and spent the next twenty years hiding out in various research institutes; by his own admission, he was fired from several positions and transferred to lesser posts during the lean years until glasnost arrived. After Gorbachev had consolidated his power, Burlatsky surfaced as one of the hundred or so people closely advising Gorbachev; he is part of the foreign policy group around Shakhnazarov, an aide to Shevarnadze. (Shakhnazarov is chair of the Soviet Political Science Association; Burlatsky is vice-chair.) Burlatsky accompanied the Gorbachev team to the Soviet-American summits at Reykjavik and Washington, DC and has become identified as a spokesman for the reforms and about human rights and legal issues in the press. For a time, he was a leading shaper of the public discussion in the press about human rights and general reform. But after the surge of public activism around the March elections, other establishment liberals of equal or greater importance emerged, people like historian Yury Afanasyev or scientist Roald Sagdeyev, as well as the well-known human rights campaigner Andrei Sakharov, who were elected to the

Congress of Peoples' Deputies and who took more outspoken positions on a number of crucial human rights issues, such as the continuing detention of the Karabakh Committee members; the massacre of peaceful Georgian demonstrators; and the passing of a new decree restricting free speech. Nonetheless, Burlatsky demonstrated his access to power by gaining a seat in the new Supreme Soviet, elected from the Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Few other liberals were able to pass through the eye of that particular needle.

The other members of the 55-person Public Commission include prominent Soviet writers, scientists, lawyers, and church leaders.

Only a dozen or so of the 55 are active in the Commission and have met with foreigners, and some of them were not even aware that they were put on the list. Most of the 55 have what are known as "good reputations" in the Soviet Union, i.e. they may have cooperated with the system, but did not actually engage in human rights abuse. They include people like the writers Daniel Granin and Vladimir Dudintsev and legal scholars Ernst Ametistov and Veniamin Yakovlev. There are two notable exceptions to this otherwise decent roster: Georgy Morozov, former head of the Serbsky Institute, who was responsible for the detention of sane dissidents in mental hospitals; and Samvel Zivs, former head of the Anti-Zionist Committee, a notorious apologist for repression of Jewish refuseniks.

The Public Commission has many privileges in comparison to Press Club Glasnost or any other independent human rights group: it has an office and meeting space; it can invite any public

organization from the West to the USSR, and the guests invited will receive entry visas into the Soviet Union; finally, the Commission members are permitted to travel at will in the West and are constantly seen abroad. In fact, the vigorous activities of the commissioners abroad have moved some Western observers to note that for the Soviet Union, the subject of human rights seems to have gone from being purely "an internal affair" to becoming a foreign affair. Using these advantages, the Commission tries to lure away to its own programs the Western non-governmental groups who might have cooperated with independent groups like the Press Club Glasnost. [154] { also include in fn On Speaking Terms and The New York Review of Books for a description of IHF meeting with Burlatsky and Timofeyev. }

There is no question that the Public Commission is positioning itself to play the leading role among the Soviet NGOs at the conference on human rights scheduled for the fall of 1991 in Moscow. It remains to be seen how much access to public discussion it will tolerate from the numerous other independent groups that have blossomed throughout the Soviet republics, many of whom have monitored human rights far more vigorously than the Commission and have become the victims of human rights abuse themselves.

Six years ago, the Soviet Committee for the Defense of Peace used similar tactics to rein in the fledgling and beleaguered independent peace movement, which first surfaced in 1982. At first, the Moscow Trust Group was compelled to take a defensive position. It constituted a competitor to the SCDP by the mere

fact of its independent existence. In reality, the Trust Group did not compete directly, but was satisfied to have Western peace activists who came to Moscow on invitation from the SCDP to come and meet with the Trust Group activists as well. But the Western peace groups which befriended the Trust Group increasingly began to raise the question of their harassment by the KGB with SCDP officials. They began to speak to the SCDP about the need for the official leadership to cooperate with the unofficial group and in general, with more grass-roots citizens' initiatives. In May 1987, during a conference sponsored by the SCDP called the IV Meeting Dialogue in Moscow with representatives of the Western peace movement, peace activists from the U.S., Britain, Australia and West Germany insisted that the official organizers give the floor to a Trust Group representative. (Starting in the glasnost era, as the Soviets moved away from the World Peace Council-style "fellow travellers" conferences, they began to use the term "meeting-dialogue" to describe conferences or seminars they held with both domestic and foreign movements or organizations which they did not consider their ideological affiliates, but with whom they wanted to begin dialogue.) Under pressure, Genrikh Borovik, the new chair of the SCDP (a former Writers' Union official who had replaced conservative commentator Yury Zhukov) was forced to agree to the request, although he set a condition that only one Group member could speak, and only for about 10 minutes. The Group delegated Irina Krivova, who gave a short presentation to the working groups of the meeting. [155] Despite having gained permission to speak, it still took the intervention of a Westerner

