

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Copyright 1991

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1991

(3)

FINAL 5-STAR



Jon Sawyer

Oleg Dugaev (right), a history teacher at St. Petersburg's School No. 113, meeting recently with some of his students.

Teacher Gives History An Immediate Focus

Russian Fought System Throughout Career

Jon Sawyer recently toured the Soviet Union. His series of reports begins in St. Petersburg, whose name change from Leningrad symbolizes that nation's upheaval.

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — Officials at the State University in what was then Leningrad had Oleg Dugaev pegged as a political troublemaker as far back as 1968, during his undergraduate years. They threw him out.

He eventually got his degree by a correspondence course, despite refusing, on principle, to take the state examination on scientific socialism as required.

Dugaev had never intended to teach. But when



Beyond The
Soviet Union

a friend immigrated to Israel in 1977, leaving a job opening at his secondary school, Dugaev not only found himself teaching but also teaching history — an ideological mine field that was generally populated by hacks willing to spout the Communist Party line.

Dugaev's approach was simple. He ignored the rules, taught facts and banished the KGB inspectors from his classroom. "I always taught them only truth," he said, "the real history."

Is it any wonder that on Monday, Aug. 19, his students were at Leningrad's City Hall, insisting by their presence that the hard-line coup against Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev would not stand?

Some of his students, new graduates this summer. See RUSSIA, page 8

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Russia

From page one

mer, gather for tea at Dugaev's book-lined apartment. "What, they are asked, did he teach them?"

"We learned to argue," said Katya Musina, who hopes to teach biology, "and to prove our arguments."

Lena Strizhevskaya, a literature student, adds: "And not only that. He taught us, always, to be true to ourselves."

Years ahead of *glasnost*, or openness, Dugaev filled his classroom with the works of emigre historians of dissidents whose papers were available then only in the *samizdat* underground press.

"No one ever reported on me," he marvels now. "It shows that society was ready, that it was ripe for change."

All across what used to be the Soviet Union, people are awakening, like Dugaev's students, to the possibilities of change.

Winter is coming. True enough, and with it the stark prospects of hunger and cold. The Soviet economy continues in free fall, with total production falling 13 percent and the grain harvest off an astounding 30 percent. Calls for cooperative approaches that cross republic borders meet with defiant but suicidal assertions of ethnic self-interest.

Those crises and more were readily visible in a month's reporting, tour through Russia, Ukraine and the three Baltic republics. But the impression that lingers is something else — of a nation filled with the potential of rebirth, as individuals cast off the dead dogma of more than seven decades and find their voice, after long silence,



Oleg Dugaev with his wife, Natalya Kozyreva. Their marriage set off a "civil war" with her parents, she said.

Jon Sawyer

Persistence

Anti-Soviet Teacher Finally Wins Acceptance From Wife's Parents

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — Their marriage the following year set off "a real civil war" with her parents, Kozyreva said. Her parents were both communists, survivors of the siege of Leningrad in World War II. They considered Dugaev a disgrace and they hated his anti-Soviet lessons in history.

Years passed, their son was born, *perestroika* began. Dugaev wore his in-laws down. Last year, they left the Communist Party. They are today by far the most radical of their friends.

"And I?" Dugaev asks, smiling. "I became their favorite son-in-law."

— Jon Sawyer

nin Museum on Red Square remain open — not because she admires Lenin, but because this is history, and history, she says, can no longer be trampled.

In a T-shirt emblazoned Salt Lake City, wearing a peace symbol on a necklace, Kazarnovskaya is truly a citizen of the world. Her touchstone, as for millions of her compatriots, is that other Lennon — John, of the Beatles. "I hope someday you'll join us," she says, quoting a famous line from one of his songs, "and the world will live as one."

Schools Changing

Last year, Dugaev began teaching an extracurricular course in Bible studies. The standard required course he taught for high school seniors, on Marxist-Leninist social theory, had been scrapped, replaced by a "foundations of civilization" course whose content is largely left to individual teachers.

Agapseva, the principal, said that earlier this year she hired a bus and took students on a tour of churches, mosques and synagogues representing all the religious faiths of St. Petersburg. The school system now shuts down on Christmas, Easter and other religious holidays, something that it never did under the old regime.

For Dugaev and his students, the ripening occurred at St. Petersburg's School No. 113, a large brick building of light-filled halls and well-polished wood floors, with three floors of classrooms for children attending all the grades from kindergarten through high school.

Nina Agapseva, the school's principal, says education is clearly the bet-in-Soviet for the changes that have occurred in the society. Teachers and administrators have more say now in choosing curriculum. The most egregiously biased books and courses are gone.

Russia

From page eight

But despite all that, Agaptseva sees a continuing moral crisis, in the schools and in society at large as Russia confronts the collapse of communism. "The disorientation in society certainly influences the children," she said. "They're confused."

Mixed Signals

Across the old Soviet Union, in education the signals are mixed.

Experimentation is accepted as never before, in places like the new classical education high school in St. Petersburg that Dugaev's son attends. But there is new rigidity as well, as administrators in the Baltics and in Ukraine move to bar the use of Russian as the language of instruction in universities.

The Education Ministry, after mandating the new civilization course, has made no materials available for it. And, except for a program in Moscow, the ministry has set up no retraining for teachers who now must shift their focus from Marx and Lenin to Plato and Aristotle.

Ministry inspectors no longer prowl school halls, enforcing ideological purity. But teachers, even as they relish the new freedom, must contend with heavy-handed texts that are relics of the past.

Zinalda Panfilova, a librarian, pulls out the new primary-grade readers that have just arrived. The covers look the same as those on the old edition, issued four years ago. But in the new version the old chestnuts on Young Pioneer exploits and the wisdom of Lenin are gone.

As Dugaev points out, even the new texts now coming out "are relics of the past."

"They're attempting to rewrite the books, but the attempts are very bad," he says. "They are mostly rubbish and junk. The same old people who wrote the old books are writing these."

Lack of money just makes the problems worse.

Teachers with 15 years' experience earn just 180 rubles a month, less than \$6 at current exchange rates. Classes are too big, with an average of 35 students for each teacher. This school got its first computer just this year; it still has no laboratory equipment for chemistry and biology.

Freedom, Vulnerability

Lubov Neimark, a young literature teacher, has a different worry: How students will handle the turbulence all around them.

On the one hand, she notes, they have access to a range of literature their parents never knew. Asked their favorite American writers and books, students shout out Ray Bradbury, Mark Twain, "Gone With the Wind," Alexander Solzhenitsyn's "The Gulag Archipelago" turns up as assigned reading for senior students.

But Neimark says her students also come to class buzzing about what they see at home now on television — from the high-wire political drama of the August coup to the movies from the West that are now available on Soviet television, many of them sexually explicit and violent.

"Before, there were no choices," Neimark said, "just the one face on the TV screen. Now, the information level has changed, and that is good and bad. Children know things that we didn't know and that probably they shouldn't know at this age."

Dugaev says he is proud that people stood up to the coup, but he is not yet convinced that Soviet leaders have really turned their backs on the past. Compare what has happened this year, he suggests, to February 1917, when the czar was overthrown.

"That was a revolution, a really radical change in everything," he said. "What has really changed today?" Compared to his students, Dugaev adds, "I am a pessimist. I gave my optimism to them."

A Talk With Students

And what of the students themselves? What do they hope for the future? The answers from the group at Dugaev's apartment, over Russian tea and apple tarts, are sometimes surprising.

The six students gathered in the apartment this evening have been in class together since first grade. Dugaev taught them history from sixth grade on, starting with ancient civilization and marching them through all world history, plus Russia both before and after the Communist revolution.

Dugaev's approach throughout, he said, was to make no question, no subject, off limits. If there was an answer he did not know, he would tell them so, he said, and try to find it.

"And that is good, too, to show them that I am a human being too, someone who is capable of making mistakes, who does not know everything but who knows a little more than they do," he said.

Was there ever a time, the students

are asked, when they believed the old Soviet dogma in their history texts?

The question brings a quick chorus of no, the students insisting that the slogans and uniforms were never more than a game. "It was just a ritual, like wearing the red tie," said Masha Apostolova. "Grandfather Lenin! And for three days you were really proud of wearing it. Then it became just a habit."

But as the conversation goes on, the mood shifts. Lena Strizhevskaya, always a leader among her classmates, talks about her activities in the Communist Young Pioneers and how much she loved their summer camps.

"Everything there was based on communism, but there was no idolatry," she said. "There was respect for the flag, for our country, for each other as human beings."

A Spirit Disappears

Strizhevskaya said that earlier this year the camp was sold to a Baltic shipping company, which is keeping it open but as a money-making venture. The emphasis now is "market relations," with campers organized into work groups who supply services for money.

"We were brought up in the spirit that camp was your home and you

should keep everything tidy and clean," she said. "Now they pay you for keeping it clean."

What's happened at her Young Pioneer camp is typical, Strizhevskaya fears, of the country at large. "All the beauty is gone," she said. "There's chaos and disorder at the camp, as there is everywhere."

Timofey Belyaev, the butt of teasing all night for his conservative views, picked up the theme.

"There's nothing left now, no idealism," he said. "We have second-graders making money, profiteering. They buy Pepsis for a ruble, sell them for three rubles and call it smart business."

"Can you really be talking about changes for the better? You can't create anything high when the ideals are mean, when the goal is only to make profit. You will only bring the society down, not up."

All but one of these students were baptized. None is an active member of any church now, although several volunteer that they would like to go more often and that church, as Masha Apostolova puts it, is "something lofty."

The dream they share, even Timofey Belyaev, is to teach together after college, in their own school, to recapture that spirit of community and shared values they say they had in Dugaev's class.

Toward 11 p.m., Dugaev shoos them out the door, declaring that it's time they were in bed. "Why don't you sing us a lullaby?" one of them teases, and they walk out laughing, arm in arm.

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Idealist: Still-Loyal Communist Helps To Privatize Health Care In Russia

By Jon Sawyer

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia — Vladimir Levichev, chief doctor at the Children's Polyclinic No. 62, may be the only Soviet citizen left who keeps an official photograph of ex-Soviet leader Leonid I. Brezhnev on his office wall.

He is almost certainly the only person who keeps such a portrait to remind him, as he puts it, of the Brezhnev-era corruption that he says sapped the pure ideals of communism. And even by the standards of this missably corrupt society, suspended between the collapse of one dogma and the reaction of another, Levichev must be unique: a still-loyal communist who is working to privatize health care and who is more and more drawn to confides to evangelical Christianity.

Levichev, 36, knows the world is changing, beginning at the clinic he runs in northeast St. Petersburg. A staff that began last month permits staff doctors to use clinic facilities on their own time, seeing private patients.

The change legalizes the already common practice of families paying doctors for private care.

"We tried to keep children's health care free for as long as possible," Levichev said, "because paying for children's health care seemed outrageous."

But here the people themselves said they were ready to pay. They want to raise the level of care, so that there wouldn't be these enormous queues and to get better equipment.

There's plenty of room for improvement. Each of the 17 staff doctors at the clinic is each responsible for about

800 patients, up from 700 a year ago. They make 300 rubles, about \$3, a month; nurses earn 230 rubles. Most work a double six-hour shift and make private house calls to supplement their income.

Alla Bukharin, the laboratory director, examines every blood sample herself, without the aid of machine scanners used the world over for routine tests.

Doctors scramble daily for scarce drugs and write prescriptions for baby food, the only way to ensure that their patients can get it.

Even antibiotics produced domestically are suddenly unavailable. Asked what caused the shortage, Bukharin says: "The explanation is no penicillin. Yesterday there was something else. No one knows what's ahead for us."

Soviet health-care specialists are pressing for emergency medical supplies from the West. Levichev isn't so sure this makes sense.

This clinic has been totally dependent on the West for disposable syringes for two years, he noted, and to this day no domestic manufacturer has put usable syringes on the market.

"Would you like to supply us with syringes forever?" he asks. "My personal feeling is that the West had better leave us alone for a while, without any assistance."

Drawing an analogy from medicine, Levichev said such aid is like injecting passive antibodies into a patient with severe disease.

"Sometimes we save the patient by doing this," he said, "but we don't stimulate the production of his own antibodies."

As health care shifts to a more market-oriented approach, Levichev fears

believes should transcend pay. "I think the idea of communism itself is not so bad, the goal of equality," Levichev said.

Some staff members suggest that Levichev joined the party to advance his career.

But his salary of 625 rubles a month (about \$19) is modest, and his administrative duties reduce the opportunity for private practice. And certainly today, waving the communist flag does not seem to be a good career move.

"I haven't resigned from the party because I didn't want to obey this cruel herd hysteria of people leaving the party en masse," he said.

His childhood may hold another clue. His father was a war veteran, a locomotive driver who was an enthusiastic party member and who received the Order of Lenin award as a worker's hero.

He was the opposite, his son asserted, of these Brezhnev-era flunkies whose idea of party loyalty extended no further than the maintenance of their own perks.

"I didn't join the party to get something for myself, it was to give something to the party," Levichev said. "I think of myself as a communist idealist."

Of course, the ideal is fading fast, and Levichev may soon find himself

alone. His six fellow communists on the clinic staff have all quit the party in the last two years. The clinic's party cell has dwindled just to him.

His wife, a nurse at the clinic, is begging him to give it up, too.

For the moment, he is holding on — although, as this conversation draws to a close, he volunteers that in recent months he has been drawn increasingly for a new passion: evangelical Christianity.

I grew up an atheist, but I was never a militant atheist," he asserted. And lately, he said, he has been much impressed by a television program, "The Way of the Cross," broadcast by the Soviet Union, including Levichev's 18-year-old daughter.

