

**REFORM DEBATE BETWEEN THE HIGH COMMAND AND
VARIOUS CIVILIAN AUTHORITIES AND ITS CONTRIBUTION
TO THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET UNION, 1985-1991**

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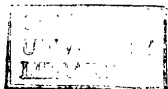
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ABSTRACT

This thesis has chosen as its topic the public debates on the restructuring of Soviet armed forces in terms of 'reasonable sufficiency' for 'defensive defense' and the military reform movement in relation to the domestic reforms taking place. In this way it was possible to grasp the nature of the issues and stakes of Soviet civil-military relations under the Gorbachev leadership.

The relations underwent a process of change from a traditional Soviet type Party-military relations, through a germinal Western style civil-military relations, and finally to a Third World style, in which the military became a sword and shield of the political leadership through a short-time contract designed to secure the Soviet Union. Once the contract was broken by Gorbachev, a reactionary coalition carried out the coup and its failure in the end led to the break-up of the Soviet Union. Consequently, the new round of debates on military reform among the former Union republics was concerned with the ironic question of how to divide the Soviet armed forces.

During the period, there was a dramatic increase in the number of civilian participants in the military reform movement. Indeed, grass roots' support for it became the foundation of the genuine civilian control over the military. Concomitantly, the scope of the debates progressively widened and deepened and the interaction between the advocacy of military reform and the stubborn high command was radicalized with no area of compromise between the two polemics. In fact, the debates were replaced with activities that seemed highly organized, secret, or illegal. These unprecedented developments clearly denied the fundamentals of traditional perspectives on the Soviet civil-military relations.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to suggest a variation on traditional approaches to the Soviet civil-military relations. The prevailing tendency among Western analysts was based on the assumption that Soviet society was a quasi-totalitarian system and, therefore, that the military, one of main components of the system, used to act in accordance with either the interests of the armed forces, or the Communist Party. Basically, they assumed that the quasi-totalitarian regimes of Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko were politically stable. The subject of their study was the relationships between the party leadership and the high command.

In essence, this thesis tries to maintain its focus on the very dynamics of civil-military interactions, in particular, the military reform debates appearing in the mass media and specialized literature under Gorbachev. During such public debates the various institutional, organizational, and individual forces demanded that the military establishment fundamentally restructure and reform the Soviet armed forces in conjunction with the radical changes in the world military-political situation and with the revolutionary restructuring in the Soviet society.

Consequently this study provides, when combined with the traditional approach focusing on the interactions between the party leadership and the high command, an in-depth analysis of the middle level of powers that linked the political leadership to the public and played an unprecedented role in framing and implementing military reform. Their activities had hardly existed in such depth and scope in the past history of the Soviet civil-military relations. Naturally, this means in terms of methodology that there was a radical change in the analytical environment, or the setting of the civil-military relations, caused by an amazing

mixture of intended results and unintended consequences of Gorbachev's perestroika.

Under the rubric of new political thinking, Gorbachev spoke about the mutuality of international security. Indeed, "common human values" replaced "class conflict" in defining Soviet foreign and security policy objectives. More specifically, a doctrinal assumption that world war would be prevented by political means not only placed national security policy in a state of flux but also demanded a radical restructuring of the Soviet armed forces, which had been structured and postured to fight the worst-case contingency of world war.

The remarkable absence of Marxism-Leninism in the words of Gorbachev, however, caused an ideological vacuum. Regardless of what Gorbachev originally meant by "democratization", the result was nationalist movements. Nationalism remained potent because it offered a new social contract in the form of an ethnic bond. As a result, the nationalism was able to fill the vacuum easily.

Political reform to a certain degree shifted the locus of power from the party apparatus to state organs responsible at all levels to elected bodies, including an executive presidency. The Politburo and the Central Committee of the CPSU took second seat to the Supreme Soviet and the President, and a traditional Soviet type of party-military relations would be replaced with Western style civil-military relations. But the collapse of the party was accompanied by nasty ethnopolitics and the issue of self-determination. In a limited sense, the Soviet Union was "hierarchically" ruled until the Gorbachev era by a single entity, the party, which based its political domination of the republics on the principle of democratic centralism, or subordination to the highest unit of administration, i.e., Moscow. As Moscow lost, or gave up, ideology as a moral adhesive to help the union together, nationalist movements forced political elites in the republics to make demands for increased republican sovereignty up to for full political independence from

Moscow. Thus, republican control over the Soviet armed forces became real.

All in all, these changes made the well-established traditional approaches to the Soviet civil-military relations obsolete. So, this study deals largely with the military reform debates free from the inferred frame of reference that assumed a lasting status of the Communist Party and of Soviet military doctrine. In fact, the frame of reference was useful because it was supplemented or paired by the inductive analysis of the empirical evidence provided by the structure, disposition, and deployment of Soviet armed forces and by weapon procurement programmes. There was always the difficulty of knowing why a military strategic statement was made, who the primary audiences were, and whether the information had to be taken at face value, that is, propagandistic or not. This inevitably demanded analysts to have a well-built frame of reference that could order the information, establish the context, and so on.

Favourably to analysts, although glasnost' itself could have compounded the difficulties of deciding on the authoritativeness of pronouncements and opinions, much of the debates was valuable under Gorbachev. Among other things, a matter of who the primary audiences were was relatively clear. It was a certain type that civilians provocatively challenged and military theorists, including the high command, reacted at the various forums. A number of radical journals and newspapers served as a regular forum for the angry exchange of information and ideas between the two. If well checked, such forums even provided for a degree of prediction of future political decisions concerning arms control.

Moreover, they made it easier to understand the 'why' of change in Soviet security and military policies, rather than 'what', on which the so-called objectives analysis was originally based.¹ The motivations behind their arguments were in some way expressed, if emphasis were placed on identifying and dating the beginning of debates on these and other issues and on investigating the

consequences. Therefore, this approach could reveal the nature of the civilian challenge to the military such as who the challengers were, what they challenged, and in which way they challenge the military establishment, and so on.

Naturally, the scope of this study is at once of middle range and broad. This study considers carefully and in detail a series of debates on restructuring of Soviet armed forces and military reform movement. It deals consistently with the new environment caused by the intended and unintended results of perestroika, glasnost', and the new political thinking, and seeks to conceptualize them in the context of the civil-military relations. So, implications of the new thinking and perestroika and glasnost' for the advocacy of military reform were treated broadly.

The new thinking appeared to have involved two alternate dimensions. On the one hand, the new thinking itself was about security ideas and assumptions for profound change in international affairs. On the other hand, the political leadership used the new thinking as the process by which the security ideas and assumptions were to be accomplished.

Those ideas included notions about the utility of force, in particular, that of nuclear weapons, and about foreign and arms control policies as tools to enhance the Soviet security interests. Its peculiarity was placed on the danger of nuclear war. This characteristic in the context of policy focused on the firstly nuclear and later conventional arms reductions. Consequently, the substantial change in military doctrine was required. In part, this logical connection explains the reason why a number of top military leaders very sensitively dismissed the new thinking as unrealistic and why Gorbachev tied himself down to doctrinal debates.

Nonetheless, the emphasis of this study is on the process side, i.e., on the flexible approach questioning many old ways of doing business with the US and other countries, particularly, in an area of arms control negotiations. As a set of security ideas, the new thinking was subject to an endless process of development

through the entire period of Gorbachev's leadership. It could never become a closed, complete doctrine. Although the so-called new Soviet military doctrine was declared in 1987, it was not suitable in the operational context for immediate implementation by the military. In practice, the draft of the new military doctrine appeared at the end of 1990, together with the reform draft plan proposed by the Ministry of Defense. The full development of the new military doctrine must have taken further a couple of years. Consequently, this study assumes that restructuring of the Soviet military forces based on the new thinking and military doctrine hardly happened, or lagged behind arms control that could directly condition military reform.

This point needs attention. There is clear conceptual difference between the fact that the high command grudgingly accepted Gorbachev's arms control agreements and restructured European security system as an accomplished fact during a period of some years and the fact that it still had the opportunity to behave in a different way if it became necessary or desirable. So, the new thinking as a process appeared to have been a time bomb.

Moreover, as a process, the new thinking demanded *glasnost'*, that is, the open competition of ideas about security issues, which would be able to hopefully function as support, input and feedback for the political system, together with the response of the West. If the Soviets were forced to take initiatives in foreign and security affairs because of their weakness, particularly in the economy, *glasnost'* was vital for the political leadership to calm down the military's possible resistance.

Perestroika could be also divided into a programme and a process like the new thinking. But it had more the nature of a process to politics and society than the new thinking. As a set of tactics aimed at resolving domestic problems, perestroika contained some strategies: individual and group self-interest; *glasnost'*; democratization; and law-based control. These strategies more or less meant a

radical change in the nature of the decision-making system but they had the danger of increasing social and political unrest. As a process, perestroika alone had the potential of inducing revolutionary changes in the relationship between military and civilian institutions.

The primary implication of perestroika for the military reform movement was that it developed the middle level of power, besides the creation of USSR and republican parliaments and presidencies. Civilian defense intellectuals, political movements and associations, nationalist groups, dissident junior and middle level officers, and military related associations such as the Soldiers' Mothers and the Shchit Union were so powerful to wrestle with the military establishment in their ways. They simply disregarded the priority of military value to others as well as the vested rights of the high command about how to frame and implement military policies and tried to change the rules of the game of the existing civil-military relations. In the Baltic republics, the Soldiers' Mothers assisted draft dodgers and deserters. In Ukraine, the Union of Independent Ukrainian Youths and other opposition groups demanded the creation of national forces. In Kishinev, the National Guard Group encouraged Moldavians not to serve in the Soviet army. In Georgia, many of the opposition groups urged a boycott of the Soviet occupation army. Radical wings in the Armenian Liberation Movement and the Azerbaijani People's Front organized their own militias. Consequently, the fundamental question of how it was possible for them to turn up in the Soviet system shall be answered before anything else. Once answered, the relations between the political leadership and the high command can thereafter be explained with great effectiveness.

Under the policy of glasnost', against the long-held idea that army problems were too delicate to be open to public eyes, hazing and ethnic conflicts within the armed forces were barely revealed. Sometimes, such bullying was quite vicious,

leading from beatings to deaths. It was reported, but unofficially, that up to 15,000 soldiers died from 1985 to 1989 from accident, illness or in nationalist unrest, equivalent to the losses from ten years' war in Afghanistan. Both relatives of boys to be recruited and republican nationalist groups spoke out on this. In response to the public who were anxious about the figures, the newly strengthened local soviets introduced 'alternative service' as a temporary measure to allow the youth not to serve in the Soviet army, while saying that their citizens had the right to serve exclusively in their republics. Thus draft dodging became a political act supported by republic parliaments, governments, and pro-independence movements. As a result, the principle of the service as well as that of formation, based on military doctrinal considerations, was being fundamentally shaken. An idea of a smaller, volunteer professional army, supplemented by the organization of territorial armed forces under the command of the republics, was raised as the best alternative to conscription army, out with military consideration -- strong reserves at low cost. In reality, the impact of nationalist unrest on military reform was far greater than that of arms control and new military doctrine that had a close relation with the force structure and posture.

When the USSR Supreme Soviet began discussing a new Union Treaty, some republics began to argue how to form their own army units. The conscription nearly collapsed in the Baltic republics, Georgia, and Moldavia. Voices were heard advocating handing over even nuclear weapons to some republics. Decisions were adopted demanding the redeployment of the Soviet armed forces including strategic purpose forces. The creation of nuclear-free zones was declared. If implemented, these changes could mark the beginning of the end of the multinational Soviet Armed Forces.

Consequently, the future of the Soviet armed forces was dependent on the new Union Treaty. Military reform became a matter of compromise between

Moscow and republics. Of course, the debate on military reform heated up, but the main thing was now who would decide the military policy. Until then there had been five broad areas in which military reform needed to be considered.

The most important involved the military needs, or in Soviet terms, the assessment of the nature of the external threat in order to decide on the numerical strength of the Soviet armed forces. Following from this was the question of whether the current structure of the army and navy composed of five armed services was needed or not. The new military doctrine declared by the political leadership in 1987 implicitly suggested that the structure of armed forces be altered: primarily offensive forces be withdrawn and destroyed and other forces reduced to a level consistent with 'reasonable sufficiency' for defensive defense. Later, if arms reduction were necessary, how far as well as whether unilaterally or not became major issues.

The third area concerned the allocation of financial and material resources for defense. A code word 'reasonable sufficiency' not only demanded a substantial cut in military spending but also made the economic potential as important as the military needs for the first time in Soviet history. The value of political and economic means became one of the major issues.

The fourth was a matter of the choice between the current mixed system where commissioned officers, warrant officers and re-enlisted men would be professional soldiers, while privates and sergeants would be drafted and a voluntary professional army where privates and sergeants would also serve on a contract basis. Or, combining both approaches.

The final area was the principle of service 'extra-territoriality,' that is, whether to send recruits to serve in the whole of the USSR outside their home republic. In reality, the issue was accompanied by a question of nationality formation, or national army.

This study finally tries to absorb the whole of these startling developments in the areas of military reform within the conceptual framework of Soviet civil-military relations. This trial will help us to grasp an outline of the relations and at the same time to point out some blind spots of traditional perspectives to be filled. In this respect, it may be useful to look briefly at the relationships between the party leadership and the high command under Gorbachev along the prevailing perspectives.

To begin with, it was generally accepted that, in terms of degree of power the Soviet military could exert on the politics of the Kremlin, the Soviet high command had reached the height of their political power before Gorbachev came to power. Even the possibility of a military takeover in Moscow was examined. While picturing the military as a "senior partner" of the civilian apparatus of the Communist Party, R. Kolkowicz, for example, foresaw that the military "would be able, and probably willing, to assume power in a transition mode." The aftermath would be a "military-dominated coalition" which would try to legitimize itself on the basis of patriotism, militarism, and Marxism and to deal with the pile of national problems that was beyond the capability of the Party.² In this respect, it was natural for us to speculate about Gorbachev's activities at the early stage of the new thinking.

The new General Secretary launched from the beginning major diplomatic offensives. Concomitantly, he undertook to reshape the foreign policy machine and gained control over it, in the end. Then many people in Western countries questioned "Are perestroika and the new political thinking for real?" It did not take long time for them to believe in Gorbachev's efforts. Instead, they asked about the power of his office and his ability to survive in the sense that the military was so powerful that Gorbachev could not do anything against the interests of the generals. Several Western writers suggested that the military leadership were not

fully supporting the changes in security policy that Gorbachev began to introduce.

Despite the difference between the political leadership and the high command, apprehension about his future had disappeared gradually. The reasoning was that with no alternative figures in sight, who could become members of a military-dominated coalition in Kolkowicz's term, Gorbachev would be secure for the foreseeable future despite the conservative's opposition and the bureaucratic resistance to his programmes. This observation was even further strengthened in the fall of 1989 when he secured some amazing achievements in consolidating his personal power unmatched by any of his predecessors.

At a special plenum of the Central Committee and an emergency meeting of the Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev conducted a bloodless purge. In addition to strengthening party leadership, he became chief of state. The purge removed any doubt about control of his Politburo. Some potential opponents were retired. During the time, the Soviet armed forces became one of the primary victims of Gorbachev's attempt to reform Soviet society. Of great significance was Gorbachev's bold, skilful activities in treating the high command. Moreover, the disintegration of central authority to which perestroika had led until then made the officer corps a resented symbol of imperial power in some republics.

However, fears that Gorbachev might be toppled by a military coup all of sudden appeared in the West and in the USSR, when the economic reform was still failing to make any progress and the so-called success in foreign policy meant the Soviets' unilateral concessions. Ironically, it was at a time when the power of the high command, whether over military budget, doctrine, or policy, fell to an all-time low. Virtually the entire high command were filled with Gorbachev's appointees. Yet, many in the West judged that Gorbachev would not fall to a plot led by his generals. Moreover, Gorbachev himself was still showing his ability of effecting a rapprochement with conservative forces and co-opting dissatisfied elements within

the army throughout the winter of 1990 and 1991. However, the coup came in the end, as if it was destined to. What was more stunning event than the coup itself was that Gorbachev was secured by people.

Certainly a sequence of these events from Gorbachev's abrupt intervention in the military affairs to the failed coup was so full of surprise. But given the correct analytical framework, this is not a matter of surprise. Indeed, there must be logical reasoning on the issue. It seems that a lot of Sovietologists failed to recognize something that had a fundamental meaning or importance, which was not necessarily obvious at first. Most likely, the traditional perspectives on the Soviet civil-military relations prevented them from considering it more carefully.

The main point is that those perspectives regarded the USSR as a quasi-totalitarian society in which the very Communist Party could control everything until the failed coup came. This kind of glass effectively blinded them to the real situation, that is, a particular set of circumstances in the Soviet civil-military relations that was built during a remarkably short period of time under Gorbachev. Main concern of this thesis is "how was it possible?"

¹ For an application of this methodology, see Michael McGwire, *Military Objectives in Soviet Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1987).

² Roman Kolkowicz, "Military Intervention in the Soviet Union: Scenario for Post-Hegemonial Synthesis," in *Soldiers, Peasants, and Bureaucrats: Civil-Military Relations in Communist and Modernizing Societies*, eds., Roman Kolkowicz and Andrzej Korbonski (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982) pp. 111 and 132, respectively.

CHAPTER 2. THE LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE SOVIET CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

2.1. Introductory Remarks

The first step towards the generalization of Soviet civil-military relations appears to be the publication of *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* in 1967 by Roman Kolkowicz. By treating civil-military relations as one illustration of Soviet politics, he investigated the relationship between the Communist Party and the military establishment in the country from 1920s to early 1960s. The conflicts between the party and the military were stressed. This book polarized its readers into endorsers and critical challengers. In the preface to the second edition of the book Kolkowicz categorized the challengers: analysts in the USSR, American hardliners, and certain Western neo-Marxist scholars.¹

Perhaps, one of the most authoritative, analytical critics was given by William Odom. Unlike Kolkowicz, Odom was concerned in the methodological context with the nature of the party. He argued that a more accurate assessment of the institutional values of the two entities suggested congruence, not conflict.² For Odom cooperation was the hallmark of the relationship between the two. In response, Kolkowicz very briefly in 1985 observed that the evolving party-military relationship was not only conflictive but also cooperative; The relationship consisted of an ongoing institutional dialogue between the two, like a dialogue between partners in a common enterprise, not one between enemies. Subsequently he concluded that the military had shown itself over the decades to be the most

loyal, reliable, and conservative institution under the party leadership.³

Given the continued growth in the size of the armed forces, the rapid modernization of many weapon systems, and the militancy of Soviet third world behaviour during the 1970s, most Western analysts pictured the country as a state in which the military could have whatever it wanted. Thus they called the period the 'golden age'. Reflecting this situation or reality, a new perspective similar to Kolkowicz's revised view was proposed by Timothy J. Colton, Dale Herspring, Edward Warner, and so on.⁴ Generally it stressed interaction between the two, in which neither side attained absolute domination but the party's sovereign power was accepted.

As the golden age was drawing to a close, around the end of 1970s, some changes arising outside the party-military-defense industry relationship were paid attention to. Gustafson, after critically summing up the above three perspectives, for example, suggested some useful ideas to understand civil-military relations under Gorbachev. In short, he drew a very tentative conclusion that the external changes of the relationship might "create or eliminate roles, add or abstract (political) resources."⁵

2.2. Two-Player Relations: Kolkowicz and Odom.

Before Kolkowicz's analysis, the Soviet military was assumed to be militarily powerful and well-equipped so that the West had regarded it as a formidable threat to security. But in political terms it was regarded to be impotent and without any institutional identity. Kolkowicz questioned this stance by assuming that the Soviet military had professional autonomy. In return, the party, once assumed, constantly attempted to deprive the military of the full exercise of that prerogative.

With regard to why the party used to do everything possible to constrain or control the actions of military specialists, he tried to reveal deeply rooted sources of mistrust and antagonism in terms of both ideology and historical incompatibilities.⁶ In general, the party feared that the elements of elitism based on military professional expertise would be developed among an officer corps, who exclusively possessed vast means of violence. Thus the party tended not to allow an officer corps to become a closed institution, because they could grow into a dangerous rival for power in the state.

More specifically, the party worried that, with the growing complexity of modern warfare, the military had sought to obtain a larger role in high-level planning and the formulation of military doctrine and military policy. So, the party regarded national security policy and the evolution of military doctrine as the exclusive domain of the party leadership. If the party leadership felt necessary, it alone made major military decisions even against the military leadership, who simply regarded the political leadership as amateurs at least as far as the military affairs were concerned.

Of course, Kolkowicz did not deny that the two protagonists had a large number of mutually complementary objectives and common interests. Despite these strong ties, the relationship between the most powerful two institutions in the country was often strained and at times hostile, and it occasionally bordered on the critical. Only at a time when there was an acute external threat, or the party was internally divided, the military was freed from the party's restraints and could complain. But when the crisis had passed, the restraints were tightened again, he observed.

Proceeding from this observation, the existence of the party's control system in the military became cardinal in his study. He considered the essence of the controlling mechanism to be the coexistence of multiple sources of authority in a

loosely defined fashion and the constant scrutiny of committees composed of ranks and civilians from outside the units. The party, Kolkowicz thought, hoped to prevent the coalescence of power and authority at a focal point, despite its possible disruptive effects on efficiency as well as on morale. What was more, in order to raise the military's political reliability, the military commanders were gathered in the committees, so-called military councils, in which they were surely open to scrutiny and criticism. Correspondingly, there were separate sources of authority in most military units and even in subunits: the political organs; the military chain of command; the local party organs; and secret police. Based on this observation, most of Western analysts used to focus on the conflictive relations between the political officers and the commanding officer corps, or between the party leadership and the high command in general.

But it is noteworthy that Kolkowicz speculatively argued that multiple lines of authority and control within a single institution could provide the top leadership with competing sources of information about organizational performance.⁷ On the other hand, Odom considered these mechanisms more positively. In particular, he regarded political officers, party's important mechanism of subjective control in Kolkowicz, as much a part of the military structure as regular line officers. In addition, the political officers' role might in fact increase military effectiveness rather than detract, he argued.

It is useful to review Odom's critique of Kolkowicz's work. As mentioned before, Odom chose the character of the Party as a starting point of the dynamics of civil-military relations. On the other hand, Kolkowicz paid his attention on military traits common in any military in the world, such as elitism, professional autonomy, nationalism, detachment from society, and heroic symbolism. Then, Kolkowicz differentiated the military from the party in terms of the latter's desire for egalitarianism, subordination to ideology, proletarian internationalism,

involvement with society, and anonymity.⁸

Odom argued against this view in the very simply way that the party at its outset adopted a military organizational ethos. The Russian Revolution itself was a military affair, a kind of coup. In fact, he appeared to focus on 'militant materialism' from the Bolshevik ideology. Leninists considered it the midwife of violence. After the revolution and civil war were over, they continuously advocated it in order to mobilize people for the struggle against internal and external class enemies. In practical terms, Odom argued that the qualities and leadership skills of party and officer cadres were similar. Moreover, the military and political elites were unanimous in treating military power as an end of social product rather than a social cost, and they had worked together to achieve the militarization of the Soviet economy and society.

Indeed, his approach appeared to rely on totalitarian theory. Military officers were executors just as the leading party cadres were, and their policymaking influence was bureaucratic and administrative, not competitive with the party. Consequently, Odom concluded that the two powerful institutions were congruent, not conflictive. Differences of opinion, which were Kolkowicz's main concern, occurred from time to time, but against a background of broad pragmatic consensus. Although there was conflict, it was largely intra-institutional, the lower levels of bureaucracy against the higher levels. Moreover, on major security policy issues, the military was not expected to express a single corporate view. Some segments of the military had lined up on one side of an issue, others found themselves on the other side.

Accordingly, Odom argued that it would be wrong to see the Soviet civil-military boundary as marking a significant political cleavage. The alienation between the party and the army, which Kolkowicz found and attributed to the army's endless efforts to increase military professionalism, had little empirical basis

in Odom's view. It was natural for Odom in a logical context that mechanisms of civilian control, subjective or objective, hardly received any consideration.

In sum, their focus of analysis was on the two-players relations, consisting of the party and the high command. Players' motives were drawn from inherent characteristics of Communists and soldiers. The only difference was that Kolkowicz found them conflictive, whereas Odom did not. Correspondingly, the content and area of the relations were defined very narrowly. The main issues which they considered were political control and resources allocation. On the whole it appears that they were based on the implicit underlying concept that Soviet politics was elite relations within a quasi-totalitarian system, which in terms of methodology inevitably limited the categories of players, the basic issues, and the rules of game. In other words, there was the unspoken assumption that the political system itself did and would not change at all.

In this respect, it is interesting that just after the failed August 1991 coup Odom recognized the importance of a Soviet political culture, referring Robert C. Tucker's early claim. If the "ethnically" and "regionally" based political culture in the various republics and autonomous regions were ignored, he said, there could be in for some "nasty surprises" about future developments of the country.⁹ In fact, he saw of late the blind spot of his paradigm in which only Marxist-Leninist ideology could exist.

2.3. A Civil-Military Contract: Colton

Timothy J. Colton presented the concept of a contract between political and military leaders, and thus there was a room for the two to bargain. This is in nature a compromise of the works of Kolkowicz and Odom. After accepting Kolkowicz's

starting point that the party and the military were the very distinctive institutions in the country, he surmised that the party had satisfied the military's interests by permitting the military to solve its own internal problems, by allowing it to participate in the decision-making process, by providing expert advice, and by adopting internal and external goals with which the military generally agreed.

As a whole, this perspective is to some extent congruent with Kolkowicz's revised view. At the same time, it gives us an impression that in order to retain military support the party leadership was always careful not to depart too far from the policies advocated by the military. Or, there could be a possibility that the party leadership would not take any important decision against the opinion of the military. Thus the most fundamental question that this perspective must address, consequently, is that a contract that is the product of a particular moment always has a chance to change under the rule of 'power politics'. If the contract is a forced one, it will be strained when the previously held balance of power change within the coalitions across major groups that have a possibility, as Colton himself considered, of cleavages. Then a precrisis situation should come, like at the end of Brezhnev leadership and during the entire period of Gorbachev's tenure.

In part, because of this complexity, he seemed to consider a broader range of civil-military issues, divided into three separate but not mutually exclusive domains: defense policy; societal choice; and sovereign power.¹⁰ Each is defined by the arena within which the military wields influence. Military influence was, therefore, deemed as legitimate in Colton's approach when motivated by professional concerns and confined to defense issues, whereas Kolkowicz found the military influence to be stability threatening. In this respect, Colton could see a possibility of the rise of a professional military in the Soviet Union and a tendency toward predominance of the objective means, with regarding to civilian control mechanism, which in Kolkowicz was achieved mainly by subjective means and in

Odom was not seen as a major area.

It is also noteworthy that Colton tried to move beyond the simple two-player scheme, and he considered a broader array of players across various institutions including the party and the military. It is likely that the smoothness of the party-military relationship under Brezhnev, called as the golden age, made him draw such a conclusion. Even he was fascinated by Kolkowicz's tentative comments that could concede to his own perspective.¹¹ But it was at a time when Kolkowicz's conflictive approach was rather suggestive of the unfolding party-military relations at the early part of the Gorbachev leadership. Originally, Kolkowicz also recognized the possibility of alliances with the major social groupings such as the governmental bureaucracy, the party professionals, the military, the KGB, among others. Simply Kolkowicz linked this to ups and downs of the political power of the party leadership. For example, he argued that during periods of firm leadership and internal stability, the party was able to keep those institutions "sufficiently divided and rigidly controlled."¹² If the party's hold was weakened by internal power struggles, succession crises, and so on, however, the groups that had formerly been kept submissive and politically impotent tended to regain in stature and influence.

Based on his own paradigm, as Colton demanded that future analyses concentrate on areas of military participation, there was a lot of follow-up researches. Of significance are C. Rice's subdivision of defense policy in Colton's term and D. R. Herspring's way of a linkage between 'players' and 'issues'.¹³ On the whole, Herspring's work was exhaustive in its coverage of them at the early stage of the Gorbachev leadership and provided us with an in-depth understanding of the development of the military leadership of a Sokolov-Yazov-Moiseev-Akhromeev line. With regard to the issues, he made a distinction between military factors and political ones. He firstly considered two aspects of Soviet military doctrine:

political-military or sociopolitical and military-technical. Subsequently he argued that the dividing line between the two aspects was often blurred in practice.

Following Colton, i.e., considering purely military affairs as falling within the domain of the high command, Herspring selected four topics: warfighting strategy and the management of the armed forces for the strictly military-technical issues, and arms control and budgetary process for the political-military issues.¹⁴ In practice, these four issues have a greater probability of conflict between the party leadership and the high command. In case of the warfighting strategy, for example, the key point is the relative importance of nuclear and conventional weapons in the Soviet strategy and force structure. As did Stalin, and to a lesser degree, Khrushchev, the party leadership reserved the right to intervene in the technical area. It is needless to say that arms control and the budgetary process are highly potential sources of discord between politicians and generals. When it came to arms control, which compelled the high command to give up some valuable pieces of equipment, the military leadership considered themselves to have a legitimate right to express their views. Here Herspring turned to the principle of democratic centralism, and drew an arguable conclusion: "the military is expected to give its full support, once the political leadership makes a decision on an issue like arms control."¹⁵

Naturally, the following questions became significant in his methodological framework. How effective are the top military leaders in convincing the political leadership to adopt positions on arms control congenial to the military? How effective are they in lobbying for a share of the country's budget? In other words, activities of the generals, particularly defense minister and chief of the General Staff, are the prime subject, as far as the Soviet civil-military relations are concerned. Inevitably, he considered the generals to be not only representatives of a highly cohesive organization that tended to "constrain their behaviour" on issues,

but also those individuals who implemented "either group interests or party policy."¹⁶

2.4. Buffering Mechanism: T. Gustafson

Thane Gustafson raised the importance of external changes of the party-military-defense industry relationships in a more detailed way than Colton did after critically reviewing the above three perspectives of civil-military relations. Probably, wondering how to see Gorbachev's 'sudden' intervention in the Soviet security and military affairs, up to warfighting strategy, Colton very briefly suggested some steps how to approach the environmental changes, which influenced the way that Gorbachev behaved. It was the first step in his approach to define some major variables or environment that could have an effect on civil-military relations. Five areas were chosen: changes in leadership politics, economic stringency, technological dynamism, social maturation and malaise, and foreign involvement. The next was to find out significant long-term trends in them, which, he argued, had been "incompletely" and "inconsistently" analyzed in previous Western studies. Proceeding from this, how the triad of the party, military, and defense industry had responded to the environmental challenges was answered. Hypothetically, he suggested that there would be some changes in the nature of the issues and stakes of civil-military relations, in perceptions of the issues and stakes, and in the roles and alignments of the institutional players, and in the political assets they were able to bring to bear. Finally, from these intermediate variables, much of possible changes in the civil-military balance could be explained,¹⁷ he suggested.

Unfortunately, his work ended at this probing level. Although Colton

summarized the environmental tendencies, he failed to grasp a series of fundamental factors to be studied in the future. David Holloway had already declared, for example, that as a result of changes initiated by Gorbachev, civil-military relations in the USSR entered "a new stage."¹⁸ Here, the main point in Holloway is not the relations within the party-state apparatus but the role of an independent public opinion in directing the state and its activities. By this he had questioned the basic context of civil-military relations.

Let us go back to Gustafson's work. In principle, he agreed with Colton's suggestions that external changes outside the military-industrial sector might and would raise new civil-military issues and alter the pattern of civil-military participation. But his point was that none of the effects of these changes were automatic. There could be the "phenomenon of lag,"¹⁹ i.e., whether such players as members of the political and military leadership perceived the environmental changes in time or not, and the buffering process against the external change. If both were properly matched and worked against the external changes, then the stability of civil-military relations could be increased, but only in short term, leaving the possibility of sharp increases in conflict later on.

Based on this framework, in particular on buffering process, he examined the civil-military relationship under Brezhnev. His first observation was that the generally accepted crisis of effectiveness of the Soviet system began around the mid-1970s. Nevertheless, there were surprisingly few signs of deep-seated civil-military conflict from 1975 to 1985,²⁰ when Gorbachev came to power. Similarly A. Becker also focused on the other side of Gustafson's point. In short, he questioned a combination of "sharply falling economic returns and uninterrupted, siegable increases in military spending" despite a heavy burden of defense on the economy.²¹

So, Gustafson could raise a series of questions: Did not the golden age of

civil-military relations come under strain as early as 1974?; Was there not growing civil-military tension throughout the second half of the decade, and open conflict by the beginning of the 1980s? If so,²² how was it possible? Afterwards, he drew an illustrative conclusion. The informal allocation, which had been the main factor of the buffering mechanism, could continue to operate as before. Military-industrial needs were insured in this way in spite of the civilian leadership's efforts to slow down the growth rate of military spending. Buffered once against the impact of change on its flow of resources, the military-industrial complex could be buffered again by the large size of its traditional missions compared to its newer ones, such as military intervention in the Third World countries, and by the relative adaptability and effectiveness of its traditional methods of weapons design and procurement, and so on. Finally, the technocratic apparatus in the military-industrial sector remained reasonably well-staffed and continued to follow long-established and time-tested procedures, far from the certain parts of the machinery of the state that had become corrupted.²³

In sum, they meant that during the Brezhnev years the military-industrial complex had been relatively unaffected by the external changes or the many-sided crisis. At the same time, they could mean that there was relatively limited adaptive responses by the military. This is a good starting point in this study.

2.5. Failure of Buffering Mechanism under Perestroika

In short, the new setting of the Soviet civil-military relations under Gorbachev, on which this study puts its attention, had some peculiar characteristics, unlike the previous one that the traditional perspectives assumed. These were: sudden increase in the number of players of the relations, particularly

'from below'; accordingly, unprecedented width and depth in issues; and explosive way of interactions. All these features appear to be inevitable. First of all, the Soviet system had been alienating all strata of the population from itself, in particular the middle class and intelligentsia. The system just needed a catalyst, which glasnost' and perestroika became, to set off a new train of thoughts and actions which were extended to the civil-military relations. In short, perestroika did not only liberate people's minds. Most people realized that the totalitarian heritage had to be demolished. It also liberated from fear something that the masses had been taught to accept for decades: hatred for real, potential, and imaginary enemies.

It may be useful to reiterate that all perspectives reviewed above focused on a group of political elites. Colton and his followers considered a broader array of players and observed some cleavages within groups and alliances across them. Gustafson did not address this issue directly. Whilst portraying the party-military-defense industry relations, he gave an impression that a triad had the monolithic character. Both Colton and Gustafson only agreed that new civil-military issues might arise. In other words, they were not interested in the masses or public opinion.

Nevertheless, radical change in Soviet security policy demands us focus on the political leadership. In part, without Gorbachev the change in Soviet foreign and domestic policies would be impossible. In a limited sense, general assumptions of the "national leadership model" in Stephen M. Meyer's term were suggestive. Briefly, this paradigm posited that abrupt changes, as well as broad trends and directions in Soviet weapons procurement, were determined by the particular interests and pet-notions of the Soviet leadership such as the Stalins, the Khrushchevs, and the Brezhnevs.²⁴ Accordingly, the capabilities of the leadership to move the system in the desired direction were considered as an important

subject.

As will be examined in chapter 3, Gorbachev recruited a key cadre to help him set in motion a set of security ideas called new political thinking, encouraged various forces for change in party-military relations and thus society-military relations under the rubric of glasnost', and created important institutional changes, up to the creation of the Soviet parliament and presidency. Therefore, to a certain degree, chapter 3 is based on a mixture of Kolkowicz's paradigm and national leadership model. But basically it proceeds from Colton and his followers approach: no matter how radical Gorbachev might sound, in particular, concerning the new political thinking, the omnipresent military-industrial complex would in some way oppose him, barring the efforts for progress. Consequently, it meant that if Gorbachev was serious and was to become an initiator against such a system, he would have to be a dynamic, politically brilliant leader with a long-term strategy. At least, he needed unprecedented tactical measures. In terms of Colton's concept a 'bargained contract' between political and military-industrial leaders, Gorbachev would, or could, be easily seen to be failing to perform its civilian duties for his partner. It was natural that the level of civil-military discord should rise.

At the same time, this study regards that it is necessary to question the nature of the Soviet society or the long-term trends in it. That is to say, had it been a quasi-totalitarian society? If Gorbachev becomes a successful leader, the country's sociopolitical nature is also important, like the order side of the coin. The totalitarian model had been a paradigm in question since Stalin's death. For many analysts, it retained its utility as a reference for judging just how much change had occurred in the country. Communist ideology, or militant materialism, the party, the military, the KGB, control of media, and the command economic apparatus were often studied in this respect.

In general, these features seemed to have left basically unchanged even until

the August 1991 coup. Gorbachev and his followers as well as El'tsin and his democrats had been struggling with the party, the command economic apparatus, and the military. Some success had come earlier in the areas of ideology and control of mass media but many difficulties had remained in the command economic apparatus. The three pillars of the Soviet power, the Party, the Army and the KGB, had collapsed after the failed coup. The character of the coup appeared to be first a matter of political elites. But the plotters met strong challenge from the public and in the end were defeated in part by them.

It was to a certain extent accepted that Soviet society had experienced substantial change at least over the past quarter century. By using existing statistics given by Soviet sociologists, for example, B. A. Ruble characterized the Soviet society as an urban society, a better educated society, and a complicated society with changes in the workplace and economy.²⁵ If that case were true, the country had already had some dynamics of a modern society found in the advanced nations of the West that could result in a qualitatively different network of relationships between people and groups. Social groups can be divided into many categories along sex and age, urban and rural, ethnic and religious, white collar and blue collar, professional and peasant, and so on. Here the point is that Ruble, after examining the new groups or social strata, called for attention on the sociopolitical sensitivities of the working class, the young professionals, the professional and paraprofessional women, and the committed national elites.²⁶ Furthermore, D. Lane classified the major groups of the fabric of Soviet society by arranging in a hierarchy with the most powerful at the top and the least at the bottom: elites, leading institutions, local interests, informal groups, social class, and finally, non-Russian nationalities.²⁷

However, we must understand the real nature of these groups. It is always possible in any system to find groupings and even social strata, which may have

different interests, with artificial statistics. Their existence must be linked to the nature and forms of control over power in society. For example, it is a question about whether the working class or the young professionals, which Ruble discovered, are exerting any pressure on the government in particular and the Soviet system in general. Or do the intelligentsia suffer from deprivation of economic and political privileges? In short, it is a matter of the dynamic. Under Gorbachev, one thing is clear: when the market was about to come, the contradiction between society and state, i.e., workers and government, became explosive.²⁸

Concerning the implication of the sociopolitical groups, including nationality groupings, for the triad relations in general and for the Soviet armed forces in particular, their dynamic nature seems not so important because of the nature of the military affairs. Their existence alone was enough. It was in part because the political leadership tried to mobilize a politically calculated military reform movement. Consequently, the traditional Soviet mechanisms such as Participation by the citizen, People's Control and Public opinion must be considered, adding to some significant groups or institutions observed by Ruble and Lane.

The political leaderships had been interested in a form of participatory democracy and given their support for it, most probably, for their own sake. In principle, mass participation could have taken place through the party, through the organs of People's Control existing outside the party apparatuses to check the government bureaucracy, and through the articulation of public opinion. Ordinary people had been able to voice their criticism of, or respect for, the system of government by writing to or communicating with the press or other media. In the post-Khrushchev period, the political leadership had advocated that greater attention be paid to letters to the media and to public authorities as a way of strengthening links with the people.²⁹ The Central Committee of the CPSU had set

up a special department to deal with such communications. Under Gorbachev this type of people's participation became vital in conjunction with glasnost' and the new political thinking at the early stage of perestroika. In his book *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, quoting a number of letters, Gorbachev noted that "we in the Politburo discuss these letters, gathering them together at regular intervals. That helps the country's leadership to keep abreast of the course of events, to assess its policies properly and readjust them, and to work out modern methods for handling things."³⁰

Therefore, what is the implication for the party-military-industrial complex of the gradual development and formation of each of above new strata and substrata within Soviet society with a positive conception of their own interests? Here, the very central point is whether this structural change is merely external conditions like in Colton and Gustafson's perspectives, or not. Can the processes of social change, i.e., the rise of independent groups such as intelligentsia, skilled manual working class, nationality formations, and so on, play a role as a kind of counter-force against the coalition and the military? Or, do the processes have potential to be able to evolve the civil-military relations from a matter of business among the party-military-industrial coalitions into that of struggle between the coalitions, sometimes the military alone, and the public being conscious of military issues for their interests under certain conditions to come in the near future? Chapter 4 will cover these questions.

Of significance is Gail W. Lapidus's observation on urban middle class that had emerged as "a major actor" on the Soviet scene.³¹ Even Gorbachev's reform strategy lay in her realization, probably in part, that the Soviet people, and above all the educated middle class, could no longer be treated as the objects of official policy but had to be treated as "genuine subjects."³² Mentioning the so-called "precrisis situation" that had arrived before Gorbachev's rise to power,³³ P.

Hauslohner also glanced over the trend that the Soviet system or the social contract was losing support on numerous levels, particularly, among more educated people.

So, it was well understood that the Gorbachev leadership adopted a two-front strategy toward the scientific and cultural intelligentsia, improving their position as consumers of state benefits, and, more significantly, appealing to them to provide the intellectual support necessary to reform the country. In practice, this could have caused even at its early state a significant change in the nature of authority relationships throughout the polity and its consequences for the personal power and authority of the party leadership itself. It was, of course, against a long-term trend in Soviet polity.³⁴

From the beginning General Secretary Gorbachev was obliged to proceed by persuading the fully grown party and state apparatus, i.e., nomenklatura, on the level of all-Union and republics, while building his authority through his success as policy maker and policy broker that could be against those nomenklaturas' interests. And if necessary, he had to be able to destroy some old institutions, which were the base of nomenklaturas, while cushioning the repercussions. At the same time, Gorbachev had to pay close attention to the management of the middle range of powers, that is, new social groups and old elites alike, so that any significant social groups could not be formed into an alignment against him, while seeking his grand goals. This paradoxical situation could force Gorbachev to act always in a time-consuming, indecisive way, that is, gradual and sometimes revolutionary changes in policy and shifts of alliances with right and left as a centrist. So, Soviet politics was for this reason very dramatic from 1985 to 1991.

These proceeding observations point to another: before Gorbachev came to power, had there been any change in the military caused by the development of a middle range of power? Unfortunately, the study of such occurrences was fairly

rare. As a rudimentary step, Ellen Jones concluded in mid-1980s that the most immediate threat to the Soviet army was demographic, i.e., a declining draft-age cohort and expected the high level of permeability between military and civilian institutions.³⁵ Later in late-1980s she again linked social change to the conscript. But this time, Jones tried to assess the extent to which social changes had affected the military as a "political" institution, examining how social changes had led to either a more conflicting or more congenial relationship between civil and military elites.³⁶ So, Jones treated the social change as an environment.

Rather, it may reasonable to question that the long-term trend in Soviet society could not have a single, simple, or immediate impact on civil-military relations, or even necessarily any impact at all, unlike action-reaction response of physics. Here we can apply Gustafson's way of approach to the question: the existence of buffering systems in various forms and the adaptive response of the military to the changes. The totalitarian institutions that were on the process of secularization or breaking away could have been in part functioning as a buffering mechanism for the military. The Communist ideology was still regarding the military value as prime one, although it had been discredited to some degree in various areas. The military establishment was a sacred cow. The long established informal, or hidden, allocation system made it possible to give the military the steadily increasing budgetary support. In addition, the combination of a rigid, formal, and essentially party structure cemented the Soviet armed forces. It was proved by the fact that once communism disappeared and nationalism filled the ideological vacuum, the Soviet armed force firstly began to disintegrate along the nationality line.

On the other hand, the military itself had changed. The mid-1960s to the late 1970s and early 1980s the military leadership dominated both doctrinal development and strategic concept development. Consequently, the bulk of the

military's role expansion occurred in areas of foreign policy and military doctrine. This was, according to the Kolkowicz's perspective, because the political leadership was either engaged in internal power struggles, preoccupied with other issues or just disinterested. This was, however, a natural process in Colton and Herspring. Without any doubts, the so-called military's monopoly of military-technical expertise became an unparalleled asset in decision making process for national security. Most likely, therefore, Gorbachev was keen to intervene in doctrinal issues on the behalf of the party.

But, to be unbalanced, the military was not interested in the area concerning 'societal choice' in Colton's term, or 'societal roles' in Gustafson, where social and economic changes had gradually, sometimes abruptly, occurred. Most likely, the military had hardly felt the necessity. On the whole, during the Brezhnev leadership, the generals were able to get almost everything it wanted in terms of resources, programmes, status, and freedom of action in developing strategic concepts. As Gustafson argued, this made the military's role expansion have a definite pattern: not at all in social roles, more in foreign and doctrinal than in economic, and most of all in military internal roles, i.e., the management of the armed forces in Herspring's term. Outside its internal arena, the military's role expansion was more of scope than of means: small numbers of individuals were involved, or at most individual offices, academies, and the like.³⁷

Even before perestroika and glasnost' came, this unbalanced expansion had met with problems. The availability of manpower resources was gradually questioned with demographic changes and changes in living standards, lifestyles, and values accompanied with urbanization, education, and structural modernization. To be sure, these developments, together with performance during the Afghanistan war, could have led to a decline in acceptance of the military service obligation among draft-age youth.

The military leadership, however, was not able to take any effective, long-term measures to meet those developments. Only what they could do was to complain. Being faced with a new generation of draftees, who were interested in Western rock music, jeans, and other symbols of Western culture, had trouble with the physical demands of military training, and were poor in Russian, the defense ministry reacted by criticizing the schools, the family, and the mass media and, at the same time, by assigning those with problems to not-combat units or positions.

As for demographic changes, the military had been in general buffered since the political leadership resolved an increasing conflict between military and civilian needs produced by demographic shortages largely in favour of the military. The college students, including those in high-prestige scientific disciplines, were drafted to maximize the proportion of the draft pool. But this decision became the backbone of the conflict between the intelligentsia and the military. As a result, intelligentsia-military relations under Gorbachev leadership became explosive, even at a time when perestroika had not yet reached its peak, as will be seen chapter 3 and particularly chapter 4. Perhaps, this was the most eloquent, indirect evidence concerning military roles in the societal arena.

In short, the existence of the buffering mechanism and the adaptive response of the military to external change played a major role under Gorbachev in producing a puzzling context in the Soviet politics as well as in the civil-military relations. For a while, the buffering mechanisms could have made possible the coexistence of apparently contradictory facts. In addition, it helped the Sovietologists to stay in the traditional perspectives on the Soviet civil-military relations. As chapters 7 and 8 cover, therefore, once the buffering mechanisms were destroyed by firstly Gorbachev's intention and by later the by-products of his programmes, there was no option for the high command but to take a reactionary road.

¹ Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), p. xxi.

² William E. Odom, "The Party-Military Connection: A Critique," in *Civil-Military Relations in Communist Systems*, eds., Dale R. Herspring and Ivan Volgyes (Boulder: Westview Press, 1978), pp. 32 and 36.

³ Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party*, p. xii. For a much more spirited answer, see Roman Kolkowicz, "Toward a Theory of Civil-Military Relations in Communist (Hegemonial) Systems," in *Soldiers, Peasants, and Bureaucrats: Civil-Military Relations in Communist and Modernizing Societies*, eds., Roman Kolkowicz and Andrzej Korbonski (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 231-252.

⁴ Timothy J. Colton, *Commissars, Commanders, and Civilian Authority: The Structure of Soviet Military Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979); Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990). Edward L. Warner III, *The Military in Contemporary Soviet Politics: An Institutional Analysis* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977).

⁵ Thane Gustafson, "Toward a Crisis in Civil-Military Relations?" in *Soldiers and the Soviet State*, eds., Timothy J. Colton and Thane Gustafson (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 334-364, esp. p. 338.

⁶ Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party*, Chapters II and III.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Chapter I.

⁹ William E. Odom, "Alternative Perspectives on the August Coup," *Problems of Communism* (November-December 1991), p. 19.

¹⁰ Timothy J. Colton, "Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations in the Soviet Union," in *Soldiers and the Soviet State*, p. 7.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

¹² Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party*, p. 31.

¹³ Condoleezza Rice, "The Party, the Military, and Decision Authority in the Soviet Union," *World Politics*, No. 40 (October 1987), pp. 55-81; Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989*.

¹⁴ Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command 1967-1989*, p. 20.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁷ Timothy J. Colton, "Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations..." pp. 37-43.

¹⁸ David Holloway, "State, Society, and the Military Under Gorbachev," in *The Soviet System in Crisis: a reader of Western and Soviet views*, eds., Alexander Dallin and Gail W. Lapidus (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 616-631

¹⁹ Thane Gustafson, "Toward a Crisis in Civil-Military Relations?" p. 338.

²⁰ Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command, 1976-1986*, R-3521-AF (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1986); Abraham S. Becker, *Ogarkov's Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma*, R-3541-AF (Santa Monica: The RAND Corporation, 1987), pp. 4-22.

²¹ Abraham S. Becker, *Ogarkov's Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma*, p. 1.

²² For such a view, see Bruce Parrott, "Political Change and Civil-Military Relations," in *Soldiers and the Soviet State*, pp. 54-75; Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command*; Abraham S. Becker, *Ogarkov's*

Complaint and Gorbachev's Dilemma.

²³ Thane Gustafson, "Toward a Crisis in Civil- Military Relations?" pp. 344-348.

²⁴ Stephen M. Meyer, "Soviet National Security Decisionmaking: What Do We Know and What Do We Understand?" in *Soviet Decisionmaking for National Security* eds., Jiri Valenta and William C. Potter (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), pp. 265-266.

²⁵ Blair A. Ruble, "The Social Dimensions of Perestroika," in *Milestones in Glasnost and Perestroika* eds., A. Hewett and Victor H. Winston (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991), pp. 92-95.

²⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 95-99.

²⁷ David Lane, *Soviet Society under Perestroika* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p. 343.

²⁸ For an analytical account of such a case, see Anna A. Temkina, "The Workers' Movement in Leningrad, 1986-1991," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 44, No. 2, 1991, pp. 209- 236.

²⁹ For a detailed practice under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, see Peter Hauslohner, "Politics Before Gorbachev: De-Stalinization and the Roots of Reform," in *The Soviet System in Crisis* eds., Alexander Dallin and Gail W. Lapidus (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991) pp. 37-63, esp. p. 46.

³⁰ M. Gorbachev, *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World* (London: Fontana, 1988), p. 72.

³¹ Gail W. Lapidus, "State and Society: Toward the Emergence of Civil Society in the Soviet Union," in *The Soviet System In Crisis*, p. 135.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

³³ Peter Hauslohner, "Politics Before Gorbachev: De-Stalinization and the Roots of Reform," p. 57.

³⁴ For a long-term trend in the Soviet policy, see, Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann, "Gorbachev's First Year: Building Power and Authority," *Problems of Communism* (May-June 1986), pp. 1-19.

³⁵ Ellen Jones, *Red Army and Society* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1985), pp. 217 and 219.

³⁶ Ellen Jones, "Social Change and Civil- Military Relations," in *Soldiers and the Soviet State*, pp. 239-284.

³⁷ Thane Gustafson, "Toward a Crisis in Civil-Military Relations?" p. 355.

CHAPTER 3. NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP'S MOBILIZING OF MILITARY REFORM MOVEMENT

3.1. Gorbachev's Agenda: Defense Budget and Personnel Change

From the outset Gorbachev made clear his intention to gain, or regain, greater control over the defense budget and arms control. This appeared to be natural in the sense that the previous party leaderships had been sensitive to attempts by any members of the high command to interfere in decisionmaking in both areas. In practice, while top leaders decided the size of the defense budget and the general configuration and deployment of the armed forces, the high command enjoyed considerable autonomy concerning the details of most defence undertakings. In logical terms, any significant change in the defense budget and arms control demands firstly major changes in the basic content of current military thought. Consequently, Gorbachev first and foremost questioned the role of nuclear weapons. He announced a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing during his first summer, and followed it in rapid succession with proposals for a sharp cutback in strategic weapons. He tried to take complete and exclusive control over nuclear policy. Up to then the responsibility at least shared with the generals, who considered themselves to have a legitimate right to express their views as far as the warfighting strategy was concerned. It was inevitable that there would be a greater probability of conflict between Gorbachev and his generals. In principle, once the political leadership made a decision on the issues, the military was expected to give its full support. Here, the point is that Gorbachev could not make all the decisions. The Soviet leadership had been a collective one for many years, although he was a

dynamic individual.

It may be useful to focus on Gorbachev's initial political position, particularly in the Politburo. In other words, was Gorbachev in a strong position to deal with the military leadership in a somehow decisive and one-sided way? To begin with, the high command was part of a much wider military-industrial complex (MIC), as Colton's perspective suggests. This is a key point. The current MIC that Gorbachev had to take into account had fully grown under Brezhnev for a couple of decades and, therefore, was a much larger and somewhat more amorphous body than Khrushchev had. Moreover, the mighty MIC included individuals within Gorbachev's own circle of close associates, who had different viewpoints and constituencies. It was a party-military-defense industry complex rather than a mere defense interest group in Gustafson's frame. This complex could attract wide support from the top leaders of nondefense bureaucracies ranging from the foreign policy establishment to party and state bureaucrats in distinctly nonmilitary sectors of the economy, to say nothing of the security organs.¹

What was more, it was a period of succession times that could limit the range of authoritative, disciplinary measures for the new general secretary, given the Soviet politics. According to Kolkowicz's perspective, it was time for the military leadership to rise, faced with the possible difficulties. Under these political circumstances Gorbachev's prime task was to consolidate his power, while, if possible, simultaneously attempting to make the military establishment support his economic programme. Throughout the Soviet history it had been a difficult task for the party leadership to keep the officer corps silent along the party line.

Even just before Gorbachev came to power, i.e., from well before the death of Brezhnev to Chernenko's leadership, Marshal Ogarkov as chief of the General Staff had publicly and ceaselessly protested against party's prevailing line such as the unwinnability of nuclear war and the task of easing resource stringency at the

expense of the military budget. During this period, the debates between the party and military leadership over the magnitude and urgency of Soviet military requirements had been quite remarkable.² Gorbachev and Sokolov had observed the struggle as Politburo member and deputy defense minister, respectively. Even under Gorbachev, in April 1985 Ogarkov claimed that the international situation was "to a certain extent reminiscent of the years preceding the second world war"³ and thereby his calls for a stronger defense effort right away were implicitly expressed. In response, Gorbachev rejected this historical analogy by saying that the present world was "absolutely" unlike the world of the Thirties.⁴ Ogarkov's replacement, Marshal Akhromeev backed Gorbachev's assessment with the view that the world was now "radically or fundamentally" different from that of the Thirties.⁵

In reality, the first step taken by the new general secretary on the defense budget was amazing and far from the general assumption of Soviet politics. In a classified speech to a training assembly of high-ranking commanding officers in Minsk on July 10 1985, Gorbachev expressed the need for limits on the growth of military expenditures and called for some changes of military personnel.⁶ John W. Parker assessed that Gorbachev's remarks were probably so frank as to preclude their direct publication.⁷ But it rather appeared that while he tackled one of his political priorities, the defense budget, in a way that could have preempted the military leadership's possible pronouncements, he avoided railing at the high command in public.

In late April 1985, Gorbachev had already publicly touched on the issue of defense spending by saying that "added increments of military power did not necessarily increase the state's security."⁸ Afterwards, in November 1985 he evaluated the current defense budget as "being adequate".⁹ And then, he emphasized the economy as being the main factor concerning the future of the

Soviet system. In particular, modernizing the machine-building, computer, and other high-technology industries was made subjects of discussion.¹⁰ By that time, the country was still being shut out of world trade organizations and subjected to rigid restrictions on the purchase of commercial equipment and computers that could have any military applications. The high command, who had already recognized that nuclear parity would not solve all of the USSR's problems and that the Soviet military establishment would have to deal with the high-technology revolution in the West, was eager to modernize its systems and operations.

Ogarkov had already demanded that the Soviet armed forces be transformed with high-technology weapons and equipment and new strategy and tactics to accommodate them,¹¹ while seeking greater resources from the party leadership. Still remaining question was who was to pay and how, under resource stringency's, and therefore it became the focal point of the civil-military conflict. Simply, as will be further discussed in the following sections, Gorbachev was about to propose a strategy that excluded offensives into enemy territory against the main stream of military thought that sought a lean, modern, high-technology force to permit a more rapid and effective combined-arms offensive. Through the Party Programme adopted at the 27th Party Congress, the political leadership ensured that the military establishment would not be given everything they needed to maintain a strong defense.¹²

Instead, he showed great interest in arms control. One can see the arms control negotiations as a way of regulating the military growth of the other side. If the way becomes successful to the extent that the country's security is hardly undermined, the political leadership can save money that is normally allocated to military systems for use in the civilian economy. As mentioned above, within three weeks after he took office Gorbachev imposed a six-months halt in the deployment of SS-20s in the European zone,¹³ and in October 1985 he announced in a speech

to the French parliament that the total number of the missiles that faced Europe and were on 'standby alert' would be reduced to 243 missiles,¹⁴ i.e., the level fielded in June 1984. Most likely, this announcement was aimed at the resuming of the INF negotiations. The unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear weapon tests announced on July 29, 1985, was to take effect from August 1985. For the START Talks, at the end of September 1985, the Soviets proposed a plan that included a 50 percent reduction in all types of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles capable of reaching each other's territory with a subceiling of 6,000 charges.¹⁵ By January 1986 this proposal was incorporated into a three-stage plan to free the world of nuclear weapons within the next 15 years.¹⁶

As for the further development of the negotiations, however, a great deal would depend on how the US responded to the series of proposals and the new approach, the political thinking, as the 1985 Geneva and 1986 Reykjavik summits highlighted. Of course, it was undeniable that the Reykjavik summit was as a major step toward Gorbachev's broader objective. Nevertheless, he had to contend with the response of his generals, who believed that military strength was key to maintaining a country's security and therefore were suspicious of arms cuts.

As the traditional perspectives suggested, defense minister Sokolov became a strong spokesman for the armed forces. Remarkable was how the marshal responded. He firstly paid attention to the dynamic of military threat from the US and its NATO allies, rather than openly disagreeing with the line followed by Gorbachev on arms control. It was usual. The defense minister, for example, painted a grim picture of deepening US militarism,¹⁷ focusing his attention, in particular, on the SDI. Far from the party leadership's intention, however, Sokolov said that "one side's deployment of an extensive ABM system will inevitably provoke a comprehensive response, including not only a strategic offensive buildup but also the creation of a large-scale ABM defense."¹⁸ Thereby, he hardened his

original position on the issue.¹⁹ Another graphic statements on the issue appeared after the 1986 Reykjavik summit. When a number of top leaders in the Politburo commented it favourably, the defense minister stated that "the US administration still hopes to achieve military superiority, which necessitates a constant improvement of the Soviet armed forces' combat capacity.... The US commitment to SDI has scuttled the possibilities of an agreement in Iceland."²⁰

On the basis of this kind of argument, Sokolov repeatedly insisted that it was necessary for the country to strengthen its defense capacity and the combat might of the armed forces. Although agreeing that all the existing disputes between the East and the West could be resolved by political means, he strongly emphasized that the armed forces had been a real factor in deterring the aggressive strivings of imperialist reaction.²¹ His responses were interesting, if we consider the reason why Sokolov was chosen as defense minister. Herspring observed that with Ustinov's death in late 1984 the political leadership wanted an individual who would not make "waves," that is, a man who had never shown any political ambitions, nor any special interest in matters such as strategy or arms control. Most likely, Sokolov was well suited for this. Despite having had a very distinguished military career and having served as a first deputy minister of defense since 1967, he had not taken noteworthy public stands on major issues such as military doctrine and defense spending, before being promoted. In this respect, Herspring described him as "a bureaucrat's bureaucrat."²²

In practice, Sokolov during his tenure as defense minister had hardly mentioned any doctrinal issues. This task appeared to have been committed to Ogarkov's replacement Marshal Akhromeev. But the chief of the General Staff had shown vague attitudes towards the new general secretary and his new policies in arms control. But his stance toward the political leadership began to change in late 1986 when the new political thinking was gaining its momentum. On the one hand,

he appeared to have objected to some of Gorbachev's sweeping proposals for eliminating nuclear missiles at Reykjavik.²³ On the other hand, he supported the unilateral Soviet moratorium on nuclear weapons tests, whilst admitting that this could place the USSR at a temporary disadvantage in weapons development.²⁴

Suddenly, in May 1987 the defense minister Sokolov was forced to resign after the young Western German M. Rust landed his Cessna aeroplane in Red Square. This event was labelled as a demonstration of military incompetence and thus became an opportunity for Gorbachev to have his political appointee D. Yazov as defense minister. Gorbachev declared in the name of the Politburo and the Defense Council at the 1987 June plenum that, reminding the Rust affairs, there should not be no doubt, either in the party or among the people, concerning the Soviet armed forces' ability to defend the country.²⁵

In spite of Gorbachev's early threat, until then most of members of the high command had considered themselves to be excused from perestroika. They considered perestroika as being directed at the civilian economy and the party apparatus. At the Minsk meeting, Gorbachev told the military leaders that radical changes would have to come and, therefore, energetic leaders were needed right away.²⁶ Since then he had been showing a firm and adroit hand, that is, a typical mixture of positive and negative measures. His inherited defense minister, for example, was elevated to candidate membership in the Politburo. By virtue of refusing to promote him to full membership, Gorbachev clearly underscored the principle of party supremacy, which in effect meant putting Sokolov, and thereby the entire uniformed defense establishment, on probation. Sokolov and even Yazov had ultimately failed to get full membership of the Politburo.