to see that she actually took the floor. She outlined the Group's purposes (the "four-sided dialogue" among citizens and government leaders East and West), and mentioned some of the Group's criticisms of the authorities and its difficulties. For example, the Group members could not travel abroad in order to build "bridges for peace" -- but at that time any ordinary Soviet citizen faced obstacles taking part in such friendship missions if he was not employed by the SCDP. The Trust Group members could not take part in the satellite hook-ups known as "space bridges" between the U.S. and the USSR, although the idea for such live, face-to-face televised shows between Soviets and Americans was actually first proposed by the Trust Group shortly after they were founded in June 1982. When the Group proposed the idea, they had in mind free access to the television audiences by any ordinary Soviet citizen, not a selection "from above" of ideologically-reliable people.

{Footnote: Americans involved in the space bridges did go to a great deal of effort to try to select Soviet participants randomly and a few of the Soviets did voice surprisingly non-conformist opinions. But random selection was not necessarily a guarantee that opinions would be voiced freely or would necessarily be independent, since Soviet education and press indoctrinate citizens to a high degree. In order to include different perspectives, one would have to make a special effort to include the minority of groups that had already taken public positions differing from the official point of view. It is also the case that the Americans involved in some space bridges are

already self-selected activists who, by reason of their different perspectives in the first place, are interested in bettering relations with the Soviet Union through space bridges, and tend not to encourage non-conformist Soviet views that they fear will be disruptive. American public polling and audience participation techniques are also more developed than the Soviet counterparts, although Soviet television executives in the age of glasnost are learning amazingly quickly.}

Finally, Krivova complained about the lack of access for Soviet citizens to Western literature and periodicals, particularly to the publications of the Western peace movement, which they could usually only receive if activists brought them into the country to them personally. (Interestingly, more than three years later in 1988, during the Gorbachev trip to Yugoslavia, Prof. Burlatsky of the Public Human Rights Commission called for the sale of Western periodicals in Soviet news kiosks. In January 1989, some non-Communist Western newspapers like The Herald Tribune and the London Times went on sale for rubles in limited quantities at foreign hotels and a few kiosks. In May 1989, a columnist in Moscow News deplored the continuing restrictions on sale of foreign news periodicals as a violation of the Vienna Concluding Document.

The obvious spread of the independent peace movement and its increased activization forced the SCDP to change its attitude towards the informal groups joining the peace movement. It had to stop ignoring them or denying their existence, but had to try to pry the new groups away from the Trust Group and bring them under

the wing of the SCDP. In October 1987, the editorial board of the SCDP's journal, Twentieth Century and Peace invited a number of groups in for discussion: Friendship and Dialogue, Peace Vigil, Religious People for Peace, and Fellowship of Dialogue. They offered to cooperate with the groups and promised that they would publish their articles in the magazine. [156] To some extent, this promise was fulfilled, in that subsequently, Twentieth Century and Peace began to publish articles on the history of the human rights movement, interviews with figures like veteran civil rights activist Larissa Bogoraz, information about a imprisoned conscientious objector, and even Solzhenitsyn's essay Live Not By the Lie, for which it was subjected to censorship in the spring of 1989. A number of people, such as Gleb Pavlovsky, Vyacheslav Igrunov, Andrei Fadin, Grigory Pelman, and Viktor Zolotaryov, originally involved in 1987 in the socialist informal groups, gravitated to Twentieth Century and Peace as editors and contributors.

As it pursued a kind of outreach to the informal groups, the SCDP simultaneously set about energetically forming groups under its aegis which were completely subordinate to it: Teachers for Peace, Rock Musicians for Peace, Peace for the Children of the World, Green World, Ecology and the Twenty-First Century, and so on.

