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c Sir Robin Butler

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*Minister*  
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*Remarkable*

### More Soviet Military Complaints

The sort of deep military unhappiness came out into the open on 19 June at the first day of the RSFSR Party Conference.

2. General Makashov's speech (Reuters account attached) is the most outspoken public expression of military discontent yet. Moreover, it does not come from a crusty old-timer. Makashov is a young high-flyer of the same generation as the better known General Gromov. He is only 52, has served as a senior commander in Germany and the Transcaucasus and is now Commander of the Urals-Volga Military District - a huge swathe of the Russian heartland to the east of Moscow where much of the country's defence industry is concentrated.

3. Makashov's remarks contain some distinctly threatening notes. There is the not-so-gentle reminder of the number of Soviet troops in the RSFSR. The reference to "learned peacocks" - probably a jibe at Shevardnadze - is downright insolent. Above all, the reference to Zhukov's help for Khrushchev carries the implication that Gorbachev could not rely on the armed forces in similar circumstances.

4. The fact that senior military commanders are airing these views does not mean that they are set to move. And Makashov himself acknowledges the ideological splits within the armed forces. But he must be fairly sure of his ground to speak out as he has done. We should therefore allow for the possibility that at least the upper echelons of the armed forces are more homogeneous than we have supposed, and perhaps more prepared to throw their

political weight behind the conservatives. (We should note that Makashov's criticism is directed not just at Gorbachev - his commander-in-chief - but also at the Yeltsin line in the RSFSR. Yeltsin even more clearly than Gorbachev is the "ideological enemy" and it is Yeltsin, not Gorbachev, who seems to want the RSFSR less firmly lodged in the Soviet Union.) At all events, the military are clearly being sucked more deeply into Soviet politics.

5. The very warm reception given to Makashov's speech and those of other conservatives, compared with the at best tepid response to his own keynote speech, suggests that Gorbachev may have uphill work asserting his line and his candidates at both this Russian conference and at the CPSU Congress which opens on 2 July. This afternoon, Ligachev has weighed in at the conference with open criticism of Gorbachev personally. We can no longer assume that Gorbachev will automatically secure re-election as head of the Party at the CPSU Congress. The centre-ground looks at though it is fast disappearing from beneath him.

6.

PERCY CRADOCK

20 June 1990

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SOVIET-ARMY

SOVIET-ARMY

### SOVIET GENERAL DELIVERS ANGRY WARNING TO GORBACHEV

By Ralph Boulton

MOSCOW, June 19, Reuter - A Soviet general said on Tuesday President Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms had left the country open to attack and vowed the armed forces would never accept "ideological surrender."

Army General Albert Makashov, standing yards from Gorbachev at a conference of Russian communists, also recalled an incident in 1953 when the military intervened in politics.

"Germany is reuniting and will probably become a member of NATO, Japan is becoming a decisive force in the Far East. Only our learned peacocks are crowing that no one is going to attack us," he said in a reference to Kremlin leaders which drew thunderous applause.

"Comrades, the army and navy will be needed yet by the (Soviet) Union," he added.

Gorbachev, who watched impassively during the general's speech, earlier appealed to the Russian communists to unite in the face of threats by radicals to split the party.

Pledging loyalty to Leninist doctrine, Makashov said the "ideological enemy" had divided soldiers and officers, officers and generals.

"Sixty-eight per cent of Soviet troops are deployed on the territory of the Russian Federation (the largest of the Soviet republics). We are not ready for ideological surrender," he said.

He said the army was guided by politicians, but recalled that General Georgy Zhukov supported Nikita Khrushchev in a power struggle with secret police chief Lavrenti Beria after dictator Josef Stalin's death in 1953.

"What was his thanks? Khrushchev thanked him by sending him into disgrace," Makashov said.

The general clearly had strong support in his largely conservative audience, which is expected to set up a Russian Communist Party within the framework of the Soviet Communist Party.

Makashov attacked Soviet agreements this year to withdraw troops from Czechoslovakia and Hungary.

"In these troubled times for the Soviet Union -- when because of the so-called victories of our diplomacy the Soviet army is being driven without combat out of countries which our fathers liberated from fascism -- it is important for the party and people to look after our soldiers," he said.

He denounced moves by the Russian Federation to assume full sovereign powers in relation to central government.

"We army communists consider a Russia without a Soviet Union or a Soviet Union without Russia unthinkable," he said. "And we are ready to fight for this."

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BC-SOVIET-LIGACHEV-URGENT

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LIGACHEV HINTS GORBACHEV SHOULD STEP DOWN AS PARTY LEADER

MOSCOW, June 20, Reuter - Hardline Politburo member Yegor Ligachev hinted on Wednesday that he felt President Mikhail Gorbachev should step down as leader of the Communist Party, Tass news agency said.

Tass said Ligachev, the most prominent of Gorbachev's conservative critics, told a forum of Russian Communists that Gorbachev had failed to consult other leaders on key questions of foreign policy and economic reform.

(Ligachev), clearly alluding to joint tenancy of the posts of (party) general secretary and president of the USSR, told the meeting: 'One cannot head the party, this leading force, without dedicating all one's time to it. Perhaps one could get by without it?''

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