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CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

8 Wilfred Street, London SW1E 6 PL. Tel: 01-828 1176

11 August 1987

'CHANGE IN THE USSR'

I am enclosing a copy of the transcript made at the Conference held on Friday 10 July 1987, at the Institution of Civil Engineers.

With best wishes,

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Secretary to the Centre

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CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES

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"CHANGE IN THE USSR" CONFERENCE.

held at

Institution of Civil Engineers,
Great George Street, LONDON, SW1.

C

on

Friday, 10th July, 1987

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LORD THOMAS of SWYNNERTON

(Chairman)

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P R O C E E D I N G S

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A

PARTICIPANTS

Lord Abinger

Mr Lionel Bloch

B

Rev. Michael Bourdeaux Keston College.

Dr. Peter Boyle Department of American
Studies, University of
Nottingham.

Miss Marjorie Brady Russian Research Foundation

C

Mr R.E. Brinkley Foreign Office.

Mr Mark Crean Collins Harvill.

D

Mr Stephen Dalziel Soviet Studies Research
Centre, Royal Military
Academy, Sandhurst.Mr Martin Dewhurst Department of Slavonic
Languages, University of
Glasgow.

E

Mr Stephen de Mowbray

Mr C.J. Dick Soviet Studies Research
Centre, Royal Military
Academy, Sandhurst.

Mrs Jessica Douglas Home.

F

Mr Daniel Dultzin Counsellor for Economic
Affairs, Embassy of Mexico.

Lady Elles MEP.

Mr Douglas Eden.

Earl of Erroll.

G

Mr George Fischer BBC.

Mr David Floyd Daily Telegraph (retired)

H

Mr Jonathan Gestetner Board of Directors, CPS.

Mr Michael Goodwin Institute for Study of
Conflict.

A	Professor Julius Gould	Board of Directors, CPS.
	Lord Greenhill of Harrow.	
	Sir Ronald Halstead	Hon. Treasurer, CPS.
	Mr Robin Harris	Director, CRD.
B	Mr Charles Janson	Board of Soviet Analyst.
	Sir Keith Joseph.	
	Dr. Janos Kalanovics	Charge d'Affaires, Embassy of Hungary
C	Mr Raif Karaca	Embassy of Turkey.
	Mr M.A. Karim.	
	Alyona Kojevnikov	Society for Soviet Nationality Studies.
D	Dr. Nicholas Lampert	Centre for Russian & East European Studies, University of Birmingham.
	Mrs G. Learner	GB-USSR Association.
	Dr. Geoffrey Lee Williams	
E	Mr James Lemkin	Board of Society Analyst.
	Mr Jonathan Luxmoore	IEDSS.
	Cecilia Mackenna	Embassy of Chile.
	Sir Fitzroy Maclean	
F	Mr Malcolm Mackintosh	Cabinet offices (retired)
	Dr. John Marks	Education Study Group, CPS.
	Viscount Mersey.	
G	Mr George Miller	Russian Research Foundation.
	Mrs Judith Morison	Soviet Analyst.
	
	Mr T. Mori	Embassy of Japan.
H	.. ..

A	Mr Craig Oliphant	..	..	GB-USSR Association.
	Mr Nenad Petrovic	..	..	Nasa Rec.
	Mr S.G. Proffitt	..	..	Collins.
	Mr I.W. Roberts.			
B	Mr J.C.Q. Roberts	..	..	Director, GB-USSR Association.
	Mr N.J.V. Robins.			
	Mr Maurice Samuelson	..	..	Financial Times.
	Miss Mary Seton-Watson.			
C	Mr James Sherr.			
	Mr Peter Shutak	..	..	Society for Soviet Nationality Studies.
D	Mr Geoffrey Stewart-Smith			Director, Foreign Affairs Research Institute.
	Mrs Christine Sutherland	..	..	Author.
	Mr Inigo Thomas	..	..	Collins.
	Mr I.D.P. Thorne	..	..
E	Mr D. Tochitch	..	..	Nasa Rec.
	Prince George Vassiltchikov.			
	Mrs A. Vaughan	..	..	GB-USSR Association.
F	Mr A.G. Waring	..	..	Department of Russian Studies, University of Sheffield.
	Mr E.M.O. Williams	..	..	BBC.
	Miss T.A. Wolff	Pushkin Scholar.
<u>CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES</u>				
G	Mrs Nathalie Brooke	Secretary to the CPS.
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	Miss Jennifer Nicholson	PA/Director of Studies.
	Mr David Willetts	Director of Studies.
H				

A LORD THOMAS OF SWYNNERTON: My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, may
I welcome you all to this discussion on Change in the Soviet
Union, organised under the auspices of the Centre for Policy
Studies.

B You will know that the Centre for Policy Studies is an
institute primarily concerned with the question of national
regeneration in this country, but you will also know that
international affairs cast a shadow and occasionally a light
C over domestic politics, and therefore we have over the last few
years looked into international questions. It is a great pleasure
to organise this Conference on a momentous issue: the question
of the nature of Mr Gorbachev's reforms has exercised the
D imaginations of all of us and tested the knowledge of many of us.
What are these reforms? What have they, as yet, left undone? What
is the significance for the West of these changes? Can the West
in any way assist Mr Gorbachev, and is Mr Gorbachev's success
E desirable? All these questions are going to be discussed in one
way or another today at our Conference. We have great pleasure
in welcoming Mr David Mellor, the Minister of State, the Foreign
and Commonwealth Office, responsible for Soviet affairs, to open
F our conference. We have, beyond him, Dr. George Urban, late
Director of Radio Free Europe. We have Dr. Iain Elliot, the
editor of The Soviet Analyst. On my left, we have Dr. Antony
G Polonsky and Dr. Dominic Lieven, both distinguished historians
at the London School of Economics.

This is an open meeting, and we hope that we will have
a most open discussion. It is a great pleasure to ask
H Mr David Mellor, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, to
open our proceedings.

A MR DAVID MELLOR M.P. (Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth
Office): My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you very much
for the invitation to open this discussion. It is good to
know that glasnost has hit the Centre for Policy Studies. The
B other thing which I must say to you straightaway is that it
is with some diffidence that I accepted your invitation because
I have been concerned with home affairs for the past four-and-
a-half years, and my translation to the Foreign Office took
C me and no doubt everyone else somewhat by surprise. I cannot
pretend that over the past four weeks, despite intensive coaching,
I have achieved a level of eminence in these matters equivalent
to any of those by whom I am surrounded today, not least yourself,
D since your book is one of the bibles on this subject. In fact
I feel a little like the minor Italian composer who was much
moved by the death of Rossini, a substantially greater figure.
He wrote a funeral ode which was performed at the memorial
E service for Rossini. Like all creative artistes, he was
nervous about this and he wondered how it had gone. He went
up to a fellow composer and said "Well, how was it?" The fellow
F composer looked uncomfortable, shuffled his feet and said:
"Well, perhaps it might have been better if you had died and
he had written the music". If any of you in my audience today
feel that, you have my intense sympathy.

G The first thing which impressed itself upon me as I
took up my new responsibilities is that this is a particularly
interesting topic, namely, our relations with the Soviet Union
and Eastern Europe, but, of course, it is no easier today to
H discern a clear friend than it has ever been. Perhaps in dealing
with Russia throughout its history, particularly in the seventy
years since the Revolution, in one of his less well-remembered

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bon mot - therefore, one can equate without having one's speech descended into cliches at an altogether earlier stage - Winston Churchill likened dealing with the Soviets to confronting a crocodile. He said: "When it opens its mouth and bares its teeth, you cannot be sure whether it is smiling at you or preparing to gobble you up. Is the proper response to tickle it under its chin or beat it over the head?" Most of us, no doubt, think that we are in a tickling-under-the-chin mood at the moment.

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We do see, plainly, a very real change under the regime of Mr Gorbachev, who takes up his responsibilities in the Soviet Union, whilst at a somewhat elderly age by comparison to the British experience, considerably younger than his predecessors, whose primary concern appeared to be to remain alive rather than to make any more fundamental changes to the Russian system. Of course, the Russians have made it very clear that we are not to miss what is going on by parading their proposals before us with a quite unprecedented degree of openness and public relations skill.

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The signals which they send out are no doubt for strongly self-interested motives, but that should not in any sense undermine our realisation that there is a real climate for change, and that Gorbachev himself is serious about a great deal of what he is proposing. The question of how far it goes and the question of whose interest is being served lies at the heart of this discussion. Inevitably, much of what is proposed is reduced to slogans. The first slogan was "Acceleration", where the model was of the Soviet Union was a truck, not immensely sophisticated but working. You press the accelerator

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and the truck lumbers forward towards the appointed destination. Then we have "Restructuring" - Perestroika - the model of the machine which does not work but needs taking to bits and fitting together, and "Democratisation", the recognition of the need for political reforms, although, of course, in an altogether more limited compass than we would acknowledge. Further, a willingness to appreciate that the talk that previous generations of Soviet leaders indulged in, that the Soviet Union was the perfect democratic society was nonsense, as we have always known it to be.

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The agenda for change has been most clearly set out in the economic field, and it is, we must be clear, so far only an agenda. It is not a change itself, but the change in language, given the significance that the Soviets have always applied to nuances of language, is enormously significant. Prime Minister Ryzhkov, almost as a pale shadow of Dr Owen, talks openly of a socialist market. "Equality" does not mean levelling down, so they say. "Incentives" bring untapped resources into play, increase efficiency, and thereby secure a higher rate of real growth plus higher quality. These are sentiments with which British politicians would be well-familiar, but both of them are direct quotes from recent speeches of Mr Gorbachev. By Soviet standards, there have been some quite astonishing revelations of inadequacy of economic performance in the public debate. For instance, the recent article by Mr Shmelyov really amounted to a confession that the Soviet economy is unplanable and unmanageable and the system does not work. We knew that, but for the Russians to say so with official sanction is something quite extraordinary for those with the kind of

historical perspective that most of you specialists have.

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Where is all this going to lead? First of all, is it going to go beyond just an agenda? We have to bear in mind the inevitable strength of bureaucratic resistance; the unhappiness of the working population at the lack of material incentives without which, as our experience has been, that people do not put their backs into their work. Mere exhortation is rarely enough. Then, of course, the ideological implications of a move towards a market system, which will be bitterly resisted on that basis. It may well be, as someone said, that this is the first Russian Government which has ever been supported by the intelligensia and opposed by the 'bureaucracy' as well as the people. We shall see exactly where those tensions lead us.

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The first question which occurs to me is why is Mr Gorbachev prepared to take these risks? It must stem, first of all, from an honest appreciation that any of us in his position must surely make, that the stagnation and inefficiency of the system is something which cannot be tolerated for very much longer, and, of course, an active reforming temperament, which was apparent to those who met him when he came to Britain before he came to office that here was a man of bigger determination. We have to be under no illusions as to what his aim is. There is the sentimental fallacy that somehow all this is being done for our benefit, but the aim, of course, is to make the Soviet Union a true superpower, a show-piece for the socialist and Russian virtues that he believes in, able to compete on equal terms with the United States and the West. That is a task for generations. When completed, whether it necessarily and inevitably makes the Soviet Union an easier world power to live with, is still something about which I think to the sentimental

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A analysis is perhaps a dangerous one. The transformation is not
for our benefit. It is designed to strengthen socialism. If
it makes the Soviet Union a more formidable adversary, our
response has, plainly, got to be a guarded one. I deplore the
B response of some within our political system, rather akin to the
dog lying on its back ready to have its tummy scratched the
moment the master's hand is extended. That is not the appropriate
response at all.

C Of course, the real test of the process of transformation
is what benefits will it offer to the ordinary Soviet citizen?
What benefits will it offer to the West? We know that
D Mr Gorbachev wants to ~~stabilise~~ international relations to give
him the appropriate climate in order to pursue restructuring at
home. That suits him and, of course, it suits us, provided that
we can take advantage of that situation to keep up the pressure
E for a sensible and prudent arms control agreement, and also,
of course, to keep reminding the Soviets that the test of
glasnost is not just whether the Russian economy can be made
to work better but that fundamental changes are expected and
F necessary on the human rights' front. We have an interest in
that because of the arrangements reached in Helsinki and
because of all the discussions which are going on in Vienna at
the moment. We have not got to be complacent in our response.
G We must insist on deeds, not merely words. I believe that our
response has got to be "Yes, but..." Yes, of course, it was
a good thing that Dr. Sakharov was permitted to have lunch
with the Prime Minister on her recent successful visit. Perhaps
H I might say, in the presence of some of those in the audience
who did so much to brief the Prime Minister and assist her on

A what I believe -- I do not say this in any sense sycophantically --
was a triumphant visit for her and a significant visit in the
history of East/West relations, because of the opportunities
B which she took to tell the Soviet people some things which they
have never had the opportunity to hear directly before. So in
the presence of some of those who made that possible, may I say
of course, yes, significant that Dr. Sakharov comes and has lunch
with the Prime Minister, but what are we to make still of their
C policy towards political detainees, and what I regard as one of
the most revolting and barbaric of practices, namely, to
treat political detainees as people who need mental treatment,
not just as people whom it is too dangerous to allow to circulate
D in society, but they actually need treatment by psychiatrists
in order to right their thinking. We still have a situation,
although many dozens have been released, and we welcome that,
where there are weasel words like "recidivism", and that can
E still be a basis for continued detention. I was familiar with
recidivism at the Home Office. It means continuing to do what
you have always done. There are many of us who are recidivists
in our thought processes, so it is not altogether a comfortable
F picture for some of those who remain bravely able to speak out.
Of course it is a good thing that three thousand Soviet Jews have
been allowed to leave in the first six months of this year, and
that is more than the total for the last three years taken together.

G However, what are we to make of the January promulgated
rules, which for the first time set forth the restrictions and
the manner in which those restrictions are applied, making clear
H that human rights and the ability of people to travel freely is
entirely seen by the Soviet authorities as a matter where the
benefit of the State totally predominates over the benefit of the

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individuals; where the grounds on which people can be refused exits are all embracing. All your relatives have to agree.

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Well, I cannot get my relatives to agree about anything. I do not suppose that the situation is any different in the Soviet Union. You have to discharge all of your obligations to the State. What does that mean? There is a catch-all security clause which means that if you are in possession of any official information, you cannot go. Until these things change, I am sure that our approach to glasnost has got to be "Yes, but....".

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Our appreciation of the reality of Soviet power and its unchanging nature has got to take into account certain fundamental yet uncomfortable truths. Often these are revealed better in anecdote than in statistics. I will be corrected by the mass

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of academics by whom I am surrounded if I am wrong, but I understand that it was Stalin who was once thought to have said "One death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic".

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Often it is the individual case which gives one the insight into the nature of the regime. What are we to make in the era of glasnost, even if the message cannot be expected in its entirety to reach East Berlin this century, of youths being clubbed for the great crime of standing by a wall to hear a pop concert over on the other side? What are we to make, for instance

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of the paradox of the Warsaw Pact communique, issued in Berlin last month, which included various long passages on the need for peace, which, I am discovering, is something that the Soviet Union and its satellites always claim to have a monopoly, at least in rhetoric, which stated: "The initiative of the

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Socialist countries is designed to overcome any confrontational approach and to assert civilised standards and an atmosphere of openness, transparency and trust in international relations"?

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A Those are very fine words. However, last November
several citizens of the GDR tried to cross the border and they
were shot down by border guards as they tried to cross. A GDR
military magazine - Militar Vaisen - explained: "This was
B necessary to protect Socialist achievements. The prevention
of border violations was a defence against opponents of Eastern
progress - an act of Socialist humanism". All this is going on
in the era of glasnost. All of this should lead us to take a
C very long spoon to some of the deliberations that are going on.
We will keep up the pressure on the human rights' front. We
will test them in relation to Afghanistan. If I have the time,
I have a few cautionary tales about that. We will maintain our
D vigilance in the face of Soviet espionage activities. We were
one of those states which took the most formidable steps against that
some years ago. There is no evidence at all that the Soviets
have weakened their resolve to make Britain one of the principal
E centres for that. Therefore, we carry a long spoon. Equally,
there are benefits to be gained. We are pursuing, actively and
constructively, in all of the international forums and with
all of the bilateral contacts open to us, practical ways of
F opening up dialogue with the Soviets. During this very week,
there is a British expert team talking to the Russians in
Moscow about the drugs question, which of course I, in a previous
G incarnation, was connected with. The Soviets used to say that the
drugs problem was somebody else's problem. Openness is extending
to realising that they have a drugs problem as well.