In 1987, the SCDP also opened a discussion club called Peace and Human Rights, which began to hold regular open meetings and debates where both members of the "coopted" and independent informal groups as well as foreign guests would meet and discuss

current issues. At the end of 1987 and the beginning of 1988, several discussions took place where informals made speeches. [157] While the SCDP began to dally with the informal groups, it retained its hostile attitude towards its chief competitor, the Trust Group. The Trust Group itself was split on how to deal with the SCDP; some members wanted to participate in a dialogue with the SCDP so as not to become isolated from other, new groups; other members wanted to avoid such a dialogue because it was bound to lead to cooptation. Some members came to the SCDP meetings, but stopped attending when they seemed to be leading nowhere. In June 1987, when the Trust Group was invited to attend the European Nuclear Disarmament Convention in Coventry, England, they appealed to the SCDP to support their efforts to get exit visas. The END organizers had urged that the Trust Group be allowed to travel to the convention, along with the SCDP. The SCDP immediately set conditions: the Trust Group had to submit detailed activity reports and a statement of its purposes, and had to agree to join in support of the official SCDP aims by denouncing Star Wars and other Western arms programs, while remaining silent about Soviet armaments. The Trust Group refused these conditions as patently unacceptable. The SCDP responded by bringing a "False Dmitry," i.e., a woman whom they claimed falsely was a mandated representative of the Trust Group, who in fact had been offered restoration of a job she had lost if she played along with the farce. She did, but was exposed by Western peace activists at the conference who had been alerted to the ruse.

In the summer of 1989, once again the European Nuclear

Disarmament movement attempted to invite a delegation of independent Soviets from a range of informal groups like the Trust Group, Democratic Perestroika, and the Moscow Popular Front along with the official SCDP delegation. They urged the SCDP to support the visa applications of the independent delegation, and warned them that they would not be welcome at the convention unless they did not hinder the travel of the independents. The independent delegation did not receive permission to travel as a delegation, although one member of Democratic Perestroika, Oleg Rummyantsev, did receive a visa and attended the conference. Official Soviet journalists did attend the END Convention, but apparently not as representatives of the SCDP. In protest against the failure of both the END and the SCDP to secure their travel permission, the Trust Group announced that it was breaking off relations with END.

The Soviet government is particularly alarmed about the influential nationalist associations. Judging from their repeated panicked and violent reactions, it does not appear that the current Soviet leaders have a well-thought strategy to deal with the nationalities question -- other than a reactionary tactic of suppressing the southern republics and loosening the reigns on the Baltic republics. But the tactics with regard to independent nationalist associations are being thoroughly contemplated and vary in accordance with specific conditions in each republic, the scale of the movements led by independent associations, and the programs of the movement. With the nationalist associations, the whole gamut of official methods is evident, from persecution to concession. The larger the movement, the wider the range of

treatment employed.

In Byelorussia, authorities are trying to coopt the nationalist youth groups and wean them away from the influence of "adult extremists" as they are denounced (but never mentioned by name) in Byelorussian papers. With Tuteyshy and Talaka, at first the authorities used the opposite approach, providing them with meeting space and the means to issue a journal in the Russian and Byelorussian language, etc., but together with the Komsomol tried to take control of their activities. [158] But when Tuteyshy asked for permission to hold a rally on October 30, 1988, in memory of the victims of Stalinism, many marchers were detained when 10,000-15,000 people who gathered without permission were brutally dispersed by clubbing and tear gas. The group called Martyrolog, the society to commemorate Stalin's victims in Byelorussia, was subjected to fierce attacks in the local press, just as was the Byelorussian Popular Front.

As for the Ukrainian Culturological Club, at first the reaction in the press was cautious, but quite friendly. The tone of the newspapers changed sharply after a meeting of the club was held on the topic "Blank Spots in the History of Ukraine," where the history of collectivization in Ukraine and the famine of 1933 were discussed; the official press was still silent on this subject at the time. Moreover, the Club would devote a minute of silence at the beginning of each meeting to the political prisoners who had perished in labor camps. For these actions the Culturological Club was refused registration and a harassment campaign began in the press. Vladimir Shcherbitsky, First

Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party, spoke against the club, and the associations of "soldier internationalists" (the Afghanistan war veterans) also denounced them. The authorities also used the "replacement" tactic with the Culturological Club by creating their own organization as a counterweight, which they named Heritage. Heritage also professes aims that are analagous to the Culturological Club since it is ostensibly involved in preserving cultural identity. But it has official status and a meeting hall and does not take up controversial issues.

The "replacement" method was used in the republic of Georgia as well against the Ilya Chavchavadze Society in Tbilisi, a cultural restoration group named after a famous Georgian democrat and cultural hero. Soon after the Chavchavadze Society was founded, the Rustaveli Society was formed named after another apparently more acceptable cultural hero with the same purposes but with far greater material and organizational resources than the independent group.