The removal from office of high-ranking officers also illustrates this point. In December 1985 Admiral S. Gorshkov was replaced as CINC of the Navy by V. Chernavin. Holding the post for almost 30 years, Gorshkov made Soviet naval

forces what they were and thus was considered the 'father' of the Soviet Navy. In July 1985 Marshal V. Tolubko, CINC of the Strategic Missile Forces, was also replaced by General Yu. Maksimov, who had never served in the service until then. The successful Ground Forces commander was probably selected in the hope that under him the strategic nuclear weapons would comply with Gorbachev's radical reduction proposals. Jeremy R. Azrael considered the retirements of both figures as the "most important changes" on the military cadres, because they were "highly assertive military lobbyists."²⁷ Gorbachev also showed his adroitness here by reassigning them to the honorific MOD Inspectorate group and by allowing them to retain their Central Committee membership and thus their high prestige, thereby reducing the potential for resentment on the part of their uniformed protégés. Moreover, Tolubko's departure helped the General Staff's efforts to equalize the status of the strategic nuclear service branches and establish a true strategic triad. As a major actor in the country's long strategic nuclear buildup, the marshal frequently argued that his branch was created the supreme branch of the Soviet armed forces.²⁸ Needless to say, these personnel changes had made it easier for younger men to gain promotion. The retirement of Marshal Epishev, the long-time holder of the chief of the MPA, could be seen in the same context.

In late summer of 1986 there were new changes at the very top of the MOD structure that might have been related to discontent about the directions being taken in either economic or foreign policy, or both.²⁹ The most noticeable case was the retirement of Marshal V. I. Petrov, who was known to take a hard line on China. Jacques Sapir presumed that his departure was bound up with Gorbachev's new Far East policy.³⁰ In January 1987 another replacement in the deputy defense minister slot was made. This time Yazov was brought from his position as commander in the Far East MD to become Deputy Minister of Defense for Cadres. Although it was not realized at that time, this was a highly significant move. In

addition, Army General I. Tretyak became CINC of the Air Defense Forces after the Rust affair.

Meanwhile, during the winter of 1986-1987 and into the spring of 1987 there were more personnel changes than usual throughout the military command structure just below the MOD. At least seven of sixteen Military District commanders, one of four Groups of Forces commanders, and one of four Fleet commanders were changed. According to Zamascikov, throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, an average of ten top-level commanders were replaced in each two-year cycle.³¹ After Gorbachev came to power, however, the rate increased to 15 between 1985-1986 and 20 between 1987-1988.³² Now Gorbachev's serious messages were surely sent through the military establishment by these personnel turnovers and by his comments at the January 1987 Plenum, in which the military establishment publicly became the subject of perestroika. The members of the high command began to vocalize their support for perestroika. Numerous articles on the subject written by them illustrated this change in their attitudes.³³

Thus, the appointment of Yazov could have important implications for the handling of perestroika in the Soviet military, although at that moment the scope of perestroika was limited to 'internal' military reform. That is, more serious military reform demands were not arrived, yet. So, Yazov appeared to have the qualities needed to implement the narrowly defined military reform in that he was a specialist of personnel-related issues rather than of strategy or doctrine. Dale R. Herspring pointed out this fact through reviewing Yazov's major writings. Then he concludes that "there is a striking congruence between Yazov's ideas and those of Gorbachev; Although Yazov did not use the term perestroika, his views clearly mirrored those of Gorbachev."³⁴ That is why he was selected.

3.2. Gorbachev's Intervention in Military Doctrine.

A primary area on which we must draw our attention is how Gorbachev tried to intervene in military doctrinal affairs and their implementation. Considering the significance of the function of military doctrine in Soviet civil-military relations as well as in the construction of Soviet armed forces, personnel change itself appears to be of minor importance. There had always been and would be a possibility that the military leadership could withdraw their support for the political leadership and its programmes, if the agenda for military change became radicalized far beyond the point that political leadership's appointees could readily accept.

In general, it was sharp contrast to the Brezhnev years and the Andropov and Chernenko interregnums that from the beginning, Gorbachev was intimately, sometimes boldly, involved in the formulation and articulation of military doctrine under the name of the new political thinking. Although Gorbachev followed Stalin and Khrushchev into doctrinal affairs and their implementation, he had shown his own style. Briefly, if he felt it to be necessary, Stalin himself decided the doctrinal matters and commanded their implementation through terror against the military leadership. On the other hand, Khrushchev with minimal consultation with the high command imposed his new military doctrine by authoritative, official order which came from his office --the General Secretary, Chairman of the Defense Council, and CINC of the Soviet armed forces. Then he made his appointees implement the revised military doctrine. But he failed to stay in office long. Although he was not ousted by the military, nor as a consequence of his military policies, most likely, this gave Gorbachev some lessons. Above all, it appeared that Gorbachev brought doctrinal discussions in the open.

This point had a connection with the nature of changes in top leaders in the Politburo. Gorbachev diminished the political input of the military first and

foremost by dropping the post defense minister from the membership of his Politburo. Gorbachev himself did not behave at all like previous guardians of the much-vaunted Soviet power. He had never been a soldier, he had no military orders, he never donned a uniform nor emblazoned his chest with medals. In general, he appeared to have tried to consolidate itself and, while simultaneously excluding the military from entering the Politburo, CC Secretariat, and other high levels of defense decisionmaking organs, and, if possible, leaving out existing figures who might have had connections with the military. We could find a primitive signal in these kind of efforts from Chernenko's funeral in March 1985 in which representatives of the military were very limited from the Lenin Mausoleum. At the 1986 Revolution Day parade, the military contingent atop the Red Square reviewing stand was reduced from a dozen men to four. In other words, the incidents could be analyzed as well-calculated indications that the new leadership was emphasizing civilian control over the military from the start.³⁵

It appeared to be around the June 1987 plenum that Gorbachev gained a marginal majority of the voting members in the Politburo. This development was at that moment evaluated as a stunning success in consolidating the party leadership at the highest level, because it had been accomplished in only two years without any open, bloody struggles. The development had a number of significant implications for the future party-military relations of the country. Up to then, Gorbachev, to a certain extent, had not been in a position to dictate the Soviet foreign, security, and economic policies. As the resolution of the 27th Party Congress suggested, in which he had to proceed with care and to accept compromises probably not much to his liking in practical terms.

Moreover, the very institutional representative of the military, Marshal Sokolov, at the 27th Party Congress and at successive CC plenums, failed to attain voting membership in the Politburo. On the other hand, several reformist 'younger'

Politburo members were promoted a few months after Gorbachev became general secretary. They attracted momentary public attention in the West. They were in contrast to the Brezhnev generation. Most of them had little experience in World War II, thus, they tended to be more receptive to innovative ideas about security. In addition, they had no personal stake in defending the interests or values in terms of previous policy.³⁶ According to Marshal Akhromeev, who claimed that he had met with Brezhnev on quite a few occasions, Brezhnev did not trust the West: "We shall survive," he said, "if we are strong."³⁷ The high command neither brought pressure on Brezhnev nor had to convince him of anything, the marshal said, because Brezhnev himself gave priority to military problems on his own initiative. Akhromeev observed, that was what his life experience prompted him.

Significant were N. Ryzhkov, E. Shevardnadze, L. Zaikov, and relatively late comer A. Yakovlev in the context of party-military relations. In April 1985 Ryzhkov bypassed the customary stage of nonvoting membership in the Politburo and was promoted directly to voting membership. In September he succeeded the retiring N. Tikhonov as prime minister. E. Shevardnadze, previously a nonvoting member of the Politburo, was promoted to full membership in July 1985. Shortly after, he became the "point man" for Gorbachev in an ongoing struggle within the top leaders to weaken the influence of the military in general and the General Staff in particular, and thus to change Soviet political, economic, and military priorities. In July 1985 Zaikov assumed secretary responsible for oversight of the defense industry, held by a supporter of the military G. Romanov, and he was promoted directly to voting membership in the Politburo. He was later appointed Deputy Chairman of the Defense Council. At the early stage of Gorbachev leadership, they all supported Gorbachev's new foreign and security policy,³⁸ although later Ryzhkov and Zaikov were thrown into opposition, together with Ligachev and Chebrikov, who were Gorbachev's initial political allies.

Now, who were possible supporters of the military? Romanov had gone. V. Shcherbytskyi was left alone. He said that the US was seeking decisive military superiority over the USSR,³⁹ and that Moscow would respond to the further development of SDI with "both offensive and defensive measures."⁴⁰ He also stated that the US commitment to SDI doomed the world to many years of an arms race and undermined the very basis for "limiting or reducing" the number of weapons.⁴¹ Concerning the defense spending: the realization of Soviet internal tasks depended on the international situation, which remained "sharp and complex,"⁴² that is, the defense budget had to receive higher priority than the domestic policy. In all, however, the military had been ill-equipped to exert a significant influence on the party's decision making process by these changes, adding to some personnel changes in the CC Secretariat and other defense and foreign policy related organs which were accompanied with structural changes.⁴³

Meanwhile, Gorbachev himself was becoming a pioneer of public debates on military doctrine. A key concept was 'reasonable sufficiency.' Gorbachev pronounced it first in October 1986 during a visit to Paris as an appropriate Soviet force planning goal.⁴⁴ As noted above, he told the French parliament that the deployment of SS-20s would be halted for six-months. Less than two months later, in November 1985, Gorbachev mentioned the concept in a speech to the USSR Supreme Soviet, in which he vowed to hold defense spending at the same level it had been in 1985, 19 billion rubles, and he implied again that nuclear weapons be reduced. To a certain degree reflecting the failure of the Geneva summit, he said that the USSR and the US would have to reach a common understanding of what level of weapons on each side could be considered relatively sufficient. Then Gorbachev convincingly suggested that the level of sufficiency was "much lower" than that both countries had at the moment.⁴⁵ In January 1986 Gorbachev called for a nuclear-free world by the year 2000. Now at the 27th Party Congress, the

nature and level of reasonable sufficiency, Gorbachev explained, would continue to be limited by the positions and actions of the US and its allies. Therefore, according to him, the Soviet Union laid no claim to greater security, but would not settle for less.⁴⁶

A clear checking point in doctrinal debates between political leaders was the new party programme adopted at the 27th Party Congress. It said: "The basic foundation of the strengthening of the defense of the socialist homeland is the Communist Party's guidance of military construction and the armed forces. Policy in the field of defense... and Soviet military doctrine, which is purely defensive in nature, are worked out and implemented with the party playing the guiding role... The CPSU considers it necessary to continue to strengthen its organising and directing influence on the life and activity of the armed forces."⁴⁷ This reference to the Party's "guiding role" in the formulation of security policy and military doctrine was not contained in the 1961 programme. Therefore, it was quite natural that the cool response of the high command to the new party programme followed. Members of the high command failed to praise the new programme, although there were numerous opportunities to do so. Conversely, Sokolov publicly challenged its tenets. After underscoring the distinction between the political-military and military-technical dimensions of military doctrine, for example, he suggested that only the former was "entirely determined by the policy followed by the state."⁴⁸

Once the party's supremacy over the military doctrine was confirmed against the high command's will, the debate on reasonable sufficiency was beginning to rapidly move toward an arena of warfighting strategy, more specifically, toward conventional forces. In July 1986 in a meeting with F. Mitterrand, Gorbachev said that even a conventional war in Europe could have catastrophic consequences for the entire world. Later he suggested more detailed reasons: on the one hand, as Ogarkov argued, the conventional weapons exceeded many times over, in

destructive force, the weapons used in World War II; on the other hand, as the Chernobyl disaster suggested, if the weapons hit some facilities such as nuclear power stations and a network of large chemical factories, the results would be serious.⁴⁹ At that time, 'reasonable sufficiency' had already been married to another popular concept 'defensive defense', by giving the former operational definition. In a speech in April 1987 Gorbachev said that 'reasonable sufficiency' was the level of military potentials required to accomplish only "defensive tasks".⁵⁰ In following months, chief of the General Staff Marshal Akhromeev fully endorsed these two points word for word. In his Victory Day article in *Krasnaya zvezda*, for example, he said that "nuclear war can only lead to mankind's destruction.... A world war involving the use of conventional means will also bring mankind incalculable and even unpredictable disasters and suffering."⁵¹

This nature of the concept 'reasonable sufficiency' became a new military doctrine at a place in which the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization met in Berlin to discuss military doctrine on May 28-29, 1987. The prime task of Soviet military doctrine was on how to prevent all war, i.e., both nuclear and conventional wars. Yazov officially defined new Soviet military doctrine as follows. "Soviet military doctrine is a system of fundamental views on the prevention of war. It is subordinated to resolution of the cardinal task... not permitting war, nuclear or conventional."⁵² Although it was in sharp contrast to the previous one that, in essence, meant a system of scientifically founded and officially endorsed views on questions of the preparation and the victorious waging of war,⁵³ it appeared too broad to be implemented immediately.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, it was significant that Yazov's approach was based on a profound understanding of the fact that "a nuclear threat is hanging over all and survival has become mankind's main concern."⁵⁵ In fact, he fully accepted Gorbachev's current argument that the huge stockpiled arsenals of nuclear

weapons posed a threat to the very existence of humanity and nuclear war could not be a means for attaining political goals. In this context, the meeting of the Warsaw Treaty member states endorsed a six-point plan for the elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons, conventional force reductions in Europe, the creation of a workable system of verification for each, the establishment of meaningful confidence-building measures, and, finally, an end both to NATO and the Warsaw Pact in order to terminate the abnormal division of Europe into two opposing blocs.⁵⁶

After that point and more ambitiously, Gorbachev began to develop and clarify much more detailed ideas relating to the implementation of the new military doctrine. Among them, the most eye-catching one was Gorbachev's momentous article "Reality and Guarantees for a Secure World" which appeared in *Pravda* on September 17, 1987. In this article the views of the Soviet government on peace, security and disarmament issues were set forth in a most detailed, streamlined, and integral way. Gorbachev first denied the past contribution of nuclear deterrence to Soviet security and thereby implied that such a policy would endanger the country, taking up a theme sounded earlier by Dobrynin, who was a pioneer in raising new security ideas as a civilian. Gorbachev worried more over the danger of accidental nuclear war triggered by a reflexive commitment to deterrence than the danger of an unprovoked Western attack. In this logic, he favourably referred to a Soviet-American study which suggested that strategic stability could be maintained with only 5 percent of existing nuclear weapons. Moreover, after having proposed the removal of the most dangerous offensive types of arms from the zone of contact, that is, 150 km on each side, in February 1987,⁵⁷ Gorbachev now explained that the new defensive strategy required a radical restructuring of the Soviet armed forces: "The armed forces must be restructured to be sufficient to repel possible aggression, but not sufficient to conduct offensive operations."⁵⁸ Not surprisingly,

a more detailed hint on arms reductions appeared at the October 1987 plenum of the Central Committee. Gorbachev gave notice that, henceforth, priority would be put on quality in the armed forces. Thus, Gorbachev's concept of reasonable sufficiency became a much more sweeping agenda of Soviet objectives in the arms control process.

3.3. The MPA and Rank-and-File Communists Start to Move

Although up to the Rust affair, if not earlier, some senior commanding officers were expressing the need for change, they did not rush into a great deal of changes. It appeared that, for them, two things, recognizing the need and dealing with the problems inherent in the military system, were different matters.⁵⁹ What was more, with regard to the issues of new foreign and security policy, many members of the high command were still giving signs of doubt and dissent.⁶⁰ Therefore, it is useful to see the response of the MPA to the new leadership's intervention in defense budget process, arms control, and military doctrine. Originally the organ was designed to control both the political organs and Komsomol organizations within the armed forces and to ensure that the influence of party policies were felt in terms of both military efficiency and political reliability, as Kolkowicz suggested.

There had been some dramatic episodes in the history of the MPA with the many changes in its system. As the above mentioned traditional approaches suggest, the relationships between political officers and military commanders had been tenuous. So, here it is rather useful to review some contradictions between the two that had existed relatively in recent decades.⁶¹ Around the mid-1970s when the political leadership's priorities were beginning to change from heavy industry to consumer goods, the MPA was active in its way to discipline some objections

coming from mainly A. A. Grechko and like-minded officers to the party line that emphasized the need for détente with the West. They were asked to grasp "the major positive changes" resulting from East-West détente and to accept the new party policies as an "organic" part of Marxism-Leninism.⁶² The campaign spearheaded by Sredin, the first deputy chief of the MPA, culminated in a national conference of military ideological workers in 1975. In contrast to similar gatherings held in earlier years, Grechko was forced to share the rostrum at this conference with Politburo candidate member B. Ponomarev, who offered a much more up-beat reading of recent international trends and progress in arms control.⁶³

Shortly after Andropov took office, the MPA again underscored the party's primacy over the military establishment to calm down Ogarkov and his military supporters.⁶⁴ Its tone was even upgraded under Chernenko. Admiral A. Sorokin bluntly stated in an article, for example, that "conceit" and "excessive ambitions" should be quickly blocked to ensure that every military leader adopted the Leninist leadership style. In addition he asked party organizations within the military to apply strictly the Central Committee's firm line against those who rejected criticism, while saying that there could be no indulgences for persons who forgot their duties as Communists.⁶⁵

Conversely, under Gorbachev the MPA was asked primarily to restructure itself, like the other party organs and organizations in society. While criticizing the Soviet economy system, Gorbachev at the April 1985 plenum of the CC focused on the party apparatus, because in his opinion it had failed to keep up with the demands of the times.⁶⁶ During the time of watching the development of the matter, the party apparatus within the armed forces called itself "to raise the level of exactness and personal responsibility,"⁶⁷ consistent with Gorbachev's April speech.

Particularly, a May 1985 meeting of party aktiv appeared to be an early

signal of the reformation of the MPA itself. Two speeches of Admiral A. Sorokin, first deputy chief of the MPA, were indicative of that signal. Sorokin stated that the political apparatus in the military had failed to meet "the demands of the April plenum" in a number of areas and that party organs had not eliminated "formalism for political-educational work", in late June and in early July 1985 respectively.⁶⁸ Even, Army General A. D. Lizichev, the new chief of the MPA, also recognized this in November 1986, when the campaign of perestroika in the armed forces had been progressing to some extent. A lot of articles on perestroika within the armed forces, not limited to just a matter of the party apparatus, or Communists, for example, were published. A special section was allowed in *Krasnaya zvezda* for various levels of military personnel to recognise problems and to suggest some measures. Many letters were also published therein. Thus, painful was Lizichev's comment on problems in the party organization within the armed forces. He revealed that "in some places, criticism carries a formal, superficial character. At many meetings, criteria characteristic of bygone days, an insufficiently fresh form of analysis, and a lack of sharp conclusions and self-criticism predominate."⁶⁹

In the midst of renewal of party works, a noteworthy article by Lizichev appeared in *Kommunist* around the January 1987 plenum of the CC. His article broadly covered military doctrine as well as more specific arms control and foreign policy questions. It appeared to try to direct possible criticism from some military officers, and thereby attempted to calm down signs of division within the military over the new thinking, as was the precedent.

Significant was Major General I. Sidelnikov's proposal, which appeared in *Krasnaya zvezda* in December 1985, just before the 27th Party Congress of the CPSU. Particularly, he focused on a passage in the draft of the new Party Programme which stated that "the party will make every effort to ensure that the USSR Armed Forces are at a level excluding strategic superiority on the part of the

imperialism's forces." The general suggested that it had to be reworked to say that "the party will continue to take unflinching care to ensure the armed forces possess all modern means for the motherland's defense."⁷⁰ His message between the lines was clear: against the political means contained in the term "every" and for strengthening the armed forces rather than "to a certain level."

The 27th Party Congress, however, stuck to the draft words. Moreover, Gorbachev at the Party Congress answered in a clear fashion. First, probably keeping the term "continue" in mind, he emphasized that the party leadership was devoting "unremitting" attention to the country's defense capability. With regard to "to possess all modern means", he made it clear that the armed forces had modern weaponry and technology "at their disposal." And then, he concluded that the USSR's defense might was maintained at a level which allowed it to "reliably" protect the peaceful labour and lives of Soviet people.⁷¹

In the midst of the debates, Lizichev first held a centrist position. He stated that while there was danger in carelessness, complacency, and naive "pacifism," there was similar danger in overestimating the potentialities of the aggressive circles of imperialism."⁷² Then, he warned that the costs of a future war would be immeasurably higher than those of WWII, even if the use of weapons of "mass destruction" was limited. Although this was one of main points of the new thinking at that time, he neglected to mention the cause of the war, or the nature of capitalism, that was more vital than the nature of the future war. In this context, the party had to do everything possible to avoid a nuclear war and to eliminate war in general; naturally, the party was also described as taking the measures needed to ensure that the armed forces remain "at the level of modern demands," he continued.

Lizichev also repeated the standard refrain that the USSR disavowed nuclear force as a method of resolving political conflicts, rejected the option of preventive

strikes, disputed the possibility of limited nuclear war, and censured the policies of "neoglobalism." Indeed, he argued that the very existence of the Soviet armed forces was made necessary only by the danger of possible aggression. In short, he in some way sided with the general secretary in the article. But this article was his first and final one. Once Kolkowicz clearly recognized the value of the MPA for the party leadership as a control mechanism over the military establishment. Under the leadership of Gorbachev this perspective could no longer account for the developing facts. It does not say, however, that professional loyalties of the political officers and their feelings tended to outweigh political or ideological considerations as a whole. Rather, political reform was promoting a symbiotic relationship between political officers and military commanders as the political reform continued. Lizichev's view on the professional army, national army, and departmentization of the armed forces shared with that of Yazov and Moiseev.

Instead, the role of the party organizations and its rank-and-file officers became much more important than had been the case in the past. Since the January 1987 plenum of the CC, perestroika in the armed forces had become a matter for the whole of the armed forces, not merely that of the MPA or Communist organizations. Based on the same principles as in the economic sphere, it intended to create an effective army, deal with laziness, inefficiency, lack of personal control, alcoholism, bullying (*dedovshchina*), friction between nationalities and educational backwardness, and the emphasis on personal responsibility and competence. In fact, these problems had already revealed themselves little by little, even before the 27th Party Congress. Consequently, the main point on these agendas is about an effective measure. The January plenum decided to introduce *glasnost*' and democratization into the armed forces, which appeared to be somewhat contrary to the military spirit.

As Kolkowicz observed, during the Khrushchev era, criticism and self-

criticism were used to denote the interference of party officials in commanders' decisions. Now, under Gorbachev, the essence of these principles was revived. In short, junior and middle level officers were allowed to have their say in the decision-making process and were able to exercise their initiative in implementing decisions. In early 1980s, i.e., at the end of Brezhnev leadership, this type of measure was also used. Then, mainly party members within the armed forces were mobilized to shore up the general secretary's support within the officer corps against Ogarkov and his like-minded supporters. A national conference of secretaries of the military's primary party organizations was convened in 1981, nearly ten years after a similar meeting.⁷³ More significant was the 1982 national conference because it gave a blanket endorsement to Brezhnev's policies, particularly his stance on the military budget.⁷⁴

In addition, Brezhnev and his supporters also threatened political retribution against officers who had failed to toe the line. Shortly after the conclusion of the national conference, the first deputy chief of the Defense Ministry's Main Cadres Administration called for tighter screening and control of commanders. Regular attestation of officers, he said, could serve as a "powerful stimulus" to the fulfilment of party and service obligations, and officers should understand the position in which an individual would serve. And he bluntly concluded that sometimes "it is necessary to remove those commanders who, despite their love of work and feeling of responsibility depend too little on the Party."⁷⁵

Now ordinary Communists, through the MPA mechanism initially, were mobilized to pressure conservative commanders. For example, at a meeting of the party aktiv of the ministry of defense convened just after the January 1987 plenum, rank-and-file officers were given many chances to express their viewpoints, including the military implications of the January plenum. The MPA officials, deputy ministers, and the Central Committee overseers participated in the meeting.

The MPA's political departments in the General Staff and in the military's central administrations were called to play a much more active role. One of the reasons was that during the past two years the officer corps had responded sluggishly to the party's calls for the revived policy, criticism and self-criticism, and institutional perestroika. Some unidentified speakers linked the currently unresolved military problems to the military leadership. They complained, for example, that military ethics and standards would not have declined, if the defense ministry's personnel administration had taken corrective steps and introduced "fresh forces" into military commands. In this connection, changes in cadres policy, including the downgrading of seniority and service records in making military appointments, was endorsed.⁷⁶

Marshal Sokolov addressed the meeting, but his remarks were not reported, possibly, because he opposed the changes. Less than one month previously in a speech on Army and Navy Day, the defense minister, arguing against the idea of revamping the MOD, insisted that the central requirement of military personnel policy was a capability "to combine young and experienced cadres to ensure their continuity and the development of everything good that has been accumulated in the activity of commanders... and has passed the test of time."⁷⁷ The omission of Sokolov's speech was in contrast to the *Krasnaya zvezda's* treatment of Gorbachev's speech at the January 1987 plenum of the CC.

The paper left out Gorbachev's comment about the "crisis phenomena" in the USSR and about the military's failings. In fact, Gorbachev said at the January 1987 plenum that "Soviet military cadres have an enormous responsibility before the people to protect the country's security. The people and the party are doing everything to strengthen the armed forces and have a right to assume that no aggression can catch the USSR unawares. The party counts on the officer corps in deciding on the tasks for strengthening the state's defense capacity. The Central

Committee is sure that all military cadres will act with the greatest responsibility."⁷⁸ But the military newspaper reported that Gorbachev stressed that "our most important concern" was about the military cadres who were defending the country.⁷⁹

As the Rust affair happened in May 1987, the measure of pressure 'from below' suddenly became much more dramatic and reached its peak. The Politburo firstly suggested a guideline on how to treat the incident. The Politburo interpreted it as some sort of incapability of the Soviet armed forces by firing Sokolov. Afterwards, at the June 1987 plenum of the CC Gorbachev remarked that the unprecedented event demonstrated "the existence of powerful negative phenomena" in the military, and he proclaimed that there had to be no doubt either within the party or among the people about the armed forces' ability to defend the country.⁸⁰

Then on June 16 1987 at a meeting of most Party members of the Moscow Air Defence District, which appeared to be a clearly calculated place for young officers and civilians, all of the commanders and staff officers related to the affair were asked to explain why it had happened and to account for 'everything' that they had done wrong. It was clear, that despite a special air command with approximately 370,000 troops, an anti-ballistic defence system with more than 100 launchers, about 2,200 interceptor fighter planes, 10,000 radar stations, a vast anti-aircraft artillery network, and more than 9,000 surface-to-air missile launchers, they failed to detect and shoot down the plane, if it were necessary. It seemed that it was in fact spotted and buzzed by several military aircraft as it approached Moscow. They did not open fire. It is rather plausible that they were still reeling from the scandal caused by the downing of the South Korean Boeing in 1983. Ironically, the incident was considered as not an independent single case but a due result of accumulated mistakes.

The commander of the Moscow Air Defence District, Marshal of Aviation Konstantinov, for example, was reprimanded for not realizing the seriousness of the situation and not undertaking measures to improve the operations of the command, and was consequently replaced by Colonel General of Aviation Tsarkov. The chief of staff of the District, Colonel General Yu. Gorkov, was severely criticized because he "avoids solving problems" and "has made it a practice of falsifying its reports to enhance its accomplishments." And "the style of work of the staff of the region headed by him is dominated by bureaucratism, useless busywork, and rapid turnover of personnel".

Moreover, Gorkov was personally accused of crude behaviour and intimidation of subordinates. Another Colonel General P. Khotylev, deputy commander for combat training, was also accused of incompetence, as was chief of radio technical troops Colonel General A. Ghukhov. Aviation commander O. Lengarov was charged with having failed to organize flight units properly. Moreover, Lt. Generals Yu. Brazhnikov, N. Markov, Major General V. Reznichenko, and a number of other high-ranking anti-aircraft defence officers of the District were deprived of their Party memberships, and consequently of their posts and privileges.

Here the main concern is not the fact that a lot of senior officers were criticized and removed, but that they were criticized by young officers as well as civilians, including then Moscow First Party Secretary, B. El'tsin, who considered criticism the "vitamin of perestroika."⁸¹ On the one hand, the fact that young officers were encouraged to speak out against their commanders could be interpreted as a threat to the hierarchy of the military, although the measure 'from below' is useful for the political leadership to control over commanders.

The new defense minister Yazov grasped this point well. Up to then, senior commanders in general were welcoming part of the measure in that the measure

could be used to discipline mainly junior officers. In reality, the measure was being used to control themselves, contrary to their wishes. Thus, on adopting a cautious attitude toward political liberalization as whole, Yazov warned that "criticism is a very sharp weapon." Sensationalism and a disrespectful attitude toward military cadres, which could be seen for someone as fresh ideas coming from both junior officers and civilians, should be avoided, he argues. In addition, he asserted on glasnost' that half-truths, lack of objectivity, tendentiousness are not of use to military preparedness and not of use to perestroika.⁸²

On the other hand, the fact that commanders and staff officers were criticized by civilians, especially, by El'tsin, was significant because he showed how to attack a sacred cow. El'tsin said at the meeting that "there had developed a pervasive state of self-satisfaction, boasting, and complacency in the armed forces. It appeared that Soviet officers neither understood nor respected their soldiers. Favouritism and nepotism had become rife."⁸³ Afterwards, the top officials of the MOD were urged to look the Soviet working people straight in the eye and to answer for their responsibility and incompetence. Conclusively, El'tsin assigned primary responsibility for the decline in the armed forces to the loss of authority of the party organization. He declared that commanders acted as if the resolutions of congress and Central Committee plenums did not concern them.

How to understand El'tsin's criticism? His action must be understood as an effort of party's control over the military in that he was the first secretary of the Moscow city and a candidate member of the Politburo, and therefore he was allowed to speak. It should be recorded, however, as a moment that unleashed new forces that would begin to challenge senior officer's social standing and their institutional role when the party began to be discredited. El'tsin and his followers' attacks on the high command, together with junior officers, made real waves.

Along the line of the unchallenged control of the party over the armed forces

organization, priorities, and future capabilities, this type of meeting was repeated in most of the Soviet republics under the chairmanship of the local party secretaries. In Moscow an enlarged meeting of the Ground Troops Military Council was held in June 1987, headed by Army General E. Ivanovskii, then CINC of the Ground Forces.

With an article in *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*,⁸⁴ the democratization campaign, or criticism from below, in the armed forces entered a more serious phase in August 1987. The main point of the article was that there was no contradiction between criticism of superior officers by their subordinates and the needs of military discipline. Initiative and creativity among subordinates should not be suppressed, it argued. In particular, the article encouraged discussion about how to carry out orders, while claiming that the prohibition on criticizing orders had been interpreted too broadly by commanding officers. As one of goals of the democratization in the armed forces, criticism of commanding officers by their subordinates was established, a much more radical idea was also introduced. Lt. General V. Korablev in the same journal argued that Gorbachev's principle of free elections should be extended to party organs within the armed forces,⁸⁵ because party organs too often directed their criticism at unidentified targets. In fact, part of this idea was implemented in the elections to the 19th Party Conference, the Congress of People's Deputies, the first RSFSR Party Congress, and the 28th Party Congress. As a result of it, a number of junior and middle level officers were elected, and some of them became 'dissident', whose activities will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.4. Civilians Began to Meddle in Doctrinal Debates

Although around the 27th Party Congress Gorbachev energetically put

forward the doctrinal issues centred on the concept of 'reasonable sufficiency', few officials reiterated it. It was June 1986 that a party figure firstly mentioned it. Head of the International Department of the CC, A. Dobrynin, in an article in *Kommunist*, called for new approaches to national security as well as a greater civilian role in the debate over national security issues.⁸⁶ Appearance of this article had a direct connection with Gorbachev's early plan to build centres of national security expertise outside the military, both in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the CC Secretariat.

The MFA began to restructure itself just after the 27th Party Congress under Shevardnadze, and a new deputy foreign minister for personnel, V. Nikoforov. Shevardnadze had been a party careerist with no professional background in foreign affairs and Nikoforov was the former deputy head of the CC Organizational Party Work Department. On the other hand, an experienced diplomat Dobrynin became the head of the Central Committee International Department (ID) and was placed in charge of the nomenklatura of the MFA. In April 1986 G. Korniyenko moved from the MFA to the ID, as first deputy chief to work for Dobrynin, along with the veteran ID staffer V. Zagladin. Two departments for arms control were established: one in the MFA and the other in the ID.

In addition, there were other personnel changes to oversee foreign policy. A. Yakovlev, who had been head of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) since 1983, became the head of the CC Propaganda Department. V. Medvedev, who had been Yakovlev's deputy in the Propaganda Department in the early 1970s, became the head of the Socialist Bloc Relations Department. V. Falin a political observer with *Izvestiya* was elected a candidate member of the CC at the 27th Party Congress. In March 1986 he became the chief of the Novosti Press Agency, and replaced Dobrynin in the aftermath of the 19th

Party Conference.

Further restructuring of the ID and MFA continued throughout 1988 as the CC Department for Relations with the Socialist Countries was brought into the ID. In September 1988, the creation of the CC Commission for Foreign Affairs, headed by A. Yakovlev, marked a critical step in continued efforts to integrate party and state institutions. Together the Commission, the ID, and the MFA emerged as an increasingly centralized party-state agency for foreign affairs. In the end, the MFA gained a lot from Gorbachev's reform of the national security establishment. The new foreign and security policy posture of the USSR gave the MFA a leading role to play. Moreover, the ministry gained further institutional prestige as a result of the changes in its relationship with the ID and later the Commission.

An active and earliest participant in the drive to enshrine the idea of reasonable sufficiency A. Dobrynin firstly called for "even more profound" works on international and military-political problems. At that time Gorbachev was stressing the threat of nuclear war and the danger of an arms race that had reached a qualitatively new stage. Proceeding from this recognition, Dobrynin emphasized the need to develop a "new theory" that could reflect the realities of the nuclear age. Then, he focused on the role of scientists in turning the new way of thinking into reality.

Already Dobrynin had expressed this point in an address in May 1986 to a gathering of scientists from various disciplines. More specifically, with regard to the concept of 'reasonable sufficiency', he argued that "immediate scientific analysis" to the issue demanded "lowering" the current level of military potentials, but without any details. As another concept 'defensive defense' was put on the agenda, he made explicit reference to the alternative defence concepts developed in the West.⁸⁷ Of late, he even pushed for the creation of new section for arms

control and military affairs staffed by civilians. As a result, Lt. General V. Sharodubov, who had taken part in the Soviet delegation to the SALT talks and INF, was transferred to the section.

In May 1987 A. Yakovlev also began vocalizing his role in increasing the role of civilian experts in the formulation of military policy. "The concept of sufficiency of military potentials, including under the conditions of a complete elimination of nuclear weapons, a concept which was advised by the 27th CPSU Congress, needs to be revealed and filled with substance. Of no less importance is the task of analyzing, in connection with the military specialists, our military doctrine, the strategic essence of which is based on the policy of averting nuclear war."⁸⁸

Although, Shevardnadze rarely referred to 'reasonable sufficiency' at that time, he played in defining the defense agenda an important role that could mean the MFA's bid for a more substantial role at the expense of the high command. Personally, Shevardnadze attached great value to the views of experts. It was quite natural, therefore, that the MFA was well linked to outside intellectuals. The MFA created a Scientific Information Centre to coordinate academic research. Moreover, most departments of the ministry established consultative councils to let scholars voice their opinions on international issues.⁸⁹ In particular, the MFA's monthly journal *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn (International Affairs)* was asked to function as a broad forum for serious writings on security issues, which in nature were critical of the armed forces. So, civilian defense intellectuals were inspired.

To be sure, the most noticeable was Shevardnadze's opening speech at a July 1988 conference of the national security community held at the MFA, in which more than 300 experts attended, including chief of the General Staff Akhromeev. There the foreign minister called for an effective "parliamentary mechanism" for the discussion of international and military issues, and through this he implied that

the MFA should be given veto power over weapon programmes.⁹⁰ This was a clear recognition of the problems in the past Soviet security behaviours. Shevardnadze criticized the past military decisionmaking and in particular denounced the Soviet chemical weapons programme which was the product of "primitive and distorted" notions of Soviet interests.⁹¹

In terms of doctrinal debates, his brief questioning of 'nuclear deterrence' was significant. In principle, he accepted that nuclear weapons could have been instrumental in preventing a third world war for over forty years. But he suggested a paradoxical situation in the area of conventional forces. As early as September 1985 when he made a speech to the UN General Assembly, Shevardnadze reiterated unintended and uncontrolled outbreak of war in the nuclear-space age and implicitly questioned the nuclear deterrence.⁹² Now, his main point is that if nuclear weapons had really been a deterrent, they would logically have curbed the race in conventional armaments. Actually the reverse had happened, he argued. In fact, the Soviet high command had overcome the nature and dynamic of nuclear weapons and had developed all kind of options to be able to conduct war. Realising that nuclear war was out of the question, for it could not be won, the Soviet built up their conventional armed forces because they regarded conventional war as permissible even in the presence of the nuclear deterrent. Now, Shevardnadze questioned the very danger of a war using conventional arms. Simply the foreign minister concluded that nuclear deterrence was a "frozen legacy" of the political "Ice Age", and he admitted that the only real function of nuclear weapons was to endanger the survival of humanity.⁹³ He went to say that "the principle of sufficiency" should be sufficient for defence but not for attack. In much more practical terms, he proposed a staged reduction of conventional armaments by removing present imbalances and asymmetries from reciprocal exchange of data to a reduction in armed forces by 500,000 men on either side of

the WTO and NATO.

Let us go back to mid-1987 when the drive for military reform was initiated by an unprecedented wave of articles in which civilian defense experts invaded the domain of the military theoreticians and took stands uncongenial to mainstream military thought.⁹⁴ One of the earliest but broadest ones appeared to be A. Bovin's questioning of the Soviet decision to place SS-20's in European Russia.⁹⁵ Thomas F. Remington argued that, assuming that glasnost' had not led to open debates on Soviet foreign policy by Soviet writers as it had in domestic matters, this publication was primarily aimed at foreign audiences and used as a bargaining chip in arms negotiations.⁹⁶ It should have been considered as a signal of the new era. General Yu. Lebedev's angry response to Bovin's dissent reflected this point in the following week's issue *Moscow News*.⁹⁷

A much more serious case was the debate between a writer A. Adamovich and Colonel General D. Volkogonov. Adamovich rejected the developments of Soviet warfighting options, i.e., to launch a retaliatory strike only after absorbing a nuclear attack on Soviet territory,⁹⁸ by saying that "we don't want to take part in the destruction of mankind, not with a first, not with a second, not with any further strike."⁹⁹ In response, Volkogonov at a writers' conference labelled Adamovich's "crying from the heart" as a "disturbing undercurrent of pacifism."¹⁰⁰ Afterwards, the political general separated pacifism from the battle for peace and even warned against such a mood. The general considered readiness for nuclear retaliation to be essential in order to deter the potential enemy first strike. These polemics continued in several journals over a period of months.¹⁰¹ Meanwhile, Volkogonov showed the difference between the two more clearly in an interview with *Krasnaya zvezda*. In Volkogonov's opinion, Adamovich thought that there was no need for a deterrent capability. Consequently, the general argued that his view was far beyond unilateral disarmament and could mean "survival at any price." If a political

mechanism failed to prevent war, he reiterated, the country had to rely on a military mechanism.¹⁰² In response, Adamovich continuously rejected the concept of deterrence based on retaliation, by saying that the very retaliation was unnecessary, because any attacker would fatally incur the radiation effects of his own strike. The point was that a nuclear arms race and nuclear war had to be prevented.

Notable and much more authoritative was the involvement of the MFA and the research institutes of the Academy of Sciences, principally the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) directed by O. Bykov and the Institute for the Study of USA and Canada (IUSAC) headed by G. Arbatov. As a kind of joint work of the MFA and the Institutes, a coauthored work, "Reasonable Sufficiency--Or How to Break the Vicious Circle," by deputy director of the IUSAC V. Zhurkin, senior researcher A. Kortunov, and researcher S. Karaganov attracted public attention.¹⁰³

Let us consider civilians' arguments over major issues. First, they sought to redefine a fundamental question, that is, the nature of the Western threat as Zhurkin, Karaganov, and Kortunov did. More broadly they assumed there would be no world war. Whilst military leaders contended that a real "military threat" continued to exist. For example, in 1987 the new defense minister Yazov spoke of the "serious reality" of possible Western aggression against the socialist countries.¹⁰⁴ The civilian theorists, however, disregarded, in methodological terms, the dimensions of military figures, although some acknowledged the role of nuclear forces in reducing the likelihood of war.¹⁰⁵

In general, they focused on the nature or impression of the Western countries. Already the new Party Programme had recognized that the present-day capitalism differed in many respects from what it was at the beginning and even in the middle of the 20th century.¹⁰⁶ At first Primakov and later Gorbachev on Lenin's

behalf had raised the relative importance of peaceful coexistence or construction cooperation particularly in the nuclear age.¹⁰⁷ In January 1987 Bovin argued that national interests had proved stronger than class interests based on the WWII.¹⁰⁸ This point was a direct challenge to the well established sociopolitical aspect of military doctrine and was too provocative not to initiate the debate about the analytical priority of national interests versus class interests. Later in November 1987 he suggested that the traditional Soviet assessment of the West's intentions to wage war to eliminate socialism might be incorrect. Based on his earlier comment that although the nature of the capitalism could not change, but the means of its realization could, Bovin argued that in the nuclear age there existed a desire for self-preservation, even in Washington. Therefore, it was assumed that there would be no world war.

Second, the civilians used the concept 'reasonable sufficiency' to lower the level of military potential, while the military used the same principle to defend it. Primakov asserted, for example, that the USSR required only a "qualitative parity," which he defined as the ability to inflict "unacceptable damage" on an aggressor in response to a nuclear first strike.¹⁰⁹ Based on such a tentative belief, military strength between the superpowers should be reduced to levels acceptable to both sides, he concluded.¹¹⁰ Further discussions of the concept by civilian analysts in 1987 and 1988 laid the groundwork for a challenge to the high command's insistence on strategic parity. It was the concept of "minimum nuclear deterrence" as compatible with reasonable sufficiency for defense. I. Malashenko, researcher of the IUSAC, said that a transition in practice to minimum deterrence could become an important stage in moving forward a nuclear-free world.¹¹¹ Until then the civilian analysts had rejected the term nuclear deterrence itself, as mentioned before. In terms of number, Zhurkin and others suggested 10 to 20 percent of the existing Soviet strategic forces¹¹² and Arbatov suggested 10 to 15 percent.¹¹³ R.

Bogdanov, formerly a deputy director of the IMEMO, and A. Kortunov took really worst-case possibilities into account and then suggested that five warheads would be a sufficient deterrent to dissuade anyone from deliberate decision to attack.¹¹⁴ Subsequently, they argued for unilateral reduction to a level of minimum deterrence: 500 single-warhead missiles, part mobile land-based ICBMs and part sea-based SLBMs. This view was considered as "incompetent" by military theoreticians, who reaffirmed the need for parity.¹¹⁵ Former US Secretary of Defense McNamara also expressed his support for "negotiated reciprocal reductions" gradually leading to a balanced minimum deterrent.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, most civilian analysts supported Bogdanov and Kortunov.¹¹⁷

The third concerned the relation between offense and defense, as the concept 'reasonable sufficiency' began to be applied to the conventional forces and the military favoured a more concrete concept "defensive" sufficiency when it was forced to define the concept. The civilian theorists still tried to link the relation between offense and defense to the problem of the arms race, or a stable balance of power, whereas the military theorists did see some merits in defensive operations. In January 1987 A. Kokoshin very conclusively argued that the problem of the arms race was a product not of the defense but of the offense with endless efforts to overcome the defense and thus instability was a product of the increasing destructiveness of offensive systems.¹¹⁸ Proceeding from this recognition, civilian analysts tried to demonstrate the potential superiority of the defensive over the offensive by providing historical examples of its use at the military-technical level.¹¹⁹ Hence they more deeply involved in the previous domain of the military.

But the battle of Kursk itself, chosen as a model case of defensive defense, had much room for discussion, because an initial defensive phase was followed by a successful large-scale counteroffensive. As the debate went on, the concept counteroffensive became critical. Inevitably, the military favoured a more extensive

counteroffensive capability in terms of when and where to defeat the aggressor.¹²⁰ while the civilians advocated the more limited counteroffensive capability, up to complete reliance on nonoffensive means of defense. After hypothesizing four alternative options that could result from a confrontation of conventional military forces, V. Larionov, for example, emphasized their fourth option, "a defense without the possibility of conducting offensive operations."¹²¹ For this, smaller troops units would be required, but their mobility would have to be increased to give them greater effectiveness.

Finally, in applying the concept 'reasonable sufficiency for defensive defense' to conventional forces, the civilian analysts particularly advocated unilateral measures. Simply Zhurkin and others praised Khrushchev's unilateral reduction of Soviet forces by 2.1 million men,¹²² while noting that conventional arms presented a greater threat to maintaining strategic stability. Foreign minister Shevardnadze aired the number 500,000 men to be cut. This was a key barrier to many officers' acceptance of reasonable sufficiency in a hurry. At that time, with the release of data on NATO and Warsaw Pact armed forces in Europe, the military leadership was arguing that there was roughly equivalent overall military power between the two, while admitting that the Warsaw Pact might be ahead of NATO in tanks and artillery, NATO had an advantage in strike aircraft.¹²³ But the civilians focused on the advantage of the 20,000 tanks that the Warsaw Pact had. The central tenet of their argument was that in the future, no attack would be possible at all, and so there would be no need of a counteroffensive potential, in which tank forces would play a pivotal role. Naturally, the tanks would be reduced unilaterally.

All in all, these developments clearly highlighted the change in the nature of the public debates on military affairs. Before Gorbachev's rise to power, Soviet civilian analysts had hardly commented on them. In such a short period of time, the civilians firstly aired the basic military issues, thereby undermined military

assumptions that had previously been excluded from consideration, and generated public support for their military policy options, including the unilateral force reductions. They were not interested in the set of long-standing military reasons, or military-technical aspects of theatre warfare that had underlain the existing huge size and offensive oriented structure and posture of Soviet conventional forces. Most of the civilian analysts used to regard the fact that the Soviet armed forces were much larger than necessary as valid.

Concerning the dynamic of the civilian defence experts, B. S. Lambeth gave them generous mark in that some leading figures such as Arbatov, Primakov, and so on, had been in place and in pursuit of policy relevance since the mid-1950s.¹²⁴ On the other hand, M. MccGwire regarded them as the extended "nomenklatura,"¹²⁵ which had been originally established in the first half of 1984 to address the problems introduced by the US SDI. In a compromising way, J. Snyder even argued that as Moscow's defense intellectuals had sought to force changes that would institutionalize the policies they preferred, Gorbachev's security concepts had, in turn, grown directly from the new domestic institutions he was promoting and the political constituencies he was relying on.¹²⁶

As a whole, it appeared that Gorbachev had to a certain extent encouraged them to speak out and that the civilians therefore perceived more freedom to conduct certain areas of analysis in the wake of Gorbachev's pioneering statements and proposals. They had not yet acquired prominence simply on the merits of their views. Rather, they were the beneficiaries of a broader process of institutional changes designed by Gorbachev to wrest control of the defense agenda from its traditional repository in the MOD and the General Staff. In sum, their views in comparison with the military ones had not yet formalized into full-fledged influence relationships. If they had high policymaking ambitions, they had to wait until such role in the policy formulation process was fully institutionalized. In practice it did

not take very long. By early 1989, the MFA and the USSR Supreme Soviet, along with a strengthened Central Committee staff organization led by Yakovlev, deeply entered into the defense arena.

3.5. Gorbachev's 1988 UN Speech, Debates on 'Reasonable Sufficiency', and Party-Military Relations

Gorbachev's announcement of the unilateral force reductions at the UN in December 1988 was a momentous decision. It ended the debates on the restructuring of Soviet armed forces in terms of military doctrine. At the same time, it meant a turning point in Party-military relations. The announcement was accompanied the resignation of Marshal Akhromeev and the appointment of the relatively junior Moiseev as chief of the General Staff. Moreover, in the weeks following Moiseev's promotion, a number of articles by senior General Staff officers appeared in the press.¹²⁷ In general, they all clearly supported the force reductions. In particular, their contents suggested to a certain extent that the Party had been conducting a campaign aimed at bringing 'disobedient' within the General Staff into line with Gorbachev's arms control line.

In military doctrinal terms, however, of significance was Lobov's recognition that the unilateral cuts demonstrated the unity of the political-military and military-technical aspects of Soviet military doctrine.¹²⁸ Under Brezhnev, the military-technical aspect had increasingly become the preserve of the General Staff and various military institutions. It had, however, become clear by the mid-1980s that well-considered military decisions intended to enhance the security of the country had the opposite effect. As Soviet deployment of SS-20s and US response to deploy the MX, Pershing II, cruise missiles suggested, they had made war more likely, while incurring heavy political, economic, and even military costs.

Therefore, General Staff had been under pressure. It was insisted that the upper reaches of military-technical aspect should come within the purview of the broader political-military establishment. In this context A. Kokoshin argued that there had to be a complete correspondence between the two aspects,¹²⁹ while claiming that war could no longer serve as a rational means of politics and a lot of decisions made at the boundary between politics and strategy might have fatal and irreversible consequences. Of course, his argument recognized the need for the top state and political leadership to know the fundamentals of military strategy, operational plans, the functioning of the military mechanism of carrying out decisions, and so on.

It is worth summarising Gorbachev's statement: the country would reduce its numerical strength by 500,000 men, 10,000 tanks in the territories of the country's European allies, including six tank divisions (5,000 tanks) in the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, 8,500 artillery systems, and 800 combat aircraft; assault landing troops and several other formations and units, including assault crossing units with their weapons and combat equipment in above countries; nearly one-fifth of all Soviet armament production; and the level of defense spending by 14.2%.¹³⁰ As a whole, these figures meant that the Soviet Union would reduce its troop strength by 12 percent. Concerning the approximate impact of these reductions on the balance of forces in Central Europe, the USSR's ability to launch a deep offensive on short notice, i.e., a large-scale standing start attack, on Western Europe would be sharply diminished because the potential for a surprise attack would be removed.

As we have seen in previous sections, Gorbachev had identified himself with a set of concepts such as 'reasonable sufficiency', 'defensive defence', 'asymmetric force reductions', and so on, and had mobilized the civilian forces to support him. But Gorbachev, since the end of 1987 when he hinted the prospect of reaching

agreement on a considerable reduction of conventional forces at the next summit in Moscow, appeared to have been restrained, particularly in taking a unilateral measure, by the institutional power of the military in terms of both Soviet politics and monolithic military expertise.¹³¹ It was in the fall of 1988 that political leaders seemed to move further towards adopting a position of 'reasonable sufficiency for defensive defence', if necessary, without the adoption of such a position by the US and its allies. Now throughout the announcement Gorbachev proved himself to be sincere in what he had stated.

Nonetheless, a suspicion remained when we focused on the retirement of Marshal Akhromeev, who, together with Yazov, had publicly argued against unilateral cuts. The immediate assumption in the West was that Akhromeev had resigned in protest over the unilateral measure. But Akhromeev himself denied this speculation in several interviews in early January of 1989. His main point was that Gorbachev's decision was correct, was justified from both political and military viewpoints, and was thoroughly considered from the military point of view.¹³² This kind of denial continued until the end of the year. For example, in an open letter to the chief editor of *Ogonek* he insisted that by mid-1988 the political and military leaders had "jointly" reached the conclusion that unilateral force cuts were possible.¹³³ This twist in Akhromeev's attitude can give us an alternative interpretation, that is, a sort of compromise between the political leadership and major part of members of the high command, centred on Akhromeev.

Marshal Akhromeev had actively participated in arms control negotiations, including the successful conclusion of the INF Treaty, and in instituting perestroika within the armed forces during his tenure as chief of the General Staff. Being chief of the General Staff and having extensive expertise in military science and technology made it possible for him to be an authoritative representative of the military. Domestically, he fulfilled a crucial function in explaining and justifying

arms control to Soviets. In carrying out this function, he often bolstered Gorbachev's positions against dissent from some elements in the Soviet military. In addition, he stressed the importance of political means for preserving international security and the need for perestroika in the military.

In relation to arms control, however, the marshal emphasized that any reduction in Soviet forces had to depend on corresponding reductions in American or NATO forces. For example, in January 1988, he warned that "defense sufficiency" cannot be interpreted one-sidedly, without regard to the developing correlation of forces against civilian defence intellectuals. It would be even more of a mistake to understand it, according to him, as unilateral disarmament.¹³⁴ Fundamentally he believed that the limits of reasonable sufficiency were not set by the USSR but by the US and its NATO allies. In March 1988 he still held this position but argued somewhat differently that there was an approximate "parity" between the Warsaw Pact Organization and NATO in the area of armed forces and conventional weapons.¹³⁵ Unfortunately, however, the plan for unilateral force reductions was announced over his repeated objections.

This was enough to undercut his military and professional authority and his political position both within and outside the armed forces. In this context, Fred Wehling argued that Akhromeev voluntarily exited from his position: the conflict between his duties as the senior military officer and his loyalty to Gorbachev's programme of military reforms became unresolvable.¹³⁶ Herspring, on the contrary, suggested that Gorbachev "deliberately" replaced Akhromeev in order to continuously work arms control issues with Yazov's protégé and Far East MD commander Mikhail Moiseev to implement military reforms.¹³⁷ Either case means that Akhromeev's ouster was not an astute political move.

In this respect, it was hardly unusual that Akhromeev was appointed as an advisor to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Moreover, it was at a time when

Gorbachev was intending to increase the legitimacy of the Supreme Soviet as a locus of political power. Akhromeev had served in the Supreme Soviet since 1984 and was again elected in March 1989 as a People's Deputy from the Beltski Okrug of the Moldavian republic after running unopposed. The appointment not only might help Gorbachev's effort but also did not alienate Akhromeev from Gorbachev himself.

As Wehling foresaw,¹³⁸ Akhromeev as the adviser would be able to provide a direct link between Gorbachev and upholders of perestroika in the armed forces, i.e., as long as the Marshal could maintain his professional reputation and contact with the military establishment, the General Staff or the Defense Ministry could be bypassed. In that case, Gorbachev's effort could or had to be another indication of the trend to downgrade the General Staff in defense policy-making apparatus whose resources were monopoly of military-technical issues.

The personal background of his replacement, relatively unknown and 49-year-old Moiseev, was very suggestive of this. He was selected over the heads of many more senior generals; he had no experience of war, not even in Afghanistan; he had never served on the General Staff in the past; and he had never written any articles about war-fighting strategies but administrative and personnel issues. This was evidence of one of the continuing trends of Gorbachev's personnel policy.

The Yazov-Moiseev military leadership should have grasped Gorbachev's very clear message that the higher levels of strategic planning or warfighting options, not to mention such political-military issues in Herspring's terms as defense budget and arms control, were now within the confines of the civilians. Instead, they were allowed to buildup of the Far Easterners within the high command,¹³⁹ i.e., those who served within the past ten years in the Soviet Forces of the Far East such as the Far Eastern MD, the Transbaikalian MD, the Siberian MD, the Central Asian MD, and the Pacific Fleet.

This forming of Far Easterners appeared to a certain degree to be a replay of the Stalingrad Group that had been formed mainly between 1957-1963 under Khrushchev. It gained control of the armed forces, and acquired a high level of political influence through its association with Khrushchev.¹⁴⁰ The Far Easterner at that time, however, were hardly seen as a hegemonical interest or pressure group within the armed forces. They were only developing as a group, united by personal ties and patronage relationships formed during their years of serving together in geographically remote areas. At most, their characterisation as "outsiders" with respect to the Moscow-based military hierarchy that developed under Brezhnev, may have been in important consideration for Gorbachev."¹⁴¹

Therefore, the decisive factor in decision making on the unilateral force reductions appeared to be the balance of power in the party leadership, that is, in favour with Gorbachev and his reformist allies against conservatives, rather than over the high command. There was a dramatic party leadership change approved at the September 1988 plenum of the CC and the USSR Supreme Soviet session. Gorbachev was positioned to facilitate a show of his determination to impose his will against the reluctant military high command. J. W. Parker even observed some unannounced shifts in the composition of the Defense Council, focusing on Gromyko, Chebrikov, and Ligachev.¹⁴² In this respect, he concluded that Gorbachev's announcement wholly confirmed the superiority of the party leadership over the military.

Concerning the possibility of compromise between the political leadership and majority of the high command, centred on Akhromeev, as mentioned above, it was too early to say, if not too cautious, whether the supremacy of the party over the military was established or not. What was clear at that moment was that the Akhromeev-Yazov-Moiseev military line-up was quite submissive to the political leadership. Yazov's Order of the Day for November 7 was suggestive. Yet, in the

midst of hot debates between civilians and many of senior generals on the new political thinking, Yazov declared that Soviet diplomacy was "creating more favourable conditions for slackening tension, broadening comprehensive East-West contacts, curbing the arms race, reducing military expenditure, and settling regional conflict."¹⁴³

Moiseev was on ahead of Yazov. The new chief of the General Staff declared that "we have now entered a new stage in the building of the armed forces,"¹⁴⁴ which began in 1985-1986. This recognition was good for the political leadership. But ominously the general began to pronounce on military doctrinal issues. He stated, for example, that "almost all positions on strategy, operational art, and tactics are undergoing fundamental changes under the influence not only of military-technical but also of military-political factors. In essence, a new theory of military art is being created."¹⁴⁵ In this context, the future role of the General Staff was to study military and political questions and the preparation of thorough, carefully considered proposals, he continued. This was a very noticeable point because Moiseev's previous writings dealt with personnel questions and thus he was not expected to address military strategic questions. Adding to this pronouncement, therefore, his view on the Western threat had a significant implication on the future civil-military relations. Moiseev warned that there was no change in the aggressive orientation of "imperialist" policy and that in particular the US remained intent on equipping its troops with the most modern technologies and weapon systems.

In conceptual terms, however, it was approaching the end of the party-military relations, although the party politics would continue. An era of genuine civil-military relations in the country was about to open with the new setting, the Congress of People's Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet. As the debate of how to restructure the Soviet armed forces in the context of new military doctrine

ended, concern about the course of internal military restructuring emerged as a major theme. This concern came from the recognition that, in a society that was becoming more open, the battle for the minds of people would become an important factor in civil-military relations. In order to preserve people's faith, there should not be shortcomings within the armed forces. In fact, the military leadership was conducting a noticeable action in defence of the status of the Soviet armed forces in the rapidly changing society. At a party conference held in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany the defence minister devoted virtually the whole of his speech to a delineation of shortcomings needed to be overcome.¹⁴⁶

Perestroika in its early stage involved a relaxation of Communist Party control over many aspects of Soviet life, particularly in the area of economic management. At the same time, it was an assault on the entrenched party bureaucracy. The new general secretary from the beginning demanded that the party reformed itself first. His efforts were boosted by those external societal pressures released by perestroika itself. The three years following the January 1987 plenum saw the greatest and most radical turnover of government and party personnel since Stalin. The political system continued to change. The process of shifting power from the party to state organs had been nearly completed in May 1989 when the Congress of People's Deputies convened for its first session. During that time, Gorbachev's power appeared to have reached its peak both as the party and national leader.

With regard to the party-military relations, the major changes in the party structure at the September 1988 plenum of the CC were significant. The existing departments of the CC Secretariat were regrouped, or disappeared, and placed under the purview of six commissions consisting of CC members plus some nonmembers. This prepared the way for transferring executive authority from the Secretariat to the commissions at the November 1988 plenum. This movement

significantly weakened the power of the permanent officials of the central party apparatus who were opposed to perestroika and nominally transferred that power to the elected Central Committee. As a result, the political status of leading conservative figures became doubtful.

Nonetheless, Gorbachev had to wait for some time to solve a paradoxical dilemma caused by the unprecedentedly successful turnover of government and party personnel. The problem was caused by the relationship between the general secretary and the CC, or the dependence of the two, the danger of which was shown by Khrushchev's fate in October 1964. The CC members were elected on the basis of the posts they held. Consequently they were normally removed from the CC when they were demoted to a lesser job or retired, usually at the Party Congress. Under Gorbachev's leadership, although a lot of high-ranking officials had been demoted or retired, some of them were still holding the CC memberships. Nearly 40% of the voting members of the CC elected in March 1986 had already been retired or demoted by July 1989, and the figure was to rise to some 50% by the time of the 28th Party Congress. The so-called lame ducks had been a political burden to Gorbachev. If anti-Gorbachev forces attempted a sort of coup in the CC, many of them would surely support the effort for personal reasons as well as policy ones. Thus, Gorbachev had often hinted at his desire for personal changes in the CC, but that was unsuccessful until the April 1989 plenum, at which 110 members of the CC and the Central Auditing Commission resigned. Moreover, the CC itself changed in a surprisingly-reduced number of members with 251 full members.

As a whole, the April 1989 plenum was accepted as a triumph both for Gorbachev personally and for his policies.¹⁴⁷ Once he held the twin posts of chairman of the Supreme Soviet and CPSU General Secretary, it would be extremely difficult for his opponents to topple him from power. Even if his party colleagues managed to replace him as general secretary, he could not be removed

from the presidency without a vote of the Congress of People's Deputies.

This success, however, was a very complicated matter, with regard to the party-military context. Until the summer of 1988 the party leadership had been united by an in-principle consensus on the need for major change. From before and after the 19th Party Conference to the April 1989 plenum it appeared to have been divided publicly into two blocs on various issues, particularly the status of the party. At a widely publicized meeting at the CC, for the first time since the ouster of Khrushchev, the top man in the Politburo came under open attack from his colleagues such as Ryzhkov, Ligachev, and Zaikov. They urged Gorbachev to reinstate the party apparatus in its previous powers and to order a crackdown on growing dissent in the country.¹⁴⁸

From the outset Gorbachev made clear his intention to gain greater control over the defense budget and arms control. For this he deliberately encouraged the various forces to participate in a more open and pluralistic debate about Soviet security and military policy. This could effectively undercut the military and professional authority and political position of the members of the high command both within and outside the military establishment and made it possible to end the debates on the restructuring of the Soviet armed forces in terms of new military doctrine in an impressive way, i.e., through Gorbachev's announcement of the unilateral force reductions at the UN in 1988. But it seems unlikely that Gorbachev could have foreseen the fundamental challenges inherent in the actual debates that took shape. Originally the debate was designed to claim the party's jurisdiction over the high command in general and military doctrine in particular. But perestroika and glasnost' significantly altered the relationship of the party and society and that of the military and society. This made Gorbachev face a dilemma of how to respond to the social pressures from below and to the isolated high command simultaneously, when the polarization among the party leadership came

to the surface. According to Kolkowicz's paradigm on the Soviet party-military relations, this polarization could mean that it was time for the military to act against the forces challenging its interests with the help of one segment of the party leadership which was openly competing against the other. In practice, there appeared to have been evidence of some support among conservatives within the party apparatus for at least some issues under the parliamentary system, as will be seen in chapter 8.