H The positive case for welcoming what is happening in
the Soviet Union was most eloquently put by the Prime Minister
during her recent interview with American correspondents the other

A day, when she said this, and like a lot of spontaneous phrases,
it sticks in the memory much more than some of the well-honed
texts of politicians and their speech writers: "There are historic
and courageous things happening in the Soviet Union under
B Mr. Gorbachev's leadership. These things should, I believe, have
the support of the West because every enlargement and liberty of
discussion, every increase in initiative and enterprise, is of
C a fundamental nature in human lives and that we must welcome
and hope that these courageous plans of Mr Gorbachev's will
indeed succeed. It is not only in the interest, I believe, of
the people of the Soviet Union; it is in the interest of the
whole free world." Thank you. (Applause)

D THE CHAIRMAN: Mr Mellor, if you are able to speak in such a
masterly way after only a month as Minister of State, all your
audience would like me to say, I am sure, that they look very
much forward to hearing your speech in twelve months time.

E I now turn to Dr. George Urban.

F DR. GEORGE URBAN: My Lord Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
reforming the system from above and trying ^{to} make it catch up
with its rivals in the West has a long tradition in Russian
G history. Arnold Toynbee saw the necessity of competing with the
West as the cause and the defining characteristic of Russia's
behaviour in the modern world. Time and again, he said (and he
wrote about this many times) Russia would make a mighty
effort to draw level, but no sooner would technological
modernization be within her grasp than the elusive West would
make yet another leap forward, leaving her behind once again.
H Peter the Great was the first ruler to put Russia through a forced
march to draw level with Western technology, Stalin the last.

A The American Strategic Defence Initiative is only the most recent in a long chain of technological challenges to which Russia has found it hard to respond.

B Gorbachev's attempt to reform and "secularize" the Soviet system fits in with this picture. So does, of course, Stalin's own perestroika of the 1930s; but whereas Stalin

C tried to eliminate Russian backwardness by show-trials and the knout, Gorbachev is trying to do so by persuasion and a number of sophisticated and civilised policies.

D It remains to be seen whether the kid-glove approach can be made to work in the specific economic, moral and historical conditions of Soviet-Russia, or whether Mr. Gorbachev may end up using Stalinist methods to foist a measure of anti-Stalinism and freedom on Soviet society. For, unlike the Czars and Stalin before him, Gorbachev has to fight on two fronts, not one.

E He has to overcome both the spirit of the Gulags and the sprit of Oblomovism; he has to eliminate the climate of state-sanctioned thuggery as well as the climate of apathy, sluggishness and corruption. In other words, he has to declare war on Soviet Man in whom these characterists are spectacularly united. All this Mr Gorbachev is now attempting to do.

G I can, just, conceive, that Gorbachev will be reasonably successful in removing from Soviet society some, perhaps even much, of the ethos of Stalinism and the tradition of the Gulags. It would, after all, be uncharitable to suppose that any society, even the Russian, actually enjoys being ruled by the rod if H there are other means available.

A It is much harder to see how Mr. Gorbachev can defeat
that torpor of the spirit, that lack of individual initiative
and, above all, that streak of irresponsibility in public affairs
that has set Russian civilization apart from Western civilizations
B and held it back for centuries.

Let it be said that the disease is now openly diagnosed in
the Soviet Union. Tatyana Zaslavskaya, for example, castigates
whenever she can the spirit of

C "psychological inertia". Abel Aganbegyan complains that Soviet
managers are reluctant to restructure because they are afraid
of responsibility and independence". Nikolai Shishlin tell us that
Soviet society has woken up from its "Sleeping Beauty" sleep, and

D he goes on to say "the ship of the state
remains to be reconstructed". Nikolai Shmelyov whom the Minister has
also just quoted, observed only a few days ago:

E "massive apathy, indifference, theft, disrespect for honest
labour, together with aggressive envy towards those who earn more ...
have led to the virtual physical degradation of a significant part
of the people". Oblomovism has seldom been better described.

F There is, then, a good deal of scepticism and
opposition to Gorbachev's "new thinking" at the grass roots level
of Soviet society. But, more important, there is opposition in
the bureaucracy and especially the imperial civil service, too.
G Of this we have, so far at least, not much written evidence, but
we know that it exists because Mr. Gorbachev and his supporters
keep telling us. Let me attempt to rehearse how the bureaucrats
of the imperial civil service might argue.

H "We have advanced" they would say from a backward
agricultural society to superpower status using precisely those

A methods of planning and control that you now want us to abandon.
Stalinism may have been unpleasant; the forced accumulation of
capital may also have been unpleasant; our bureaucratization under
Brezhnev may have been corrupting, but all these things were,
B in one way or another, our way of doing things, and
because they were in harmony with Russia's particular virtues and
vices, they have brought us success. They have turned us into an
C empire which makes the world tremble. We have the whole of
Eastern Europe and much of Central Europe in our hands. In
Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and South-East Asia we
have acquired a maritime dimension. We have moved close to the
D Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. Our economy may not be
competitive by non-Russian standards and our social welfare
institutions may lag behind those of Sweden or the Federal
E Republic of Germany - but we have done well enough by Russian
expectations. No-one in our country goes without a job, food
or shelter. Our population is conscious of the advances we
F have made - not those we have failed to make. No rebellion is
brewing in our ranks. So, why rock the boat?" They would then
go on to say: "Your suggested reforms of the economy cannot be put
into effect without jeopardizing the Soviet system as we have
known it - and that would ~~also mean the end of the~~ Russian nation's
G great rendezvous with history which we are now enjoying as a
superpower. Of course we must
change our forms of economic management. Of course we must
become technologically more efficient, but we must go slowly
and adopt only those aspects of the Western way of life that are
H inseparable from Western technology."

A If these were, indeed, the arguments that my imaginary
Soviet imperial civil servant would make, they would strike me as
convincing, for they rest on the facts - not the "might-have-beens"
of history. They have Russian tradition, including Oblomovism,
B and the Russian assimilation of coercion on their side. They
are part of the Russian landscape and reflect a wisdom we have all
been familiar with at least since de Toqueville, namely, that the time of
C danger for an authoritarian regime is not when repression is at
its worst, but when the regime sets about reforming itself.

 There is also another and more tangible reason why
perestroika may not succeed, or succeed only partly and slowly.
In post-war Britain socialism of a highly non-Soviet kind
D gained a modest foothold in our institutions. It has nevertheless
taken Mrs. Thatcher's government eight years to begin to roll it
back and encourage the revival of the spirit of self-reliance,
private initiative and responsibility. In the Soviet Union, no one
E since 1928, has seen private property in action, managed a private
enterprise, handled convertible currency (except on the black
market), or observed a capital market. Three
F generations have grown up to be taught to despise the profit
motive. Three generations have seen no management system other than
the command economy and had no conception of economic good other
than that accruing to the benefit of the state. I would
G find it surprising if Mr. Gorbachev's brave attempt to rekindle
the entrepreneurial ethos of capitalism were to succeed, or
succeed soon enough to make a difference. That Mr. Gorbachev's
"Thatcherism" is paraded in impeccably Leninist colours increases
H the confusion - not its chances of success.

A Any reflection on Gorbachev's Russia inevitably raises
the question: And what are we going to do about it? The Minister
has raised it and answered it, but I shall try and answer it in
a slightly different way. In purely power political terms, it
B is clearly not in the Western interest to help the Soviet Union to
extricate itself from the bankrupt state of its economy
so long as the system remains what it is. An economically
backward Soviet state has given us enough headaches. An
C efficient and technologically advanced Russia would be even
more difficult to deal with.

Mr Gorbachev's revolution cannot, it seems to me,
materialise, if it can materialise at all, without Western
D co-operation, both passive and active. He wants us to take the
military and technological pressure off his system and help him
in the longer term to reshape his economy. We should not squarely
reject his approaches. We should, rather, tell him: "We agree
E with you that the world has shrunk and become interdependent.
Our word for "interdependence" is linkage. We are going to help
if you can see your way clear to taking care of certain
problems that concern us because they are a threat to world peace."

F I would then list at least three conditions. First,
the rapid withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan; second,
a new deal for the whole of Eastern Europe, to begin with the
G removal of Soviet troops and bases from Czechoslovakia and
Hungary, and, third, the cessation of Soviet interference
in Central America. We could think of other conditions, but these would
do for a start. Seeing that it is the Soviet Union that is in
H trouble and the West in a position to assist or not to assist
her, this may not be a bad time for putting linkage to the test.

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That the current American-Soviet arms control negotiations do not contain a strong element of linkage outside the actual arms control area is a great weakness in our position.

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At the same time - we should return Mr Gorbachev's friendly overtures with friendly noises of our own in terms of the Helsinki accords, that is: cultural and scientific co-operation, tourism, environmental co-ordination and the like.

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I am echoing what the Prime Minister said; neither the United States nor any West European country can remain psychologically or politically indifferent to the spectacle of the modern world's worst political tyranny trying to find its way to a measure of freedom and democracy.

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It can never be entirely ruled out that a more permissive Soviet society will inhibit the Kremlin's expansionism - although, as Lord Thomas has shown in his masterly pamphlet, the historical evidence rather points the other way.

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I, for one, cannot deny Mr Gorbachev a certain grudging admiration. He is a great player in a great game. I wish we had people of his calibre at the head of certain Western chancelleries. He has taken on a difficult political culture, and a 19th Century system that needs to be dragged direct into the 21st. He is, as both Lenin and Stalin were, a profoundly un-Marxist phenomenon in that he is not waiting for impersonal forces to cut the cloth of history, but is doing it himself.

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Will he fail? I think he probably will, but I marvel at the audacity of his challenge to Russian traditions and the Party that bred him. (Applause)

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-(Continued)

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A THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Dr. Urban, for that characteristically brilliant and fascinating introduction. Now we have Dr. Dominic Lieven.

B DR. LIEVEN: I fear those in the audience will feel at the end of the fourth brief presentation that they suffer from an overdose of historians. I will be less brilliant than George, dotting some of the 'i's' and crossing the "t's" on much of what he said, perhaps being a little bit narrower.

C I do not think any of us probably have many doubts about the fundamental aims and motives of Gorbachev and those who surround him. It is quite clearly the desire to revitalise the Soviet economy and Soviet society in order not to be left behind
D which is at the root of what he is trying to do at the moment. One can see a political system whose leaders perhaps up to the early 1970s were convinced that although still backward by
E Western standards, they were catching up; that history was on their side. That conviction was buttressed of course by
F ~~detente~~, by the feeling in some circles in Moscow -- leading circles very often -- that beckoning them was at least, in the immediate future, a condominium over the world, was the Americans and perhaps in the more distant future overtaking the Americans as well.

G This kind of optimism is dead. Since the early 1970s, it has been increasingly clear that the Soviet Union is falling further and further behind the most advanced capitalist states. It is in response to that awareness and in response also to the feeling that that awareness is linked to a malaise not only of
H the economy, but deeply rooted in Soviet customs, in the whole way

A that Soviet society operates, that one must explain the radicalism
of Mr. Gorbachev and perhaps more interestingly the willingness
of the Soviet elite as a whole to live with that radicalism
B at least as long as it is a radicalism expressed in words and
in programmes and not yet in action.

C If we want to look at the motives, it seems to me that
one can tick them off pretty quickly. Defence is an obvious one.
It may be that we are facing now the beginnings of a secular
D shift in military technology in which currently relatively
cheap mass weapons of aggressive extermination, if you like,
(the ICBMs) will be to some extent replaced by hideously
expensive defensive systems of a technological complexity which
certainly an ignoramus like I can barely comprehend. The financial
pressures on the Soviet system of that kind of shift would be
tremendous. That is point 1.

E Point 2 is very simply the price of empire. This country,
better than most, knows what that price is. It is not just that the
Soviet Union cannot hope to expand its influence in the world; it
will have increasing problems bailing out its clients - first
F Cuba and Vietnam and then the clients closer to home when they
get into increasing economic trouble as well. The price of
empire is enormous. Those who have a will to empire, as the
Soviet leadership still quite clearly do, have to be willing to
G face that price.

H Thirdly, and very simply, socialism is supposed to triumph
in the economic sphere. Ever since Khrushchev and peaceful
co-existence, that has been the basic idea: "We will triumph
because our system is palpably more efficient, both at the

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production and at the distribution of wealth. The failure in the race against capitalism strikes in the longrun at the very root of the regime's legitimacy.

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Beyond that, the fourth point, it strikes too at the self-esteem of the elite, an elite which finds itself dealing, on the one occasion that I know about, with Indian negotiators who actually openly told their Soviet opposite numbers that it could pass off anything on the Soviet consumer because it was better than what Soviet industry produced. That is deeply humiliating. One is no longer dealing either with an elite like the one that Stalin left behind and which ruled the Soviet Union until three or four years before, which comes from very naive peasant roots which has no real firsthand experience of the wealth and the efficiency of the distribution of wealth in its major competitors. This elite does have a greater awareness of what is going on and it is more and more conscious of the fact that it is falling behind. Its pride is affected by that.

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Beyond that, of course, very simply, one has the question of living standards and the longrun implications for social stability should those not improve. Beyond that again -- this is an important point -- what has the effect on the legitimacy not just of Soviet, but of Russian rule as regards the non-Russian peoples of the Soviet Union? If, after all, one is attached to a ruling people whose political system is so inefficient that one finds oneself falling further and further behind, even in basic necessities, what does that do for the feelings of Uzbeks or Kazakhs or Georgians in the political system under which they live? One can go on with these points for ever, but I

A suspect that all these points together, added to the general
B impact on the morale of the Soviet population, if the present
C inefficient methods of creating and distributing wealth are
D allowed to continue, or the effect on the morale of a population
E which is already in trouble -- one sees that in appalling life
F expectancy, appalling health service, the actual admission of
G an increasingly bad drug problem and dreadful rates of producti-
H vity: all these factors already exist -- are already spurring
on reform. The reformers are well aware of the fact that should
the changes they are trying to implement now not succeed, the
malaise, the lack of self-belief, the creeping cynicism, the
alienation which one feels in Soviet society, will simply become
worse and worse.

None of the reform programme that Gorbachev has put forward
means that he, or those who surround him even more, believe that
their system is fundamentally defective to its roots. For them,
Socialism, Marxism, Leninism and Russia and the Soviet Union
are, in a sense, indivisible. It is for them quite genuinely
the case that to try and throw over the essence of the system,
the belief in socialism, is to be a traitor to the Motherland and
to take on the ideology, the ways of running economy and society,
of their enemies of the West. The basic sense of irreversible
competition would not die and has certainly not died so far.

Nor does it mean, as George Urban and the Minister rightly
said, that should Gorbachev succeed in some Soviet economic
miracle, the Soviet Union would become a lamb in the international
community, accepting the present territorial status quo,

A accepting ideological co-existence with the West. I do not think that would happen for a moment. My hunch is that a much more powerful Soviet Union would simply pursue the traditional objectives in a much more effective way.

B On the other hand -- and this is to the point -- it does seem to me that what we can expect in Soviet foreign policy is a lull. It does seem to me that one would logically expect a lull of ten years, maybe even a generation, because it will be clear to the leadership that the combination of international, C military and technological competition, of prices, etc., with the attempts to challenge fundamental vested interests at home, would be a disaster. You would simply be handing weapons to your D conservative enemies within the Soviet elite if you found yourself in nose-to-nose confrontation with the Imperialists. I would therefore expect something of a lull, although -- it is worth bearing this in mind as well -- as and when reforms E begin to bite in the Soviet Union, which they have not yet done, when conservative opponents of Mr. Gorbachev begin to exploit the inevitable difficulties and opposition that are going to emerge, then it may be that the effect of instability at F the top of the political system, of power struggles, is going to have its impact as regards adventurism in foreign policy of a tactical sort. We can perhaps discuss that. Other people are probably more intelligent or better equipped to discuss these G points than I am. It seems to me that this balance is important to keep in mind.