The evangelist? Jimmy Swaggart. His association with prostitutes may have disgraced him back home, but his ministry is going strong in the Soviet Union, where he has been a Sunday morning television fixture since early this year.

Levichev had not heard of Swaggart's troubles. Listening to them now, he looks genuinely shocked.

Pausing just for a moment, he declares that he would not tell any of this to his daughter.

"Why ruin an ideal?" this struggling communist asked. "I think human beings should believe in something."



Jon Sawyer
Dr. Vladimir Levichev, chief doctor at Children's Polyclinic No. 62 in St. Petersburg. He has kept his party membership.

that doctors will start basing their care on families' ability to pay.

"The psychology of the doctor is changing," he warned. "When the new ones come here now, the first question they ask is: 'How much will I get paid?'"

When I came, 10 years ago, the question we asked was: 'How much will I have to work?'"

For this still-believing communist, the issue is commitment to the common good, a commitment that he be-

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Copyright 1991

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1991

(3)

5-STAR

For Ukrainians, No Turning Back

Nationalist Says His Generation Was 'Brainwashed'

This is the second in a series exploring attitudes that reporter Jon Sawyer encountered during a monthlong tour of the Soviet Union and its breakaway republics.

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

KIEV, Ukraine — For Valery Teteryatnik, the prairie fire of nationalism that now blazes across the Ukraine began 15 years ago at a remote work camp in the northern Urals of Russia.

The young civil engineer from Kiev was embarrassed, among the friends thrown together there from throughout the Soviet Union, by how little he knew of his native Ukraine.

"We were sitting around the bonfire, singing songs," Teteryatnik recalled. "There was another chap there — a Russian — and he said to me, 'You're Ukrainian, but you don't know any Ukrainian songs.' He seemed to know more about Ukraine than I did."

Teteryatnik has learned since then. Today he is a popularizer of Ukrainian folk

music, a lecturer in Ukrainian history and a fierce promoter of Ukrainian independence.

Across the old Soviet Union, Teteryatnik's numbers are legion — those once-model citizens of the Soviet empire who have risen, apparently out of nowhere, as its staunchest opponents.

For all those Western leaders and analysts who want to believe the Soviet Union will somehow hang together, Valery Teteryatnik — as an expression of the public mood in the Ukraine and across the union — is a useful corrective.

He is a self-proclaimed pacifist who supports the Ukraine's plans to field a 400,000-member army and to exert independent control of the hundreds of nuclear war-

heads still based on its territory.

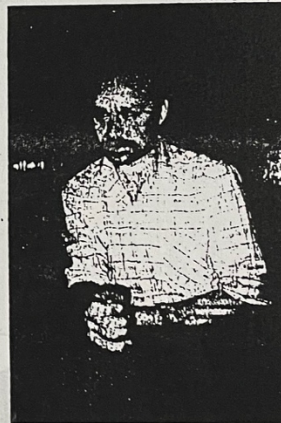
The reason, he says, is simple: "We don't trust Russia."

As in the Baltics, Georgia and Moldavia, the Ukraine had no viable independence

See UKRAINE, Page 10



Beyond The Soviet Union



Jon Sawyer
Valery Teteryatnik explaining how he became a fervent Ukrainian nationalist.

Ukraine

From page one

movement before the political freedom and economic reforms that Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev began in 1986. *Glasnost* and *perestroika* were intended to jump-start a stalled-out socialist economy. What failed. What happened instead was a series of political events, as ethnic groups throughout the nation, some for the first time — discovered their separate roots.

Rukh, an umbrella nationalist group whose formal title is the Popular Movement of Ukraine, was founded just three years ago. It embraced the cause of full independence only last year, in October 1990.

The hostility on which movements like Rukh feed is deep-rooted, a sides of long economic mismanagement, Russian colonization and the systematic sup-

pression of local culture.

On Krestchatic Boulevard, Kiev's main street, a big crane stood poised to demolish the Lenin monument. On the great man's cloak, someone had scrawled "kak," the Ukrainian word for murderer.

On the construction fence below, directing pedestrians around to one side, there was a sign that summed up, with unintended irony, the 72 years of Communist rule in Ukraine. "We apologize for any inconvenience," it said.

A Soviet Upbringing

Teteryatnik grew up in Dainius, a working-class suburb across the Dnieper River from Kiev. The suburb was built by German workers still in a room apartment with his wife, a computer programmer, and their two daughters.

When Teteryatnik was a schoolboy,

he recalls: "I was a Soviet person, going to a Soviet school. At that time I didn't see any of the problems. I did believe in the system."

His parents were believers, too — on the extent that they concealed from his father that they concurred with the Russian Orthodox Church takeover of Ukrainian Catholic monasteries 300 years ago to the population shifts imposed by Soviet authorities after the revolution — shifts that made ethnic Russians the dominant group in the eastern Ukraine and the Crimea.

Yevegen V. Pronyuk is chairman of the democratic faction in Parliament in Kiev. A philosopher by training, he is also chairman of the Ukrainian Historical Society, which runs the Perm camps in the northern Urals, from 1972 to 1984. His crime: printing an underground newspaper.

Teteryatnik says, "We have to create a society to teach Ukrainian to Ukrainians. It's a joke."

There are still four schools in the Ukraine taught in Russian for every one conducted in Ukrainian, a related but distinct Slavic language.

Does that make a difference? Yes, Teteryatnik contends, a great deal.

He says that the Russian language shepherded, Russian-language schools all over the world, is indifferent to the cause of independence. The second daughter, age 10, attends Ukrainian school.

She "will be more active, more pro-Ukrainian," her father said. "She speaks only Ukrainian; she never speaks Russian at all."

even figures as far removed in time as the late 17th-century leader from Magna Carta, were always presented in a certain light.

That emerged was one of the Russian Orthodox Church takeover of Ukrainian Catholic monasteries 300 years ago to the population shifts imposed by Soviet authorities after the revolution — shifts that made ethnic Russians the dominant group in the eastern Ukraine and the Crimea.

Yevegen V. Pronyuk is chairman of the democratic faction in Parliament in Kiev. A philosopher by training, he is also chairman of the Ukrainian Historical Society, which runs the Perm camps in the northern Urals, from 1972 to 1984. His crime: printing an underground newspaper.

Teteryatnik says, "We have to create a society to teach Ukrainian to Ukrainians. It's a joke."

There are still four schools in the Ukraine taught in Russian for every one conducted in Ukrainian, a related but distinct Slavic language.

Does that make a difference? Yes, Teteryatnik contends, a great deal.

He says that the Russian language shepherded, Russian-language schools all over the world, is indifferent to the cause of independence. The second daughter, age 10, attends Ukrainian school.

She "will be more active, more pro-Ukrainian," her father said. "She speaks only Ukrainian; she never speaks Russian at all."

Dec. 1 Decisions

Decision time for the Ukraine is coming soon. Presidential elections are set for Dec. 1, the same day Ukrainian voters have their say on an independence referendum. That day the parliament approved Aug. 24, the day after the Moscow coup collapsed. Every presidential candidate favors complete independence. Surveys indicate that the referendum will pass in a landslide.

Yevegen V. Pronyuk is chairman of the democratic faction in Parliament in Kiev. A philosopher by training, he is also chairman of the Ukrainian Historical Society, which runs the Perm camps in the northern Urals, from 1972 to 1984. His crime: printing an underground newspaper.

Teteryatnik says, "We have to create a society to teach Ukrainian to Ukrainians. It's a joke."

There are still four schools in the Ukraine taught in Russian for every one conducted in Ukrainian, a related but distinct Slavic language.

Does that make a difference? Yes, Teteryatnik contends, a great deal.

He says that the Russian language shepherded, Russian-language schools all over the world, is indifferent to the cause of independence. The second daughter, age 10, attends Ukrainian school.

She "will be more active, more pro-Ukrainian," her father said. "She speaks only Ukrainian; she never speaks Russian at all."

Pronyuk contends is the many Communists "who are struggling to hang on to power by applying the rhetoric of nationalism. He compares today's situation to the civil war years after World War I, when "while Russian monarchists made the Ukraine the base of operations against the new Bolshevik government in Moscow."

Pronyuk said the position of Communists and their "hangers-on" would be "very difficult" in the new parliament. Leonid M. Kravchuk, a longtime Communist-turned-ardent-democrat, got a popular mandate on Dec. 1.

"Kravchuk is a master of the situation," Pronyuk said. "He's a very flexible, clever politician — someone who can adapt himself to any complicity and wriggle out of any problem. He does not seem satisfied with his candidacy because, frankly speaking, we don't think he's completely reliable."

See UKRAINE, Page 1.

The Ukraine At A Glance



The Ukraine, breadbasket of the Soviet Union, declared its independence by a vote of Parliament on Aug. 24. Its people are Slavs, ethnically close to Russians. Most of the Ukraine had been under Soviet control since 1953, shortly after the end of the Polish-Czechoslovak and Romania after World War II. The Crimea, formerly part of the Russian federal republic, was attached to the Ukraine in 1954.

Population: 50 million; 75 percent Ukrainian, 25 percent Russians, Byelorussians, Poles and others.

Capital: Kiev, first capital of Russia and the place where, in the year 988, Christianity was first introduced to Russia.

Government: Parliament elected March 1990, in elections that produced a rough split between Communists and democrats. Leonid M. Kravchuk, Communist Party's chief of ideology, selected as president. He now champions independence, has left the party. Presidential election set for Dec. 1, 1991.

Religion: Greek Catholic in the western Ukraine, Russian Orthodox in the eastern Ukraine and the Crimea.

Size: 233,100 square miles, somewhat larger than France.

Economy: Agriculture, coal, chemicals, steel, shipbuilding and ports.

Post-Dispatch Graphic

Ukraine

From pagé ten

We don't think he can be entrusted with the future freedom of the republic — because he himself is the product of the former Communist regime."

One factor in Kravchuk's success may be his acceptance internationally. Since the August coup attempt, he has made one whirlwind tour after another — to Washington and other Western capitals — seeking world support for the Ukraine's autonomy and foreign aid.

Kravchuk's critics at home worry that too much aid too soon will just enfeeble the old guard.

Viktor Chervinco, a member of Parliament, says his advice to the West is: Go slow. Chervinco, a leader of the Ukrainian Environmental Association, says Kravchuk's government is

still too allited to old Communist Party ways.

"Whatever aid they get, they won't use properly," he said. "Each department has a complete monopoly in its field. There is no competition. The foreign aid coming in makes them stronger, and so it just perpetuates them in power."

The Size Of France

Can the Ukraine make it on its own? Not without difficulties, most specialists believe. But they say it has a better chance than most other republics have. This is a region the size of France — with a population of 53 million — economic production that accounts for roughly a quarter of the Soviet total and a population that is generally better educated than the Soviet average.

Its vast fields of wheat and feed crops account for 21 percent of total Soviet agricultural production, includ-

ing more than half of total sugar production. The Ukraine produces half of the old Soviet Union's chemicals and most of its coking coal.

The interdependence of most republics is felt in the Ukraine, too. Nine of the 15 former republics, including the Ukraine, ship at least 60 percent of their production to consumers in other republics.

Ninety-eight percent of industrial production in the Ukraine remains in the hands of state monopolies, including some 3,000 military factories under the direct control of the Soviet defense ministry. In the industrial center of Dnipropetrovsk, alone, 50,000 jobs are tied to the Soviet space program, officials say.

And what about pensioners from Russia and other republics? The Ukraine's Crimean resort area, on the Black Sea, is the Soviet Florida. Hundreds of thousands have moved to the area for retirement. Will their pensions continue? And what will be their

citizenship?

Every region, including the Ukraine, depends on low-priced Russian oil and natural gas — although the Ukraine does have the benefit of huge coal reserves in the Donets basin.

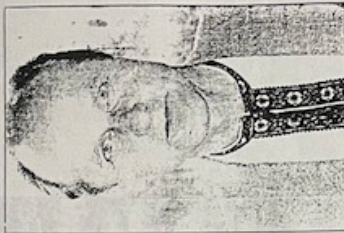
Less than 60 miles to the north of Kiev lies Chernobyl, site of the disastrous nuclear power plant explosion in 1986. Radioactive contamination from that event will claim tens of thousands of lives. The political fallout, as environmentalists energized a previously quiescent public, helped fuel the movement for independence.

The Ukraine's government is now committed to eliminating all six nuclear plants within the republic. They account for nearly 25 percent of the Ukraine's electricity generation. Shutting them down guarantees increased dependence on Russia, as would the closing of noxious chemical plants that make the Ukraine the most polluted of all the republics by far.

"we've got to be pragmatic," says Volodymyr Pilychuk, who heads the Ukrainian Parliament's committee on economic reforms. "We're more interested in fulfilling our own interests than those of the [Soviet] center," he said, explaining why the Ukraine economic treaty that Soviet President Mikhail D. Gorbachev pushed last month.

Instead, Pilychuk wants detailed agreements between republics that spell out specific terms of trade. Set the rates for Black Sea shipping, he said, and for transporting the Ukraine's goods across Russia to Japan. Allocate the union's foreign debt, some \$65 billion, to the republics. Work out customs procedures and currency exchange rates.

But don't expect the Ukraine, he warned, to march in lock step behind Moscow. That day is gone.



Yevgen V. Pronyuk
Opposes Ukrainian president

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Farm Family Sows Seeds Of Independence, Profit

By Jon Sawyer
 Photo by Alexander Burtu
 VITA, POKHOLOVA, Ukraine —
 Twenty miles southeast of Kiev, on an
 unexpected half-acre of high ground
 in the mornas-of Soviet agriculture,
 Alexander and Sofia Dubina have
 managed not only to survive but,
 prosper.

Call it a window, a glimpse of what
 private agriculture here used to be
 in the Ukraine. It's a small plot
 of land, but it's theirs.