¹ Ilya Zemtsov and John Farrar, *Gorbachev, the Man and the System* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1989), p. 319.

² For a detailed analysis, see Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), chapters 5 and 6.

³ N. V. Ogarkov, *Istoriya uchit bditel'nosti* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1985), p. 93, cited in John W. Parker, *Kremlin in Transition, Volume II* (Cambridge: Unwin Hyman, 1991), p. 44.

⁴ M. Gorbachev, "Bessmertyi podvig sovetskogo naroda," *Kommunist*, No. 8, 1985, pp. 13-14.

⁵ *Izvestiya*, May 7, 1985.

⁶ Major General Yu. Lebedev, *Newsweek*, November 18, 1985, p. 50; Colonel General A. Lizichev, *Pravda Ukrainy*, July 17, 1985 and "Boevoi gotovynosti voisk-partiinuyu zaboty," *Kommunist*, No. 3 1986, p. 97. An editorial of *Krasnaya zvezda* published on August 1, 1985. Major General A. Skrylink and N. Tarasenko's article was also published in *Pravda* on August 16, 1985.

⁷ John W. Parker, *Kremlin in Transition, Volume II*, p. 32.

⁸ *Pravda*, April 24, 1985.

⁹ M. Gorbachev, "Proekt programma kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soyuza," *Kommunist*, No. 16, 1985, p. 48.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ N. V. Ogarkov, "Voennaya nauka i zashchita sotsialisticheskogo Otechestva," *Kommunist*, No. 7, 1978, p. 118.

¹² Brezhnev said in a meeting with commanders in 1982 that the party was taking measures to ensure that "they [the armed forces] have everything they need." See *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 28, 1982. However, the new Programme says that "the CPSU will make every effort to ensure that the USSR's Armed Forces are at a level that excludes strategic superiority on the part of imperialism's forces."

¹³ *Pravda*, April 8, 1985.

¹⁴ *Pravda*, October 3, 1985.

¹⁵ *Pravda*, October 17, 1985.

¹⁶ *Pravda*, January 16, 1986.

¹⁷ S. Sokolov, "Velikaya pobeda," *Kommunist*, No. 6, 1985, p. 67.

¹⁸ *Pravda*, November 6, 1985.

¹⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 5, 1985.

²⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 7, 1986.

²¹ For Sokolov's comments on the role of military power in ensuring Soviet security, see *Pravda*, November 8, 1985, *Pravda*, February 23, 1986, and *Pravda*, May 9, 1986.

²² Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, p. 233.

²³ Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism* (November-December 1988), reprinted in A. Dallin and G. W. Lapidus, eds., *The Soviet System in Crisis* (Boulder: Westview Press), p. 585.

²⁴ *New Times*, No. 35, 1986, pp. 4-5.

²⁵ *Pravda*, June 26, 1987.

²⁶ *Newsweek*, November 18, 1985, p. 50.

²⁷ Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command, 1976-1986*, p. 39.

²⁸ *Literaturnaya gazeta*, August 8, 1984. For a detail, see Rose E. Gottemoeller, *Conflict and Consensus in the Soviet Armed Forces*, R-3759-AF (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, October 1989), pp. 22-30.

²⁹ Ilya Zemtsov and John Farrar, *Gorbachev, the Man and the System*, p. 321.

³⁰ Jacques Sapir, *Le système militaire soviétique*, translated by David Macey, *The Soviet Military System* (Worcester: Polity Press, 1991), p. 254.

³¹ Alexander R. Alexiev and Robert C. Nurick, *The Soviet Military Under Gorbachev*, R-3907-RC (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, February 1990), p. 3.

³² For a partial list of key Soviet personnel comprising the leadership of the Soviet Armed Forces, see Grey Burkhar, "The Soviet Military Leadership," in *Gorbachev and His Generals* eds., William C. Green and Theodore Karasik (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 203-215.

³³ Sokolov devoted an unusually large part of his Armed Forces Day article to perestroika appeared in *Pravda*, February 23, 1987; For others' articles, see Akhromeev, *Sovetskaya rossia*, February 1, 1987; P. Lushev, "Vysokaya otvetstvennost' voennykh kadrov", *KVS*, No. 5, 1987; Yu. P. Maksimov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 5, 1987; V. Chernavin, *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 21, 1987.

³⁴ Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, pp. 243-244.

³⁵ Christoph Bluth, *New Thinking in Soviet Military Policy* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1990), p. 30 and Jeremy R. Azrael, *The Soviet Civilian Leadership and the Military High Command, 1976-1987*, p. 38.

³⁶ Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," p. 576.

³⁷ *New Times*, No. 14, 1991, p. 19.

³⁸ For the new members' statements on foreign policy, see *Pravda*, April 23 and September 13, 1985. Especially, E. Ligachev, "Gotovyat' k priinomu c"ezdu," *Kommunist*, No. 12, 1985, p. 21; Chebrikov *Kommunist*, No. 9, 1985, pp. 49-53; *Pravda*, February 7, 1985. Chebrikov generously praised the potential benefits of flexible diplomacy in a major speech appeared in *Pravda*, November 7, 1985.

³⁹ *Pravda*, March 8, 1985.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Pravda Ukrainy*, December 22, 1985, cited in Bruce Parrott, *op. cit.*, p. 579.

⁴² *Pravda Ukrainy*, July 12, 1986, cited in Bruce Parrott, *op. cit.*, p. 584.

⁴³ Jan S. Adams, "Institutional Change and Soviet National Security Policy," in *Soviet National Security Policy under Perestroika*, ed., George E. Hudson (Boston: Unwin

Hyman, 1989), pp. 151-170.

⁴⁴ *Pravda*, October 17, 1985.

⁴⁵ *Pravda*, November 28, 1985.

⁴⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 15, 1986.

⁴⁷ *Pravda*, March 7, 1986.

⁴⁸ S. Sokolov, "Reshayushchii istochnik boevoi moshchi," *Pravda*, February 23, 1986.

⁴⁹ *Pravda*, April 11, 1987.

⁵⁰ *Pravda*, April 1, 1987.

⁵¹ S. Akhromeev, "Velikaya poveda," *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 9, 1987.

⁵² D. Yazov, "Voennaya doktrina Varshavskogo Dogovora-doktrina zashchity mira i sotsializma," *Pravda*, July 27, 1987.

⁵³ Marshal A. A. Grechko, *Na strazhe mira i stroitel'stva kommunizma* (Moscow, Voenizdat, 1971), p. 52.

⁵⁴ Thomas Nichols and Theodore Karasik, "Civil-Military Relations Under Gorbachev: The Struggle over National Security," in *Gorbachev and His Generals*, eds., William C. Green and Theodore Karasik (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), p. 41.

⁵⁵ D. Yazov, "Warsaw Treaty Military Doctrine-For Defence of Peace and Socialism," *International Affairs*, No. 10, 1987, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Pravda*, May 30, 1987.

⁵⁷ *Pravda*, February 23, 1987.

⁵⁸ *Pravda*, September 17, 1988.

⁵⁹ Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, chapter 7, esp. pp. 242-243.

⁶⁰ For details see Thomas Nichols and Theodore Karasik, "Civil-Military Relations Under Gorbachev: The Struggle over National Security," pp. 33-36.

⁶¹ For early cases, see I. P. Petrov, *Partiinoe Stroitel'stvo v Sovetskoj Armii i Flote: 1918-1961* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1964); Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); and Timothy J. Colton, *Commissars, Commanders and Civilian Authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁶² G. A. Sredin, "O nekotorykh voprocakh ideologicheskoi raboty v booryzhennykh silakh," *KVS*, No. 2, 1974, pp. 17-27, esp. 17, 19, and 23-24 and "Razvitie obshchestvennykh nauk--vazhnyi uchastok ideologicheskoi raboty," *KVS*, No. 1, 1975, pp. 9-13, 18.

⁶³ *Pravda* January 29, 1975.

⁶⁴ B. Utkin, "Dokhdit' do uma i serdtsa," *KVS*, No. 23, 1982, pp. 22-32, esp. pp. 30-31.

⁶⁵ A. Sorokin, "Otvetstvennost' rukovoditelya za ukreplenie voinskoj distsipliny," *KVS*, No. 14, 1984, pp. 9 and 11.

⁶⁶ *Pravda*, April 24, 1985.

⁶⁷ *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 25, 1985.

⁶⁸ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 25, 1985 and *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 2, 1985.

⁶⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 15, 1986.

⁷⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 25, 1985.

⁷¹ *Pravda*, February 26, 1986.

⁷² A. Lizichev, "Oktyavr' i leninskoe uchenie o zashchite revolyutsii," *Kommunist*,

No. 3, 1987, pp. 85-96.

⁷³ "Vsearmeiskoe soveshchanie sekretarei partiinykh organizatsii," *KVS*, No. 21, 1981, p. 8.

⁷⁴ "Tsentral'nomu komitetu kommunistitsekoi partii sovetskogo soyuza, ...," *KVS*, No. 11, 1982, p. 32.

⁷⁵ V. Goncharov, *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal*, No. 6, 1982, pp. 6 and 9.

⁷⁶ Colonel B. Pokholenchuk, *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 18, 1987.

⁷⁷ S. Sokolov, "Na strazhe mira i bezoposnosti rodiny," *Pravda*, February 23, 1987.

⁷⁸ *Pravda*, January 28, 1987.

⁷⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 28, 1987.

⁸⁰ *Pravda*, June 26, 1987.

⁸¹ *Moskovskaya pravda*, April 14, 1987, cited in Thomas F. Reminton, "Gorbachev and the Strategy of Glasnost'," in *Politics and the Soviet System*, ed., Thomas F. Remington (London: Macmillan, 1989), p. 73.

⁸² D. Yazov, "Gluboko raskryvat' opyt perestroiki," *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 13, 1987.

⁸³ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 17, 1987.

⁸⁴ Major General V. Fedorov *et al*, "Perestroika i demokratizatsiya nashei armeiskoi zhizni," *KVS*, No. 16, 1987, pp. 9-16.

⁸⁵ V. Korablev, "Po puti razvitiya demokratii," *KVS*, No. 20, 1987, pp. 17-23.

⁸⁶ Anatolii Dobrynin, "Za bez'yadernyi mir, navstrechu XXI veku," *Kommunist*, No. 9, 1986, p. 27.

⁸⁷ *Pravda*, May 5, 1987.

⁸⁸ A. Yakovlev, "Dostizhenie kachestvenno novogo sostoyaniya sovetskogo obshchestva i obshchestvennye nauki," *Kommunist*, No. 8, 1987, p. 18.

⁸⁹ E. Shevardnadze, "Diplomatiya i nauka: soyuz vo imya budushchego," *Kommunist*, No. 2, 1990, p. 18.

⁹⁰ *Pravda*, June 29, 1988.

⁹¹ *Pravda*, July 26, 1988.

⁹² *Pravda*, September 25, 1985.

⁹³ Eduard Shevardnadze, "Toward A Safe World," *International Affairs*, No. 9, 1988, p. 8.

⁹⁴ Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Is Soviet Defense Policy Becoming Civilianized?*, R-3939-USDP (Santa Monica: CA: The RAND Corporation, August 1990), pp. 16-19. For a detailed explanation on those leading figures, see his previous work *Moscow's Defense Intellectuals*, P-7545 (Santa Monica: CA: The RAND Corporation, January 1990).

⁹⁵ Alexander Bovin, "Breakthrough," *Moscow News*, No. 10, 1989, p. 3.

⁹⁶ Thomas F. Remington, "Gorbachev and the Strategy of Glasnost'," pp. 62 and 79.

⁹⁷ Yuri Lebedev, "Why SS-20 Missiles Have Appeared," *Moscow News*, No. 11, 1987, p. 3.

⁹⁸ For a detail of the development of Soviet war-fighting options, see Alan B. Sherr, *The Other Side of Arms Control* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp. 84-92.

⁹⁹ Ales Adamovich, "At the Forum and After," *Moscow News*, No. 10, March 1987, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ *Literaturnaya gazeta*, May 6, 1987.

¹⁰¹ A parallel debate between V. Begun and V. Bovsh and V. Bykov, see

Politicheskii sobesednik (Minsk), Nos 1 and 2, 1987 and *Sovetskaya Kul'tura*, October 3, 1989, p. 6. For a round table discussion among Adamovich, Begun, Bovsh, Bykov and the editors of *Sovetskaya Kul'tura*, see the same journal on December 10, 1987. Bovin's criticism on the nuclear retaliatory strike, see *Izvestiya*, February 5, 1988.

¹⁰² *Krasnaya zvezda*, May 22, 1987.

¹⁰³ V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, and A. Kortunov, "Vyzovy bezopasnosti: starye i novye," *Kommunist*, No. 1, 1988, pp. 42-50.

¹⁰⁴ D. Yazov, *Na strazhe sotsializma i mira* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1987), p. 30.

¹⁰⁵ A. Arbatov, "Parity and reasonable sufficiency," *International Affairs*, October 1988, pp. 75-87.

¹⁰⁶ *Pravda*, March 7, 1986.

¹⁰⁷ *Pravda*, January 22, 1987.

¹⁰⁸ *Izvestiya*, January 10, 1987.

¹⁰⁹ *Pravda*, July 10, 1987.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *New Times*, No. 13, 1989, p. 17.

¹¹² V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, and A. Kortunov, "On Reasonable Sufficiency," *SShA*, No. 12, 1987, pp. 14-15.

¹¹³ A. G. Arbatov, "How much defense is enough?" *International Affairs*, No. 4, 1988, p. 39.

¹¹⁴ R. Bogdanov and A. Kortunov, "'Minimum Deterrence': A Utopia or a Real Prospect," *Moscow News*, No. 23, 1989, p. 6.

¹¹⁵ Colonel V. Dvorkin and Colonel V. Torbin, "On Real Sufficiency for Defense," *Moscow News*, No. 26, 1989, p. 6 and Lt. General E. Volkov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 28, 1989.

¹¹⁶ Rober S. McNamara, "Minimum Deterrence - A Final Aim," *New Times*, No. 37, 1989, p. 6.

¹¹⁷ Nikita Moiseyev, "Both calculations and Sound Thinking," *New Times*, No. 28, 1989, p. 7; Igor Malashenko, "Parity Yesterday and Today," *Ibid.*, No. 31, 1989, p. 6.; Yury Bandura, "The Doctrine of Deterrence: Pro and Con," *Ibid.*, No. 42, 1989, p. 6.

¹¹⁸ A. Kokoshin, "Razvitie voennogo dela i sokrashchenie vooruzhennykh sil i obychnykh vooruzhenii," *MEMO*, No. 1, 1987, p. 25.

¹¹⁹ A. Kokoshin and V. Larionov, "Kurskaya bitva v svete sovremennii obornitel'noi doktriny," *MEMO*, No. 8, 1987, pp. 32-40.

¹²⁰ *Moscow News*, No. 8, 1988 and *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 25, 1987.

¹²¹ Andrei Kokoshin and Larionov, Valentin, "Protivostoyanie sil obshego naznacheniya v kontekste obespecheniya strategicheskoi stabil'nosti," *MEMO*. No. 6 pp. 26-27.

¹²² V. Zhurkin, S. Karaganov, and A. Kortunov, "Reasonable sufficiency or How to Break the Vicious Cicle," *New Times*, No. 40, 1987, p. 13.

¹²³ *Pravda*, October 13, 1987; D. Yazov, "The Military Balance of Strength and Nuclear Missile Parity," *International Affairs*, No. 4, 1988, pp. 15-22; and *Pravda*, February 8, 1988.

¹²⁴ Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Moscow's Defense Intellectuals*, P-7545 (Santa Monica: CA: The RAND Corporation, January 1990).

¹²⁵ M. MccGwire, *Perestroika and Soviet National Security*, (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991) p. 312.

¹²⁶ Jack Snyder, "The Gorbachev Revolution: A Warning of Soviet Expansionism?" *International Security*, Winter 1987/88, pp. 109-110.

¹²⁷ V. Lobov, *Pravda*, December 17, 1988 and *Moscow News*, No. 51, 1988, p. 5; Yu. Lebedev, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 23, 1988; N. Chervov, *Trud*, December 22, 1988; V. Kuklev, *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 23, 1988; and so on.

¹²⁸ *Pravda*, December 17, 1988.

¹²⁹ A. Kokoshin, "Alexander Shechin: On War and Politics," *International Affairs*, No. 11, p.121.

¹³⁰ *Pravda*, December 8, 1988.

¹³¹ *Pravda*, December 9, 1987.

¹³² The most earliest one was an interview by S. Kosterin, appeared in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, January 14, 1989.

¹³³ *Ogonek*, No. 50, 1989, p. 6.

¹³⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 3, 1988.

¹³⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 20, 1988.

¹³⁶ Fred Wehling, "Old Soldiers Never Die...", p. 71.

¹³⁷ Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989*, pp. 267-269.

¹³⁸ Fred Wehling, "Old Soldiers Never Die...", p. 70.

¹³⁹ Members of this group are defense minister Yazov and chief of the General Staff Moiseev along with their deputies, including Army General P. G. Lushev, the Commander of the Warsaw Pact, Army General I. M. Tret'yak, the Chief of the Air Defense Forces, Army General V. L. Govorov, the Chief of the Civil Defense Forces, and Army General M. I. Sorokin, the Chief Inspector of the Ministry of Defense. The commanding officers of both the Western and Far Eastern theaters of military operations (TVDs), as well as the commanders of some of the most important military districts, including the Moscow MD, are also "Far Easterners." Army General S. I. Postnikov, CINC of the Western TVD, and Army General I. Voloshin, had prior experience in the Far East, as did Colonel General N. V. Kalinin, the Commander of the Airborne Troops.

¹⁴⁰ Roman Kolkowicz, *The Soviet Military and the Communist Party*, chapter 7.

¹⁴¹ Alexander R. Alexiev and Robert C. Nurick, *The Soviet Military Under Gorbachev*, p. 4.

¹⁴² John W. Parket, *Kremlin in Transition, Volume II*, p. 287.

¹⁴³ *Pravda*, November 7, 1988.

¹⁴⁴ M. Moiseev, "S pozitsii oboronitel'noi doktriny," *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 10, 1989.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 25, 1988.

¹⁴⁷ *Izvestiya*, April 27, 1989. For a brief analysis, see Elizabeth Teague, "Gorbachev Outfoxes the Opposition," *Report on the USSR*, No. 19, 1989, pp. 1-3.

¹⁴⁸ *Pravda*, July 21, 1989.

CHAPTER 4. VARIOUS CIVILIAN FORCES' ADVOCACY OF MILITARY REFORM

4.1. Setting the New Stage by Savinkin and Vicys and 1989 Elections

In the previous chapter, we established that an era of genuine civil-military relations in the USSR was about to begin. Around the fall of 1988, when the debates on restructuring of the Soviet armed forces based on 'reasonable sufficiency' came to a close, the new round of military reform debates reflecting the new Soviet society appeared. Its key idea was the introduction of a mixed professional-militia system. The previous debates on the new political thinking virtually isolated the grudging senior generals from Soviet society in general and from the rank-and-file officers in particular. Meanwhile the activities of the middle level of powers publicly supporting restructuring of the armed forces in accordance with the new defensive military doctrine undertook a kind of loose coalition. This coalition was composed of civilian defense intellectuals, young officers, various political associations, and mass media from the MFA's monthly journal *Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'* to reformist ones such as *XX Vek i Mir*, *Ogonek*, *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, and the television programme *Vzglyad*.

The March 1989 elections to the Congress of People's Deputies made it possible for the coalition to have a chance to gather momentum. On the one hand, the elections allowed them a much-needed independent institutional base. Consequently, they were able to influence over the Soviet armed forces on behalf of people and society rather than the Communist Party. On the other hand, the elections made the high command face directly various sociopolitical and

institutional forces and even the public. The latter, or the very election campaigns alone, was enough to transform the Party-military relations into the civil-military relations. All sorts of grievances related to the military were expressed. Military candidates were asked to answer some delicate issues such as principles of service and formation. These activities were hardly seen before.

Here it is necessary to review two Lieutenant Colonels' articles focusing on the idea of the professional-militia system. Lt Colonel A. Savinkin's article which appeared in November 1988 in *Moscow News* was one of the first proposals for military reform in terms of how to man the armed forces. By the time, the main stream of the debate on reasonable sufficiency for defense was still unilateral reductions in Soviet armed forces. Although Savinkin's article was short, it was enough to touch the essence of the current mood of the civilian defense experts and of the political leadership. How to understand the concepts of threat and security in the current world situation? Where does the threat to the USSR come from? Is it military, political or economic? What does the USSR need to meet this threat? And finally, what kinds of forces are necessary? After briefly reviewing these questions, he drew a conclusion: the country had to introduce a mixed professional-militia system, consisting of "a relatively small, perfectly technically equipped, professionally trained and mainly voluntarily staffed military organization supported by a broad network of local militia formations."¹

A professional-militia system would, he argued, create a democratic military structure that would be integrated into society; make it possible to reshape the army in accordance with the principles of reasonable sufficiency and defensive defense; reduce the military burden; and even remove a potential military threat to other countries.² Although Savinkin's proposal was the most widely covered in the media, in fact, it was not the only proposal of its kind. In a roundtable table discussion organized by *XX Vek i Mir*, the concept of a professional army was

raised. But its necessity was different. It was argued in the panel that only professionals would be able to participate in future military operations conducted by "sophisticated and technologically advanced... military machines."³ In other words, the imperative of modern technology needed the professional army, they considered. Major General N. Chaldymov, who made an opening statement in the discussion, agreed with this point. The general's disagreements with civilian representatives focused on which alternative structure should be adopted. There Savinkin praised the virtues of a cadre-militia system as it existed in the country in the 1920s.⁴

In approaching the issue, he now seemed to pay much of his attention to the relation between the military and society, rather than to doctrinal, military-economic matters. A starting point of his argument was the belief that the strength of the armed forces lay in popular support. This was a relatively new element in military reform considerations. At the end of 1988, Yazov appeared to be aware of the fact in practical terms. Referring to the social, ethnic problems that could have negative impact on the military's public image and social status, he stated that it was necessary to do everything to strengthen the faith that Soviet people had in the armed forces.⁵ The Soviet armed forces were being dislocated, according to Savinkin, by the influence of war in Afghanistan, the slower pace of perestroika in the military, the political alienation of the armed forces from the people, the lack of information in Soviet society about defense policy and life in the armed forces, and so on. In this context the colonel treated military reform as an urgent matter. So, if the idea was adopted, it would enjoy closer ties to and greater respect from the people because it had the nature of a people's army, Savinkin stated.

Lt. Colonel Z. Vicys, a Lithuanian military engineer serving in Vilnius, also became a pioneering figure in the debate on the professional-militia system. Whereas Savinkin focused on the professional army, Vicys did on the militia

system or territorial formations. Focusing on internal military relations such as nonregulation behaviour, he argued that the creation of national formations would raise responsibility for service, would further the inculcation of patriotic feelings, and would be a genuine school of internationalism.⁶ His article was published in a local paper *Sovetskaya Latvia* in January 1989 and *Komsomol'skaya pravda* (Lithuania) in February. Ironically, strong, quick, and monotonous critiques of the idea by the high command, which were published in *Krasnaya zvezda*⁷, made it a nationwide issue.

Territorial units were criticized as inimical to the introduction of modern military technology, which, the above academicians argued, demanded a professional army. In particular, Yazov argued that the territorial units would disrupt the chain of command and that in the event of an attack on the country they would tend to stay within their own republic borders rather than joining in the general repulse of the enemy.⁸ A military theoretician, Lt General of Aviation V. Serebryannikov, also contended that the territorial-militia formations were notably inferior to the current cadre system in preparedness, coordination, and in the military and technical training of personnel.⁹

In the meanwhile, the MFA indirectly involved in the debates by sanctioning the publication of reserve Colonel G. Alimurzayev's article in its journal *International Affairs*. The colonel also strongly supported the combination of a small cadre and militia system that offered the only opportunity to avoid immense military expenditures and provide military training to the masses.¹⁰ During WWII's initial phase, the regular army, he wrote, suffered tremendous losses and allowed the aggressor to reach the gates of Moscow.

The elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, in which eighty two military officer deputies were elected, had a number of implications for the military reform movements. One hundred and twenty one military personnel ran in the first

election with seventy six elected and six more gaining seats after a run-off.¹¹ They comprised 3.6% of the deputies in the Congress of People's Deputies but only 1.6% of the Supreme Soviet in comparison with 3.7% of the previous Supreme Soviet elected in 1984. The drop in proportion appeared to be meaningful because first of all the new Supreme Soviet was to function differently. The previous Supreme Soviet met for four or five days a year and voted unanimously on bills thus hardly had a chance to check the government. It made sense to have symbolic representation: a certain quota of workers, peasants, factory managers, military officers, party secretaries, and so forth. Now the legislature was to become a more meaningful body and thus needed more capable people.

In turn, more progressive and capable people, including 'dissident' junior and middle level officers, wanted to go there. Although many high military commanders were protected by one-candidate elections, some were forced to run in competitive races. Most of them won easy victories.¹² Of significance among the losers were Colonel General Yu. A. Yashin, Deputy Minister of Defense; Army General B. V. Snetkov, CINC of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany; Colonel General A. V. Betekhtin, First Deputy Chief of the Ground Forces; Admiral K. V. Makarov, Chief of the Main Naval Staff; the commanders of the Northern, Pacific, and Black Sea Fleets; and the commanders of the Leningrad, Volga, and Far Eastern Military Districts.

We must consider why they lost and to whom. One can say that the voters simply rejected them because they were conservatives, but this is only partly correct. It should also be noted that there were some mistakes in particular in their strategy connected with a delicate situation. If a district elects a high official who does not intend to give up his post, the district gives up the possibility of being represented in the more important Supreme Soviet. This situation may have caused the defeat of some commanders. For example, the commander of the Far Eastern

MD ran against a local social scientist and a Nanai by nationality, who was concerned with problems of the peoples of the North.

Whatever one's views about the party or the military, the commander would clearly have been too busy to do much of value in the Congress of People's Deputies, and he could never be elected to the Supreme Soviet. His opponent, academician E. Gayer, on the other hand, could be elected to the Supreme Soviet and have an impact on a question that was poorly handled in the Soviet Union. A person totally loyal to the system should have voted for her unless she had shown anti-party views herself. She was, in fact, elected. She was a candidate for deputy chairmanship of the Council of Nationalities and spoke out for the rights of peoples of the North.¹³ Many Westerners less cautiously concluded that the defeat of the Far East commander was a repudiation of the regime.

A rather awkward case occurred in other places. In a district in Ivanovo Oblast, for example, the commander of the Leningrad MD competed against a 'dissident' Lt. Colonel, and lost in spite of Zaikov's allowance for standing up there. Therefore, the composition of officer deputies appeared to be a real blow to the high command. As a whole, officer deputies' backgrounds were complex in terms of rank and differences which were apparent in their policy positions and the degree of their political activism. Almost half of them were junior officers from the rank of colonel down. As the Soviet political situation became gradually radicalized, the officer deputies also split into reformists and conservatives and joined parliamentary groups and party clubs according to their political convictions. Some of the more active deputies had formed a new group to promote their own views. As covered later in detail, the noticeable number of young officer deputies even became so-called "young Turks," and joined the "Interregional Group of Deputies." Lieutenant N. Tutov became even a cofounder of the Social Democratic Party so that he was expelled from the CPSU. On the other hand, Lt

Colonel (later Colonel) V. Alksnis and Colonel N. Petrushenko were prominent among young officers deputies at the conservative pole. They were called the "black colonels." Alksnis was instrumental in forming "Soyuz," the conservative parliamentary group. The group, together with "Rossiya," advocated a centralized Soviet state and a strong army and KGB. Although there was an attempt to unify them at a meeting in October, 1989, it had failed to do so because of the so strong differences of opinion among them.¹⁴

4.2. Impressive Opening of The Congress of People's Deputies and The Supreme Soviet and Military Reform Debates

When the Congress of People's Deputies, the so-called supreme body of state authority in the USSR, was established, it was expected not to make any important decisions, for the simple reason that its structure and composition were not fit for it. The congress was like a rally or a debating club whose purpose was to discuss numerous problems. A body consisting of 2,250 members cannot make any responsible decisions in principle, especially if they require thorough preparations and detailed discussion. Nevertheless, this nature of the Congress of People's Deputies, not to mention the Supreme Soviet, was in many ways more dramatic than the election itself. In short, in the case of the Congress, a debating club was alone enough to raise public attention, initially because the proceedings of the Congress were covered on live television.

When the Tbilisi events were being discussed, 92% of people of the Georgian capital Tbilisi watched Soviet national television.¹⁵ At the session the commander of the Transcaucasian MD and People's Deputy Colonel General I. Rodionov, who had been in charge of troops that suppressed a demonstration in Tbilisi on April 9, 1989, blamed the leaders of local informal groups for the deaths, while claiming

that he only followed orders.¹⁶ The general said that the MVD troops had been responsible for clearing the square where the deaths occurred, and the army could not be blamed. He also said that it was the MVD troops who had used the teargas, and that regular troops were not issued with it. On the other hand, former Georgian first secretary D. Patiashvili, who had been known to order Rodionov to use troops against the demonstrators, named generals directly involved in the action. E. Shevardnadze stated, for example, that the decision to use troops had been taken by the Georgian republican leadership against the advice of Rodionov.¹⁷ Against this kind of assertions, the Georgian first secretary stated that the day before the incidents he was visited by Rodionov and deputy defense minister K. Kochetov. But he refused to say who gave the order first. Besides, a number of delegates treated the incidents as a deliberate provocation, presumably aimed at overturning Gorbachev's policy, while others poured scorn on the notion that Moscow was not involved in what happened there.¹⁸ In the end, the Congress of People's Deputies made a decision to set up a commission to review the circumstances.

As planned, at its second session, the Congress of People's Deputies had a chance to hear presentation of a commission responsible for investigating the Tbilisi incidents. In short, its chairman A. Sobchak said that serious errors had been made both by the former Georgian leadership and by the military and party leadership at all levels of the Union. The main point was that they should have not decided to use the army against the demonstrations. On the other hand, chief of USSR Military Prosecutor A. Katusev claimed that the Georgian themselves were responsible for the death of their compatriots and that the actions taken against them by the troops were entirely justified. Katusev's speech caused the exit from the session of almost the entire Georgian contingent, followed by a massive walk-out of over 200 progressive deputies from other parts of the Soviet Union,

including A. Yakovlev. After Gorbachev's cool but compromising speech, the Congress of People's Deputies adopted a resolution condemning the use of violence against the demonstrators. Thus, the military leadership got the clear message with regard to the domestic function of the armed forces. In soon, Rodionov was transferred to head of the Voroshilov Military Academy of the General Staff in Moscow.

Meanwhile, the top leaders in the Politburo were also involved in political conflicts. It was revealed that at the meeting of the Central Committee chaired by Ligachev, defense minister Yazov was ordered to send troops to Tbilisi, while Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, and so on, were abroad, i.e., in London. In general, radical deputies questioned whether the party organ had power by law to give orders to the armed forces. But it was a more serious question to ask who was directly responsible for it. In the end, the then chief of the KGB Chebrikov was believed to have been dropped from the Politburo because of his involvement in the event.¹⁹ Nevertheless, Ligachev was continuously criticized. R. Medvedev and Petrushenko suggested that the Tbilisi incident was a provocation by Ligachev against Gorbachev and his policies at the first session of the Congress of People's Deputies.²⁰ Gorbachev sent Shevardnadze in November 1988 and Yakovlev in February 1989 to appease the Georgians.²¹ In addition, Shevardnadze, Georgian by birth, had threatened to resign because he regarded the public exposure of the affairs to be inadequate. He also engaged in a verbal battle in public with Ligachev, who argued that the decision to send troops to Tbilisi was confirmed by the whole party leadership, including Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and Yakovlev. Shevardnadze responded by saying that there had been no Politburo meeting, just a meeting at the airport on Gorbachev's return from abroad on 7 April. Gorbachev's instructions at that meeting were that matters should be resolved by political methods, Shevardnadze said.²²

Since the Tbilisi affairs, the involvement of the armed forces in domestic policing operations became a new issue of the military reform movement. In principle, the military leadership portrayed internal policing functions as dishonourable missions. Chief of the General Staff Moiseev, for example, argued that the policing functions could detract from the dignity and high esteem of the armed forces and hurt their ability to fulfil their principal task of guaranteeing the security of the homeland.²³ CINC of the Warsaw Pact Forces, General Lushev saw the function as "unconstitutional" and therefore, he stated, it had an extremely negative effect on their combat readiness.²⁴ Major General M. Surkov, a political officer and chief of the political department of the garrison in the capital of Armenia, Yerevan, also sided with this position.²⁵

On the other hand, CINC of the Ground Forces Army General V. Varennikov held a different position. Not only did he deny the armed forces' responsibility for the Tbilisi events but also he argued that the troops sent there had acted properly. In practical terms, the general questioned the capability of the KGB and MVD troops to cope with nationality conflicts and he did not deny the use of armed forces in a policing function. But he considered it only as a final, reliable means. In this context, the general raised the importance of proper equipment and training for that function.²⁶

The proceedings of the Supreme Soviet were also dramatic because, from its beginning, the issues of defense budget and personnel changes were addressed. They had been delicate tasks for the political leadership, including Gorbachev, to tackle. The Supreme Soviet hearings brought into the open the details of the defense budget for the first time in the history of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev, who had already announced in January 1989 that 14.2% was to be cut from the military budget overall, with a 19.5% drop in procurement and a 12% fall in troop strength, made it public that the 1989 defense budget was 77.3 billion rubles. This

estimation could not really be completely accurate. No reliable estimate would be possible until the country switched over to free market prices. In other words, the amount of military spending depended on the prices in terms of which it was calculated. Simply it appeared that prices for Soviet-made weapons were artificially kept several times lower, as will be seen. Nevertheless, it was at a time when the Soviet people, who had expressed dissatisfaction with the slow tempo of perestroika, were watching the television. This politically well-calculated revelation was enough to create popular support for a reduction of military spending in particular and for the new direction of military policy as a whole. Thus, the year of 1989 saw public debates about whether the defense budget be reduced or not.

The debates over the actual size of the military budget of the past and present moment became as interesting as were the debates over how much it should be in the future. It was guessed in the West that the Soviet defense budget might be around 20 billion rubles in the mid-1980s. Needless to say, nobody accepted the figure as being near accurate. But the Soviets had not been allowed to dispute the military spending in public until glasnost' came. Around Gorbachev's disclosure, the intelligentsia were cautiously making the military budget a political issue, as they had done just before Gorbachev's announcement of unilateral reductions in Soviet armed forces.

In February 1989 academician V. Goldanskiy, for example, in an interview with *Izvestiya* called the Soviet defense budget figures "simply ridiculous." He went on to state that Western estimates that were much higher than Soviet's official figures were much closer to the truth.²⁷ In a similar fashion, A. Kireyev, an economist and aspiring specialist on defense affairs, wrote in *Ogonek* that "no one in the world ever took seriously the 20.2 billion ruble defense-budget figure."²⁸ Finally, B. Rayzberg, doctor of economic sciences, even suggested an estimated volume of the defense budget. Taking into account the costs of the Army's upkeep,

operational costs, scientific research, and so on, he claimed that "our own military expenditure is far more in excess of 100 billion rubles a year."²⁹

Gorbachev's announcement made the military leadership clarify the figure 77.3 billion rubles, because this figure was still viewed with scepticism. Army General Moiseev, for example, claimed that "all expenditures are included in the announced figures," giving an example of difference in prices between the Soviet Union and the US. He said at a news conference for Soviet and foreign journalists, together with Admiral W. Crowe, that a modern Soviet Su-25 aircraft cost 5.8 million rubles, whereas an F-16 cost 28 million dollars and that, thus "77.8 billion rubles is in fact our entire defense budget."³⁰

In return, A. Nazarenko, USSR People's Deputy and chief engineer at the Yuzhnoye Design Bureau, responded to Moiseev's claim in a provoking way. Simply, he argued that the real figure for defense was apparently higher the announced one by saying that a number of civilian ministries should be attributed to the defense industry and others. He said in jest that the country spent only about 30-40 billions dollars based on the devalued ruble, if one ruble were really worth 20 cents. Once Moiseev had argued that in terms of both absolute and relative value of roubles the US military budget was incomparably larger than the USSR military budget in relation to the USSR and US state budgets.³¹ Now keeping in mind Moiseev's arguments, Nazarenko asked how, with parity in the primary types of strategic weapons, with the same number of armies, and with equal numbers of conventional weapons, the country had managed to spend 10-15 times less than the Americans, under conditions of lower labour productivity?³²

A television interview in which A. Kireyev openly argued with Marshal Akhromeev deserves considerable attention. Kireyev plainly declared that "we have become choked by military expenditure."³³ Pegging the Soviet defense budget at 9 percent of the country's GNP, Kireyev said that no developed capitalist country

spent so much. Returning to the announced military budget of 77.3 billion rubles, he claimed that it raised more questions than it answered. In response to this complaint, Akhromeev interrupted the proceedings and gave Kireyev a sheet of paper denoting military expenditures since 1976, while asking him to study it for the time being. Nevertheless, Kireyev continuously challenged the figure by saying that "many items are simply not here."³⁴ Later in his article in *New Times*, Kireyev went on to assert this: the Soviet defense budget did not include all the items included in the US budget: and it was divided into several large sections but it was impossible to find out which spendings were included in each section and which were probably left out. He suggested, for example, that there was no information about the amount of money allocated to strategic forces and the amount of spending on civil defense programmes seemed unrealistic.³⁵

Meanwhile, the debates over what military budget level be sufficient became vital. The political leadership had never suggested an absolute figures. Only some time later, in early 1990, Gorbachev made it clear that the current budget was "far too high." Nearly four years ago he said the current budget was "adequate." While avoiding the arguable total volume of the defense budget, Gorbachev stated that "we have, after all, been spending almost 18-20 percent of our national revenue on military purposes. This does not happen in any other state..."³⁶

With regard to another interesting issue, the personnel change, defense minister Yazov was subjected to severe criticism amid the confirmation of cabinet, the first order of business for the Supreme Soviet. Yazov was perceived to be a reform-minded 'young' general when he replaced Marshal S. Sokolov in the aftermath of the Rust affair in May 1987. Until then he had written a series of articles about corruption in the military, discipline, and the military's internal performance. Without any doubts, the Soviet people expected him to introduce perestroika into the armed forces. *Krasnaya zvezda* lauded Yazov as a model

commander.³⁷ Within two years since then, at the Soviet parliament Yazov was relentlessly accused of lacking the vision to oversee the restructuring of the armed forces. In other words, he was charged with being a representative of the old guard and with harbouring traditional thinking in his approach to military problems. Notably, the characteristics of those who criticised him were important. A young officer deputy, Lieutenant N. Tutov, called for his removal in favour of younger and more dynamic leaders such as Moiseev and Gromov, while saying that "Yazov has no real conception of perestroika in the armed forces."³⁸ In short, they held Yazov personally responsible for the many problems that had emerged in the armed forces over the decades as well as for those that persisted at that time. Although the chairman of the Committee for Defense and State Security of the Supreme Soviet, V. Lapygin, and Akhromeev were outspoken in their defense of Yazov's candidacy, the majority of deputies were about to vote against him. In defense of Yazov, Gorbachev well grasped the point. Because overall military strategy emanated from the Defense Council as a whole, he argued, the defense minister should not be accused of a lack of vision on the issue of military reform. In fact, Akhromeev also tried to make the role of the defense minister clear, by saying that Yazov was fully capable of maintaining the armed forces' peacetime readiness at a proper level.³⁹

It may be rather useful to review that institutional stubbornness on various aspects of military restructuring and internal reform, not to mention the unilateral reductions, which still existed around this time. Most authoritatively, Akhromeev gave such evidence. The then chief of the General Staff, in a speech at a meeting of the General Staff party aktiv in August 1988, sharply criticized the slow pace of implementation of military perestroika. With regard to the new military doctrine, Akhromeev charged that "certain commanders and staffs have not fully grasped the demands of the defensive strategy and operational art," and he accused the military

establishment of blocking plans to increase democratization and personal responsibility."⁴⁰

Again, just before his resignation, he stressed that the new thinking was not penetrating army and navy life easily-the outdated, stereotype clichés were still exerting their influence.⁴¹ As a whole, his criticism confirmed Daniel Goure's judgement that the Soviet military tended to divide between "modernists" and "conservatives."⁴² Major General I. Lebedev, being categorized as the conservatives by Goure, for example, in an article in *Kommunist* declared that the potential to change military doctrines and force postures "unilaterally" was limited, whilst attacking civilian defence intellectuals as being "unqualified amateurs."⁴³ It is interesting that Goure considered as "modernists" Marshal Ogarkov, Akhromeev, some defense industry leaders, and most of the new military leadership, including Yazov and, probably, Moiseev. However, for the Soviet citizens, including radical deputies, they were just conservatives. It is likely that the modernists also gradually became the conservatives. As far as glasnost' was concerned, most of the members of the high command, including Yazov, were critical.

Yazov's confirmation process suggested a lot. First and foremost, the defense minister could have been changed so effortlessly not by the party leadership but by the Supreme Soviet. It was unthinkable in the past. If so, the fact that in the future the defense minister was to face this confirmation process again and again might increase military accountability to civilian authorities. Yazov himself hinted at this point by praising the deputies. He said in an interview with *Pravda*, for example, that the Congress of People's Deputies was an "event of major significance in the history of revolutionary restructuring, of all-round renewal of Soviet society."⁴⁴ Then he linked the Congress to its influence on military policy. In this connection, an interesting question came forth: the conflictive relationship between minister of defense and chief of the General Staff, who was relatively free from political

accountability. There were even some speculations.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, the Supreme Soviet was continuing to show its influence over the high command. Against the will of the military establishment, it passed a decree in July 1989 ordering the deactivation of some 176,000 former students from active military service. It meant a symbolic victory of the new-born legislative body and civilian as a whole over the so stubborn military establishment. Regulations on deferments and terms of service for students in higher education had changed along with the number of draft-aged males. The latest version of the universal military service law limited college deferments to students in institutions approved by the Council of Ministers. The new provision was applied to certain universities and institutes in April 1982,⁴⁶ and later, in October 1984, was even extended to Moscow University because of the continued decline of the size of the draft pool.

This implementation caused resentment not only among students but also among the intelligentsia. In May 1987 at a roundtable discussion organized by *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, academicians argued, for example, that the current draft policy had led to the destruction of students' intellectual flexibility.⁴⁷ They proposed exempting talented students from military service on the grounds that the economy and the society itself needed physicists, biologists, etc. more than soldiers. This insistence drew a very critical response from a number of military representatives, including Colonel General M. A. Gareev, deputy chief of the General Staff, who refuted this argument in the same journal.⁴⁸ Concerning another issue, students' military training in the frame work of the military department of their university or institute, which occupied 18-20 percent of study time,⁴⁹ the military authorities wanted the training of officers there to continue. According to I. Ergashev, a deputy head of the military department of a Riga Institute, it was cheaper than conducting officers' courses in special military schools.⁵⁰

In the meanwhile, Gorbachev opened further discussions on the issue without

any concrete recommendations. In his address to a Komsomol meeting, for example, he noted that the students' draft should be "looked into," and the length of military service "could be changed."⁵¹ Hardly surprisingly, around the end of 1988 various anti-military protests became evident in the whole Soviet society, in particular, on college campuses all over the Soviet Union. Gorbachev's 1988 UN announcement of unilateral troop reductions was also meaningful for the "quick" implementation of the July 11 decree. On the one hand, it provided a further spur to students dissatisfaction with military obligations, on the other hand, it gave a definite time-limit to the military establishment. Students seemed, therefore, likely beneficiaries of a reduction in the Soviet armed forces along the implementation of Gorbachev's announcement of unilateral reductions.

One of the main criticisms of military spokesmen against the Supreme Soviet was that it was "hasty" in practical terms. In fact, the decree of July 11 was proposed by Ryzhkov and accepted during one or two minutes without a discussion. Moreover, the Soviet parliament forced the military establishment to demobilize the students from August to September. The results of hasty implementation of the decree were very serious for the army to such an extent that, according to Yazov, in the Western Group of Forces in Germany alone more than 6,680 tanks and 1,070 artillery systems would be left crewless. In the rocket forces, two shifts instead of three would be performing combat alert duty. Nearly 40 percent of posts for section commanders in military construction units would remain unfilled.⁵²

Yazov noted that the extension of deferments rights for students had resulted in a situation where only one-third of all young people were now eligible for active military service.⁵³ This general de-emphasis of military obligations had contributed to an increase in the number of young people avoiding military service, Yazov contended, while claiming that "last year a quarter of those eligible for induction in

Moscow had failed to report to local military commissariats on the appointed day."⁵⁴ On the other hand, Deputy Chief of the General Staff Lt General G. Krivosheyev emotionally criticized the decision. The general insisted that so-called Soviet elite groups, i.e., deputies, freed themselves and their children from military service. These changes in draft and service regulations were a socially "unjust" violation of the spirit of universal military service,⁵⁵ he stated. Now a bone of contention between the military and the intelligentsia disappeared. But the generals felt bitterness, not merely because military service disrupted higher education, but because the military resented the notion that army life was in some sense antithetical to science and culture, and also because the relative importance to the country of military power and of science. Moreover, considering the fact that the new draft regulations would result in the armed forces manned predominantly by young men with less educated working-class backgrounds, the political ramifications of this change were no less significant.

4.3. The Committee of Defense and State Security and Its Control over The Military

When the first session of the Supreme Soviet was opened, the idea of introducing some measures of public control over the armed forces and, in particular, over the KGB, was very much in the air. The creation itself of the Committee of Defense and State Security represented the mood of ordinary people, not to mention the political leadership. With regard to the public control over the military, Lambeth argued that "the formation of the committee was a direct outgrowth of earlier advocacy by Shevardnadze and others for an end to the military's monopoly on defense information and its replacement with a system of

public accountability and legislative oversights."⁵⁶

Whatever the background of its creation, the Committee became a central part of the broader challenge that the Supreme Soviet was beginning to present to traditional Soviet authority, that is, the Communist Party's partocracy. The real matter was what and how to control. For the time being, statements of V. Lapygin, head of the Committee, were suggestive of them. Far from people's demand, however, he more narrowly defined its sphere, mainly "the combat readiness" of the armed forces. He considered the combat readiness of the armed forces as their principal and most important function. Naturally, the Committee was to bear responsibility for it.⁵⁷ The control over implementation of the new military doctrine by the military establishment was also a job for the Committee. He said in a television interview that the Committee would examine "very important programmes" for the development of the Army and Navy and the branches and categories of troops with due regard to military doctrine and their reasonable and reliable sufficiency. Lapygin's deputy, Colonel of the Air Force V. Ochirov showed some kind of political ambition, by asserting that "Yazov is going to have to appear before our committee to defend his arguments about why a particular programme is necessary for defense."⁵⁸ But it was noteworthy that what Lapygin intended to do was "to ensure strategic stability," because the background of the concept strategic stability was different from the current popular advocacy of the military reform movement. As far as strategic nuclear weapons, civilian academicians focused on "minimum level of deterrence" or nuclear free world, whereas members of the high command argued for "strategic parity." In addition, he revealed that the Committee would analyze how the "demands connected with enhancing quality parameters" in military building were being realized.⁵⁹

Another significant reference to the function of the Committee was made by Primakov, the newly elected chairman of the Supreme Soviet's upper chamber. He

demanded the Committee to do more than what Lapygin considered. Lapygin was asked to bring defense outlays down to a level of reasonable sufficiency so that the rest can be used chiefly for the development of the civilian sectors."⁶⁰ In view of the serious economic problems confronting the country, for Primakov it was not unexpected that budgetary issues were central to its new tasks. Social aspects of the defense budget, however, became his number one priority around the fall of 1989. Lapygin said that the social position of servicemen were in a critical condition, and thus 1.2 billion rubles were diverted from other defense programmes to improve their pay and living conditions.⁶¹

With regard to the question of how to exercise control over the activity of the armed forces, Lapygin described the hearings of defense minister and his deputies, the setting up a system of non-military departmental experts, and the use of information supplied by public organizations, the press, and ordinary citizens as such measures.⁶² A series of these schemes appeared to be close to the concept "accountable" to the Soviets of People's Deputies, as stated in the Constitution, although every detail of the control mechanism was not elaborated, yet.

But the Committee for Defense and State Security ended its existence in the aftermath of the failed August 1991 coup. In fact, the nature and extent of staffing and operations of the Committee were still being clarified. In other words, during this period, it had never taken any initiative as far as restructuring the armed forces or military reform. Rather it had wound up itself. As Soviet society moved towards a rule by law, a lot of laws were naturally needed. The Committee just discussed, rather than produced, the concept of military reform and draft laws on defense, on the organs of state security, on the status of military servicemen, and on the performance of military service. Of course, there could be some excuses. The USSR Council of Ministers, or an other body with the right of legislative initiative, had to submit to the Supreme Soviet Presidium, as far as above draft documents

were concerned. Only then the Committee could officially begin to examine them.

But there were some exceptions. When Gorbachev's unilateral reduction announcement was to be implemented in promised time, for example, members of the Committee were "in a great hurry" with the law on servicemen's pension provision. A number of officers who had not reached the age limit were forced to retire. In order to get them pensioned off, a new law that could cover the early retired personnel had to be adopted. And when servicemen were under attack especially in non-Russian republics, the Committee urged the ministry of defense and President to adopt some measures. In response, President Gorbachev soon issued a decree strengthening the social and legal protection of servicemen.⁶³

The most noticeable was the Committee's swing to the right around the fall of 1990, when a concerted defense-industry lobby of conservative orientation was beginning to consolidate under the marketization. The defense-industry's lobby was well presented by two letters. The one was a letter with the signatures of 46 general directors and general designers of organizations under the eight ministries of the defense complex addressed to the Supreme Soviet.⁶⁴ The other was the so-called 'letter of the 53' addressed to Gorbachev, who was urged to use his presidential powers to the full to restore stability and discipline, if necessary by resort to states of emergency in regions of conflict.⁶⁵ Amid of the climate of conservatism, the Committee for Defense and State Security warned Gorbachev that under the marketization the defense industry's destabilization had reached a dangerous level. Incidentally, Akhromeev told parliament at that time that the proposed programme for transition to the market might cause an irrevocable damage to the Soviet Union's defense capability.⁶⁶ On the other hand, People's Deputy Major Lopatin claimed that "the conversion of the defense industry affects only 3% of the military-industrial complex, while the level of production is to be maintained for an indefinite period."⁶⁷ Gorbachev, whilst recognizing the

difficulties of the conversion, evaluated the Committee's warning as "nonsense." In addition, he criticized them in a political sense by saying "I believe that somebody wants to play on the sacred feelings of the people."⁶⁸

Not surprisingly, the Committee was not so active at a "heated" debate over the 1991 military budget. It appeared that most of the members of the Committee were interested in determining the optimum size of military expenditure, not in cutting it, although the committee chairman Sharin insisted that the Committee had managed to change the "consumerist attitude" of the ministry of defense and the ministries of the defense industry sectors toward budget formation. At its best, the Committee succeeded in publishing all figures of military spending "in detail" in Sharin's term.⁶⁹ Probably, in order to legitimize the current size of defense budget, they focused on the fact that neither the US nor the Nato countries were to reduce their armed forces for 1991 and, on the contrary, they were to improve them qualitatively.⁷⁰ Final formulas for the defense expenditure for the year of 1991 amounted to a reduction of two billion rubles compared to what was originally proposed by the Ministry of Finance and the government.

Subsequently, O. Baklanov, the CC Secretary for defense matters, rationalized this figure by comparing it to that of the US. In the USSR, expenditure on defense in 1990 was 7.2% of GNP and in the US it was 5.4%, he suggested. The reason why the USSR had a "somewhat higher" proportion of expenditure on defense could be understood, he explained, when one saw the fact that the USSR's GNP was several times less than the American.⁷¹

In sum, the activities of the Committee appeared to have been passive and controlled by the military-industrial complex, rather than controlling it, and thus dragged its heels over the issue of military reform. This could hardly be excused by the fact that the Soviet had never had such a committee before or by the argument that the committee was on the process of gaining access to the 'holy of holies' of

executive power, that is, the military, or the triad of the party, military, and defense industry, for the first time.

There were some definite reasons why it was not functional. One can argue that the Constitution of the USSR was a fundamental problem because it failed to grant the Supreme Soviet the authority to determine basic measures in the area of defense and state security. Or, there was no established means for effectively implementing its decisions. Inevitably, the Committee was, from the beginning, destined to carry out only an "advise and consent" role.

The more decisive factor appeared to be the "tame" characteristic, coming from the composition of the Committee. Of the thirty-eight members of the Committee seven were military men, nineteen represented enterprises of the defense industry, two represented the KGB and five were secretaries of regional Party committees.⁷² Thus, it was a typical case of interested people controlling themselves. When Lapygin was asked about this, he said, "Why then should we rely on amateurs in defensive affairs, which are very specific?... The Committee had been selected on the basis of competence."⁷³ First deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet A. Luk'yanov, who had proposed Lapygin to the post, also showed the same attitude and turned down an alternative suggestion of how to use expertise of military and defense complex representatives.⁷⁴ It was suggested that the Committee should consist of civilians, while military and defense industry representatives should be called upon for their expertise only when the need arose.

It would take years for civilians to know the problems and peculiarities involved, if they were selected, Lapygin further explained. Moreover, he emphasized that it might be necessary to take concrete decisions "now," or "very soon," in spite of the fact that the Committee was constitutionally not designed to make any decisions, as mentioned before. This argument was also inconsistent with the fact that he tried to pack its membership with officials from the military-

industrial sector rather than liberal uniformed deputies.⁷⁵

It should have been needless or harmful to try to break through a structural constraint, coming from the administrative-command economic system, which could prevent committee members from access of information about defence spending and other matters. Although, its head once commented that there were "too many unjustified secrets and secrecy,"⁷⁶ this was probably aimed at the more rather than the fewer. Moreover, some of its sessions were held behind closed doors. As soon as the Committee got to work, a reformist deputy G. Sturua complained on that point.⁷⁷ There might be nothing for a couple of the selected liberal officer deputies to do in the committee.⁷⁸ Therefore, the power of public debates hardly reached there.

4.4. Young Officer Deputies and Military Reform Movement

By the spring of 1990, when the Committee for Defense and State Security was still failing to do anything productive, a group of young officer deputies became a powerful centre, as far as military reform was concerned. Seventeen reform-minded young military deputies, originally six, led by Major V. Lopatin, had secretly prepared a draft programme of radical military reform and submitted it to the second session of the Congress of People's Deputies in December 1989. Afterwards, under the name of "project of the seventeen" part of the programme was made public in February 1990.⁷⁹ Whatever its contents were, the event was remarkable in that, for the first time in Soviet history and at a time when the high command still showed lack of enthusiasm for a radical restructuring of the armed forces, the armed forces' problems were outlined by them outside the military

establishment, i.e., in the Soviet parliament.

Certainly, it was difficult for them to prepare the draft secretly, but it was more difficult to distribute the prepared document among deputies at the Congress of People's Deputies, not to mention the Committee for Defense and State Security of the Supreme Soviet. Other conservative officer deputies mainly composed of commanders of military districts and senior generals of the ministry of defense asserted that the armed forces' problems should be tackled within established structures. According to Major E. Erokhin, one of the seventeen deputies, after the draft proposal was submitted to the secretariat of the Congress, it had never been officially circulated and simply disappeared. Instead, the authors were told by the secretariat that the document was being studied and that a recommendation had been made.⁸⁰ In such a situation, Colonel A. Tsalko frequently negotiated with the secretariat and consulted with high ranking officials, including chairman of the Supreme Soviet and chairman of the Council of Ministers, Gorbachev and Ryzhkov, respectively. Later, but in a compromised way, they were allowed to send the project to the Committee on Defense and State Security and a working group given a task of the elaboration of the Law on Defense, i.e., the General Staff. In November its full draft was released to the mass media, together with the MOD draft (USSR Ministry of Defense Draft: Military Reform Concept).⁸¹

The Lopatin draft first touched the reasons why the military reform was needed: positive improvements in the world; a significant reduction in the level of military threat; the priority of nonviolent means for ensuring international and domestic security; and revolutionary perestroika in the country.⁸² Through this, the officer deputies positively confirmed Gorbachev's new security policy and perestroika in the country. This verdict appeared to be declaratory with lack of authoritative analysis. Nevertheless, it is significant that the draft called for the transformation of defense and of the armed forces to be in accordance with the

country's "real needs" and "economic potential". Up to then the concept 'defense needs' had been a centre of the debates on defense issues, while 'economic potential' had been hardly considered.

With regard to defense needs, there was no clear analysis on the threat to the USSR apart from the mention of a phrase "a significant reduction in the level of military threat." Subsequently, it was stressed that the armed forces be brought into line with the level of "real military danger." Comparatively, the MOD draft assigned a lot of space to evaluating the threat to the USSR. The military leadership was yet repeating their cautious assessment of the international situation. The central tenet of their arguments was that "international tensions have abated, changes in the direction of peace are still not irreversible."⁸³ Focusing on perestroika and its implication for the military, the Lopatin draft raised a fundamental question about who should decide and implement defense policy as well as military reform. If we follow this questioning, the action of evaluating the danger of war and the level of a military threat was not a matter of officer deputies as well as the MOD but that of "a community of sovereign states," in Lopatin's term.

In a challenging way to the authority of the military leadership, the Lopatin draft said that because of structural transformations in the state and society, there was neither precise legal regulation nor an effective state mechanism for formation and implementation of military policy, for organizational development and employment of the armed forces, and for control over them on the part of the USSR legislative and executive agencies and of society. Afterwards, the absence was very neatly linked to the centre versus periphery relations that could touch, at the level of analysis, the broad issues such as economic reform, conversions, and so on, including military affairs.

Based on the belief that the transition of the union republics to real

sovereignty demanded fundamentally new approaches to military organizational development, they introduced a concept "supreme bodies of legislative power of the community of sovereign states"⁸⁴ that would determine the priority in choice of defensive measures. This concept certainly denied the current constitutional authority of the existing institutions such as the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, and the President. Proceeding from this, the Lopatin draft suggested a series of subconcepts such as a military-political alliance of sovereign states, coalition command and control entities, and an [administrative] institution of representatives of sovereign states in both centre and republics.

All in all, these ideas were radical, well ahead of the political leadership. Around the late winter of 1990, Gorbachev was still thinking that a New Union treaty was unnecessary. In part, this nature of the Lopatin draft explained why only the part related to reorganization of the armed forces into a professional army was published in *Komsomol'skaya pravda* in February 1990. Later in September 1990, when a draft of the New Union treaty, prepared by the Soviet parliament, became the subject of debate between Moscow and republics, the other part of the Lopatin draft functioned as a pioneering base. The military deputies, for example, suggested a starting point for further debates by stating that the introduction of the sphere of "joint" competence and activity between Moscow and the republics be necessary. They were as follows: determining the procedure for stationing, testing, and eliminating nuclear and other kinds of mass destruction weapons on the territory of sovereign states; placing armed forces on the territory of sovereign states in heightened degrees of readiness, mobilizing the reserve, moving armed forces, and conducting exercises; appointing and promoting commanders of formations and commanding generals of large strategic formations located on the territory of sovereign states; and so on.⁸⁵

More significantly, the concept "sovereign states" could mean that they had a

natural right to have their own armed formations and reserves, but with the centre granted the possibility of their use to ensure the community's security against an external military threat. So, it was unnecessary for them to explain in detail a historical, political, economic, and military rationale for a militia system, as Lt Colonel G. Alimurzayev did.⁸⁶ Although of minor importance, the officer deputies also argued that defense minister had to be a civilian and the General Staff was to only implement military-political and military-technical decisions, after being optimized in structures and renewed in makeup on "a competitive basis".

Apart from these major principles, the officer deputies handled the reorganization of the armed forces in a much more authoritative way. The Lopatin draft advocated a "phased" transition to professional armed forces of "lesser size" and "better quality" with a volunteer method of manpower acquisition, an interethnic makeup and the preservation of universal military obligation "in wartime" as the principal idea of military reform. This was about a matter of principle. In some sense, they merely summarized the current debates that had existed since Colonel A. Savinkin put forth the idea of the professional-militia system. Of significance was an idea about the sequence of the transformation within 4-5 years. But this time table also appeared to be a mere reflection of the Soviet people who believed that military reform was proceeding slowly. In addition, they failed to mention the most vital area, in terms their idea, the optimal size in numerical strength of personnel and how to raise quality. The Lopatin draft arranged in a row what to be reduced, what is more, mainly in the context of how to reduce defense expenditure. These blanks, however, were paradoxically able to spur the further debate in public.

As noted above, the necessity for the professional army was linked to the modern technology at the roundtable discussion organized by *XX Vek i Mir* in September 1988. The officer deputies further developed this point. Arguing against

the idea that a transition to a professional army would involve substantial economic costs, major Lopatin said that "nobody has calculated the damages from breakdowns and accidents of the most complex combat equipment which are the "fault of the personnel," as they are elegantly described in documents. Having visited the troops I see: officers fulfil the duties of mechanics and technicians more and more, in other words, they are busy doing what soldiers and sergeants are supposed to do... They are afraid to let soldiers and sergeants near the equipment."⁸⁷

Finally, the military deputies recognized the lack of "social protection" or the hardships of day-to-day life faced by officers and their families. Before perestroika came the Soviet officer corps had been considered as one of the most privileged groups in Soviet society. But by the middle of 1989, if not earlier, a storm of startling accounts of military life appeared in the mass media from the military news paper *Krasnaya zvezda* to radicals such as *Ogonek* and *Moscow News*. Complaints came from every corner of the country from a remote base to Moscow, from every branch of the Soviet armed forces, from the rank and file officers, retired officers, family members of military personnel, and veterans of the Afghan war. The subjects of their complaints were also various: housing, food, unemployment among families of military personnel, and so on.