H As regards methods of objectives, I think that George Urban has said most of what I wished to say so I shall be very brief.

A It seems to me quite clear that in line with the tradition of
certainly imperial reformers and, to some extent, Krushchev,
what Mr. Gorbachev is trying to do is, on the one hand, to
B maintain a centralised authoritarian political system. Why does
he want to maintain that? It is for obvious reasons. It is,
of course, the pillar on which he himself rests. He would
undoubtedly regard it as being the essential fundamental basis
of any kind of political system in this vast multi-ethnic community
C You have to have something to hold it all together: after
the deluge, without the centralised authoritarian bureaucracy
everything will collapse; everything will disintegrate. There
can be and will be no consensus in society.

D Also, of course, in the traditional Russian and Soviet
manner, he will desire to maintain the centralised authoritarian
bureaucracy because he wishes to impose change on a society which
E does not desire change. Whether that is true of most of the
bureaucracy or of wide sections of Soviet society itself, it
seems to me that one is dealing with a situation in which, to
some extent, Gorbachev is right to believe that if change is
F going to come, a powerful initiative and a powerful degree of
pressure is going to have to come from him. That can only
be exercised through the present centralised authoritarian
bureaucracy, but what he wishes to use to impose change is itself
G the greatest of all vested interests, the greatest of all
conservative interests in Soviet society; in other words, the
party apparatus itself. What he is trying to do, as the Tsars
did before him, is to maintain the essence of a centralised
H bureaucratic system yet at the same time to mobilise the energy

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and the initiative of the Soviet population. That is a very difficult circle to square. I would underline everything that George Urban said about the difficulties of stirring up initiative of creating enterprise in a society such as the Soviet Union.

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I would also back up everything George Urban said in emphasising again that it is not simply vested interests of the bureaucracy or of the elite which are obstacles to reform. To my mind, one of the essential obstacles to reform is the Soviet working class which is holding firm to the social contract which has existed since Stalin died, a social contract which is, in many ways, thoroughly advantageous in the short and medium term for them. We have only to remember the blindness with which, let us say, the British printing unions held onto clearly out-dated methods (in the longrun disastrously for themselves) in a society in which information is free and in which one can go and see what is happening in the outside world. There is no limit to human obstinacy, blindness and short sighted self-interest. The Soviet Union is a vast public sector union, which has been told for 70 years that it is the salt of the earth, that its way of doing things represents progress and that it (the working class) is the embodiment of all that is best in the Russian and Soviet spirit. Moving those people is like moving a mountain. You need to take dynamite to it and yet the problem is that when you take dynamite to it, when you try to dynamite Soviet society in order to get it to move, then you run into the problem that you are, at the same time, risking political stability. The one thing that the system has been brilliant at achieving since Stalin died is an immense amount of political stability at the cost of

A an immense amount of economic and social inertia.

Another problem which George did not mention, except briefly, which needs to be taken into account is the fact that this is not a Russian society; this is a multi-ethnic society. Fifty per cent of the population, roughly, is non-Russian. Wherever you look as regards possible avenues for change in the Soviet Union which Gorbachev might wish to be done, the nationalities problem stands across it. Think of de-Stalinisation; think of allowing the cultural intelligentsia room to criticise what happened under Stalin. We can debate the possibilities of that. I am open to the suggestion that there is leeway now with the modern and sophisticated Soviet Union to abandon the old true Stalinism and to fall back on a more sophisticated version of Marxism and Leninism, perhaps bringing Bukharin back into the fold.

E Yet, there are many arguments against it. Think of what revelations did to West German political culture and West German youth culture in particular. Think of what happens when you allow people to criticise Stalin. Stalin, after all, was the heir of Lenin. Lenin is still the founding father, the great myth. When you let people criticise, they do, in the end, go in the direction that Solzhenitsyn did because that is the way that truth takes them. Stalin was, in many, many respects, the inheritor of Lenin.

H Let us throw all of that out. Let us say: "Too bad, all this is past history and it does not matter." You still find yourself, when you begin talking about being truthful on what happened in the formative years of the Soviet Union under Stalin, facing the

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A fact that the Soviet regime in three years killed around a
third of the Cossack population, devastating the Ukrainian
population. Are you really going to let central Asian and
B Ukrainian intellectuals discuss that openly? Individuals may
not know who their grandparents were in the Soviet Union. Maybe
for that reason, you can afford an element of denouncing Stalin
because people do not associate with the suffering of grandparents
they never knew; they do not even know where they lived. However,
C nations have long memories and the Kazakhs and Ukrainians
will remember for a long time, if they are allowed publicly
to be told what happened, what the Soviet regime did to their
nations.

D This is the last point I will come to. This is
regarding parallels, rubbing in what George said and perhaps
being a little specific. When Gorbachev first got moving,
I think that most of us imagined that what we were looking
E at was a re-run of Krushchev. I think that is rather out-dated
as a parallel. To my mind, one comes back to the years of
Alexander II, the great reforms of the 1860s and 1870s. The
F motive is very similar. It is a desire to not fundamentally change
the system, but to make it competitive by taking on some of the
aspects of Westernisation. It seems to me that serfdom, lying as it
G did, across all the avenues to change in Russian society, created
a climate of rigidity, inertia, and an absolute obstacle to
initiative and the mobilisation of public energies in very similar
ways to those that the present Soviet economic system operates.
There are the same kinds of effects. It seems that the motives
H behind the reform, the time-scale in getting the reform under
way, the manoeuvrings, the attempts to gather support among

A critically-thinking public opinion, glasnost, hold many parallels.

B In 1861, the serfs were emancipated - a great triumph undoubtedly. Alexander was a man to admire as Gorbachev is. Many reforms followed that, and yet when one looks at what happened, we see this. Firstly, amidst these great and truly radical reforms, there were great fears too for social stability; fears which were so great; fears that, for instance, the social contract of the masses with the peasant masses in those days would be broken. Reform was hedged around with so many elements protecting the social contract, so many elements designed to limit the impact on social and political stability, that really, in the end, the amount of initiative, the amount of enterprise liberated, was relatively small. It was decades before the Russian economy really began to move.

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E Then one looks at further obstacles. In Alexander's Russia of 1856, just as now, there already existed a small, but nevertheless potentially vocal and important dissident group. Already these were people whose faith in the existing system had been destroyed for ever. Nothing that the existing regime did could satisfy their aspirations. Within five years of emancipation, people were attempting to assassinate Alexander II. Within five years of emancipation, you have people denouncing not merely
F the Imperial regime, but all the bases of bourgeois society in Europe. They denounced marriage, for instance. The extent to which public opinion can move when the brakes are taken off can be dramatic. Think again of the nationalities issues. The Imperial
G regime still had legitimacy in the Russian areas. It could face
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A now the challenge of dissidents. It did not have legitimacy
in some of the non-Russian areas, Poland in particular. Within
two years of emancipation, the effect of liberalisation, the
effect of awakening expectations is a massive Polish revolution
B which takes tens of thousands of Russian troops to put down.
Again, constraints are there.

C Finally, the reforms do indeed go deep, but not deep
enough to challenge the fundamentals, as I said, of the centra-
lised authoritarian political system. What one has is a hybrid.
That hybrid did not work very well. Indeed, you could say that
the conflict between the traditional Russian autocratic principles
and the Western institutions introduced in the great reforms
D played a fundamental role in the destruction of imperial Russia.
When we look at the modern day, can we honestly say that the
hybrids which other socialist regimes have attempted, whether
in Hungary or in Yugoslavia, have worked that very well? It
E is not, in other words, by any means self-evident that reform
is going to bring the kind of rewards commensurate with the blows
to vested interest, to inertia and to habit which it will
undoubtedly retain.

F This is a last word to sum-up. It does not seem to me
that there can be any doubt that Gorbachev is a man to admire,
that he has radical intentions. It seems to me that he has learned
G considerably in his years already in office. He is no longer
just prompting discipline. He is genuinely talking about
fundamental reform. It does not, however, yet seem to me that the
Soviet Union is as yet faced by such a crisis that the elite will
H bear with him not merely when he talks about reform and sets out

A programmes, but when those reforms run into the obstacles which they are bound to run into and excite the kind of conservative opposition which is inevitable. Gorbachev is, after all, just a general secretary and not an emperor by the grace of God.

B It seems to me that there is a real question whether he will be able to bear with those reforms and whether if he does the elite will bear with him.

C It would be wrong to end on a sour note. As with most of us here, I am impressed by Gorbachev's intelligence, by his energy, by his patriotism and by his sense of purpose. It would not seem to me to be in our interests that Gorbachev's reforms should be a Soviet economic miracle for reasons I have already stated. It would also not seem to me that it is in our interests that his reforms should fail entirely. In both cases, I think we would be dealing with a much more unpleasant neighbour than the one we have to deal with at the moment. On the whole, from the point of view of our own interests, I am not pessimistic. I think that the Soviet Union will be an easier country to deal with on the whole in the next 15 or 20 years than perhaps it has been in the last 15 or 20 years, but I may be very seriously wrong. I suspect there are many people here who are better judges than I am.

(Applause)

G THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Lieven, I think we all regret that we are not your pupils on a permanent basis. Dr. Elliot.

H DR. ELLIOT: The advantage or disadvantage of coming third is that much of what one wants to say has already been said, but I can perhaps take a slightly different angle and look at some case

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examples as evidence for what we feel about the Soviet Union deep down.

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It is an incredibly exciting time for Sovietologists. The amount of information that is coming from the Soviet Union is much greater than before, but I think the difficulty of interpreting it has increased too. Just in the train coming up from Brighton this morning, I was getting part of this great detective story of tracking down Gorbachev and his motives.

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In Literaturnaya Gazeta, the weekly for intellectuals, there is an article by Balam Shalam,

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the writer on the prison camps, who many of us would rank with Solzhenitsyn in what he sets forth as the essence of this Stalinist system. Here we are with an exact description of details of how he was arrested in 1937, he went to the camps, eventually came back and was rehabilitated etc. It is incredibly interesting and very positive, but it is only one, in the last

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fortnight, of many articles which have appeared on the Stalinist period, exposing it in much greater detail than happened at any time under Brezhnev. At the same time, one reads on the same

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date, precisely three days ago, an account of Ligachev, a member of the elite who is often seen as the most opposed to Gorbachev's reforms, at least to the extent that they are liberalising the Soviet society. He warns the editorial board

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of Sovietska Kultura, a journal which has carried a great deal of interest in prison conditions, that they should not go too far. He says: "What

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we want is glasnost, but it should be a concrete glasnost and a concrete openness, which is limited. As part of glasnost appearing, we have not only had positive information, but we have had regrettable sides to it too. As was to be expected,

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the waves of restructuring" -- that is perestroika -- "and renewal have also washed up some scum and debris. Energetic people, who sometimes try to supplant our spiritual values with their own dubious ideas and contentions have emerged."

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One sees other examples of this too. The article in Novi Mir, by Shmelyov, who was mentioned earlier, on all sorts of interesting aspects of the Soviet economy, including suggestions that a certain amount of unemployment would be a good idea, was, according to certain rumours, which seemed to be backed up, the result of a telephone call from Ligachev to the author in which he said that his ideas were harmful and suggested that he limit them to some extent. One sees a certain amount of opposition to what is happening right in the very centre of Soviet affairs.

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There is a certain sense of déja vu, which goes back not just to what happened under Krushchev, but much earlier. I think Alexander II is an excellent example to bring up of this side of things. Here is a quote from The Observer about what the Soviet leader is doing. He talks about: "... formal approval on the part of the all-highest for an experimental attempt to free Soviet industry from the dead hand of centralised planning, and to give factory directors and their employees a real and material interest in raising productivity by methods altogether shocking to economists and bureaucrats deep-died in the Stalinist tradition." We are hearing a great deal of this just now. In fact, this is not from The Observer of last week, but from The Observer of 6th January 1963. It was Edward Crankshaw who was writing at this time about Krushchev and what he was doing.

A He goes on to elaborate about the Libermann profit motive reforms for that period.

B I suppose deep down I am pessimistic about what is happening
C If the economic reforms succeed -- and I think they will to
D a large extent; not as much as Gorbachev wants and certainly
E not to the extent that the plan lays down for the year 2000 --
F I think we will see an improvement in Soviet economy. I do not
G see that as necessarily to our advantage in the West unless the
H liberalisation or democratisation elements of the reforms fit
in too. I have much more doubt about that because it seems to me
that if liberalisation of the Soviet Union goes on to its logical
conclusion, then the Soviet Union would no longer be a super-
power. We would not have to fear it in the way that we justifiably
do now. It would break down, as the present system is doing. I am
quite sure that Gorbachev does not want this and certainly his
colleagues do not either.

E There are ten brief points, looking at what is happening
now in the Soviet Union. The first five are suggesting changes
taking place with the second five suggesting what, in my opinion,
are likely to prove the limits to what is going on at the moment.

F I think the most fundamental change that we are all aware
of is the change in leadership itself; not just Gorbachev,
but the way he has removed people very skilfully from the
G Politbureau and the Secretariat, the two top bodies. He has
replaced them with people who are loyal to him and who go along,
to some extent, with his ideas for reforms. This is not completel
new, of course. Every new Soviet leader tends to bring in his
H own men to secure his own power base. Gorbachev had a colossal
advantage in the fact that under Brezhnev, the leadership had

become so old that they had to go whether Gorbachev wanted them out or not. I think that more than half the Politbureau and almost all the Secretariat is with Gorbachev now. To some extent, they have completed perestroika.

Secondly, I would certainly agree with what has been said about Gorbachev's new style. That is very evident in every day's news reporting of what is happening in the Soviet Union. I think that we should not go from that to questioning whether he is committed to fundamental Soviet aims because nothing I have seen him say or do alters my conviction that he is still dedicated to what we have seen as Soviet aims over 70 years. I think he just has a more realistic assessment of what the Soviet Union is capable of doing at the moment. He intends to do something about that by making it more efficient than it has been before.

Thirdly, there is ideology. I think that one can see that this less significant in policy decisions than it was. Pragmatism has become a much more important basis for decision-making. I do not think that we can reckon that ideology is no longer important in the Soviet set-up. I think mainly it is important because they need something to bring the whole lot together. There are over 100 disparate nations in the Soviet Union and they have not really got a great deal in common except 70 years -- in some cases less -- of Soviet rule and this Marxism and Leninism which was brought in as part of their unification with the rest of the Soviet Union. If they do not have the aim of building world Communism -- it is a little old-fashioned to go on talking about the old Communist society -- what have they got left? They are talking about Communism as a good state and as something which

A will benefit the world population in general. They continue to stick to this and to emphasise again and again that this is what they are aiming to do. If that goes, there is not really very much left to offer all these different peoples of the Soviet Union. If one looks at it, what they would be left with is 70 years of Soviet rule. That has been under different Soviet leaders all of whom have been condemned, with the possible exception of Lenin, by their successors. They have been condemned with good reason. If one looks at what Stalin did, what Krushchev did and what Brezhnev did, there is a reason for their successors condemning them.

Continued:

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I think this is a particular problem in the nationalities sphere, as Dominic pointed out. Interestingly, I see in the leadership a move towards greater Russian nationalism. One sees it not only in the people in the leadership now, but if you take the 25 people in the top bodies, there are only two non-Slavs, although the Slavs by no means make up that proportion of the population. Of the two, Shevardnadze is, obviously, firmly there, supporting Gorbachev. Aliyev, the Azerbatjani member, has not been seen for some time, and seems likely to go soon. One sees a concentration of Slavs at the top, and particularly Russians. One sees this reflected in Soviet society in general. One of the more worrying aspects of what is happening is the publicity appearing for an organisation called Pamyat in the Soviet Union, which has good sides protecting Russian traditions but also some very worrying signs, which are genuine, based not only on what has been reported in the Soviet press, but it does seem to have very strong anti-Semitic overtones, not just anti-Semitic but certain criticisms of the non-Russian nationalities, too. This element, which could form an alternative to the ideology of Marxism/Leninism and keeping the Empire together, is not necessarily a good thing for the West or the peoples of the Soviet Union.