Robust rose bushes and carnations
 fill the two greenhouses behind the
 Dubinas' house. Strawberries and po-
 tatoes, cucumbers, tomatoes and
 green pepper plants stretch down the
 gently sloping field that ends in rich
 river-bottom land.

The Dubinas are the very image of
 middle-class success, posing with
 their family and their two-story house
 that is beyond even the dreams of
 most Soviet citizens.

The kitchen is modern. There are
 two large television sets, a stereo sys-
 tem, western-style plumbing and an
 unfinished upstairs for the handyman
 husband they expect their younger
 daughter to find and wed.

And the best, Alexander Dubina as-
 serts, is yet to come. "We're doing

quite well now," he concedes. "But if
 at long last we get real freedom, we'll
 be rich."

Chlorine, a member of parliament
 Viktor Chernomyr, "just" has
 altered the agency. If you stop subsidizing
 the collective farms, they'll die out
 themselves. You won't have to destroy
 them."

He said government officials with
 Communist roots in the Ukraine tend-
 ed to forget that the collectives were
 the first place they were seized from
 private owners illegally, by force."

The land that the Dubinas farm in
 Vita Pokhlova was part of a much
 larger tract that had belonged to his
 family since before the revolution.

The small parcel they retained simply
 fell through the cracks of
 collective farms. Dubina worked on a
 state farm for four years when he was
 a teen-ager. He quit at the age of 17,
 got a full-time job as a mechanic and
 cultivated the family garden on the
 side, never looking back. He earns 500
 rubles a month — about \$15 — as a
 mechanic and "much more" from the
 farm. The family would make even more,
 Dubina says, if he gave up being a
 See DUBINAS, Page 11



From left (rear) are Sofia and Alexander Dubina, their daughter, Lida Sakhinya, her husband Alexei, and the Sakhinyas' daughter, Olga, standing with their dog, Bill, on the family's land.

Dubinas

From page ten

mechanic and worked full time on the farm. But after 38 years, he still loves his regular job and doesn't want to quit.

A bouquet of carnations will fetch 2 rubles in the summertime and twice that in winter, at the Bessarabia Market in downtown Kiev. On the right winter day, Dubina says, "a really beautiful rose" might bring 25 rubles. The Dubinas sell 700 flowers in a good summer week — somewhat less during the winter.

The issue at this point isn't access to land, Dubina said — it's getting the equipment to work it.

"These days you can get land, at last," Dubina said, "but no one can do anything on it because there's no machinery and no financing. You can't get a decent loan, and technology and machinery cost a fortune."

The miniature tractor that sits outside Dubina's house — his pride and joy — resulted from a stroke of luck. He happened to have 8,000 rubles on hand when the used tractor turned up in a local state store.

That was three years ago, the first year that private farmers were allowed to buy tractors. "You'd be appalled at how much I've had to do by hand," he said.

The Dubinas' daughter, Lida Sakhinya, has followed in their footsteps. She graduated from medical school and works part-time as a nurse but spends most of her time in the greenhouse she and her husband, Alexei, have set up at their home a few miles away.

Alexei Sakhinya has another job, too, working at a leather-goods cooperative. He and Lida both say laughing that carnations and roses — working for themselves, that is, as opposed to state jobs — hold the key to the new house they hope to build.

One might conclude the same, Alexander Dubina says, for all of the Ukraine.

"I want Ukraine to be independent," he says. "We have 52 million people; we are hard workers. We could live well, and yet we live like paupers."

He insists that it need not be this way.

"Ukraine has absolutely every-thing," he says. "It could be completely self-sufficient. Given half a chance, we'll survive."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Copyright 1991

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1991

(1)

5-STAR

Respect, Perks Ebbing For Army

This is the third in a series exploring attitudes that reporter Jon Sawyer encountered during a monthlong tour of the Soviet Union and its breakaway republics.

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau
ST. PETERSBURG, U.S.S.R. —

His two grandfathers, both soldiers, were killed in action in World War II. His father was a career army man, too, rising to the rank of colonel.

Yevgeny Kosyakov, son of this family of officers, excelled as well. Today, at 39, he is Lt. Col. Kosyakov, deputy chief of faculty at the army's space engineering institute, one of the most prestigious research centers in the Soviet Union.

His question is this: What happened to the respect the army used to have?

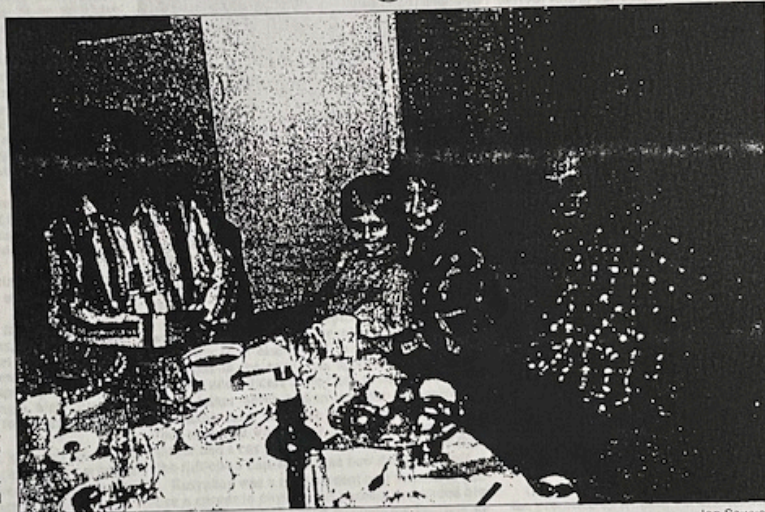
It's not just the shrinking empire — daunting as Kosyakov concedes that is for career military men who took pride in protecting one-sixth of the world's land mass.

The real humiliation is closer to home — a home that after nine years in St. Petersburg, still consists of one room in an army hostel for himself, his wife, and their 14-year-old daughter and 7-year-old son.

AWAKENINGS



Beyond The Soviet Union



Jon Sawyer

Lt. Col. Yevgeny Kosyakov (right) enjoying an evening at home with his family, (from left) Alexander Volykhin, his father-in-law; his son, Sasha; and his wife, Nina.

The room is 18 square yards, or roughly 9 feet by 18 feet. The Kosyakovs do their cooking in a common kitchen, shared with 15 other army families.

Kosyakov describes all this at a restaurant in downtown St. Peters-

burg. He is too ashamed of his living quarters, he explains, to bring a visitor home.

Multiply Yevgeny Kosyakov's situation by 3.7 million or so, the total number of troops in the Soviet army. Imagine the increased duress for

those without Kosyakov's high rank and advanced academic degree. Add abuse and contempt for all those soldiers stationed in rebellious republics that want them out.

What you have, in short, is a military culture in desperate distress.

See SOVIET, Page 15

Soviet

From page one

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev promised last month to reduce the total armed forces by 700,000. Even rapid demobilization, however, would not overcome the flood of Soviet soldiers who are due home soon from Eastern Europe and the now-independent Baltic republics.

Last month, according to Soviet press reports, a strike committee was formed by civilian crew members on ships based at the Northern Fleet headquarters at the Arctic Ocean port of Murmansk. About 1,200 crew members stationed there were without apartments and facing waits of as long as 20 years, the reports said.

After decades of meeting the military's orders first, suppliers of food, clothing and medical equipment now balk. Backfire bomber crews have reportedly gone without flight helmets. Navy purchase agents cannot get protective rescue clothing for air crews. Soldiers budget tourists everywhere, selling off their belts, their fur hats and their jackets.

Army officials say they are increasingly squeezed by suppliers demanding either hard currency, barter or prices much higher than budgeted by the Soviet Defense Ministry. To meet what is described as a mounting crisis, troops at military bases throughout the country have taken to the land, doing manual labor at military farms and food-processing plants.

"The carefree times have gone," said Lt. Gen. A. Abramov, deputy commander of the Leningrad Military District, in an interview last May with Radio Liberty, the U.S.-funded information service for the Soviet Union.

"The provision of food is growing into a task equal to that of achieving combat and organizational readiness."

Desperately short of rubles, faced with increasingly restive troops and officers, the army scrambles for cash. Its salesmen travel the west, hawking MIG-23 jets, rocket engines, even bits of plutonium. The Soviet Union's respected space program is on the block, too, as are high-strength, high-temperature alloys of the sort required for advanced rocket engines and nuclear reactors.

Yevgeny Kosyakov, for one, says sell on — not just for the hard currency that such sales produce but for the possibility of using them as a springboard for acquiring Western technology as well.

"I think we should be bolder, that we should move ahead on this," Kosyakov said.

"There's a saying here that applies. If you have an apple and I have an apple and we trade, the saying goes, each of us will still have one apple. But if I have an idea and you have an idea and we trade, each of us will have two ideas."

Kosyakov grew up an army brat, moving with his family across the vast reaches of the Soviet empire with his father, an instructor of driving.

The younger Kosyakov was born in East Germany and spent the first few years of his life there. "The only thing I remember," he says, "are the good



Jon Sawyer

Lt. Col. Yevgeny Kosyakov inspecting a cannon with his son, Sasha, at the Soviet Museum of Artillery in St. Petersburg.

sausages with mustard." Then came two years in Armenia, three in Leningrad — as St. Petersburg was known under communism — five in the western Ukraine, two in Kazakhstan and four in the Soviet far east.

Back then, Kosyakov recalls, being in the army was something special. "People were wealthier in the army than elsewhere," he said. "There were traditions in the army too, special ties that made privates and officers quite close to one another."

His father never had to wait for an apartment, Kosyakov said, recalling the especially spacious, four-room flat where they lived in Chabarovsk. His father had a car then and a driver — a far cry from the rattletrap Zaporozhets he now drives himself.

Kosyakov was a good student and wanted to pursue a career in physics. His parents persuaded him to enter the army's space engineering institute instead. "They had a dream to see their son an officer," he said.

"My expectations mostly did not come through," is Kosyakov's dry reduction of the tedium he encountered, working at monitoring stations for the Soviet space program in Kazakhstan, the Crimea and the Kamchatka Peninsula.

In 1981, he won permission to return to the institute, where he completed his doctorate and joined the faculty. He has divided his time since then between research and teaching. He was appointed deputy faculty chief last year.

The latest promotion brought with it no change in housing, however. The Kosyakovs remain on hold, near the top of a list that for the moment appears to be frozen.

City officials in St. Petersburg, as of earlier this year, have stopped making apartments available to the army. Kosyakov said the space engineering institute decided to supply its own housing. It set aside land and started construction on a complex of apartment buildings.

But work has ground to a halt because the institute cannot get the building supplies it needs. St. Petersburg officials now are threatening to take over the project and the apartments, Kosyakov said, which would delay still longer his family's hopes for a larger home.

Why not just quit?

Surely there is a market for Kosyakov's computer skills, and at a salary far better than the 1,000 rubles a month that he earns now. After this week's latest devaluation by the Soviet central bank, 1,000 rubles are worth just \$25 — and even less, \$11, at the black-market rate of exchange.

Kosyakov's hesitation, as he explains it, is part fear of the unknown, part loyalty, even now, to the military calling, and part bureaucratic Catch-22.

The space engineering institute suffered for years, Kosyakov acknowledges, from the restrictions that Western nations, at U.S. insistence, placed on the export of a long list of computers and other exports with potential military value.

But today, he and his colleagues work with advanced versions of the IBM personal computer and with equivalent models. Kosyakov fears that he might not find an employer in the civilian world with the same kind of equipment.

"Certainly the conditions we have to work in are different from those in European, or U.S. institutes," he said. "We read Western magazines; we have information on what you have. But compared to Russian civilian institutes, ours is quite well-equipped."

As for taking the leap into private business, Kosyakov professes anxiety. "There are few people really competing now on the private market," he said. "I am not sure I could find the right niche for me."

The Catch-22, naturally, concerns the apartment. If Kosyakov completes 25 years' service in the army and finishes his tour at the institute, he will be legally entitled to a three-room apartment, at virtually no cost, in St. Petersburg.

If he quit early, however, he would not only lose the promised apartment but also his residence registration, without which the family could not legally reside in St. Petersburg.

And so they wait, month after month in that single hostel room, knowing full well that there's a catch within the catch. What if the army, given the general chaos now in Soviet society, never gives them that apartment at all?

"We are very close to getting an apartment," says Kosyakov's wife, Nina, a teacher who has temporarily left her career to be with their children.

"But we've been close for two years, and for those two years the movement has virtually stopped."

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Officials Pin Hopes On Private Gardens

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

KISILNYA, Russia — The saving grace in Yevgeny and Nina Kosyakov's dismal housing situation lies 60 miles away, in the refuge of her parents' home.

The Kosyakovs come almost every weekend. Their children, Masha, 14, and Sasha, 7, have spent their summers in Kisilnya since shortly after Sasha's birth.

Nina Kosyakov's father, Alexander Volykhin, shows off the half-acre farm plot that seven years ago, when he and his wife retired, was little more than swamp.

Here's the pump he installed himself, there the tomato and potato plots where he burned down the trees and pulled up stumps. This brightly painted shed, blue with yellow trim, is his creation too, and the loft above where he keeps his inflatable rubber fishing boat. An old bathtub sits out front, his extra reservoir for water.

Their apartment is a surprise, a ground-floor unit in a six-story concrete-block building. This was former Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev's idea of bringing urban comforts to the toiling masses of the countryside. There it sits today, a white elephant amid the traditional, century-old frame houses that dot the unpaved roads and cranberry bogs of Kisilnya.

The Volykhins came to Kisilnya seven years ago from Murmansk, on the Arctic Ocean, where Alexander Volykhin had worked in a nickel processing plant. An injured war veteran, he retired early and now draws a pension of 500 rubles a month — about \$12 at current exchange rates. The insulin shots and pills he and his wife take for diabetes are free.

