

cial message here is that none of us can bear this burden alone. Unless responsible words from one politician in one country are echoed by responsible politicians in others, Gorbomania will be in the short-term interests of all, and the Devil take the hindmost—until reality catches up with all of us together.

We Westerners together need military forces in Europe that are capable of defending themselves against, and of defeating, the Soviet Armed Forces. We need them because without them, the Soviet leaders can always imagine that they can persuade Europe to become its milk cow. Thus, they need never face the harsh choice between prosperity and the political viability of their slave labor system. Also, so long as the Red Army is unchallengeable in Europe, Eastern Europe will be condemned to acts of tragic heroism. And each time one happens, you in Western Europe will tremble and rush to pay the Soviets for going no farther.

Our forces in Western Europe are not now serious, and are becoming less serious every day in relation to what is arrayed against them. . . . I assure you that the combination of military inferiority and Gorbomania has a logic that is especially corrosive of one component of those forces: the American component. Despite much of the talk at NATO conferences, there is nothing in the law of God, or in the U.S. Constitution, or in the genes of Americans, that forces us to keep troops in Europe. Today, the argument that the Soviet threat is past, and the reality of the increasing incapacity of American troops to defend themselves, work to persuade the U.S. Congress to solve its budgetary problems at Europe's expense.

There really are two lines of logic before us. One would trust our future to the kind of burden-sharing decisions we have been making for 20 years. I suggest that this line of logic overlooks the real burden, has been undermined by Gorbomania, and will lead to all sorts of troubles, not the least of which will be withdrawal of American troops under bad circumstances.

Then there is another line of logic, according to which our safety lies in our willingness to recognize the political obscenity of Communist rule, and the role of serious military forces in protecting ourselves. To follow this line of logic is to take up our heaviest burden. But in the long run, it is by far the most honorable and the safest course open to us.

While the hour is late and the momentum well gathered, political burden sharing can and should be successful. It will require honesty in the face of very specific flights of public fantasy on both sides of the Atlantic. The left's historic view, now echoed by the right, finds purchase in public opinion because it is unchallenged. Decades of vigilance seem almost irrelevant in the face of the siren songs from Moscow. Rhetoric, not reality, feeds both apathy and confidence that what is unsayable is desirable—the demise of the alliance. But we, all of us, hold in our hands the keys to ensuring that our alliance does not fail from within as it attempts to remain vigilant in the face of Soviet military power.

Gorbachov orders Georgian massacre

by Konstantin George

The April 9 bloodbath in Tbilisi, Georgia, has tarnished the mythical image portrayed by the Western media of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov. Operating on orders from Moscow, Soviet Army paratroopers and special units of the Interior Forces, composed of Army *spetsnaz* commandos, marched into a crowd of 8,000 Georgian nationalist demonstrators in Rustaveli Square. The troops fired riot gas into the crowd, and then proceeded, using shovels with razor-sharp edges, to beat to death the first ranks of the demonstrators. Within a few minutes, 40-50 people, mostly women, were dead, and at least 150 injured and taken to hospitals, many in critical condition.

This version of what happened was compiled from sources in phone contact with Georgians who were eyewitnesses to the murders. These eyewitnesses also reported that local Georgian police, deployed to help seal off the square, were so enraged at the sight of Georgian women being murdered, that they tried to intervene on behalf of the demonstrators. With "Bloody Sunday" in Tbilisi, Moscow has lost forever the Georgian population. But Moscow is not interested in popular support. Gorbachov intends to drown "captive nation" aspirations in blood.

Following the examples of the other Transcaucasian republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan, on April 9 Tbilisi was placed under military rule, with the creation of a military Special District with Gen. Lt. Igor Rodionov, a former commander of Soviet forces in Afghanistan and currently commander of all forces in the Transcaucasus Military District, as the district's commandant. Moscow has thus moved to complete the institution of military rule over the entire Transcaucasus.

New decrees forbid unrest

The massacre directly followed new decrees signed on April 8 by Gorbachov, in his capacity of chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, mandating stiff jail terms for "nationalists" and "extremists." Under the new decrees, anyone issuing "calls for the overthrow of the Soviet state and social order" faces three years in jail, and the same

applies to anyone engaged in “conduct with the goal of creating inter-ethnic or racial hostilities.” The decrees were published in *Pravda* April 10.