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The Gorbachev revolution comes about quite clearly because of the economic imperative. That point has been made repeatedly. One can see this from what Gorbachev has said and from what Prime Minister Ryzhkov said in the Supreme Soviet. One could quote endless pieces out of their speeches about the condition of the Soviet economy and why it needs changing.

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C It is not so immediately obvious why glasnost comes about. Why do they go in for things like exposing Stalinism and what Stalin did. That, I think, is a bit more subtle. Quite clearly, there is a need to bring the intellectuals over on to the side of the Party and what the Party is trying to do now. The intellectuals have, to a large extent, opted out. They did their jobs, they collected their pay and they gathered in the evenings together and discussed literature, and so on, but they were not really in any way enthusiastic participants in the Soviet system.

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H I think that glasnost boils down to an attempt to win over the intellectuals and to get them to co-operate with the Party. It is a danger for Gorbachev because there has been a lot of pent-up enthusiasm for this openness. Journalists, who are often written-off in the West as simply Party hacks, have a certain respect for their profession, and, of course, a respect for what they themselves as individuals are able to do. In the old days one used to hear this in the Soviet Union, with people saying "Have you seen page 3, page 5 or page 7 of Novy Mir? I managed to squeeze a certain sentence ~~past~~ the censor." If you look at it, it is a bit obscure as to why he is so excited about it but it is something which is a little bit different. Those people are now coming out into the open and pushing all the time. I tend to be a little bit cynical of some of the examples of glasnost because they appeared in Moscow News aimed mainly at foreigners. In the recent edition of Moscow News, there is a little article in the back saying "You cannot really buy Moscow News in Russian. Why is this?" Of course, this is what we have been saying. Glasnost is merely for foreign consumption. If you get up at 6 o'clock in the morning

A it is still for sale until about 7 o'clock. "There is an old
lady rumoured to be selling it at five times the face price
outside the main Moscow station, if you are prepared to go for it"
B You can only get it at one library in Moscow. There is a great
queue there. So it is not all that easy to get at it there,
either. "Why do you publish this?", one asks. It seems to me to be
C a suggestion that the editor or somebody in Moscow News is saying
"We would like our opinions to be spread and discussed among
the Soviet population and not just among foreigners". Therefore,
they are pushing the limits all the time, which could be a
D difficulty for them. The limits are lined fairly clearly when
one starts looking at the future over the next few years. None
of us can know just how far he can go but we must suspect that
E limits exist. I do not think that time is on his side. He has
promised the Soviet people an improvement in consumer goods and
so on, but in order to get this improvement, he has got to get
F the economy moving. He himself has said, repeatedly, that the
next three or four years are going to be very hard. I do not
think that we will see such a dramatic improvement in such a
short time sphere. Then he will have to make speeches which
do not depend on knocking what has happened before. He will
G have to say "We have been in charge for four or five years,
you will not notice a dramatic improvement now, but it is coming.
Just bear with us". That will be a much more difficult time.

H The dividing line between people who are pushing for
reforms and outright dissidents has now become blurred. That
again will cause him difficulties. The people who are reforming
from inside have been there and they were there, most of them at
least, in Khrushchev's time. The ones who are constantly being

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C reported to us are Zaslavskaya and Bodlansky, etc. They have been around for a long time. They were quite evident under Khrushchev. They were much less evident under Brezhnev. In some cases they sympathise very strongly with dissidents who have been locked up for ten years, but they did not do anything for them. They did not go out into the streets and demonstrate. They did not throw in their Party tickets. They kept their heads down. I suspect that a lot of them who are very obvious now might well be inclined to do the same if the swing goes against what is now happening, namely, the reform movement.

D I think that democratisation in the form of elections is, again, likely to be limited. We have heard, of course, that it is only going to be limited to candidates chosen by the Party. Therefore, what we can expect from these candidates is limited.

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G Even there, those elections which are taking place in the non-Russian Republics could be very dangerous for the system. We have seen in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan exposed in very great detail what happened when a party clique of local nationals come together and allocate all the jobs for their families and friends. The result is absolute corruption and inefficiency which is not what Gorbachev wants. The Party will have to try and organise things so that it does not become a case of people putting forward their local nationals for the elections. The people at the top are going to want to choose the candidates, and that again could lead to resentment when the locals find that their people are not emerging on top. I have strong doubts about what is happening in this area.

H As to the economy, the biggest problem that they are up against is this integration between economic progress and liberalisation. One sees this in the economic miracles which have

taken place in places like Japan, depending very much on the
ability to get ideas quickly from other countries either through
sending your scientists and businessmen to discuss things in
these other countries or by reading immediately the latest
scientific articles which appear and distributing them very
quickly amongst your colleagues. What is happening in the
Soviet Union could help that, but they have a long way to go.
It is still not possible to have open access to a photo-copying
machine. Let us assume that an interesting article, probably
months late because it comes through the postal system, is
wanted for distribution among colleagues. It is a little risky.
You cannot immediately go and photo-copy it and send it through
the post. It is one of the points which dissidents in the
West make, which was not taken up although the letter was
published, that photo-copying machines should be very much more
available than they are. Take computers. They are widespread
in the West. Children have been brought up with their own
personal computers which can also be used as word processors.
There is a limit to how widespread and available those can
be in the Soviet Union for then people would be able to produce
their publications much more easily. There is already an
indication of that. Some of the dissidents who have been
allowed out have not compromised with the authorities. In
Armenia there is a dissident who has resurrected The Armenian
Nationalist Party and is proposing a secession from the Soviet
Union. He is not going to be allowed to go on for much longer
before he is sent back to Siberia. Another has started a
journal called Glasnost - Openness. His intention is to produce
the kind of material which can get into the official press.
Again, I think that will be sat upon very soon.

A What does it all add up to? I think my colleagues have
said what the attitude of the West should be. I think I
agree completely with that. Until the Soviet system is
B fundamentally altered and becomes more liberal than it is now,
we have to be extremely cautious. We can encourage all of
those positive features. But as regards technology, and
the kind of things that COCOM has banned, I think we have to
be as tough as we were before and not to slacken our approach
C in that respect. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Dr. Elliot for a wonderful
interpretation.

D Dr. Polonsky has the invidious task of speaking fifth.
I know he will rise to the challenge of being the last of our
specific speakers, and I know he will do so with his usual
verve and drive.

E DR. ANTONY POLONSKY: Thank you, Mr Chairman. It is always difficult
to speak last because many of the things which are most important
have already been said, but I wish to concentrate on a different
area to that of the other speakers; that is, to look at this
F problem from the perspective of Eastern Europe. Anybody who
is interested in Eastern Europe has a very strong element of
déjà vu when he observes what Gorbachev is trying to do.
These ideas have been widely current in Eastern Europe for a long
G time. The programmes which Gorbachev is trying to implement
have been attempted in Eastern Europe, largely unsuccessfully.
The question as to why is important and relevant to our under-
standing as to what Gorbachev is trying to do and the sort of
H obstacles he will face. I know that Eastern Europe is very diff-
erent from the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union is a multi-national

A Eurasian empire. The states of Eastern Europe are small and
medium sized national states. There is also a major difference
in their political culture. The Revolution was a Soviet
B Revolution. It has a degree of legitimacy in the Soviet Union which
the Socialist system does not enjoy in Eastern Europe. It seems
almost everywhere - perhaps Yugoslavia is an exception - as an
imposed system and something which lacks a degree of legitimacy.
C Also there is a greater degree of civil society and consciousness
of Western democratic values. This is best illustrated by a story
which many of you may probably know about a Russian and a French
official who were sent to the respective capitals of their other
D countries - France and the Soviet Union. They met in Warsaw.
Each believed that they had arrived at their destination. The
fact is that Eastern Europe is very different from the Soviet
E Union. Nevertheless, the reasons for the failure of revisionism
in Eastern Europe are important. The revisionists - the people
who set out to reform the Eastern European Socialist system from
within - put before themselves two goals. The first was to reform
F the economic system by the introduction of a wide measure of
the price system. It was a matter of using the price system to
cut down the power of the central planning mechanism and devolving
G power to the individual enterprises and to the individual industries.
At the same time, the revisionists aimed at democratising the
Party. They wanted to maintain the structure of the one-party
coalition group. They do have a pseudo-multi-party system.
H The system was to be made more democratic. Parliament was to be
given a greater role, tinkering with the electoral system so that
you could reject candidates. Democratisation and discussion would
be much greater within the Party. These two reforms were linked

A by diminishing the power of the officials who hampered democratisation of the Party. By increasing democratisation of the Party, one would increase civil control over the political and economic mechanisms.

B I think it is quite clear, if one looks at the political evolution of Eastern Europe, from the time when these ideas were first expressed, which was in the period of reform between 1953 and 1956, to the present day, although the States in Eastern Europe are much less repressive than they were in 1953, and C although there has been a degree of economic progress, the main objectives of the revisionists have not been achieved. The question is why? The usually expressed answer is the Soviet veto. It D was the Soviets who intervened in Hungary in 1956. It was the Soviets who put the brake on the changes which were attempted to be introduced into Poland after 1956, and it was the Soviets who E intervened to stop democratisation in Czechoslovakia and it was Soviet pressure which led to the introduction of Martial Law in Poland in 1981.

F The maintenance of the political system in Eastern Europe depends on the ultimate threat of Soviet intervention, but I do not think that Soviet intervention on its own explains what is going on and the factors which preserve stability and which inhibit G the introduction of the sort of reforms which were advocated in Eastern Europe. I think the factors which have prevented the the sort of political change being introduced are the same factors which have been so eloquently described by all the speakers this morning. I think there are three. The first is that it is H obvious that the changes which are planned have as their goal, whether implicitly or explicitly stated, the reduction of the power of the Party bureaucracy, particularly what George Elliot said of

A the Imperial Civil Service. This group has privileges because of
its access to the rather scarce goods which are available in that
B society and because it will provide opportunities for their children,
which it is extremely unwilling to give up. It is well-entrenched
and it has the machinery to maintain itself in power. I think one of
the lessons of the introduction of martial law in Poland in 1981,
C which one should never forget, is that a small unrepresentative
group of people with little public support - almost no public support
can maintain itself in power providing it can keep the apparatus
of coercion reasonably loyal. We know, also, that it is reasonably
D easy to keep the apparatus of coercion because the nature of armies
and police forces is that they are established to force people to
obey orders. One of the reasons, in my view, for the rather facile
discussions about the possibilities of the Polish army going against
the Government was that very few people of my generation had done
E military service. If you have done military service, you know
it is not very easy to disobey orders. The fact is that the
Party bureaucracy has very strong tools at its disposal and it will
use them if its position is threatened. We have not found that
F situation yet in the Soviet Union, but it is very easy to see the
sort of people who George eloquently expounded getting very unhappy
with what was taking place.

Secondly, the fact is that the economic system established
G under socialism has within it very many strongly centralising
features. It is very difficult to break the hold of the central
Party bureaucracy of the central economic planning apparatus. It
H is easy to talk about allowing the local factories or industries to
decide what they are going to do, to decide how they are going to
implement their plans and to decide how they are going to spend their

A scarce resources. When it comes down to the practical situation,
the power of the central ministries and the power of the planners
is very considerable. We have seen this in Western economies.
B These phenomenon are well-known in the West. They are much
more clear in the Soviet-type systems. In Poland, since 1981,
General Jaruzelski has been committed to the most far-reaching
form of economic reform. It is easy to talk about allowing firms
to go bankrupt. The Soviets have done this themselves. One has
C to wait for the first firm to go bankrupt. We have seen in this
country ourselves how much political opposition this creates. It
is obviously much greater in the Soviet system.

D There is a third factor which has also been discussed
this morning, and that is popular opposition. It is very easy
to present the sort of reforms which are planned as a means of
increasing the differentials, undermining the position of the
industrial working class and strengthening the position of the
E privileged elites at the expense of society. The society of
Eastern Europe, for all their pro-Western sentiments and for all
their desire to emulate the West -- a question asked in Poland
is "Why is the sun shining so brightly?" The answer is that it knows
F that in the evening it will be in the West -- suffers from a lack
of awareness of the implications of the changes which are being
introduced. The paradoxes are obvious. In Poland, for instance,
G there is widespread commitment, as is shown by the public opinion
polls, which are allowed there although the results are not
published - they are properly conducted polls undertaken by the
Department of Sociology at the University of Warsaw - to the
H principles of economic reform but opposition to the implications of
economic reform; e.g. redeployment of labour, closing the factories
and so on.

A They show widespread commitment to the introduction of private enterprise but bitter resentment when people profit from private enterprise. "Who are these people who are obviously defrauding the authorities because they are getting rich, keeping money and not
B paying taxes?" This means that it is very easy for demagogic leaders -- one of the features of Communist systems is that you have factional struggles. All political struggles turn out to be
C factional struggles, which are both struggles for power and struggles over policy -- to put forward anti-reform policies on the grounds that these are policies which abandon the true interests of the working class. One can see this happening in Hungary, for instance. One of
D the main contenders for succession talks all the time about the severe sufferings which the economic reforms are imposing on ordinary people and on the need to diminish differentials and of the need to get back to a more just and egalitarian social system.

E There is one further barrier to change in Eastern Europe, and that is the one country which falls outside the Soviet sphere and where change has gone furthest is Yugoslavia. The Yugoslavian precedent is not an encouraged one for the outcome of the experiments
F which Mr Gorbachev is attempting. What you have in Yugoslavia is far-reaching political de-centralisation, effective autonomy for the various Republics and autonomous regions, coupled with fairly large scale economic decentralisation with plant and factory
G autonomy. This has meant that it has been very difficult to introduce major economic changes because of the interests of the local republics. What has happened today is that the Socialist ideal has lost whatever attractiveness it ever enjoyed in Yugoslavia, and
H so, too, has the Yugoslav idea. It has been replaced, essentially, by the appeal of Moslem nationalism in Bosnia and Croatian Catholic

A nationalism in Croatia. Those who created the state feel very
much oppressed. This is, again, a precedent in the Soviet Union
because if you have decentralisation - it is a feature of
B Communism that the goal is national Communism - and if the
local republics get more autonomy, the feelings of the Russians,
who still really control the system, is that they are being
pushed out and their fear may be of losing the State. The outcome
may well be the Pamyat views which were described by Iain Elliot.

C A final factor which one needs to stress is that in the
Soviet Union there is a degree of political legitimacy. These
changes can be introduced without large scale unrest. However,
D there is a danger of large scale unrest. There have been strikes
in the Soviet Union. We have seen that many of the changes in
Eastern Europe - for instance, the price changes - have been
followed by large scale unrest.

E Just to sum-up -- I know we have been talking a lot
here and that you want time for discussion -- what are the
implications for what Mr Gorbachev is trying to do for Eastern
Europe today? I think it has to be said, firstly, that there is
F a great deal of scepticism in Eastern Europe about the possibility
of Mr Gorbachev succeeding. A Czech recently asked me what was
the difference between Mr Dubczec and Mr Gorbachev? Apparently,
the answer is that there is no difference, except that Mr Gorbachev
G does not know it yet. Let us hope that that is not correct.

H However, there is a sense of hope on the part of the
more official elements that this change will somehow strengthen
the move towards economic decentralisation and economic
efficiency, and on the part of the opposition that the Soviet Union

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will be pre-occupied with internal matters for a long time which will give a greater opportunity to the Eastern Europeans to push their own interests. I think what George said about linkage is important here. One wants to encourage the Governments of Eastern Europe to take the opportunities which exist for them.

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It is worthy to note that in the 19th Century, in the Tzarist Empire change was often inhibited by the implications of liberalisation in the non-Russian areas of the Tzarist empire.