But it's the garden, not the rubles, that makes these pensioners the mainstay of the family. And it is tiny gardens like theirs, Russian officials hope, that will get the country through this coming winter of trial.

Marina Salye, head of the parliamentary committee set up to handle emergency food distribution for the St. Petersburg region, insists that when winter clamps down in earnest, "There will be no starvation, no famine; I'm sure of that."

The reason, she said, is as clear as the pile of potatoes, knee deep in Alexander Volykhin's garden shed. Almost everyone, Salye said, is gardening at their country dacha cottages — or else they have relatives and friends who do.

“There will be no starvation, no famine; I'm sure of that.”

MARINA SALYE, food official for St. Petersburg

Interviewed at City Hall in St. Petersburg, the chain-smoking Salye said she herself had harvested a bumper crop of potatoes this fall, in anticipation of the winter ahead.

Salye is old enough to have lived through the siege of Leningrad, a 900-day blockade by German forces during World War II. The city survived, but at a terrible price, including one stretch of several months when deaths from starvation exceeded 3,500 a day.

Salye's mother was among them. Even now, half a century later, the subject is too emotional for this hardened woman to discuss.

She said that today, in fact, "We have quite a lot of food in the city."

"The problem is how to protect the people of the lowest income because the prices for food are so high now," she said.

When the price jumps even more this winter, Salye said, the government must impose rationing or some other system to ensure food for all.

She said that during the siege, by contrast, "there was no food, period, no matter how much money or precious jewels you might have."

"And you should also add the daily bombing and the cold because there was no heat, no electricity," Salye said. "There is no way to compare the situation then to now."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Copyright 1991

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1991

(1) FINAL 5-STAR

Survivor

Lithuanian Escaped Holocaust And Lived To See Independence

This is the fourth in a series exploring attitudes that reporter Jon Sawyer encountered during a monthlong tour of the Soviet Union and its breakaway republics.

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

AWAKENINGS



Beyond The Soviet Union

VILNIUS, Lithuania — Naomi Bromberg Vanagiene was a child of the Lithuanian republic, born to freedom in the ancient heart of Europe to well-to-do Jewish professional parents in a prosperous, tolerant Lithuanian town.

The year was 1938, and everything, as Vanagiene puts it now, "was pink and beautiful." And then the 20th century came pounding in, not only smashing to pieces the fragile independence of the Baltic states but also

smashing something more — the idea that there were limits to human evil. Walking the streets of Vilnius today, a city as of last August that is free again, Naomi Vanagiene looks like the quintessential survivor. She knows everyone. She lives well, with a five-room apartment in Vilnius and a weekend condominium on the Baltic Sea.

Vanagiene, 53, the widow of Lithuania's most eminent



Jon Sawyer

Naomi Bromberg Vanagiene on the streets of Old Town in Vilnius, Lithuania.

physicist, knows most of her nation's leaders. She quotes Anna Akhmatova, Russia's premier poet of the 20th century, from memory. She has traveled widely, to Israel, London and Canada.

See LITHUANIA, Page 14

Lithuania

From page one

And yet this confident, resourceful woman, like so many fellow subjects of the Soviet empire, bears the scars of her time and place: the murder of most of her family, years of hunger and cold, the death of her son, the flames of anti-Semitism that raged spectacularly under the Nazis and then rekindled, unbelievably, under the Soviet regime.

Can you blame her, then, for looking to the future with a wary, skeptical eye? For her generation, perhaps, the Baltics will always remain, first and foremost, the expressway route between Moscow and Berlin.

"It's one thing to declare independence," she said. "It's quite another to be really and truly free. We are far from that. Perhaps Estonia will succeed. They are more isolated. But we are too much in the way. I think, Lithuania and Latvia.

"We're always in the way of somebody."

Family Prospered Before War

Before the war, the Vanagiene family lived in Siauliai, the third-largest town in Lithuania and the place where Jews were most accepted in community life. Mashe Bromberg owned a pharmacy. Her husband had a thriving medical practice.

The Russians arrived in 1940 and that life stopped. The drugstore was nationalized. The private medical practice was closed. And then, a year later, came the Nazis and the descent into hell.

On June 22, 1941, the day the German army entered Lithuania, Vanagiene and her mother boarded the very last train that made it out to Russia. They had never been to Russia, had no connections there and no idea where to stop.

"We just rode the train until it stopped" at a village in Central Asia, about 1,000 miles east of Moscow, Mashe Bromberg recalls. She worked first as a nurse, and then later as a librarian. The room they shared for four years had no heat and no bathroom; they scrounged constantly for food.

Vanagiene's father had been drafted into the Soviet army by then, as a military doctor. He saw his

family only once during the war. Vanagiene recalls the American chocolate he brought with him.

It was the only candy she saw during the war. This was Naomi Vanagiene's war, in sum: One uncle was deported with his family to Siberia, before the Germans came. One aunt was killed, along with her family, in the war's first days. Another survived the concentration camp at Dachau and immigrated to Canada.

"The people who stayed alive tried to forget such sad things," she said. "But of course, such things cannot be forgotten. You can't blame a whole nation, but still, you remember."

And besides, for a Jew living in the Soviet empire, through the late 1940s and early 1950s, anti-Semitism was not just behind you, in Nazi Germany. It caught up with Mashe Bromberg's husband, by then a full colonel with a distinguished 12-year career as an army physician, in early 1953.

All through 1952, anti-Semitism had been building, with Soviet dictator Josef Stalin convinced that Zionists, in league with Americans and renegade Yugoslav Communists, were bent on his destruction. A show trial in Czechoslovakia late that year resulted in the execution of 11 Jews from the top ranks of the Czechoslovak Communist Party.

On Jan. 13, 1953, Stalin informed the world that "murderer doctors" had conspired to kill top leaders of the nation. Some of those alleged to be conspirators were "connected with the international Jewish bourgeois organization," the official report said.

Three months later, after Stalin's death in March, Soviet authorities dismissed the allegation as a hoax. In the meantime, however, doctors close to the top leadership were arrested and tortured. And many others, especially Jewish doctors in the military like Bromberg's husband, were summarily dismissed.

Bromberg said she had expected worse — that they would be deported to Siberia.

"They told us that all the Jews here would be deported," she said. "The military people were competing to take over our apartments."

And so Bromberg, just a dozen years after her family's first flight into Russia, sold off her "precious things" again, hoarding cash for Siberia.

"There was permanent trembling among all the doctors," Vanagiene said. "But then, thank heaven, Stalin died."



AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Before the war, Bromberg's husband had sympathized with the Soviet revolution. From the end of the war until his death, he was, "like any thinking person," a closet opponent, Bromberg said. She recalls him fiddling, almost every day, with the dials on his patched-together short-wave radio, straining through the static to pick up the news on the British Broadcast Corp.'s World Service.

But he always tuned in secretly, and never when she was around, Vanagiene said.

A Model Soviet Citizen

By this time, she was a model Soviet citizen herself, thoroughly indoctrinated through her schooling, Vanagiene said. If she had stumbled on to her parents listening to anti-Soviet radio broadcasts, she would have turned them in, she says now.

"They were very afraid of me," she says, her parents were then. "All parents were afraid of their children. It was an atmosphere of total fear. If parents wanted to say something, they went for a walk; they'd never say anything at home."

Vanagiene's own awakening came later, through her English studies at Vilnius University and then her romance and marriage to Vladas Vanagas, a theoretical physicist whose brilliance put him beyond the leaden rules of bureaucracy and party politics.

Her husband never joined the Communist Party and never hid his contempt for it, Vanagiene said. And yet he rose to the chairmanship of his university department and membership in the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

"Every time they said they were promoting him as an exception," Vanagiene recalled. "But when people would tell me it was impossible to achieve anything without joining the party, I'd say, 'Don't tell me that. Look at my husband!'"

"He hated the regime. He hated the hypocrisy, the injustice of it. I think he saw more, maybe, than others did."

The couple had two children, a daughter, Lena, and a son, Julius — named in a burst of confidence after Julius Caesar, she said. When he was 9, Julius, like his mother before him, was an enthusiastic school-taught believer in all things Soviet.

"He came home one day, full of excitement about

a story in his school reader about these brave Young Pioneer Communists who had crossed the ice on a river," Vanagiene said. "And the next day, he went out on the river to try that himself. But the ice was too thin, and he fell through and drowned."

It is a brilliant fall afternoon as Vanagiene recalls the tragedy, sitting on a bench in a park beneath the Vilnius castle. Telling the story, dragging long on a cigarette, she seems a million miles away.

Caught Up In Constant Quest

In the years since, Vanagiene has thrown herself into work. She now works at the Vilnius kidney clinic, caught up in the constant search for cash. With its limited equipment, the Vilnius clinic can serve only 30 dialysis patients at a time; the waiting list is never less than 200 people, Vanagiene said.

Vanagiene's husband died last year in the United States, where he had gone on a teaching sabbatical at Yale University. Her only daughter now lives in Israel, where she is studying medicine. So Noemi Vanagiene is home alone in Vilnius. She visits her mother almost every afternoon in the ground-floor apartment where Bromberg has lived for decades, just a stone's throw from Vilnius' main square.

That's the square where Lenin's statue used to dominate, before August. Across the street was KGB headquarters. Vanagiene says she used to sit and watch its entrance, wondering about the Lithuanians who went in and out and what it was they did. Now there's a placard hanging outside, declaring that Lithuania will make this building a museum of Soviet genocide.

Bromberg, idly fingering a bowlful of her husband's old army medals at the apartment, is clear-eyed. Her mind is sharp, her hair barely gray. It is hard to believe that she has lived 84 years, these 84 years in this place.

It is only this year, Bromberg said, that Lithuanians took seriously the talk of independence. "Nobody thought about it before," she said. "Nobody thought of the Russians' actually leaving."

As to Lithuania's future, she is, like her daughter, a skeptic.

"Everybody lives with hope, but it's not America yet," Bromberg said.

The happiest period of her life? Bromberg stretches back a very long while, to 1928 and her days in graduate school, studying pharmacology at the university in Strasbourg, France.

She fell in love there with a student from Egypt, Mohammed Shucro. Her parents said it was impossible, this Lithuanian Jewish girl and an Arab boy from Egypt, and called

the romance off. They insisted that she must marry a Jew.

"For three years she looked at no man, and then finally she met my father," Vanagiene said. "I think she respected him. She knew he was a kind and gentle man. But there was not the passion she felt for the Egyptian. All that was gone from her life."

Vanagiene said that when she met her own husband, a gentle, her mother repeated the warning her own parents had given her — that she must marry a Jew. Vanagiene, who by then had heard of the Egyptian, told her mother that she was shocked to hear such an argument from her.

"And she said to me, 'And what if I had married this Mohammed? And then Israel and Egypt went to war, the Arabs and the Jews? We would have had to separate in the end, I'm sure, and so my parents were right.'"

"Or so she said," Vanagiene concluded, smiling.

Vanagiene's marriage went through. Never for a moment, she said, did her mother regret it.

• SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1991

Few Lithuanian Jews Escaped The Holocaust

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

VILNIUS, Lithuania — The German commander for the Baltic region reported in January 1942 that Nazi forces had killed 80,311 Jews in their first three months in Lithuania. For the war years as a whole, the killing totaled 126,000.

The population of Jews in Lithuania today is fewer than 3,000.

It's easy to forget, half a century later, how extraordinary it was that Noemi Bromberg Vanagiene and her mother escaped the Holocaust. The vast majority of Lithuanian Jews did not.

Consider Hirsch Mileikowski, who today runs an auto body shop in Melbourne, Australia. He was in Vilnius this fall with his son, David, back for the second time to the place of his youth. His mother, his sister, his father, aunts, uncles, cousins — almost to a person, the Nazis killed them all.

Mileikowski was 12 in the summer of 1942, when the Nazis began killing the Jews still alive in Vilnius. Most by then had been segregated in a ghetto in the Old Town section of Vilnius. Mileikowski lived there with his mother, his older brother and his younger sister.

"My father had already disappeared, and we presumed he was killed," Mileikowski recalled. "The Germans were rounding the Jews up. My mother told us to run, and we did, my brother and I. She and my sister stayed behind."

The mother and sister both were killed — a fact that has preyed on his

conscience ever since, Mileikowski said. It doesn't matter that his mother commanded him to leave that day, or that he was a 12-year-old boy. "It wasn't right," Mileikowski said, his English still heavily accented despite 45 years in Australia. "I knew that day it wasn't right."

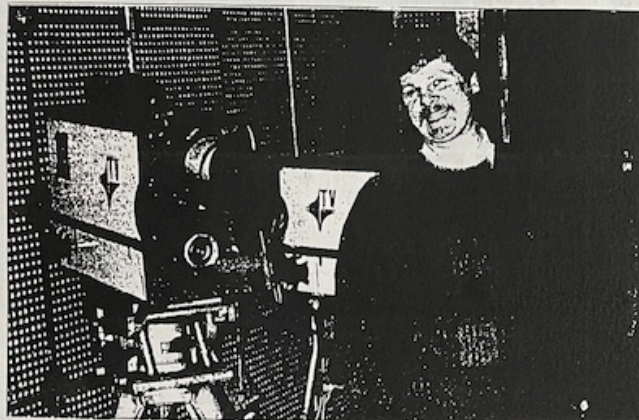
A Christian family took the two boys in, hiding them for three years in the cellar of its farmhouse on the outskirts of Vilnius. Each night for those three years, the couple's teen-age daughter, not much older than Mileikowski, would open the cellar doors and bring the two brothers food.

Four years ago, long after the war and Mileikowski's departure for Australia, he came back. He found the house of his wartime refuge and knocked on the door. When a young woman answered, he gave the name of that teen-ager from the war and asked whether she knew what had become of her.