The next day, *Pravda* followed this up with a declaration of war against resistance to the Russian Empire, attacking “extremists and nationalists who hide their true face behind the mask of *perestroika*,” who are trying to “push rights and freedoms into a one-way street in the direction of lawlessness.” *Pravda* then listed the national ferment which has wracked the empire since the beginning of 1988: “the events

Moscow got what it wanted through its manipulation of the crisis in Georgia: the premature coming to a head of mass national ferment—out in the open enough to be crushed by a bloody example, but not yet consolidated in depth to withstand the coming crackdown.

in Armenia and Azerbaijan, which tragically ended prematurely the lives of innocent people; the nationalist manifestations in the Baltic republics, in Moldavia, and other regions [referring to the Ukraine]; and the disorders in Tbilisi.”

The commentary made clear that the new decrees were being employed against any future eruptions: “The decrees will be the basis for bringing to account those whose conduct is directed at undermining the Soviet state and social system.” In a replay of the arrest and incarceration of the Armenian resistance leadership of the Karabakh Committee last autumn, during the height of the earthquake disaster, most leading Georgian national resistance figures “disappeared” April 9-10, taken away to KGB prisons.

The hand of the KGB

The origins of the present Georgian crisis are remarkably similar to last year’s Armenian-Azerbaijan crisis, which began with demands by Azerbaijan’s Karabakh region, with its 80% Armenian majority, for union with neighboring Armenia, but whose explosive dimensions were triggered by deliberately KGB-directed pogroms against Armenians in Azerbaijan.

This time, the KGB created the Georgian crisis by launching an artificial inter-ethnic conflict in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, located in northwest Georgia, along the Black Sea coast. A “mass movement” of Muslim Abkhazians was created to demand that Abkhazia become its own inde-

pendent “republic.”

But here the similarities with the Karabakh case end. The ethnic ratios in Abkhazia—where Abkhazians comprise a mere 17% of the population—are the reverse of those in Karabakh. Armenia and Georgia, before falling victim to Russian expansionism, had existed for thousands of years as independent nations, in fact long before Russia existed. Azerbaijan never existed as a nation, let alone Abkhazia.

The “Abkhazia” movement, launched in 1988, did not even pretend to emanate “from the people.” It began with a letter presented to the U.S.S.R. 19th Party Conference, last July, signed by 58 leading Abkhazian Communist Party cadres, demanding that Abkhazia leave Georgia and become a “republic.” Then, on March 18, KGB-manipulated disorders began in Abkhazia, with the Muslim minority demanding secession from Georgia. March 25 marked the first mass counterdemonstrations in Tbilisi, the Abkhazian capital of Sukhumi, and other cities.

The KGB then moved for the *coup de grace*—a small-scale, but effective replay of the pogrom formula used against the Armenians in 1988. On April 1, the Abkhazians again demonstrated, but this time, well-organized attacks using knives and firearms were launched against Georgians in the region. The news spread throughout Georgia, and by April 5, mass protests were under way in all cities and towns of the republic. By April 7, a general strike was in full swing, and Moscow had gotten what it wanted: the premature coming to a head of mass national ferment in Georgia—out in the open enough to be crushed by a bloody example, but not yet consolidated in depth to withstand the coming crackdown.

On April 8, Red Army paratroopers and other Army units, joined by the U.S.S.R. Interior Ministry’s special units (which come operationally under Defense Ministry control) poured into Tbilisi and other Georgian cities. Overnight, Georgia came under military rule.

Transcaucasus militarization

The Georgian crisis has provided Moscow with the pretext to launch the concluding phase of the huge Soviet military buildup begun last year in the strategic Transcaucasus region, bordering on Iran and Turkey. Phase I occurred last year, when the Armenia and Azerbaijan crises were used as pretexts for a large troop buildup near the border with Iran, and for placing both republics under military rule, a status which exists to this day. Phase II was launched in December, in the aftermath of the Armenian earthquake, and this time the main concentrations of fresh troops were positioned in the Leninakan region of Armenia, opposite the Turkish border. Phase III has begun now, in April, with the militarization of Georgia, which borders on NATO ally Turkey.

The cumulative effect of these moves will soon give Moscow the military strength it requires should Russia decide to exercise military options against Turkey, the Iran-Gulf theater, or the Mideast region.