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The great reforms very quickly led to major upheavals in Poland and in the Baltic states. Also at this time was a growth in vociferous tendencies within the empire which were strongly resisted. The same is true today. It is very easy to see the situation getting out of hand in Eastern Europe. The system is relatively stable in that everybody knows that if you rock the boat too much the consequences are likely to be very unpleasant.

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Given that the system enjoys a relatively low degree of legitimacy, a small incident, like the rock concert which the Minister mentioned, can have large scale consequences. It is easy to see a situation in which a major crisis blows up. I do not actually think this is likely, but it could happen and we might well be faced with a serious problem.

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Another consequence is that it seems to me unlikely that the present economic reforms are going to be particularly successful. I do not see Gorbachev being able to solve the major problems of large scale centralisation. This is a serious implication for the possible success of the Soviet reform. The Soviet system is so inefficient in that merely by increasing efficiency by one or two percent may enable you to get by for a period, but you are still faced with the problem of how to make the countries of Eastern Europe more efficient and how to diminish the subsidies.

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I am rather pessimistic, above all, about the economic prospects on what Mr Gorbachev is doing. In the political field, one cannot but marvel at the kind of things which are coming up, but one has to worry about the reaction which these are going to arouse. The strength and the entrenched position of the bureaucracy should never be under-estimated in the Soviet Union, because even in Eastern Europe where the bureacracy is weaker and has had less support, it has generally been able to maintain its position. (Applause)

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THE CHAIRMAN: Antony, thank you very much, indeed. I think you will agree that we have had a wonderful morning. There is much to talk about and ask about after we have had a cup of coffee.

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(A short break)

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11.25

A THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, I am sure that what was said
earlier will have stimulated you to a good deal of thought and
possibly to some doubts and scepticism about some of the
B interpretations. Would you put your points, if possible, as
questions. If you want to make a point or ask a question, catch
my eye and I will call you at the appropriate minute. If you want
to direct these questions to a particular member of the panel,
do so, otherwise I will try to deal with them in an appropriate
C way. Our first question or point is from Sir Fitzroy Maclean.

SIR FITZROY MACLEAN: Might I say, first of all, how enormously
interested I have been by the panel's very appropriate and
D informed remarks. Obviously, the 64 million dollar question is:
will Gorbachev survive? I have spent a lot of time during the
last two years in the Soviet Union making a television series
and I therefore talked to a lot of people. One of the things
E that interests me is the extent to which not only Gorbachev
himself, but top people who follow form very closely, have
emphasised the strength of the opposition to him. I take that
as meaning -- having had a long association with the Soviet Union,
F I have a rather perverse mind -- that the political opposition
is not all that strong. I think that is why they talk about it:
it is because it is not there. Perhaps that is being rather
too blurred. My own feeling is that the serious opposition,
G which I think is "resistance morale" rather than actual opposition
comes from the entrenched bureaucracy, which has been there since
the time of the Tartars. It likes the way it is and does not want
to be upset. Certainly, in dealing with a number of Soviet Union
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A Government departments, I have found absolutely no signs of
either glasnost or perestroika. I think a lot of people are
still waiting to see which way the cat jumps. I would be
interested to hear the panel's views. I think that Gorbachev
B has been very clever indeed in getting rid of his political
opponents. Romanov went within weeks. He was the most famous
one. I thought that the way in which he handled Herr Rust's
C landing on Red Square was absolutely masterly, to the extent
that a lot of people were saying: "Did he hire him for that pur-
pose?" Can I hear what the panel feel about the question of
opposition?

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Elliot, would you like to reply?

D DR. ELLIOT: I think that one has to be very careful about internal
Soviet reports of opposition in the Soviet Union to the top man
because one has seen this kind of report emerging under all the
other leaders too. Even with Stalin, people were saying:
E "Co-operate with Stalin because if you do not, the hard men
will get into power and that will be much worse" etc.

SIR FITZROY MACLEAN: These people were all saying that they were
F 150% on Gorbachev's side and they were worried about a lot of
baddies who were being a nuisance.

G DR. ELLIOT: At the moment, there is not a major opposition to
Gorbachev. He is a very skilful politician and one can see that
from the way he has manoeuvred people out of power. He has
promoted somebody like Gromyko so that he has less immediate
political power, but he is still there and his authority is still
great. I think that what we might see developing is that in ten
H years' time, I would expect Gorbachev still to be there, but then

A possibly more opposition if he has not managed to prove to people that economic reconstruction is -----

SIR FITZROY MACLEAN: A popular alternative.

DR. ELLIOT: Yes.

B THE CHAIRMAN: Laurence Kelly is going to join our panel. He is the biographer of Lermontov. I think he has a response to that.

C MR. KELLY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to refer back to Dr. George Urban's very stimulating contribution and the wonderful phrase he used about the torpor of spirit in the Russian character and, secondly, also the arrival with history which Gorbachev is dreaming of. He put his finger on the main problem of this reform, which is: can you leave the well of Revizov and Dead Souls and create a true Forsyte Saga in Russia? There is no Galsworthy novel to turn to as a parallel, Dr. Urban. How do we get out of Gogol into a new spirit? Can you do this without the use of the knout? What are the carrots which would bring the donkey to water? Will they work? I thought you put your finger on it when you referred to the terrible inertia in the Russian character.

F Let us remember that Peter the Great, who was another Stalin in his way, used coercion on a massive scale and the knout ruthlessly to move the Russian character into the forms he was seeking. It seems to me that this is the big question; whether it can be done without terror and if so, what knout will Gorbachev introduce? What carrots will do the trick? Perhaps my colleagues on the panel will think about this and sketch out the successful carrots that he is using to banish Chichikov into H the backyard of history.

A THE CHAIRMAN: Does anyone want to reply to those brilliant questions?
George, they were really addressed to you.

B DR. GEORGE URBAN: Let me first say that Peter had a considerable measure of
success in his forced march to catch up with the West and, also, in using
the knout. It was a mere 20 years after the initiation of Peter's
westernizing programme that he defeated, in 1709, the Swedes at Poltava.
C The coercion worked, and we may well say that Stalin's coercion worked too
and on a similar time-scale. Gorbachev, if he were to succeed, would need
much more time (as he now frequently admits) unless he decided that in Russia's
particular conditions even "liberalisation" needed the liberal use of the
knout. As to the more general question of: How is Oblomovism to be overcome?
- I have no answer, and I don't think Gorbachev has either. The Soviet
D population does not actively dislike the state it is in, certainly not to
the point of wanting to sink the system. The particular mixture of
dirigism tempered by corruption and periodic upheavals to bare the "Russian
Soul" is rather in the spirit of Russian tradition. Gorbachev first talked
about a reform period lasting 2 or 3 years. Now he is talking about decades.
E My own feeling is that it will take generations if indeed it will ever happen.

F THE CHAIRMAN: The Reverend Michael Bordeaux, George Miller and
then Lionel Bloch.

G REV. MICHAEL BOURDEAUX: We have heard some relevant though passing
references to human rights in the various discourses of the panel.
We have heard references to Jews and Sakharov, for example.
H Could we have a little more on the subject from the panel? I
am personally surprised that there has not been a strong
re-emergence of such movements as that founded by the Helsinki
Monitors. One might have expected that in a new climate, something

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more systematic might have emerged possibly dealing with Sakharov once again, ten years later, as the focal point. In fact, this does not seem to have happened in quite the way one might have expected. Looking back, during the period of Krushchev, his new ideas had to be counterbalanced. Krushchev picked out religion as the butt of his ideology and showed himself as a purist. Lenin had to pick on something which was not traditional, namely, Communism. In proving his orthodoxy, his persecution of religion was systematic and extremely serious. That is not at the moment happening under Gorbachev. One knows that it is not. Does anyone on the panel foresee a systematic counterweight to Gorbachev's liberalism in other directions?

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Lieven, would you like to respond to that?

DR. LIEVEN: My impression at the moment is that people are waiting to see which way Gorbachev is going to jump. In other words, I suspect that certainly a lot of people who have been let out of camps are having a bit of a breathing space and, secondly, are themselves uncertain. Is this a man who is genuinely going to change things or is this a man who is trying to corrupt the the true spirit of the human rights movement, co-opt it to some extent and twist it and use it for his own purposes? You get the impression that there is real disagreement at the moment. Were I in the same situation as them, I would be not clear which way I was going to jump. Being a man of no immense courage and a certain pragmatism, I think I would be putting my money on Gorbachev at the moment. I am not particularly surprised that things have not yet developed in the direction of a much stronger reassertion of the Helsinki Group, etc.

A One has to have a certain sense of timing. We are talking
about a man who is really a pretty recent phenomenon. I think
again it is interesting to look back to the early years of
Alexander II. Alexander was, after all, an emperor. He
B inherited supreme legitimate and unquestioned power. It
nevertheless took him five and a half years from his succession
to the throne to get rid of serfdom. You would expect Gorbachev
to spend some time creating the kind of political base which would
C enable him to carry out political reforms. One would expect some
of the manoeuvrings, the ideological statements and smokescreens,
etc. One would expect that to bewilder would-be oppositionalists,
D dissidents who might wish to support him or who simply feel that
he is just trying to use their support. Again, think back
to what happened in 1856, 1857, 1858 and 1859. You had people
who subsequently became strong supporters of the Government and
at some points losing patience, saying: "This man is betraying us."
E You had some people like Tchernyshevsky who would subsequently
be great revolutionary opponents of the Government.

F It is an uncertain moment. It is in the very nature of
things as well with this kind of political system that so much of
the manoeuvring goes on behind closed doors and what comes out on
the surface are very definitely smokescreens put forward for one
kind of tactical reason or another. You would expect a degree
G of waiting to see what is going to happen and uncertainty in the
minds of either the dissidents themselves or people who have
sympathy with that movement.

H As regards the counterweight to his reformism, this may be
the case. There are all sorts of potential scenarios. Speaking
from our own point of view, it would seem to me that the most

worrying scenario would be one which one might describe as Cuba. In other words, if one looks to Krushchev, here we had a man who was attempting most definitely to transform certain elements of domestic economy in a direction away from the military and industrial complex and away from putting all his money into military confrontation with the Western powers by reducing the military budget. He was trying to some extent to create the same kind of climate of glasnost that we have now. He was trying to build bridges to the cultural intelligentsia to encourage in a licensed way, as Gorbachev is trying to do, critically-thinking people in the Soviet society. It does seem to me that the Cuban episode was to some extent Krushchev's attempt to outflank his opponents on the conservative side of the military and industrial complex by saying: "Look, you may think I am a wet. You may think, to some extent, that I am deserting Soviet and Russian tradition in the way that I am doing things, but by this clever ploy, I seem to be beating the Imperialists at their own game. I have my missiles in Cuba at no financial expense. I have increased our security no end. Therefore, how can you accuse me of being weak with the Imperialists? How can you accuse me of not having protected Soviet interests or its security because, after all, I have achieved at no expense what you wanted me to spend thousands of millions of roubles on?" That to us is the main danger.

I would have thought, but I would not be 100% sure on this, that probably the logic for the moment of Gorbachev's policy runs against that. It would be too dangerous a counterweight because after all, the Soviet Union had experience in the 1970s of what happens when you tread on the Americans' toes.

A Pushing forward in Angola and pushing forward in Afghanistan
turned out to be a bad mistake. One point that does come
across clearly is that any illusions that the Soviet Union
may have as regards the ease with which one could expand one's
influence and interests in the world by military means should
B have been seriously weakened by Afghanistan. It does seem to me
that if one is putting forward counterweights, then you are
right: it is more likely to be in the domestic sphere than
the foreign one, which is better for us fundamentally.

C It might be that religion would be a counterweight, but
I doubt it. I doubt it because I think there is too strong an
effort to build bridges to the cultural intelligentsia and to
build bridges also to the Russian national spirit. If indeed
D there was any element of using anti-religion, it would be very
much in the margins of religion from the point of view of a
Russian leader. In other words, it would not be the Orthodox
church. It probably would not be the Catholic church. It might
E be the traditional enemies amongst the Evangelical movements -----

REV. MICHAEL BOURDEAUX: Or Islam.

F DR. LIEVEN: Islam again is a very interesting one. I would not put
my money on which way they would jump on that. It will be
very interesting to see. It is inevitably not a decent answer
to your question. It comes back to Asquith and "wait and see."

G Continued:

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11.45

A DR. ANTONY POLONSKY: You probably know more about this than
anybody on the Panel. This religious question is very interesting,
especially the role of the orthodox Church in Soviet society
in the next generation. It is quite clear that the Pope's visit
B to Poland led to considerable friction between the Pope and
General Jaruzelski. The root of the problem lies in the fact,
I think, that when General Jaruzelski was in Rome he promised
the Pope that he would arrange a visit for the Pope to the
C Soviet Union, and was unable to deliver. Apparently, and
I am telling you these rumours for what they are worth, Gorbachev
was willing to allow the visit but not those in authority in
Lithuania on the grounds that it would make life impossible
D for the Communists in Lithuania. An interesting fact is the
Vatican's perception of the situation. This has been commented
on widely in the Polish emigré press. The Vatican certainly
believes that the Orthodox Church is now a much more independent
E force in Soviet Society. It is not wholly independent, as we
would understand it, but there is the feeling that the Orthodox
Church can somehow be brought into play as another factor of Soviet
Society. I think this is linked with a general attempt on the
F part of Gorbachev to legitimise his rule, to make his rule
more popular, by making certain concessions to Russian national
issues; the rebuilding of Russian national buildings, stress
on Russian cultural heritage and stress on the Orthodox Church.
G I think that this may well be an area where one could give
increased power to the Church. Of course, the Russian Orthodox
Church has a long tradition of subservience to the State. I do
not think that that will necessarily be good for democratisation.
H I do not think that one should rule out some greater independent
role for the Church. I think in this respect an anti-religious

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campaign is unlikely because Gorbachev's interest does lie in that direction. On the contrary, Gorbachev's interest is in enlisting and using the support of the Orthodox Church to widen his appeal both domestically and abroad. You notice this fact from the Church delegations which are coming from the Soviet Union. They are no longer composed of quite the old hacks. There are still hacks, but they are not quite as hack about it.

DR. GEORGE URBAN: Why have the human rights' dissidents and the Helsinki monitors been so unsuccessful ?

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The Helsinki idea and, I am afraid, human rights in general are not popular with the ordinary Russians. They do not really care.. Helsinki and human rights are elite pursuits in the Soviet Union and, to some extent, Jewish pursuits. What impresses me enormously when listening to people like Irina Ratushinskaya or talking to a man like Anatoli Koryagin, is that in camp they were absolutely alone. Their fellow prisoners did not support them; they were, indeed, mostly hostile to them. The dissidents were looked upon as odd men out on the argument : "How come that these privileged intellectuals are still rebellious because their demands for this or that fanciful right have not been met ?" The men and women you and I would regard as being in the forefront in the battle for a better society are generally unpopular with the masses; and this is extraordinarily depressing.

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It is all the more depressing because in Eastern Europe one has precisely the opposite picture. In Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1956 and 1968 and again in the early 1980s, dissident intellectuals became national

leaders. When these people came out of prison, as in Hungary in 1956, they led the national revolution.

In Czechoslovakia in 1968 television producers and writers automatically went to the head of the movement.

Not so in the Soviet Union.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and Gentlemen, you will see that I am being an extremely bad Chairman because I am going to allow Dr. Lieven to say something more.

DR. DOMINIC LIEVEN: Just to back-up George, from "Notes on the House of the Dead" on the attitude towards intellectual upper-class revolutionaries, human rights activists, from ordinary Russian prisoners in the 1850s. The collectivist instinct, and the idea that the individual must conform to the laws of the collective is far, far more powerful among ordinary Russians than the sense that a human being has inherent rights.