"Yes," the young woman said, surprised. "She is my mother, and this is still her house."

Mashe Bromberg said that yes, there were Lithuanians who collaborated with the Nazis. The "great heroism" of that time, however, was that so many Lithuanians, at the risk of their own lives, acted to save Jews.

"There is a museum in Jerusalem where trees are planted to honor every Lithuanian who saved Jews," Bromberg said. "One such person is worth thousands."



Jon Sawyer
 Vitally Yurazov, a director turned entrepreneur, standing in front of television cameras in St. Petersburg.

Capitalist Drama

Puppeteer Tries His Hand As Entrepreneur, Sets Up Eclectic Group Of Private Companies

This is the fifth in a series exploring attitudes that reporter Jon Sawyer encountered during a monthlong tour of the Soviet Union and its breakaway republics.

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau
 ST. PETERSBURG, U.S.S.R. — Vitally Yurazov is a sleepy-eyed puppeteer who sports a drooping mustache and a resume so obscure that a major highlight was leading a theatrical tour through the lesser towns of Siberia.

But in Russia's topsy-turvy embrace of market capitalism, this unlikely Horatio Alger is looking very much the tycoon-to-be.

He is the director of the Leningrad Art Imitative Theater and operates a conglomerate that handles as much as a half-million rubles a month. His interests range from video equipment to bulldozers, from currency exchange to the costs of bribes.

The metamorphosis began three years ago, when Soviet authorities moved to permit the establishment of private enterprises. Yurazov seized the moment, setting up a theatrical troupe in St. Petersburg.

After two years of constant touring, producing three and four shows a day for indifferent receipts, Yurazov said he realized that something had to give. He also had his eye on the tax breaks enacted this year for cultural enterprises.

The equation, to Yurazov, seemed simple enough.

"There are subsidies for culture," he said. "I am the culture. I should be getting some of the subsidies."

A business friend, about the same time, clued Yurazov in on an amazing fact — that the new tax law exempted not only theaters but also



Jon Sawyer
 Irena Isayeva, an accountant hired away from the state gas company to work for a budding entrepreneur, in her tiny office in St. Petersburg.

■ MACHINIST PLEASED he joined new company., Page 1B

any other businesses attached to them as subsidiaries. All you had to do was share the same state bank account.

Businesses that otherwise faced tax bills of up to 60 percent would owe nothing if linked up to a theater.

Yurazov took a long, searching look through that loophole. A conglomerate was born.

Half a year later his tiny office, on the top floor of the textile institute in

downtown St. Petersburg, is abuzz with deals.

His ventures include a factory making spare parts for bulldozers. Two video companies. A movie studio. A commodities business importing consumer goods for resale in St. Petersburg.

Who knows? In the future the Leningrad Art Imitative Theater may even have a theater.

At the moment, the theater side of Yurazov's business remains a concept only, with just a handful of actors rehearsing an Isadora Dun-

See YURAZOV, Page 9

Yurazov

From page one

can show in temporary space. But as a concept, the theater is highly lucrative — the legal fig leaf for a multipronged business of dizzying eccentricity.

Irena Isayeva, the accountant Yurazov hired away from the state gas company, keeps the books. With Yurazov running most of the business out of his pocket, paperwork is light.

Where, Isayeva is asked, are the records kept? The pigeonhole she and Yurazov share is all but filled with their two desks, a samovar for tea and posters of Yurazov's past plays going back to his directorial debut, "Little Goose."

She holds up a thin sheaf of papers and laughs: "That's about it," she says. So much for Price Waterhouse.

The rough and rugged transformation of the Soviet economy, from central planning to bootstrap capitalism, is a landscape littered with predictable types — party officials-turned-business people, academics-turned-consultants, street vendors and taxi drivers hustling dollars from tourists.

Vitaly Yurazov may be in a class by himself. "I approached this business like a theatrical production," Yurazov said, "putting together the elements for a successful climax. I am, after all, a director — that is my training."

Bribes Routine

One element that has keyed the conglomerate's success is bribes.

"We have to pay those on whom we are very much dependent," says Alex Milnarich, who heads up the "Alex M." commodities import subsidiary. That operation depends on audiotapes, beer and other consumer goods imported from the West. It could not function without cooperative customs agents and without hard currency from bank clerks willing to flout the law on currency exchange controls.

The bribe is proportionate to the value of the goods imported, Milnarich said, usually a little more than 1 percent.

"There is, unfortunately, no legal way to pay these people what they are worth to us," says Milnarich, an artist who fell into business by chance. "They may be criminals according to the outstanding law, but I do not think of them as criminals."

"Here you have a customs agent, say, who gets a salary of 200 rubles or 300 rubles a month. And yet this is someone upon whose work the state may gain or lose trade that is worth millions of rubles."

"Or consider someone who works at the bank. He gives us a hard-currency loan worth 50 million rubles in imported goods, but he himself is earning 500 rubles a month."

Alex M. invested 40,000 rubles for a seat on one of the new commodities exchanges that have sprung up in St. Petersburg and in Moscow. The seat gives the company advance information on what goods will be available at upcoming auctions and, just as important, what companies are willing to pay for goods they need.

"Once we know the price," he said, "we go to our suppliers outside the country. If we can get a better price there, we decide whether it's worth it to us to arrange the import."

Milnarich's arrangement with Yurazov is typical in most respects of all the subsidiaries.

All money is channeled through a single account at the state bank, an account controlled by Yurazov, to receive the tax break. Profits are distributed to Milnarich's six employees after 10 percent is given off the top to Yurazov. Decisions on who gets to draw down funds for the bank, and how much, are discussed among all the subsidiary managers.

Always and everywhere, Yurazov is chief expediter.

At the state textile institute, Yurazov negotiated a sweetheart lease for his office and those of the Alex M. and video subsidiaries. They pay 1,000 rubles a year — not much more than \$12 at the ruble's plunging exchange rate — for almost the entire top floor. He and his associates plan to invest 7 million rubles to build a movie studio out of one abandoned corner.

"My contract says that if they evict me, they must repay all the rent I have paid plus all the investments we make in repairs — plus the profits we had planned to make," Yurazov relates. "I wrote that myself," he adds, confidentially. "You can't get good lawyers here."

Both the equipment and the staff for the video subsidiaries come from the textile institute, where they were grossly underemployed, according to Boris Protasov, director of the Yurazov subsidiary called Frames.

"We had enthusiasts here," Protasov said, "people who were interested in expanding and developing our video work. The textile institute wasn't interested. So it was dull for me, just putting out educational and technical films. Everything was stale and boring."

Enter Yurazov. Within a month, Protasov and his staff found themselves on the street, shooting some of the best and only footage of St. Petersburg's defiance of the coup in Moscow in August. They are editing it now, hoping to market it to television net-

works in the West.

"It's not that we have no flops," Yurazov cautioned. "We're sometimes up, sometimes down and sometimes in the red. Everything is developing and changing; it's not at all stable."

He and Milnarich got suckered on a deal in Uzbekistan earlier this year, for example, that cost them 360,000 rubles and almost drove them under. They're threatening a lawsuit, but the business lesson, they say, is "no more Central Asia." They are better off sticking close to home.

The Factory

The theater's industrial operations subsidiary, Ross, is in a dreary building acquired from a state-owned truck factory on the outskirts of St. Petersburg.

Workers at the factory already have cleared out 400 tons of scrap metal. They've patched up leaks, but still, with ceilings 45 feet high, this dark and cavernous space promises to be hell in winter.

Yurazov shows off prized finds from the factory's rubbish heap: a 1942 metal hole-puncher, seized as war booty from the German army, and an ancient yellow forklift. With parts that he cheerfully concedes were stolen, Yurazov says they might even get these antiques to work.

Surveying the scene, his pride is unabashed:

"This is the most respectable, the most solid part of all our operations," the entrepreneur allows.

This is another operation, like that at the textile institute, where Yurazov and company have exploited openings in the crumbling system of Soviet state enterprise.

Opportunity knocked here because of the state factory's chronic failure to meet a legal requirement that it produce a certain number of bulldozer spare parts each year. The deal struck by Yurazov's associates gave them workspace at the factory and access to equipment, in exchange for two days' work each week on the bulldozer spares.

In the three months since work began, the factory subsidiary has signed contracts to produce as many as 500 steam boilers a year for heating

plants. At 40,000 rubles per boiler, the contract is extremely lucrative — assuming the subsidiary comes up with the metal and equipment to get the boilers made.

"We have qualified managers and highly specialized workers," said Roslav Rusin, the subsidiary's director. "What we need are technology, equipment and orders."

"If you know of any joint venture proposals," he added, "we'd be very interested."

Dreaming On

If such a proposal surfaces in St. Petersburg, one senses, Vitaly Yurazov will sniff it out.

In the meantime, this free-market impresario continues his high-wire improvisation.

There's a new Mitsubishi coming in today for Milnarich. The commodities man has been "moody" lately, and his work has suffered, Yurazov said. First his girlfriend left him, and then he wrecked his car. The Mitsubishi, Yurazov hopes, will get the numbers man humming again.

Yurazov can't afford any letdown from Milnarich. Their former associate, who helped master the currency exchange procedures for them, has decamped for America, to graduate school at the University of Chicago.

The bookkeeper, Irena Isayeva, meanwhile, has just got to the head of her queue for an apartment but does not have the 28,000 rubles she needs for the down payment. Yurazov figures that at the moment the business is flush enough to make her the loan.

"That's the difference between us and all the old enterprises, where people are alienated," he boasts. "We're trying to get solutions that help everybody."

For himself, he muses, he'd like to get back to art. He has a historical novel in process, tracing the life of a rich industrialist who emigrates to America just after the revolution and comes home, a half-century later.

"Would it be possible," he asks a visitor from America, "to send something to me that shows what life in New York was like, from the 1920s to the 1960s?"

And what of the theater itself — the Leningrad Art Initiative Theater that was, after all, the tax-free genesis for this varied collection of enterprises? On yes, the theater.

"It remains my great dream," Yurazov says, in a reflective moment.

"It is our hope someday to have performance space for our theater company," he said. "And when we get that set up and working, with a manager in place, then at last I will get back to directing, my original field."

He has plans, Yurazov says, for mounting the definitive production of "Crime and Punishment," of capturing on stage somehow the 19th-century St. Petersburg of Dostoyevsky's classic. It will be, he promises, "truly spectacular."

And should there be profits, knowing Yurazov, they will surely be tax-free.

Confident Capitalist

Soviet Is Glad He Shifted To Job With Private Firm

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau
ST. PETERSBURG, U.S.S.R.

YURI PILUSHKOV, a skilled machine-tool operator, worked for 18 years at a state-owned factory with the same team of half a dozen workers.

This year, fed up with low wages, indifferent management and broken promises, they made the leap together into Russia's Great unknown — the free market.

Three months later, the crew is still together, stamping out bulldozer spare part boilers at the cavernous, filthy building that is the headquarters for the Boss factory of entrepreneur Viably Yurazov.

So far, Pilushkov strings with a smile, so good.

"There's much more trust here," he said, "and more understanding between us and the managers. We don't need any spare words. It's like one hand, working together."

It helps, he adds, that Ross is paying the workers 800 rubles a month — twice what they were earning at the state factory.

Now 38, Pilushkov said he had felt that 40 marked the point of never turning back. "If we had stayed at the state factory another three years, we'd be covered with moss," he said.

"Of course, there were risks. Not everything was clear. Not everything

was understood. "Now we're feeling more secure, more confident about the decision we made. If you want to work, you can work, I think. You can do things."

From the worker's perspective, Pilushkov said, the big difference is that there was no sea and. We start with the big money, we prepare it and we make the finished part. We're in total control of the whole process.

"At the state plant, we couldn't see the final result. We were very far from it."

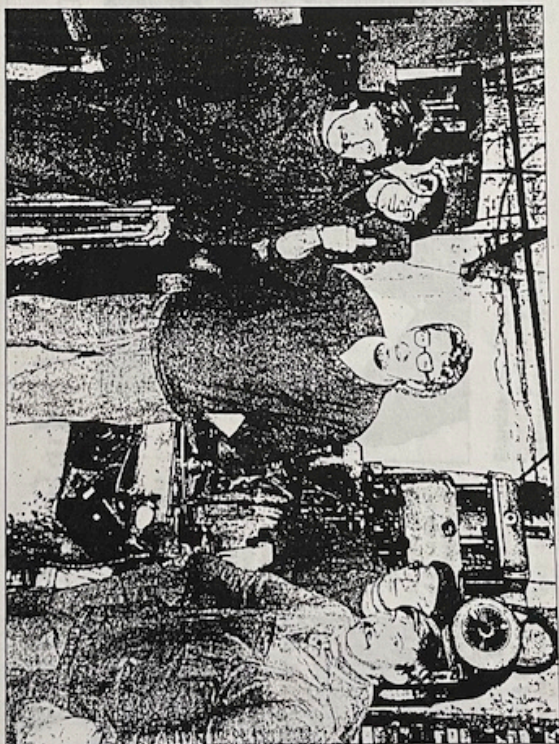
Co-workers from their old plant say they are trying similar changes now as well, shifting to an incentive-based, results-oriented system of contracting with work units for specific production tasks but making the appointment much more difficult. The 150 workers, Pilushkov said, had about six times the size of the workers at Ross.

The big factories also are saddled with an unproductive mass of outdated, which stifles workers and management alike.

There are still many people who are not psychologically prepared for the free market, Pilushkov said.

They're not interested in their work; they don't care how to make something better or faster. For them, work is just a burden.