In approaching these problems, the officer deputies, at first, in a modest way acknowledged a series of alleged military internal problems. The Lopatin draft said that instances of tragedies involving military equipment, the death of people in peacetime were increasing. Then they focused on what factors were intensifying the difficult situation to the extent that practically many elementary civil rights were deprived. Interestingly, the officer deputies tried to find its prime source in perestroika which in their opinion lacked social reference points for military reform. The "unprepared" withdrawal of Soviet forces from other countries was

the next factor to aggravate the bad situation. In particular, the Lopatin draft pointed out the "absence of a well-thought-out plan" for their redeployment with consideration of socioeconomic conditions of regions as well as of the rights and capabilities of sovereign republics.⁸⁸ Finally, they referred such broad issues as the allocation of an "excessively high" share of the GNP to defense, the "diktat"⁸⁹ of the military-industrial complex, and the "uncontrolled" arms race. These issues could lead to an intensification of the economy's instability and a curtailment of social programmes, they argued. But the issues are too broad to be used for a frame of reference for how to solve the hardships of day-to-day life. Rather, it might be useful to consider in detail some changes in the defense budget structure in favour of supporting upkeep of military personnel, i.e., from arms and equipment purchases to social needs and the preparation and implementation of social programmes.

Now, let us consider the implication of the publication of part of the Lopatin draft for the civil-military relations. Through the publication, first and foremost, a number of officer deputies were able to be centred on the mass media. The progressive journals such as *Argumenty i fakty*, *Literaturnaya gazeta*, and *Ogonek*, had repeatedly provided forums for those progressive uniformed deputies.⁹⁰ It is arguable why they were so attractive. To a certain degree, the reason was not their merits appeared in the draft. As mentioned above, the idea of the phased transition of the Soviet armed forces into a professional-militia system was not new. Most likely, it was their status. As deputies they could be free from the fear of retribution from the high command. Of minor significance, there were too many blanks to be filled or answered right away in their draft reform plan.

It must be noted that those journals themselves had severely criticized the members of the high command by publishing details about their privileges such as luxurious dacha, cars, resort facilities, and so on.⁹¹ This kind of revelation not only

heightened the vertical intermilitary tensions but also reduced the legitimacy of the high command who were claiming that the military reform suggested by the junior and middle officers was unnecessary.

This kind of coalition, between those officer deputies and liberal or radical journals, appeared to have become a much more decisive force in tackling the issues that the armed forces faced, against members of the high command. The head of seventeen deputies group Major V. Lopatin was not only allowed to give a speech to the third session of the Congress of People's Deputies, but also was nationally exposed.⁹² Interestingly, it was at a time when senior ranking military deputies were complaining that they had not been given enough time to speak at the Congress⁹³ and thus were forced to depend on *Krasnaya zvezda* in order to speak to the nation. Major Lopatin even became a deputy defense minister of the RSFSR, most likely because of his view on centre-periphery relations.

The military leadership responded to this situation with a series of measures. The Collegium of the Defense Ministry met on April 10 1990 to discuss its draft proposal.⁹⁴ While promising to make its own military reform plan, the General Staff made a temporary examination of the Lopatin project. A number of ideas such as the gradual transition of professionalism, the reduction of the number of political officers and bodies and, the introduction of elective political officers were turned down right away. Some reliable counter forces were mobilised to cool off the heat. Lt Colonel N. Nikitin, an economist, accused Lopatin of professional incompetence and irresponsibility with regard to his actions on the Supreme Soviet commission. In addition, Lopatin was described as a dupe of the liberal press.⁹⁵ Lt Colonel V. Alksnis, a conservative deputy and later named one of the "black colonels", acting as a counterpart of the reform-minded officer deputies and, sometimes, a substitution of the high command at the Congress, began to be prominent in the military press.⁹⁶ Finally, Lopatin was situated under threat of

expulsion from the Communist Party, thus, could not be a delegate of the 28th Party Congress, but he was in the end secured by the party progressives. During this time even *Pravda* sided with Lopatin.⁹⁷ The Party Control Commission officially overruled the MPA's decision and ordered that Lopatin be reinstated. Harry Gelman linked this decision to Gorbachev's instigation.⁹⁸

Some of the junior and middle ranking officer deputies were emerging as a catalyst for calls for a review of the political organs within the armed forces since Lt. Colonel V. Podziruk questioned the political organs' practices.⁹⁹ In the election to the Congress of People's Deputies, the colonel stood against the commander of Western Group of Forces, General B. Snetkov, and won despite active support for Snetkov from local party officials and the military establishment.¹⁰⁰ Podziruk's critical comments not only encouraged democrats who had already begun their attacks on the political organs under the slogan of departization of the Army, KGB, and MVD troops but also spurred the debate over the future role of the political organs within the armed forces.¹⁰¹ Naturally, the radical officer deputies and democrats cooperated to achieve the same aim. The officer deputies even served as coalition partners with both the Shchit Union and the Russian democrats. Prior to the 28th Party Congress, Lopatin examined the history of the Soviet Party-military relations and drew a provocative conclusion that "the Soviet armed forces are as it were before,"¹⁰² i.e., an instrument of the Party's power. Subsequently, the major left the party. Moreover, he distanced from Gorbachev, who, having renounced the party's constitutional monopoly on power, in Lopatin's opinion, tried to keep the army subordinate to the party and to use the army in ethnically troubled areas such as Dushanbe, Kishinev, Baku, and the Baltic republics.

The fate of the Lopatin draft ended when it was defeated by the MOD draft at a session of the Committee for Defense and State Security in December 1990. After summing up the preliminary results of the competition between the two main

drafts, the Committee reached its final decision: to take the MOD draft as a basis and recommend that the government put the finishing touches to it, and officially submit it, in the future, to the Supreme Soviet. In fact, the Lopatin draft successfully fulfilled its original purpose in the sense that it became a base, or a starting point, of the MOD draft reform plan. Additionally, some points of the Lopatin draft related to centre-periphery relations in the formation of military policy became a pioneering work, as the debate about a New Union treaty heated up.

4.5. Soldiers' Mothers and Shchit and Military Reform Movement

If the group of junior and middle-level officer people's deputies were active at the state and institutional context, two noticeable voluntary associations, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers and the Shchit (Shield) Union, unofficial military trade union, (Union for the Social Protection of Servicemen, Military Reservists, and Their Family Members), were very powerful in society. Simply, they were concerned with the most obvious and highly emotional issue for the ordinary people such as the cruel hazing of young recruits.

Many voluntary associations had existed for a long time but they had hardly been independent of the state. A powerful group, the Communist Party, had prevented others from establishing an independent existence by using various and very complicated mechanisms. Of them we cannot fail to notice the KGB's activity. The difference under perestroika was that the associations were no longer under the direct tutelage of the authorities. Moreover, throughout late 1989 there were a lot of political movements in all-Union level, besides the Communist Party, such as popular fronts, minority movements, internationalist movements, Russian

nationalist groups, party clubs, parliamentary groups, independent workers' movements, anti-Stalinist groups, ecological and cultural movements, religious groups, and fledging parties. All could have had impact on the civil-military relations in some ways. Some of them tried to court the officer corps, in particular, the rank and file officers, and at the same time functioned as an umbrella organization.

The Committee of Soldiers' Mothers was first formed by ordinary people, rather than by special leaders. In Vilnius in March 1989 there was a rally held by a group of women who had lost their sons during military service. They in the first place tried to show their anger at a lack of attention of the military authorities on their suffering. While focusing on how to avert others' similar suffering, the mothers argued that new recruits had to perform their military service in home republics.

The reason why such a demonstration happened in Lithuania could be explained, though in part, by the tragic case of a young Lithuanian soldier Arturas Sakalauskas, who killed eight soldiers on a Leningrad train in February 1987 after they had allegedly beaten and tried to rape him.¹⁰³ As this case was exposed republic-wide, the ordinary Baltics believed that army life was barbaric in general and ethnic minority Baltics had been among those most seriously affected by hazing in particular. A number of official and informal groups appealed to the central authorities for a public review of his case and at the same time demanded that the Baltics serve in or near their home republics. More progressive groups even argued for the establishment in the Baltic of territorial military formations or even of national armies.

In response, a military commentator argued that while recognizing the fact that twelve Lithuanians had died in the armed forces in 1987, not one of those deaths was in any way related to military brutality.¹⁰⁴ He also observed that many

Lithuanians, who had demanded that the Lithuanian youth had to be sent for service only in Lithuania, did not even want to hear that the soil for unhealthy relations in the army was mostly carried in from "outside the army". Moreover, he argued that civilian authorities in the Baltic republics should be held responsible for rising crime rates and antisocial behaviour among the draft-age cohort. In fact, this article was aimed at a Lithuanian Popular Front Sajudis, which had announced its intention in mid-October 1988 to revive the Lithuanian military units and institutions for the preparation of a national officer corps.

In spite of the compromise of defense minister Yazov, who agreed to allow increased numbers of Lithuanian conscripts to serve near home at a meeting with the first secretary of the Lithuanian Communist Party, A. Brazauskas, in April 1989, while rejecting the idea of a national army,¹⁰⁵ the soldiers' mothers continued to face military draft offices in Vilnius and other Lithuanian cities. They even presented their demands in the form of a petition as well as by picketing. During election campaigns to the Congress of People's Deputies the mothers asked candidates to reveal their attitudes towards the issue of military service, that is, principles of service and formation. Major General S. Nekrosius, chief of staff of Lithuania's Civil Defense, for example, announced his support for the territorial formations.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, the commander of the Baltic MD Colonel General F. Kuz'min expressed limited support for it, while criticizing the antimilitarism throughout the Baltic republics.¹⁰⁷

In early April 1989, the mothers again organized a rally in Vilnius to protest against brutal treatment of recruits in the Soviet armed forces, together with Sajudis. About 5,000 people demonstrated in support of demands that Lithuanian youths be allowed to do their military service in the Baltic republics,¹⁰⁸ Around 300 women united to present the first session of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies with a demand that their sons be released from service in the armed

forces.¹⁰⁹ They, in the end, became the founding members of the committee of soldiers' mothers.

By the middle of 1990, this grass root activism had developed nationwide with the formulation of the All-Union Committee of Soldiers' Mothers. Since then, a significant change in the committee's activities followed. It began functioning as a coordinating body and information centre independent military authorities. One of major works was to gather cases of hazing and noncombat deaths. Naturally, campaign for official recognition of the hazing in the armed forces became important. In this context, members of the committee took part in a mass demonstration in Gorky park in June 1990. These activities of mothers' group were run by a liberal television programme *Vzglyad*. Once the committee' existence was known to the public, people who had been dissatisfied with the suffering cases and military authority's treatments for them showed their serious interests in a form of letters and telephone calls.

On the other hand, the mothers group sought to appeal to the highest political institutions. In a letter to the USSR Supreme Soviet, the committee asked the Soviet parliament to set up a special commission to examine all cases of soldiers dying in peacetime. This committee should be independent of military departments with the participation of parents. In addition, the committee demanded more detailed measures. In principle, draftees should carry out their military service in their home republic, they argued. The mothers considered that it was necessary to declassify and publish statistics on all cases of soldiers dying during their military service. In part, this demand was met with the defense ministry's decision to publish the names of all soldiers who died in Afghanistan. Finally, they asked that in case of noncombat deaths related company commanders should be removed from work with soldiers on active duty.¹¹⁰

The committee's activities reached their peak when the First All-Union

Congress of Servicemen's Parents was held in Moscow in September 8-9, 1990.¹¹¹ The nature of participants was impressive. First and foremost, the committee members had succeeded in causing politicians to become involved with the rally at various levels, from the USSR people's deputies to public organizations across the country. A dozen of people's deputies addressed the congress delegates. E. Gayer, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet, for example, reproached the ministry of defense with the fact that "there is not a single official representative of the military department" at the congress,¹¹² while criticizing a number of military practices and a lack of their interests in solving the problems. What is more interesting was the fact that the RSFSR leadership and deputies showed their keen interests in the congress itself, not to mention its prime issue, soldiers' deaths in peacetime. A RSFSR people's deputy and co-chairman of Shchit Union, V. Urazhtsev, chaired the congress. A. Surkov, T. Koryagina, and O. Kalugin all deeply took part in the work of the congress. Possibly, in an attempt to give an impression that the RSFSR leadership shared in the care of the mothers and soldiers and officers, Koryagina was even introduced to the congress as a candidate for appointment to the post of Russia's defense minister.

Another significant development was the radicalized activities of the soldiers mothers. I. Kugushev, member of the organizing committee, publicly said "you should strive as hard as possible to find out the home addresses of everyone from the defense minister to the commanding officers of military units,"¹¹³ most likely, in order to picket them personally. After the congress, delegates picketed a nearby apartment block where generals and officers live. According to Colonel General B. Pyankov, the commander of the Siberian Military District, certain commanders were presented with ultimatum demands that soldiers be allowed to return home.¹¹⁴

The congress also gained a lot of publicity, primarily, by claiming that over

the past four years since Gorbachev came to power 15,000-20,000 soldiers and officers had suffered "noncombat-related deaths." Delegates blamed brutality among the troops as one major cause of death and criticized military and political leaders for not being more responsive. They also called for a law or presidential decree protecting servicemen, to be enacted before the beginning of the fall 1990 draft. Otherwise, they said, they would boycott the draft.

At the end of October 1990 in a letter to *New Times*, members of the Soldiers' Mothers demanded a public discussion of draft laws establishing principles and organization of military service and in the shortest time, within two years, the realization of "radical" military reform and reduction of the period of compulsory military service. They saw that alternative service for a period of time "not longer" than the usual active military service should be brought in "as soon as possible." Moreover, all military construction units should be disbanded and recruitment of non-professionals onto the railway should be banned and the same for the MVD and KGB troops, they went on to ask.¹¹⁵

The frightening exposure of the figure to the public just before the fall 1990 draft was the most decisive way in their efforts to call upon the public to begin the struggle for making compulsory military service defunct and virtually made the purely military issue into a political one. The military leaders were forced to respond to the situation in a hurry. Initially, there was a change in their attitudes towards the organization. Within two days of the congress, the USSR main military prosecutor and deputy general prosecutor met a group of soldiers' mothers. At the meeting Lt General of Justice A. Katusev assured the mothers, who demanded a thorough investigation into the circumstances in which their sons had been killed or severely injured and into cases of non-regulation relations in the units, that every case would be investigated and "criminal" charges brought, if necessary. The general even promised that the results of this investigation would be

sent to every woman who had appealed to him.¹¹⁶

On November 5 1990, President Gorbachev met mothers of soldiers who dies during peacetime. It was two days before their set date to hold a radical demonstration, aiming at the Victory-Day rally, such as going on a hunger strike or blocking the movement of tanks on Red square by lying under the tanks. According to L. Lymer, one of the participants of the meeting with the President, the mothers were inspired by Gorbachev's promises that he could meet many of demands of the mothers such as material compensation, issuing parents a death certificate, and so on.¹¹⁷

Meanwhile, the military authority became busy explaining the figure 15,000. Before the congress was held, a similar rumour had been circulated in public: 45,000 soldiers and officers had died since perestroika began. The military leadership had lightly treated this issue. At the end of August 1990, a General Staff spokesman said that only one percent of all deaths was due to violence among the troops, failing to mention the total numbers of deaths in peacetime.¹¹⁸ Now, Katusev revised the figure by saying that one third of all non-combat deaths among Soviet servicemen were the result of criminal acts, while two thirds resulted from accidents.¹¹⁹ In addition, the general announced that most of the accidental deaths were caused by the misuse of weapons or other equipment and that one in every four deaths was suicide. Subsequently, insurance for servicemen was mandated by a presidential decree issued at the start of 1991. Some parents, who had lost their sons, were to receive around 25,000 rubles each. Deputy defense minister Colonel General V. Babev in an interview with *Izvestiya* said that 285 million rubles were set aside in the 1991 military budget in order to implement Gorbachev's decree for insurance for servicemen.¹²⁰

One of the key factors in the very successful development of the committee of soldiers' mothers appeared to be a coalition among various associations,

including democratic political figures. But the most noticeable was its cooperated work with "Shchit", an unofficial trade union for servicemen. It was formed around October 1989 and its main aim was to protect the economic and legal rights of military personnel, veterans, and their families.¹²¹ Co-chairman of its board of directors, Reserve Lt Colonel V. Urazhtsev, noted that veterans returning from Afghanistan and thousands of servicemen recently discharged as a result of the large reduction of the armed forces along Gorbachev's 1988 UN announcement, which he termed as a real disaster, needed social protections. He continued to say that "it is no coincidence" that 40% of its members were former active servicemen transferred into the reserve in the course of recent reductions.¹²² Interestingly, the union was planned to open a store to serve the mothers of soldiers so that they could purchase needed goods at the most modest prices. It was at a time when the committee of soldiers' mothers was not active, yet. But this idea certainly helped the union absorb women's activism. Moreover, the union supported the transformation of the armed forces into professionals in terms of officers' declining standard of living. The other side of this idea meant the abolition of the draft. Besides, members of the union opposed the use of Army in policing operations. To be sure, this assertion appealed to the Russian leadership, who worried about the military crackdown of democrats and wanted to increase his influence over the Soviet armed forces, on the other. In his address to the second congress of the Shchit Union, for example, El'tsin criticized the fact that servicemen were killed in peacetime. On the other hand, he sympathetically recognized that human and social rights of people in military uniforms were violated and that the relations between the Army and local residents deteriorated in some areas.

At the founding congress of Shchit its strength was about 10,000 members. Up to 80% of the members were secret, because officers were dismissed from the Army for taking part in this organization's activity. Some 1,000 officers

were driven out of the armed forces.¹²³ When its second congress was opened in December 1990, however, according to V. Urazhtsev, cochairman of the board of the Shield Union and Russian people's deputy, the membership reached 200,000, including 15 people's deputies.¹²⁴ Moreover, five hundred primary cells were created in all Union republics. This rapid growth caused qualitative changes in its activities from secret to open way. At the second congress, its leadership announced that they were about to take part in law-making and to work in the government. But they considered their prime task as departization of the Armed Forces, the MVD, and the KGB. When the Shchit union was formed, Yazov totally disregarded it. In December 1989, for example, he said that "I do not know such an organization, and the army doesn't need any sort of help or shield. We are capable of defending ourselves, and we don't need any retired officers to defend us."¹²⁵ Meanwhile, the union had deeply involved in the Soviet politics in general and sided with the RSFSR leadership in particular. Shchit's revealing activity of the "strange" troop movements around Moscow in September 1990 reflected well that development.

The troop movement included Ryazan Paratroop Regiment, units of the Tula Assault Division, units of the Pskov Airborne Division, the units of the Vitebsk Airborne Division of the KGB Border Troops, and the Dzerzhinskii Division of the MVD. Incidentally, all of these troops were involved in the August 1991 coup. At that time, the RSFSR leadership was so keen to know such questions: why was the operation so well coordinated by the MOD, the KGB, and the MVD? who did issue the order to take measures?; and how was it no-one in Russia's government knew about such large-scale troop movements?

On September 9 the Ryazan Paratroop Regiment and units of the Tula Assault Division were put on the alert and were later put in a state of combat readiness. The next day at 03:00 the units moved off to an unknown object. Units

of the Pskov Airborne Division began landing at an airfield in the Moscow area at 16:00 on September 10. The USSR people's deputy N. Molotkov learnt by hearsay, probably by members of Shchit, about the troops' movements and drove to the airfield, and six other deputies dispersed to various military units. But none of them was allowed access to the personnel. On September 11 the Pskov Division flew off to new stationing locations and had returned. The Ryazan Regiment was given an assignment, preparing for a parade. In the meantime, the units of the KGB Vitebsk Airborne Division were placed in a state of combat readiness, moved towards Moscow, and returned. The MVD Dzerzhinskii Division was also placed in a state of combat readiness.

A USSR people's deputy S. Belozertsev asked a question on September 24 at the USSR Supreme Soviet concerning the strange movements and called on the government to explain what the troops were doing, referring to information received from the Shchit union. In return, Gorbachev lightly touched the question. Moreover, Belozertsev was asked to name his informers. KGB chief Kryuchkov also told the Soviet parliament that the Vitebsk KGB Airborne Division had been brought to Moscow to take part in harvesting operations, and the Ryazan paratroops regiment came to take part in the November parade on Red Square.

Colonel S. Kudinov, member of Shchit, deputy of Ryazan Oblast Council, and chief of the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School Political Department, made the first wave by revealing details concerning the troop movements in an address to the Democratic Russia deputies group. First of all, he emphasized the fact that the Ryazan paratroops regiment received ammunition and hardware and that it was planned to leave for Moscow on September 22 as far as the parade was concerned.¹²⁶ And he gave other information about the Tula Division, the MVD and KGB troops, and other troops of Moscow Military District.

This revelation forced defense minister Yazov to explain troop movements to

the Supreme Soviet the following day. At first Yazov recognized that a regiment of the Tula division, stationed in Ryazan, arrived in Moscow from the 9th to 10th. But as for the day of departure, he underlined the fact that there was an order signed on July 30 by the commander of the Moscow Military District that this regiment had to be in Moscow on the 10th along the military exercise plan. Yazov also revealed that the airborne troops always had to be fully equipped in the country wherever they went. In case of the Vitebsk Airborne Division, which, Kudinov argued, had moved toward Moscow, not a single step was made in the direction of Moscow, defense minister stressed. Finally, he confirmed Kryuchkov's explanation on the MVD troops by saying that 1,300 men from the Dzerzhinskii Division were digging up potatoes in Moscow.¹²⁷

The second wave came when *Komsomol'skaya pravda* published a letter to *Moscow Television* and to President Gorbachev from Major M. Pustobayev. After giving detailed information about manoeuvres which happened from 9 through 13 September, the major questioned why those taking part in preparations for a parade should need steel helmets, flak jackets, arms, and ammunition and whether there was any Kolkhoz in Moscow, Bryansk, Rayazan, or Kaluga Oblast where any one of the thousands of people who took part in the manoeuvres helped agricultural workers. Then he concluded that Yazov deliberately refused to clarify the situation, and, in this connection, asked the Supreme Soviet to start an independent deputies investigation of the matter.

This case to a certain degree explained the fact that a coalition that included Shchit Union, the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers, republic-level associations and even soviets, and democrats in the USSR Congress of People's Deputies was on the process of development. This advent spurred people's advocacy of military reform advocacy and even isolated the high command from their rank-and-file officers and from society.

4.6. Nationality Ferment and Republican Control over the Soviet Army

Mounting nationalist ferment was the final but most decisive factor to provide more momentum for the military reform movement. From the time of Gorbachev's accession to power in March 1985, the political aspirations of most of the people of the Baltic republics, for example, had evolved along with the general flow of perestroika. While the initial goal in 1986 was for cultural sovereignty, by 1987 it had come to include economic and, by 1988, political sovereignty. The consensus by late 1989 and early 1990 was a clear desire for fully fledged independence. Both the Estonian and Latvian Popular Fronts and the Lithuanian Sajudis as well as more radical groups such as the National Independence Party of Estonia, the National Independence Movement of Latvia and the Lithuanian Freedom League, had been organizing meetings to work together. And they had tried to involve Ukrainians, Armenians, Georgians, Moldavians and other minorities.¹²⁸ In every part of the country national groups were calling for a relaxation of control from Moscow, and later for complete secession from the Union.

The Soviet armed forces' problems with regard to nationalist unrest had two dimensions: internally institutional and externally societal. These two dimensions were interrelated as the debates on a New Union Treaty continued. The internal dimension implied the dynamics of the ethnic factor in the military establishment, i.e. the ethnic makeup of the Soviet armed forces. There had been a demographic shift over the past two decades in favour of the non-Russian, especially the Muslim nationalities. As a result, as members of the high command complained, not only

was it difficult to train them because of the language problems but there was also ethnic solidarity groups within the units formed that could engage in violent conflict and undermine discipline and morale. On the other hand, the external societal dimension reflects the military's involvement in domestic policing operations.

As far as the relations between the rise of nationalist feeling in the Union republics and military reform movement were concerned, the Baltic republics, Georgia, and the Ukraine were significant. By early 1989 when military reform debates reached their peak, the extent and nature of nationalist feeling in the five Central Asian republics, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Tadzhikistan, and Turkmenistan, was difficult to gauge. Although violent conflict broke out on a number of occasions,¹²⁹ it had no significant, direct influence on the restructuring of Soviet armed forces. Simply the Soviet troops became 'friend or foe?' Conflict between the republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the autonomous region of Nagorno-Karabakh that began in early 1988 could be seen in the same context. In Azerbaijan the Soviet military maintained a state of emergency after bloody reimposing order in Baku in January 1990. When the USSR Supreme Soviet began to prepare for a New Union treaty, virtually all union republics advocated military reform, including the creation of national armies. But their proposals had already departed from the dimension of purely military considerations. As will be seen later in chapters 5 and 8, republican authorities used the military issues as a valuable bargaining chip in order to take more from Moscow.

The RSFSR was typical. The order of issues raised by the Russian republican leadership was similar to what appeared in the Baltics, i.e., from military internal problems, republican control over the commanders stationing in the territory of the Russia in terms of materials and troops movement, use of the armed forces for policing, and finally the formation of a Russian army. But in general they had the

dynamic of the Russian leadership's challenge over Gorbachev, particularly, his position of the CINC of the Soviet armed forces. It was in early December 1990 that might had brought a near miss for Gorbachev. El'tsin planned a parliamentary debate on a proposed new constitution that would have empowered him as president of Russia to raise an army and declare war. Under pressure, however, El'tsin withdrew even the debate.

In the Baltic republics, three kind of political forces had been discernible during the period of 1987-1989. The first was the 'restorationist' movements such as the National Independence Party of Estonia, the National Independence Movement of Latvia and the Lithuanian Freedom League, although they were not major forces, yet. They aimed for the very restoration of the independent republics. This force, appealing to young people, succeeded in moving a major force, from the centrists, to the left. Centrists preferred to work within the existing political structures and work for change step by step, for example, for cultural autonomy. Both the Estonian and Latvian Popular Fronts and the Lithuanian Sajudis, together with some of intellectuals, technocrats, and rank and file Communist Party members, were included in this force. At that time, this force stood for the sovereignty of the Baltic republics within the Soviet confederation, but later came to support full independence from Moscow. The third force, anti-reformist or conservative, included Russian-speaking Party officials, the military, bureaucrats and immigrant workers who did not wish to lose their privileged status. This force was represented by the Estonian Intermovement, Latvian Interfront and the Lithuanian Edinstvo.

As far as the development of civil-military relations was concerned, coordinated and sometimes individual activities of the Popular Fronts were important. Criticism of the Soviet armed forces occupied a prominent place in their proposals. Their programs include everything from calls for a reduction in the

length of military service to demands for the establishment, or re-establishment,¹³⁰ of national armies. They never missed the chance to bring several cases of brutality in the armed forces to light using glasnost' and functioned as an umbrella of soldiers' mothers.

It was widely believed that ethnic minorities, especially Baltics, had been among those most seriously affected by such phenomena as "hazing" and "nonregulation" behaviour. In response, as seen in the previous section, ordinary people began to demand that, for example, Lithuanians be sent for service only in Lithuania and to argue that only territorial formations would be capable of easing national tensions. Nobody believed the argument that the armed forces had been a vehicle by which national integration had been promoted.

After becoming a major force in their Supreme Soviets, they began making more critical decisions. First, three republican authorities demanded that the Soviet army stationed there should be under control of the republics. Then, they unilaterally issued a proposal against calling for their youth to be allowed to perform their military service in their home republic. The republican authorities took more serious actions. The Latvian Supreme Soviet, for instance, proposed that servicemen on active military service in the territory of the Latvian republic would be granted only official housing and that the allocation of new housing would be stopped. The local authorities suspended the operation of USSR Council of Ministers' resolution governing the procedure for placing reserve officers on the waiting list and providing them with housing. The republic's Council of Ministers adopted a law that granted servicemen official housing alone. Moreover, units of the Soviet armed forces stationed there were not allowed to build houses for themselves.¹³¹

As the Lithuanian government declared its independence, the situation was beginning to rapidly deteriorate. Not only did those getting their call-up papers

rarely report to the appropriate organizations but also those who had deserted rushed into nationalist organizations. Garrisons were about to face stoppage of water, electricity, and so on. Children of military personnel were limited to schools and kindergartens. There was no work place for wives of officers. There were even instances of servicemen being directly threatened and beaten up. In short, the Soviet army had become an occupation force.

In Georgia the Soviet armed forces were also regarded as an army of occupation since the military action in Tbilisi on April 9 1989. Georgians argued that the incidents were not exposed to the public and that somebody in Moscow should take the responsibility. In short, people shouted "where are your shovels?" if they saw soldiers. During the operation special MVD units and regular paratroops attacked a demonstration outside the Georgian main government building, using teargas and shovels. Less than one month after the incidents, in May 1989, a group of approximately 800 young Georgian men in various cities who were due to be drafted began a hunger strike to back their demand to be allowed to perform their military service in their home republic because of some unconfirmed incidence of brutality against Georgian recruits serving in the Soviet army. On June 7 1989 republic-wide industrial strikes were held in support of these demands.¹³²

Thus, military issues were very sensitive to any associations and organizations, including the Georgian Supreme Soviet at the end of 1989 when the Tbilisi events were exposed in the second session of the Congress of People's Deputies. Therefore, it was not unexpected that a working group of the Georgian parliament sorted out the high incidence of brutality against Georgian recruits serving in the Soviet army. This effort by the Supreme Soviet was the earliest case in comparison to other republics. Part of the report was published in a local paper *Zarya Vostoka* on November 29 1989. At the following day, the Georgian

Supreme Soviet ruled to raise the possibility of reviving the Georgian national army division, of opening a military academy in Tbilisi, and of allowing the majority of draftees from Georgia to perform their military service on Georgian territory.¹³³ The idea of creating a national military formation as a place where young Georgians could serve rather than in the Soviet army began circulating on the street. Even demonstrations supporting this idea were held in a number of towns throughout Georgia. Naturally, the issue of Georgian army was incorporated into the pre-election programmes of virtually all the political parties and coalitions that competed in the Supreme Soviet elections in Georgia in October 1990, including that of the Georgian Communist Party.¹³⁴ One of the first issues addressed by the newly elected Georgian Supreme Soviet was, not surprisingly, the question of forming a national military unit. In December 1990 the Georgian parliament issued a decree on the formation of a National Guard (NG) under the jurisdiction of the Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In the Ukraine, Rukh, the Association of Democratic Soviets and Democratic Blocs of Ukraine, was the most noticeable political force in terms of military issues. Nevertheless, the Ukraine's highly active Committee of Soldiers' Mothers should also be noted, because the organization had played a key role in the campaign to keep Ukrainian conscripts in their native republic and enjoyed broad support for its efforts. In addition, as for the creation of a Ukrainian army, the radical "Narodna rada" parliamentary faction and the Committee to Resurrect the Armed Forces in Ukraine were also significant.

The organization Rukh had its origin in 1988 when attempts were made in various cities to launch popular-front organizations on the model of those in the Baltic republics. Its draft programme was published in February 1989 in *Literaturna Ukraina*. The first national congress composed of 1,158 delegates in Kiev on 8-10 September 1989. Some delegates pointed out that the military-related

provisions in the sovereignty declaration were meant to lay the groundwork for a Ukrainian national army.

Dmytro Pavlychko, head of the Supreme Soviet Commission on Foreign Affairs and a leading member of Rukh, for example, told *Izvestiya* that the creation of national armies, including a Ukrainian army, was a "normal, legitimate process" in the attainment of a republic's genuine sovereignty."¹³⁵ However, the most urgent concern, which most of the parliamentarians agreed, was not whether to raise an army but how to stop young Ukrainians' being exposed to danger in areas of ethnic conflict such as Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

Accordingly, in a move that was dramatic, if unenforceable, on July 30 1990, the republican Supreme Soviet ordered that Ukrainian conscripts, police, and KGB troops should return home from conflict areas by October 1 and from all other parts of the USSR by December 1. This decision was a real shock to the Soviet high command. Chief of the General Staff Moiseev in a hurry flew in and gave an address to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. He tried to soothe parliamentarians by saying that the high command regarded Ukrainian youth as "a mainstay of the army."¹³⁶ In fact, Ukrainians made up over a fifth of all those drafted and a significant proportion of the officer corps. In this respect, the general argued that to permit them to serve only in the Ukraine republic meant to damage the Soviet armed forces and therefore on the defense capability of the country as a whole. At the same time Moiseev reminded the deputies of the fact that the growing desertion from the armed had reached 3,000, including 184 Ukrainians.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, he tried to show a compromising attitudes by saying that the USSR defense ministry did not reject Ukrainians' decisions. Moreover, he promised that the MOD took the decisions into consideration when planning special measures to meet the interests of Ukrainian citizens. Although the drive for radical military reform at the all-Union level to a certain degree weakened around November, as

Moiseev himself argued, now the military reform was clearly linked to evolving centre-periphery relations, the signing of a Union treaty.¹³⁸

The January 1991 bloodshed in the Baltic republics accelerated the debate on the creation of a Ukrainian army. For example, the deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, Volodymyr Hryn'ov, at a conference held in Kiev on February 3-4 said that most recent events showed that the genuine sovereignty of any republic could only be asserted, and the rights of its citizens defended, if the country had its own army.¹³⁹ The conference was devoted to "the external and internal security of Ukraine, the concept of a Ukrainian army, and steps towards its creation." All of political groups took part in the conference. The strong support of the DOSAAF (the official Ukrainian-language organ of the Voluntary Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation, and Fleet) was surprising in that the political groups that organized the conference were at the centre of the drive for national independence, and therefore the fact that they were interested in the possibilities of a national army was self-explanatory.

In sum, there were a number of ways in which the military reform could be related to Gorbachev's broader domestic policy agenda. The alleviation of the burden of military spending on the country's economy was repeatedly associated with arms cuts particularly in conventional forces. But this pragmatic concern was only one of the questions addressed by the civilians. A wider agenda of domestic questions emerged beyond the bounds of economics as well as military strategy which was mentioned in chapter 3. This wider agenda covered: the military internal problems, the republican control over the Soviet armed forces stationing in the territory of the every republic in terms of materials and troops movement, the use of army troops for policing, and the formation of a national army. These well reflected the fast-moving development in the relationship between the army and society under the conditions of political reform. The most noticeable figure was the

dynamic activities of the middle level of powers. They effectively challenged some of the military structures of the country as it had evolved over decades and even questioned the issue of how to divide the Soviet armed forces among the republics with consequences that were hard to predict, as the nationalist ferment became the most decisive factor to provide more momentum for the military reform movement.

¹ A. Savinkin, "What kind of Armed Forces Do We Need?" *Moscow News*, No. 45, 1988, p. 6.

² *Ibid.*

³ "Armiya i obshchestvo," *XX Vek i Mir*, No. 9, 1988, pp. 20-21.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 24, 1988.

⁶ Z. Vicys, "Byt' li natsional'num armeiskim formirovaniyam?" *Sovetskaya Litva*, January 13, 1989. For more developed his article, see "Armiya vnov' stanet dlya nas shkoli zhizni," *Komsomol'skaya pravda* (Lithuania), February 24, 1989.

⁷ A. Lizichev, *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 3, 1989; M. Moiseev, *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 10, 1989; and D. Yazov, *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 7, 1989.

⁸ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 7, 1989.

⁹ V. Serebryannikov, "Armiya, Kakoi ei byt'?" *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 12, 1989.

¹⁰ G. Alimurzayev, "A Shield or A Sword? History of Soviet Military Doctrine," *International Affairs*, No. 5, 1989, p. 101.

¹¹ The number of candidates is given in *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 7, 1989. For partial election results see *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 9, 1989 and *Izvestiya*, May 6, 1989. Biographical information on the military deputies appeared in "Doveriem oblechennye," *KVS*, No. 10, 1989, pp. 3-29.

¹² For example, M. I. Sorokin, the deputy minister of defense, L. V. Shustko, the commander of the North Caucasus military district, Yu. Maksimov, the deputy minister of defense for strategic missiles, V. Varennikov, a deputy minister of defense and commander of the ground forces, and so on.

¹³ *Izvestiya*, June 10, 1989 and June 12, 1989.

¹⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 21 and November 2, 1989.

¹⁵ *Izvestiya*, May 29, 1989.

¹⁶ For his earliest explanation, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 22, 1989.

¹⁷ *Pravda*, April 16, 1989.

¹⁸ For a couple of speeches by radical deputies such as Yu. Vlasov and V. Tolpezhnikov, see *Izvestiya*, June 2, 1989. For conservative deputy Petrusenko's speech, see *Izvestiya*, June 1, 1989.

¹⁹ Alexander Rahr, "Gorbachev and the Post-Cherbrikov KGB," *Report on the USSR*, No. 51, 1989, p. 17. See also *Moscow News*, Nos 26 and 33, 1989.

²⁰ *Izvestiya*, May 30 and June 1, 1989.

²¹ *Izvestiya*, June 1, 1989.

²² For a dispute between Ligachev and Shevardnadze, see *Pravda*, February 7 and

8, 1990.

²³ M. Moiseev, "Eshshe raz o prestizhe armii," *KVS*, No. 13, 1989, pp. 3-14,

²⁴ *Trud*, May 9, 1989.

²⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 4, 1989.

²⁶ For his short comment, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 15, 1989. And see also V. Varennikov, "Prednaznachenie sovetskikh vooruzhennykh sil," *KVS*, No. 18, 1989, pp. 22-25. By that time *KVS* published a series of articles under the heading "Function of the Army: The Dialects of Development."

²⁷ *Izvestiya*, February 11, 1989.

²⁸ *Ogonek*, No. 19, 1989, pp. 6-8.

²⁹ *Nedelya*, No. 8, 1989, p. 6.

³⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 23, 1989.

³¹ *Pravda*, June 11, 1989.

³² *Pravda*, December 30, 1989.

³³ *Moscow Television*, October 9, 1989, in *FBIS-SOV-89-197*, p. 98.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

³⁵ Alexei Kireyev, "Beating swords into... What?" *New Times*, No. 44, 1990, pp. 24-25.

³⁶ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, April 28, 1990.

³⁷ "Siloj pravdy," *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 16, 1987.

³⁸ *Radio Moscow-1*, July 3, 1989, cited in Benjamin S. Lambeth, "Is Soviet Defense Policy Becoming Civilianized? R-3939-USDP (Santa Monica: CA: The Rand Corporation, August 1990), p. 11. Lt. Colonel V. Podziruk's comments, see "Ekzamen derzhat ministry," *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 4, 1989.

³⁹ Stephen Foye, "Yazov Survives Contentious Confirmation Debate," *Report on the USSR*, No. 29, 1989, p. 10.

⁴⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 13, 1988.

⁴¹ *Rabotnichesko Delo* (Sofia), December 6, 1988, cited in Fred Wehling, "Old Soldiers Never Die: Marshal Akhromeev's Role in Soviet Defense Decision Making," in W. C. Green and T. Karasik eds., *Gorbachev and His Generals* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 69.

⁴² Daniel Goure, "Soviet Doctrine and Nuclear Forces into the Twenty-first Century," in W. C. Green and T. Karasik eds., *Gorbachev and His Generals*, p. 93.

⁴³ I. Lebedev and A. Podberezkin, "Voennye doktriny i mezhdunarodnaya bezopasnost'," *Kommunist*, No. 13, 1988, p. 112.

⁴⁴ *Pravda*, June 20, 1989.

⁴⁵ For example, George G. Weickhardt, "Moiseev versus Yazov: Backlash in the Armed Forces?" *Report on the USSR*, December 1, 1989, pp. 6-8.

⁴⁶ *Izvestiya*, April 13, 1989.

⁴⁷ *Literaturnaya gazeta*, May 13, 1987.

⁴⁸ M. Gareev, "Eshche raz ob obrazovannosti: East' drugoe mnenie," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, June 3, 1987.

⁴⁹ *Izvestiya*, April 21, 1989.

⁵⁰ *Pravda*, August 5, 1988.

⁵¹ *Pravda*, November 1, 1988.

⁵² *Izvestiya*, September 16, 1989.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

- ⁵⁴ Ibid.
- ⁵⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 31, 1989.
- ⁵⁶ Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Is Soviet Defense Policy...*, pp. 8-9.
- ⁵⁷ Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, *The Soviet Parliament: First Step* (Moscow: Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, 1989), p. 54.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ *Central Television*, July 29, 1989, cited in W. C. Green and T. Karasik eds., *Gorbachev and His Generals*, p. 564.
- ⁶⁰ *Moscow Television*, September 1, 1989, cited in Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Is Soviet Defense Policy...*, p. 11.
- ⁶¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 27, 1989.
- ⁶² *Central Television*, July 29, 1989, cited in W. C. Green and T. Karasik eds., *Gorbachev and His Generals*, p. 564.
- ⁶³ The military's response to the decree, see an interview given by Major General L. Ivashov, see *FBIS-SOV-90-178*, p. 68.
- ⁶⁴ "Status - 'oboronke'," *Pravda*, September 6, 1990.
- ⁶⁵ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 9, 1990. Signatories of this letter included almost all the defense industry members of the Council of Leaders of State Enterprises, including A. Tizyakov and N. Mikhailov, O. Baklanov, M. Moiseev, chief of the General Staff, V. Varennikov, CINC of the Ground Forces, A. Prokhanov, and so on.
- ⁶⁶ *TASS*, September 20, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-184*, p. 21.
- ⁶⁷ *Diario De Noticias* (Lisbon), September, 15, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-182*, p. 38.
- ⁶⁸ *TASS*, November 28, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-230*, p. 45.
- ⁶⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 13, 1990.
- ⁷⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 13, 1990.
- ⁷¹ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 15, 1990.
- ⁷² *The Soviet Parliament...*, p. 52.
- ⁷³ Ibid.
- ⁷⁴ Viktor Yasmann, "Supreme Soviet Committee to Oversee KGB," *Report on the USSR*, No. 26, 1989, p. 11.
- ⁷⁵ William E. Odom, "The Soviet Military in Transition," *Problems of Communism* (May-June 1990), p. 67.
- ⁷⁶ *Central Television*, July 29, 1989, cited in W. C. Green and T. Karasik eds., *Gorbachev and His Generals*, p. 564.
- ⁷⁷ G. Sturua, "Komitet po voprosam oborony i gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti--pervye mesyatsy roboty," *MEMO*, January 1990, pp. 83-84.
- ⁷⁸ *Izvestiya*, June 26, 1989.
- ⁷⁹ "Porekt semnadtsati," *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, February 2, 1990.
- ⁸⁰ E. Erokhin, "Kakaya armiya nam nuzhna," *Ogonek*, No. 9, 1990, p. 29. cited in Stephen Foye, "Radical Military Reform and 'The Young Turks'," *Report on the USSR*, No. 15, p. 9.
- ⁸¹ *Pravitel'stvennyi vestnik*, No. 48, 1990, pp. 10-12 and 5-10, respectively. Translated in *FBIS-SOV-90-239*, "Draft Reform Plan by Lopatin, Others," pp. 75-80 and "Defense Ministry Draft Reform Plan." 62-75.
- ⁸² "Draft Reform Plan by Lopatin..." p. 75.
- ⁸³ D. Yazov, "S nakazom partii i naroda," *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 5, 1989.
- ⁸⁴ "Draft Reform Plan by Lopatin..." p. 77.

- ⁸⁵ Ibid. pp. 77-78.
- ⁸⁶ G. Alimurzayev, "A Shield or A Sword? History of Soviet Military Doctrine," *International Affairs*, No. 5, 1989, pp. 100-109.
- ⁸⁷ "Proekt semnadsati."
- ⁸⁸ "Draft Reform Plan by Lopatin..." p. 76.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 75.
- ⁹⁰ "Kakaya armiya nam nuzhna," pp. 28-30; "Armiya na poroge reformy," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, No. 10, 1990, p. 29; "Professional'naya armiya: za i protiv," *Trud*, March 27, 1990.; "Kto komu sluzhit?" *Sovetskaya Kul'tura*, March 31, 1990.
- ⁹¹ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, June 30, 1990.
- ⁹² *Izvestiya*, March 15, 1990; *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 7, 1990; *Izvestiya*, "Proekt voennoi reformy," April 10, 1990.
- ⁹³ For a complaint of People's Deputy Major General M. Surkov, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 4, 1989.
- ⁹⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 11, 1990.
- ⁹⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 13, 1990.
- ⁹⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 25 and October 24, 1989, and January 3, March 23, and April 6, 1990.
- ⁹⁷ *Pravda*, May 2, 1990.
- ⁹⁸ Harry Gelman, *Gorbachev's First Five Years in the Soviet Leadership*, R-3951-A (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, May 1990), p. 98.
- ⁹⁹ "Ekzamen derzhat ministry."
- ¹⁰⁰ *The Guardian*, July 18, 1989.
- ¹⁰¹ For the results of a meeting of leading political officers held on 11-13 July in the wake of Podziruk's comment, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 12 and 22, 1989. Defense minister Yazov and chief of the MPA Lizichev addressed the gathering. Colonel V. Marchenkov argued for the preservation of the current system, while demonstrating that nonpolitical officers recognized the contribution made by their colleagues in the political organs. See, V. Marchenkov, "Opora," *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 11, 1989.
- ¹⁰² V. Lopatin, "Armiya i politika," *Znalya*, No. 7, 1990, p. 150.
- ¹⁰³ Kestutis Girmius, "No Love Lost between the Military and the Lithuanian Restructuring Movement," *Radio Free Europe Research*, January 5, 1989, p. 15.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 22, 1988.
- ¹⁰⁵ Guoda Latvaitiene, "Lithuania's Brazuskas on Talks with Yazov," *Radio Vilnius*, cited in Stephen Foye, "Baltic Nationalism and the Soviet Military," *Report on the USSR*, June 30, 1989, p. 26.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 26, 1989.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 16, 1989.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Report on the USSR*, No. 15, 1989, p. 39.
- ¹⁰⁹ "Salvation and preservation," *Moscow News*, No. 29, 1990, p. 6.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹¹ *Pravda*, September 3, 1990; *FBIS-SOV-90-177*, Sept. 12, 1990, pp. 67-68; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 11, 1990.
- ¹¹² *Izvestiya*, September 9, 1990.
- ¹¹³ *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 11, 1990.
- ¹¹⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 16, 1990.
- ¹¹⁵ *New Times*, No. 44, 1990, pp. 2-3.

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- ¹¹⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 13, 1990.
- ¹¹⁷ *Moscow Television*, November 5, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-215*, p. 41.
- ¹¹⁸ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 30, 1990.
- ¹¹⁹ *Novosti*, December 8, 1990.
- ¹²⁰ *Izvestiya*, February 25, 1991.
- ¹²¹ For general information, see *Molodezh'severa*, November 22, 1989; *Atmoda*, December 12, 1989; and *New Times*, No. 32, 1990.
- ¹²² *Izvestiya*, October 25, 1989.
- ¹²³ *FBIS-SOV-90-198*, October 12, 1990, pp. 89-90.
- ¹²⁴ *TASS*, December 16, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-242*, pp. 68-69.
- ¹²⁵ *Moscow Television*, December 15, 1989, in *FBIS-SOV-89-241*, pp. 121-122.
- ¹²⁶ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, September 26, 1990.
- ¹²⁷ *Moscow Television*, September 26, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-188*, pp. 39-40.
- ¹²⁸ Keith Sword ed., *The Times Guide to Eastern Europe*, revised edition (London: Times Books, 1991), pp. 207-228. The following details on the Baltic situation are derived from this book.
- ¹²⁹ Noticeable cases are the December 1986 mass demonstration in Alma Ata, the July 1989 Uzbek's attack on Meskhetian Turks in the Ferganda valley, and the June 1990 Osh incidents. For details, see Stephen White, *Gorbachev in Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 128-141.
- ¹³⁰ The term "reestablishment" is used because the Soviet armed forces did include national formations in their structure for twenty years, from 1918 to 1938. Estonian Army was formed from units of the Seventh Army (RKKA), Western Front, and included the First Division and the Pskov Group of Forces. Army of Soviet Latvia included the First and Second Rifle Divisions (Army of Soviet Latvia), the Second Novgorod Rifle Division, and so on. Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Army included the Lithuanian Rifle Division.
- ¹³¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 16, 1990.
- ¹³² Elizabeth Fuller, "Georgians Win Concessions on Military Service," *Report on the USSR*, No. 28, 1989, p. 20.
- ¹³³ *Zarya Vostoka*, November 30, 1989, cited in Elizabeth Fuller, "Georgia's National Guard," *Report on the USSR*, No. 7, 1991, p. 18.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁵ *Izvestiya*, July 28, 1990.
- ¹³⁶ *TASS*, November 28, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-229*, p. 96.
- ¹³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁸ M. Moiseev, "Voennaya reforma: deistvitel'nost' i perspektivy," *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 18, 1990.
- ¹³⁹ *Radio Kiev-3*, February 3, 1991. cited in Kathleen Mihalisko, "Ukrainians Ponder Creation of a National Army," *Report on the USSR*, No. 8, 1991, p. 16.

CHAPTER 5. PRESIDENT GORBACHEV AND MILITARY REFORM

5.1. Gorbachev's Inaugural Speech and Military Reform

On March 15, 1990, Gorbachev was sworn in as the first president of the USSR. As another new player in civil-military relations, following the Supreme Soviet, the post was believed to have very powerful influence on the relations. The Article 127(3)/10) of the USSR Constitution reflected this well: the President of the USSR shall "to coordinate the work of state bodies to ensure the country's security; be the Supreme Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the USSR; appoint and dismiss the supreme command of the Armed Forces of the USSR and award the highest military ranks; appoint judges to military tribunals."¹ So, the president as head of state was to assume many of the powers that previously belonged to the USSR's collective head of state, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

It was at a time when demands for restructuring of the armed forces and military reform were being frequently heard. The military reform movement gathered momentum since a group of challenging junior and middle-level officer deputies proposed a conceptualization of the military reform and part of its contents was published in February 1990, as seen in the previous chapter. There was a barrage of negative media coverage of the senior generals and of favourable coverage of the reform movement and its key participants.

So, it seemed that the high command was becoming isolated from society and even from the rank and file officers. The senior generals were seen as more

than the nucleus of conservative forces which blocked the implementation of radical reforms. With regard to the military reform movement many of members of the high command were strongly opposed to any attempts to either clarify problems that armed forces had faced or to take clear-cut measures to solve them. The combination of the new political climate in the country given by glasnost' and democratisation and strong advocacy of military reform at both the grassroots and political leadership levels from the Kremlin to the local soviets were very subtle. Thus, the members of the high command were becoming increasingly expendable from the point of view of the political leadership, who had consciously orchestrated the combination. In this context, Eugene B. Rumer, observed in the middle of 1990 that the political leadership would be given an opportunity to purge the high command "at a small cost but with huge benefit,"² although it was hasty to some degree.

Now President Gorbachev told the Congress of People's Deputies in his inaugural speech that presidential power would be used for a truly "decisive" advancement of all the processes of perestroika but on a democratic basis. Then he suggested, as prime tasks on more detailed level, the introduction of measures to reduce tension in the socioeconomic sphere, the drafting of a new Union Treaty, the establishment of a revitalised system of local soviets on which the president can rely when performing his functions, and etc. The president also promised to be a guarantor of a stable social order and energetically oppose criminality.

All issues could both positively and negatively bear on the role and status of the armed forces, of course. More directly, Gorbachev recognized a profound military reform to be an important task for himself. However, he added a fifth wheel to his will. That is, he would undertake the task "together" with the Presidential Council and "in cooperation" with the USSR Supreme Soviet. On the other hand, the president should also exercise "leadership" in the formulation of

defence policy and military doctrine.³

In reality, President Gorbachev was in a politically complicated situation. In other words, his presidential power was questionable. The Supreme Soviet had acquired considerable influence since its creation in 1989, but it did not have real power, yet. The decisions of the legislature were hardly being enforced. The Soviet citizens were beginning to call the situation a vacuum of executive power. Moreover, whatever the Constitution said, it had been the Party and its Politburo that made policy, controlled the state budget, and gave orders to the armed forces. For Gorbachev, therefore, the Supreme Soviet's fledgling institutions were not yet strong enough to enable him to govern the country without the Party. Consequently, far from his original intention, Gorbachev appeared to have met another obstacle, besides the nomenklaturas.

Most importantly, his political tactic of occupying the centre of the political spectrum and balancing right against left while, at same time, retaining the reform initiative, nearly exhausted its possibilities. As the gap between the extremes of the political spectrum widened, fewer people occupied the centre ground, making it harder for Gorbachev to satisfy either the reformist radicals or the conservatives, including the high command. Both poles were urging Gorbachev to resign the post of general secretary of the CPSU, but for different, opposite reasons. Gorbachev was being forced to decide whether he would be the leader of perestroika or of the nomenklatura, although he was continuously siding with reformists as seen at a couple of plenums of the Central Committee held in early part of 1990. Moreover, Anatolii Luk'yanov, then Gorbachev's deputy, argued that the new presidency was essential to put a stop, once and for all, to the concentration of power in the hands of the party.

With regard to the constitutionally expected relations between the president and the high command, it was rather noticeable that Gorbachev's final manoeuvre

in political reform to create a strong presidential system in the country was not enthusiastically welcomed by the high command. Moreover, the institutional weight and political status of the military were becoming increasingly important or real with a number of significant countervailing factors, particularly national unrest, which would be enough to negate the forces that had been trying to put pressure on the high command.

By early 1990, the secession crisis in Lithuania and the violence in the Caucasus and Central Asia heightened Gorbachev's need for the armed forces and their stakes in countering the spread of "antistate" and "antimilitary" sentiments. This need was further dramatized for Gorbachev and his colleagues when in January 1990 they found no alternative but to dispatch military forces to Baku. In addition, in April 9 1990 the USSR Supreme Soviet issued a decree to strengthen the laws against "antistate" activities. During the period, Gorbachev had made a number of gestures probably calculated to appease the military leadership. In a series of public statements in December 1989 and February and March 1990, the president praised the army troops and even warned the press against attacks on the armed forces. Defence minister Yazov was promoted to Marshal. Military parades were held to celebrate the Soviet victory in World War II.

Yet, by the spring of 1990 Gorbachev had not gone far in this direction of retreats, as a whole. Moreover, after becoming president he began to show some indicators pointing in the opposite direction. Symbolically, Gorbachev in a speech to veterans on the WWII anniversary in May 1990 again criticized those in the army who wanted to be immune from press criticism. He argued that perestroika required that the role of the army in Soviet society be looked at anew, and thus further spurred an Arbatov-like criticism.⁴ A civilian defence expert and deputy, G. Arbatov, most outspokenly to date denounced the military leadership.⁵ Under the title of "An Army for the Country or a Country for the Army?" he particularly

accused the high command of denying civilians' access to important military data.

Gorbachev's turning was also confirmed by the continuing public complaints of chief of the General Staff, General Moiseev. Particularly, the general protested the deliberate exclusion of the high command from speaking at the February 1990 plenum of the Central Committee⁶ and from participating in the Supreme Soviet debates that preceded the establishment of the executive presidency and the Presidential Council.⁷ Thus, the certain failure of behind-the-scenes negotiations on the new presidency between the political leadership and the high command was frankly disclosed at the elections to the President. President Gorbachev received 1,329 votes among 2,000 deputies in the unopposed election. 495 deputies voted against him, including many in military deputies.⁸ According to deputy Colonel N. Petrushenko, officer deputies voted against Gorbachev because, they thought, he was indecisive, because his arms concessions had wrought havoc in the officer corps, and because glasnost' had allowed open criticism of the military".⁹ Gorbachev was even characterized as unsuitable person to have responsibility for the Soviet nuclear arsenal. Subsequently, Petrushenko warned that, "when there is unrest in the army, there is unrest in the country." As a head of the Soyuz group, Colonel Alksnis proposed Bakatin as well as Ryzhkov as a candidate for the position of president.¹⁰

These actions could be considered as a kind of challenge by the military establishment to Gorbachev's leadership. Immediately after his election, Gorbachev met with the military deputies, probably in an attempt to assure them that their interests were being taken into consideration. Gorbachev paraphrased Petrushenko's words, noting that criticism of the armed forces had to be taken calmly and that "calm in the army means calm in the country."¹¹

We cannot fail to pay attention to another Moiseev's complaint. When the Presidential Council got to work, he criticized the Supreme Soviet for failing to

spell out the exact functions of the president and its council with respect to the armed forces in the absence of the Defence Council.¹² Moiseev also focused on the nuclear command authority. It was possible that the chief was upset with a series of works by the political leadership damaging the highest organ of the military affairs. Thus, he appeared to limit or downgrade, in some way, the military related functions of the Presidential Council that were not made clear in the Constitution. For example, "in a special period" the Presidential Council would be transformed into a USSR State Committee for Defence and then take over the functions previously performed by the Defence Council, he said, recognizing that the Presidential Council would act from then on as the country's supreme and permanent body overseeing defence policy.

The Defence Council was a state organ composed of party and government officials whose primary jobs, when combined, cover virtually all aspects of national security, before the parliamentary system came into being. The Defence Council was then compared to the US National Security Council (NSC).¹³ In reality, it went beyond the NSC. In principle, the role of the NSC was to give the US President advice on matters of national security, with some exceptions dependent on the president's personal style. Considering the presence of a select group of the top political, military, and economic officials in the Defense Council, its decisions could easily become policy. Its activities were, moreover, hardly checked by other institutions. Its status began to slide, however, when Gorbachev made the CC Secretariat of the CPSU a much more important centre of national security policymaking than it had ever been before, particularly with the widening of the jurisdiction of the International Department of the Central Committee as mentioned in the chapter three.

Amid this change, Gorbachev publicly recognized himself as chairman of the Defense Council in order to raise his authority over the military. For example, in

February 1987 he said that "the Soviet leadership, and the country's Defence Council, which I am instructed to head, constantly keep the problem of the security of the country..."¹⁴ As two years had past since then, the committees and commissions of the Supreme Soviet began checking the Defence Council and inevitably many debates on its work took place. This became apparent after Gorbachev announced some of details of the activities of the Defence Council during Yazov's confirmation as defense minister at the first session of the Supreme Soviet. For example, Yazov was asked to present his view on the global political-military situation before Lapygin's Committee for Defense and State Security. Others who had testified before the Committee included Moiseev and Army General V. Shabanov, deputy defense minister for procurement.

Gorbachev also changed the nature of the Defence Council, besides opening the organ to the public. In November 1989, L. Zaikov, CC Secretary responsible for defense industry, was promoted to the post of first deputy chairman of the Defense Council and assumed several functions formerly performed by defence minister Yazov. And the membership was also expanded to allow better civilian representation. But details of these changes were not made public. Only Zaikov revealed in an interview that Gorbachev wanted a non-military official supervising the work of the Defence Council during a time of retrenchment and arms control. Zaikov's comments indicated that opposition to Gorbachev within the military establishment was growing and that his own appointment represented a move to enhance control over the armed forces.¹⁵ William E. Odom interprets Gorbachev's attempts as an attempt to make the Defence Council less dependent on the Central Committee apparatus, and as a continued scheme for moving real power into the Supreme Soviet at the expense of the Party.¹⁶

Finally, the Defense Council got lost its legal foundation for its existence in the very lately amended USSR Constitution in March 1990. The old version of the

USSR Constitution said that it was the responsibility of the Supreme Soviet to form the Defense Council, without mentioning whatsoever of its chairman. The Article 121/(14) says that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR shall form the Council of Defense of the USSR and confirm its composition; appoint and dismiss the high command of the armed forces of the USSR. Finally, according to the Article 121/(5) of the USSR Constitution amended in December 1988, the chairman of the Defense Council was reserved for the chairman of the Supreme Soviet.

5.2. Gorbachev's Odessa Speech and Military Reform

Attending troop exercises at the Odessa Military District on August 17 1990, President Gorbachev gave a noticeable address to the military personnel. His speech consisted of three issues: the urgency of a transition to a market economy, the working out of a new Union Treaty, and military reform.¹⁷

It is necessary to trace the progress or unfolding of some circumstantial events to understand the character of his speech. First of all, President Gorbachev interrupted his summer holiday of 1990 to address the troops there, because of his concern about military problems, Novosti military commentator V. Pogrebenkov very tentatively observed.¹⁸ In fact, it was his second appearance at such a minor military event in less than two months. Gorbachev even appeared at a graduation ceremony of Soviet officers in Moscow on June 26 1990 and spoke to them.¹⁹ There he had boosted military reform, of course. It was at a time, moreover, when the advocacy of military reform had already arrived with a vengeance in the USSR.

When politicians in most parts of the country, including El'tsin,²⁰ were compelling the Soviet army to adopt a mixed system consisting of a smaller

professional army supported by nationally based territorial formations, on July 25 1990, Gorbachev issued a decree forbidding the formation of unofficial armed forces, i.e., national armies, and calling for the disbanding of such groups and the confiscation of all illegally owned weapons, ammunition, and explosives within fifteen days. Moreover, the decree contained the explicit threat of the use of force by saying that failure to comply would result in seizure of the arms by either republican or local authorities or by the MVD, KGB, and Army troops. But Gorbachev was in the end forced to extend the deadline by two months because of rebellious republican authorities. This clearly reflected how weak Gorbachev's authority was at that moment.

But the real irony was how little control Gorbachev had over the army. In fact, Gorbachev needed some form of additional consent, besides the publication of the decree. According to First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Army General Omelichev, army troops would be used to enforce the decree, only if first requested to act by local authorities.²¹ It was hardly accidental that in an interview to mark Soviet Navy Day on July 29 1990, Admiral V. Chernavin called for military reform to take place within the confines of the present mixed system of professionals and conscripts. Moreover, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2 was about to be used as a new ammunition by the conservative generals to attack the new political thinking.

Therefore, Gorbachev was not in a strong position to conclude the debates on military reform but to summarize them by major issues. Nonetheless, Gorbachev's Odessa speech was significant in that he had made his first attempt at a systematic analysis of military reform from defense needs to principles of formation and service. Until then, Gorbachev's ideas on military reform had been piecemeal mainly in connection with new military doctrine, i.e., reasonable sufficiency for defensive defense, and arms control proposals.

First, Gorbachev involved the assessment of the nature of the external threat against the USSR. This was the traditional approach of making Soviet security policy, in which the external threat had been the prime determinant of defense building and the country's economic capability had always been of secondary importance. A group of young officer deputies had been arguing that reorganization of the armed forces had to be in accordance with both defense needs and economic potential in its draft plan of military reform. Some civilian defense experts considered the country's capacities, particularly economic, as the main factor of military construction. Nevertheless, the president appeared to side with the high command in terms of approach.