Much the same was done with the Central Initiative Group of Crimean Tatars (see above); authorities tried to find more amenable figures within the movement to coopt. But in all of these cases, in time, the officially-supported associations came to support the very assictions which they were supposed to be replacing, because they were simply overtaken by events. Interestingly, in the Baltic republics, the "replacement" tactic has failed completely; officials simply cannot manage to organize either their own organization or an artificial national organization which could compete with the real informal groups in

the struggle for the independence of these republics. In the Baltics, therefore, the government operates chiefly by the "chopping off" method, severing leaders of informal organizations from their groups. By creating a combination of petty and major everyday difficulties for these people and their families, they forced them into agreeing to emigrate. More than 10 people have been coerced into leaving Latvia and Estonia; at that time, they were the most radical and active members of the nationalist movements in these republics; in time, even the mainstream movement leaders came to articulate the same types of demands.}

[159] With the emergence of the mass national-democratic movements in the Baltic republics, these methods ceased to be employed. In Estonia, the Party leadership of the republic which came to power with the held of the Popular Front, sincerely supported the front as a bulwark in carrying out their common ideas. In Lithuania, the current Party leadership does not consist of people who share the ideas of Sajudis, but they are Party apparatchiks who are acceptable to Sajudis, since they are aware of the danger to their own power base if they were to break with Sajudis. The Lithaunian Party leaders try to placate Sajudis and keep a balance between their demands and the demands of the central Soviet leadership. In Latvia, those in power do not wish the Popular Front well, but the apparatchiks fear it, and understand that an open confrontation with the Popular Front could lead to being replaced with Party functionariess more acceptable to the Front -- just what has occurred in Estonia and Latvia. In all three Baltic republics, interference with the mass popular

movements leads to criticism in parts of the republic and central press.

In Armenia and the Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaidzhan, where the authorities have been confronted by a truly nation-wide movement, extraordinary measures were taken. Gorbachev himself received the leaders of the Armenian Organizing Committee and begged them (!) to stop the strikes and demonstrations -- an unprecedented event in Soviet history. They did not, which partially explains his fury at them during his earthquake visit in December 1988 and his authorization of the arrest of the Karabakh movement leaders. But the treatment of the Armenian nationalist movement stands out among all the republics for the widescale brutality used by the central authorities against provincial civilians: the arrest and expulsion of Paruir Ayrikyan; the sending of troops into Yerevan, despite the absolutely peaceful nature of the movement; the disbanding of the Krunk and Karabakh Committees by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the republic and the arresting of its leader, Arkady Manucharov [Luda: leader of just Krunk?]; the removal from their posts of the first secretaries of the Communist Parties of Armenia and Azerbaidzhan and other major Party functionaries; [160] the declaration of states of emergency and virtual occupation of the the two republics; the arrest of all the members of the Karabakh Committee and their transfer to Moscow; detention and arrests of at least 200 other activists; and so on. The massacre of the Georgian demonstrators on April 9, 1989, of course superceded this brutality, and hundreds were detained and some arrested and First

Secretary Patiashvili was forced to resign. But as yet, the rout of the Georgian nationalist movement does not appear to have reached the scale of the repression of the movements in Armenia and Azerbaidzhan.

Beginning in mid-1988, "national-patriotic associations" of a new type began to appear in addition to Pamyat' and analagous groups. Among the founders of these new patriotic groups are writers Valentin Rasputin, Vladimir Belov, Viktor Astafyev and scientists, military men and other public figures known for their nationalist beliefs. The groups include Tovarishchestvo russkikh khudozhnikov (Russian Artists' Guild); Otechestvo (Fatherland, whose full name is the Moscow City Voluntary Fatherland Society of Russian Culture); KLIO, the acronymn of Klub lyubiteley istorii oteschestva (Club of Lovers of the Fatherland's History); Soyuz dukhovnogo vrozozhdeniya otechestva (the Union for Spiritual Renewal of the Fatherland) and so on. Furthermore, a number of patriotic associations were established by official organizations and foundations -- for example the Foundation for Slavic Letters and Slavic Cultures has as its sponsors the Russian Union of Writers and the Academies of Science of the Ukraine and Byelorussia as well as the Russian and Old-Rite Orthodox Churches.

Although these organizations have some differences in their cultural and educational programs, they all proclaim that their purpose is to preserve the integrity of the Soviet multi-national state. They speak out against the independence of the Union republics and foster the strengthening of the military spirit of the people and Army ("military-patriotic education"). They all obtain official registration with unusual ease, are recognized as legal entities and can rent space -- a sign that the authorities' are well-disposed towards them. [footnote: Moskovskiy literator, no. 49/50;, December 16, 1988, p. 3; Literaturnaya Rossiya, March

17, 1989, pp. 4-5.]

All these associations, together with Pamyat' and analagous groups, could be considered a "Russian Right" in formation, with Pamyat' as the extreme right or fascist wing. These groups have a solid base in the imperial ideology shared by a significant number of Russians. In the future, the Russian Right may become a serious threat to the democratic development of the Soviet Union.