Part of it is generational, the cumulative effect of a system that was cul-



Jon Sawyer
Yuri Pilushkov (center), a machine-tool operator, with his crew of workers. They were stamping out bulldozer spare parts in a private factory in St. Petersburg.

turally barren. "As a man of the 1960s," Pilushkov said, "I had goals and interests, both at work and in my spare time."

"Now there's a difference, with the younger workers. They are kind of boring and bored."

Pilushkov's avocations run to sports, especially soccer. His work crew fields its own team, which for several years running won the championship at the big state factory. His wife teaches volleyball and tennis at a military school in St. Petersburg.

For the Pilushkovs, as for nearly every Russian, housing remains a major problem.

"This is the most painful question for everybody," Pilushkov said. He and daughter had lived in the same single room, part of a communal apartment unit.

"The reason I stayed at the state plant all these years was that they kept promising us apartments. But here my daughter has grown from a baby to where she's almost ready to marry, and still no apartment."

Will the collapse of communism, or Boris Yeltsin's embrace of capitalism, mean more and better apartments? "I don't think so," Pilushkov said. "I'd like to believe, but I don't believe."

But he wouldn't have made the leap to this private venture, he concedes, if he had thought there was no possibility of a better life.

"Who knows?" his new boss Viably Yurazov says, rubbing his hands and thinking ahead. "We might build an apartment block ourselves."

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

5-STAR

(1)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1991

Copyright 1991

Voices: Radio Liberty Won Respect From Soviets

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau
SIXTH IN A SERIES
MOSCOW — James Critchlow and Francis S. Ronalds Jr. were there at the beginning, broadcasting from a tiny German transmitter the news that Joseph Stalin had died — and what his death might mean for their listeners in the Soviet Union.

In the 1960s, Radio Liberty, the broadcast service they helped create, became the essential conduit for the samizdat underground, acquiring material from Soviet dissidents and transmitting it back into the their office in Munich, Germany.

By the 1970s and 1980s, most Soviets regarded the service as the single most reliable source of information

spontaneous turned up as the guest news announcer on "Vremya," the Soviet Union's most widely watched television news program. If you wanted definitive proof of irreversible change, Soviets said, that was it: Jim Critchlow and Ronnie Ronalds had lived through other, darker times, back when Radio Moscow assailed them both by name. Propagandists for war, Moscow had called them. Murderers, and CIA spies.

The two were visiting Moscow this fall — two veterans of the Cold War, men who fought with words and information, who had lived long enough to relish the joy of walking the streets of Moscow that seemed at long last free.

Twenty years ago in the United States, when Radio Liberty's CIA funding was exposed, it was fashionable, particularly among liberals, to scorn the broadcast service. This was a propaganda machine, they said, a white-elephant relic from the days of Joe McCarthy and the Red Menace.

But listen to Alexander Kan, a jazz critic in St. Petersburg. From the

See RADIO, Page 11



Jon Sawyer/Post-Dispatch
Francis S. Ronalds Jr. (left) and James Critchlow, both founding members of Radio Liberty, meeting this fall at a restaurant in Moscow.

about their own country. And last August, when Soviet hopes for freedom were under siege from the coup, Radio Liberty stringers kept

an open line to the west from Boris Yeltsin's White House.

Less than a month later, on Sept. 14, Radio Liberty's Moscow corre-

Radio

From page one

time he was a teen-ager during the 1960s, and especially in the turbulent past half-decade of political and economic change, he said, Radio Liberty had consistently provided the most objective, most complete and most sophisticated analysis of Soviet affairs.

"Beginning in the detente years you could hear all the 'Voices,'" Kan said, "from the Voice of America to the BBC and Radio Liberty. But Liberty is the best, and always was, because it was the one that concentrated on events here."

Many people here, Kan among them, believe that Radio Liberty, because of its unique role in awakening Soviet people to the possibility of change, deserves the Nobel Prize for Peace.

In The Beginning

Radio Liberty was the last of three major efforts by the United States to broadcast in Europe. Voice of America began in 1942, targeted initially at the German population but expanding after the war to include broadcasts in other languages.

Radio Free Europe began transmitting in 1951, with programming aimed at the subjugated peoples of the Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe. Those advocating broadcasts into the Soviet Union itself argued for a separate service.

And so Radio Liberty was born — or rather Radio *Liberation*, as it was known informally until government overseers decided on a less militant name.

Eugene Lyons Jr., then a senior editor at Readers' Digest, was so incensed by the name change that he quit the advisory board that had been established as public cover for the CIA's new project.

"To him that was appeasement," Critchlow recalled. "'Liberty' meant just sitting on the sidelines."

Ronalds and Critchlow arrived at Radio Liberty's office in Munich in the summer of 1952. Neither matched Liberty's image of hard-boiled anti-communism.

Critchlow hated the engineering he had studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He was miserable in Schenectady, N.Y., where he wrote advertising copy for General Electric Co. When he saw an advertisement offering GI Bill money for courses in the Russian language, he jumped at the chance.

He had a brief stint next with the old Atomic Energy Commission in Washington before the Radio Liberty project began.

Ronalds learned Russian courtesy of the Navy, after World War II interrupted his undergraduate studies at Princeton University. The first months after the war found him in Vienna, under Navy orders to ferret out what information he could on the Soviets' atom-bomb program.

This was a heady assignment for a young naval officer with no college degree, Ronalds recalled with a laugh, especially for someone whose own background was politically suspect.

His best friend, growing up in Morristown, N.J., became a top organizer for the Communist Party. That friend's sister married folk singer Pete Seeger, known then and since for his leftist politics. As a teen-ager, Ronalds spent so much time around Seeger's Greenwich Village crowd that a friendly FBI official felt compelled to warn his father.

"I was pro-Soviet," Ronalds recalled. "It wasn't until I got to Europe that I began to get a clearer idea of what system they had over there."

On The Air

In 1952 Ronalds joined Critchlow in Munich. Boris Shub, the emigre son of Lenin's Soviet biographer, was hired as Radio Liberty's political adviser and put most of the original staff together. He was a brash New York lawyer who set out, loaded with CIA money, to buy the best talent in Europe.

It was Shub who persuaded Victor Frank, then head of the Russian-language service at the British Broadcasting Corp., to jump ship. It was Shub who scoured the ranks of Soviet emigres, coming up with discoveries such as the taxi driver who happened to be a north Caucasian novelist.

As Radio Liberty approached the date of its debut, the

staff wrestled with the question of sign-on music.

"Shub's idea was that our theme should be the tick-tock of a metronome," Critchlow recalled, "and then a voice saying, 'The Stalinist era is coming to a close.'"

"We said, 'Boris, you're crazy! This guy Stalin could live for years.' And so we didn't use his theme. We went on the air on March 1, 1953, and five days later Stalin was dead."

From those frenzied first days Radio Liberty grew, building its staff of Soviet emigre researchers and announcers and expanding the programming. Most of the staff, including Critchlow and Ronalds, did not work directly for the CIA. They encountered little interference from Washington.

A Voice For Dissidents

"The most important thing I ever did," Ronalds said, came in 1966, when he arranged for the publication and broadcast of the transcript of Moscow's first show trial in 30 years. The defendants were novelists Andrey Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel.

Publication of their defiant testimony before a world audience, Ronalds said, "gave a tremendous boost to the whole dissident movement."

Another breakthrough — in the opinion of many analysts, the major breakthrough — was Soviet acceptance in 1975 of the Helsinki Accord.

U.S. critics of that agreement called it another Yalta, consigning half of Europe to permanent Soviet submission. It never looked that way to Ronalds and Critchlow, who recognized that Helsinki's real significance lay in Soviet acceptance of basic human rights — including the right, first stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to disseminate information regardless of national frontiers.

Ronalds stayed with Radio Liberty through the beginning of President Jimmy Carter's administration. The service by then had survived the public exposure of its CIA ties, and moves by Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., to have it killed. In 1975 Radio Liberty was merged with Radio Free Europe, and made accountable for its budget through the U.S. Information Agency.

Critchlow left Radio Liberty in 1972, believing that if he stayed he would never be permitted to see the Soviet Union itself. He got there a year later, on assignment with the Soviet research division of the U.S. Information Agency, and has made three trips since.

Ronalds, after stints as Radio Liberty's director and as programming director for the Voice of America, is back in Washington today, where he prepares news documentaries for the Voice of America. Critchlow is based at Harvard's Russian Research Center, where he has just completed a study on Soviet Uzbekistan.

In four decades of covering Soviet affairs, what key trends did Radio Liberty miss?

Nationalism, for one — the force that accounted more than anything else, Critchlow believes, for the collapse of Soviet communism.

"We never anticipated nationalism and that's what really did it," he said. "We never took it seriously. I played volleyball with these Tatar emigres for years but I never took them seriously."

Meeting With Solzhenitsyn

How much of a difference did it make, all those years of broadcasting into the vastness of the Soviet Communist empire?

Ronalds recalls the day in 1974 that he met in Zurich, Switzerland, with Alexander Solzhenitsyn. The Nobel laureate's exile had begun just a few days earlier and Ronalds, who at the time was Radio Liberty's director, was eager to broadcast a message from Solzhenitsyn back to his people at home.

Ronalds was accompanied by the Russian-language announcer who would read Solzhenitsyn's words for the broadcast.

"When Solzhenitsyn heard his voice he said he recognized it, from hearing it on the radio," Ronalds said. Solzhenitsyn claimed, in fact, to have been a listener of Radio Liberty for years, and from as far away as Kazakhstan in Central Asia.

Ronalds was startled — this was much farther than Liberty's expected range.

"I was so delighted," Ronalds said. "If only this one man, this Solzhenitsyn, was listening, that made the whole thing worthwhile."

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1991

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Rich, Risky: U.S. Entrepreneurs High On Soviet Prospects

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

MOSCOW — Sasha Karpov and Victor Moss belong to a small but growing breed — American lawyers, business people and business-service firms who recognize that for all its surface confusion, Russia abounds in opportunities. "Business is risky always," Moss said. "But if a businessman isn't willing to take a little risk, he isn't much of a businessman."

That's not to say it's easy, especially when striking deals with officials of central Soviet ministries that are themselves in the process of collapse.

For example, Karpov and Moss were negotiating an iron-ore contract last month for an American client. Midway through the talks, Karpov said, the Soviet ministry of geology that had been handling the negotiation was abruptly replaced by the Russian geology committee.

"And next month they may be called something else," Moss said.

But, Karpov observed, "The nice thing about dealing with Russians is that once you establish rapport, it's not the institution but the individual that matters. And the bottom line is that they do deliver."

The example she cites is her major current project:

finding a U.S. market for a Soviet-designed bore-hole mining tool that she said was simpler and more effective than comparable tools available in the United States.

Karpov said her Soviet clients "had bent over backward" to promote the sale, handing over technical specifications on the tool and sending their own experts to the United States to supervise the manufacture of a prototype device in Colorado.

The two lawyers, both Russian-Americans, discussed their novel partnership during their first trip together here at a conference sponsored by the American Conference on International Leadership.

Karpov's parents, Russian emigrants from Rostov-on-the-Don, met in Denver. Karpov grew up there and earned degrees in both mining and law. In between came three years in Moscow, from 1980 to 1982, when her then-husband served as deputy Air Force attache at the U.S. Embassy.

Victor Moss was born in Soviet Byelorussia in 1944, then emigrated with his family to New Mexico. After graduating from law school, he settled in Pueblo, Colo. His Russian proficiency brought in legal business from emigrants and then, five years ago, a call from a recent arrival from Moscow, looking for U.S. help on the export of Soviet art.

Those modest beginnings have mushroomed since into a full-fledged business. Karpov and Moss opened their two-partner law firm last month, along with IBR Inc., for International Business Representatives.

American investors plying the water of Soviet trade have pursued three different goals, Karpov suggested, with results as mixed as their objectives. They are:

- Long-term investment. McDonald's is the classic example: opening a huge restaurant in downtown Moscow, taking profits in rubles and investing them in Russian cattle farms and in the construction of processing plants.

- Barter: PepsiCo's long-standing arrangement with Stolichnaya Vodka typifies the approach. Pepsi shipped its soft drinks in, took the vodka out and pocketed the dollar profits at home.

- Dollar profits, now. This is what most American firms are looking for. It is also the most elusive to obtain, given the non-convertibility of the ruble.

Moss warned that if American businessmen sit on their hands, waiting for franchise guarantees, they would lose the future.

Businessmen from Japan, South Korea, Germany and Spain are streaming in, he said. They appreciate what most Americans so far have not — that for all its current chaos Russia remains incredibly rich, with more gold and oil than any other country and so much other natural wealth that "there's no way it can go belly up."



Jon Sawyer/Post-Dispatch
American lawyers Sasha Karpov and Victor Moss in Moscow.



Sergei I. Baranovsky, a defense engineer, outside his research laboratory.

Open Arms Reformers Seek Peace Profits

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau
MOSCOW — Sergei I. Baranovsky brings to his engineering lab the same competitive fire that helped win the Soviet Union's national team handball championship three times running.

As senior research engineer at one of Moscow's most prestigious military institutes, his hope is to convert this nation's moribund defense factories. He bubbles with ideas for commercial products he says the plants ought to be building.

Baranovsky heads a semi-private consortium, set up by 128 defense plants, that aims to produce everything from catalytic

converters to advanced jet engines.

Baranovsky also knows the West, more so than most Soviet defense researchers. He did a year of post-doctoral study at Virginia Polytechnic Institute in the 1970s. He lectured last year at the University of Michigan.



Beyond The Soviet Union

The battered car he drives has a UM sticker; a Virginia license plate sits propped on the rear-window ledge.

The man is savvy — but then, given the Soviet Union, he has to be.