As for the assessment of the threat itself, however, his position was more complicated. On the one hand, he strongly insisted that the "direct military threat" against the Soviet Union had "evaporated." Then grasped the logic of the deduction: current armed forces were created to perform their functions during the Cold War which was now over. So naturally, changes were needed. Moreover, military doctrine had been modified and, therefore, the structure of the armed forces had to be modified.²² The president, however, had a reserved attitude towards the fact that there was still an excessive amount of arms in the world, which the military leaders regarded as being of military threat. Until then Gorbachev had argued that they had to be reduced to the level of reasonable sufficiency. While jumping some questions, he concluded that the country still needed "powerful and modern" armed forces.²³

On the other hand, returning back the subject that was the first work within the frame of military reform, Gorbachev briefly suggested that it was necessary to have an accurate idea of such countries' plans for the development of their armed forces in the 1990s as the US and the other NATO countries and also Japan, China, and so on. Therefore, the next step was clear, but too simple. Proceeding

from the first step, Gorbachev stated, goals and tasks in safeguarding the USSR's defence capability had to be set and the structure of the Soviet armed forces as well as its numerical strength in general and in individual directions had to be decided.

The third area concerned military spending. Of course, there could not be an absolute, or fixed, amount of money for defense, because of the way Gorbachev was dealing with military reform. Before the two preceding steps were completed, it was impossible for him to say detailed defense needs. Inevitably, he gave a hint about change in formation of the defense budget but still in a very suggestive way. They were as follows: what financial and material resources could be allocated for the maintenance of the army and navy and of their combat readiness; for research and development; for the serial production of weapons and military hardware; for the insurance of normal living conditions for personnel and officers' families; for housing construction and maintenance; for cultural amenities for the armed forces and so on. Here again, he failed to make any comments on relative importance among them. Only he mentioned the tasks associated with the withdrawal of Soviet troops from foreign countries. The president considered housing problems as "very urgent," confirming the military leadership's argument.²⁴

Fourth, Gorbachev turned to the question of the principle of formation of the Soviet armed forces. In the context of military-technical side of military doctrine, this concerned whether the current principle of formation was needed or not, that is, a large-standing army based on conscription. This issue became much more vital for the high command because it was at a time when civilian and military critics, including the young and middle-level officer deputies, were hysterically calling for a gradual shift away from conscription towards a smaller professional army. Gorbachev refrained himself from expressing his own preference. Circumspectly, he described the current system as "predominant" view.²⁵

With regard to another similar issue, formation of nationality, on the other

hand, Gorbachev more clearly revealed his position, particularly on the dividing of nuclear weapons among the republics. He said, "I certainly do not think that anyone will suggest dividing nuclear weapons and nuclear potential."²⁶ Along with it, he argued for a single unified command, based on the belief that the country's system of defense control was a sophisticated complex and everything was mutually related. Whilst he did not give further detailed explanations, he concluded that if the Soviets suddenly embarked on the path of creating regional structures and fragmenting their defenses, not only would the security of the country be undermined but also that of the entire world would be threatened.²⁷ Finally, the principle of service of whether to send recruits to serve in areas of the USSR outside their home republic was touched in the same fashion, too.

On the whole, it is undeniable that Gorbachev boosted military reform through this speech, as many in the West observed. But it rather appeared that both the way of approach to the military reform and the contents of his speech gave an impression of his retreat in many ways, particularly in comparison to his 1988 UN speech. To be sure, he was indecisive. The fully grown centrifugal tendency around the country seemed likely to continue to erode the ability of the military, in particular the General Staff, to maintain the current mass army based on conscription. This long-term factor adverse to the military's institutional interests would probably endure, even if Gorbachev was eventually forced to give the military a much greater role in trying to halt the erosion of central authority. Moreover, Gorbachev himself strongly tried to revise the military decisionmaking institution at the outset of the new presidency, as mentioned above, in such a fashion as to downgrade the role and leverage of the General Staff in the decisionmaking process by abolishing the Defense Council and by introducing the President Council.

All of sudden, Gorbachev moved away from this strong position. At a time

when the General Staff was working it out under the leadership of Moiseev, Gorbachev said that the development of the concept of military reform was near completion. In addition, the concept was to be examined at the Defense Council, according to him, which had no legal basis of its existence. Ironically, the president confirmed that the Defense Council had still been retained as the leading security decision-making organ, but in a "revitalized" form and "attached" to the president.²⁸ So, although Gorbachev had curtailed the military's dominance over national security decisionmaking, he had neither emasculated it nor fundamentally altered its pivotal role in Soviet force planning. In fact, on September 1 1990 there was a meeting of the Defense Council at which Marshal Yazov spoke about plans for military reform. Gilbert A Lewthwaite even in early 1989 well observed that Gorbachev's challenge had been to get the generals "out of having control of state policy" with regard to the Soviet defense effort, while at the same time taking care "not to destroy... the General Staff headquarters or smash its power."²⁹

But it was in contrast to the Odessa speech that Gorbachev issued a decree directed at the problems of hazing, the deaths of soldiers in peacetime, and the service in ethnically trouble spots in the country. A powerful catalyst of mounting concern and debate over the future shape of the Soviet armed forces was brutal violence in military life outlined by the figure of 15,000 deaths since perestroika was introduced. As a sole way to eliminate such incidents, a professional-militia system became popular among civilians. Desire for such a system or half of the system, formation of national armies, was in part motivated by political factors that were not directly related to conditions within the army. In general, under glasnost' growing awareness of conditions in the armed forces alone could have lead to protest and action. The most noticeable case was a mass demonstration in Gorky Park organized by shchit union and the committee of soldiers' mothers and held in June 1990.

Nevertheless, by the summer of 1990, the military leadership were still negligent. The defense minister dealt with the situation superficially, and avoided recognizing the fundamentals of the problems. For example, in an interview with *Pravda* in December 1989 Yazov said that the "antiarmy manifestations" had become more frequent in a number of regions, including the Baltic republics, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldavia, Ukraine, and some Central Asian Republics. Particularly with regard to the activities of the coalition, he described that a number of informal organizations and nationalist, extremist groups were trying to obstruct and, if they could, wreck the draft by inciting young people to refuse to serve, to desert, and to destroy army registration documents.³⁰ Even a couple of days before the decree was issued, a General Staff spokesman said that the figure of 15,000 did not correspond with reality.³¹

Gorbachev's timely decree, therefore, appeared to be a politically well-calculated move. At first, one could easily regard it as part of a broader initiative by Gorbachev in the area of military reform because it followed the Odessa speech and another decree on military-political organs that emphasized the principle of loyalty to the state rather than to the Communist Party. In addition, it could be seen as a direct response to popular outrage about conditions in the Soviet armed forces, although it was in part designed to protect servicemen from attack in ethnically troubled areas.

The various institutions to be instructed by the decree reflected this point. The MOD, together with the MVD and the KGB, were asked to immediately take measures to strengthen discipline and order in the armed forces and thus ensure the inviolability of servicemen's legal rights. The USSR Council of Ministers was instructed to resolve the question of introducing mandatory state personal insurance for servicemen, with funding to be drawn from the MOD. The decree directed the USSR Supreme Soviet to examine the question of granting servicemen

the right of recourse to military tribunals to contest unlawful actions by superiors and to oversee effective implementation by the MOD of all these measures. The USSR Prosecutor's Office was asked to resolve questions pertaining to the initiation of proceedings against persons blamed for the death or injury of a serviceman. The USSR Prosecutor General was ordered to step up monitoring of the Military Prosecutor's Office.³²

5. 3. Gorbachev's Turn to The Right.

Within three months since the Odessa speech, on November 13 1990, there was a fully televised meeting between Gorbachev and more than 1,100 uniformed people's deputies of all levels of soviets. For Gorbachev it was the fourth meeting among noteworthy ones with military cadres as the president. This first was with the participants of the First Congress of the USSR People's Deputies who were also servicemen, the second was with delegates to the 28th CPSU Congress, the third was at military exercises in the Odessa MD.

This time can be regarded as a turning point in many senses. First of all, the president's speech, not to mention Gorbachev's changed, supportive attitude towards the MOD military reform plan, was repeatedly interrupted by shouts from the floor and noise in the auditorium, when people were anxiously watching the event on television. The supreme commander in chief, interrupted by officers, was driven to ask them: "Is this [marketization] of no interest to you? I am not talking about this to you for nothing. If perestroika proceeds in these main areas the atmosphere in which the army lives and works will also be completely different."³³

It happened when even in the early part of November one of the most highly contentious themes concerned the armed forces. On the first day of the month

Gorbachev invited a group of soldiers' parents who lost their sons in peacetime to the Kremlin. The next day the Russian leadership received officer deputies, following the event that military chiefs and military experts whose units were stationed on the RSFSR were invited to the RSFSR Council of Ministers on September 20. Then the military parade in Red Square to mark the 73rd anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution came. The Soviet Union's most modern road-mobile ICBM, the SS-25 was paraded through Moscow,³⁴ probably in order to bolster the declined morale of the armed forces. Moreover, the coup rumours had not yet calmed down since September 1990 when news of armed military units moving in the direction of Moscow reached the Russian leader.

Before Gorbachev appeared on the platform, there were the speeches by the officer deputies, the contents of which were strikingly consistent. Pain and bitterness came to the surface particularly in speeches by deputies from the Ukraine, Georgia, Moldavia, and Estonia. Their introductory remarks provided general information about the sociopolitical situation in their garrisons. The main point was that "antipeople," "antisocialist," and "separatist" forces were waging a struggle for power under the slogans of the development of national self-awareness and carrying out "mass moral terror" against servicemen. The brutal violence against servicemen and the chanting of the pickets around headquarters buildings and airfields, and so on, were common.

The activities of republican authorities were their major interests. According to the deputies, many of them not only adopted legislative acts and resolutions on the military question that contradicted USSR legislation but also demand the creation of ethnic military formations. There were some variations along the republics. V. A. Kostin from Latvia focused a lot on housing problems caused by a series of acts of the Latvian Council of Ministers. Colonel V. Suvadevidze critically saw that the law on alternative service adopted by the Georgian parliament and he

argued that the law effectively suspended the fall 1990 draft to come. On the other hand, Major V. Kibalnik, representative of the MVD Dzerzhinskii Division, spoke mockingly of the Russian parliament, which had honoured with a minute's silence the memory of the "innocent victims" of Yerevan. He insisted that the innocent victims were militants who tried to seize the weapons of a patrol of internal troops personnel, and concluded that only the Russian parliamentarians did not grieve for the dead soldiers.³⁵ In addition, he drew a prompt conclusion from disagreement with them: "did the people elect the right parliament? Could they have made a mistake?"

The end part of their speeches were straightforward. Gorbachev was repeatedly reminded that his duties as head of state, supreme commander in chief, and general secretary were to defend the Soviet armed forces and Communists against "accusations" and "denigration." Colonel V. Suvadevidze after summarising the situation in Georgia said, for example, that it was time the country's leadership stopped being an "onlooker" and came out resolutely in defense of the armed forces.³⁶ Here an interesting point was that the military deputies preferred to appeal to Gorbachev the General Secretary, not to Gorbachev the President and to swear allegiance to the Communist Party. In fact, this kind of appeal, severe criticism of republican authorities, and the party's continued activities in the armed forces were resulting in more confrontation and deeper alienation between army units and local soviets which would impede the solution of the army's own social problems.

In response to the officer deputies criticisms, Gorbachev firstly accepted that one could talk of problems, difficulties, the aggravation of interethnic relations in society, and the complication in the consumer market that had all affected the armed forces. Then he promised to take personally all those remarks. He even said that "a government that does not understand the significance of the armed forces,

and that does not take care of them has no right to exist."³⁷ There was no change in his logic, however, why military reform was needed. That is, if the international situation altered in a different direction, then the Army would alter, too. But Gorbachev recognized this time some "failures" arising from the implementation of the treaties on reductions in the armed forces such as the INF Treaty and the unilateral reductions of conventional weapons, as the participants of the meeting, including senior military leaders, strongly argued. Based on this line, he stressed that "very well balanced, well-thought-out steps" in working out military reform were required.³⁸

In other words, Gorbachev clearly recognized that military reform, particularly reductions, could affect both the armed forces and the defense sector of the economy, in which, according to him, the best forces of the working class, designers, and scientists were concentrated. On the whole, this clearly signalled a retreat from his earlier position on military policy. But Gorbachev never gave up the basis of new political thinking and his wish to move away from the militarized nature of the economy to a market economy.

In fact, Gorbachev allocated a large part of his speech to these two issues. He laid great emphasis on détente and disarmament toward a nonviolent and nuclear world. There was no change in his belief that the current world was vulnerable, confronting ecology and the depletion of resources that were arising acutely everywhere. In this respect, the country had to cooperate and to divert international relations into a "new channel,"³⁹ he argued. In addition, he defined the militarized nature of the Soviet economy in an unprecedented way. "Only 10% of production assets have been employed in the light and food industries... How, in such a distorted and deformed economy, can one tackle the problems of improving living conditions, which do not suit any of us?"⁴⁰ Gorbachev lamented.

This was the most severe description of the defense burden on the Soviet

economy. Until then the Gorbachev leadership had sought to maintain progress in the economic reform partly by reducing military expenditures. The stable international environment was necessary for this approach because it could help Gorbachev to sustain political support for converting industrial capacity to civilian output as well as for restructuring the defense industry. Disarmament was also important because it could not only release material and technological resources but also ease the international conditions. In Gorbachev's opinion, it was time to substantially reduce the military expenditures, judging the current Soviet security situation. But officer deputies complained about the problems caused by arms reductions and urged Gorbachev not to cut further. Therefore, it seemed that, while recognizing the socioeconomic difficulties facing officers and their families, Gorbachev publicly depicted the militarized economy in such a way.

At the same time, he appeared to have wanted to separate the issue of marketization, which could mean the republic's greater autonomy, from the creation of national armies, currently central issue of military reform. At the session of 'Question and Answer,' Gorbachev firmly supported the current system as far as the principle of formation was concerned. In the Odessa speech he refrained from giving his preference. This time, however, reminding the military deputies of major Lopatin's accusation that the president had failed to react to a group of young and middle level deputies' message and their project for military reform, Gorbachev solely said that there were no professional armed forces anywhere apart from in three states, the US, the UK, and Japan and other all states everywhere effectively adopted the conscription system. In this context, the president concluded that what the country currently had was a very good principle.⁴¹ With regard to the creation of national armies, however, he failed to give any details, other than to say that the idea was "not convincing."⁴²

Gorbachev did not see seriously the popular demand for the removal of

Communist Party's influence over the armed forces. He accepted only the idea of "departization". In his opening speech to the 28th Party Congress, Gorbachev had rejected "depoliticization" of the armed forces, arguing that the inculcation of political values was crucial to maintaining high morale.⁴³ Both political officers and commanders argued that political training was carried out in all the world's armies, and that there were relevant institutions, they had different names, but they existed. Although it was not clear that as General Secretary of the CPSU Gorbachev himself either was ambivalent about depoliticization or had been compelled to compromise with the high command on the issue, he considered it acceptable to transform the existing political organs for the tasks of building and training, including moral and psychological, and educating military servicemen, rather than to abolish them.

Finally, the president showed his keen interests in social protection for servicemen and officers under market conditions, while regarding it one of the most important questions. On the housing problem, Gorbachev stressed that it was planned during the 13th five-year plan to broaden housing construction. He even recalled that the united Germany was appropriating 8 billion marks specially for housing for Soviet servicemen. Furthermore, he promised that "we will do everything"⁴⁴ to normalize the housing situation more rapidly, vigorously involving local organs in resolving it.

Let us address the fundamental question of why the president had sided with the high command through the speech concerning military reform. Primarily whether Gorbachev was forced to do so, or not? If he deliberately sided with the conservatives, including the high command, what was his motive? In fact, both questions are indivisible, just like two sides of the same coin. It was suggestive of this point that the centre place in an extremely broad political spectrum for Gorbachev was waning.

S. Shatalin, economist in the Presidential Council, somehow pointed out this. In an open letter to the president, he disclosed that Gorbachev's change of heart occurred during a late-night session with leaders of the Russian Communist Party and certain members of the Politburo on November 17 1990.⁴⁵ Then, he urged Gorbachev to abandon his mystical, suspicious attitude towards the democrats and to re-establish his alliance with them. According to Shatalin, the democrats were not weak and even had the support of many healthy forces in the army, KGB, and military-industrial complex. In part, his argument that the democrats were not weak was plausible. Ironically they were too strong as far as the relations between Gorbachev and the high command were concerned. In short, El'tsin as a core of the democrats was strongly challenging the post of the CINC of the Soviet armed forces.

During the last five years there had been unprecedented criticism and open airing of the problems of the armed forces and many institutional challenges to the military in the country. They all appeared to have some interrelated natures on which Gorbachev and his reformist allies had more or less designs. While developing his own views both on security and military affairs and on other policy areas which had an impact on the military, until then Gorbachev had deliberately situated the high command to face the difficulties. To be sure, a feeling that he had to do it so had increasingly grown with the unsatisfactory progress of economic reform.

From the beginning, Gorbachev recognized that the requirements of economic reform needed new foreign and security policies, which could have implications for the institutional status of the military as a whole. Thus, the downgrading of the military sector in policymaking processes followed necessarily and inevitably. In this connection, the reformist leadership had tried to encourage a group, from civilian defence experts to dissident officers, to take part in the debate

on how to reform the armed forces. It was designed in order to reduce the military's monopoly on military information and to change the setting of the Soviet security policy agenda and policymaking process.

The sudden and dramatic chain of events that started in Eastern Europe in the late summer or early fall of 1989 led to this design being questioned. The rapid unravelling of Communist powers throughout the region, the resulting pressures on Soviet troop withdrawals, and the emergence of the issue of German unification had severely sharpened the difficulties confronting Gorbachev's new thinking. These were hardly consistent both with requirements of the economic reform and with overriding Soviet security interests. It is most likely that the Soviet leadership had hoped to slow the pace of change in the East, preserve the integrity of the Warsaw Pact, and defer the issue of German unification to the indefinite future.

When the unified Germany's membership of NATO was put into practice, the Soviets had not any options but to accept it. These developments were enough to be used as the most strong ammunition by hard-line conservatives, including senior generals, and thus re-intensified the debate about the implications of Gorbachev's foreign-policy priorities for the USSR's defence posture at a moment when, one thought, the new thinkers had nearly won the debate. Around the end of 1989, defense minister Yazov appeared to have endorsed the concepts of reasonable sufficiency and defensive defense. Now with regard to his foreign policy, Gorbachev was being judged to have bargained away Soviet military power and accepted the loss of the buffer zone while gaining almost nothing in return.

In addition, the domestic situation was very bad. The country was at the moment worse off economically in comparison with that of five years ago. President Gorbachev was wavering between wanting the benefits of a free market and wishing to retain centralized control of the economy. The Soviet Union was threatened by a growing nationalism in the various republics, manifested in

separatist or nationalist movements in the Baltic states, in Central Asia, and in the Russian republic itself.

Rather ominously, it was on the verge of civil breakdown and the demise of the union. Among other things, however, the nationality question was delicate enough to renew the relationships between Gorbachev and his senior generals, adding to the foreign and security policy that was being questioned. On the one hand, the Soviet armed forces through their internal policing function played a key role in the regime's recent efforts to maintain order in areas driven by nationalist upheaval. This policing function had made the Army the focus of attack and hostility on the part of nationalist groups, which begun to press for an end to extraterritorial staffing with the military, for the establishment of national military units on republican territory, and for the placing of local units under local political control. All these demands were troublesome for the military leadership.

On the other hand, to Gorbachev, who was presiding over the collapse of the union, the Russian leadership's enhanced activities in order to achieve some influence over the Soviet armed forces were becoming a political threat. In September 1990, military chiefs and military experts whose units were stationed on the Russian republic's territory were invited to the RSFSR Council of Ministers. Subsequently, a number of military deputies were invited. In mid-November 1990, there was a meeting between the RSFSR Council of Ministers and with leaders of defense complex enterprises.⁴⁶ The most serious, however, was El'tsin's demand for the resignation of the Ryzhkov's government and its replacement by a coalition government in which the Russian republic would nominate the prime, finance, and defense minister.⁴⁷ Nearly two weeks before, when news of the Army, MVD, KGB elite units moving in the direction of Moscow reached the Russian leadership, the commanders of the military districts around Moscow, including Yazov, were summoned and were told that the RSFSR Supreme Soviet was the only legal

power in Russia.⁴⁸ And now, El'tsin had a head-on collision with Gorbachev's role as CINC of the armed forces and the country's nuclear arsenal.

Therefore, a cautious observer of the political activities of the RSFSR leadership in its attempt to raise its influence over the USSR government, naturally over the Soviet armed forces, could raise a question: whether this series of meetings had happened by chance and without any deliberate intention of the RSFSR leadership, or not. A political commentator of *Izvestiya* clearly observed this with some suspicion. The Russian leadership virtually attempted to use the views of officer deputies to put certain demands to Union bodies."⁴⁹ In this context, Gorbachev hit the nail on the head, mentioning the issue at his meeting with officer deputies. Gorbachev said that "I have to say that I am resolutely opposed to such methods...."⁵⁰ So, there could be a mutual area between Gorbachev and the military concerning the drawing up of a new Union Treaty,

Gorbachev first rejected the idea of the new Union Treaty at the September 1989 plenum of the CC held to discuss nationality policy. By February 1990 Gorbachev began talking of the need for it. In the end, it became a top agenda because the passage of the Union Treaty was vital to his retention of power. However, the main concern was that there was unlikely to be general agreement amongst fully grown republics about an empty concept, a "union of sovereign states", although it depended on Gorbachev's position on drawing up the new Union Treaty.

Meanwhile, the high command had shown its determined attitude towards retaining a unified, multinational army under a unified command, in particular, and maintaining Moscow's predominant role in various areas, as a whole. In the circumstance, If Gorbachev was resigned to a much diminished role for the centre, then he might be willing to keep steady pressure on the defense community. On the contrary, if not, it would be helpful for him to side with the armed forces. In

reality, he chose the latter option.

Thus, he appeared to have shown a more shallow commitment to his commitment to military reform and at the same time tactical manoeuvres designed to weather the current "storm." This was also reflected by the fact that, faced with the dissolution of the empire, Gorbachev had already issued a number of hard-line statements indicating his willingness to use force as a means of putting down independence drives in various republics. In fact, a period of compromise or contract that continued to the spring of 1991 between Gorbachev and the high command had already started, as will be seen in chapter 7.

¹ *Constitution (fundamental law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics* (London: Novosti Press Agency, 1990), p. 45.

² Eugene B. Rumber, *The End of a Monolith*, R- 3993-USDP (Santa Monica: CA: The Rand Corporation, August 1990), p. 44.

³ *Izvestiya*, March 16, 1990.

⁴ *Izvestiya*, May 10, 1990.

⁵ G. Arbatov, "Armiya dlya strany ili strana dlya Army?" *Ogonek*, No. 5. 1990, p. 4.

⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 10, 1990.

⁷ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 16, 1990.

⁸ Dawn Mann, "Gorbachev Sworn In as President", *Report on the USSR*, No. 12, 1990, p. 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Izvestiya*, March 16, 1990.

¹¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 16, 1990.

¹² *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 15, 1990.

¹³ *Pravda*, November 27, 1989.

¹⁴ *Pravda*, February 28, 1987.

¹⁵ *Pravda*, November 27, 1989.

¹⁶ William E. Odom, "Soviet Military in Transition," *Problems of Communism* (May-June 1990), p. 66.

¹⁷ "Dostoino proiti pereval v istorii strany: vystuplenie M. S. Gorbacheva v odesskom voennom okruge," *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 19, 1990.

¹⁸ *Report on the USSR*, No. 39, 1990, p. 30.

¹⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 27, 1990.

²⁰ *Sovetskaya molodezh'*, February 6, 1990.

²¹ For a detail of the decree, see Dawn Mann, "Nongovernment by Decree," *Report on the USSR*, No. 35, 1990, p. 3.

²² "Dostoino proiti pereval v ustorii..."

²³ *Ibid.*

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- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Gilbert A Lewthwaite, "Deep Military Shake-Up a Key Part of..." cited in Eugene B. Rumber, *The End of a Monolith*, p. 4.
- 30 *Izvestiya*, March 12, 1990.
- 31 *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 30, 1990.
- 32 *Pravda*, September 6, 1990.
- 33 *Central Television*, November 13, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-220*, p. 50.
- 34 *Jane's Defence Weekly*, November 17, 1990, p. 970.
- 35 *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, November 15, 1990.
- 36 *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 16, 1990.
- 37 *TASS*, November 13, 1990, *FBIS-SOV-90-220*, p. 55.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Ibid.
- 40 Ibid, p. 54
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 3, 1990.
- 44 *TASS*, November 13, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-220*, p. 55.
- 45 *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, January 22, 1991.
- 46 *Izvestiya*, November 13, 1990.
- 47 *Radio Moscow*, November 13, 1990.
- 48 *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 21, 1990.
- 49 *Izvestiya*, November 15, 1990.
- 50 *TASS*, November 13, 1990, *FBIS-SOV-90-220*, p. 51.

CHAPTER 6. MILITARY RESPONSE I: AIRING OF THE MOD DRAFT REFORM CONCEPT

6.1. Timing of Airing of the MOD Draft Reform Concept

It was in November 1990 that the USSR ministry of defense aired the whole of its military reform concept (MOD draft). *Pravitel'stvennyi Vestnik* published the MOD draft as well as the Lopatin plan, i.e., "On the Preparation and Conduct of Military Reform" developed by a group of USSR People's Deputies and signed by People's Deputy Major V. Lopatin.¹ Consequently, readers could have a chance to compare the two draft plans. As seen in the previous chapters 3 and 4, around the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989, there was the highest wave of military reform debates in the country. The debates had dynamics of 'from below.' Ordinary people responded to civilian defence experts' criticism by complaining to the high command. Gorbachev's announcement of unilateral arms reduction at the UN in December 1988 was followed on the heels of widespread debates over the meaning of 'reasonable sufficiency' and particularly over the immediate implementation of the new military doctrine adopted in 1987. One could say, therefore, that the announcement forcefully ended the military doctrinal debates, which were one aspect of the necessity for the restructuring of the Soviet armed forces, against his reluctant generals.

The airing of the MOD draft was directed at how to end the other aspect of military reform necessity coming from the domestic situation in general and internal problems of the armed forces in particular. The election campaigns provided a

unprecedented, unrestricted setting for bringing the debates before a wider audience from the top military leadership to the ordinary people. A compromise had been hardly effected between the two polemics of conservative senior commanders and people through debates, including face-to-face discussions. This was in part mirrored by a variety of reform agendas such as the establishment of territorial and ethnic units; the reduction of the term of compulsory military service, the rejection of extraterritorial principles of military conscription, and so on. The most common measure to be taken to solve the current problems was that the Soviet armed forces should become a volunteer, professional army. Thus the word military reform mainly meant the introduction a professional army.

But many of the senior military representatives rejected this idea as soon as it appeared. Chief of the General Staff Moiseev simply called it a "mercenary" army.² Defense minister Yazov mentioned that professional soldiers serving for money would have poor moral qualities and poor fighting spirit.³ Chief of the MPA Lizichev defended on behalf of the majority of military communists the current system. He argued that it had been developed by the Communist Party and tested by World War II and therefore proved to be reliable.⁴ The current mass conscript army could benefit from some improvement as mandated by the principle of reasonable sufficiency, but to completely replace it would be counterproductive, he continued. These generals offered two main reasons why a change could not be made immediately. One was the inability of the Soviet economy to fund such an army. The other was the existence of a continuing threat to the Soviet Union. In other words, the danger of war still existed so that the country needed a ready body of military reservists.

Despite the high command's efforts to protect the current conscript army, the popularity of the professional army gained momentum with the publication of part of the Lopatin military reform draft. Under a more relaxed political atmosphere the

media coverage against the high command and for reform movement, including the activities of a group of young and middle level officer deputies, forced the generals to change their approach to the issue. In fact, they were left with no choice but to begin formulating a competing programme for military reform. General Moiseev denied that the activities of Lopatin's committee were a catalyst for the steps taken by the MOD. The chief of the General Staff argued that he was immediately charged with overseeing a reformation of Soviet defense needs to the year 2000 since being appointed as chief of the General Staff.⁵ But this claim was hardly credible.

The Collegium of the Defense Ministry met on April 10 1990 to discuss its draft reform proposal.⁶ The following days on April 12 and 13 *Krasnaya zvezda* published a predraft of the law on defense. Although it was brief, the predraft codified the main directions of military reform.⁷ In June 1990 an overview of the draft law's key areas was presented by Yazov. Of significance was his approach to the professional army. The defense minister said that the Soviet armed forces had already had a high number of professionals, whilst acknowledging that a professional army would be more effective than a regular army of draftees.⁸

Originally a military theoretician, Colonel General V. Serevryannikov, handled the issue in that way. Conceptualizing the difference between a small professional army and the current mass conscript army, he declared that the country had a fully professional army in which almost all officers possessed a higher education and were fully trained in the effective use of weapons and military technology.⁹ Here the theoretician's curious point was that Western armies were a kind of mass army, which forced the USSR to do the same. In case of Yazov, however, the term professional army was used generally. If a voluntary professional army were adopted, Yazov argued, there would be the limits on the trained reserves, economic burden, and so on.

Moreover, the defense minister announced that within a set of ideas of military reform an experiment concerning the system of recruitment would begin in 1991 first in the navy and, if successful, that could be expanded to other branches of the armed forces.¹⁰ Its main point was that some recruits in the navy would be given the option, either to serve for two years like other regular draftees serving in other branches of the Soviet armed forces, or to sign up for a three-year term at 150 rubles per month. This experiment caused confusion as far as the professionalization of the Soviet army was concerned. Around the time, chief of the General Staff Moiseev recognized some advantages of a volunteer, professional army. If it were introduced, there could be better service and material conditions for officers and a higher quality of recruits, he observed. Furthermore, he assured that possibilities for introducing such an army were being studied and the possibilities, if some prerequisite conditions were met, would be put into practice.¹¹

In reality, however, Yazov's twist hardly reflected what it was actually like, if we consider the number of defections from the previously unbroken high command's opposition to such a transition. One of the earliest ones was chief of the staff of the Warsaw Pact Military Organization, Army General V. N. Lobov, who had focused on Soviet defense policies in the 1920s and 1930s and their current implications.¹² Another advocacy of a professional army was recently retired Serevryannikov, who had been considered as a leading conservative general up to the present moment. This time, calling for a national referendum on the question of a professional army, he strongly believed that the transition to such an army could be completed "in 5-7 years"¹³ under current international and domestic conditions.

It is most likely, however, that navy's position on the issue could have imposed a heavy burden on the military leadership. As early as 1988 chief of the Navy Admiral of the Fleet V. Chernavin suggested an idea similar to what Yazov mentioned as an experiment. Then it was demanded that the length of conscripts'

service in the navy should be reduced from three years to two years like other branches. Admiral Chernavin, while defending the three-year term of naval conscription as necessary because of the complexity of naval technology, asked enlisted men in the navy to be offered "benefits."¹⁴ By October 1989, the Admiral had even submitted to the MOD a set of proposals for creating a volunteer navy. Therefore, Chernavin's position on volunteer enlisted men appeared to be the first open crack in the solidarity of members of the high command. There was a wonder that there would be a necessity for Gorbachev to mediate the conflict between Chernavin's views and the views of the rest of the high command.¹⁵

In this respect, Yazov's commitment to the experiment represented a mere concession. It certainly fell short of the core of the widely shared concept of military reform and appeared to be a rather clever move given the situations. Admiral Chernavin himself confirmed this line in an interview to mark the Navy Day on television in July 1990. First, the view or interpretation that the Navy would become professional based on the contract system was criticized as a sort of "irresponsible, demagogic, high-pitched" one.¹⁶ He considered that the Soviet armed forces could not be made up on an "exclusively contract" basis, nor only on a volunteer basis but that there had to be a combination of both, of a universal military obligation and contractual voluntary make-up.

This view was well manifested by Colonel General Krivosheyev's comments on the issue. Whilst describing the MOD's draft for military reform on television in July 1990, the deputy chief of the General Staff hardly mentioned the word professional army itself. It was just envisaged that a certain number of generals' and admirals' appointments would be reduced. Instead, he tried to pay attention to the withdrawal of troops from Eastern Europe, more troops cuts, and resolution of socioeconomic problems in the armed forces.¹⁷

Since that point the high command geared up to activities which could divert

the public's attention from the professional army and at the same time to create the impression that they were responding in a timely fashion to the key issues facing the military and were solving its many problems. First of all, the military leadership argued that the year 1987, when new military doctrine was adopted, should be considered the beginning of military reform. Then, the high command insisted that the restructuring of the armed forces was in process. A list of changes in Soviet foreign and security policy were cited as evidence for their claim. They were the conclusion and fulfilment of the INF Treaty; withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan; the unilateral reduction of the armed forces along Gorbachev's 1988 UN speech; conversion in over 400 enterprises of the defense complex; the reduction of military budget; and movements of such troops as The Railroad Troops, MVD Internal Security Forces, and KGB Border Guard Troops away from the armed forces.

At last, in November 1990 they aired the detailed draft of military reform. In general, the MOD draft laid out a lot of facts and figures but failed to show reform-oriented ideas. It lacked an overarching conceptual framework that could be applied to existing problems. In this respect, the airing appeared to be a temporary measure to soothe ordinary people who were complaining that the military leadership was neither prepared nor willing to support fundamental changes in the current system of the Soviet armed forces and that the high command sought to suppress dissenting view within the officer corps on the issues of military reform and defense policy. At its best, the main aim of the MOD draft seemed to be to win approval at the Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security over the Lopatin's plan that had been waiting to be finally settled there.

6.2. The Level of External Threat and The Necessity for Military Reform

In the MOD draft great attention was paid to the assessment of the external threat to the country, in comparison to the Lopatin plan, which hardly touched threat assessment. In his Odessa speech, President Gorbachev showed a complicated, but vague, position with regard to it, as seen in the previous chapter. It was interesting that the MOD draft introduced its prefatory remarks with praising the new political thinking. The high command endorsed the argument that the new thinking opened up a new stage in international relations, the basic content of which was the cessation of the Cold War. In addition, according to it, the new thinking envisaged the rejection of war as a means of resolving international contradictions, gave unconditional priority to political methods of ensuring security, and proposed a cessation of nuclear testing, the elimination of nuclear and chemical weapons, intolerance of an arms race, a reduction of military potentials to the level of necessary reasonable sufficiency, the dissolution of military force groupings and a reduction of military expenditures, and so on.¹⁸ Through this the military leadership avoided collision with the political leadership, unlike some senior commanders who were criticizing the new thinking.

On the other hand, they tried to give the impression that the implementation of military reform had been in process. It was emphasised that the country undertook a unilateral reduction of its armed forces by 500,000 persons, 10,000 tanks, 8,500 artillery systems and 890 combat aircraft; A treaty was concluded on the destruction of intermediate and lesser range missiles and a withdrawal of Soviet forces began from the territory of Eastern European countries; And since 1989 there had been a reduction in military expenditures and the decision was made to convert a number of enterprises of defense sectors of industry.¹⁹

And then, down to business, the military leadership raised a series of

fundamental questions: whether the external threat to the Soviet Union still existed; If yes, where did such a threat emanate from; what were the scale, character and targets of the threat. Up to then, generals had argued that military threat to the country existed and it emanated chiefly from the US and NATO. This danger, however, was different now, not what it used to be, they continued. In other words, before the new political thinking came that was an immediate war danger but now there was no such danger. In this context, the MOD draft introduced the other concept the military threat (*voennaya opasnost*) in a more general and long-term respect. As Gorbachev insisted, the MOD draft made it clear that the immediate danger of a world nuclear war had been removed and a widescale military conflict between East and West was very unlikely in this historical stage. But the high command insisted that an overall military threat would exist as long as "major nuclear arsenals and powerful groupings of armed forces exist in those states with which acute political conflicts are potentially possible."²⁰

This analysis was nothing new. In reality, this way of thinking in the assessment of the military threat had prevailed even before this publication. There was a more graphic description of military danger by Akhromeev. In the latest polemics in July 1990 against civilian defense expert and people's deputy Arbatov, Marshal Akhromeev said that "the US surround the USSR with military bases at the beginning of the 1950s, and they still have not done away with them... More than 500,000 US servicemen are situated at these bases. There are naval vessels, military aviation... The US is not reducing the number of its aircraft carrier strike groups. They have 15 of them. These aircraft carriers have up to 1,500 attack aircraft on board which can be deployed around the territory of the USSR within eight to 10 days... They pose a military threat to us... We could not create an analogous military threat to the US, which was located thousands of km across the oceans from us. And we could not deploy that sort of navy..."²¹

Even a progressive civilian defense analyst A. Kokoshin, deputy director of the USSR Academy of Science US and Canada Institute, also accepted the MOD's conceptual dichotomy word by word in a round table discussion: "there will be a general military threat as long as there are large nuclear arsenals and powerful military machines in states with which serious political conflicts are potentially possible."²² Another civilian defence expert S. Rogov elaborated further upon this point. According to him, if nuclear weapons existed around the USSR and they could reach the territory of the USSR "within 30 minutes," there was a military threat.

Here, it is noteworthy to recall that a classical analysis of the concept of a military threat is generally divided into intentions and capabilities. With regard to the former, for decades assessments of the military threat to the Soviet Union had as a rule been of a highly simplistic nature and ideologized to the utmost. Now the military leadership felt that this simplistic nature of the estimates of the military threat no longer satisfied a large part of Soviet society. The MOD draft plan reflected this point, to some degree, as the Cold War ended. It hardly showed a class-based concept, or approaches to the Soviet security. Simply, it tried to focus on facts or capabilities, for example, an upgrading of accurate non-nuclear strategic offensive arms and the policy of modernization of tactical nuclear forces, particularly in Europe, by the US and its NATO allies. In the section of Military Cooperation of the USSR with Foreign Countries, however, there was a single worrisome sentence: "Socialist countries remain our basic partners in military cooperation."²³ Later Marshal Akhromeev clarified this point. While emphasizing the fact that "military pressure" was still being brought on the country by the US and NATO, which wanted the Soviet Union to pursue a policy suitable for them but not always serving the Soviet interests, he demanded that the Soviet Union's "socialist choice" be protected.²⁴

The MOD draft plan, in general, put its relative weight on the third world countries, where the Lopatin draft did not touch at all. Gorbachev in his Odessa speech once laid emphasis on the predictable trend in the military activities of such states as the US, the other NATO countries and also Japan, China, Iran, Pakistan, India, a number of Arab states, Israel and the Southeast Asian states. But President Gorbachev did not use the term 'third world' countries. Simply he appeared to be concerned with to the long borderline of the country. Maybe, as a kind of answer to Gorbachev's suggestion, the high command generalized them under the name of third world countries and gave militarily significant characteristics. It firstly concluded that "the centre of international tension is shifting more and more toward third world regions."²⁵ Here the main point is that leading world countries, including the Soviet Union, would be drawn into a war through regional conflicts. Iraq's aggression against Kuwait was given as evidence for this conclusive argument. Second, an "intensive" buildup of efforts of third world countries, particularly Israel, Republic of South Africa, India, Pakistan, to create their own nuclear missile and chemical potentials was observed. Third, the MOD draft treated the "nationalistic aspirations" as the trigger of the adoption of adventuristic decisions regarding the use of weapons of mass destruction. And finally, the high command worried, as another source of instability, about the presence of aggressive totalitarian regimes that could not stop at using armed force to achieve their arrogant claims.

Proceeding from them, the military leadership had drawn a temporary conclusion that despite positive improvements the Soviet Union's international position remained "complicated." That is, although the threat of war had been removed, it had not been precluded and no guarantees of the "irreversibility of positive changes" in the world had formed. And as for military danger, it considered that the danger was "preserved" because of the development of

international processes, paying again its great attention to the third world countries. Therefore, the Soviet Union still needed, the MOD draft said, "sufficiently powerful, mobile armed forces," as Gorbachev had frequently said. The military leadership, however, added another dimension of military reform, i.e., principles of formation and service, to the calculation: the sufficiently powerful, mobile armed forces had to be "multiethnic, regular, and manned on a mixed volunteer-compulsory basis."

6.3. Domestic Change and Military Policy.

Perhaps the most fundamental difference between the Lopatin's plan and the MOD draft is the high command's approach to centre-periphery relations. Lopatin's group argued that the republics should have a far greater say on defense policy and even urged the establishment of republican-based armies and territorial service. In particular, it introduced the term "a community of sovereign states" and demanded that a determining principle of military policy in the community be "the joint resolution" of questions of defense organizational development and development of the armed forces.

In contrast, the MOD draft devoted little space to the centre-periphery relations and favoured retention of the existing, unified multinational army allowing the all-Union government to maintain control over most aspects of defense policy. It simply said that changes in political structures on the level of all-Union such as the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, and the President and its Council, demanded "precise legal regulation of the procedure" used in developing military policy and determining the organizations and officials responsible for making decisions for the country's comprehensive preparation to repel aggression,

for determining defense appropriations and the fundamental directions of armed forces organizational development, and for making decisions for their employment, and so on.

Through this, the military leadership gave a definite answer to the Lopatin plan. In addition, the generals linked nationalist movements to internal stability, as they had repeatedly mentioned. For example, the MOD draft said that the line toward secession from the USSR and the establishment of national armed forces weakened the unity of the union and internal political stability. So, It appeared that the military leadership still considered the national movements as not something to be solved in a political way through negotiations between the Kremlin and republics but as something should not exist.

Then the MOD draft referred to what the new Constitution had failed to mention in relation to the interests of the military establishment. One was about the Defense Council. Another was concerned with the issue of who could order the ministry of defense on the use of nuclear weapons. First of all, the high command accepted that military policy was the prerogative of not the Party but the state in the person of the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet and the President. Then it suggested, as for the fulfilment of military policy, that a divided but coordinated system was necessary, although it appeared to be a matter of conception rather than of reality.

First, the President was to head the system of coordination of the above structures and levels of command and control and a lot of authority was given to him suitable for the position. For example, the President was to organize and exercise overall direction of the defense of the USSR; to be the Supreme Command-in-Chief of the armed forces; to make decisions and issue order to the USSR Armed Forces on the conduct of military operations as well as on the use of nuclear weapons; and to declare general or partial mobilization, declare a state of

war and bring up this question for consideration by the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Among these, who was to decide to use nuclear weapons was at the top of the agenda in military circles regarding the President's authority. Chief of the General Staff once complained that the Supreme Soviet had failed to pay its attention on the issue, as mentioned before. Therefore, it appeared that through this draft the high command endorsed the president as the 'real' CINC of the armed forces. Its cost, however, was not cheap. The President was, according to the MOD draft, to rely on the Presidential Council and Defense Council. Although the MOD draft failed to mention the relationship between the two Councils, it tried to give the Defense Council the legal basis for its existence. This had also been one of the main concerns of the high command for the presidential system. In addition, when he made decisions and issued orders to the USSR Armed Forces "on the conduct of military operations" as well as "on the use of nuclear weapons, the president had to be in accordance with "military doctrine." Perhaps, the most severe blow was that the President was to bear "personal responsibility" for the organization, status and maintenance of national defense.

Second, as the "supreme organization of state authority" in the sphere of military policy, the Congress of People's Deputies of the USSR was to consider and make decisions on "any questions" concerning defense and determined "basic" directions of the country's domestic and foreign policy in the defense sphere. Incidentally, President Gorbachev had often reminded some military leaders, who criticized the current foreign and security policy based on the new political thinking, of the fact that it was approved by the Congress of People's Deputies. For example, aimed at those who had expressed anger at the new political thinking at the congress of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation and the 28th Party Congress, including some military officers and generals, he said that the country now had a "legitimate" foreign-policy course. And all state agencies to deal with

international affairs had to be guided by it, i.e., the decision of the Congress of People's Deputies.

Third, the Supreme Soviet was to exercise "legislative regulation" in the sphere of defense and military organizational development; to make decisions on introducing martial law, declaring a state of war and employing the USSR Armed Forces; to determine the "overall structure and size of the USSR armed forces" based on requirements of defense sufficiency; to approve "the military doctrine" of the USSR, the basic directions of military organizational development, budget appropriations for defense, and amounts of material-technical resources for defense and monitor the correctness of their use; to determine the basic directions of the USSR cooperation with other states in the military sphere and amounts of material and financial means allocated to others states within the scope of military assistance; and to ratify and denounce the USSR's international treaties on such cooperation.

Finally, the Ministry of Defense was to be responsible for strictly military issues. The military leadership regarded maintaining of constant combat and mobilization readiness and combat effectiveness of the Soviet armed forces such issues. In previous years, the high command had taken part in the decisionmaking process in various ways. Now changes in political structures forced the ministry of defense to accept its limited role in the process. As for this declined status, the MOD draft stated that the ministry of defense was to draw up and submit "draft plans" for approval to the USSR President for employing the armed forces.

After establishing division of labour among the central political structures in this way, the MOD draft focused on the domestic sociopolitical situation of the armed forces. As the Lopatin plan and President Gorbachev had said, it observed the drop in prestige of armed forces service in connection with insufficient material support, poor social and everyday support, and lack of legal protection of

servicemen. Of course, this was not new at all in their arguments. The main thing was what had made it possible. Over and over again, the MOD draft stressed that the difficult situation for the armed forces happened, first of all, as a result of activities by authorities of a number of republics. A number of "anti-constitutional legislative measures" adopted by the republican authorities was given as prime evidence. The next was the Soviet armed forces' reduction and withdrawal of the Soviet troops from foreign countries under conditions of a lack of legal and social protection of servicemen and their families. This type of verbalization was a two-edged knife. The lack of protection had been used by a number of senior generals as a cord word to attack perestroika and the new political thinking simultaneously. This time, the military leadership was very keen to give detailed figures, which had previously only appeared in a fragmented manner.

One well-known figure was the unilateral reduction of the Soviet armed forces by 500,000 persons and some equipment, begun in 1989 and ended in allocated time. Simultaneously with this, the withdrawal and reduction of forces, and the storing and destruction of arms and military equipment continued. The following was subject to withdrawal from the territory of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Mongolia over 186,000 persons, including over 43,000 officers and warrant officers, 77 operational-tactical and tactical missile launchers, 3,200 tanks, 5,150 armoured combat vehicles, 2,350 field artillery pieces, 350 combat aircraft and 364 helicopters.

To be sure, the most difficult tasks facing the Soviet high command was the planned withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces from the territory of Germany over a four- year period. It was fully understandable therefore to have assigned a lot of space in the MOD draft for detailed information on the Western Group of Forces. It numbered five combined-arms armies totalling 17 divisions, one air army totalling five air divisions, and over 200 other formations and units in compressed

time periods. It included 370,000 servicemen, including some 100,000 officers and warrant officers, 184,200 family members, including 99,300 children, over 5,000 tanks, 9,500 APCs (armoured personnel carrier) and IFVs (infantry fight vehicles), 4,400 field artillery pieces, 1,700 SAM system, 620 combat aircraft and 790 helicopters, and so on. The overall amount of stores of ammunition and supplies was more than 1,660,000 tons. In addition, the equipment of 12 fixed command and control facilities, 632 communications facilities, 31 air-field and 40 hospitals as well as a large amount of motor pool, garage and barracks equipment, vehicular and arms repair plants, and the physical facilities of rangers and training centres were subject to dismantling and withdrawal. In short, this numerical strength was hardly less than the sum of UK and France ground forces. It is reasonable, therefore, for the high command to consider the domestic sociopolitical situation of the armed forces as a precondition of military reform.

6.4. Contents of Military Reform

The reform [reorganization] of the armed forces was regarded as the nucleus of the entire military reform in the MOD draft. After its publication Marshal Yazov had described the measures that appeared in the draft as "radical" reforms.²⁶ He emphasized that all armed forces components were to be "reorganized," "qualitatively renewed," "reduced," "given a strictly defensive direction," and so on. On the whole, the draft plan seemed to aim at streamlining the old system rather than constructing the new one based on some fundamental principles. As a prime evidence, the implementation of significant restructuring, including the changes in the existing five-branch system, was to be put off until at least 1996.²⁷ Whether to change the five-branch system was in the spotlight. Besides the fact

that Gorbachev hinted that in his Odessa speech in August 1990, a significant change in Soviet military considerations, particularly with regard to the fundamentals of strategic, tactical, and battlefield offensive operations, was a precondition for any transformation of the five-branch system. Not surprisingly the military leadership was very cautious. The MOD draft said that the changes would not be considered until that year and that, even in that case, the changes would depend upon the "developments in the military-political situation,"²⁸ a new word since General Moiseev pronounced at a meeting of General Staff Party aktiv in June 1990. So, for the period until 1996, the high command appeared to pass military reform off as a number of measures launched well before the draft publication, including the withdrawal and resettling of Soviet forces from Eastern Europe and Mongolia and the removal of civil defense and construction units from the administrative purview of the ministry of defense.

Although the matter of how much to reduce the Strategic missile forces was dependent on the ongoing START Treaty at that moment, the MOD draft suggested that it would be reduced by more than 30 percent. But there was no comment about the function of the strategic nuclear weapons. Surely, it was too provocative to write it there at a time when the political leadership was still advocating the nuclear free world. In fact, the military leadership were arguing that the strategic nuclear forces were to be developed to deter an enemy from initiating a nuclear war and, in case it began, to guarantee their execution of combat missions in "retaliatory operations." In this hidden strategic logic, the MOD draft said that priority in the restructuring of the Strategic Missile Forces was to be given to increasing missile weaponry's resistance, to damage-producing factors of nuclear and conventional weapons, and to increasing the command and control system's survivability. In short, the strategic missile forces were hardly touched in terms of their traditional functions.

Second, there was also no comment on the status of the Ground Forces. The fundamentals of strategic, tactical, and battle field offensive operations made the ground forces the core of the Soviet armed forces. The fundamentals required around four million mass army with heavy armaments from tanks to medium-range nuclear missiles. The Air Force and Air Defense units were allocated to assist the ground-gaining troops that were deployed in the configuration and deep echeloned pattern from the forward edge of the Warsaw Pact across to the Urals and even further. Generally these characteristic features are needed in the event of the immediate threat of war. Confusingly the MOD draft insisted that the country needed "flexible, highly mobile forces." But it appeared that the Ground Forces would continue to be the basis of force groupings in continental TVD's [theatres of military operations], along Ogarkov's reform line. Simply, the MOD draft mentioned that ground forces would be reduced by 10-12%. However, there were some puzzling suggestions. For example, the number of armies, corps, and divisions were to be reduced. At the same time, subunits, units, formations and large strategic formations were to be reorganized, concentrating the main efforts on improving their defensive power. Thus, perhaps, the most impressive change was about a transition of the structure of combined-arms and tank armies to "armies with a unified structure."²⁹ This could be confirmed by the statement that from 20 to 40 percent of the tanks were to be removed from their makeup. Of course these transformations to a certain degree confirmed the new military doctrine 'defensive defense'.

The Air Defense Forces were also to be reduced by 18-20 percent in a way that the number of large strategic formations were to be reduced. It was in the Air Defense Forces that some measures of a qualitative upgrading of arms and military equipment would be taken. The MOD draft said that air defense personnel and equipment were to be developed by outfitting the SAM Troops, Fighter Aviation,

and Radio technical Troops with new weapons of warfare and by developing the intelligence-gathering and command and control system.³⁰ These efforts were hardly at odds with Gorbachev's advocacy of reasonable sufficiency for defensive defense.

Fourth, there would be an reduction of 6-8 percent in the Air Forces. As a typical measure of streamlining, the number of different types of aviation equipment and the time periods for up-grading the armaments of air formations and units were to be reduced, the MOD draft stated.³¹ The number of aircraft in Air Force regiments was to be reduced from 40-32 in order to give it a "defensive" character. In addition, attention was paid to the aircraft basing system, above all in European USSR.

Finally, in case of the Navy, there would be no change even in the force composition of personnel and equipment. Rather there would be an increase in the combat capabilities of the fleets under the conditions of a further reduction in ship strength through their qualitative renewal, and command and control systems and equipment and all kinds of support were to be upgraded. Finally, the Navy's organizational structure was to continued to be upgraded.

In sum, there would be as a whole a reduction of the size to 3.0-3.2 million and that of directorates at central, district, and army levels by 15-20%. The number of general and flag officer positions were to be reduced by at least 30% in connection with a reorganization of command and control entities, including those of the MOD central apparatus. This was one of the areas on which civilians' concerns had been concentrated, in the sense that senior generals were an enemy of military reform, in particular, and of perestroika, in general. Reflecting this concern, in fact, a reduction of generals had been often hinted at by the high command such as chief and deputy chief of the General Staff Moiseev and Krivosheyev.

The MOD draft highlighted the system of manpower acquisition, or principle of formation. It summarized that the existing methods of manpower acquisition for the armed forces, combining citizens' voluntary entry into military service and the call-up of youth, would be retained for the "immediate" forthcoming years in accordance with the political, economic, social and purely military considerations. Instead, the high command granted some concessions to people. The volunteer recruitment of warrant officers, extended-term servicemen, and servicewomen for military service were to be expanded. A shift was to be made to a mixed principle of manpower acquisition, combining universal military obligation with volunteer entry into military service by contract to private and NCO positions. Non-military, i.e., alternative service is to be introduced; and so on.³²

Nevertheless, the MOD draft criticized the idea of maintaining a professional army, one of the main concerns of the Lopatin plan. This time it was done in a very detailed way. Even the MOD draft suggested the calculations of expenditures for the upkeep of a professional army. Given a reduction in size of the Soviet armed forces to 2.5 million, their annual upkeep would cost the country 3.3 times, if average monthly pay for privates was R430, for NCOs R645, for warrant officers R820, for officers and generals R950, or 3.65 times, if R500, R750, R950, and R1100, respectively, more in comparison with 1990. In the case of the strength of 1 January 1990, 3,993,000, 3.75 or 4.2 times. For this reason, the MOD draft bluntly concluded that the professional army was unthinkable. Based on this calculation, the military leadership rebuked advocatores of the idea strongly. They were simply portrayed as those who were pursuing "selfish" objectives of freeing some of the population from performing the sacred duty and honourable obligation of defending their Motherland.³³

Incidentally, as for the military reasons, the military leadership summarized what it had repeatedly said until then. They fully accepted the belief that a regular

professional army in peacetime was "most combat-effective." But they made it clear that a state without militarily trained resources would be incapable of supporting the transition of the armed forces from a peacetime to a wartime footing and the qualitative replacement of personnel losses in short time periods.

The final part of the MOD draft concerned the military-economy. Its main point was the volume of the defense budget. The high command showed the volume of appropriations for national defense up to the year 2000 in the following way.

Table 1: The MOD's Preliminary Calculations of Defense Budget

Description of Expenditures	1991-1995	1996-2000
Procurements of arms and military equipment	290.7	295.0
NIOKR*	88.6	97.8
Upkeep of Army and Navy	172.1	174.8
Capital construction	28.1	26.8
Servicemen's pensions	21.4	24.0
Other expenditures	11.3	8.6
Total	612.3	617.0

*: Scientific research and experimental design work

Unit: billions of rubles in 1991 prices

The chart combines estimated spending totals for the years 1991-1995 and 1995-2000. There was an increase of 129.5 billion roubles in constant prices over the period of 1991-1995, if we calculate this using the military budget for 1991, which was pegged at 96.6 billion rubles.³⁴ Consequently, this caused a lot of confusion and debate in the country. Defense minister Yazov tried to justify this growth by pointing to increases in weapons prices. According to him, tank costs

would rise by 50%, fighter aircraft by 60-70%, and artillery systems by 40%.³⁵ Marshal Akhromeev also argued that the price increase eroded real value of the ruble so that a substantial rise in the nominal value of the defense bill was necessary.³⁶ When the Soviet parliament decided to cut two billion rubles in the budget, the Marshal argued that, if measured in constant 1990 rubles, the defense budget R96.6bn actually showed a decline in 1991 of about 8.5%, i.e., to between R64bn and R65bn and real cuts were made in procurement and NIOKR.³⁷

Of significance was, however, that the MOD draft reform plan envisaged an absolute increase in the money spent on weapons acquisition from R39.7bn (see Table 2) in 1991 to R58.1bn in 1995 in constant prices. And there was also an increase in NIOKR from R12.4bn to nearly R17.7bn (see Table 1 and 2).

Table 2: USSR Defense Budget, 1989-1991

Items	1989	1990	1991
Procurement of arms and military equipment	32.6	31.0	39.7
NIOKR	15.3	13.2	12.4
Upkeep of Army and Navy	20.2	19.3	31.0
Capital construction	4.6	3.8	6.2
Servicemen's pensions	-	-	3.2
Other expenditures	2.3	1.3	1.9
Total	77.3	71.0	96.6

Unit: billions of current rubles in 1991 prices

Source: *Izvestiya*, January 12, 1991.

In its previous section, the MOD draft paid a lot of its attention to the improvement of military technology and its policy. In fact, there had been an decrease from 19.8% in 1989 to 12.6% in 1991 in NIOKR's proportion in total

military spending, increasing the ratio of procurement spending to NIOKR from roughly 2:1 to 3:1 (see Table 2). Now, the MOD draft suggested that the ratio would rise even further, i.e., to 3.4: 1 (R58.1bn versus R17.7bn). This fact had a great implication for the relationship between the military and defense industry.

In principle, the military leadership considered a steady reduction in the armed forces' level, using less personnel and equipment, as interchangeable with a qualitative upgrading of arms and military equipment. The MOD draft even asserted that developing new spheres of military equipment and advanced technologies were an inalienable part of the new defensive military doctrine. Then it specified the prime task as being a reduction of the military-technical lag behind armies of NATO countries, above all in such kinds of arms as long-range precision-guided missiles with conventional warheads and automated command and control and weapon control systems. This was one of the earliest concerns of Marshal Ogarkov.³⁸ The MOD draft, however, did not give any indications of the problems would be solved in practical terms. One of the possible ways appeared to be more money for military research and development. Paradoxically the MOD draft suggested that the generals were more interested in the weapons procurement than the research and design.

Moreover, the MOD draft considered the application of market prices to military products "unacceptable." In fact, around the fall of 1990, most of members of the high command sided with defense industry,³⁹ as will be seen in the chapter 7. One of the noticeably exceptional cases was the view of Colonel General E. Shaposhnikov, the CINC of the Air Forces.⁴⁰ But as a whole conservative generals argued that enterprises supplying products for defense needs should be given incentives by granting tax benefits and advantages. Most importantly, this time the military leadership stipulated this expressly in the text of the MOD draft.

6.5. Treatment of the MOD Draft: Voting and Debates

On December 13, 1990, the Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security had examined the MOD draft as well as the Lopatin plan and then adopted the former as the basis for further work. At the same time, it was recommended that certain sections of the draft submitted by the deputies' group would be included in it, particularly those sections laying out positions on the social protection of military servicemen and the members of their families.⁴¹ And the Committee recommended that the government should put the finishing touches to it, and then officially submit it to the Supreme Soviet.

Later, on June 11, 1991, the USSR Cabinet of Ministers had examined and approved a plan for military reform sponsored by the MOD draft as expected. In doing so, the Cabinet of Ministers confirmed the decision made by the USSR Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security on December 13, 1990, which had already rejected the Lopatin draft. After that time, the fate of the little changed MOD draft lay with the Supreme Soviet and the president,⁴² but ended in a document after the failed coup.

During the period of six months, there were some critics, although the number of articles was limited. The main reason seemed to be that the Gulf war had made the new political thinkers defensive. Moreover, most of critics appeared after Gorbachev's turn to the left had failed to suggest any theoretically, doctrinally supported evidence for their arguments. Simply, complete changes in military leadership were called for because of their opposition to military reform.⁴³ However, S. Rogov's article appeared in *Kommunist* was to certain extent exceptional. Besides taking aim at defense ministry's spending projections, accused the military leadership of failing to define the threat to the country, on which the

entire reform plan should be based.

Once he accepted the way of how define the 'military threat' as the military leadership did. Concerning the MOD military reform draft, however, Rogov argued that the US and Nato doctrinal changes and force reductions were misrepresented. In fact, the MOD draft said that the US was creating a large grouping of "non-nuclear strategic offensive" arms, which could be stationed anywhere. As Akhromeev observed, the draft also focused on the US naval forces: US had a "three-fold superiority" and it continued to be unshakeable.⁴⁴ Against this argument and particularly, keeping the CFE treaty in mind, Rogov questioned the logic of how to propose only superficial manpower reductions in the European part of the USSR at a time when the CFE treaty required the removal or destruction of vast amounts of equipment in exactly that part of the country.⁴⁵

The more serious critiques, however, were related to the results of the Gulf war. In general, the high command did not try to link the results of war with the reform in the armed forces. Chief of the General Staff at a conference on the Gulf war lessons in June 1991 venomously said that the main conclusion drawn at the conference was that political means had failed to prevent the Gulf war, although the possibility existed. On the other hand, Moiseev warned against those who used the results of the war as a pretext for making immediate changes in the military reform.⁴⁶

By that time, for example, a reformist People's Deputy Colonel A. Tsalko said that the Gulf war had demonstrated the obsolescence of a doctrine based on massive ground forces and tanks.⁴⁷ Concerning the US advanced high-technology weapons such as sea-launched cruise missiles, laser-and electro-optically guided smart bombs, and F-117A Stealth Fighter, which provided the high command with a good justification for an increase in the cost of military research and development of such weapons, civilian defense experts argued that those weapons could not be

used with great efficiency without an adequate level of preparation of personnel, including commanders. In short, it was concluded that the operations conducted in the Gulf proved the advantages of a highly professional armed forces over a mass army based on universal military service. Consequently, the idea of the creation of a smaller, highly mobile, and professional army was once again became a hot issue.

In spite of the military leadership's effort to suppress the dissenting views within the officer corps, some interesting ideas for a radical restructuring of Soviet forces were further proposed by many of the participants in discussions held at the General Staff Academy following the conference. Among them, the most significant was the idea of abandoning the excessive dispersal of troops across the country's territory and the proposed creation of major military centres with a developed infrastructure.

Even the smallest subunits and installations could be easily pinpointed by modern means of surveillance and effectively destroyed by precision weapons so in the event of the danger of war it was still necessary to remove troops in good time from their permanent deployment sites. In addition, repulsing possible foreign attacks was possible only with the pre-emptive movement of troops toward the presumed sectors of invasion. Moreover, modern means of transport enabled that to be done quite quickly. Thus, there was no need to be continuously sitting and waiting for the aggressor right on the border, they argued.

In this sense, it would also be convenient to organize troops' combat training and maintain their combat readiness at the proper level in big garrisons, where questions of management, support, and supply were resolved for better than in units in "god-forsaken" remote areas in the mountains.⁴⁸ Although the high command, including Moiseev, did not agree with them, the debates were enough to cause a review of the operational role of MDs and TVD.