MR GEORGE MILLER (Russian Research Foundation): A lot has been said about minority nationalism in the Soviet Union, and the role played in opposing Gorbachev's reforms. I would like to ask a question about Russian nationalism and if the Panel sees a divergence growing up between the Russian patriotic interests and ideological party interests? I have particularly in mind the country writers and their success in stopping the whole policy of diverting the rivers, and, for example, the divergence in the Eastern sphere of the Kuril Islands - the Kurilskiye Ostrova - where it would be an interest to Russian nationalism to give up the Kuril Islands so that the Japanese could invest in Siberia but for ideological reasons that is not being done. Those two are examples of many where I see a divergence increasingly taking place between the Russian

A patriotic element and the nationalist element. Do members of the Panel think that the Pamyat organisation would be a very good example to see how this battle for Russian nationalism is going on and how we see the KGB trying to influence it in a more chauvinistic and with a more national Bolshevik tendency to maintain control of that element, and how other elements are trying to move it in another direction which could be called more Slavophile rather than Pan-Slavic?

C DR. IAIN ELLIOT: This is certainly an interest which I share with George. It is a major question for future development in the Soviet Union. I think I would see nationalism working in two ways. Obviously, there are good examples where the Russian nationalist writers have come to the fore at the moment. The diversion of Russian northern waters down to Central Asia is a very good example. That was stopped and hailed as a great example of glasnost - openness - with discussion in the media. Of course, one feels it was easier to push that through because Koniev, the leader in Kazakhstan, and Rasheedev, the former leader in Uzbekistan, were among those that Gorbachev and his people wanted to do down, so as they had been in favour of this water coming to irrigate the southern areas, their political push was much less than those of the Russians in the north.

Another aspect, which is very important, and goes back to what Michael was saying, it is closely linked up with the religious question, and one sees this particularly in central Asia with local nationalism and Islam being almost indistinguishable. They come together very closely. The same thing is true in Lithuania with the very strong support for the Catholic Church and strong nationalism, too. I would expect that to go on growing in importance in future years.

A MR JAMES SHERR: I have two questions, if I may, about foreign
policy. Firstly, my own view is that in that sphere Gorbachev
is probably the USSR's most accomplished Leninist since Lenin.
By that, I mean that he is single-minded in his ends but totally
flexible in his means. Secondly, he understands that the most
B cost-effective way of dealing with a powerful opponent is to
make the opponent's weaknesses work for you rather than trying
to match his strengths directly. It seems to me that he, plus
his team, understand that by contrast we in this part of the
C world often confuse means and ends. We are very style conscious.
We confuse people who do things nicely with people who are doing
nice things. Firstly, do the Panel share this evaluation?
Are they disturbed by the tone of his approach at this moment?

D Secondly, I think what is now becoming a general
assumption is that Gorbachev is interested in a foreign policy
lull for the next 10 to 15 years. It seems to me that we should
at least entertain the thought that he is interested in doing very
E radical things internationally, albeit not in ways which are
either dangerous or especially costly.

F If one looks both at his diplomatic offensive towards
the Far East and also towards his advance towards arms control,
it seems to me appropriate to ask whether, when it
comes to long-standing aims, such as breaking up NATO, Gorbachev
by arms control and cut backs will be able to accomplish more.

G THE CHAIRMAN: Who would like to respond to that?

H DR. IAIN ELLIOT: To illustrate the point, I think one only has
to look at some of the public opinion polls which have come out
recently showing that people are so impressed by Gorbachev's
style and message which has come from Moscow, that they tend to
see Moscow now as the source of peace proposals rather than
Washington.

A The percentage of people supporting Gorbachev as opposed
to those supporting Reagan is very alarming. One cannot imagine
anything similar taking place when the Americans were involved
in Vietnam. However, here we have the Soviet Union involved in
B a very brutal war in Afghanistan and yet it is still being seen
as a source for peaceful proposals. I think he is being
successful to some extent in splitting the Alliance as regards
public opinion. I do not think it will go as far as affecting
C Governments. It will be, I think, a temporary phenomenon.

DR. GEORGE URBAN: I have nothing much to add except to say that
Gorbachev is an alarmingly accomplished opponent. As a
practitioner in communications over the air, I rejoice in ~~having~~
D ~~him as an opponent~~ because he makes our job so much more challenging. We
had very little problem with fighting Brezhnev or his crew, but Gorbachev
is a worthy antagonist.

MR LIONEL BLOCH: I have two questions. There are a number of people
E in the West speaking unofficially for Russia. They are
unanimous in canvassing the point of view that we ought to
support Mr Gorbachev's titanic struggle against the forces
of darkness in Russia. My first question is this: Does the
F West really have an interest in helping Mr Gorbachev to
consolidate, modernise and make the Soviet Union more efficient,
and make it a more formidable opponent? I think the question
should be faced squarely and not indirectly.

G My second question is a different one. Notwithstanding
all the talk about glasnost, it appears from recent reports that
dissidents are still being tortured in psychiatric wards, people
are still being killed one way or the other in hard labour camps,
H and so on. Would there not be a point in translating for the

A benefit of those responsible for those actions the message of
the Barbie trial, which is that those who commit crimes against
humanity, even in a regime which some of you like to describe
as "almost legitimate", ultimately may have to account, regardless
B of how much time will pass before this happens? I am not
suggesting that it should come on a government level, but there
are other levels on which the message could be conveyed.

DR. DOMINIC LIEVEN: Yes. I fully take your point about the fact
C that if one did have some kind of Soviet economic miracle then
we would be up against a much more formidable power. The great
weakness of the Soviet Union at the moment is that military power
is by no means adequate on its own in the international sphere,
D and the Soviet Union absolutely lacks economic power which would
enable it to compete with us. Should it acquire that power,
we will be in trouble. I am not sure, at the other end of the
spectrum, whether we might also not be in trouble or have
E considerable difficulties in dealing with a superpower on the
slide. There are few things nastier than a great power which
feels that it has not got a great deal to lose because the
alternative to acting radically is actually seeing the ground slip
F from under its feet. I am thinking of Austria before 1914. That
is a very difficult country to hold on to. You do also get to a
situation in the Soviet Union where you would have the leadership
feeling that it simply had to win every battle in the international
G sphere, that it had to assert its power, that it had to show that
it was not on the slide, but on the contrary, history was on its
side, for fear of increasingly losing control, particularly over
the periphery. One has in the last resort always to remember
H that the key to Soviet power is the inertia imposed from fear.

A "You may not love us, but you have to live with us. You do not
love the Russian climate; you do not love your mother-in-law;
but they are facts of life which you have to live with. So long
B as you live within the bounds of the inevitably present situation,
and you do not imagine that you can get rid of us, do not imagine
that you can scare us or push us around, and you do not try,
your life will be bearable." That is, to my mind, the fundamental
C of Soviet power. If that began to shift, then I think that the
rulers of the Soviet Union would feel that that inertia based
on fear and on a sense that "We are immovable; we are
invincible; we are part of history" would have to be reasserted
very nastily and strongly. I strongly suspect that they would
D choose the international field as the one in which to do it.
In the sense it has a resonance. I would feel that, anyway.
I would have a slightly more balanced view than you have. I quite
agree that it is not in our interest to build up the Soviet state
E as a great success. It would be madness to do so. I also do not
think that we have it in our power to push it over the edge, save
in a mutually destructive way. That is the answer to your first
point.

F Secondly, this is indeed a vile regime internally.
Extremely nasty things happen. That has nothing to do with the
fact that it is legitimate in the eyes of the Russian people.
G It is an absolute illusion to think that nastiness and legitimacy
are in any sense opposed to each other. That is, unfortunately,
my conclusion on that point. As regard the extent to which we
should stress the human rights' approach in our dealings with the
H Soviet Union, I have a mixed view on that. I think, fundamentally,
foreign policy is about the interests of the United Kingdom, the

A interests of Western Europe, the interests of the international
capitalist community. At the same time, I think it is also very
important that societies should have principles, and should, for
B their own benefit, their own selfish interests, if you like,
stand up for those principles in order, in a sense, to give us a
feeling that we do stand for something in the world. I do think
in that sense, from our own selfish point of view, standing up
for human rights is relevant. In that sense, I do not think
C that real politik and a human rights' approach can be completely
divorced. What I have said may sound cynical and rather crude,
but it is my point of view.

D DR. GEORGE URBAN: Referring to the phrase "Barbie Trial",
I, for one, have been advocating for some time that we
should demand from the Soviets the holding of "Stalin
E Crimes Trials". Steps in that direction are now being
cautiously taken in the Soviet Union itself though mostly
without naming names and without openly referring to
Stalin as the chief criminal. Only last week a young
Soviet scholar, going through part of the files, disclosed
F that some 600,000 people had been done to death under
Stalin under just one arm of Soviet jurisdiction. This
is a staggering figure. But as research of this kind is
now being conducted under Gorbachev (even though not
G always publicly) I am not completely without hope that
gradually the crimes will be dug up and perhaps some of
those still alive and responsible will be brought to
book. But Gorbachev's present inclination seems to be
H to talk about the injustices but not the perpetrators.
It is for the Soviet elite to hammer away at this theme

irresistible. We should make the same demands in our foreign broadcasts. The cover-up in the Soviet Union is a blot on the national conscience. No true reforms can take place until the blot is removed.

The great test of Gorbachev's "revolutionary" intentions will be this: Is he going to make another Khrushchev-type speech next year or the year after? Will he go back to the Stalinist period and go into the annihilation not only of millions of Party members but of those millions of non-Party people too who formed the great majority of Stalin's victims? I doubt very much whether he will because this might bring him down.

MR CHARLES JANSON (Board of Soviet Analyst): Dr. Polonsky has been speaking about rule by fear. The Party has not ruled by fear alone. It has always ruled by ideology. I think that is a subject which the Panel has rather under-emphasised, although Dr. Iain Elliot referred to the continuing necessity of ideology. Those of us who have read Eric Voegelin and Minogue know that the ideology is about 200 years old. It originated in or from the French Revolution. Most people agree today that it is in decline in the world. It was a very powerful secular religion, and certainly, as transformed by Lenin, it was the making of the Soviet Union. Does not this question arise: How can a new regime, a so-called "perestroika" do without it? It is clear that the regime is moving towards a sort of imperialism. One does not have to believe in very much in this world. We, in this country, believe in a little religion, and also there are our poets, writers and philosophers. The Soviet population has never had such a religion. It has always been abolished. Can ideology be used in a sort of reticent way as a kind of morning prayer so it is said in the morning and then one forgets about it for the rest of the day?

A If you do that, you have no principles at all. Myself, I do not see how it is possible to divorce western thought from what Gorbachev is trying to do. I would like the Panel to take me up on that.

B THE CHAIRMAN: That is a very interesting point. Dr. Elliot.

C DR. IAIN ELLIOT: Ideology is one of those subjects which is so wide and there are so many interpretations on it that it is worthy several hours of debate. I think I would accept what Charles is saying and add to it that as ideology has emerged in the Soviet Union it has always been linked in some way with Russian nationalism. When the regime has been under threat - the Second World War is the best example - it was much less for Maxism/Leninism. The population were fighting for "Mother Russia". I think one sees that in evidence today. One talks about the language of Lenin, for instance, as needing to be taught more thoroughly throughout the Soviet Union. As it is linked with Lenin, that makes it all right to push this form of Russification in the Central Asian Republics. My own feeling is that it will always be necessary to stand as a kind of backboard to the State, because this "Soviet Union" is artificial, it seems to me. I believe it is the only country in the world which does not have any geographical boundaries in its name. The Soviet Union could go out and expand and take in, say, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Poland or of Hungary etc. without changing its name. It would still be the USSR. There are no geographical limits set within this place. Its justification is in the ideology. Soviet man is put forward in the form of needing to be a Soviet patriot. It is difficult to know what they mean by "Soviet patriot" and "Soviet patriotism" if you leave out Marxism/Leninism because that is the basis of it.

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It is a very important aspect of keeping the USSR together.

DR. POLONSKY: I will make three brief points about ideology.

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First of all, the Soviet Union is clearly an ideological state and likely to remain one. It do not think it could dispense with the ideology very easily as some sort of civic cement.

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Secondly, this ideology is very vague. You only have to read the quotations from Lenin which are now being dug up to realise that you can find practically anything in Lenin. You can justify the far-reaching de-centralisation of the economy on grounds of the new economic policy. This will continue. The ideology as it exists can be very much re-interpreted.

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This is the third point. There are certain fundamentally irreducible parts of the ideology - the fact that there is an irreconcilable hostility between the Socialist and the Capitalis systems. The fact that a long-term accommodation between these two systems is not possible. One will have to triumph. In the periods of accommodation, the aims should be for periods of relative relaxation. The aim should be to weaken one's opponents. These are all very fundamental features of the ideology, and they are not likely to change.

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An important question is how the Soviets assess their own situation. The language of the ideology affects the Soviets' way in which the ideology is perceived. It was very interesting if one looked at the speeches which Gorbachev made at the last meeting of the Central Committee, because he used phrases like "pre-crisis situation". A phrase like "pre-crisis situation" has a specific meaning in the Marxist/Leninist context. That is, unless something is done about it, it will become a crisis situation. I think that as an ideology it is quite useful

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in some way of perceiving the outside world. One is looking
at the whole concept of the correlation of the rather subtle
version of the balance of power. In other ways, it inhibits
clear thinking about the situation. It also does inhibit
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democratisation in the Soviet Union.

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DR. JOHN MARKS (Education Study Group, CPS): It was very interesting
to hear George Urban say that the West should reintroduce the
concept of linkage into the arena. In the three examples he
gave, could I ask his views on whether a fourth kind of linkage
might be suggested, which would really go to the heart of the
matter? At the Vienna Review Conference into the Helsinki
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Process could we not suggest that something like the abolition
of glasnost or extending reciprocal information between West
and the East should become more of a reality? If that is not
forthcoming, could we not build up the activities of organisations
like Radio Free Europe and the other radio stations, using
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other modern technology, and taking glasnost at its face value?

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DR. GEORGE URBAN: I think it is being done in Vienna in dribs
and drabs. It is not being done systematically. I only gave
three examples because those, it seemed to me, were the most
urgent. I quite agree that information policy is very important.

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I am a great believer in enlarging Radio Free Europe and that type
of organisation. Indeed, I am in favour of turning it into a television
station, which is being discussed. The effectiveness of that sort of
communication in Eastern Europe is enormous. It should be stepped up.
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Glasnost is being taken at its face value, and in Eastern Europe at least
the results will not be long in coming.

DR. DOMINIC LIEVEN: I agree in many ways. It seems to me that
from the point of view of this Government, the key thing is
to spend not a very great deal more money on the internal services

A of the B.B.C. to enable to broadcast in more than simply the Russian language. That would be a clear step forward.

MR DANIEL DULTZIN (Counsellor for Economic Affairs, Embassy of Mexico):

B I would like to know the opinion of the members of the Panel on the position of the Soviet Army under Gorbachev? My feeling is that the Army is strongly backing Gorbachev. The dominant position in the Soviet Army - I think I am speaking of the main block of the Soviet Army - is that they need the type of reforms that Gorbachev is pushing for. I would also like to know your
C opinion on how efficient is the military industrial complex and what are the possibilities for the civil economy as opposed to the military economy?

D DR. IAIN ELLIOT: One or two points come to my mind on this question, which is a crucial one. Historically, the government of the Soviet Union has not had a problem with the military as regards
E political control. One sees it as a potential challenge because they have got the guns, troops and tanks which combat Party control. The way the system works, with KGB control, reporting back through the Army, I think makes any idea of Bonapartism
F unlikely. More on the question that you were asking about, one can see elements of support for Gorbachev, mainly I think on the economic front, because they do understand that a modern army does need a modern economy to back it up, otherwise it simply
G cannot compete with the Americans on SDI and other such aspects. When it comes to the crunch, the people will say this means that you, the military industrial complex, which has had first choice of talent coming from the universities, and raw materials going
H into those industries, for so long, will have to be prepared to share a bit more. They have never had the advantage that the

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Americans have had that research money put into military projects has had a feed-back into the civilian economy. This is something which Gorbachev clearly wants. Mr Gorbachev's economic adviser has actually said that the military will have to be prepared

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to put some of their expertise into the civilian economy. I think one accepts that they have the ability from the weapons that have been developed. Whether we exaggerate that or not, I would

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not like to say. I think we have to assume that we do not. One or two little incidents which have emerged recently suggest that they are not all that efficient, but that could be very subtle

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disinformation. I have in mind the consumer goods sector which the military are supposed to contribute to, and in particular the evidence about television sets which they were producing until quite recently. There have been all sorts of indications there. Somebody suggested that if you buy a television set, buy a fire-extinguisher along with it, otherwise it is very dangerous.