The paperwork for the consortium sailed through early last year, Baranovsky recalled. And then — nothing. Four different ministries approved the venture; none supplied the money he

See MOSCOW, Page 14

Moscow

From page one

needed to get the company on its feet. Finally, salvation came with the Persian Gulf War. Baranovsky discovered a cache of surplus Soviet gas masks. He bought them for rubles "at next to nothing" and sold them for dollars to the Saudi government.

Baranovsky won't say where he got his supply or what his profits were. "Several million rubles" was as specific as he would get. "Certainly, it's been our main profit so far," he said. And getting the working capital in hand just meant facing up to all his other headaches: shoddy equipment, breakdowns in supply and bureaucratic structures that are short-circuiting since the botched coup in August.

"We have brains and cheap labor, raw materials and even sophisticated metals," Baranovsky said. "We have some very interesting technologies — some of them unique — that we could sell in the West."

"What we need is technology and assistance in marketing and, most of all, real capitalists — not the stupid ministries we have now."

The problem, for Baranovsky and all other reformers of the Soviet Union's bloated military-industrial complex, is that effective conversion means achieving four major transformations almost simultaneously:

- From a command economy to the free market.
- From central government control to autonomy for the republics.
- From a closed military system to one that's open.
- From military production to civilian.

"That's why everything is so mixed up now," said Yuri Andreyev, a leader of the Soviet national commission on defense conversion.

"This is not a command economy anymore, but there is also no market economy as yet. The state's economic plan doesn't function anymore, but at the same time, there is no new program to replace it.

"And in the meantime, people are mixed up. We had eight or nine different ministries making decisions that were important for defense conversion; their fate now is unclear. For the moment, they are dormant. Some ministers have retired; others are awaiting new orders."

McDonnell Douglas, take heart: It could be worse.

St. Louis and other defense-dependent U.S. communities have been adjusting, and will continue to adjust, to smaller military budgets. For workers of specific product lines, be it the F-15 Eagle or B-2 Stealth bomber, the winding down of the Cold War has clearly been traumatic.

But consider the challenge facing the Soviet Union, where the defense industry has absorbed anywhere from 12 to 26 percent of the country's total economic output, according to various external estimates. U.S. defense spending, by contrast, runs less than 6 percent of GNP at present and did not exceed 8 percent even at the height of the military build-up of the early '80s.

In Russia, the largest of the Soviet republics, officials estimate that defense work accounts for over half of

total output. In St. Petersburg, the former Leningrad, dependence on armaments and related factories may exceed 70 percent.

New Work For Old Plants

The Soviets' approach to conversion is to keep defense plants largely intact but shift an increasing share of their production to commercial goods. Since the coup, that has been complicated by the breakdown in economic relations between republics.

Forty percent of production at military plants already goes to consumer goods. Plans call for increasing that to 60 percent by 1995. Economists who say tank factories can't build freight cars may not realize that in the Soviet Union, they already are — or that defense plants account for the total Soviet production of sewing machines, television sets and video recorders.

Is more radical reform possible, in an economy that is already slated to contract by 17 percent in 1991 alone? Russian President Boris Yeltsin announced an ambitious reform plan two weeks ago that called for freeing all prices by the end of the year. Massive hoarding and endless queues followed immediately — and now Yeltsin's advisers are saying the reforms could take months, not weeks.

AWAKENINGS: BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION



Jon Sawyer (right) with an assistant standing before a model of a super-sonic combustion engine.

At the big defense plants that ring Moscow and St. Petersburg, prospects for production appear even dimmer. Of 5,000 defense factories, only 500 have started a conversion program. Soviet officials say. And of those 500, fewer than a dozen have converted completely to commercial production. Not one plant has been taken out from under the control of the defense industries ministry.

Decisions on Soviet defense purchases, unlike those in the United States, have been driven almost entirely by the defense industry. The defense industries ministry, not the defense ministry, was determined what got built, say senior analysts here.

The industry bias has skewed the allocation of resources. More money has gone to building weapons than to training staff or to operations and maintenance. And within the procurement budget, spending has favored current weapons over development of new ones.

This was a recipe for debacle. It was a prescription that the Soviet Union, as the world now knows, and tanks — as the world now knows, since the Persian Gulf War — that simply could not compete.

"From the military perspective, this policy was obviously suicidal," said Andrei Kortunov, head of the foreign policy department at the USA and Canada Institute. "It was absolutely crazy."

But from the point of view of the defense ministries, it was a rational policy. Labor force, and it kept the whole regime under their control.

Instead of trying to keep specific assembly lines open by retooling them for commercial production, the defense industry ought to rechannel its skilled labor into new sectors, Kortunov said.

Don't attempt to fine tune factories that are beyond repair, Kortunov

ovsky said he was close to a deal with Volvo, the Swedish automobile manufacturer, to provide an engine to test the equipment. If it turns out, he says, orders will follow.

Other ventures include pollution control equipment for coal-fired heating plants, a household filter for drinking water and convertible kilns capable of burning a variety of materials.

Defense materials pose another challenge, partly because of the breakdown in deliveries among the republics. Because the system of state orders persists — at least in part — a factory that doesn't fulfill its orders finds itself almost immediately short of raw materials.

The law that governs business spin-offs from the state factories gives half of any profits to the government. The business is also required to sell any hard currency that it earns to the central bank at a rate much lower than the market price.

"We're permitted to use profits to buy new equipment, but we can't distribute any of it to our employees," Baranovsky said.

Corruption, most of it petty, is constant. Twenty different ministries require operating permits, and that means 20 opportunities for a bureaucrat to seek a bribe, he said.

Describing his ventures as a U.S.-Soviet consortium, another problem: For all their technical expertise, he and his colleagues lack basic business skills.

"We are highly trained technically, but we are not trained as managers, as accountants, as lawyers," he lamented. "We need more lawyers."

"You'll regret that," said an American in the audience.

Needed: An Enforcer

Andreyev, of the commission on defense conversion, said reform would not come until the government resolved the question of who owned what at the state factories.

"That's the most important thing," he said. "Once you have real ownership, everything else will more or less be decided."

He said he was encouraged by the spread of commodities exchanges, semi-private trading cooperatives and big defense plants have established to get raw materials and consumer goods that are no longer available through the government.

The most ambitious of the exchanges is Konversiya — Russian for "conversion." It opened in late September, in the defense industrial center of Dzerzhinsky, just outside Moscow.

At the exchange, buyers from 18 countries are allowed to bid for a wide range of goods — bicycles, sewing machines, small tractors, even tennis rackets — in lots that ranged from several dozen to several hundred.

V.V. Chesnokov, a former defense industries ministry official who is now director general of the exchange, said some 100 items had changed hands during the first hour and a half, at a total value of 20 million rubles.

He claimed that his own salary was only 1900 rubles a month — between \$30 and \$35, at the rapidly falling exchange rate.

"These commodity exchanges weren't set up to make a profit," he said. "Our purpose is to stir up the production of consumer goods."

But for the moment, at least, Dzerzhinsky is an exception. The reform is still a critical bottleneck for those who favor reform.

"The system of state order still exists," Andreyev stressed. "If you do not fill your orders, you don't get raw materials. They immediately punish you."

Andreyev ended with a note of irony. The best conversion from military to civilian production that he had seen so far was in the USSR in 1945 and 1946, he said. "That was a strict command-style performance, headed by a notorious guy named Beria" — Lavrenti Beria, Stalin's enforcer and longtime head of the secret police.

"Maybe that's why it succeeded," he said.

BEYOND THE SOVIET UNION

Ex-Governor Optimistic On Soviet Conversions

By Jon Sawyer

Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

MOSCOW — The brochure advertising the satellite reception dish was printed on glossy paper, with all the technical specifications a potential customer might require.

There was only one thing missing: a price.

Former Ohio Gov. Richard Celeste says the experience was typical of his tour of Soviet defense factories that are trying to make the free-market plunge.

Celeste was in Moscow this fall to head a Soviet-American conference on defense conversion.

One site that particularly struck him, Celeste said, was the research center credited with developing the Soviet Union's respected surface-to-air missiles. GOSPLAN, the state economic planning agency, has cut the center's budget by 40 percent in the past two years.

GOSPLAN also ordered a shift in production to corn oils, which Celeste says proved a blessing in disguise.

Not only did the center develop production techniques more advanced than those at other Soviet plants, it also came up with a ceramic heating

tile that Celeste predicted would find a market in the West.

"So I ask the price of that, and the guy there does some figures and says they'd need to get \$14 apiece. And I said, 'No, that's your cost. You need to add on to that, for development and marketing and profit. You ought to figure at least 60 percent more,' I said. 'Make the price \$20 or \$25 apiece.'"

Celeste, who has worked with displaced defense firms in Ohio, said he came away impressed by the potential in the Soviet Union.

"What American think tank wouldn't like to have a joint-venture partner and be able to say 'Here's the guy who developed the surface-to-air missile, or the space station Mir?'"

When Celeste said so publicly, a Soviet defense researcher said the Soviets could "out-compete" any Western think tank because, after all, Soviet scientists make only \$10 a month.

"I said, 'Don't let the American and European firms sucker you that way,' Celeste recalled. "'Make them pay.'"



Celeste

NEWS ANALYSIS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1991

Soviet Autumn: The Lights Are Going Out

This is the last in a series of eight articles exploring attitudes that reporter Jon Sawyer encountered during a month-long tour of the Soviet Union and its breakaway republics.

By Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

MOSCOW

A MERICANS WHO showed up here in mid-September for a conference on U.S.-Soviet relations got a cold-shower lesson in how quickly, and how much, Soviet perspectives have changed.

The meeting, sponsored by the American Center for International Leadership, brought together academics, government officials, journalists and businessmen. The idea was to talk about issues of mutual interest.

"Regional issues" was the assigned topic for one panel of Americans among them this reporter. The platter looked full: the Middle East peace conference, Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, Cuba and southern Africa and Eastern Europe.

The agenda, as the Americans understood it, lasted maybe five minutes.

It wasn't that the Soviet delegation didn't want to discuss "regional issues." They did. But the regional issues they had in mind were Soviet Georgia, Nagorno-Karabakh, the Ukraine and a dozen other domestic uprisings, stretching from the Baltic coast to the Pacific Kuriles Islands.

For these representative Soviet citizens, obsessed and numbed by the spiraling disintegration of their country, the Middle East might have been the man on the moon.

And so it went, during a month's reporting tour through Moscow and St. Petersburg, Kiev and the three new Baltic republics — a running encounter with a society and people that are dysfunctional, disoriented and open, incredibly open, to change.

Dysfunctional? You bet.

Pay telephones and subway rides cost 15 kopecks, a steal at less than half a cent. The catch is that 15-kopeck coins have all disappeared, and



Beyond The Soviet Union

phones and subway machines won't accept anything else.

A light bulb goes dark at the apartment of a friend and she explains, a little sheepishly, how she gets new bulbs. She takes the dead one to work and trades it there, surreptitiously, for one that works.

What's special about a Soviet automobile? The stubs, where windshield wipers ought to be.

Drivers carry the wiper blades inside. They protect them like crown jewels and put them on only for a real rain. Anyone fool enough to leave the blades on, unattended, risks immediate theft — and why not, in an economy where replacement blades simply don't exist?

No one goes anywhere without the "a vos ka," a loose-meshed string bag, "just in case" you happen on something to buy. The two cardinal rules: Don't shop for a particular item; you'll never find it. But be ready, always, to buy what you can.

You can't count anymore on *Beryozka* dollar stores. That's where tourists and others with access to hard currency buy cheeses, wines and other goods long since vanished from regular stores. But most *Beryozka* stores have quit taking credit cards. Too many people are ripping them off with stolen cards, and they lack the computers they need to verify the cards.

Will The Center Hold

Are the Soviet people disoriented?

Consider an evening with Andrei Kortunov, director of foreign policy at the Institute of U.S.A. and Canada Studies and a rising star of the Soviet intellectual establishment.

Kortunov and his wife live in the Ukraine Hotel, a Stalin-era wedding-cake monstrosity on the banks of the Moscow River. Its multiple wings and cut-de-sac halls have housed foreign journalists, diplomats and

See SOVIET, Page 4

Soviet

From page one

members of the Soviet *nomenklatura* for going on two generations.

The apartment is small but furnished in the Western mode. The kitchen has hard-wood floors and wood-paneled walls, an array of modern appliances and a plethora of electrical adapters. A bulletin board in the corner is filled with Kortunov name tags — most of them collected on his many trips to the United States.

There's a big-screen television in the living room, a telephone that rings every few minutes from New York. Kortunov has promised to appear live on "Nightline," at 3:30 a.m. Moscow time; the producers at ABC News are anxiously checking to make sure he'll show.

In the course of a wide-ranging interview he is by turns reflective, exasperated, and weary, resigned to the prospect that in the difficult months to come there is "only possibility that his country will make one wrong," voice after another.

er. He gives off the uneasy air of a sure-footed scambler aware that the ground is shifting beneath him.

The nationalist disputes rolling from one republic to another are susceptible to peaceful solution, Kortunov insisted.

Ideally, of course, Estonia would protect the civil rights of its ethnic Russians. Russia would accommodate the legitimate aspirations of its Tatar Moslems. An alternative, less attractive but doable, would be mass relocation — moving the 60 million Soviets who now live separate from their ethnic communities.

"That would become a fertile ground for extremists of all sorts," Kortunov said, as would any attempt to solve the ethnic problems through the redrawing of republic boundaries. That way lies Yugoslavia, he warned, and civil war.

"I wouldn't exclude any of these possible outcomes," he said. "As a historian, I can say that some ethnic problems have no fair solution. Someone will have to suffer."

Kortunov's plea to the West, as spokesman for reason at the center, is this: Don't assume that every nationalist is a democrat.

"For quite a time each dissident who proclaimed his opposition to the central government could count on full support and understanding internationally — simply because he was against the Evil Empire. The time has come to judge them on their own merits."