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- ¹ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft: Military Reform Concept," *Pravitelstvennyi vestnik*, No. 48, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-239*, pp. 62-75 and pp. 75-80.
- ² M. Moiseev, "S pozitsiy oboronitel'noy doktriny," *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 10, 1989.
- ³ D. Yazov, "Byt'na ostriye perestroyki" *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 7, 1989.
- ⁴ A. Lizichev, "Armiya: Razgovor o nasushchom," *Kommunist*, No. 3, 1989, pp. 16-17.
- ⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 12, 1991.
- ⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 11, 1990.
- ⁷ "Obsuzhdaetsya proekt zakona," *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 11, 1990 and "Kursom voennoi reformy," *Ibid.*, April 12, 1990.
- ⁸ D. Yazov, "Voennaya reforma," *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 3, 1990.
- ⁹ V. Serebryannikov, "Armiya. Kakoi ei byt'?" *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 12, 1989.
- ¹⁰ "Voennaya reforma."
- ¹¹ *Izvestiya*, February 23, 1990.
- ¹² V. N. Lobov, "Aktual'nye voprosy razvitiya teorii sovetskoy voennoy strategii 20-kh -serediny 30-kh godov," *Viz*, No. 2, 1989, pp. 41-50.
- ¹³ V. Serevryannikov, "Kakaya armiya nam nuzhna?" *KVS*, No. 9, 1990, p. 38.
- ¹⁴ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, February 21, 1988. For a detail, see M. Tsyppkin, "Will the Soviet Navy Become a Volunteer Force?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 5, 1990, pp. 5-7.
- ¹⁵ M. Tsyppkin, "Will the Soviet Navy Become a Volunteer Force?" p. 7.
- ¹⁶ *Moscow Television*, July 28, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-151*, p. 61.
- ¹⁷ *Moscow Television*, July 5, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-130*, p. 36.
- ¹⁸ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft..." pp. 62-63
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* p. 63.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²¹ *Moscow Television*, July 21, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-145*, pp. 63 and 65.
- ²² *Trud*, October 2, 1990.
- ²³ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft..." p. 72.
- ²⁴ *New Time*, No. 14, 1991, p. 15.
- ²⁵ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft..." p. 63, Following details on the restructuring of the Soviet armed forces are derived from the MOD draft.
- ²⁶ D. Yazov, "Parametry voennoi reformy," *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, No. 5, 1991, p. 57.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*
- ²⁸ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 22, 1990.
- ²⁹ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft..." p. 65.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 66.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 68-69.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.
- ³⁴ *Izvestiya*, January 12, 1991.
- ³⁵ D. Yazov, "Parametry voennoi reformy," p. 59.
- ³⁶ S. Akhromeev, "Skol'ko stoit oborona?" *Izvestiya*, January 21, 1991.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸ Mary C. FitzGerald, "Gorbachev's Concept of Reasonable Sufficiency in National Defense," in *Soviet National Security Policy under Perestroika*, ed., George E. Hudson

(Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 175-177.

³⁹ For a detail of a defense industry's lobby, see Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defense Industry* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1991), pp. 75-84.

⁴⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 15, 1990.

⁴¹ *Izvestiya*, December 15, 1990; *Pravda*, December 14, 1990; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 15, 1990. Only 3 of the deputies suggested taking Lopatin's draft as a basis for future work.

⁴² *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 12, 1991.

⁴³ For examples, see V. Tsygichko, a civilian military expert, *Voennyi vestnik*, April-May, 1991, p. 6; General V. Dudnik, *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, June 8, 1991; and *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 12, 1991.

⁴⁴ "USSR Ministry of Defense Draft...", p. 63.

⁴⁵ S. Rogov, "Kakoi budet voennaya reporma?" *Kommunist*, No. 6, 1991, p. 88.

⁴⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 8, 1991.

⁴⁷ *Knight-Ridder Newspaper*, March 2, 1991, cited in Stephen Foye, "The Gulf War and the Soviet Defense Debate," *Report on the USSR*, No. 11, 1991, p. 2.

⁴⁸ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 12, 1991.

CHAPTER. 7 MILITARY RESPONSE II: A CONTRACT BETWEEN GORBACHEV AND HIGH COMMAND

7.1. Until The Military Leadership Arose against Gorbachev

In the previous chapter, we evaluated the MOD draft as being short of any reform-oriented ideas and an overarching conceptual framework, and thus a temporary measure to make time for the high command and to soothe the Soviet people who considered the military leadership as neither prepared nor willing to support fundamental changes in the current system of the Soviet armed forces. In addition, at its best it aimed at winning over the Lopatin's plan at the voting of the Committee for Defense and State Security of the Supreme Soviet.

If we look at the MOD draft from another angle, it would be the equivalent of a final notice concerning military reform. The military leadership tried to end the debate on military reform one-sidedly after obtaining Gorbachev's consent. They made it clear that although the threat of war had disappeared, there were no guarantees of the irreversibility of positive changes and a military danger still existed. Therefore, the Soviet Union still needed the sufficiently powerful, mobile armed forces that were multiethnic, regular, and manned on a mixed volunteer-compulsory basis. Following the final notice, the high command began getting down to the much more fundamental problems, most noticeably the collapse of draft.

Until the spring of 1987, it was difficult to generalize the picture of civil/Party-military relations. From the outset the new general secretary made clear his intention to gain control over the defense budget and arms control based on the

new political thinking.¹ This could threaten the interests of the military. In response, defense minister Marshal Sokolov attempted to oppose possible changes being forced upon the military, but by his nature and from his speeches and writings he touched the political-military aspect of military doctrine, which was the domain of the party leadership. This meant that the defense minister gave responsibility for the other side of the military doctrine, military-technical issues, to chief of the General Staff Marshal Akhromeev.

Whereas Sokolov held the position of maintaining the status quo, Akhromeev, like Ogarkov, initiated the restructuring of the Soviet armed forces based on his calculations. Even in the early part of Gorbachev's term, for example, Akhromeev played a central role at the Reykjavik meeting in 1986, in which the Soviets made major concessions to US demands on INF and strategic forces. He showed considerable flexibility and had significant authority to make concessions within established guidelines.² But he was probably not a whole-hearted supporter. Only did he think that he could best ensure the nation's security interests as a member of Gorbachev's team rather than the opposition. This point was reflected by Parrott's observation that Akhromeev might have objected to some of Gorbachev's sweeping proposals for eliminating nuclear missiles.³ Therefore, Sokolov's vocal oppositions and other senior officers' occasional questionings to the new line taken by Gorbachev were short of relative political weight.

Tangibly, the civil-military relations appeared to have taken a turn for the worse around the summer of 1987. Gorbachev was showing a considerable degree of his power and the Party's authority over the military in a manner that had not been experienced in the country since Khrushchev. In particular, after the Rust affair the turnover of personnel, including Sokolov, had dramatically intensified. A much more serious body blow was that the military ceased to be immune to public criticism. Some of the leading personnel of the military had to face a series of open

challenges ranging from military internal problems to sacred issues of military doctrine coming from both civilians, in particular intellectuals, and within the armed forces, i.e., rank and file officers.

Writer Adamovich denounced the legitimacy of second-strike nuclear retaliation. Some scholars argued at a round table discussion in May 1987 that the drafting of first and second-year college students was harmful to their intellectual and professional development. Chief of the Moscow Communist Party, B. El'tsin, together with young officers, delivered the storm of criticism in the aftermath of the Rust affair. These events, as a whole, signalled a new era of civil-military relations in the country.

In response, the new defense minister General D. Yazov took a simple road by recognizing the military's internal problems. He even criticized the failure of the armed forces to eliminate "negative" phenomena.⁴ Yazov appeared to be consumed with the implementation of perestroika in the military. In previous days he had shown his interest in personnel and management and, most likely, therefore, had been chosen by Gorbachev to assume the primary responsibility for improving Soviet performance in that area.

It meant that Akhromeev could continue his role with regard to arms control and force structure modifications. Herspring observed that as a result of this alignment Akhromeev became a key officer in determining the military's stance even on budgetary issues.⁵ So, the leadership of Yazov and Akhromeev, together with Lizichev, chief of the MPA, was beginning to mobilize support within the military establishment for Gorbachev's policies at a time when many of members of the high command were still yet showing signs of doubt and dissent on Gorbachev's budgetary and arms control policies.

Their first noticeable effort appeared around the Berlin Declaration on new military doctrine. Akhromeev, who had already endorsed word for word

Gorbachev's statements such as how to react to the US SDI challenge and how to rebalance the definition of military doctrine in favour of the social-political rather than the military-technical side, on the front page article of *Sovetskaya rossiya* of February 21, 1987, reiterated his support for these issues. He noted that "in the modern nuclear-space age, the guaranteeing of security appears ever more to be a political problem. It can never be guaranteed through military-technical means, even through the creation of the most powerful offensive or defensive forces, including a "space shield."⁶ Lizichev also through an article published in *Kommunist* tried to neutralize criticism to the new political thinking.

Nonetheless, oppositional military leaders remained. Moreover, the unprecedented debate arranged by the political leadership over the new military doctrine or reasonable sufficiency between civilians and the military not only divided members of the high command to a large extent but also made them freely come to the surface. Of significance were Deputy Chief of the General Staff for Doctrine Colonel General M. Gareev, CINC of the WTO Marshal Kulikov, CINC of the Air Defence Forces General I. Tretyak, and so on.

These conservative generals disagreed with both the political leadership and challenging civilians in two interrelated respects: the nature of the imperialist threat and arms reduction agreements. They tried to keep a position that the very basis for reductions were the principles of parity and necessary sufficiency, based on a worst-case assessment of the currently existing imperialist threat. So, they resisted the drastic reductions of both armed forces and defense spending.

On the other hand, Akhromeev became a leading supporter of force reductions. But he regarded it only as a means of enhancing the security of the country. This point was well reflected by his consistent statements that arms reductions had to be bilateral and therefore reductions in Soviet forces had to depend on corresponding reductions in US or Nato forces. This created difficulties

for him in relation to some of the military aspects of the new thinking that demanded the arms control, to a certain extent, for its own sake, and in the end led him to resign his job chief of the General Staff.⁷ Of course, as an adviser to the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, he could have continued to be the most influential figure among members of the high command, i.e., as a military's major linker when it came to negotiating with the political leadership over the military affairs.

Around the summer of 1989 a significant twist and turn in the attitude of the Yazov-Moiseev-Akhromeev-Lizichev leadership began to appear. The policy of 'glasnost' was questioned. As we have studied in chapter four, the essential point of the Soviet civil-military relations at this stage was that the public opinion was now seeking democratic mechanisms of control over the military.

The debate of military issues was intense during the election campaigns for the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. The lively televised proceedings of the new institutions were also dramatic. Gorbachev told the Congress of People's Deputies that the Soviet defense budget in 1989 amounted to 77.3 billions and that it would be reduced. The debates on the Tbilisi events there spurred widespread popular antipathy in many non-Russian republics, not to mention the Georgian republic, to the existing military system. Despite defense minister Yazov's vehement public protests, the Supreme Soviet decided to release 176,000 drafted students early from the military service.

All of these events in the end boiled down to military reform movement, being an anathema to most of the senior military leaders. The advocacy of military reform from below, i.e., from a group of young and middle level officers, caused practical difficulties for the high command. The movement emerged quite suddenly at the end of 1988 when Lt Colonel A. Savinkin published an article in *Moscow News* that called for a radical transformation of the current Soviet armed forces into a professional and territorial army. The release of so called Major Lopatin's

military reform conceptualization spurred the movement. Although there were many variants to the reform movement, the key point was that the Soviet Union had to adopt a mixed professional-militia system.

In response, the General Staff set to make its own reform plan under the leadership of Moiseev. On the other hand, its chief sent the first signal of the change in the direction to the political leadership by the publication of an article in *Kommunist vooruzhennykh sil*, under the title of "Once Again on The Prestige of The Army." Until then he had adopted a more or less supportive or less confrontational approach in dealing with the political leadership. But Moiseev took a shrewd approach. In the article he first introduced N. Koldaeva's letter. The unknown candidate of juridical sciences criticized the new political thinking and its supporters, particularly civilian military experts; warned "biased" coverage of mass media of the armed forces; and then worried about the unilateral troop reductions and reduced military spending.⁸

Moiseev first evaluated the current international climate as "being warm."⁹ Of course he did not forget to raise the new political thinking. Proceeding from this, he justified Gorbachev's UN announcement of a unilateral reduction of 500,000 troops. At the same time, he assured the reader by saying that the country's military capabilities were not weakened because the size and nature of the cuts were the results of careful discussions between the political leadership and the military establishment. But if we consider this point from a different angle, we see that he was in fact trying to raise the authority of the high command.

As for the structural change, the chief of the General Staff reiterated his previous comment of February 1989.¹⁰ The central tenets of 'reasonable sufficiency for defense' were well confirmed: motorized infantry and tank divisions would become structurally more defensive, with reductions of 30-35% in tanks, artillery systems, and assault-crossing units; but defensive weapons such as antitank and

anti-aircraft forces would be "increased" by between 50 and 100 percent.

Turning to the defense budget, Moiseev did not oppose Gorbachev's plan to cut military spending. But he hated those who pictured the armed forces as a "parasite" on Soviet society. Defense minister Yazov shared Moiseev's view. Rather cautiously, Yazov warned that it would be economically harmful and politically short-sighted, if the military budget were treated as the sole cause of the country's current economic difficulties.¹¹ Incidentally, it was at a time when whilst the military leadership was trying to minimize perceptions of the extent of the military burden in order to alleviate pressure for cutting the military budget, opponents associated with the MFA were trying to maximize the estimate of the burden.

With regard to glasnost', Moiseev disclosed in his article that a new department staffed entirely by military officers within the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio (Gosteleradio) had been established to promote the military's point of view on defense matters. It was a sharp reversal of the policy of glasnost'. It was not clear at that moment whether the political leadership confirmed the change, or not. But, at the very least, it indicated clearly that there was a developing alliance between certain conservative elements within the party apparatus and the military leadership aimed at limiting glasnost'. H. Gelman regarded chief of the KGB V. Chebrikov as a leading figure among such conservatives.¹²

In this respect, it may be useful to trace back two incidents that took place in July 1989: the Central Committee's calling for limits on criticism of Soviet military and Gorbachev's facing of a public revolt at a the Central Committee meeting. On July 6, *Krasnaya zvezda* in a major announcement warned editing staff throughout the country against presenting on overly negative picture of the Soviet armed forces,¹³ following a hint dropped by Marshal Akhromeev, who was outspoken on

a number of important issues, particularly on press criticism aimed at the armed forces.¹⁴ A number of journals such as *Ogonek*, *Vek XX i mir*, and so on, were not only labelled incompetent publications on military affairs but also accused of describing army life in an unobjective and one-sided fashion and with carrying unreliable information concerning the armed forces' restructuring. Savinkin's article was singled out as a typical case among a series of incompetent publications by the memorandum.

Of greater importance, however, was the fact that the major part of the announcement consisted of a memorandum proclaimed by the Central Committee Departments for State-Legal Matters and for Ideology, together with the MPA. And the memorandum was accompanied by a resolution issued by the Secretariat of the Central Committee. The resolution called for a proposal to post military journalists from the armed forces to the editorial offices of the central newspapers and was to be forwarded to the USSR Council of Ministers for consideration.

On the other hand, Gorbachev bluntly rejected calls for a return to a less radical reform programme and categorically defended his policy of 'glasnost' at a widely publicized CPSU Central Committee meeting, in which N. Ryzhkov, E. Ligachev, L. Zaikov, and others urged Gorbachev to order a crackdown on growing dissent in the country.¹⁵ He argued that the Party had to seek collaboration with informal groups which the conservative party leaders regarded as dissidents. Furthermore, he even threatened them by saying that the party leadership was to bring in completely new cadres from outside, even from outside the party's ranks.¹⁶

Therefore, the military newspaper's announcement and Moiseev's comment on the new department staffed entirely by military officers within the Gosteleradio were puzzling. One possible explanation was that the military leadership was exploiting the very clear split within the party leadership itself concerning the

continued utility of pursuing the radical policy of glasnost'. Nevertheless, it was more accurate to consider Moiseev's reasoned response as a slightly tentative effort to re-establish a workable relationship with the Gorbachev leadership. As chief of the General Staff, Moiseev adequately expressed his support for reduced military spending, arms reductions, restructuring of the armed forces, and new political thinking. In return, he requested significant restraints on glasnost' and particularly media criticism of the military. After revealing his own view on the Tbilisi affairs, he contended that the regular military should not be used in domestic disturbances.

As Gorbachev publicly rejected this offer, as mentioned before, defense minister Yazov helped Moiseev by raising the SDI question in connection with upcoming arms control talks. It was unusual since for the first time he touched the military-technical issue, which had been assigned to Marshal Akhromeev. However it was understandable, if we consider Gorbachev's rejection. Defense minister was still a proponent of increased discipline and the rooting out of bureaucratic inertia and generally supportive of reductions in military spending and manpower. Regarding to glasnost', he also registered clear dissatisfaction.¹⁷ Of importance was the fact that Yazov made the Soviet position on the SDI: "Any profound reduction in strategic weapons is possible only under conditions of a renunciation by both sides [the USSR and the US] of the creation and development of a widely based system of missile defense."¹⁸ Then Yazov argued that the US was continuing to adhere to its SDI programme.

This was a significant difference between the MOD and the MFA. Since the INF Talks resumed, the foreign ministry had expressed a willingness to decouple the SDI from future negotiations on strategic nuclear arms reductions. This chasm between the two ministries was also found in Moiseev's article. President Bush in late May 1989 proposed that US ground forces in Western Europe and Soviet troops in Eastern Europe be limited to 275,000 on each side for the July 1989

summit on conventional force reductions. In fact, this offer would require the withdrawal of 35,000 US troops, a cut of around 10 percent, and of 285,000 Soviet troops, a cut of around 50 percent.¹⁹ The chief of the General Staff said that Bush's proposal intended to lead to unilateral reduction of the armaments of the Warsaw Pact Organization countries and, in fact, to destroy them. On the contrary, foreign minister Shevardnadze called it "serious" and "constructive."²⁰

In this respect, Yazov-Moiseev leadership appeared to be questioning further reductions in Soviet troops, or was trying to slow down Gorbachev's arms control pace. As the impact of withdrawals and arms cuts on the socioeconomic situation of the armed forces and the implication of political reform on the military status in the society became much more serious, the high command turned far more closely to their conservative colleague generals.

Marshal Akhromeev also confirmed this view. In a TV interview in October in which he argued with A. Kireyev, an economist and specialist on defense affairs, Akhromeev agreed that the US did not want war. But the marshal argued that the US sought to use all military, economic, and ideological mechanisms to "pressure" the USSR. In this context, Akhromeev revealed his sensitivity regarding arms cuts: force reductions could be made by "both sides", "if tensions were reduced."²¹ More specifically, the marshal reminded people of the fact there were 256 nuclear power plants in Europe which could create nuclear war-like conditions in a conventional conflict. In fact, Gorbachev had already issued a serious warning, citing the figure. Now, Akhromeev said that national defense could not be based on hopes and wishes; instead, it had to be determined by a reality where war remained a "possibility,"²² drawing a firm conclusion that the threat of war was not yet over.

Returning to criticism of the military, he expressed his anger on the mass media for depicting military life in a negative way and his concern with its lack of patriotism. Citing a particular issue of *Ogonek* which had discussed the possibility

of a military coup, the marshal said that "there is criticism and criticism... I am against unfounded attacks on the armed forces and it is particularly impermissible when these insults are inflicted against the armed forces."²³ In addition, with regard to *Ogonek's* view that the army was swathed in a "smokescreen of secrecy," the marshal asserted that this was a "direct accusation" against the leadership of the armed forces.

Since Akhromeev's television appearance, a number of senior generals became open in attacking the mass media. In mid-November 1989, Yazov observed that patriotism and dedication to international and military duty had declined, blaming "nationalist, extremist, separtist forces who passed themselves off as champions of 'national interests.'"²⁴ Two days later, Colonel General B. Gromov, the last Soviet commander in Afghanistan, focused upon the media's "inadequate and inaccurate" coverage on the Afghan war. Even acknowledging the fact that the General Staff recommended against sending troops Afghanistan, but was overruled, the general attacked *Ogonek*, *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, and other media for "trying to drive a wedge between the army and society,"²⁵ and he particularly spoke of an "Afghan complex" of behavioural difficulties among the Soviet veterans.

7.2. Politicized Armed Forces

By February 1990 Moiseev's clear message came with the publication of an article appeared in *Krasnaya zvezda*.²⁶ After it was adopted, the chief of the General Staff publicly criticized the draft programme for the 28th Party Congress and by doing so he criticised the party leadership. As a Gorbachev appointee, Moiseev was expected to be more committed to Gorbachev and his programmes

than to the traditional interests and tasks of the military establishment. On the contrary, like Yazov, he had shown himself not to be a simple yes-man.

It was likely that the draft Party programme fell short of attention to defense issues, for instance, a call to ease the harsh living conditions currently faced by the soldiers was encompassed in one sentence. Furthermore, it superficially evaluated the international situation and no space was devoted to defining the army's domestic policing function. In a short section devoted to "internal security," reference was made only to the Border Troops, the MVD troops, and the KGB.²⁷

In this background, Moiseev seemed to argue that the political leadership should have carefully considered both the implications of the impending large-scale troop withdrawals from Eastern Europe for Soviet security arrangements and the problem of settling the returning troops in the Soviet Union. Particularly, concerning the latter point, he revealed detailed numerical figures, for example, from Czechoslovakia and Hungary alone over 35,000 officers and 30,000 families, including 19,000 children, would need to be resettled.²⁸ Then he warned that these people could end up being little better than refugees and called for a detailed government programme to ensure their well-being.

In an open answer to the Koldaeva letter as noted above, Moiseev expressed optimism as a whole. But he had left himself the option of complaining for the future. For example, after calling attention to a Council of Ministers' resolution and a Supreme Soviet decree that directed local soviets to provide housing for demobilized soldiers, he demanded that they implement given orders right away. Nevertheless, the situation had not improved. This was well reflected by the military newspaper *Krasnaya zvezda's* treating the housing problems as one of the most pressing issues.²⁹ So, the housing crisis became the first ammunition for some of the party conservatives as well as the high command to attack the new thinking on practical grounds.

More ominously, Moiseev was not alone in complaining the party leadership. Marshal Akhromeev confirmed that he, Yazov, and Lizichev all shared Moiseev's views with regard to the draft party platform. Later, less than one month before the 28th Party Congress, the chief of the MPA, Army General Lizichev condemned the draft Platform in a similar fashion to the Moiseev. He argued that the Party programme not only failed to properly evaluate the international situation but also underestimated the threat still posed by NATO.³⁰

There was certain change in the manner in which the military leadership dealt with the new thinking. It appeared that Moiseev used the draft party platform's negligence as a rallying point to mobilize supporters. First it started within the armed forces. Aiming at the coming 28th Party Congress, they exercised a great deal of influence on the process of delegate selection, probably in order to prevent liberal officers from being elected. The most dramatic case was the failed attempts to expel a people's deputy Major Lopatin from the CPSU to preclude his election.³¹

Of significance were the dramatic activities of some of members of the high command and senior commanders at the founding congress of the Russian Communist Party. It was held on June 20-23 1990 amid the session of the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies. It may have pleased the high command that the RSFSR Communist Party not only adopted hardline resolutions but also rejected the idea that the crisis in the country was the result of faults in the Socialist idea. Particularly, the congress blamed the current Politburo for political errors, by naming Yakovlev and Shevardnadze, as well as Gorbachev.

As for military related affairs, there was a mounting wave of dislike and anger at the issue "Who lost Eastern European countries?" This question in fact was used as further ammunition for the conservative generals to attack the new thinking, following the housing crisis. It was General Al'bert Makashov, the

commander of the Volga-Urals Military District, who firstly opened the door for the Yazov-Moiseev military leadership to attack the new Soviet foreign and security policy and its results.

Makashov said that domestic reform had permitted the "ideological enemy" to divide soldiers from officers, and officers from generals and that the Communists of the army and the navy were indignant at the inaction of the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the government. Concerning the awful results of unilateral force reductions, he said that the CINC of the armed forces should be a realist. The realities of the world today were such that continuing unilateral disarmament would be an act of "stupidity" or a "crime." He believed that the so-called victories of diplomacy meant that the Soviet army was being driven without a fight out of East European countries with only the "learned peacocks" crowing that no one was going to attack the Soviets. The Soviet Union, however, would be needing the army and navy yet.³²

Through this unprecedented criticism, he attacked the MFA and the progressive forces, from liberal intellectuals to representatives of the various civilian defense institutions, who under the Gorbachev leadership had redefined Soviet security needs and thereby encroached on what had formerly been the military's exclusive domain in society and in defense policy formation. On the other hand, he argued that the Communist Party could still, or had to, do something for the military.

Whereas the general did not name Gorbachev, Colonel N. Petrushenko, probably using his status People's Deputy, directly blamed Gorbachev for the fact that his arms concessions had wrought havoc in the officer corps. Moreover, the majority of military delegates supported a hardliner Ivan Polozkov, who defeated A. Vlasov, Gorbachev's candidate for the post of Russian Party first secretary.

As noted in chapter 5, during the presidential election in March 1990 most of

officer deputies did not vote for Gorbachev. Vlasov's defeat was a painful body blow to Gorbachev, because at the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies in spite of the Gorbachev's support, Vlasov had been defeated by El'tsin in an election to the chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Two congresses elected "extremists," El'tsin from the left and Polozkov from the right. These incidents were enough to cause a substantial decrease in Gorbachev's authority over both the RSFSR and the USSR as a whole.

Meanwhile, one week after the RSFSR Communist Party Congress convened, Yazov warned that the USSR had to account for the strategic reality of the US and NATO increasing in strength through a policy of nuclear intimidation and direct confrontation. Furthermore, he raised another issue: "What prospects are there for peace in Europe, if Nato incorporates a unified Germany while the Warsaw Pact is disbanded?." ³³ This became the third round of ammunition for the conservatives to attack the new thinking.

During the days leading up to the 28th Party Congress, the debate on the issues intensified. Very naturally, at the 28th Party Congress a series of foreign and security issues, including 'who lost East Europe', occupied a prominent place in the proceedings. A senior political officer, Major General I. Mikulin, the head of the Southern Group of Forces Political Administration, brought the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe to the forefront of the debate at a meeting of the working group on international affairs.

First, he laid the blame for the event on the new thinking. Then, the general rejected Gorbachev's idea of "a common European home", one of central tenets of the new thinking. What was more, Mikulin criticized Gorbachev and Shevardnadze personally as being "indecisive" and "hasty," respectively. ³⁴ Another senior commander from the Navy, Admiral G. Khvatov, the commander of the Pacific Fleet, said "we have no allies in the West. We have no allies in the East.

Consequently, we are back where we were in 1939."³⁵

It was comic that Gorbachev, being faced with those two senior commanders' daring challenge, passed over to chief of the General Staff. In such a tense moment, Moiseev uttered a face-saving word: the Soviet Union possessed a "reliable rocket shield" that ensured itself full security."³⁶ But this pronouncement, if we consider it seriously, was not unusual. The Soviet Union had never officially accepted the strategic nuclear forces as the main factor deterring the aggressor, as Moiseev's comment suggested. Moreover, the new thinking itself rejected such a function.

Moiseev, however, returned to his job in the traditional way used to secure the military interests. In a speech to the working group on international affairs, chief of the General Staff accused NATO countries of trying to establish military superiority over the USSR and of continuing to rely on force. Therefore, it was necessary for the USSR to maintain "parity" in both strategic and conventional weapons systems,³⁷ he claimed.

Marshal Yazov in a speech to the Congress said that there was still a "military threat" from the West, while in a roundabout way confirming Gorbachev's foreign policy. The resolution of the Congress on military affairs well reflected the Yazov-Moiseev line. It stated that a military threat to the USSR remained and that there were no guarantees of the irreversibility of positive changes. The MOD draft plan of military reform clearly contained this word for word as seen in the previous chapter.

Nevertheless, it appeared that the military leadership gained little in practical terms, although it had hardly prepared for the Congress. The main reason was, among other things, the fact that the characters of the CPSU and the Party Congress were radically changed. Moreover, the Congress failed to take any concrete decisions about domestic problems facing the military. Of course, it

lacked both the necessary authority and popular support.

In terms of international affairs, Shevardnadze, being faced with Ligachev's charge that West Germany had swallowed up East Germany, clearly stated that the issue of German unification was subject to international negotiations. That is, it was not for the Congress to decide. In a similar fashion, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, El'tsin left the Congress to preside over meetings of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. Both incidents made it clear that the Congress was primarily concerned with internal Party affairs. Paradoxically, what the 28th Party Congress had done appeared to emasculate the Party itself. So, it could be seen as a triumph for Gorbachev, or the reformists. However, having suffered defeat, Ligachev urged the military to resist democratization. Moreover, the fundamental problems facing the military leadership still remained.

The Soviet decision of withdrawal of some of Soviet troops from Eastern European countries was firstly announced by Gorbachev at the UN in 1988. At that moment it was mainly aimed at making the Soviet armed forces 'defensive' or of non-offensive orientation. So the Soviets were firmly taking the initiative on the matter. However, the issue of the withdrawals of Soviet troops was enveloped in flames with the political revolutions in Warsaw Pact countries. The political development of the Eastern European countries caused a sensation for the world community. But it meant the beginning of bitter trials for the Soviet armed forces stationed there. Both ordinary people and the new political leaderships in those countries did not want the Soviet troops to stay any longer.³⁸ Virtually, the Warsaw Pact collapsed and therefore a unilateral withdrawal of Soviet troops from Eastern Europe was inevitable regardless the ongoing CFE talks.

During the 28th Party Congress and the aftermath of the storming event, the MFA hardly accepted the angry general's charges that the USSR had abandoned Socialist regimes throughout Eastern Europe and that the current leadership,

particularly the foreign ministry, was responsible for the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact. Gorbachev's supporters in the MFA and elsewhere argued that the events in Europe were irreversible in principle and that Eastern Europe countries would consider the interests of the Soviet Union, a country that remained an influential factor in the region. To them, the West was interested in maintaining stability on the European continent and considered it unacceptable to transform the East European region into their zone, therefore, the change in these relations did not put Soviet national security at risk since there were political, legal, and material guarantees.

Academician A. Kozyrev, former head of the department of international organizations at the MFA and newly appointed Foreign Minister of the RSFSR, for example, stated that the possibility of an attack on the country was today ruled out completely. While accepting "nuclear deterrence", he argued that an attack on a nuclear power was not realistic from the purely military point of view. But, first of all, there were no economic motives for such an attack, he continued. "The West with its economy does not need our sugar coupons or queues for sausage. On the contrary, it most likely fears to lose its prosperity in the face of the crisis and instability in a country with nuclear missiles and a population of 300 million."³⁹

But they never mentioned the central concern: the rapid tempo set for the withdrawals, which, according to officer corps's opinion, had turned into a disorderly, almost humiliating, retreat. Whatever new political thinkers said, soldiers definitely resented "the atmosphere of defeat" associated with their rushed evacuation. The question of who decided to bring soldiers home so quickly became more serious one as the material and sociopolitical situation facing those returning soldiers worsened. So, the officer corps began to blame the Soviet authorities for taking the political decision to end the Cold War without considering such mundane concerns as the absence of housing for returning soldiers. Therefore,

there had to be a scapegoat for the military leadership. Although treaties were concluded at the state level, it was the military department alone that had to bear the responsibility and to solve all the problems.

Another hot issue, German unification and its membership of NATO, existed also in the same context. Just after the crumbling of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, the political leadership treated the German unification as a matter for the distant future. Gorbachev said, for example, that he did not think that today the question of reunification manifested itself as a truly correct issue. In December 1989, talk of German unification at any time in the near future was "fraught with destabilization in Europe." In February 1990, after a meeting with H. Kohl, the West German chancellor, Gorbachev said the Germans themselves should make their choice in what state forms, what periods, at what pace, and under what conditions they would be realizing their unity.⁴⁰ In addition, in the aftermath of the elections in East Germany on March 18 1990, the process of unification gained speed and greater substance. As a result, Moscow could do little to block, or delay, the unification but some risky measures that could isolate the USSR from the world.

More specifically, the Soviets opposed German membership in NATO. It continued, however, only for a short period of time. Instead, they tried to limit German military power. The Soviet Union wanted to limit German manpowers to between 200,000 and 250,000 men. Former East German foreign minister M. Meckel in July 1990 suggested a ceiling of 300,000. NATO allies looked at between 350,000 and 400,000. West Germany avoided advancing any figure at all.⁴¹ In the end, the Soviets only received permission for Soviet troops to remain on German soil for a temporary period, payment for Soviet acquiescence, together with a 5 billion mark credit. In addition, the Soviet Union agreed to restrict the training activities of its forces stationed in eastern Germany prior to their comple

withdrawal in 1994.⁴² In September 1990, the Treaty of the Final Settlement with Respect to Germany was signed in Moscow by France, UK, the USA, the USSR, the FRG and the GDR, and in October 1990, the Treaty between the USSR and FRG on Procedures for the Scheduled Withdrawal of Soviet Troops from the Territory of the FRG had made German unification a real fact.

Meanwhile, foreign minister Shevardnadze said in a report to the Soviet parliament on Soviet policy towards Eastern Europe, Germany, the Persian Gulf, and on disarmament in October 1990 that after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany there would be no confrontation on the continent, the number of German troops would be cut considerably, as would the number of US troops on the continent. The FRG government in August had already made a statement undertaking to reduce the personnel strength of the armed forces of the united Germany to 370,000 within three or four years. In general, new political thinkers, particularly foreign ministry officials, regarded German unification as an entirely favourable development. What was more, the USSR earned Germany's regard, according to them, because Soviet officials responded quickly and positively to the change in Germany's status, which would have happened sooner or later. Then they concluded that cooperation with Germany and that country's ability and willingness to help the Soviet Union held great promise for the USSR.

This MFA's optimistic evaluation was in sharp contrast to that of the military officials. First of all, they tried to remind the Soviets of the huge losses of personnel during the WWII. And then many in military officers demanded the neutralization of unified Germany. For example, Army General V. I. Varennikov, as one of the delegates to the 28th Party Congress expressed in July 1990 a typical view of the military: "the planned unification of the two Germanies is a matter for the German people, but as for the maintenance of peace, that is a matter for the whole world."⁴³ In this connection, he expressed his wish that the future armed

forces of the new European state did not belong to any military alliance. Despite the Soviets' failure in this kind of assertion, Soviet conservatives stuck to the German question, most likely, to discredit the new political thinking, and, probably, to slow or delay Soviet troop withdrawals from Eastern Germany.

7.3. A Contract between President and High Command

At the moment when everyone was thinking the 28th Party Congress had receded into the past, a series of very dynamic events both in domestic politics and in arms control talks occurred around November 1990. In the earlier case, we could go back to a meeting of the Defense Council held on 1 September and presided by President Gorbachev, at which defense minister Marshal Yazov spoke about plans for military reform. The series of events was far beyond a workable relationship between Gorbachev and the high command. So, let us assume for the moment that the Yazov-Moiseev leadership contracted with President Gorbachev to do something beneficial for each other. It continued until Gorbachev turned to the left in the spring of 1991.

To begin with, both Yazov and Moiseev had clearly shown their negative attitudes towards any further reductions through arms control negotiations, as we have seen. But the CFE Treaty was signed on 22 November 1990 at the CSCE summit in Paris. For the West, the CFE Treaty, if ratified, was very beneficial. It eliminated prospects for massive surprise attack on Western Europe; assured that Soviet forces withdrawn from Eastern Europe would not increase forward deployments by cutting and limiting forces located in the western third of the country; and established a comprehensive verification system, including on-site-inspection. On the other hand, for the Soviets the CFE Treaty meant huge

asymmetrical reductions. The US made a concession about definitions and numerical limits on combat aircraft. In short, the CFE Treaty did not include maritime patrol aircraft and 500 land-based naval aviation aircraft would not be subject to treaty verification.⁴⁴

Nevertheless, Marshal Yazov said that the asymmetrical arms cuts were "natural" in a series of interviews with media on November 21 with *Ian Press Release*, on 23 November *Rabochaya Trivuna*, and on 26 November *Moscow Television*, and on 29 *Krasnaya zvezda*. Among them, the most noticeable one was a 6,000-word article which appeared in *Krasnaya zvezda*.⁴⁵

In the early part of his article Marshal Yazov praised perestroika and the new political thinking in an unprecedented way during his tenure as defense minister. Furthermore, he recognized word for word what Gorbachev had argued at a meeting with military deputies. The defense minister said that "the USSR failed to avoid being drawn into the arms race and failed to overcome the obvious discrepancy between the scale of the defensive effort and the measures and actions to explore political, economic, diplomatic, and other ways of safeguarding national, collective, and general security."⁴⁶ In addition to highly evaluating the Paris conference, he endorsed previous Soviet-American summits in Geneva, Reykjavik, Washington, Moscow, and Malta as being productive.

Then he proceeded to detail the NATO and Warsaw Pact arms reduction ceiling. Moreover, the marshal gave reasonable sufficiency a new definition. Yazov said that whereas in the past the concept implied, above all, the readiness and capability of states' armed forces to wage "active offensive actions," now it meant that armed forces correspond to the level of "actual war danger" and "minimum defense requirements." Then he rationalized asymmetrical cuts, particularly, in tanks. At the same time he explained the previous military doctrine's military-technical principles that made around 41,500 tanks, 45,000 armoured vehicles, and

50,300 artillery systems by mid-1988. Now 19,000 tanks, approximately two-third of them, were faced with elimination under the CFE Treaty.

Once a civilian defense expert and People's Deputy Arbatov cornered Marshal Akhromeev in an interview on television by forecasting the elimination. Arbatov said: "they [military specialists] made the SS-20s, then they had to destroy them. They yelled to us at the time that we had parity, yet it turned out we had to destroy three times as many. Tanks were built, 64,000 tanks according to our own data, more than in the rest of the world combined. How was that possible? Who permitted this?"⁴⁷ In response, Akhromeev tried to focus on how the armed forces of the two sides developed historically and what tasks they were given, rather than putting the question in terms of accountability. On the other hand, Major Yu. Selivanov rationalized that, while mentioning that one NATO tank manned with "professional soldiers" could knock out 2 to 3 Soviet tanks with unprofessional crews, the country had such tanks.⁴⁸ S. Tarasenko, head of the planning department of the MFA, urged that Soviet tank men had to be trained so that one Soviet tank could knock out at least one, or better 2 to 3, hostile tanks.⁴⁹

As for an assessment of the correlation of military forces, Marshal Yazov, based on the armaments of the USSR and NATO, calculated as follows: 1:1.5 in NATO's favour for tanks and armoured combat vehicles and 1:1.3 for artillery, combat aircraft, and attack helicopters; If NATO reached the upper level for artillery (20,000 units) the correlation for that type of armaments would be 1:1.5. But he ensured that, combined with the "powerful nuclear shield," this would guarantee the implementation of defensive tasks in any circumstances.

Chief of the General Staff also, but sometime later, accepted the CFE treaty as "irreversible." In an interview published in January 1991, Moiseev said, "it is clear that a new era has begun on the European continent," adding that the CFE treaty would significantly lower the level of the military threat in Europe.

Nevertheless, he cautioned that Moscow still faced a powerful opponent in the NATO alliance. Then like Yazov, Moiseev said that the force levels allowed the Soviet Union under the CFE treaty to be "capable of reliably ensuring the country's security." Moiseev further assured his audience that the armed forces' "powerful atomic shield" stood behind the nation's conventional forces.⁵⁰

If this twist in Yazov-Moiseev leadership's attitude toward the new thinking and arms reductions meant that President Gorbachev was given something, then what concessions were Gorbachev to make to the military? It was clear that Gorbachev supported the MOD reform plan, but this was a very superficial and cheap concession. A new union treaty appeared to be more fundamental. Up to this moment it had been generally expected or argued that military reform be conditioned by domestic economic conditions and by arms control negotiations with the West. All of sudden, military reform was linked, among other things, to evolving centre-periphery relations. In fact, the mood of the relations around the fall of 1990 had already become a real threat to both the military and Gorbachev. The followings traces the events in October alone.

On 9 October, the Tajik Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution stipulating that republican conscripts called up into construction battalions had to serve in the Turkestan Military District and primarily in Tajikistan. On 13 October, the Azerbaijan Council of Ministers ruled that 50% of the draftees planned for call-up in the fall of 1990 would perform their military service within Azerbaijan. On 13 October, Moldavian MVD Major General I. Costas announced the draft for the republic's own "Carbineer Corps" to number 10,000 men under the republican MVD would begin in the spring of 1991.⁵¹ Already on 4 September, the Moldavian Supreme Soviet had adopted a decision suspending the applicability in Moldavia of the USSR law on military service and stopping any call-up of draftees and reservists in the republic until further notice. On 14 October, a representative of

the Moscow City Soviet urged the immediate establishment of alternative service for conscripts in a televised meeting with military officers. On 17 October, the Armenian Supreme Soviet passed a resolution suspending the all-Union law on compulsory military service and making provision for draftees to perform their military service on Armenian territory in the future. The Armenian National Army claimed a total of 140,000 members.⁵² On 30 October, the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet said Lithuanians were not required to and should not serve in the army of a foreign country [the Soviet armed forces] by passing a resolution that stated Lithuanian youths would ignore the fall conscription. On 30 October, Estonian officials demanded in a meeting with the Soviets, to set up their own army and to have their conscripts serve only in Estonia. A similar step was taken in Uzbekistan on 5 September when Uzbek President Islam Karimov issued a decree banning the conscription of Uzbeks into military units deployed outside Uzbekistan.

All in all, the most urgent thing for the military was that the activities of republican authorities, sociopolitical associations and organizations, and civilians were threatening the fall 1990 call-up. Under these circumstances Gorbachev's agreement in principle on military reform was of little importance. As the below table shows, the 1990 spring military draft in the country was in deep trouble particularly in the three Baltic republics, Georgian and Armenian republics. As a result of it there was the personnel shortfall of around 400,000 men in the Ground Forces alone in the fall of 1990, according to Colonel General D. Grinkevich, chief of the Ground Forces.

Generally speaking, this development could be unintended results of the new political thinking and perestroika. The overwhelming majority of soviet population, not to mention the new thinkers, perceived for the moment no real military threat and thus saw no need for maintaining military spending on the present level. Democratization and glasnost' led to an explosion of national self-awareness and

spawned independence drives both on the periphery and even at the heart of the empire itself. Proindependence forces viewed Soviet armed forces as an occupation force and the most visible symbol of imperial power.

Table 3: Draft Situation

Republic	1989 fall	1990 spring
Azerbaijan	97.8%	100.0%
Moldavia	100.0%	100.0%
Ukraine	97.6%	99.4%
Kazakhstan	100.0%	99.2%
Belorussia	100.0%	98.9%
RSFSR	100.0%	98.6%
Tajikistan	100.0%	92.7%
Turkmenistan	100.0%	90.2%
Kirgizia	100.0%	89.5%
Uzbekistan	100.0%	87.4%
Latvia	90.7%	54.2%
Estonia	79.5%	40.2%
Lithuania	91.6%	33.6%
Georgia	94.6%	27.5%
Armenia	100.0%	7.5%

Sources: *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 12 and
November 23, 1990.

These developments were the very decisive factor in making young people of call-up age to be disenchanted with being conscripted into the Soviet armed forces. The brutality of military life, which had been continuously covered by media thanks

to glasnost', was also important in this respect. Moreover, the youth themselves appeared to be very susceptible to activities of various sociopolitical groups, that is, middle level powers. As seen in chapter 3, representatives of those groups, particularly Popular Fronts existing virtually in all republics with different names, were now using not only methods of persuasion but also blackmail against conscripts and their parents. The republican authorities, as noted above, had adopted a number of legislative acts and decrees concerning military service that contradicted the USSR Law on Universal Military Duty. As a result, most of the youth were left wondering how they were supposed to act under these circumstances. Furthermore, in some republics such as the Baltic republics and Transcaucasia areas local authorities were conniving at draft evasion. For them, opposition to conscription could be part of their broader assertion of autonomy. Proceeding from this situation the military leadership could see that the result of the fall 1990 call-up was inevitably questionable.

Here, if we look back the meeting between Gorbachev and officer deputies, as we have seen in chapter 5, the meeting firstly seemed to be designed to humiliate Gorbachev in public. But the anger expressed by officer deputies appeared to be aimed at the republican authorities rather than Gorbachev and his policies.

If so, we must pay attention to Marshal Akhromeev's article which appeared in *Sovetskaya Rossiya* on 14 November, the day after Gorbachev attended a meeting with military deputies. The marshal said that the armed forces might be used to maintain the country's integrity and Socialist system if they were threatened by "anticonstitutional forces."⁵³ Akhromeev said, however, force would only be used after a decision by the Soviet parliament or the President. Although this ominous article had failed at that moment to attract significant attention, it appeared to be an important signal that the military had won a contract with the

political leadership to cope with the "unconstitutional forces." What was more doomed was the Party-military relations. Confusingly, Akhromeev wrote that if some other party assumed power by the constitutional way, the army would accept the change.⁵⁴ In other words, the marshal meant that the army was the instrument of the state, not parties, including the Communist Party. We must not miss the mood of the meeting between officer deputies and Gorbachev. As seen in chapter 5, most of them swore allegiance to the Party. "None of us has quit the party nor will we." "I have been brought up by the Party of Lenin..." Gorbachev was frequently called as the General Secretary rather than as President. This Party-military relations must not be shadowed by the current top issue the centre-periphery relations.

In fact, Gorbachev had already distributed to republic leaders a draft union treaty worked out by a group of experts of the USSR Supreme Soviet. But it was short of authority. Representatives of the Baltic republics had not participated in the work from the early stage. The representative of the Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Moldavia had never been in earnest in drawing up the draft treaty. Only representatives of five republics Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia, Tajikistan, and Turmenia signed the result of the experts' work. As for the military aspect, the draft stated that the armed forces and border, internal, railroad, and civil defense troops had to be within the jurisdiction of the union's top organs of authority and government. But the political situation in the republics was changing day by day with the adoption of declarations of sovereignty. As a symbol of sovereignty, military issues became the first and foremost subject of activities of the republican authorities, as seen above.

At last, a moment of truth came following Akhromeev's message when Yazov went on national television on November 27 1990. In many instances the use of armed forces for the maintenance of order aggravated relations between the

centre and local districts, intensified or gave rise to anti-Russian sentiments and exerted a demoralizing influence on the army. Nevertheless, defense minister again announced that the Soviet armed forces would take all necessary measures to check illegal activity in a number of republics jeopardizing the country's defense capability and insulting the honour and dignity of the servicemen.

It is useful to review some pretexts given by the central mass media for taking those measures. One week before Yazov's TV speech, *Pravda* reported some instances of "provocative acts of hooligans" against military units that had recently happened in a number of regions of the country. In Kishinev on November 16, for example, about 30 people broke into the garrison Officers' Institute, tried to wreck it, and threatened to beat up the staffs and set fire to the building, according to the report. After examining other similar cases in Tbilisi and Vilnius on 17 November and in the region of Saldus in Latvia on the next day, the paper said that "all necessary measures" would be adopted to cut short such actions.⁵⁵

On the other hand, *Izvestiya* in its front page on 23 November urged not to push the army into a corner. Thus, it took a more or less moderate stance. The paper firstly recognized that the military establishment was more vulnerable now than ever in the light of glasnost'. Then, it warned extremists who were playing a game with those who "have nothing to lose."⁵⁶ In this respect, *Izvestiya* depicted the socioeconomic situation facing the armed forces. First, it concluded an officer's pay long ago ceased to be an object of envy. Around the time, it had been reported by *Moscow News* that nearly half of officers' families live on monthly income of 100 rubles per family number, or only two-thirds of the officially published average per-family-member income 153 rubles.⁵⁷ The withdrawal of troops from the East European countries was also touched on with sympathy by *Izvestiya*: thousands of "totally innocent people" who were placed in the position of "uninvited guests in their own home," might be grudgingly provided with little more than a "rug in the

corridor." The paper did not fail to mention the military personnel's situation stationed in the non-Russian republics. In general their children changed school five times in five years of study and in the sixth school, because they came from the family of an "occupier", the family was required to pay "1,500 occupation rubles."⁵⁸

Meanwhile, the military news paper *Krasnaya zvezda* focused on the fall 1990 draft. Deputy Chief of the General Staff Krivosheyev said that the fall draft was at the present moment proceeding "smoothly" in parts of Russia and Central Asia but the situation was "much worse" in Transcaucasia and the Baltic republics.⁵⁹ In some sense, it was suggestive of the specific areas subject to a military crackdown in the near future. Krivosheyev said that in Georgia little more than 2 percent of conscripts for the fall draft had registered and in Armenia just over 5 percent. But the general gave no figures for the response to the draft in the Baltic republics.

Although it was expected because of the already strained relations between the army and society, Yazov's TV statements aroused great public interests in the country. A startling point was that measures outlined in the speech were taken by Yazov himself "on the instructions of the president." In other words, the armed forces would now be in charge of fulfilling them. The statement consisted of eight points. Each point was of great emotional and legal character. Therefore, there arose the question of whether each was a function proper to the armed forces.

The defense minister pointed out, for example, that nuclear weapons had not to be allowed to be shared among the republics. In fact, his approach on the relations between the union and the armed forces was somewhat questionable. Discussions on a draft union treaty were still under way. Supposedly and as Yazov himself said,⁶⁰ controversial issues could emerge in such a delicate area. But the dislinkage of nuclear weapons to the new union treaty by its nature had to be

resolved through talks between politicians and military officials rather than by the MOD alone.

On the other hand, there was a relatively clear but still emotional, message. For example, to stop attempts offensive to the "honour and dignity" of officers and soldiers and members of their families, he gave instructions that "every necessary measure" must be taken in the framework of the existing Constitution, laws of the USSR, and decrees of the country's president. Without defining the ambiguous concepts such as honour and dignity, Marshal Yazov underlined that servicemen had been given instructions to use weapons in the case of violence and armed attacks on servicemen of the Soviet armed forces, military facilities, ammunition and armament depots.⁶¹

Here, the main point or the most worrying thing of all for the military was that the union republics had adopted a list of "unconstitutional laws." In fact, the military leadership left from the constitutional or legal context. In other words, they were about to counterattack those who had treated the armed forces as a bargaining counter in political games, regardless of who set the stakes in these games and whatever they might be.

Let us examine such a case. Less than one week before Yazov's TV appearance, Colonel General F. Kuz'min, commander of the Baltic Military District, called a kind of economic blockade, which a resolution issued by the Latvia Supreme Soviet had legalized, against the armed forces an act of "political provocation."⁶² In response, People's Deputy T. Yundzis firstly considered Kuzmin's argument to be unconvincing. Then he stated that the resolution would "oblige the USSR leadership to sit down at the conference table with Latvia more quickly."⁶³ In some sense, the military personnel were regarded by Yundzis as a pedal to which pressure had to be applied to speed up change in the centre-periphery relations. In fact, the military was not merely a social institution. The

military was people, not only those in military uniform but also their wives and children who were about to encounter such actions as cutting off water and electricity.

Therefore, Yazov's announcements appeared to be part of an increasingly forceful campaign to intimidate independence-minded groups in the republics, particularly the Baltic republics. At the same time, that confirmed the growing consonance between the military leadership and Gorbachev on the issue of centre-periphery relations. Following the announcements, members of the high command tried to give more concrete shape with regard to areas where the necessary measures were to take effect; reasons of what brought them about; what kind of measures they would be, and so on. In fact, the speech by Yazov had provoked many responses and questions from TV viewers.

One of the noticeable follow-ups was Colonel General G. Krivosheyev's TV appearance. As a whole, there was no change in the high command's perspective on the relations between society, i.e., republican authorities, and the armed forces and on how they should be. Instead, the deputy chief of the General Staff suggested a lot of figures. For example, there were more than 3,500 deserters in the country; 81 officers and ensigns died at the hand of extremists in 1990 alone; 30 anti-constitutional, illegal legislative acts had been passed in 1990 alone; and so on.⁶⁴ With regard to the other side of their efforts, i.e., how to form national armies, Yazov had already defined it: "they gather the young men into groups. Without any discipline, any order. They try to obtain weapons. Through theft, robbery, attacks on dumps."⁶⁵

Meanwhile, Major General L. Ivashov, candidate of historical sciences, rationalized Yazov's statement in terms of legislation. Ivashov argued that the actions, which were to be implemented by the relevant commanders, military directorate bodies, and servicemen along the Yazov's statement, would be "in strict

accordance with regulations, laws, and constitution of the USSR."⁶⁶ Moreover, he tried to limit the range of the statement and the directives issued by the defense minister. They would only affect "criminal elements," i.e., those who intended to perpetrate illegal actions against military installations and servicemen, he foresaw.

Again, the above figures were mentioned by Marshal Yazov at the first all-Union conference of junior and middle-rank command staff on the Army, KGB, and MVD troops which was held on December 5-6 1990. A slight difference was the figure about deaths: 69 officers and 32 ensigns died.⁶⁷ In fact, this conference reflected the high command's keen recognition of the fact that the reliability of the young and middle level officers was being questioned. It was believed that the army was as subject to political divisions as the rest of society. Watching democratically-minded young officer deputies blast their superiors in parliament, citizens probably hoped that liberal attitudes would prevail among the military. The junior and middle rank command staff, however, declared in an appeal to servicemen, their parents, state and public organizations, and patriotic movements: "The fate of the socialist homeland must be above personal and ethnic interests and ambitions... Let us be united..."⁶⁸

While the military was becoming deeply involved in the vortex of a severe crackdown in such a way, the Baltic republics that were the most likely to be firstly subjected to the crackdown was showing a cool and thus provocative response to Yazov's TV speech. On 1 December 1990, after having a joint session of the Supreme Council members of the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian republics, Landsbergis defined the status of the Soviet military contingent as being "temporarily stationed on the territories of the Baltic states."⁶⁹ Therefore, neither the Soviet military personnel and their families' dignity and human rights would be belittled, nor would their social and material demands be met, according to him. Then he urged them to observe the "principles of non-interference" in the Baltics'

internal affairs.⁷⁰ This ever more uncompromising attitudes was producing a much more complicated situation than the previous days.

Coincidentally, on the same day at a news conference the ministry of defense revealed that in Latvia 5,000 servicemen and 12,000 members of their families had been left without residence permits and had lost the right to medical services, to work, and to acquire goods.⁷¹ Moreover, an MOD spokesman said the military units stationed there had been refused deliveries of foodstuffs, and telephone communications and power and heat supplies were being taken away.

Military officers stationed there, who, most likely, had been waiting for such a statement, backed Yazov's speech.⁷² General Kuz'min, commander of the Baltic Military District, said in his speech that Yazov had issued such a statement, henceforth, the Army would take its "measures" against an economic blockade,⁷³ without any details. So, General Vinchenko, who was asked to explain Kuz'min's "measures", interpreted them in the following way: "We will not let our men suffer."⁷⁴ The more significant development, however, appeared to be the fact that a conference was held at the Latvia republic Communist Party CC with the participation of representatives of the Army community,⁷⁵ because this could imply the nature of the imminent crackdown that had to a certain extent critical implications for the current Baltic republics' authorities.

Meanwhile, at such a tense moment, President Gorbachev took the first step assigned to him, if a series of actions were planned. A presidential decree ordering local governments and agencies to enforce existing all-Union conscription laws was issued.⁷⁶ Gorbachev called republican laws pertaining to military service "unconstitutional." Thus, the President embraced the generals' views. The next day, on December 2, Gorbachev replaced the relatively liberal Minister of Internal Affairs, V. Bakatin, with B. Pugo, who had been chairman of the CPSU Party Control Commission. Army Colonel General B. Gromov was also appointed first

deputy minister of the MVD.⁷⁷ It was reported that several regular army divisions would be transferred to the MVD.⁷⁸

At a time when one was questioning whether Gromov's appointment could mean a strengthening of the role of the army in resolving interethnic conflicts or any other conflicts, he soon appeared in the press. In an interview with *Sovetskaya Rossiya* he stressed that the USSR needed "order" and "discipline" in order to improve living standards.⁷⁹ But these should be based on understanding and respect for the law and the state rather than on force, Gromov underlined. Nevertheless, he recognized the centre-periphery relations were problematic but in a moderate way. Gromov said that the passage of sovereignty declarations by various Soviet republics had delayed reform.

At last, in a speech to the Congress of People's Deputies on December 17, Gorbachev was critical of the Baltic independence movements, warning against the danger of "dark forces" that were threatening the integrity of the state.⁸⁰ Moreover, the armed forces were pictured as "the most important bulwark" guarding the state's both internal and external security. In this respect the President called for a resolute rebuff to any attempt to "blacken" their name or discriminate against them.⁸¹

We cannot fail to examine an interview by O. D. Baklanov, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and Deputy Chief of the Defense Council, because it was so suggestive of the possible military crackdown as well as the current solidarity among President, the Party, and the military. Baklanov recalled a series of political events. Among them were: in mid-November 1990 the Secretariat issued a resolution calling for links between Party and army institutions to be strengthened; The resolution was based on a report by the Central Committee Commission on Military Policy; President Gorbachev was asked by the Commission to take steps immediately to counter antimilitary tendencies in certain

republics; and the Politburo met to discuss measures to stabilize the political situation in the USSR, in particular, to deal with development in Lithuania.⁸²

It was not made public that in November 1990 the CC Secretariat adopted a decision for the defense of the Soviet armed forces from attacks supported by domestic opponents. Nevertheless, as Simon Kordonsky observed, since then the tone of national newspapers changed instantly.⁸³ At that time the military leadership was effectively unable to refute the flood of charges on the part of individual citizens and newly formed public organizations. First and foremost, because they were fully supported by the facts of the instances of hazing; participation of troops in the Baku and Tbilisi events; the existence of clannishness in the army; and provocative military exercises, i.e. the September 1990 "strange" troops movement. Consequently, the Soviet armed forces sought protection from the authority which they had pledged to defend, including President Gorbachev. Now, the historically close links between the communist party and the defense industry were beginning to appear in the surface of the Soviet politics, and some leading members became a core of army supporters.

Baklanov was questioned whether he initiated a letter that was published in September 1990 and addressed to the Soviet parliament over the signatures of 46 general directors and general designers of organizations under the eight ministries of the defense complex.⁸⁴ A. Tizyakov, President of the National Association of State Enterprises, was believed that he persuaded Gorbachev to drop his support for the Shatalin "500 days" programme. The concerted defense industry lobby became apparent when the marketization was about to come.

The defense industry had an immense inertia. In general, it tried to preserve its production facilities and the demand for its products. It was not a matter of the bad intentions of anti-perestroika forces. The point is that the vast regions of the country fully depended on military contracts and programmes. Any substantial

reduction of the arms and direct conversion would deprive hundreds of thousands of people of their livelihood, compel highly skilled workers and specialists to change their way of life, and abolish their social privileges and correspondingly high social status.

The influence of the Party was on the process of a decline, and so did its primary organizations lapse into inactivity and lost members. Unlike the Party, the defense industry was better fit for struggle under the rapidly changing sociopolitical conditions. The power of the Party was based on forming purely authoritative relations with society, and these relations began to collapse with the first free elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989. The power of the defense industry was more tangible because it held in its hands the better part of the country's economic potential and cooperated with the institutions of control over society, the military establishment, the KGB, and the MVD. The defense industry was now engaged in a desperate attempt to save a kind of privileges. The leading figures of the triad of the party, military, and defense industry, or the upper strata of the armed forces, the defense industry, and the structures connected with the two, appeared to be in the limelight. More ominously, deputy chief of the Defense Council said that there would be a limit to "the patience of the military servicemen."⁸⁵

Within one week since then, on December 19 1990, at a news conference the defense minister Yazov called on the state of emergency by saying that "one cannot go on just watching people die."⁸⁶ The same issue was also raised at an extraordinary congress of the representatives of the Soviet armed forces personnel stationed in the Baltic Military District held on December 21-25. Finally, the USSR Congress of People's Deputies was asked to introduce "presidential rule" in Baltic republics.

Then without warning, on December 20 foreign minister Shevardnadze gave

his resignation speech to the Congress of People's Deputies. And around the time, almost all of Gorbachev's reform-minded advisers, including A. Yakovlev and N. Petrakov, had resigned in protest at the sudden promotion of conservatives to leading positions. From his resignation speech, it appeared that Shevardnadze was deeply convinced that he should retire in order to compel the Soviets to pay attention to a kind of contract between Gorbachev and the high command. In fact, he called it a "right-wing reactionary dictatorship." Later in his first public comment since his resignation he told *Moscow News* that he feared "military crackdowns" similar to those in Tbilisi and Baku.⁸⁷ Concerning Shevardnadze's resignation statement about a "coming dictatorship," Gorbachev warned just after the foreign minister left the platform of "moods of panic." However, he did give a lingering hint of it, by stressing that "strong authority is essential for country today."⁸⁸

The most noteworthy remark in the foreign minister's speech, in the context of civil-military or the relations between the MFA and the MOD, was the fact that Shevardnadze cited "two colonels", officer deputies Alksnis and Petrushenko. The foreign minister claimed, they had boasted that, having toppled Interior Minister Bakatin, it was now time to "settle scores with the foreign minister." Incidentally, Alksnis told *TASS* that Bakatin was not only "passive" but also rendered "concrete support to separatist forces" in the republics.⁸⁹ Deputy E. Kogan, leader of the "Intermovement" and a member of Soyuz, claimed that Soyuz had persuaded Gorbachev to replace Bakatin with Pugo.⁹⁰

In an apparent reference to the political leadership, Shevardnadze asked, "Why did no one speak out against them? [Alksnis and Petrushenko]" There were only piecemeal details on the causes and reasons that prompted the foreign minister to make such a statement from the platform of the Congress of People's Deputies. But it was true that they continuously argued that the Soviet Union had simply

given up to much, aiming at the MFA. Colonel Petrushenko complained, for example, that the armed forces could not keep up with the foreign ministry's shifts of policy.⁹¹ It was also true that both officer deputies questioned the ways that the foreign policy had been carried out under the leadership of Shevardnadze rather than the new policy itself. They argued that talks with the US could and should have been conducted in such a way to defend the Soviet Union's interests in a more principled manner.