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Very recently I heard of a very tragic story of a young child who was killed in a fire which was caused by a television, so I think it is probably genuine. Some aspects of production are not as efficient as we would like to think but I think we should

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assume that the Army is efficient.

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DR. DOMINIC LIEVEN: I will make three points on that. The first is to back up Iain. It strikes me that neither the traditions nor the contemporary mentality of the Russian and Soviet officer corps are at all in favour of direct intervention in politics.

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If one compares them with the officer corps of other European nations, one can see a very distinctly different tradition running through the 19th Century and into the 20th. Secondly, efficiency of the military industrial complex and attempts to

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transfer it to the civilian side is something that we have seen already, in the sense that one of the most unpopular moves which Gorbachev has made is to bring in a great deal tougher inspection of the goods produced in the civilian industries. That is a straight carrying over from the defence industry complex.

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The military have officers who say "We will not take that". The problem is, of course, and this is related to every attempt at economic reform so far, that one can run the defence industry

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complex with an element of efficiency because it has top priority, but you cannot give everybody top priority. There are many times

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when someone has a bright idea of how to make the Soviet economy more efficient. It is taken up by the top leadership and it is tried out in a relatively small number of enterprises or in one region or whatever. It works marvellously. Everyone says "Great, we will spread it across the Soviet Union". The trouble is that it worked marvellously, as often as not, because it had a political

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stamp put on it saying "Top priority. New model way of running the Soviet economy more efficiently with the agreement of the top leadership." Fine. Top priority for labour; top priority for

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raw materials; top priority when bottlenecks come up. It works marvellously. When applied across the whole board, nothing happens. One has to watch that.

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I think the third point, and potentially the most important, is that the more intelligent senior Soviet officers are quite aware of the fact that to compete as a superpower on the military side it is necessary to compete economically. These people are

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not children. The other side of the coin is that if one could actually imagine a liberalisation of the Soviet economy to take it quite far into the direction of a Western economy, the Soviet Union

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would simply cease to be a superpower. If you had to compete for raw materials, labour and technology on a free market, and if the Soviet Union had to spend as much building aeroplanes and nuclear submarines as its Western counterparts, it would simply not be able to afford the kind of defence effort which would put it into the top league. There are problems, it seems to me. If I was a Soviet general, I would be very very worried about the problems.

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A THE CHAIRMAN: Could we have the gentleman there? Could you tell us your name?

B MR. ROBERT BRINKLEY: Robert Brinkley. I would like to take up the point about Stalinism brought up by Dr. Lieven and Dr. Urban. Dr. Lieven said that disintering the skeletons of Stalin would have an effect in the republics of Ukraine and Kazakhstan. I think it is also going to have a considerable effect in Russia itself. When I was in Moscow in February, I took the opportunity to go and see "Pokayanie", which is "Repentance", the film by C Abuladze, which has been playing to packed cinemas around the Soviet Union. There were mostly Russians in the audience, but there were a lot of people there -- not just middle-aged D and older people -- who were seeing a part of their own history, affecting their own families and friends. One could hear the gasps as they recognised features of this history. Do the panel think that in opening up this area, the unpleasant areas of E Soviet history, Gorbachev is storing up a lot of trouble for himself? He is storing up questions about the very legitimacy of the party of which Stalin was one part. As you say, he succeeded Lenin, who was the predecessor of the present regime F and a lot of people are still there in the leadership.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to reply, Anthony?

G DR. POLONSKY: Yes. I think in the short run, what George said is right, that is to say, it is not likely to be a destabilising factor. On the contrary, it is likely to win the support of the H intelligentsia whom Gorbachev is trying to woo because he needs their involvement to get the economic system working more effectively and also because he would like their support. In the long

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run, it is difficult to know how these things work. If you look
at eastern Europe, in the initial response to de-Stalinisation, it
was very rapidly converted and then confined to a small group
who very rapidly became symbolic when Rajk was reinterred
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in 1956 and there was a mass demonstration. One cannot imagine
this happening in the Soviet Union, but on the other hand, it
could easily happen.

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I also think, however, that it opens up all sorts of
rather nasty cans of worms. For instance, it would be very easy
to argue on the lines of Solzhenitsyn that this regime is not
really a Russian regime; that this is a creature of the minorities
that the KGB is in the hands of the minorities. This is quite
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easy to imagine and one could easily imagine some sort of
nationalist reaction.

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Look again at the experience of eastern Europe. There have
been a number of these purges of, particularly, Jews. In Hungary,
you had this and in Poland in 1968. It is very easy to see some
of these anti-Soviet emotions or some of these anti-Stalinist
emotions diverted in this particular way. I do not think it is
at all clear how these things will move. I do not think, however,
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that if the Soviet Union is to move towards the establishment
of a greater degree of civil culture, which is absolutely essential
if we are to get democratisation, it is impossible. I am
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less pessimistic than George. George published in Encounter
this very fine interview with Galina Vishnevskaya,
which gave a very pessimistic account of how difficult it would
be to establish the institutions of civil society in Russia because
of the orthodox tradition and because of the tradition of the
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Tsars and the Tsars' inheritance. I think this is true, yet at the

A same time, a first stage in this will have to be some sort of reckoning with the past and essentially with the Stalinist past. This is a long process.

DR. GEORGE URBAN: Let me respond to this question.

B Stalinism is being debunked and the ideology is being broken. It is not quite true to say that the ideology is still being kept in shape. The best example is precisely the argument used by people like Vitaly Korotich who was saying the other day in an interview that it is very difficult to deal with all these requests to de-Stalinize and reveal the past. What happens if you do reveal the past? Do we want to undermine the legitimacy of everything that we did under the rubric of Socialism? Do we undermine part of it? Who is going to tell us what part of it is acceptable and what part of it is not acceptable?

E What I regard as even more important - and this comes back to the question regarding ideology - is that Korotich was using language - and many others are using language - which is totally away from "ideological-speak", as it were, a la Soviet. He was answering his questions in ordinary terms in the sort of language which he would use in talking to the greengrocer or the bus conductor. This, to my mind, is extremely dangerous for the system. Besancon and I published something recently on the use of language as the last bastion of orthodoxy in keeping the Soviet empire, as it were, in place. The moment the Soviets start talking the way Korotich does the Soviet

A Union is in trouble. When that language is used -
and it now is - much more significant than what they are
saying is the language in which they are saying it:
B "Truth is truth; a lie is a lie. Let us be clear
about this, comrades, let us stop lying". "I get real
telephone calls now", Korotich said, "These are not made
up the way they used to be, and I have to answer them".
C This could mean a revolution. Here, to my mind, is the
real crux of the matter in the Soviet Union; the change
of language.

THE CHAIRMAN: We have lots of questions. Jessica Douglas Home?

D MRS. JESSICA DOUGLAS HOME: I wonder if Dr. Elliot has also read
in last December's Literary Gazette, which was mentioned earlier,
about the law against unauthorised earners. A few months later,
E the Gazette said that 82 employees, within a nine month period,
had been imprisoned and arrested and forced to quit their jobs
in the commercial sector.

F MR. ELLIOT: I think there are very interesting developments in this
area. Again, it is playing with fire to start encouraging
individual enterprise in the Soviet Union. They have not quite
managed it yet. People are now trying to set up little businesses,
G driving taxis for their own personal profit, running little
restaurants, running little clothes shops and so on. To some
extent, this is recognising what was happening before. It was
happening in a rather unorthodox black market way and now it has
H been permitted. However, they do not know how to deal with it.
To illustrate that, one only has to look at the different
regulations in the different republics where you are supposed to

A pay for a licence to operate as an individual enterprise. The fees differ from republic to republic. The local authorities have not ironed out exactly what the licence for a private taxi ought to be.

B In addition, they have not quite got to grips with what they do about raw material supplied. These new firms are likely to be so popular that the queues are forming right down the streets for having your own clothes made, having a meal in a private restaurant, etc. They make a lot of money and with this money they obviously want to expand. What happens then? Can they open a second institution at the same time? The public demand is there, but that amounts to capitalist exploitation.

D At one point, they do have to be terribly careful because although there is now a debate going on about the death penalty in the Soviet Union, they are still shooting people for economic crimes. At what stage do you pass the limit between being there pursuing individual enterprise, giving to the population what they want, and moving on to the extent where you make so much money that you move into the black market at the risk of being shot. I think it is a dangerous area and they are not clear how to pursue it. It is a very interesting one to follow.

F THE CHAIRMAN: The gentleman here has been very patient. Could you tell us your name?

G MR. STEPHEN DALZIEL: Stephen Dalziel. I would like to put three quick questions, if I may. First of all, the subject of the military was recently brought up in the economic sense. I think that in the broadest sense, in the last 18 months, the question of perestroika and the military has been one of the greatest

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A successes for perestroika. We have definitely seen before
the Party congress that the military were kicking and screaming
and saying that they could have not have everything they wanted.
After the congress, that same small child who had been kicking
B and screaming was now sitting in the corner sucking its thumb.
There have been a number of clear points where the military has
been very firmly put in its place publicly. I agree with
Sir Fitzroy that Gorbachev handled the Rust affair very well.
C It was also a classic example of the military shooting itself
in the foot which helped him to do that. I would like the panel
to comment as to whether they think that lessons would be learned
in the broadest sense from that one.

D The second question which has been totally ignored so far
is that I feel that Gorbachev may well have an ace up his sleeve
with the position of Soviet women because in the ordinary humdrum
Soviet life, the ones who suffer the most are Soviet women. If
E things are going to get better, they will be the ones who will
feel that this chap is doing something for them. The anti-
alcohol laws are the first new laws under Gorbachev and if they
are going to benefit an area of society more than any other,
F it is going to be Soviet women. Soviet women, in Raisa Gorbachev,
have a respectable figurehead to show the world that they are
not all 17 stone shot-putters. In fact, Gorbachev himself is
G stressing that women must play a greater part. In the recent
local elections three weeks ago, nearly 50% of the candidates
elected were women.

H That brings me to my final point; the position of Dr. Elliot.
He mentioned the encouraging, although very limited, step at the
moment of multi-candidates and what effect this might have

A on the non-Russian republics. In fact, Central Asia was far
more democratic than anywhere else. Overall, there were only 5% of
the districts which actually elected their candidates by a
multi-candidate way of doing things, but in Tadjikistan
B and in Turkmenistan, 12% of all seats were done on a multi-
candidate basis which far outweighed any other area of the
Soviet Union. That is a matter possibly to point out.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Lieven?

C DR. LIEVEN: You know better than I do the position on the military
front, but I totally agree with what you say. It does seem to
me that one of the clear successes of Gorbachev has been to
put the generals in their place. I think that one can see all
D sorts of justifications for that. Quite apart from anything else,
there is a gap or shift from the generation whose main emotional
memory was the War, the close acquaintance between the civilian
leadership and the military leadership in a period of mutual
E co-operation, suffering and ultimate triumph.

I think it was emotionally very difficult for the Brezhnev
generation to say "No" to the generals in a way that is not
at all true of Gorbachev. It also seems to me that he has seen
F the utter fatuous idiocy of what Brezhnev was up to, namely,
the principle that if you spend five roubles on defence, the
Americans will always spend eight and you are not getting anywhere.
G What he is doing is gaining for the Soviets on both points, to
my mind, by cutting back on the role of the armed forces and,
at the same time, very much increasing the chance that the West
will also cut back so you have perfectly acceptable levels of
H security at much, much less cost. Meanwhile, you are diverting

A your resources into domestic reform with the intention, in the
long run, of being a much more effective competitor. All of that,
to my mind, makes excellent sense. It seems that the recent
B promotion of someone out of bureaucratic promotion line to
Defence Minister is probably a sign that he has actually succeeded
in getting his own attitudes to the top of the defence establish-
ment. I go along with you 100% on that.

C Women is a fascinating subject. Again, it would not be the
first time that this has been a resource to be tapped. Part of
Stalin's demoniac revolution was just getting the females into
the work force. One of the ways in which you would have massive
D increases in production without massive increases in productivity
is by expanding the number of people involved. Women were the
labour arm. Yes, you are right, there is a potential support.
There is certainly the anti-alcohol point. You know as well as
E I do, however, that there are real problems. The real difficulty
with the Soviet women is the role that they are expected to play.
That meets up with the whole problem of the dramatic decline of
the Russian birthrate, vis-a-vis the Central Asian birthrate. You
F cannot expect women to play the role they do play in the economy
and to play the role they are expected to play in boosting the
Russian birthrate. Anything you do to encourage one side, almost
inevitably knocks off the other.

G Also, again, you come back to this wretched problem of the
nationalities. You put through some splendid law to boost the
birthrate in the Russian republic. Its effect is +0.7% in Russia
and +17.9% in Central Asia, which is exactly what you want to
H avoid. However, the Soviet Union is no longer the kind of State

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where you can actually have clearly discriminatory laws for Russia against other republics. The price of empire in the Soviet Union is such, and has been for some time, that a certain degree of equal treatment is inevitable. I am slightly shifting off your

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subject, but the word "women" did set off this amalgam in my mind. I have frankly forgotten the last question.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you like to deal with the last question?

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Continued:

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12.30

A DR. I. ELLIOT: On the Rust affair, I agree that he handled this
extremely skilfully, but it does occur to me that he was also very
B lucky in this case. He was unlucky over Chernobyl. That was
not really his fault. It all blew up in his face. He has been
unlucky with the harvest this year. There was not much he could
do about that. In the Rust affair he was lucky in the respect
C that the plane was not shot down. I think there are all sorts of
indications that the rules are still there, but it could have been
shot down. Some of the commentary in the Soviet press has made
D this very clear. They have listed it as part of a succession
of plots by the CIA, including the Korean airliner incident, and
more recently the American warships which went into what the
Soviet Union claims to be their national waters which the Americans
do not. As to the Rust affair, Gorbachev used this incident as
E an opportunity for dismissals. He used that as an excuse. That
emphasises that it was it was a near thing. The plane, possibly,
might have been shot down, and then Gorbachev would have been in
great difficulty.

On the elections, I think they are very interesting.
F I do not think that we shall see them going on expanding and
expanding beyond a limit because there has to be a certain
control on the people who represent the Soviets. Possibly
G even more interestingly is the fact that first secretaries in
the regions within the Party is another area in which they are
talking about holding elections. Information is still coming
out in the Soviet media about the last election results. Some
H of the more interesting ones, for example, were the local elections
in Moscow. The media said words to the effect "Look how
marvellous it is now. We have genuine choice". To prove this,
they pointed out that some of the more unpopular candidates

A such as those in catering -- those of you who have visited
Moscow restaurants will know why they are unpopular -- only got
80 per cent of the votes.

B SIR KEITH JOSEPH: Does the Panel think that more decentralised
decision-making and more decentralised ownership could be achieved
without a framework of the rule of law, and is the rule of law
on Mr Gorbachev's agenda?