Kortunov said he was hopeful that economic self-interest would drive the republics to compromise.

"I don't see a protracted period of trade wars. I think that sooner or later, rather sooner than later, reasonable leaders will decide there is no way other than to cooperate with a union center. If they don't, then those with convertible resources will be better off. You can sell oil. It's much more difficult to sell grain and then buy oil. It's much more difficult to sell consumer goods abroad, find hard currency and then buy oil."

That's the argument of Russia, that the rest of the republics will eventually bow to the obvious — that they cannot survive outside a union with giant Russia and all its oil and natural wealth.

Kortunov made these comments early last month. The weeks since have seen scant progress. Just this Thursday Mikhail Gorbachev and

Boris Yeltsin were able to persuade just seven republics to endorse the idea of confederation with a central government, even in drastically diminished form. Five other republics, among them the Ukraine, the second largest, declined even to send representatives.

In the Ukraine, particularly, where national elections take place Dec. 1, defiant voices still ring loudest.

Take the issue of agriculture. The Ukraine now projects a shortfall of 30 percent in the 1991 harvest, said Volodymir Pylypchuk, head of the Ukrainian parliament's committee on economic reform, and plans to feed its people first.

"We're prepared to fulfill our obligations to other republics, concerning food," Pylypchuk said, "but we can't go beyond that. There won't be any surplus."

There won't be any shipments, period, he warned if Moscow doesn't come up with better payment than rubles. "The ruble is getting cheaper and cheaper and we don't want to accept it," he said. "If we sell grain for this unreliable currency there's no guarantee we can use it. The ruble no longer works. The ruble is

Soviet

From page four

dead."

Uprooting the Weeds

No one can visit what was the Soviet Union without coming away humble, and cautious, when it comes to predicting what the future holds.

Six weeks ago Boris Yeltsin, flush from his triumph atop the tank at the Russian White House, swooped down on Azerbaijan for a day's negotiation that appeared to settle, magically, the long dispute over the Armenian enclave there of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Flash forward to this past week, hear Yeltsin make similar pronouncements regarding the rebellious leaders of Russia's own Chechen-Ingush region — and watch in awe, as both the rebels and Russia's parliament flout their leader's command.

On the economic front, after frittering away nearly two months of precious, Yeltsin comes storming out with a truly radical plan, one that calls for lifting price controls entirely by year's end. It dies almost at birth, in a frenzied wave of hoarding and the specter of food riots this winter.

And Yeltsin, day by day, looks less like the hero of August, more like his old nemesis Mikhail Gorbachev: important men both, *historic* men both, but possibly, it appears, irrelevant.

Robert Legveld, director of the Hariman Institute at Columbia University, warned earlier this fall that we should expect more of the same. This is a country, after all, in the full flush of hyper-inflation, with prices rising on the order of 1,000 percent a year.

Its leaders in Moscow talk of a loose confederation of autonomous repub-

lics, a model for which there is no successful historical precedent. The republics see an increasingly resurgent Russia, and do not like it.

And with the possible exceptions of Russia and the now-free Baltic states, no government of a Soviet republic can lay claim to the legitimacy, and authority, of democratic election.

The Communist officials who helped lead Eastern Europe to freedom two years ago had the same problem. Many appear, in retrospect, to have been true democrats. All are gone, swept away in a tide of public revulsion against all things Red.

Leonid Kravchuk of the Ukraine, Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, ~~Zviad Gamsakhurdia of Georgia~~ — all these men, before they positioned themselves as nationalists, were Communist time-servers first. As, of course, were Gorbachev and Yeltsin.

"All these people were part of the 'system,'" Legveld said. "They may not be there six months from now. We can't organize our policy around anticipated outcomes because what we anticipate may turn out drastically different."

Francis S. Ronalds Jr., a Voice of American veteran who has tracked Soviet affairs for four decades, tells of an encounter this fall with a taxi driver in Kiev.

A "typical" Russian, Ronalds said, in that he combined both extreme cynicism and a passion for poetry. To a question about the birch trees they were passing, this driver responded by reciting a complete poem by Sergei Esenin, a somewhat obscure Russian poet from early in the century who was married for a time to the dancer Isadora Duncan.

Ronalds said he asked this man if he had expected to live to see this year's transformation. "I'm not sure I have lived to see it," he said. I asked him why and he said, 'Because I'm not sure

anything has changed.'"

Or try this, from St. Petersburg, where Marina Salye is chairman of the local parliament's emergency food committee. She is also a fierce critic, from the democratic left, of St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoly Sobchak — a darling of the west for his stand last August against the coup.

Sobchak continues to surround himself with the same defense industry officials who pretty much ran things before the coup, Salye notes. He continues to ignore the St. Petersburg parliament, she adds, and has done nothing to strengthen local prosecutors and judges. Vodka has been rationed here for months, for example, with purchasers required to show a special government-issued coupon. Counterfeit coupons are sold openly in state stores, Salye said. Sales of vodka during September equaled 193 percent of the legal coupon quota. Local prosecutors, waiting on Sobchak's direction, have done nothing.

It's hard to say what's more remarkable — Salye's bill of particulars against Mayor Sobchak, or the fact that she feels so free, in the new Soviet Union, to make them.

What happened this August was "an easy victory," she warned. She compared it to a gardener digging up weeds.

"We succeeded in cutting off the tip of the roots but the roots are still there," Salye said. "Getting them out will be a long and painful work."

EVERYDAY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1991

SECTION D



MUDDLING THROUGH

A VISITOR FINDS THE SOVIETS MAKING THE BEST OF CRAZY TIMES

Story and Photos by Jon Sawyer
Post-Dispatch Washington Bureau

KIEV, Ukraine

A VISITOR to the Soviet Union, post-coup and pre-winter, comes home rubbing his eyes, shaking off the dust from never-never land. No one knows who owns what, which republics will remain attached, what the currency will be or who the real leaders are.

Or what the future will bring. Here in Kiev, waiting one rainy night for the delayed flight to Vilnius, I fell into conversation with a woman named Marina who captured, for me, the tap dance of Soviet survival. Until last year, she had a very good job as a Spanish interpreter. She had spent three years in Cuba, translating for top officials and living the good life that Soviet experts there used to live.

They knew it was all crashing down, Marina said, that Cubans were fed up with the dreary regimentation and empty shelves of communism. What no one suspected, she said, was that Moscow — not Havana — would be the first to fall. And what does a Spanish translator do when the great contraction comes — when the Soviet empire that once had ambitions throughout Spanish-speaking Latin America shrivels up to the point that even your native Ukraine is beyond the empire's reach? You come home and support yourself as best you can. For Marina, that



ABOVE: Moscow's largest flea market takes place every weekend at Izmailovo Park.

TOP: Shakh Foremuzov (center, in white sweater) and members of his family at the Torzhkovsky Street Collective Farm Market, where they sell pickled garlic and eggplants.

means playing the organ synthesizer, as the musical accompanist for Kiev's mime theater of the deaf.

The Soviet Union is full of people like Marina — plunging ahead, making the best of crazy times. Entrepreneurs, doctors, teachers and army officers — across society, I kept running up against people who were

AWAKENINGS



Beyond The Soviet Union



140

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Soviets

From page one

Chief of graphic arts here, she oversees a collection of 40,000 works, most of them crammed into cabinets in the three tiny rooms she shares with her staff of nine. They have been working for more than a year on two major shows, one a survey of old Russian art and the other an exhibit devoted to Filonov, a towering figure of early 20th-century graphics art.

"Everything has been wonderfully done," Kozyreva said. "But since January we have been working and we cannot get a catalog done. There's no paper! Every day, sitting in that office, we talk about paper and nothing else."

Kozyreva said the museum's commercial deputy director had scoured the Soviet Union. She found six tons of very good paper for poster reproductions — Kozyreva won't say exactly where; "it's almost a state secret" — but nothing suitable for catalogs.

The big museums of Washington, New York and Amsterdam have in recent years built handsome shows around the master works in Kozyreva's files, from book illustrations of the 19th-century Russian realist school to the post-impressionist abstracts of Malevich, Kandinsky and Filonov. The Louvre may open a special department for works on loan from Kiev.

For people here with a professional interest in Russia's art heritage, these developments are promising, but only a start.

"We need everything," Kozyreva said, from special packing crates for transporting art to better storage facilities to the money required to build space here for permanently exhibiting the best of the graphics collection.

And, not least, paper, glossy and thick.

Shakh Feremuzov, a Muslim farmer from the autonomous region of Dagestan in southern Russia, showed up this fall in St. Petersburg, the same as always, dishing out pickled garlics and eggplants from huge shipping barrels at the open market on Torzhkovsky Street.

For Feremuzov and his extended family, most of them here with him, the political tremors in Moscow remain distant. The prices they pay for fuel and clothes and sugar have soared, but so have their own: The garlic that went for 10 rubles a kilo last fall goes for 20 now.

"Is it better in America or here?" Feremuzov wants to know, peppering a visitor with questions. "Do you have unemployed people there? What nations are in America? What faith are you? Are there ethnic clashes there?"

determined to search out a future, for their families and their country.

It's as if a whole people, all 290 million of them, are sitting with Marina at her synthesizer, trying to make the music of their lives fit the movements of performers who cannot hear.

They improvise, the traveler concludes, as best they can — and often, it appears, amazingly well.

At the Russian Museum in St. Petersburg, a treasure house of Russian art and culture, curator Natalya Kozyreva spends her days poised between the sublime and the absurd.

See SOVIETS, Page 14

His own region is peaceful and should remain so, Feremuzov predicts, even though it is close by Azerbaijan and Georgia, two areas that have already weathered ethnic strife.

"We are a friendly people," he insists. "Everything will work out."

Alla Bukharin runs a makeshift lab at a children's polyclinic in St. Petersburg, where she lives with her husband and their 5-year-old son, Kostya. Like most Russians, she spends her days scrounging for food and dreaming of a larger apartment.

"It's almost an epic," she laughs, after describing their elaborate efforts to "trade" for housing in a better part of town. Deals are going down, with cash transfers unheard of even a year ago, despite the fact that legal title to property remains, for most people, impossible.

"What we have," Bukharin said, "is a real estate market where people are buying and selling something that doesn't belong to them."

Bukharin has redoubled her apartment search in recent months, after a woman was found stabbed to death in the weed-filled vacant lots between the dreary concrete-block high-rises where the Bukharins live. Crime is much discussed here but is nothing yet like the norm even for American suburbs. The murder was nonetheless, of course, a shock.

The pediatrician reaches into her purse and pulls out a large aerosol can of mace. The label reads "Tear Gas/Chemical Defense Weapon." The manufacturer? Security Equipment Corp., Sabre Division, St. Louis, Mo.

Alla Bukharin's friend Alexander Kan is a part-time jazz critic, part-time interpreter for journalists. Kan's work gives him access to dollars; he and his wife live well. To an outsider, his prospects, now that the Soviet Union is opening up, look boundless.

And yet Kan may leave. He has talked with an immigration lawyer in Minneapolis, is exploring the technical requirements for a visa and says he may emigrate even if it means settling for a routine clerical job.

"We all felt this incredible euphoria back in August," he said, "but it was short-lived. The lines are still here. The bureaucrats are the same. And who knows what the winter will bring?"

Talking with Kan, this reporter was reminded of traveling in South Africa a year ago — surely the most hopeful period in a generation for that troubled country. Yet its best and brightest, black and white, were united in their dreams of escape, of taking their talents and starting fresh in some place that was not, in their eyes, foredoomed.

You see that same despair, often, across the Soviet Union. But just as often you find people making do, making deals, making the best of these worst of times.

One such determined optimist is Nikolai Kulikov, a 39-year-old dentist in Moscow with an ambitious scheme to open a dental clinic for children.

Kulikov and his partners plan to stress preventive care and will offer their services free of charge. Their profits will come on the side, through the sale of water-piks and similar devices that they hope to publicize through their clinic work.

The clinic itself will be situated just around the corner from Kulikov's home in central Moscow, on the first floor of a building that before August housed the neighborhood Communist party. Kulikov went to the Moscow city government and got permission to take it over, at nominal rent, for five years. The papers were signed on Aug. 21, the day the coup collapsed.

Kulikov says that in those tense three days of the coup, he went down to the Russian White House and joined the defense.

"You can imagine my feelings," this budding entrepreneur said. "It's true I was just beginning, but I had all my plans in my mind. When I saw this coup happen, I was shocked. I went down there to protect my future, my dream."

Vakhtang Ketchekmadze, an English teacher in Kiev, was rattling off prices, the dizzying increase in the cost of vegetables and other staples as the ruble nose dives day by day. He offered this explanation of the relationship among the ruble, the dollar and the British pound:

"A pound of nicely dried rubles," he said, "costs a dollar."

For Soviet citizens struggling through these days of tumult and confusion, the last, best refuge is humor.

Yuri Andreyev, a defense conversion official, was talking about GOSPLAN, the Soviet central planning agency, and how its ineptitude had dragged down the country's economy. To make his point, he cited a flaccid May Day military parade through Red Square.

"There were all these huge missiles and then a group of little men, carrying briefcases," Andreyev said. "Leonid Brezhnev turns to his defense minister and says, 'Who's that?'"

The minister replies: "They are our most destructive weapon — GOSPLAN."

Or consider the fate of poor Lenin in his glass tomb on Red Square. His statues have been toppled throughout the empire, his name so tarnished that Western news media accepted uncritically the spoof report that his corpse was up for sale.

Don't fret about keeping Lenin in his Red Square tomb, a Muscovite says. Just add three letters to the LENIN that runs across its front in giant Cyrillic letters.

"Make it LENINISM instead," she said. "Have it mark the mausoleum of the entire movement."