In this respect, they raised a question: Should some agreements with the US be ratified by the Supreme Soviet in the form in which they were signed under Shevardnadze's leadership? For this, they even suggested a list of "unilateral concessions" during the negotiations with the US. Moreover, Petrushenko asked the establishment of a commission of the Supreme Soviet Presidium to look into the agreement on the united Germany. In an interview both colonels raised a number of questions connected with the foreign minister's pronouncements on the Gulf incidents.⁹² Finally, with regard to the withdrawal of Soviet troops from East Europe, Alksnis said that Shevardnadze should visit the tent cities set out on the snow in which the servicemen were placed after being hurriedly withdrawn from where there were living. He declared that it was Shevardnadze who signed the schedules for the withdrawal of these troops."⁹³

Meanwhile, being faced with a suspicious situation that the military was likely connected with Shevardnadze departure, People's Deputy Major General M. Surkov officially stated just after the resignation speech that military deputies did not put forward anything as a group. He argued that the two colonels had done on their own behalf as deputies something like as noted above.⁹⁴ Moreover, Alksnis himself revealed in his speech that his views were not shared by the military leadership. As evidence, he reminded deputies of the fact that Yazov had summoned the colonel and "asked" and "ordered" him to alter his stance. Then he

said that "I have expressed my opinion as a deputy, the way I understand what is happening in our country."⁹⁵ Moiseev also categorically disagreed with Shevardnadze's warning about the looming dictatorship, arguing that the country had a mature Supreme Soviet, which was able to decide matters linked with constitutional conflicts through negotiations.⁹⁶

Shevardnadze's disagreement with the two colonels, in particular, and the military, as a whole, appeared to be only part of the problem. When we consider a linkage between domestic policy and foreign policy, it was likely that the Soviet foreign policy had lost its impetus at that time. This could, or should, be seen as the main reason for his resignation. A central tenet of the foreign policy under Gorbachev was that the Soviet Union could become more secure and prosperous by turning adversaries into allies. In other words, the deterioration in the domestic situation in the country had fuelled the USSR's need for international support and assistance. To gain the trust of former enemies, Moscow gave up a lot, including its East European buffer states, although, some of this happened not only as a result of new-found freedom but also out of absolute necessity. It was undeniable that the results of perestroika in foreign policy were so good for the world. But if the country failed to resolve its internal problems, then its "successful" foreign policy would also fail. The socioeconomic turmoil in the USSR at the end of 1990 was widening and deepening the problems facing the military establishment, as noted above, far from absorbing that. In this respect, there should be a scapegoat.

Despite Shevardnadze's effort to stop the expected military crackdown, it came when the MVD troops took over the main publishing house of Latvia on January 2 1991. It was one day before Latvian government leaders planned to meet with Gorbachev, Yazov, recently appointed first deputy interior minister Gromov, and Party officials. It is needless to explain why it was the day. If this was a light tremor, the a big earthquake was yet to come.

On January 7 1991, the defense ministry announced that airborne troops would be used to enforce the draft where turnout for the fall 1990 draft was low -- the three Baltic republics, Armenia, Georgia, Moldavia, and some regions of the Ukraine. There were no details about the exact number of units to be dispatched to there, when they were expected to arrive, etc. In response to these kind of questions, two days later, Major General V. Manilov, the head of the Defense Ministry's Information Administration, revealed that the defense ministry's order had in fact instructed military district commanders in the relevant republics to help local military commissariats enforce draft regulations by contributing troops to the effort. And Lt General F. Markovsky, a senior spokesman for the General Staff, said that the airborne troops dispatched to help with draft enforcement would not perform "gendarme" functions and only be used to make sure that regional commissariats were not blockaded and to protect military personnel conducting draftees to their units.

Colonel General F. Kuz'min, commander of the Baltic Military District, confirmed Manilov's explanation. The commander, who said that he was acting on the orders of defense minister Yazov, informed Latvian Prime Minister I. Soldmanis, Lithuanian President V. Landsbergis, and Estonian President A. Ruutel that airborne troops would be sent to the Baltic region. However, Kuz'min did not give them details other than the date of January 13 to implement USSR draft laws.

Nevertheless, the vague announcement alone was enough to make political leaders of those republics to be anxious, and, thus, to change their attitude towards conscription issues. A. Ruutel and E. Savisaar, Estonian Prime Minister, and V. Landsbergis dispatched a telegram to Gorbachev on January 7. Moreover, Landsbergis expressed his willingness to travel to Moscow for talks with Gorbachev. Latvian Supreme Council President Gorbunovs met General Kuz'min at noon on January 7. Most likely, both Gorbachev and the military leadership

might have hoped for this kind of responses from the republics. In fact, for this they had been setting the stage for a military crackdown.

They met, however, strong a protest, particularly from the US and RSFSR leaderships. This protest became the fatal one when at least 13 people were killed and more than 150 injured when Soviet troops stormed the radio and television centre in Vilnius on January 13. This incident drove both the political and military leaderships into a corner and in the end made Gorbachev turn to the left.

If we treat the Vilnius incident as a single case, the first malfunction appeared to be the political system of the Lithuanian republic. There was a desperate split among the people. One portion of them had a supreme legislative and executive body in the form of the supreme soviet and the government, while the other declared itself to have the authority in the form of the National Salvation Committee (NSC). As a result, matters developed to physical fighting on the streets.

The NSC firstly sent a group of one hundred people to the Lithuanian parliament, demanding that "anti-Soviet" broadcasts be stopped. According to the MOD explanation, the television called on the people to go onto the streets and destroy the Communists. Since the NSC representatives were not allowed to enter the parliament building, they headed for the TV Centre. When they were approaching the TV Centre, someone shot an officer in the group. Then people started shooting live ammunition into the air from the bushes, garrets, and windows. A spokesman for the NSC, Juozas Jermalavicius, defined the situation as a civil war. The NSC appealed to the Vilnius garrison for assistance. The commandant turned to the district deputy commander for authorization. The army tried to take control of television and radio, first of all, with the aim of warning against and ending "provocative actions."

Izvestiya recognized this decision as an "understandable mistake" in the sense

that they had been under attacks and insults. In March 1990, the Lithuania parliament adopted a series of decisions on the status of the Soviet armed forces in the republic and the military service of Lithuanian citizens. Simply the Soviet armed forces was defined as an occupation army. There was a number of attempts by Lithuanians to penetrate the military installations and of sometimes attacks against servicemen and their families.⁹⁷

Controversially, Yazov said that the garrison commander acted within the realms of the law in conformity with the Garrison and Guards' Manual when he took the decision to deploy army units under his command to support the NSC.⁹⁸ It was quite clear, however, that the paratrooper's rush to rescue the NSC and its supporters from the legitimate power was "unlawful,"⁹⁹ even if that legitimate power had itself violated the Soviet Constitution. Supposing the use of force was part of a planned scheme, the point is how much room was allowed for the local military commander rather than who sanctioned the use of force. In practical terms, nobody knew that a chain of violent action-reactions between soldiers and angry demonstrators would lead up to the deaths. If anyone knew, to what extent? It appeared that any detailed plan could not have existed, therefore, the following denials were also understandable.

The defense minister said that he was not informed about it. Minister of internal affairs B. Pugo also told the USSR Supreme Soviet on January 14 that no one from the centre gave an order to use force. President Gorbachev said that he also learned about the incident only after it had happened. In fact, he knew a lot, although it is arguable whether he was a pioneer of the military crackdown. When an appeal by M. Burociavicius, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Lithuanian Communist Party, was put before him and it was argued that he should promulgate a state of emergency in Lithuania,¹⁰⁰ Gorbachev gave neither yes nor no. Instead Gorbachev warned that the situation was reaching a deadlock, as

mentioned before. By that time, the paratroopers had already been moving to Lithuania. When Yazov, Kryuchkov, and Pugo wondered whether to imposing order by force, together with CC secretaries,¹⁰¹ Gorbachev did not sanction the military police operation in Vilnius, but on the other hand, neither did he forbid it. Just after the crackdown, Gorbachev defended it by calling it a defensive action.

Major General V. Nikolayevich revealed that the Army had orders not to fire first, only to answer to firing. The question of who fired first became a fundamental issue. From this stance, both political and military leaders tried to justify the use of military force, including tanks, against civilians in the capital of a union republic. The general suggested some evidence at a news conference held on January 17. A photograph showing a citizen placed one of his legs under the tracks of a tank and some bullets from the wounded and deaths which soldiers did not have were displayed.

The aftermath of the incident seriously strengthened the position of supporters of independence from the Soviet Union and centrifugal trends in the country. It proved that tanks were hardly the best means of convincing the Baltic republic's population of the expediency to sign a new union treaty. Paradoxically, it was not necessary for all the union republics to discriminate between right and wrong. They just feared that something similar to that incident could happen to them, and, therefore, from the beginning, could not help but denounce the military actions.

President of the Georgian Supreme Soviet Z. Gamsakhurdia, for example, told a rally on January 15 that what had happened in Vilnius could well happen in Georgia, too. The president expressed the Georgian government's solidarity with Lithuania. The most astonishing development was, however, the attitudes of the RSFSR leadership toward the incidents. Leaders of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the RSFSR jointly condemned the military action. El'tsin regarded the crackdown

as "the first step in a powerful offensive against democracy" in the USSR, and he announced that the RSFSR would consider creating a separate Russian army to defend "its sovereignty." He also urged Russian soldiers not to use arms against civilians. It was like a real blow on the back of the neck for both Gorbachev and military leaders.

Gorbachev's reactions clearly reflected this. In a speech before the USSR Supreme Soviet, he accused El'tsin of exacerbating interethnic tensions and of trying to politicize the army. The president called the idea of creating a Russian army "a deliberate act of provocation." The officer corps also quickly responded so that El'tsin's appeal had no impact on attitudes in the rank and file of the Soviet armed forces. *Krasnaya zvezda* published a series of letters signed by a group of senior officers, including former chief of the General Staff Marshal Ogarkov, to over eight hundred servicemen stationed in the Baltic region.¹⁰² The Russian Communist Party through a resolution said that El'tsin had lost his sense of political responsibility by calling for the creation of a Russian Army.¹⁰³ *Pravda* called El'tsin's being destructive and directed solely at replacing Gorbachev.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, in an article which appeared in *Sovetskaya rossiya*, Marshal Akhromeev accused El'tsin of conducting an open struggle against Gorbachev and the USSR Supreme Soviet.¹⁰⁵

Under this storm of critics, R. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, announced that there were no concrete plans to create a Russian army. El'tsin also tried to approach the issue in a different way. He set up the new State Committee on Defense and Security of the RSFSR and then named Colonel General Kobets its head. The general was motioned to expose the public to the notion of a Russian army.

Meanwhile, Gorbachev, not to mention the military leadership, had also been forced into a corner. First of all, on 20 January more than 100,000 people attended

a demonstration against the Vilnius incident in Moscow. It appeared as a kind of answer to El'tsin's calling the incident "the first step in a powerful offensive against democracy." At the extraordinary session of the RSFSR devoted to the incident, Colonel A. Rutskoï accused Gorbachev of placing the blame for "the bloodshed in Lithuania" first on the army and then on the democratic forces.¹⁰⁶ Focusing on Gorbachev's denial of any prior knowledge of the incident, the colonel argued that anyone who had served in the army would understand that neither the head of a garrison not even the defense minister could give such an order without higher sanction. In the same context, the USSR people's deputy Colonel Alksnis called Gorbachev "a weak man." Because Gorbachev had indeed engineered the crackdown and had then abandoned his cohort, making the armed forces the scapegoat.¹⁰⁷

Hardly surprisingly, Gorbachev's stance was beginning to change to a less confrontational course, or to try to limit the political damage caused by the military actions in the Baltic. The first signal was his condemnation of independent military actions. Just after the incident he had sided with the garrison commander, as mentioned above. Now at a press conference held on January 21 Gorbachev urged troop commanders to strictly obey his orders. Then he denounced the use of military forces in political struggles.¹⁰⁸ No public organizations, committees or fronts were allowed to appeal to the armed forces in political struggle. But it was unlikely that the political leadership was estranged from the military. Gorbachev addressed a conference on prosecutors on February 13 1991 that only one dictatorship could exist in the USSR during the current critical period: the dictatorship of law, while he told French Foreign Minister R. Dumas that there was no return to totalitarianism.¹⁰⁹ He added that the Soviet Union needed economic, financial, and legal stability now more than ever.

In addition, in spite of critics Gorbachev did not veto joint military and police

patrols throughout the country that had started from on 1 February 1991.¹¹⁰ V. Kudryavtsev, the director of the USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of State and Law, said it was "illegal" for the army and the MVD to organize joint patrols on the streets of Soviet cities "against the wishes of the local soviets."¹¹¹ The Committee for Constitutional Oversight of the Supreme Soviet also criticized the action in that the use of armed forces for maintaining law and order inside the USSR had firstly to be approved by the leaders of the Union republic concerned.¹¹² Chairman of the committee, Aleksayev, firstly observed that the armed forces could be used to solve internal problems, including maintaining public order, but solely based on the law and on the basis of legislative procedure. Then he made it clear that such procedure existed for the problems of a state of emergency confirmed by the Supreme Soviet allowing the use of internal troops, but not in other cases.¹¹³ Moreover, what is the most embarrassing for Gorbachev is the fact that the decree was originally signed by defense minister Yazov and interior minister Pugo on December 29, although Gorbachev did not confirm it until January 29 1991.

Meanwhile, the military leadership also recognized that the commander in Vilnius, General V. Uskhopchik had exercised "poor judgement" in launching the assault.¹¹⁴ Through this Yazov excused Gorbachev. Nonetheless, the defense minister continuously laid the principal responsibility for the incident with Landsbergis. But it was more significant that about 300,000 people attended the rally to mark Soviet Armed Forces Day. Interior minister Pugo, Yazov, Moiseev, chief of the KGB V. Kryuchkov, Moscow City Party First Secretary Yu. Prokofev, and other figures took part in the demonstration. The rally in Manezh square, across from the Kremlin, was carefully organized by work collectives in Moscow factories and by local military units. Participants expressed support for Gorbachev, for the army, and for the preservation of the Union. They held up red

banners reading "no to civil war," "our faith in the army and the state," "President Gorbachev, we support you," and "El'tsin, you won't get us."¹¹⁵ This was a new kind of approach of the military leadership to Soviet politics. One day before at the same place about 400,000 people rallied, calling for democracy and glasnost'. People then carried signs denouncing the armed forces and praised El'tsin.

By that time a significant change in the military leadership's attitude towards the new political thinking and arms control policy was beginning to appear. In a speech on Soviet Armed Forces Day, Marshal Yazov was harshly critical of the Soviet Union's eroding strategic position. He particularly bemoaned the loss of Eastern Europe: "over a forty-five-year period we jointly built powerful infrastructures, reached agreements, made plans. Now all of this has no juridical, moral, or practical value."¹¹⁶ This was sharply in contrast to his earlier speech made just after the CFE Treaty, as analyzed above. Now he ominously suggested that the Soviet side should reconsider its compliance with the CFE treaty both because Moscow had made too many concessions in negotiating it and because the treaty had been based on the existence of two equal alliances in Europe.

Since then a lot of worrisome voices appeared in the conservative mass media. On March 2, *Pravda* warned that the collapse of the Warsaw Pact and closer ties between Eastern Europe and Nato could disrupt the European balance of power and endanger conventional arms negotiations.¹¹⁷ On March 5 1991 Marshal O. Losik contended in *Krasnaya zvezda* that the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact emboldened other countries to interfere in Soviet internal affairs.¹¹⁸ On March 26 an editorial of *Krasnaya zvezda* warned that new European security structures were emerging too slowly and voiced concern over the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact's military wing. It said NATO's role as a guarantor of European stability was overstated, and it cautioned against any idea of extending NATO membership to East European nations. The article said a new European system had

to take into account the state interests of the USSR.

Marshal Akhromeev well summarized these opinions, adding his own comments. In an interview with *New Times*, Akhromeev firstly declared that military threat to the Soviet Union did exist today, which emanated chiefly from the US and NATO, while an "immediate war danger" had evaporated. The marshal tried to generalize the term "military pressure," by saying that while seeking to reach understanding and even to cooperate with the Soviet Union, the US was trying, at the same time, to bring pressure on the USSR by various means, armed forces included. Akhromeev illustrated where the danger lay: The military setup of WTO was no more but the military setup of NATO remained, and the US had been circling the Soviet Union with its army and naval bases -- 1,500 of them manned with a total of 500,000 troops. Particularly, the US aircraft carriers constituted a military force which, within six to eight days of receiving the "go-ahead," could reach the shores of the Soviet Union and pose a military threat to the country,¹¹⁹ he warned. With regard to the reason why the Americans had no intention of cutting the naval forces, he drew a conclusion: their idea was to bring "military pressure" on the Soviet Union. Moreover, the US often acted from positions of strength,¹²⁰ the marshal complained. Referring to the US support for Japan in its claims to the southern Kurils and the US stand on the matter of the Baltics, he stated a strong argument for the keeping of the armed forces enough to enable the country to uphold the national interests and to prevent interference in the Soviet internal affairs.

For that aim, Akhromeev raised the importance of the conventional forces. The marshal attempted a militarily realistic evaluation of the functioning of nuclear weapons: nuclear weapons were neither a reliable guarantee against aggression, nor a safeguard of national interests. In fact, in certain situations nuclear weapons proved useless, as the US defeat in Vietnam and the Soviet defeat in Afghanistan

suggested. He observed that the nuclear weapons became only a "political deterrent".¹²¹ Consequently, he took a cautious step as far as further arms reductions was concerned, and said that no country but the Soviet Union had reduced its armed forces by 12 percent and its defense spending by 18 percent.

¹ For detail, see Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security under Gorbachev," in *The Soviet System in Crisis*, eds., Alexander Dallin and Gail W. Lapidus (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), pp. 573-615.

² Michael MccGwire, *Perestroika and Soviet National Security* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991), p. 253.

³ Bruce Parrott, "Soviet National Security Under Gorbachev," *Problems of Communism* (November-December 1988), p. 6.

⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 19, 1987.

⁵ Dale R. Herspring, *The Soviet High Command, 1967-1989* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 282.

⁶ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, February 21, 1987.

⁷ For a detail of Akhromeev's retirement, see Chapter Three and Fred Wehling, "Old Soldiers Never Die: Marshal Akhromeev's Role in Soviet Defense Decision Making," in *Gorbachev and His Generals*, eds., William C. Green and Theodore Karaik (Oxford: Westview Press, 1990), pp. 63-74.

⁸ M. Moiseev, "Eshche raz o prestizhe armii," *KVS*, No. 13, 1989, pp. 3-4.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-14. The following details are derived from this article.

¹⁰ M. Moiseev, "Na strazhe mira i sotsializma," *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 23, 1989.

¹¹ *Izvestiya*, September 16, 1989.

¹² Harry Gelman, *The Soviet Turn Toward Conventional Force Reduction R-3876/1-AF* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation December 1989), p. 11.

¹³ *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 6, 1989.

¹⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 2, 1989.

¹⁵ For an analysis of these high ranking party officials' speech, see Alexander Rahr, "Gorbachev Faces Revolt in Party Apparatus," *Report on the USSR*, No. 32, 1989, pp. 7-10.

¹⁶ *Pravda*, July 21, 1989.

¹⁷ D. Yazov, "Ofiterskie kadry i perestroika," *Krasnaya zvezda*, September 19, 1989.

¹⁸ *Izvestiya*, September 16, 1989.

¹⁹ IISS's *Military Balance 1988-1989* lists roughly 310,000 American and ground and air-force personnel in Western Europe while crediting the Soviet Union with having some 560,000 men stationed on its allies' territories.

²⁰ *Izvestiya*, June 3, 1989.

²¹ *Moscow Television*, October 9, 1989, in *FBIS-SOV-89-197*, p. 97-98.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 101.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

²⁴ *Pravda*, November 13, 1989.

²⁵ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, November 15, 1989.

²⁶ M. Moiseev, "Zadachi u nas odin," *Krasnaya zvezda*, February 10, 1990.

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- ²⁷ *Pravda*, February 13, 1990.
- ²⁸ M. Moiseev, "Zadachi u nas odin."
- ²⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 26, 1990, p. 2; Yazov, *Sobesednik*, No. 8, 1990; on Moscow situation by the deputy chairman of the Moscow City Executive Committee *Pravda*, March 4, 1990, p. 2
- ³⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 13, 1990.
- ³¹ *Pravda*, May 2, 1990.
- ³² *Izvestiya*, March 16, 1990.
- ³³ *Rabochaya tribuna*, June 26, 1990, p. 3; TASS, June 27, 1990, cited in Stephen Foye, "Military Hard-Liner Condemns "New Thinking," in Security Policy," *Report on the USSR*, No. 28, 1990, p. 6.
- ³⁴ *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 6, 1990.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Pravda*, July 6, 1990.
- ³⁷ *Krasnaya zvezda*, July 6, 1990.
- ³⁸ TASS, July 7, 1990, cited in Alexander Rahr, "A Pyrrhic Victory for Gorbachev?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 29, 1990, p. 8.
- ³⁹ Andrei Kozyrev, "Building a bridge -- along or across a river," *New Times*, No. 43, 1990, p. 7.
- ⁴⁰ *The Sunday Times*, February 11, 1990.
- ⁴¹ *Jane's Defense Weekly*, July 21, 1990, p. 83.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, October 20, 1990, p. 738.
- ⁴³ *Pravda*, July 12, 1990.
- ⁴⁴ *Jane's Defense Weekly*, October 3, 1990, p. 682.
- ⁴⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November 29, 1990.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ *Moscow Television*, July 21, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-145*, p. 64.
- ⁴⁸ Yu. Selivanov, "Save our tanks!" *New Times*, No. 48, 1990, p. 15.
- ⁴⁹ S. Tarasenko, "Tanks or people?" *New Times*, No. 48, 1990, p. 15.
- ⁵⁰ D. Yazov, "Parametry voennoi reformy," *Izvestiya TsK KPSS*, No. 1, 1991, p. 50.
- ⁵¹ *Jane's Defense Weekly*, November 10, 1990, p. 940.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*
- ⁵³ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, November 4, 1990.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁵ *Pravda*, November 20, 1990.
- ⁵⁶ *Izvestiya*, November 23, 1990.
- ⁵⁷ V. Dudnik, "Armiya i predprinimateli," *Moskovskie Novosti*, No. 27, 1990, p. 6.
- ⁵⁸ *Izvestiya*, November 23, 1990.
- ⁵⁹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, November, 1990.
- ⁶⁰ For a detail, see a comment by I. Novoselov, consultant to a sector of the USSR SS Secretariat in *Krasnaya zvezda*, September. 13, 1990.
- ⁶¹ *Moscow Television*, November 27, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-229*, P. 68.
- ⁶² *Izvestiya*, November 23, 1990.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁴ *Central Television*, November 30, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-232*, pp. 72-73.
- ⁶⁵ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, December 1, 1990.
- ⁶⁶ TASS, December 8, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-237*, p. 75.

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- ⁶⁷ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 8, 1990.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ⁶⁹ *Vilnius radio*, December 1, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-232*, p. 81.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 2, 1990.
- ⁷² *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 1, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-233*, pp. 26-27.
- ⁷³ Ibid., p. 27.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 28.
- ⁷⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 2, 1990.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ *Izvestiya*, December 3, 1990.
- ⁷⁸ TASS, December 3, 1990, cited in Stephen Foye, "The Case for a Coup: Gorbachev or the Generals?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 2, 1991, p. 4.
- ⁷⁹ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 5, 1990.
- ⁸⁰ *Izvestiya*, December 18, 1990.
- ⁸¹ Ibid.
- ⁸² *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, December 15, 1990.
- ⁸³ Simon Kordonsky, "Reform is necessary, but of what kind?" *New Times*, No. 2, 1991, p. 28.
- ⁸⁴ *Pravda*, September 6, 1990. For an analysis of the letter, see Julian Cooper, *The Soviet Defence Industry: Conversion and Reform* (London: Pinter, 1991), pp. 75-80.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 21, 1990.
- ⁸⁷ *Moscow News*, No. 1, 1991, p. 4.
- ⁸⁸ TASS, December 20, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-246*, p. 10.
- ⁸⁹ *Report on the USSR*, No. 50, 1990, p. 23.
- ⁹⁰ Ibid.
- ⁹¹ *Izvestiya*, October 6, 1990.
- ⁹² TASS, December 20, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-246*, p. 21.
- ⁹³ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, December 21, 1990.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid.
- ⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ⁹⁶ TASS, December 21, 1990, in *FBIS-SOV-90-246*, p. 11.
- ⁹⁷ For a list of these attempts, see Kseniya Myalo, "After "The Red Yuletide" in Lithuania," *New Times*, No. 11, 1991, pp. 10-11.
- ⁹⁸ *New Times*, No. 3, 1991, p. 7.
- ⁹⁹ For a detail, see the view of a jurist B. Pugachev in *New Times*, No. 3, 1991, p. 8.
- ¹⁰⁰ For a detail, see *New Times*, No. 5, 1992, pp. 9-11.
- ¹⁰¹ They are CC Secretary for the Military Industrial Complex O. Baklanov, CC Secretary for Organizational Matters O. Shenin, and chef of the CC Department of General Affairs V. Boldin. They frequently met between December 2, 1990, and January 9, 1991, including Yazov, Kryuchkov, and Pugo. See *New Times*, No. 5, 1992, pp. 9-11.
- ¹⁰² *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 19 and 22, 1991.
- ¹⁰³ *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, January 18, 1991.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Pravda*, January 29, 1991.
- ¹⁰⁵ S. Akhromeev, "But' ili ne byt' soyuzu," *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, February 7, 1991.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Central Television*, January 21, 1991. cited in Julia Wishnevsky, "Will the

Conservatives Join the Liberals against Gorbachev?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 6, 1991, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰⁸ *Izvestiya*, January 22, 1991.

¹⁰⁹ *Glasgow Herald*, February 15, 1991.

¹¹⁰ *Krasnaya zvezda*, January 29, 1991.

¹¹¹ *Izvestiya*, February 5, 1991.

¹¹² *Central Television*, February 15, 1991, in *FBIS- SOV-91-033*, p. 31.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ *Sovesednik*, No. 8, 1991, p. 4, cited in Stephen Foye, "The High Command Confronts "New Political Thinking" at Home and Abroad," *Report on the USSR*, No. 13, 1991, p. 25.

¹¹⁵ *The Sunday Times*, February 24, 1991.

¹¹⁶ D. Yazov, "Sluzhim sovetskmy soyuzy!" *Pravda*, February 23, 1991.

¹¹⁷ *Pravda*, March 2, 1991.

¹¹⁸ O. Losik, "Gde granichy razumnoi dostatochnosti," *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 5, 1991.

¹¹⁹ *New Times*, No. 14, 1991, p. 17.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 16.

¹²¹ Ibid., p. 15.

CHAPTER 8. MILITARY RESPONSE III: THE COUP & EXPROPRIATION OF THE SOVIET ARMY

8.1. The Revised Draft of A New Union Treaty and Military Reform

When a new Union Treaty became vital in terms of military reform, the revised draft of the new Union Treaty was published on March 9 1991, ahead of the national referendum planned on March 17. Compared to the first draft published in November 1990, the new one recognized rights of the republics with regard to defense policy.

For the first time in the Soviet history, the Union was to share with the republics the following powers: the determination of the state security strategy and of the defence policy; the implementation of measures to ensure the defense of the country and of decisions connected with the stationing and activity of troops and military installations on the territories of the republics; and the establishment of a single procedure for the draft and for the performance of military service.¹ After the 1991 January military crackdown in Vilnius, the military aspect of the Union Treaty, particularly the forming of national armies, became the most controversial issue between the centre and the republics and thus these changes were inevitable. In mid-February 1991, for example, to control over military conscription, troop movements, and appointments of military district commanders on Russian territory became one of the top agendas of the Russian parliament.

Before the Vilnius incidents, the ownership of land and other natural resources was the main interest of the republics. The first draft clearly reflected this. The republican leaderships tried to clarify "who owned what" because the

draft left considerable room for disagreement between the centre and the republics. According to Article 7 of the first draft, for example, the republics were to be the owners of the land and natural resources on their territories and also of state property with the exception of that part which was necessary for realizing the powers of the Union.² Although the adoption of foreign and defence policy was still retained for the exclusive jurisdiction of the Union, the republican authorities remained relatively silent.

The revised draft Union Treaty in March was much closer to the context of Lopatin's military reform conceptualization concerning centre-periphery relations. It could be felt from the limited contents, nevertheless, that the very notion of the military security system of a "union of sovereign states" was not yet formed. In addition, it appeared that all official plans for a military reform, and long-term military development programmes in particular, continued to be designed for the unitary model of the state. It was most likely, however, that the notion had been already being under discussion at certain levels.

Soviet troops were pulling out of Eastern Europe and Mongolia. They would be deployed strictly inside the territory of the USSR by January 1995. It was not announced where and how the Soviet armed forces would be redeployed. Some republics were considering the Soviet armed forces as an occupation army and demanding a radical decrease in the military presence in their confines, if not a total withdrawal. The Baltic parliaments insisted that the troops be withdrawn. On the other hand, the high command thought that such demands were "premature" and referred to the USSR Constitution. The MOD military reform concept did not take into account the changing politics. By the end of 1990, the General Staff only set up a directorate for relations with the state bodies of power and administration of the USSR and Union republics.

It seems that troops can only be deployed where they are welcome, unless

they are truly an army of occupation, otherwise the damage of the troops' presence may outweigh all the desired strategic and operational advantages, not to mention the purely military damage. In practice, the troops were still in the areas where they had been deployed and they could not be transferred to new deployment areas overnight. Consequently, it was required as a temporary measure to define the troops' status in the territories of their current deployment particularly in the remaining outgoing republics such as the Baltics, Moldavia, Georgia, and Armenia. The rejection of any use of armed forces as a tool of interference in republican affairs, for example, would result in a calmer atmosphere.

It was necessary to conclude a separate security treaty alongside the new Union Treaty, because the above republics did not want to remain in the Union. The military-technical component of the new structure would be an integrated system of a new type. The military-administrative division, the theatres of operation, and the echelons of the new system had to correspond to the new political structure. As the Lopatin reform plan suggested, it was necessary to coordinate and legally seal the distribution of rights, duties, and prerogatives between the federal and national structures.

Here, the main problem was the fact that the revised draft Union Treaty itself was still rejected by the virtually all republican leaderships with fundamentally different reasoning from previous days. Now the Russian leadership, for example, complained that the draft was imposed from above, that is, the central authorities.³ In fact, there were consultations between the USSR Supreme Soviet and individual republics and discussions in the recently upgraded Council of Federation at the expense of the Presidential Council.⁴ And two chairmen of the chambers of the Russian parliament took part in the process. Therefore, El'tsin was surely called in for the consultation. Nevertheless, he did not support even the title.

In some sense, that was rather natural. As El'tsin himself publicly said, if

Gorbachev wanted to retain the centralized system, El'tsin sought to destroy it. The Russian leadership said "we do not need a centre which is so huge and bureaucratic. We do not need ministries... We must rid ourselves of it."⁵ According to him, the future Soviet "federation" should be governed by a collective leadership of republican presidents. Paradoxically, it seemed that El'tsin wanted to play a leading role in that mechanism. If it were possible for him to do so, then he could effectively control most of the current all-Union state and government powers. In practical terms, he could become the CINC of the Soviet armed forces, because they were located mainly in Russia.

Meanwhile, chief of the General Staff Moiseev stressed that agreement on a Union Treaty was crucial to the continuation of military reform. But General Moiseev avoided expressing in public his opinion about the revised draft Union Treaty. Instead he continued to insist that the army should remain a unified force.⁶ Concerning the general attitude of the military leadership towards the country's future as a Union, we rather focused on the fact that on February 23 1991, the military took to Manezh Square, together with the Communist Party.⁷ In the previous day, on February 22, there was also a rally called by activists from the Democratic Russia movement. Some of the demonstrators carried signs denouncing the Soviet armed forces. They demanded, there should be reliable guarantees that armed forces would never be used inside the country. While Gorbachev was criticized, El'tsin was praised.

In response, the February 23 rally to mark Soviet Armed Forces Day expressed support for Gorbachev, for the armed forces, and for the preservation of the Union. Here a focal point is that military personnel were ordered to attend the demonstration in civilian clothes. It was designed to increase the number of participants. Once the officers took to the street, however, moving beyond rhetoric, it could mean that the military began to intervene directly in the political

process. Public rallies until then were the domain of the Russian democrats. Now, it appeared that the debates, which took the form of a 'war of slogans,' were transferred to the streets.

This kind of deteriorating political atmosphere was further worsened by the result of the March 17 referendum on the future of the Union, in which three-quarters of the ballots were cast in favour of holding the USSR together as an integral state. Just after the referendum, President Gorbachev tried to use the result in order to gain some political advantage for himself. In a major interview with *Der Spiegel* Gorbachev amplified two current opposing forces. Democrats were described as "extremists" acting under the slogan, "the worse the better". On the other hand, conservatives believed that everything should be reversed.⁸ Through this, he tried once again to hold a centrist position. But the two poles were being further split.

The conservative forces demanded that the will of the people voiced during the March referendum be implemented without suspension. Moreover, some of them asked for Gorbachev's resignation, accusing him of being unwilling or unable to use the referendum result to force rebellious republics back into an "imperial alliance."⁹ Especially, a core of the conservative forces, the Russian communist deputies, hoped to topple El'tsin and insisted on calling the third extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies.

At that time El'tsin was in an awkward situation. On the one hand, he was politically weakened by the referendum. He had urged people to cast a 'no' vote, while calling for the creation of a 'commonwealth of sovereign states.' On the other hand, he was strengthened by the result of a republic-wide poll that took the opportunity to combine the referendum with a vote on the introduction of the post of a popularly elected Russian President. The latter result became a great threat to the communists because it was quite sure that El'tsin would hold the post. At the

extraordinary Congress held on March 28, however, the communist deputies failed to topple El'tsin. About from 300,000 to half a million¹⁰ people turned out for a protest rally. The demonstration was in fact banned by the Union authorities but permitted by the Moscow City Soviet. Neither side sought a compromise. But in the end the rally was allowed to proceed a short distance from the planned site outside the Kremlin. Once again speakers called for Russian sovereignty and for the resignations of President Gorbachev, ministers of the Army and the MVD, and the chief of the KGB.

Now, the balance of political forces was shifting to the democrats. A Gorbachev-El'tsin alliance was beginning to look more feasible, although Gorbachev was still critical of the democrats. In his speech to the first All-Army Party Conference held on March 29-30,¹¹ calling the democratic groups "opposition groups," Gorbachev said that "they are trying to exploit tensions in society and, among other things, hope to split the armed forces along national lines."¹² But his stance on them was less critical than that of high command who had clearly emerged as a force determined to keep the Union. Both Marshal Yazov and Colonel General N. Shlyaga, chief of the MPA, as in the past, equated democratic groups, or opposition groups in Gorbachev's term, with "separatist, nationalist, and extremist forces."¹³

In less than a month since the March 28 rally Gorbachev succeeded in finding a consensus among the republican leaders for a new Union. On April 23 1991, the leaders of the USSR and nine republics agreed to halt the disintegration of the Soviet Union, committing the signatories to approve a new Union Treaty by the end of 1991. A joint anti-crisis stabilisation programme was also adopted by Moscow and ten republics on July 23. But the programme hardly reflected hardliners' view. Symbolically, they were urging Gorbachev to declare presidential rule in South Ossetia, where Georgian nationalists were fighting Ossetians rebelling

against Tbilisi's decision to dissolve their autonomy and leave the USSR. At last, a series of meetings resulted in another new draft Union Treaty, due to be signed on August 20, which must have forced the coup leaders to take action in a hurry. For them the signing of the proposed Union Treaty had to be forestalled because it must have laid the constitutional foundation for a greatly decentralised Union.

The document aimed at establishing a loose confederation, although it referred to a "federal" government. This reflected the central theme of all those negotiations: the preservation of a "common economic space", while recognizing the right of the republics to sovereign control over property, natural resources and taxation. With regard to military policy, the final draft called for republican participation in defining the military policy of the Union and national security strategy, resolving questions connected with troop activities and the locating of military facilities on republican territories, directing defense-complex enterprises, and so on.¹⁴

8.2. The Military's Involvement in Political and Ethnic Conflicts

For the military the stockpiles of weapons in the Transcaucasian republics and elsewhere had to be cleared. Since the appointments of Pugo and Gromov as the minister and first deputy minister of internal affairs, respectively, the MVD internal troops had become a pivotal force as far as policing troops in a mechanism of the KGB, the MVD, the armed forces, and communist hardliners was concerned. This leadership change had a number of implications for the future policing operations. By both law and tradition the KGB had played a decisive role in coordinating MVD and military action when ethnic conflicts occurred. The KGB and the MVD appeared to have been two parts of a single state coercive apparatus

rather than two independent institutions, considering the fact that the KGB Third Main Administration had monitored the ordinary MVD police, MVD troops, and the MVD divisions.

As nationalist unrest continued, however, the KGB-MVD relationships became questionable. In the non-Russian republics Moscow could no longer rely on the MVD ordinary police and troops because they began to show local loyalties and to resist subordination to the centre. Moreover some republics such as the Baltic republics, Armenia, and Moldavia formed independent security apparatuses or armed detachments. The Kremlin, therefore, was left to strengthen its control of part of the MVD that was still subordinated to the centre and to increase the number of the MVD internal troops, which were directly responsible to the MVD minister and through the military line of command to Gorbachev in his capacity as chairman of the Defense Council.¹⁵ The first increase of 30,000 troops was announced by former MVD minister Bakatin in September, 1989.¹⁶

The appointment of Colonel General Gromov had a significant implication for the relationship between the MVD troops and the armed forces. Since March 1989 the MVD troops had been separated by Gorbachev's decree from the armed forces in general and from the General Staff in terms of operational command system. This disconnection increased to a certain extent the autonomy of the MVD minister. If the minister were reluctant to impose a severe military crackdown, then the effectiveness of a coordinated action among the KGB, MVD, and Army troops would drop. In fact, when the process of the republics' self-determination put him in a difficult position, Bakatin was moderate. He even signed, for example, agreements on the division of terms of references with the Interior Ministries of Estonia, the RSFSR, and so on, accepting the principle that the republic was primary and the Union was secondary.¹⁷ In this context, he was accused of being passive and of rendering concrete support to separatist forces in the republics.¹⁸ In

this respect, one could say that the MVD troops were virtually taken over by the KGB and the armed forces.

There had been an extensive reequipment and redeployment of the MVD forces followed under the leadership of Pugo and Gromov. The operational designation troops, Opnaz (*operativnogo naznacheniya*), had been expanded from 36,000¹⁹ in 1989 to a strength of around 70,000,²⁰ with a higher rate of professionalization. Some of its divisions were transferred from the Army to the MVD, including the 55th Irkutsk-Pinsk Guards Motorized Rifle Division. But it was rather important that the Opnaz troops remained under the USSR MVD control, that is, out of control from reformists both in the centre and in the republics. Among the troops, the most effective and mobile unit was the Dzerzhinskii Motor Rifle Division with 6,500 men.²¹ Besides the Opnaz troops, the MVD riot squads, the so-called "black beret", or OMON (*otryad militsii osobogo naznacheniya*: specialized purpose militia detachments), increasingly became paramilitary units. The OMON units were controlled by republican governments, except, OMON of Moscow, Riga, and Vilnius. Incidentally, the KGB also expanded its troops, with an airborne division, the 103rd Guards Vitebsk Division, attached under the auspices of the Border Troops²²

If Pugo and his new team at the ministry failed, then the future for the republics and the Union would be too dreadful for the military to think. A tough line was urgent to avoid civil war by preventing the formation of nationalist detachments and armies in the republics. Regardless of the nine-plus-one agreement, a number of elite units of the armed forces continued to be used as part of pacification teams in the troubled Transcaucasian republics. The MVD troops were still not enough for that. Thus the military could stake a claim to the domestic politics.

By the end of April 1991 national armies or their prototypes were appearing

on the Soviet map along with republics, including the Central Asians. In Kirgizstan, for example, there was no evidence of armed units on any large scale, but the possibility of armed groups emerging in the near future could not be ruled out. A Kirgiz cavalry, which took an active role during the Kirgiz-Uzbek riots in the Osh Region in June 1990,²³ could re-emerge. More than 200 people died there.²⁴ The Uzbeks in Osh had organized their male youth for quick mobilisation in an emergency since the riots.

Although the Ukraine republican parliament decided that the Ukrainians should do their military service only within the republic, none of the Ukrainian paramilitary organizations had yet been tried in battle. But the UIPA (Ukrainian Inter-Party Assembly) were about to form a Ukrainian national army.

In Lithuania since January's Vilnius events the National Defence Department guards were increased and had public support, and Siauliu Sajunga, a paramilitary organisation pledged allegiance to the independent republic. The Latvian nationalists restored the paramilitary organisation of aizsargs, which had existed under the old regime. In Estonia two paramilitary national formations, Kodukaitse and Kaitseliit, declared their readiness to fight if there was any attempt to repeat January's Vilnius events in Tallinn.

In Moldova, by November 1990, after campaigning against the southern Gagauz, who had proclaimed their independence of the republic of Moldavia, the Moldavian parliament raised the 1st Tiras-Tigina National Guard Battalion. In fact, the Moldavian volunteer units, which had hit the Gagauz minority, were transformed to become the National Guard rather than demobilized.²⁵ Although their structure was shadowy, the Gagauz self-defence detachments sprang up by October 1990. In the Dniester Moldavian republic the workers' detachments run by the United Council of Work Collectives were operating, and some of them had been sent to help the Gagauz in October. Besides, the Arkalyk Party of National

Resurrection declared its allegiance to armed struggle.

The Caucasian peoples were still causing difficulties for the high command. In Azerbaijan, by January 1990 the Popular Front of Azerbaijan had established an armed wing, and that month a National Defence Committee was created in Baku. When the anti-Armenian pogroms started in mid-January, Soviet troops stormed road blocks and occupied the city. Some 160 were killed.²⁶ The NDC was dissolved, the Front's military and other formations defeated.

In Georgia, by January 1991 the republic's parliament ordered the creation of an Internal Troops National Guard numbering 12,000 men as seen in the previous chapter. Several armed formations that emerged after the Tbilisi events in April 1989 remained. Tetri Giorgi had been involved in the conflict in South Ossetia. Sakartvelos Mkhedrioni (The Knights of Georgia), opposed to Gamsakhurdia, were supportive of the National Congress organisation, which confronted the new Georgian authorities. In February 1991, Soviet tanks and armoured vehicles stormed Shavnabada in the Tbilisi suburbs, where Sakartvelos Mkhedrioni had been based for several months. A third group, Shevardeni, remained neutral in the conflict between parliament and National Congress. Non-Georgian armed forces included Abkhaz units and South Ossetians units. At present, the USSR MVD troops had been deployed there since the first unrest in Tsikhinvali which followed South Ossetia's unilateral declaration of itself as an autonomous republic within Georgia and a state of emergency was in force in the capital city of Tskhinvali and the Dzhava district. This state of emergency was sponsored by the Georgian parliament, which had vetoed South Ossetia's decision as illegal.

More ominously, in Armenia, estimates of their total forces veered from a few thousand to 140,000. Their weaponry included small arms, some artillery, civilian helicopters, and rocket launchers. But the Soviet army and MVD troops were involved in disarming them. On April 30, 1991 subunits of the Azerbaijan

republic's special OMON militia and Soviet army units entered the Armenian villages of Getashen and Martunashen, and exchanged fire with armed detachments defending the village.²⁷ Thus the incidents also became a serious political issue, following the Tbilisi, Baku, and Vilnius incidents. According to the joint statement of the KGB, the MVD, and the Army, troops' moves were in compliance with the presidential decree on disarming illegitimate armed formations, which had already issued.²⁸

Nevertheless, once again, a series of questions of who gave the order to enter the villages and which units were used to carry it out became a sensitive political issue. The Armenian envoy in Moscow, F. Mamikonian, claimed that the central authorities issued the order and that there were no armed militants in the villages, including Getashen.²⁹ But the USSR Supreme Soviet simply passed a resolution saying that the Congress of People's Deputies had repeatedly discussed the dispute and the Soviet parliament had passed decisions, but to no effect. However, in a compromising way, the USSR Supreme Soviet decided to send a fact-finding group to hear both sides.³⁰

Here a focal point is the fact that, according to Colonel V. Martirosyan, a reformist People's Deputy, the Army units were the first to enter the village and they were followed by the local OMON militia.³¹ In case, it was in contrast to the 1990 March operation to police the demonstrations in Moscow, where the army troops had remained the final stronghold for public order forces. Nevertheless, both cases suggested the extent of how far the military would directly intervene in the politics. The legal justification of the Soviet army involvement in Getashen and Martunashen military crackdown was Gorbachev's decree to disband and disarm all illegal armed groups. Naturally, neither the Kremlin nor Azerbaijan cannot fail to understand that the only possible Armenian interpretation of the Soviet army involvement was that Moscow displayed solidarity with Baku. From the point of

view of Armenia, Moscow's combined action with Baku was revenge for Yerevan's independent course and separatism. In addition, the decision of the Armenian parliament to nationalize the property of the Communist Party of Armenia could hardly improve Yerevan's relations with the Kremlin. Trying to find an effective counterbalance to Gorbachev, the Armenian leadership appealed to El'tsin. Five days after the storming of Getashen and Martunashen Soviet paratroopers landed in Yerevan and were deployed to defend a number of the defense ministry installations, including one helicopter unit stationed there.

Moreover, the dynamic of both operations was very suggestive of army troops' movements during the August coup, together that of the military crackdowns in Vilnius in January 1991. Therefore, it may be useful to review the 1990 March Moscow operation. It was directed by General Tomashev, deputy chief of the Main Administration of the MVD for Moscow and the Moscow Region. All the Army, MVD, and KGB troops involved in the operation with a high level of interservice coordination. Armoured vehicles from the KGB Kantemirov Guards Tank Division were both displayed overtly on the outskirts of Moscow and parked restrainedly within the Kremlin. The main forces were police of the Moscow Main Internal Affairs Administration (GUVD) and the MVD troops coming primarily from Dzerzhinskii Division and another unit probably from Kalinin.³² Through the operation, the MVD troops, which once carried out an exercise under the direction of Gromov Moscow in February 1991, had a real opportunity to test their plan of how to secure the city in case of massive industrial disorder.

The army personnel also took part in the operation. Soldiers, armed only with truncheons, supported the MVD police forces. Many of them stayed in military trucks. Large numbers of cadets from military schools, officer students from military academies, and senior officers were also deployed. The senior

officers, army officers of the rank of major and above, were deployed at some complicated places, for example, in Manezh Square, where the union government forbade the rally to reach and thus collisions were expected.³³ They might be considered as the only men available with the requisite maturity and self-confidence. This could be the reflection of the 1991 January Vilnius incidents.

In the view of an officer of Moscow OMON detachment, 1,500 men of the regular Kremlin guards or the downtown Moscow militia could easily have carried out the official mission of preventing a rally in Manezh Square.³⁴ In fact, at least 50,000 officers and men were mobilised, according to General Tomashev, who admitted that a mere 20,000 would have been enough to completely block the major area, i.e., the whole of the Boulevard Ring.³⁵ Thus there was at least a reserve of 30,000. In this context and, particularly, based on the fact that the army was mobilised, it was concluded that the very idea in the operation was not to maintain public order but to "threaten the people."³⁶

In fact, there was an emergency meeting of the USSR Council of Minister on March 27, the day before the opening of the RSFSR Congress of People's Deputies, to consider the possibility of declaring a state of emergency. Around twenty ministers, including Kryuchkov, Yazov, and Pugo, took part in the meeting. The attendance of the three powerful figures was unusual, according to N. Vorontsov, then USSR Minister of Environment Protection. While wanting ministers' advice, Pavlov said that "the miners are on strike. Should we introduce a state of emergency or not."³⁷ Pugo sided with the prime minister by saying a lot that was meant to be intimidating. Chief of the KGB also stated that left-wing terrorists and extremists wanted to provoke disturbance. In the end, they decided to bring troops into Moscow as a show of force to intimidate the large crowds taking part in the rally.

8.3. Prime Minister Pavlov's 1991 June Challenge and Military Reform

On June 17, 1991 Pavlov asked the USSR Supreme Soviet to expand the scope of his cabinet's authority.³⁸ His reasoning was that the only way to avert economic collapse was to increase the cabinet's power because Gorbachev's schedule was too full to permit him to oversee the cabinet's work. The important thing was timing. Gorbachev was scheduled to take part in the Novo-Ogaryovo conference during the session of the Soviet parliament. One could see the challenge as a carefully calculated one. Being surprised at Pavlov's demand, Gorbachev immediately suspended the debate on the issue and took part in the conference.

Although Gorbachev had tied himself down to the future inter-republic structure since the Novo-Ogaryovo agreement, a new Union Treaty was not likely to be signed soon. The majority of republics intended to subject it to various changes, while supporting the Novo-Ogaryovo draft in principle. The Soyuz group was categorically against signing the Union Treaty because it amounted to an agreement to the dissolution of the country. The left-wing parliamentary opposition in individual republics such as Rukh in the Ukraine and the Democratic Russia party also spoke up against the draft. They believed that the draft turned down the declared sovereignty of the republics.

Two leading figures aligned themselves to Pavlov during the parliament debate that continued in Gorbachev's absence. Interestingly, but ominously, Vice President G. Yanayev told the Supreme Soviet that Gorbachev did not think Pavlov's request was politically motivated. Chairman of the Supreme Soviet A. Luk'yanov warned the deputies not to side with the cabinet against the president, but he urged them to grant Pavlov's request.

Conservative deputies, including members of the "Soyuz," some of whom

were collecting signatures to recall President Gorbachev sided with Pavlov. They had for a long time searched for a replacement to Gorbachev. During the presidential election they nominated Bakatin. E. Kogan, a co-chairman of the group, once depicted Pavlov as being both able to tough measures and unafraid of being unpopular.³⁹ Consequently, the anti-Gorbachev bloc between the Soviet parliament and the Cabinet had become evident.

During two days of closed-door debate the president and his domestic and foreign policies were subjected to severe criticism. Perestroika was described as "cold, hunger, and inadequate defense," and the loss of Eastern Europe as "a historic defeat," by Yazov, Pugo, and Kryuchkov.⁴⁰

The defense minister grasped a good chance to publicly criticize the new thinking and perestroika, as usual, focusing on personnel problems in the armed forces. He claimed some 35,000 of 100,000 officers as part of a planned reduction of 500,000 troops had no right to a pension. And the troops returning from Eastern Europe lacked housing. Over 10,000 officers in Moscow had no housing, and 5,000 in Leningrad. He urged a government decree making the republics contribute to housing officers. Based on the result of the fall 1990 draft, the Marshal noted that the failure to enforce the draft in Georgia, Armenia, and three Baltic republics, combined with republican decisions allowing draftees to serve in their home republics, meant that soon there would be no armed forces. This had already resulted in a shortfall of some 353,000 men, according to him. In this connection, the Soviet parliament was urged to make a clear decision on conscription. He added that the number of women in higher education had fallen by 90,000 last year because of men pulling out all the stops to become students and avoid military service. The student deferment issue became revived when a new version of draft military reform plan that excluded those provisions for students that had been legislated in April, 1989, was circulated in the Soviet parliament.⁴¹

Finally, as for the currently most vital issue, the signing of a new Union Treaty, the defense minister argued that the armed forces should exist under a unified command.⁴²

Upon arriving in the Kremlin from the conference, Gorbachev came out fighting. He explained that Pavlov had been so scared of his deputy Kucherenko's attacks that he thoughtlessly demanded the powers he did not actually need. Moreover, there was no conflict between the Cabinet and the President. In this connection, Gorbachev asked that the question of Cabinet powers be left up to himself, as head of the legislative power. And the parliament agreed to Gorbachev's demand. In his brief speech to the parliament, Pavlov himself agreed with the Gorbachev's position.⁴³

Gorbachev gave a series of message to the Soyuz leaders and the military. By naming V. Alksnis and Yu. Blokhin, the president said that they were busy destabilising cooperation and interaction between parliament, the Cabinet and the President. Gorbachev again recited his recent version of the Soviet militarized economy: "If I didn't keep in mind that this country's economy isn't human-oriented and is over-militarized, if I didn't try to get rid of this burden and turn it to the benefit of the people, I would be derelict in my duty and I would just have to step down..."⁴⁴ Through this, Gorbachev clearly recognized the linkage among the Soyuz group, defense industries, the military, and the conservative party apparatus.

This was also reflected by Gorbachev's decree on defence councils issued on the next day, June 22.⁴⁵ This was clearly designed to cut a link between the armed forces and the Party, particularly at the regional level, as the Tbilisi and Vilnius incidents demonstrated. This shifted a large part of the communist party's influence over the armed forces onto elected civilian representatives. Military councils had long existed as a structure for collective direction of the troops, in the areas where they were deployed, by the top local officers and party bosses. But now they were

to be responsible not to the communist party, but by the head of state. The new regulations, by stating that military councils were set up by the President, could mark a significant strengthening of the influence of Gorbachev not as General Secretary but as President. More than that, the civilians who sit alongside the armed forces officers on the military councils would be representatives of elected local government such as republic presidents and premiers or parliament presidiums, or local government leaders and chief executives. The military councils would also have to work with local public organizations and movements. Although it was too early to treat this as the end of communist party guidance of the armed forces, it was surely another forward step following the 28th Party Congress resolution, as far as the issue of depoliticization of the armed forces was concerned.

Finally, on 26 June, just before the Group of Seven summit, Gorbachev made a clear pitch for accelerated military reform. In March 1991 as one of key note speaker at the first All-Army Conference Gorbachev briefly called for military reform to continue.⁴⁶ Now in an address to military cadets on their graduation, the president called for "thoroughgoing military reform" in defense and defense production, and he said that the "essence" of reform lay in the credo of not numbers but know-hows. Usually, this meant that the military would have to make do with less. Moreover, Gorbachev also implied that a failure by the army to support his general reform efforts could lead to the destabilization of society.⁴⁷ In short, the height of the revived collision between the military leadership and Gorbachev became much more serious.

8.4. Activities of the Armed Forces during the Coup

In the early hours of 19 August, a small group of conspirators under Vice-President G. Yanayev seized power. The self-styled State Committee for the State of Emergency (Emergency Committee) had eight members. The leading five figures, i.e., Yanayev, Pavlov, Kryuchkov, Yazov, and Pugo once aligned themselves against Gorbachev when the Prime Minister asked the Supreme Soviet to expand the scope of his cabinet's authority at the expense of Gorbachev's power. The involvement of the Secretariat for defence, O. Baklanov and, President of the Association of State Enterprises in Industry, A. Tizyakov in the emergency committee was not entirely unexpected. They were well-known for their close association with the defense industry. Particularly, as signatories of the December 1990 'Letter of the 53', both figures were spreading panic that the country was about to be attacked by the imperialists rather than concentrating on working out the strategy and tactics of conversion under the policy of marketization.

Only a month prior to the coup the chairman of the USSR Peasants' Union, V. Starodubtsev, who had been the champion of the collective-farm system, in a manifesto "Word to the People" appeared in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, called for the launching of a popular patriotic movement to prevent the destruction of the motherland. Incidentally, deputy interior minister Gromov and deputy defense minister and the CINC of the Ground Forces General V. Varennikov were among twelve signatories of the manifesto.

Therefore, the emergency committee had the nature of a coalition of the reactionaries of the Party, the KGB, the MVD, the Army, and defense industry elements. In effect, the KGB, equally with the Party, appeared to lead the coup. All Kryuchkov's deputies were directly involved in the coup.⁴⁸ After the coup, Kryuchkov and Luk'yanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, were identified as the leaders of the junta. Yakovlev said in an interview with *Russian Television* that the putsch's address to the Soviet people had been drafted at the CPSU

Central Committee and the KGB.⁴⁹ L. Ponomaryov, chairman of the Russian Parliamentary Commission for Inquiry into the Causes and Circumstances of the August 1991 Coup, even argued that the KGB chairman Kryuchkov personally held the "controlling packet" during the coup.⁵⁰

There could be other views. Konstantin Pleshakov of *New Times*, for example, believed that no other than Baklanov was the mastermind of the putsch or at least was in the centre of the plot, while defining it as the coup of the military-industrial complex. Moreover, it was Baklanov, according to him, who was entrusted with representation of the junta among the four who rushed to the Crimea to deliver an ultimatum to Gorbachev.⁵¹ Controversially first deputy chief of the MVD Gromov was told at the Bilbek airfield on August 18 that the emergency committee had imposed a state of emergency.⁵² After the coup new defense minister E. Shaposhnikov disputed descriptions of the putsch as a "military coup", arguing that it was "a plot by high-ranking state officials" that counted on some military support.⁵³ In general, this coup attempt appeared to fit the traditional practice of the Soviet military that used to find the most useful ally rather than having anything to do with a seizure of power. So to speak, the military held a position of being a participant rather than prime mover.

It was quite clear that the motivation behind the coup, particularly concerning its timing, was a sharpening crisis of centre-republic relations. In broad terms, the following events appeared to have stimulated the junta: the nationalization by Russia of the oil and gas industry and the promise given by El'tsin to raise domestic prices for oil and related products; the imminent introduction of national currencies in some republics; the failure to fulfil state deliveries of freshly harvested corn; the 50-percent cut of defense orders, the oncoming paralysis of the defense industry, and social consequences of the ill thought-out conversion of defense enterprises; the increasing commercializing of

relations between leaders of large enterprises and sub-branches of the national economy, which would result in the abolition of planned management methods; the financial independence of leaders of enterprises and organizations and the ensuing loss of the last management levers; El'tsin's decree ordering departization of the CPSU in the enterprises in Russia; and the establishment of republican security systems, including military formations and national guards, and the beginning of the transition of republican KGB agencies to the jurisdiction of the republics.⁵⁴

The organizers of the coup tried to reationalize their action primarily as an attempt to forestall what they viewed as the imminent demise of the country. In the "Appeal to the Soviet People," the emergency committee condemned what it called "extremist forces" who had adopted a course of destroying the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ Yanayev in detail and emotionally described this at the press conference following the emergency declaration: "A real threat of disintegration has arisen, the break-up of a single economic space, a single space of civil rights, a single defense, and a single foreign policy. Normal life in these circumstances is impossible. In many regions of the USSR, as a result of multinational, inter-ethnic clashes, there is bloodshed, and the break-up of the USSR would entail the most serious internal and international consequences. Under these circumstances, we have no other choice but to take decisive measures in order to stop the slide of the country toward catastrophe."⁵⁶ For the military, "to prevent the disintegration of the country" could mean to restore its unitarian structure, i.e., its prime aim of the coup.

It appeared, however, they did not carry out the coup attempt at the risk of death. Paradoxically, the chaotic sociopolitical situation made them optimistic. By August almost the entire bureaucratic class, the entire party-economic-military establishment opposed Gorbachev. They spoke about their opposition openly and this probably made the conspirators more confident. Moreover, the introducing of

extraordinary and emergency measures had been being discussed since the spring of 1991. Of course, this was far from the coup in terms of law. A plan of arrangements for imposing and realizing a state of emergency regime can exist in every country and it provides for a number of various measures ranging from preventive arrests to introduction of a restricted movement in the country. According to the Moscow radio, Luk'yanov, in his interview given on the second day of the coup, said that Gorbachev intended to declare the state of emergency after the Union Treaty was signed, in compliance with the nine plus one agreement, although it was to a certain degree incredible.

For the coup leaders, the problem was Gorbachev's turn to the left since April 1991. The new Union treaty negotiations were still proceeding with difficulty. Gorbachev's rival El'tsin was becoming politically stronger day by day around the election to the RSFSR president. Therefore, conservative hard-liners might have good reasons to expect that Gorbachev would go along with their proposal to institute a state of emergency in the country. Unexpectedly Gorbachev was moving in the opposite direction. But things had already been set into motion. In fact, it was probably unstoppable. Gorbachev's intending to sign a new Union Treaty, which was vital to the plotters' interests, could have forced them to proceed without his official sanction of their will.

Colonel General D. Volkogonov, El'tsin's defence adviser, observed that Gorbachev had long been under pressure to agree to a 'coup', but at the most critical moment he refused to sign the statement.⁵⁷ As far as the reason why he disapproved was concerned, Volkogonov pointed out Gorbachev's characteristic. That is, he had long hesitated. In this respect and at least those given to conspiracy theories, some could suggest that Gorbachev had organised the whole thing.⁵⁸ This assertion was put very credibly, but there were still doubts. The composition of the emergency committee, nevertheless, appeared not to have been discussed

beforehand,⁵⁹ aiming at toppling Gorbachev himself.

When it came to how to overcome the existing constitutional barriers in instituting a state of emergency in the whole country or some part of it, the plotters in a hasty but optimistic way tried to legitimize their seizure of power. Simply Gorbachev had to be too ill to perform his duties and in accordance with Article 127/7 of the Constitution USSR Vice-President Yanayev assumed power as acting president. Consequently, it was not necessary for them to display the all-out show of force by surprise which a coup generally requires. Moreover, they did not indicate which particular localities were subject to the resolution that declared a state of emergency. It seemed that the coup leaders had an assumption that any specific declarations were not necessary until some significant opposition emerged, while trying to avoid an official countrywide declaration directly at variance with the Constitution. This assumption was part of the point that the coup was poorly planned.

It was doubtful, however, that in the early morning of the first day of the coup columns of tanks and armoured vehicles began to move towards Moscow and around 09:00 took up positions outside key state buildings, when as a precondition of troop movements the state of emergency was not officially imposed in Moscow. Yanayev declared it late in the afternoon of the day. There was a more crucial mystery. Why did the columns of tanks and troops carriers stop short of the Russian parliament building? The question is whether the coup leaders calculated that arresting El'tsin would inflame an immediate popular uprising, or whether they just hoped him to be persuaded to back the putsch under threat of attack. When the columns of tanks were moving towards Moscow, El'tsin and his several people were in their retreat outside Moscow. According to Sobchak, Mayor of Leningrad, they worried that, when they decided to go to Moscow in the middle of the highway, the coup leaders would want to arrest them. But as they

drove to Moscow in the form of a motorcade, the military troops made way for El'tsin.⁶⁰

In many cases, authoritative orders to bring in army troops were never given, or were so vague and belated that they could not act upon them. But it was quite sure that a prior consultation had been given to the related local commanders, with some autonomy of how to cope with the coming situation. Consequently, it was possible for people who might have been counted upon to support a state of emergency, including key military commanders and even soldiers, to raise a question that the emergency committee would not succeed in imposing a state of emergency and, therefore, to have a wait and see attitude until they could see how events unfolded.