C DR. DOMINIC LIEVEN: The rule of law in the sense that we understand
it is not, in my view, on his agenda at the moment. There is
no conceivable possibility of the actions of the Party
apparatus being subject to any kind of legal order. That does not
D seem to me to be something which is conceivable at present.
It does not even seem to fit into his ideas of reform. His
ideas of reform do contain what you might describe as a
E traditional, maybe Stalinist, element. He is, after all, an
authoritarian reformer. He believes that his function is to
impose changes on society and not to be constrained by any kind
of external authority as to how those changes are imposed.
F He would certainly argue that there are quite sufficient obstacles
in that Society itself without people trying to impose artificial
ones on him. This is the reformist tradition in the Soviet
Union. Reformism does not necessarily mean liberalisation.
G It has a strong content of getting out of the car and actually
booting people into being more efficient. Where, of course, you
do get a greater sense that legal order is necessary is going
back to Tzarist parallels. Legal order should exist for
subordinates. It is important that the Ministry of Internal
H Affairs - the ordinary police as distinct from the KGB, the
political police - be constrained by the rule of law. If you do

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not constrain junior and middle ranking officials - civil servants, if you like - by some kind of rules, there is no control over them whatsoever. Indeed, a strong element of the Gorbachev campaign is that one must control the goings-on

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of ordinary officials. Just as in the same way - it is already coming - that once you begin expanding the degree to which enterprises are allowed to make contracts between each other,

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and there are moves in this direction, then you must have some kind of effective civil law apparatus because unexpected things happen. We do not need to tell each other of the chaos which will ensue. At the same time, and here one is touching on

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the absolute key to economic reform, the situation in the Soviet Union until very recently has simply been that any private contracting of any sort -- e.g. you agreeing with me that you will supply me with raw materials in order that I can actually be assured that those raw materials will arrive at the time and in the quantity and at the quality that I want -- was illegal.

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That is breaking the law. If one is going to go over to a system whereby I can decide that I am going to secure my raw materials from the person who can provide them most efficiently, and sell them to those who will distribute them most efficiently, then that is an economic revolution. Part of that economic revolution, if it is going to be effective, must be an

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effective system of civil law. If it comes, that will be a very very big and important change.

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MR ANTONY POLONSKY: Without going into the details of the latest Gorbachev economic proposals, none of which have been implemented yet, there is an inherent contradiction in what he is trying to do. At one level he is trying to centralise authority, to take away

A authority from the people to whom authority was dispersed in
the Brezhnev era; the local Republican authorities and the
middle ranking officials. To centralise it again as Stalin did
and at the same time also to give authority to individuals is an
B inherent contradiction in this which I think will inevitably mean
that there will be more intervention rather than the reverse.

We have not really said anything about agriculture.
That is, more than women, his trump card. If he wanted to do
C something drastic, he could do what Deng Xiao Ping has done.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am going to prolong this discussion, which I take
to be a Russian style, for another five or ten minutes. We have
five questions left. I hope you will make your questions
D extremely brief. Prince George Vassiltchikov.

PRINCE GEORGE VASSILTCHIKOV: One of the reforms announced a short
while ago was one which allowed recourse against abuse of authority
against law enforcement agencies. That is, I think, a very
E important innovation. I think there is an element in his plan
that answers that question.

We are also being told that they are discussing a
form of parole. That will be another element.

F In a lighter vein regarding the Rust story, within a
week of the landing of the plane, there was an anecdote that
Aeroflot were recruiting personnel for a new airport which will be
located in Red Square.

G Mr Chairman, something you said I am not sure I agree
with you about regarding social content. One of the things when
reading slogans is if you read them in reverse, that is a reflection
H of the truth. I think that one of the reasons why Gorbachev is
having such a tough time with popular support, and more and more

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he is addressing the people over the heads of the Party, is that basically they have never believed in the elite. They have established their own way of life. They have learnt to by-pass all of the rules, how to cheat and steal, and he is

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introducing new rules with which they are not familiar. That is why they are holding back. I do not know how he can enforce these rules without their participation until they participate and unless they participate.

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One point regarding nationality. I have found increasingly that what is interesting as far as the nationality issue is concerned is that they are beginning to question the success of their nationality programme. We no longer talk in terms of Slovaks. We talk more and more about the failure of the nationality programme. One thing which struck me is that just published is the latest list of Army commanders, military districts, their senior deputies, their chiefs of staff and chief political officers. I made a little calculation. Out of some sixty to seventy named names, there is not a single non-Slav. Last time, two years ago, there was one Armenian. Here, you have a few possible Ukrainians, a few possible Bielorussians, not a Central Asian and not even a Caucasian. That is an interesting phenomenon. Within a matter of years, the bulk of the lower ranks of the Army will be from those populations. I am told by people who have served in the Army that the minorities are not allowed to go above the rank of Colonel. That is a strong phenomenon.

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Something else which I have noticed regarding the Stalin revolution is that names are beginning to appear, and all of a sudden people are beginning to be aware that their grandparents

A were torturers. I remember talking to one who one person
who said "Both my grandmother and grandfather were in the...(?)...
in the 1930s and they are such nice old people. I cannot believe
that they were torturers, too." This is the sort of agony
B which is arising among hundreds and thousands of people in the
Soviet Union. They are asking "How many torturers were there
in the Soviet Union?" Thousands. That is all.

- Continued.

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A DR. ELLIOT: One of the laws now to be brought in is that the
individual is protected from the State organisation as from
January of next year. I think one of the major problems that
B this is going to come up against is the dual control which runs
throughout the Soviet Union between Soviet ministries, etc.
and the Party. One sees, for example, the clash already appearing
at local level. People are now backed up by the law, but the
C Party chiefs in each locality still feel that they have the say
in what is finally decided and that the laws are really for them
and not for the population unless the Party people say that the
law applies to them in a particular case. The Prime Minister,
D Mr. Ryzhkov, brought out an interesting example in his last
speech, going back to the economic side, where the factories
are now given rights about choosing what they produce and the
quality which they produce because they have to sell it on the
E market. Some of them are doing very well and making a good profit
out of it. This is all according to the laws.

However, local Party officials in one case which was
reported said: "Please, in addition to what you are producing,
F because you have planned it yourself and have made a profit out
of it, produce so many greenhouses" etc. on a one-off basis, which
disrupts the whole production and keeps out the profit which they
expected to share among the workers. The Party leaders locally
G felt they had a right to do that. Presumably, the greenhouses
were for them, but it did not say that.

Under Stalinism again, I think it was selective. The
H author who brought this up here to illustrate how far they have

A gone in de-Stalinising and admitting that the purges took place
and so on is dead. Solzhenitsyn is still alive and he is being
very quiet at the moment. He hopes to go back to the Soviet
B Union and he would like to be able to co-operate with Gorbachev
to some extent. Solzhenitsyn is his own man and at some time,
he is going to denounce some of the things happening in the
Soviet Union. He is an awkward one to take on.

C There was a demonstration in Riga, Latvia recently against
the people who were arrested after Latvia was incorporated into
the USSR and they were shipped off to Siberia where most of
them died. This demonstration was given a very different treatment
D to the cases where they have decided that it is all right to
bring up Stalinism. I think we are going to see a double
standard being observed in the Soviet Union for some time to come.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would the gentleman here tell us your name?

E DR. NICHOLAS LAMPERT: Nick Lampert from Birmingham. I just wanted
to make a general point which relates to certain underlying
themes in the discussion as a whole. It seems to me that there
is a kind of tension between the search for what are the limits
F of reform in the Soviet Union, whether due to the nature of the
political system or the ideology or Soviet global ambitions and,
on the other hand, the constant sense of surprise about what they
are coming up with. As there is a sense of surprise, it is
G really difficult to predict how far it can all go. When Sakharov
was released, everybody was surprised, but now it seems as if
that has not changed anything fundamentally. When Dr. Zhivago
was published or the film "Pokayanie" was shown, everyone was
H surprised, but somehow in retrospect it seems that there is no

A fundamental change. I would like to make a plea for some sort
of sense of historical openness. While it seems that there are
limits, I am not sure where those limits are. If we cannot say
where the limits are, I think we may have to find a distinction
B between means and ends. We can say that the ends of the Soviet
Union remain fundamentally the same except that the means have
changed, but if this chipping away process goes on for long
enough, then maybe the ends will get chipped away as well.

C One example of this is in the international sphere. If
some kind of demilitarisation of the East-West conflict can
be obtained, then maybe the Soviet Union, in the long run, will
not be in a position to compete in the political ideological
D ways. It will not be in a position to meet its traditional long-
term goals and they may change. I would make a plea for a sense
of openness.

THE CHAIRMAN: Could we have the gentleman at the top on the left?

E MR. JONATHAN LUXMOORE: My name is Jonathan Luxmoore. My question
is particularly about Eastern Europe and is a general question
which I ask of the members of the panel and Dr. George Urban in
F particular. I would be interested in hearing something more about
how you feel that the whole phenomenon in Gorbachev's changes is
being perceived in Eastern Europe, not only at the level of the
military establishments, but particularly at the level of public
G opinion. I would also like to know how the reaction and the atti-
tude of the West to these changes is being perceived. To recall
one case, in Poland at the moment one encounters almost everywhere
a very deep sense of foreboding about the future. They see,
H of course, certain short-term practical advantages for themselves

A in this situation, in particular as their own Government can
no longer use the pretext of hardline pressure from Moscow
as a barrier against reform. On the other hand, they see that
B the very last area in which he will make any concessions is in
anything that concerns Soviet control which exists over the
Eastern European countries. Also, they see the tremendous
Western preoccupation with the changes taking place in the Soviet
C Union. They see the procession of Western leaders to Moscow
and the statements of leaders like Margaret Thatcher about working
with Gorbachev and trusting him and so forth. This is a general
question about how this whole situation is being perceived at the
level of public opinion in Eastern Europe and how you see this
D developing in the future.

THE CHAIRMAN: Dr. Urban?

E DR. GEORGE URBAN: Yes, very briefly - I am sure Mr. Luxmoore
has heard me on this question before at another
conference - there is a real dilemma as far as the whole
Gorbachev-type of revolution is concerned for most East
F Europeans. This is because the East Europeans generally
do not like to take models from Moscow. Here we are,
for the first time since the war, apart from the short
1956 period, with a model emerging from Moscow - and
they are being told, not least by Western sources, news-
G papers and even radio stations, that they ought to look
at this model. "Look at what Gorbachev is doing. Look
at this speech and that". The East Europeans do not
like it. They have always felt that they are culturally
H superior to anything that comes out of Moscow. For

A them glasnost and perestroika or "new thinking" are
suspect. This is a difficult problem because for purposes
of cross-fertilization Prague and Rumania, for example,
to take two hardline countries, would benefit from
Gorbachev's ideas. However, there is resistance to him
because of this cultural factor. "Our cultural models
B have always been Vienna, Paris, London and Berlin."
There is no arguing with that sort of sentiment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Our last question or point is from the lady in the
front.

C MISS TATIANA WOLFF: I just wanted to go back to the religious
question and ask the panel whether it would be interesting to
see how Gorbachev will handle the Millennium next year in
D Moscow. That is going to present something which comes only
once in a thousand years with a very patriotic and nationalist
situation. Is he going to try to oppose it or use it? What
is his attitude to the church going to be?

E THE CHAIRMAN: That is a very interesting question. Dr. Lieven,
do you feel you ought to answer it?

F DR. LIEVEN: Not really, no, because to answer it, I have to come back
to the scene of Russian nationalism and the ways in which the
regime will wish to ensure that Russian nationalism stays within
its confines rather than becoming something which society
possesses against the State. This is linked to the whole idea
G that Russian nationalism in a form acceptable to the State is
optimistic, technological and progressive. It is also to do with
the State as the embodiment of Russian international power. There
were real dangers in the early 17th century with the Kurds that
H Russian nationalism would take on a greenish tinge. Anti-techno-
logical progressiveness protected Russia from the in-roads of

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a fundamentally corrupted modernism which is precisely at the very roots of Marxism and Marxism/Leninism. Therefore, it is at the roots of the whole ideology of the existing Soviet regime. I think this question regarding the Orthodox church is very interesting indeed.

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THE CHAIRMAN: A final word from George Urban.

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DR. URBAN: I think that Gorbachev is going to get up and take out a leaf from our employment book and say that Leninism is deeply anchored in primitive Christianity and the argument can be made.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Iain Elliot.

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DR. ELLIOT: It is very damaging that we have here 1,000 of history as opposed to 70 years of history. I think they are working very hard to limit what possible damage it could do.

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They are succeeding not too badly in Lithuania, which celebrates its 600th anniversary this year. Without the Pope being able to visit, as they had talked about, the East Germans managed, with Martin Luther, to try to take them over as a precursor of the East German state. If I can quickly answer the questions, I think there are very important points about our pessimism in some ways. I think there are limits. Just to rehearse them and quickly answer the question, the first is freedom to travel abroad. I do not think that is going to come. There would be too massive a brain drain if anything like that is allowed.

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A There are not going to referendums in the republics to see what sort of system to have or to allow succession. These are two limits. I would put some others too, but I would be prepared to put some money on those.

B THE CHAIRMAN: A final word from Anthony Polonsky.

C DR. POLONSKY: I would just like to say a very brief word about the Polish reaction. Initially, the Poles were very sceptical about what Gorbachev was doing. It was just a question of everybody will work harder and stay in their place. Since 1986, there has been a growing awareness that something very big was happening before there was the same awareness in the West. When the West became aware of it, there was a reaction against it so
D there was a rather complicated set of reactions which, as George pointed out, had much more to do with Polish feelings about the Soviet Union than with what Gorbachev is actually doing.

E THE CHAIRMAN: The last word after the last word from Dr. Lieven.

F DR. LIEVEN: I just wanted to come back to the very interesting comments from George, with whom I was in more agreement than he perhaps said. As regards the unity of State and people, I quite agree that it is to some extent fortunate. I think this is the whole point about the social compact as it has developed. It is precisely because you feel that reason that is conveyed that you do not dare touch many of the established habits, institutions, etc. It reminds me of Nicholas II and his comment: "I will not dare to touch this fundamental institution of the Russian people." Actually, what the comment was on the old regime was that it was an institution which the peasants liked because it allowed them a very great degree of social security. It was also a barrier against
G too much differentiation in the village. You could not envy
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A your neighbour too much because the commune stopped anyone from
getting too rich and powerful. Again, you do not dare touch
institutions like that because of your feeling that this is in a
B sense what you have given these people. You told them to live in
peace and you have allowed them to run their own lives to a
considerable extent in their own sleepy way. It is precisely
because it is us against them that you do not dare to try to stir
C them up too much. God knows, when it was tried after the 1905
Revolution, the amount of indignation from within the peasant
rule was a contributory factor to instability at the end of the
old regime.

D The other point which I would be less certain on is your
one for law. It does seem to me that one is still in the situation
where the laws are for subjects and not for sovereigns. The
subjects ought to be subject to the law. The law does not limit
E the sovereign. I think there is a parallel with Charles I and
I will really believe that a revolution has happened in the Soviet
Union not when militia officers or State officials get hauled
before the courts for activities committed in the course of their
F official duties, but when senior Party officials can actually be
stopped through the courts, even retrospectively, for having
taken certain kinds of action. You do have to remember that at
the present moment, every judge is fundamentally a Party official,
G subject to promotion, appointment, etc. on straight political
grounds. It seems to me inconceivable that we are going to get
a fundamental shift as regards the control of law over sovereigns
until you have something at least as dramatic as the 1864 legal
H reform and where you have a separate judiciary with its entirely
separate and different system for promotions and appointments.

A I have not seen that come yet.

B Again, I come back to Nick Lampert. Gorbachev had done many things which surprise us. It may be that he will do something that surprises us there as well. Even if he does, even if he goes as far as 1864 where it came to the point that that reform was pushed through initially, you can believe that you are going to create legal order when legal order becomes insupportable for the security police and the highest political authorities in the State; the legal order being subverted in the areas that the highest political authorities felt necessary. I am personally convinced that that will happen again.

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D THE CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the 1987 White Paper on Defence, published by Her Majesty's Government, has uniquely, for a Government White Paper, a chapter with a question-mark at the end of it. The chapter is entitled "A country or a cause?" That refers to the Soviet Union. I think that it is no reflection on our admirable panel today if we go away feeling that there are still a great many question-marks about the future of the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Government has got things right, as on many other occasions. However, I would say that there is no question at all but that you would like me, on your behalf, to thank this panel for their admirable, lucid, fascinating and marvellous contributions which they have made to our knowledge and understanding today. Thank you very much indeed. (Applause).

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