These points, however, do not mean that the conspirators were not concerned with the development of structures for the coordination of the various arms of the coercive apparatus - the KGB, the MVD, and the Army. Paradoxically, they had prepared for all kind of emergencies in major areas, including Moscow. As seen in the previous section, their possible conclusion drawn from the aforementioned operations, as far as coercive forces were concerned, the MVD troops were enough, particularly in Moscow. Thus, the regular army was allocated to the minor role of reserve troops. But this calculation significantly hampered the emergency committee's ability to implement the military crackdown, especially at the vital areas such as Moscow and Leningrad, because the Soviet armed forces were showing various patterns along the units and areas.

The most extraordinary thing was the behaviour of the airborne troops. A highly controversial role in the putsch was played by Colonel General Pavel Grachev, commander of the airborne forces. From the beginning of the coup, it was rumoured that Grachev had been arrested because he refused to follow orders from defense minister Marshal Yazov. Some of airborne troops from Rayazan, the

airborne officers' training school, sided with the El'tsin camp.⁶¹ This was a real shock because they were part of 'the September 1990 strange troops movement', as seen in chapter 4. On the other hand, a Pskov airborne unit was deployed in Tallinn.⁶² The Moscow City Council building was sealed off by a group of paratroopers from the Kazan and Rayazan bases.⁶³ Moreover, in the afternoon of August 19 Lt General N. Zimin and a paratrooper entered the office of Moscow's Vice Mayor Yu. Luzhkov on an unwritten order from Grachev.⁶⁴ Naturally, one can question whether there was a rebellion by a group of paratroopers, including senior level of officers, who refused to accept Grachev's authority, or Grachev himself changed his mind all of sudden after ordering the troops' movements. In fact, it was proved that the latter was true. In early August Grachev was instructed by Yazov to explore the likely consequences of the instituting of a state of emergency. In the early morning of August 19, when the coup was officially announced, General V. Achalov, who previously commanded the airborne troops and attended a conference of future emergency committee members on August 17, ordered Grachev to alert the Kursk Paratroop Division and moved on Moscow.⁶⁵ Grachev was ordered by Achalov to place under guard major facilities such as the State Bank, the State Reserves, and the Radio and TV offices and subsequently by Yazov to prepare a detention camp. By coded cable the commander of airborne troops put nationwide subordinated troops on full alert.⁶⁶ In a meeting to discuss coordination of Army, KGB, and MVD troops for a attack on the Russian parliament, Grachev declined to take part in the assault, together with first deputy of MVD Gromov. After the coup General Shaposhnikov controversially named Grachev as the chief hero of resistance while confirming that Grachev and himself agreed to oppose the coup and to ensure that neither airborne nor air force personnel took part in the junta.

Let us see the nationwide activities of army troops. There was no unusual

military activity in the Central Asia. Exceptionally, Kirgizstan President A. Akaev immediately after Yanayev's announcement of the coup in the early morning of August 19 was telephoned by the commander of the Turkestan Military District. The commander told him that tanks and troops would be sent into the republic, if Akaev did not dismiss his guards.⁶⁷ But, only helicopters and aircraft flew over Bishkek.

In the case of Georgia, Moldavia, and the Ukraine, the military mutineers showed different approaches. The political leaderships were visited by local commandants and other dispatched generals from the ministry of defense, and asked to side with the emergency committee.

There were talks between Georgian President Z. Gamsakhurdia and the head of the Transcaucasian Military District, Colonel General V. Patrikeev. In general the republican leadership took an equivocal attitude towards the coup. But when Gamsakhurdia was asked to disarm the Georgian National Guard, he agreed to the general's demand.⁶⁸ This promise cost him his political life. After the coup, 15,000 members of the Georgian National Guard announced that they were no longer subordinate to Gamsakhurdia and denounced the Georgian government for not opposing the coup.⁶⁹

President Kravchuk of the Ukrainian met on the morning of August 19 with General V. Varennikov, General V. Chechevatov, commander of the Kiev Military District, and another general named Sharikov. At the meeting Varennikov asked Kravchuk not to encourage the deputies to debate the coup, and he said that "the army has its orders and will act."⁷⁰ Here, the point was that the general said that "should the army have information that the situation requires the introduction of a state of emergency, it will be done."⁷¹ This clearly confirmed the general plan of the coup organizers. Of course, it was self-evident why Varennikov went there at such a tense moment. In part, Kravchuk himself answered: "I understood from him

[Varennikov] that I was on the blacklist after El'tsin, i.e., the Baltics, El'tsin and then me."⁷²

In the morning of 19 August Colonel General V. Osipov and V. Kolesov, commander in chief and deputy commander of the Southwestern Military Theatre, respectively, visited the Moldavian leadership, and announced that Kolesov was in charge of administering the state of emergency as commandant of the city of Kishinev. Subsequently the generals demanded that troops of the army and the MVD join Moldavian police in patrolling Moldavian localities. Rejecting the demands, however, the republican leadership mobilized more than 100,000 citizens to defend public buildings in the republican capital and other towns against possible military seizure. So, this was a somewhat different case. Moreover, some of the theatre forces had already moved from their original military bases and taken up positions in military encampments just outside Kishinev. They even made several attempts to enter Kishinev during the nights of August 19 to 20 and 20 to 21, but each time they were blocked by the human walls.

In the three Baltic republics, it appeared that the January 1991 military crackdown was replayed. Colonel General F. Kuz'min, commander of the Baltic Military District, was declared to be assuming control of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania on behalf of the emergency committee. This was usual, considering the previous military crackdown. But it was significant that the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Latvian Communist Party at a press conference on August 19 announced the news. On the other hand, Kuz'min made it clear that he was not a member of the emergency committee.⁷³ In fact, around twenty-five staff members of the KGB Directorate Five had already been dispatched.⁷⁴ In addition, 300 personnel of the 103rd Paratroop Division had also been positioned along the direction of Lt. General I. Perovas, deputy chairman of the KGB.⁷⁵

The troops of the Army and the MVD, including the airborne troops,

behaved as they had done in January 1991. Some seized broadcasting facilities, parliament buildings, and other major communications facilities on the morning of August 19. Others left their barracks in tanks and armoured vehicles to organize patrols in capitals, i.e., Vilnius, Riga, Tallinn, and other cities and to set up checkpoints at strategically important sites, such as bridges and major intersections. During the operation, they did not meet with any noticeable resistance. In fact, civilians were actually urged to stay away from those important places by their political leaderships.

But there were also noticeable points that revealed the extent of coordination among the troops and subsequently the dynamic of coup organizers. The prime was Kuz'min's denial of his membership of the emergency committee. The army troops arriving in Tallinn were not aware of why they were sent in there until city officials handed out leaflets and talked to the soldiers as in Moscow.⁷⁶ The commander of the military airport in Tartu in Estonia refused the Pskov airborne unit over flight permission, forcing the troops to travel by the land route to Tallinn. Moreover, the head of the Tartu military garrison told a local paper, although it was the second day of the coup, that he would not bring his troops out of their barracks for the duration of the coup.⁷⁷

In the RSFSR it appeared that some commanders were given orders with some autonomy to the extent that if the commander had information that the situation required the introduction of a state of emergency, then he could declare it. In part this was confirmed by what General V. Varennikov told the Ukraine leadership. Colonel General V. Novozhilov, the commander of the Far Eastern Military District, said that he had received instructions from Yazov to "shut down news organs and deploy troops at strategic location."⁷⁸ In fact, the general did not follow the order. In Leningrad the state of emergency was imposed by the commander of the Leningrad Military District but he could not deploy troops

because of the strongest protest by Leningrad Mayor A. Sobchak, or because of negotiations between the two.

First and foremost, Moscow was in the spotlight as in the afternoon of August 19 Yanayev declared a state of emergency. At that time, tanks and other armoured vehicles had already taken up positions up to Manezh Square, but they had not cordoned off major facilities, including the Russian White House. The Moscow operation appeared to have involved all the Army, KGB, and MVD troops, but with some questionable level of interservice coordination. Most likely, the MVD and KGB troops were to form the main forces, based on the lessons of the March 28 operation in Moscow. With regard to armed forces, only one division of the Moscow Military District was to be mobilized with plans for seizing important urban centres in Moscow. According to a correspondent of *Izvestiya*, who had conducted a conversation with the chief of staff of the district, Lt General Zolotov, several days before the coup began V. Achalov had given oral orders to Zolotov, while Moiseev had issued coded telegrams to the same effects.⁷⁹

On the contrary to coup organizers' belief and calculation, from the beginning Moscow's commandant Colonel General N. Kalinin met an unexpected situation. When he ordered the two KGB praetorian guard divisions, the Taman Motor Rifle Division and Kantemirov Tank Division, they displayed doubts about the coup. Some elements of the Taman division, rumoured to have been sent to storm the Russian White House, encircled the building by the morning of August 20. It surely caused shock and disarray both in the KGB leadership and in the General Staff. It might have minor significance in terms of military operation that those tanks and other officers and soldiers from the Tula Airborne Division and Rayazan paratroops school went over to El'tsin side. But the sight of them surrounding the building sent a fatal symbolic signal to the desperate military leaders who had counted on military unity. Moreover, according to Golovatove, the new head of

the KGB's antiterrorists unit, known as "Alpha" squad, the KGB unit also did not obey an order to assault on the building that was planned to start at 03:00 on August 20.⁸⁰

Consequently, Kryuchkov was forced to find alternative troops. On August 20, the KGB chairman signed a coded telegram to some KGB divisions and units. It said that from 20:00 hours, August 20, 1991, 103rd airborne division in Vitebsk, 75th motorized infantry division in Nakhichevan, 48th motorized infantry division in Chuguyev, and 28th detached motorized infantry brigade were to be subordinated to the Task Force Administration, Moscow.⁸¹ In other words, the Administration was to assume control over the combat operations of the units. Meanwhile, leading military figures such as Achalov and Varrenikov spent the whole of August 20 in preparing for an assault on the Russian parliament.

As televised in the West, the assault by pro-junta troops on barricades near the building appeared to be taken as a response to the unexpected situation, i.e., a series of defections. The early 24 hours of the coup went reasonably well, although it was not clear what kind of resistance El'tsin might be able to gather. The positioned tanks were rumbling down Manezh Square but the crowds on the streets were small. To some extent most people were too apathetic, cynical or just plain frightened of the consequences to obey El'tsin's strike call. Moreover, they were given a kind of medicine by the emergency committee's announcement to low food and consumer goods prices.

But there was a big enough minority which rallied round El'tsin boldly. The longer they held out, the faster sympathy for the coup flowed outside Moscow. Once the Russian parliament gradually became a focus of nationwide resistance, the coup leaders were forced into an 'impossible' choice. Some local commanders urged them to take more decisive action. On the night of August 19, Colonel General B. Pyankov, commander of the Siberian MD, sent the coded message to

the emergency committee, which ran "the local military council is puzzled by the efficient action against the Russian republic leaders who continue to hoodwink the people, urging them not to obey the emergency committee decisions. The majority of the working people call for decisive action in which the military council supported them."⁸² Colonel General A. Makashov, commander of the Volga-Urals MD, also said that "the military council and troops of the district are perturbed by the indecisive attitude towards El'tsin and his entourage... Delay is fatal."⁸³ It was clear that El'tsin's resistance had to be broken as soon as possible, i.e., at the night of August 20, if they were to survive. In other words, they had to take the building by force with bloodshed.

In military terms, the defenders were largely unarmed, apart from Molotov cocktails, iron bars and a few small arms. Moreover, the weather, cold and rainy, was keeping many people off the streets and could provide some cover for attackers. Therefore, if a decision to attack was taken, then speed and violence would be of essence. But the troops showed lack of resolve. Rather, they appeared not to act in earnest. The columns of vehicles hung around for hours before probing the barricades. The long hours of waiting, uncertainty, the jeering of the crowd, and possibly lack of clear orders, could undermine troops effectiveness, considerably. In fact, the coup leaders themselves showed lack of resolve. That evening Yanayev said that he would not permit any attack by the armed forces on the building. He even assured El'tsin that, if orders for such an attack existed, he would cancel them.⁸⁴

That is, the coup leadership had already lost its nerve at that time. Besides the defiant citizens, there was the world's media, some of them broadcasting live, to record the event. But it was a real irony that the coup leaders themselves were no longer men of the past: they did not want to shed blood on a Stalinist scale to achieve their ends. On the first day of the putsch, one thing was clear: the army

was not under orders to shoot. For example, a middle ranking officer pestered with angry shouts of protesters in Manezh Square vowed that the troops had not been given an order to fire on people.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, those defending the building had hours to improve their defences to the extent that the lightweight armoured vehicles could not penetrate the barricades. The vehicles used during the operation were originally designed to be dropped from aircraft as part of a fast-moving operation in open country and, therefore, not suitable against barricades of vehicles and concrete. Now a kind of combat engineer vehicle that had a bulldozer blade and crane, and even a built-in search-light for night operations were needed to get more combat vehicles through, disperse the pro-El'tsin crowd, occupy the building, and seize El'tsin, without bloodshed. In short, the attackers became small and even helpless against the defenders. Some of the attacking troops fired a few shots into the air in an effort to disperse the demonstrators, as they were isolated. Although there were three casualties, this was far from the coup organizers' basic line.

The operation clearly disclosed the failure of a coordinated system among different units such as the KGB, MVD and some elite army units. It is quite clear that the coup leaders knew the nature of the barricades. According to General V. Makhailov, chief of the Main Intelligence Administration (GRU), GRU officers in Moscow and personnel from the General Staff's diplomatic academy were ordered to put on civilian clothes and spy on demonstrations and barricades.⁸⁶ Here the main question is why the necessary combat engineer vehicles were not in the fore front. And why did tanks, which were heavier than the armoured troop carriers and thus more suitable to crush the barricades than the troop carriers, remain quiet? One can say that the coup efforts were cut short by the people who took to the streets and to the Russian parliament. However, it is correct only in part. Quite a few stayed at home. Moreover, popular anger cannot stop tanks. Therefore, it

seemed that the issue was decided by the part of the army which did not support the plotters from the beginning. On the second day of the coup, Radio Station, the Moscow Echo, broadcast that Colonel General Shaposhnikov, then CINC of the Air Forces, was arrested. Sobchak announced that the whole of the Air Forces had sided with the El'tsin. In fact, the general was staying in permanent contact with the White House.⁸⁷ This defection, including tanks and paratroopers surrounding the building, significantly boosted the defenders' morale. At the same time it limited the coup leaders' option in terms of military operation.

As a whole, however, Soviet army's action during the coup was still controversial and unclear. Tank columns moved into the streets of Vilnius, Moscow, and other cities. On the other hand, the troops of the Southwestern Military Theatre, which had already moved from their original military bases and taken up positions in military encampments just outside Kishinev, failed to do so. It is too early to know the whole story. The new military leadership drew a veil over the story but something beneficial to themselves in particular and the Soviet armed forces in general.

8.5. New Defense Minister's Approach to Military Reform

In the days following his appointment, the new defense minister Shaposhnikov moved quickly to put his stamp on the military. Firstly, on August 23, he apologized for what he called the "careless, and in certain cases illegal, actions of some military units" and he ensured that "the armed forces would never again be used against the people".⁸⁸ The defense minister in an appeal issued on August 30 *Krasnaya zvezda* bitterly lamented the fact that at a critical point not all of the military leadership adopted a firm stance in opposition to the coup.⁸⁹ The

marshal said that he was proud of his actions during the coup. As mentioned before, Shaposhnikov even disputed descriptions of the putsch as a military coup, arguing that it was a plot by "high-ranking state officials" that counted on some military support.⁹⁰

In addition, the marshal emphasized that the army itself was "guilty of nothing before the Soviet people,"⁹¹ because an "absolute majority" of the armed forces personnel took a firm stance of loyalty to the Constitution.⁹² In this context, he spoke out strongly against what he termed efforts to conduct a "witch-hunt" in the armed forces in the aftermath of the coup. A vindictive search for those who fulfilled orders during the days of the coup and those who did not would be both "immoral and a stain upon the honour of the officer corps," he said.⁹³

Most likely, in a move to strengthen his relations with the armed forces, El'tsin not only praised the role of the armed forces in defending democracy during the coup but also said that he would defend the armed forces from "unjustified criticism."⁹⁴ Moreover, he issued a decree improving social protection for servicemen in Russia. It promised social security guarantees for servicemen and veterans, better housing or rent grants, tax exemption, compulsory state-funded insurance for active-duty servicemen, and legal safeguards for servicemen.⁹⁵ All in all, El'tsin promised to do what the Union government planned to do, but never did.

Meanwhile, the new defense minister tried to find a scapegoat in the Communist Party. Having been a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU, he resigned from the party declaring that the party had failed to stand behind El'tsin during the attempted coup. Since the 28th Party Congress under the leadership of Colonel General N. Shlyaga political officers had been given the task of educating servicemen in the spirit of devoting to the policy of the state. Moreover, vows of allegiance of the USSR President were made at a national conference of party

secretaries of the armed forces held a week before the coup. And a few days before the coup the same vows were also made by the leaders of the Army Committee of the party. As soon as the coup was launched, however, the party branches of the armed forces were ordered to mobilize Communists to carry out the decisions adopted by the emergency committee.⁹⁶ They served the interests of the party.

The marshal firstly linked his resignation with the belief that an army in a multiparty system should be free of political parties and organizations of every kind.⁹⁷ This was consistent with the political leadership's stance towards the communist party in the wake of the coup. Primarily aimed at the Communist Party, on August 22, El'tsin issued a decree ordering the elimination of party bodies and of their activities in all military units stationed on the territory of the Russia. Two days later Gorbachev extended the ban to all military units in the country.⁹⁸ Finally, the new military leadership on August 29 told the USSR Supreme Soviet that he had proposed to Gorbachev not only that party bodies in the armed forces be disbanded but that the military-political organs be eliminated as well.

This kind of effort intended to recover the image of the Soviet armed forces appeared to be successful. In mid-September, the new defense minister was sympathetic even to Yazov by publicly saying that the former defense minister did not shoot at civilians. In an interview with *Nezavisimaya gazeta* Shaposhnikov revealed the remaining part of what Yazov said at the first meeting of the MOD Collegium. "Don't do anything stupid. There will be people in the crowd who will throw themselves in front of the tanks or the throw Molotov cocktails. I want no bloodshed or carnage."⁹⁹ In fact, Lt General V. Manilov had already made a similar comment. The general said in an interview with *Komsomol'skaya pravda* that Yazov participated in the putsch because, once the conspirators got him to say yes, he could not walk backwards.¹⁰⁰ In this context, the involvement of the military in the coup could be simplified. Shaposhnikov continued to say in the interview that

the troops were simply told to enter Moscow and to stop at certain places. Finally, he declared that it was "the people, the time, and the army" that halted the coup.¹⁰¹ This was quite remarkable development, if the military leadership obviously read the mood of Soviet citizens.

Naturally, and at least in public, there was a small scale of purge from the Soviet high command. In mid-September, 9 out of 17 members of the MOD Collegium had left or had been transferred from various reasons.¹⁰² Marshal D. Yazov, General V. Varennikov, General K. Kochev, first deputy defense minister, and General V. Yermakov, head of the chief directorate for personnel were arrested or relieved from their duties as 'active organizers' of the coup. On the other hand, Moiseev was released at 'his own request' from his duties and sent for examination by a military screening commission to be discharged into the reserve for the health reasons. Shlyaga and Achalov¹⁰³ were released from their duties in connection with 'the abolition of the posts'. But the former chief of the MPA was being examined in the hospital by the screening commission. General I. Tretyak¹⁰⁴ and V. Govorov, CINC of the Air Defence and CINC of Civil Defence, respectively, were dismissed from the armed forces for 'age reasons'. Marshal Akhromeev, an adviser to President Gorbachev and the former chief of the General Staff, had already committed suicide.

How could Shaposhnikov become the defense minister? It seemed that there was a differentiated command structure that consisted of only selected army commanders and staff officers, including those generals classified as "active organizers of the coup," together with their counterparts in combat units of the KGB and the MVD. There was no way to know when it was formed and who the prime organizers were. The most authoritative conclusion drawn by the RSFSR parliament through hearings said that "preparation of concrete measures to carry through a coup was initiated in the KGB in December 1990."¹⁰⁵ Doubtless, other

views are possible. Nevertheless, it is quite sure that Yazov was an early participant in the structure. At the start of August 1991 the marshal instructed Grachev to explore the likely consequences of the promulgation of a state of emergency, as mentioned before. The marshal attended a conference of future emergency committee on August 17, when the decision was taken to seize power, and he took part in a major meeting on the night of August 18 called by Kryuchkov, Pugo, and Yazov and attended by Pavlov, Luk'yanov, and others, in order to work out a strategy to do their secret business. In addition, Yazov acted as an official link between the existing command structure, that is, the MOD Collegium, and the other, a possible differentiated one.

General Varennikov was also one of the early participants of the command structure. The general visited Gorbachev in the Crimea on August 18, together with other three figures. Gorbachev was coerced to assent to the conspirators' demands. For this job the general was not able to take part in a major meeting of the MOD Collegium held on August 18. Subsequently the general visited the Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk in order to enlist his support.¹⁰⁶ On August 20, with Achalov, Grachev, and Gromov, the general attended a meeting to discuss coordination of army, KGB and MVD troops for a planned assault against the Russian parliament. Grachev and Gromov declined to attack the building.¹⁰⁷

The extent of Moiseev's involvement in the structure remained unclear, as the reasoning of his release, i.e., at his own request, suggested. Moreover, the general argued that he had no complete information about the coup efforts,¹⁰⁸ and was even appointed to defense minister, though it was for one day. His involvement appeared to be essential and inevitable because of the very vital role that the General Staff could play in mobilising troops. As mentioned before, Moiseev ordered the chief of staff of the Moscow Military District to mobilize one division. But Yashin's explanation of the operation in Moscow was confusing. According to

him, the Moscow operation was prepared by the headquarters of the district on Yazov's directions.¹⁰⁹ It is true, however, that Moiseev ordered a lot of local commanders to make "maximum use of all means and methods" to explain the correctness of the measure being taken by the emergency committee, as the coup launched.¹¹⁰ Incidentally, before the coup officially launched, he did not appear to have used any network of the General Staff, including a computer network.¹¹¹

Considering the actions of these leading military mutineers, the differentiated command structure had been active for more than two weeks before the coup launched. But the initial instruction was issued at 04:30 on August 19. It was addressed to army units and the directive to put troops on alert and called for cooperation with "healthy forces" in local organs of power and with USSR KGB and MVD organs.¹¹² At 06:00, there was the first meeting of the assembled military leadership, the MOD Collegium. Yazov told the collegium that President Gorbachev was sick and that USSR Vice President G. Yanayev had assumed the powers of the presidency.

According to Yashin, who was called back from a holiday by Yazov to attend the meeting, the military leaders were surprised by the announcement of a state of emergency, but they initially carried out those orders issued by Yazov. Incidentally, General Mikhailov, chief of the GRU, also revealed that the first he had known of the military involvement was when he saw troops and armoured vehicles in the streets, as he went to work on August 19.¹¹³ It was another irony that the all-powerful GRU, in terms of intelligence capability, could be forgotten.

Thus there could be a chance for Shaposhnikov to have his doubts and communicate his feelings to other senior officers such as the first deputy commander of the Navy, Admiral I. Kapitanets, Grachev, and so on. On August 20 when the coup met with resistance, Yazov was advised by Shaposhnikov to break with the emergency committee and to order the troops back to their barracks. The

MOD Collegium met once again at 08:00 on August 21, by which time the coup had nearly failed. All participants supported Shaposhnikov's proposal to withdraw the troops, outlaw the emergency committee, and put an end to the whole business.¹¹⁴ Not as member of the emergency committee but as defense minister, Yazov ordered the troops positioned in Moscow to withdraw. In the end, the integrity of the high command could be recovered, and Shaposhnikov became a face-saving figure of the high command.

Being faced with the issue of the Soviet armed forces' future, the new military leadership began negotiations with republican authorities. On September 10 and 11, Shaposhnikov met with representatives of the 12 republics and the three Baltic states to discuss military reforms and related centre-periphery responsibilities. The talks focused on how to retain a single military force and ensure a unified command of Soviet nuclear weapons. On a broader plane Shaposhnikov called for a clear demarcation of republican and all-Union responsibility for defense questions. In a compromising way, for example, he suggested that the Soviet armed forces on a sovereign republic's territory would pledge to defend the external borders of the republic and the state as a whole; there would be the principle of noninterference by the army in the republic's internal affairs; and military exercises, manoeuvres, and redeployment of troops would only occur by agreement with the republics. In return, he hoped that sovereign republics ensured the conditions for the armed forces' presence on their territory.¹¹⁵ At that time a lot of republics, including the Baltic states, were demanding the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces their territories.

Concerning sovereign republic's rights, the marshal offered that republican governments could participate in formulating and implementing military policy, drawing up the defense budget, training reserves, and organizing the draft. These were consistent with the final draft of a New Union Treaty. In this respect, the

defense minister considered the restructuring of the ministry of defense to be necessary.¹¹⁶ He even advocated republican control over small formations similar to national guard units that could also serve as a type of armed forces reserve. Later Shaposhnikov clarified the creation of the national guard units in a detailed way. They were to protect republican government institutions and other major facilities. But they had to carry only firearms "without any military equipment." And in wartime they could provide a reserve "for the Soviet armed forces."¹¹⁷

However, the new military leadership's trial had not continued so long. In principle, Colonel General V. Semenov, the new CINC of the Ground Forces, for example, accepted that the structure of the ground forces would depend upon arrangements outlined in any future Union treaty. But in practical terms he urged that a unified army be retained. The main point of his arguments was that individual republics were unable to finance or train well-equipped ground forces. Therefore, only a strong central government could maintain military forces capable of reliably ensuring the security of the Union, he stated.¹¹⁸

Meanwhile, Shaposhnikov also became a strong spokesman against any defense budget cuts. In general, he accepted that the country faced no "genuine" external threat, as the former military leadership did. He consequently agreed to Gorbachev's major arms control proposal, including the reduction of 700,000 men. He argued, however, that it was necessary to increase the capabilities of those that were retained. At the same time, the new defense minister revealed the fact that 185,000 families of officers and warrant officers had nowhere to live.¹¹⁹ This was one of main areas used by the former military leadership as a base for more money. The housing problem could be resolved only by the revising of the budget structure. He knew this, too. The defense minister said that there would be a significant increase in the capital for housing construction at the expense of funds for the training infrastructure, testing grounds, airfields, and commanding

centres.¹²⁰

Consequently, the military leadership appeared to have come up with the previous ideas, as far as the major military reform issues were concerned. However, in the context of the Soviet civil-military relations, the failed coup brought the overall crisis to the limit. The most critical thing was the collapse of statehood. Nevertheless, it brought something invaluable in terms of the future civil-military relation. A commander's order had been law for his subordinates in the history of the Soviet armed forces. After the coup, however, it was argued that orders be "legal and sufficiently correct" so as not to cause any doubts. Shaposhnikov, who was one of disobedient to Yazov during the coup, stated that orders should be checked both against "people's consciences" and against the "law."¹²¹ In particular, reminding the major incidents in civil-military relations such as Tbilisi, Baku, and Vilnius incidents, including the August coup, he argued that there should be "a [MOD] collegium decision and two signatures," that of defence minister and chief of the General Staff.¹²² According to him, those incidents were done over the telephone.

8.6. How to Divide the Soviet Armed Forces

In September 1991 the USSR Congress of People's Deputies declared itself redundant, after confirming self-determination of the union republics. Its key decision was a law on bodies of Soviet state power and administration of the USSR during an unspecified transitional period.¹²³ This passed all its powers to the Supreme Soviet and a new State Council, which consisted of the Soviet President and top officials from the union republics. Union bodies responsible for the country's defence, security, and order and foreign affairs were to be directed by the

President by agreement with the new State Council.

These arrangements were designed to operate only until a new Union Treaty was signed. Consequently, on October 18, 1991, eight republics signed the treaty of the new economic community, laying the basis for a joint effort against the socioeconomic crisis.¹²⁴ It stressed private ownership, free enterprise, and competition, and bound the republics to stimulate business. They pledged not to unilaterally divide shared property or put up trade barriers between each other. The Ruble was the common currency, but members were free to have their own currencies.

But immediately after its signing, acute political frictions among the republics became more apparent. The redistribution of authority turned out to be rather explosive. The expropriation of the Soviet armed forces in republican favour became a vital issue. A strong centre was in principle incompatible with the idea of sovereignty. But as a coordinator the centre was seriously needed not only for domestic troubles but also for the West, which insisted on dealing with one, not twelve partners.

As everyone took it necessary and good, on November 14, a new political treaty was agreed upon along the principle of the Novo-Ogarevo agreement.¹²⁵ However, no sensation was created. Ukraine President L. Kravchuk again cast aspersion on the very idea of an "union of sovereign states." Armenia, Moldavia, and Georgia were even more outspoken.

Under these circumstances Gorbachev tried to secure the rapidly collapsing union. Characteristically he fought almost to the end of his days in the Kremlin for the preservation of the union and his own position. By that time Gorbachev was observed even to send signals to the military, hoping the last all-union institution would back him in action against what he saw as an "unconstitutional seizure of power" by El'tsin and his colleagues in the Ukraine and Belorussia,¹²⁶ who had a

founding meeting of the commonwealth. On December 7 1991, chief of the General Staff, General Lobov, was replaced by Colonel General Samsonov, who was the commandant of Leningrad during the coup. This incident was reported as a result of the conflict between chief of the General Staff and defense minister.¹²⁷ Considering the fact that the general Samsonov was strongly supported by the democrats, in particular, Leningrad Mayor Sobchak,¹²⁸ we could speculate that there was a linkage between Gorbachev and Lobov against democrats.

Of course, it appeared that Shaposhnikov had already sided with the Russian leadership since he established intimate relationship with El'tsin amid of the coup. Moreover, El'tsin had already gained popularity a lot in the Soviet armed forces. The decisive factor was probably his August 28 decree improving social protection for servicemen in Russia. In addition, as mentioned before, none of democrats who gathered around the Russian leadership addressed a bad word to the army divisions which took part in the coup attempt. It was repeatedly stated that the army did not turn against the people. Therefore, it was quite understandable that in mid-December at a time when Gorbachev was still head of the Soviet armed forces, the defense minister discussed future military strategy with El'tsin.¹²⁹

Furthermore, Gorbachev's position was fatally weakened by the republics' refusal to fund his government. The governments of the republics had simply stopped pouring money into central coffers, leaving a huge sum of budget deficit. Gorbachev even tried playing a Central Asia card, knowing that he had a strong pro-union ally, President N. Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, and that the other Central Asian leaders preferred him to El'tsin. But they also refused.

So power slipped inexorably from Gorbachev's grasp. President Gorbachev was left only with a humiliating shell of office. In fact, he had no choice but to depart from the office. On Christmas day of 1991 President Gorbachev resigned, after signing a decree ending his function as CINC of the armed forces. At that

time, the Supreme Soviet had already disappeared.

The document was handed to Marshal Shaposhnikov, the last defense minister of the USSR and the man who would oversee the transfer of the Soviet armed forces to a joint commonwealth army. Thus, it was no longer necessary to argue for the reform of the Soviet armed forces. The remainder of work was how to divide them among the former union republics.

The issue of how to divide the Soviet armed forces, particularly, nuclear weapons, had already become serious since in November the Ukraine parliament decided to place the armed forces stationed in the republic under its jurisdiction. At first the Ukraine insisted that it did not want to be a nuclear power but opposed the handing of the weapons over either Gorbachev or Russia. Now its defense ministry was formed under the leadership of General Konstantin Morozov. In early December, Kravchuk declared himself head of all the Soviet troops on Ukrainian soil and pressed ahead with forming a Ukrainian army.

As the Ukraine leadership and the Soviet high command entered into a quarrel in earnest,¹³⁰ the West began to show its acute and urgent concern. But its concern was no longer primarily that the Soviet military machine might be mobilised for an all-out attack on it. On the contrary the West worried that the machine might not be under any political control at all.

The immediate implementation of the recent Bush-Gorbachev's proposals for the removal and destruction of non-strategic weapons was suggested as the single, most important step that could be taken. Bush and Gorbachev had already traded spectacular new nuclear disarmament initiatives. On September 27 1991, President Bush announced a unilateral move by the US to withdraw and destroy US ground-based tactical nuclear weapons deployed abroad, and on surface ships, attack submarines and naval aircraft, mostly deployed in Europe.¹³¹

Within one week, these unilateral measures were fully supported by the

Soviet Union. On October 5, Gorbachev responded with great interest that not only matched the American cuts but also challenged President Bush and to make even faster strides towards disarmament, starting with a nuclear test ban. First, weapons to be eliminated were nuclear artillery and battlefield missiles. Second, weapons to be removed from alert or active service were heavy bombers, 500 strategic missiles, tactical naval weapons, and three nuclear missile submarines. And finally, other unilateral moves were suggested: Soviet armed forces to be cut by 700,000 men, one-year nuclear test moratorium, and strategic offensive weapons to be cut to 5,000 over seven years, instead of to 6,000 as envisaged by START Treaty.¹³² The nature and motive of Bush's proposal was quite clear, when it first appeared. The US politico-military leadership could have concluded that tactical nuclear weapons had their day. This was not the only reason for the Western initiative. After the euphoria at the failure of the coup had died down, the West suddenly saw that the USSR no longer existed, the centre was disappearing, and 27,000 Soviet nuclear warheads were crawling out of the woodwork. Facing the bitter example of the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the West began to wonder what would happen if the nuclear weapons were involved in a similar ethnic conflict in the Soviet Union.

Soviet nuclear weapons were deployed not only in Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan, which held the strategic missiles, but also in nearly all of the other republics in the form of from nuclear-tipped air defence missiles to nuclear artillery shells. Particularly, these tactical nuclear weapons alarmed the world. It was estimated that there were about 16,500 tactical nuclear weapons,¹³³ including short-range battlefield missiles, anti-submarine rockets, bombs, artillery shells, mines, surface-to-air missiles, and ship-to-ship weapons; and as many as 5,000 nuclear artillery shells distributed throughout at least nine republics.

Up to then Soviet nuclear weapons had been protected by a very effective,

centralised command and control system against any unauthorised access, seizure or major accident. The current process of social, political, economic, and ethnic disintegration was forcing everyone in the collapsing Union, and by no means least in the Soviet armed forces, to re-examine their most basic loyalties. In certain cases, it was almost impossible for the weakened centre to fully control the movement of tactical nuclear weapons. Moreover, orders to use them could be given by officers as low-level as regimental level of formations. In mid-December, Dick Cheney, the US Defense Secretary, assessed that while the Soviets were well doing a job in securing their nuclear capability, they did not control up to 250 warheads.¹³⁴

Hence both the Soviet Union and the West were in a hurry. Bush probably believed that a full-scale nuclear deal was only possible with the centre, Gorbachev. Delay could only make nuclear weapons, particularly tactical ones, a bone of contention at the talks on independence for the sovereign republics. And that could mean the West having to hold nuclear disarmament talks not with the USSR but with a dozen independent nuclear states.

Therefore, authorities of the union republics had to be persuaded that it was in their interest to allow such weapons to be withdrawn, to deactivation sites in Russia where practical difficulties preclude that, or to be disabled in place. Ironically, James Baker, the US Secretary of State, became a pioneer in such an effort at a time when the strategic weapons had already become an invaluable bargaining chip to be used in negotiations between Russia and the other republics. Carrying specific proposals to safeguard the Soviet nuclear weapons, Baker travelled to Russia, Ukraine, Belorussia, and Kazakhstan where strategic nuclear missiles were deployed. Moreover, the US Congress set aside money around 220 million pounds for use for dismantling Soviet missiles.¹³⁵

At last, a nuclear agreement signed on December 21 in Alma Ata. Eleven commonwealth republics, including Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, and

Kazakhstan, accepted a single command for strategic nuclear weapons, and thus at least should have satisfied many of the West's concerns about the risks of control and even proliferation. However, they all did not accept that the rest of the army should remain under single command. The Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldavia were still adamant that they wanted their own armed forces. Moreover, they argued that these armies be formed on the basis of the troops already stationed in their republics.

Consequently, the Soviet armed forces was to break up of its own accord, along geographical and ethnic lines against what was supposed to happen in the aftermath of the coup: the former Soviet armed forces would remain under central command, while being gradually reduced in size to become a fully professional commonwealth force. Less than one week since Gorbachev resigned, *Krasnaya zvezda*, with a headline saying "The army cannot be cut up alive," argued that the armed forces were too complex an organism to be carved up without jeopardising the security of the CIS.¹³⁶ But this warning was of no use.

The final effort of eight leaders of former Soviet republics, who met to have a talk over the contentious issue of a unified military command for conventional forces in Minsk on December 30, was also not useful. In fact, the text of the Minsk agreement left open the question of republic armies, bowing to the insistence of Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldavia. Based on this agreement, President Kravchuk of Ukraine further tried to keep under his control tactical forces, which would include any units, such as mechanised infantry divisions and armoured divisions, equipped with nuclear weapons. Most likely the Soviet armed forces would be divided, and very soon. Nevertheless, only Ukraine was able to raise a more or less independent army and a fleet of its own. There were enough ethnic Ukrainians among the officers having taken the oath of allegiance to Kiev to staff Ukrainian army cadres. Indeed, Ukraine had a number of officer training schools graduating

officers for all the branches. The raising of Moldavia's armed forces on the basis of a division of the Odessa Military District, which was to go over to Ukraine, created problems. The ethnic and political situation in the republic was more complicated than Ukraine. It was a difficult choice for the servicemen, particularly officers and NCOs, of the division to take an oath to defend its borders. Azerbaijan failed to persuade the local army commanders to defend its borders, and decided to raise its own armed forces. It was difficult to imagine that the officers of the four divisions stationed in the republic, consisting primarily of Slavs, as everywhere, would take the Azerbaijanian oath and would be ready to carry out orders from Baku. Nevertheless, some officers of other nationalities might agree to serve in the newly formed Azerbaijanian army. In short, Azerbaijan had much greater needs but very limited possibilities. Having raised its own armed forces on the basis of a military district, Belorussia was expected to establish close cooperation with Russia in the military field. The other member states of the CIS would most likely form a united army in which Russia would naturally play a leading role. The Central Asian republics would receive security guarantees from their great northern neighbour, evidently on favourable financial terms, and in this way Russia would prevent the appearance of a dangerous vacuum south of its borders.

Meanwhile, the Soviet armed forces became disunited, muddled by the multitude of oaths, and muzzled by social problems. Under the leadership of Marshal Shaposhnikov, the Army was no longer politically heterogeneous and had no backbone in the shape of a military concept.

In the end, in April 1992 Russian President El'tsin issued a decree ordering the creation of an independent Russian defence establishment. In May 1992 Army General P. Grachev was appointed to the post of Russian defense minister along the decree. This virtually ended the Shaposhnikov interregnum. If the creation of the CIS in December 1991 marked the end of the Soviet period in the political

sphere, then Grachev's appointment meant the beginning of the post-Soviet period in the security sphere, in general, and of the new civil-military relations in Russia, in particular.

¹ *Pravda*, March 9, 1991.

² *Pravda*, November 24, 1990.

³ *Radio Rossiya*, March 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-048*, p. 73.

⁴ *Central Television*, March 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-047*, p. 35.

⁵ *Radio Rossiya*, March 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-048*, p. 73.

⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 12, 1991.

⁷ *Moscow News*, No. 14, 1991, p. 1.

⁸ *Soviet Weekly*, March 28, 1991, p. 2.

⁹ *Moscow News*, No. 16, 1991, p. 7.

¹⁰ *Moscow News*, No. 14, 1991, p. 1.

¹¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 4, 1991.

¹² *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 2, 1991.

¹³ For Yazov's speech in the conference, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 2, 1991 and for Shlyaga's speech, see *Krasnaya zvezda*, March 30, 1991.

¹⁴ "Dogovor o soyuze cuverenny gocudarstv," *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 28, 1991.

¹⁵ *Izvestiya*, March 31, 1990.

¹⁶ *Izvestiya*, September 22, 1989.

¹⁷ *New Times*, No. 50, 1991, p. 8.

¹⁸ *TASS*, December 2, 1990, cited in *Report on the USSR*, No. 50, 1990, p. 23. See also *Jane's Defence Weekly*, March 2, 1991, p. 305.

¹⁹ *Pravda*, July 17, 1989. See also, *Moscow News*, No. 30, 1991, p. 15.

²⁰ Mark Galeotti, "The Role of the Security Forces," *Report on the USSR*, No. 36, 1991, p. 5.

²¹ *Jane's Defence Weekly*, March 2, 1991, p. 305. See also *Moscow News*, No. 30, 1991, p. 15.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Moscow News*, No. 24, 1990, p. 5.

²⁴ *Report on the USSR*, No. 50, 1990, p. 40.

²⁵ *New Times*, No. 46, 1990, p. 11.

²⁶ *Report on the USSR*, No. 5, 1991, p. 15.

²⁷ *Moscow News*, No. 19, 1991, p. 5.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Soviet Weekly*, May 16, 1991, p. 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Moscow News*, No. 19, 1991, p. 5.

³² Mark Galeotti, "Eyewitness of Account of Policing of Moscow Demonstration," *Report on the USSR*, No. 16, 1991, pp. 9-10.

³³ *Moscow News*, No. 14, 1991, p. 5.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ *Russian Television*, September 3, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-165*, p. 51.
- ³⁸ *Izvestiya*, June 17 and 21, 1991; *Pravda*, June 18, 1991.
- ³⁹ *Moscow News*, No. 16, 1991, p. 7.
- ⁴⁰ *The Times*, June 19, 1991.
- ⁴¹ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, July 10, 1991.
- ⁴² *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, June 27, 1991.
- ⁴³ *Radio-1*, June 21, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-120*, p. 28.
- ⁴⁴ *Knight-Ridder Newspapers*, June 22, 1991, cited in Dawn Mann, "An Abortive Constitutional Coup d'Etat?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 27, 1991, p. 4.
- ⁴⁵ *Krasnaya zvezda*, June 26, 1991.
- ⁴⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, April 2, 1991 and *Pravda*, April 1, 1991.
- ⁴⁷ *TASS*, June 26, 1991, cited in Stephen Foye, "Gorbachev's Return to Reform: What Does It Mean for the Armed Forces?" *Report on the USSR*, No. 28, 1991, p. 7.
- ⁴⁸ First deputy chairman Colonel General V. Grushko frequently attended meetings with the future emergency committee members, meanwhile his aide drafted "the initial measures for stabilizing the situation in the country in the event of the promulgation of a state of emergency." G. Ageev, another first deputy, directed operations on Foros. He ordered the USSR President's communications to be disconnected. Major General Lebedev, a deputy chairman, commanded that the forces of the Directorate Five and the Department of Information and Analysis of the KGB be active. In particular, the deputy supervised the drafting and circulation of emergency committee's documents. Lt. General I. Petrovas, a deputy chairman, placed the special purpose groups on a heightened alert. In collaboration with the MOD, the deputy directed troop movements in Moscow and dispatched 300 personnel of the 103 Paratroop Division to the Baltics. Finally, Yu. Plekhanov, chief of the KGB security detail, was assumed to command the 79th Border Guard Detachment and the 5th Separate Coastguard Brigade boats, which were on President Gorbachev's guard in Crimea.
- ⁴⁹ *Report on the USSR*, September 6, 1991, p. 75.
- ⁵⁰ *New Times*, No. 8, 1992, p. 6.
- ⁵¹ Konstantin Pleshakov, "Abaddon takes off his dark glasses," *New Times*, No. 38, 1991, p. 12.
- ⁵² *New Times*, No. 10, 1992, p. 7.
- ⁵³ *Russian Television*, August 28, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-168*, pp. 72-73.
- ⁵⁴ Simon Kordonsky, "The coup d'etat: a failure fraught with consequences," *New Times*, No. 37, 1991, p. 14.
- ⁵⁵ *Pravda*, August 20, 1991.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ⁵⁷ *Soviet Weekly*, September 5, 1991, p. 7.
- ⁵⁸ *The Times*, August 22, 1991.
- ⁵⁹ *Russian Television*, August 24, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-165* pp. 30-31.
- ⁶⁰ *Soviet Weekly*, September 5, 1991, p. 7.
- ⁶¹ C. Bellamy, "Rank and file loyalties at odds with the leadership," *The Independent*, August 21, 1991, p. 2.
- ⁶² *Russian Television*, August 28, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-168*, pp. 72-73.
- ⁶³ *Moscow News*, Nos. 34-35, 1991, p. 7.

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- 64 Ibid.
- 65 Ibid.
- 66 *New Times*, No. 10, 1992, p. 7.
- 67 *Moscow News*, Nos. 34-35, 1991, p. 44.
- 68 Ibid., p. 41.
- 69 Ibid., p. 42.
- 70 *Molod' Ukrainy*, August 27, 1991, cited in Roman Solchanyk, "Ukraine: Kravchuk's Role," *Report on the USSR*, No. 36, 1991, p. 49.
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 *The Independent*, August 23, 1991.
- 73 Dzintr Bungis, "Latvia Reaffirms Its Independence," *Report on the USSR*, No. 36, 1991, p. 53.
- 74 *New Times*, No. 8, 1992, p. 5. Under department chief V. Vorotnikov remaining department staff members formed a group that was to place under administrative arrest all who in Vorotnikov's opinion could destabilize the situation in Moscow during the promulgation of an emergency situation.
- 75 Ibid.
- 76 Riina Kionka, "A Break with the Past," *Report on the USSR*, No. 36, 1991, p. 60.
- 77 *Postimees*, August 22, 1991, cited in Riina Kionka, "A Break with the Past," p. 60.
- 78 *Le Monde*, September 3, 1991, cited in Riina Kionka, "Weekly Record of Events," *Report on the USSR*, No. 37, 1991, p. 28.
- 79 *Izvestiya*, August 22, 1991.
- 80 *The Independent*, August 28, 1991.
- 81 *New Times*, No. 36, 1991, p. 19.
- 82 *New Times*, No. 10, 1992, p. 6.
- 83 Ibid.
- 84 *Report on the USSR*, August 30, 1991, p. 51.
- 85 *New Times*, No. 36, 1991, p. 14.
- 86 *Soviet Weekly*, September 12, 1991, p. 6.
- 87 *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, September 12, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-180*, p. 28.
- 88 *Izvestiya*, August 25, 1991.
- 89 Shaposhnikov, "Obrashchenie ministra oborony SSSR," *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 31, 1991.
- 90 *Russian Television*, August 28, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-168*, pp. 72-73.
- 91 *Izvestiya*, August 25, 1991.
- 92 Shaposhnikov, "Obrashchenie ministra oborony SSSR."
- 93 Ibid.
- 94 E. Teague, S. Wise, and S. Girmius, "Record of Events in the Week of the Coup," *Report on the USSR*, No. 36, 1991, p. 101.
- 95 *Soviet Weekly*, September 5, 1991, p. 12.
- 96 For details of departization of the Soviet armed forces, see Stephen Foye, "Maintaining the Union, the CPSU, and the Soviet Armed Forces," *Report on the USSR*, No. 23, 1991, pp. 1-9.
- 97 *Izvestiya*, August 25, 1991.
- 98 Shaposhnikov, "Obrashchenie ministra oborony SSSR."
- 99 *Nezavisimaya gazeta*, September 12, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-180*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, August 27, 1991.

¹⁰¹ *Russian Television*, September 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-175*, p. 41.

¹⁰² *TASS*, September 16, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-180*, p. 30.

¹⁰³ He attended a conference of future emergence committee and spent the night of August 18 with Yazov at the Pavlov's room. The whole of August 20 was spent preparing for an assault on the Russian parliament. The Russian parliament repudiated the demand by the Procurator's Offices to arraign him.

¹⁰⁴ On August 19 to isolate Gorbachev he closed down the Bilbek airfield in the Crimea and ordered out trucks to block the landing strip.

¹⁰⁵ *New Times*, No. 8, 1992, p. 7.

¹⁰⁶ *The Daily Telegraph*, August 28, 1991.

¹⁰⁷ *New Times*, No. 10, 1992, pp. 10-11.

¹⁰⁸ *Interfax*, August 22, 1992, in *FBIS-SOV-91-164*, p. 38.

¹⁰⁹ *Radio-1*, August 23, 1992, in *FBIS-SOV-91-165*, p. 32.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Moscow News*, Nos. 34-35, 1991, p. 7.

¹¹² *Komsomol'skaya pravda*, August 27, 1991.

¹¹³ *Soviet Weekly*, September 12, 1991, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ *Central Television*, August 23, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-165*, pp. 32-33.

¹¹⁵ *Russian Television*, September 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-175*, p. 9.

¹¹⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, August 31, 1991.

¹¹⁷ *Pravda*, September 25, 1991.

¹¹⁸ *Russian Television*, September 9, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-175*, pp. 35-48.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ *Pravda*, September 25, 1991.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ Ann Sheehy, "Power Passes to the Republics," *Report on the USSR*, No. 37, 1991, pp. 1-3.

¹²⁴ The agreement was signed by Armenia, Belorussia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenia, and Uzbekistan. The Ukraine, Moldova, and Azerbaijan were expected to join if they could get satisfactory responses to their criticisms of some clauses. For details, see *FBIS-SOV-91-203*, p. 46.

¹²⁵ *TASS*, November 14, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-221*, p. 25.

¹²⁶ *The Guardian*, December 27, 1991.

¹²⁷ *Radio Rossiya*, December 8, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-236*, p. 25.

¹²⁸ *Radio Rossiya*, December 8, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-236*, p. 26.

¹²⁹ *The Independent*, December 16, 1991.

¹³⁰ *Moscow News*, No. 44, 1991, pp. 8-9.

¹³¹ *Krasnaya zvezda*, October 5, 1991.

¹³² *Central Television*, October 5, 1991, in *FBIS-SOV-91-194*, p. 1.

¹³³ *The Times*, December 16, 1991.

¹³⁴ *The Independent*, December 16, 1991.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ *Krasnaya zvezda*, December 28, 1991.

CHAPTER 9. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has chosen as its topic the public debates on the restructuring of Soviet armed forces in terms of 'reasonable sufficiency' for 'defensive defense' and the military reform movement in relation to the domestic reforms taking place. In this way it was possible to grasp the nature of the issues and stakes of Soviet civil-military relations under the Gorbachev leadership.

The relations underwent a process of change from a traditional Soviet type Party-military relations, through a germinal Western style civil-military relations, and finally to a kind of the Third World style, in which the military became a 'sword and shield' of the political leadership through a short-time contract designed to secure the Soviet Union. This is not a place to make certain conceptual distinctions among those three styles.¹ Here the Third World style mainly refers to a sweeping role expansion of the Soviet armed forces. Once the contract was broken by Gorbachev, a coalition of the conservative forces composed of state institutions, Party, military, and defense industry carried out the coup and its failure led, in the end, to the break-up of the Soviet Union. Consequently, the new round of debates on military reform among former Union republics was concerned with the ironic question of how to divide the Soviet armed forces.

During the period, as we have examined, there was a dramatic increase in the number of civilian participants in the military reform movement. Indeed grass roots' support for it became the foundation of genuine civilian control over the military establishment. At the same time, the scope of the debates progressively widened and deepened and the interaction between the advocacy of military reform and the stubborn high command was also radicalized with no area of compromise between the two polemics. In fact, the debates were replaced with activities that seemed

highly organized, secret, or illegal. These unprecedented developments clearly denied all assumptions of traditional perspectives on the Soviet civil-military relations.

The origins of those developments were related to Gorbachev's method of the intervention in military affairs. Simply, the party leadership brought into the public arena, for the first time, a series of foreign and security issues. To make this tactic successful, he tried to build a wide range of supportive networks for the new security policy from the political leadership to the citizens and even to the rank and file officers of the armed forces under the rubric of *glasnost*' and democratization. At the same time, he continuously excluded both the military leadership and its possible supporters from the highest level of the defense decisionmaking process.

Originally the debate was designed to claim the Party's jurisdiction over military doctrine, but *glasnost*' and democratization significantly altered not only the relationship of the Party and society but also that of the military and society. *Glasnost*' legitimized new forms of expression and activity against the Soviet ideology that was the very foundation of both the party and the Soviet armed forces. Democratization effected the calculus of costs and benefits associated with political activism.

Consequently, the military reform issue even became a politically useful bargaining chip. This erosion of the core ideology and institution not only transformed the nature of Soviet politics and but also produced the new political system. As a result, the top leaders in the Politburo were divided. This polarization, reflected in Soviet society itself, made it possible for the military to side with the conservatives within the party apparatus in order to secure its interests, as Kolkowicz's generalization on Soviet Party-military relations suggested. Thus, Gorbachev not only lost, to a certain extent, his personal influence over his own appointees but also power of the general secretaryship over the high command,

including the MPA. On the other hand, he gained the support of rank and file officers as well as a community of civilian military experts, who mainly linked to the ministry of foreign affairs. In particular, a group of junior and middle level officer deputies became a very decisive force in tackling the issues facing the armed forces with the help of mass media. All these forces opened a new era of the genuine civil-military relations under the conditions given by political reform.

In democracies, two mechanisms are significant to ensure civilian control over the military: the budget process and the framework of laws. For the new born Soviet parliament, the latter was important, because previously there had not been such a framework. In principle, the formal, legal definition of parliamentary control and of the political roles that the military in the new system are to play should be established. In practical terms, however, this definition has to be based on an ethic of partnership among civilian authorities, citizens, and military. The military must not only be ready to accept a civil definition of what the military's responsibility ought to be but also must feel that this definition is legitimate. The society must have well-defined boundaries for the exclusive exercise of power and control by the military on the one hand and by civilians on the other. Moreover, in a period of transition the military should remain politically neutral. Restraint is also needed on the civilian side as well.

In reality, as we have seen, the Gorbachev leadership was ambiguous. Partly they tried to keep these fundamentals in mind, but in general they publicly brought pressure to bear on the military. Probably the high command considered the pressure to be unnecessary. This pressure came from the political leadership's efforts to raise the weight of the new political system as soon as possible. In some sense, Gorbachev was forced to give the public, who regarded the high command to be an obstacle in perestroika's path, the impression that he was also eager with regard to military reform as well as arms control. Gorbachev's public

announcement about the details of the defense budget at the opening session of the Supreme Soviet was typical of this. Needless to say, there was also the interaction with economic requirements.

The advocacy of various sociopolitical forces' military reform was so strong that it could not set military goals that were both feasible and attainable. With regard to the vital question of who was to form national security and military policies, for example, civilians simply denied the status of the Defense Council and the General Staff. They hardly considered the fact that alternative mechanisms were not yet established.

In addition, they tried to intervene too much in the inner problems of the military. Their haste to exclude the representatives of the military from the decisionmaking process and the lack of knowledge, input, and control on the part of the broad body politic, combined with the obstinacy of many of members of the high command, led to distrust of the military or antimilitary sentiment in society. People spoke of the necessity of control over the military, in principle, by people, and, on behalf of people, in practice, by the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, and the President. However, it was all talk and no action. In reality, they denied all these authorities, too, and thus denied the fundamental of 'objective' control.

A mechanism of subjective control, the MPA, was on the process of collapse as the political reform proceeded. Civilian control, which in Kolkowicz's paradigm was achieved by subjective means and in Odom was not seen as problematic at all, was in Colton affected by both subjective and objective means, but with a tendency toward the predominance of the objective. Paradoxically, the Soviets rejected both means under the parliamentary system.

Consequently, the Soviet armed forces, which had been secured by the systematic, multiple buffering system, were barely exposed to naive politics. The

high command was forced to uphold the prestige of the military and the material well-being of officers. Certainly, there were problems of corruption and incompetence and even a growing cleavage between officers and generals. The economic constraints facing the Soviets were very serious so that it was understandable that drastic arms cuts were so frankly linked to budget deficits and economic reform. Nonetheless, civilians should have resisted such a nasty urge to indulge in scapegoatism.

Not surprisingly, the military establishment tried to defend its own legitimacy and to engage in projects tangential to its primary mission to demonstrate that it was not a drain on society and that it had an essential role to play. Furthermore, it had effective means to defend itself. Once the military became politicized, effective parliamentary control of the armed forces soon became fictitious. The Soviet parliament was unable to act as a directing force because the military did not give it the information, including details of the defense budget, indispensable for control. The well-entrenched triad of the party conservatives, the high command, and defense industry resisted any transitions in the military economy field at the parliament. This was clearly reflected by the efforts of the Supreme Soviet Committee for Defense and State Security. The so-called two 'black colonels' became the military's spokesmen in the Soviet politics, as Shevardnadze's resignation speech suggested.

The most alarming development was the fact that, as democratization continued, power rapidly diffused in the fourth and fifth years of perestroika. Very little power was transferred to the USSR Supreme Soviet, and only some remained in the Party, but most of power drifted inexorably to the republics. This had great implications for the civil-military relations. When incipient nationalist political movements in a number of republics gained political power, they demanded that 'a military-political alliance of sovereign states' must form military policy. In fact, this

demand was accompanied by the near collapse of conscription in such republics as the Baltics, Georgia, and Moldavia. This was a clear manifestation of how real and powerful the republican authorities' control over the Soviet armed forces were. In fact, It was so quick that the military establishment could not adapt itself to the new situation steadily.

The winter of 1990-1991 was a decisive moment in terms of Soviet politics. It was at a time when the sociopolitical situations had already developed to such a point that a restoration of rigid controls over autonomous activity by non-political means was hardly conceivable in numerous regions of the USSR. It was also at a time when the outcome of the struggle between reformers and conservatives became apparent in the RSFSR where the fate of perestroika in the Soviet Union as a whole was likely to be decided. Although, the RSFSR was then suffering from all the chaotic disorders resulting from the immaturity of newly formed political movements and parties, its leadership presented a serious challenge to Gorbachev. Moreover, the gap of central authority between the extremes of the political spectrum widened. The brilliant centrist Gorbachev thus found it difficult to satisfying either the reformist radicals or the traditionalist conservatives, although his position was generally secure.

Under these circumstances, President Gorbachev made a contract with the high command to keep the Union secure. Of course, this effort could be seen as a reasonable goal for the 'Soviet' President. Here the main thing was how to secure the Union. Accordingly, Gorbachev's decision to turn to the right appeared to be the undoing of all his patient work and, at the same time, made the Soviet Union in a limited sense a garrison state, in which the military was given priority over any other societal institution in return for being his reliable sword and shield against republican powers. Consequently, the high command could regain professional autonomy, in particular, with regard to how to reform the armed forces and ended

one-sidedly the unprecedented public debates on military reform. In addition, they could ensure conscription through strong measures including a military crackdown.

There was a carefully calculated period of preparation. On the one hand, the military establishment tried to inform the public of many instances, which could rationalize the strong measures, ranging from provocative acts of hooliganism against military personnel and units to the figure of draft failures. On the other hand, the high command gathered likely-minded forces around them from the political leadership to the public. The sudden change in the leaderships of the MVD and the MFA reflected this effort. At last, the ministry of defense announced that airborne troops would enforce the draft where turnout for the 1990 draft was low. On the whole, both the timing of Yazov's announcement and the nature of the military crackdown appeared to be intended to intimidate the political elites in the rebelling republics into signing a new Union treaty. But this calculation was ruined by the Vilnius incident.

In general, the army can alleviate the current systemic crisis but only for a short period. But it is dangerous that once the military is given a free reign in its domestic activities, it can present a threat in the long run to the political leadership itself, as often seen in nondemocratic states.

The aftermath of the Vilnius incident seriously strengthened the positions of supporters of independence from the Soviet Union and centrifugal trends in virtually all republics, including the RSFSR. Although it was too late, Gorbachev recognized this, and he changed his stance on the new Union Treaty. Of course, this forced plotters to proceed with the coup in a hurry. Therefore, Gorbachev should have endured temptations to rely on the military for his power and his view on the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, the Soviets learnt a lot in the aftermath of the failed coup. It proved how powerful the people could be by themselves. Such public activism was

the result of perestroika as a whole and of successful activities of middle level of power in particular. In the past the Soviet military, together with the KGB, had played key roles in leadership struggles, having been called upon by Party leaders to support their efforts. The Soviet people had been accustomed to sudden denunciations of certain leaders and used to official silence on how these men came to power. The coup attempt of August 18-21 1991 was different in many respects. First and foremost, it failed. The Soviet citizens were no longer men of old times. They rallied around El'tsin, opposed the Emergency Committee, and demanded Gorbachev back. In the end, many were jubilant.

Strictly speaking, however, there was little reason for it. It was rather naive to believe that there would be new coup attempts, of course. While observing three features of the Soviet political system -- the weakness of the party system, the lack of a firmly based rule of law, and the weakness of the new pluralist order, which counted upon the "limited" and "qualified" support of the mass public, Stephen White drew a cautious conclusion just after the coup that "a stable pluralistic order might still lie some distance in the future."² The germinal democratic society had to manage the danger of the military-industrial complex, yet. The MIC was left uncontrolled. The Communist Party, which had had the MIC under its control, collapsed. In other words, as far as the future civil-military relations in the country were concerned, it was the time to use the term the MIC instead of the triad of the Communist Party, the military, and defense industry. If the MIC continuously remained uncontrolled, there could be another coup and this time new putschists would strike a well-aimed and merciless blow which human chains could not prevent.

The MIC was not an expletive but a natural existing phenomenon. It cannot be abolished but should be civilized. Consequently, the first task of the democrats, particularly El'tsin, who according to William V. Wallace "has borne the main

responsibility in the course of this crisis [coup], and was in many ways the driving force before the crisis,"³ was how to civilize it.

¹ For a seminal work, see Samuel Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), chapters 1-4. For more significant efforts to arrive at a generalization of the Third World style, see Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1962) and Amos Perlmutter, *The Military and Politics in Modern Times* (New Haven: Yale University Press Press, 1977). For a typical case study of the Third World style, see Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

² Stephen White, "Towards a Post-Soviet Politics?" in *Development in Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics*, eds. Stephen White, Alex Pravda, and Zvi Gitelman (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 16 and 16-21, respectively.

³ *BBC*, August 21, 1991.

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