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A Research Paper

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A Research Paper

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The Growing Independent Labor Movement in the USSR: Friend or Foe to *Perestroyka*?

Scope Note

This Research Paper evaluates the prospects for the newly forming independent trade unions and the existing, party-sponsored official unions to organize the increasingly restive Soviet labor force. It is our first comprehensive look at the size, composition, and power of independent labor organizations that gained prominence following the nationwide walkout by coal miners in the summer of 1989. In spite of *glasnost*, Soviet media regularly underestimate the strength of these new labor organizations, and as a result we have based our evaluations of them primarily on information available [illegible] unofficial Soviet publications, and Western media.

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The Growing Independent Labor Movement in the USSR: Friend or Foe to *Perestroyka*?

Summary

Information available as of 1 September 1990 was used in this report.

Since the nationwide coal miners' strike during the summer of 1989, the independent labor movement has begun to supersede the official trade union structure and has become a player in determining the country's political and economic course. Gorbachev entered into an uneasy alliance with the independent labor movement last year to promote reform goals that they share—the overturning of the entrenched midlevel bureaucracy and a shift away from the centrally directed economic system. In recent months, however, the workers' movement has been pushing Gorbachev to advance the timetable and scope of these reforms much further than he has shown a willingness to go. Disappointed with the slow pace of change, independent labor has recently adopted a confrontational antiregime—and particularly an anti-Communist Party—stance.

Independent labor organizations are now active in at least 170 cities and collectively represent several million workers. Labor activists have advanced the political democratization process by winning seats to city, regional, and republic legislatures, particularly in the industrial cities of the Russian, Ukrainian, and Baltic republics, in the spring elections. Organized workers have also recruited people's deputies to defend workers' interests in the USSR legislature. At present, the independent labor movement is not unified but consists of a growing number of grassroots organizations. Some headway is being made toward coalitions, however. At a congress held this past spring, over 50 workers' organizations allied into a loose "Confederation of Labor." The group organized the largest, single-day workers' protest in recent Soviet history on 11 July

Gorbachev in many ways encouraged the rise of the independent labor movement. Since 1987, he has led a campaign to increase labor productivity by making workers the "master of their workplaces," leading some workers to interpret his slogan as an open season to strike. Gorbachev has also backed independent labor groups in their attacks on the party-backed "official" unions, whose anti-*perestroyka* leaders have tried to water down and delay his economic initiatives. With his blessing, workers led public protests this spring in many industrial cities that spurred the resignation of old style party bosses.

But as workers have become more politicized out of frustration with Moscow's unfulfilled promises of improvements in working and living conditions, the independent labor movement's support for Gorbachev, conditional from the start, has waned. Initial gratitude to him for political

reforms that made the movement possible has been supplanted by the view that he is now more interested in restraining their aspirations and thus has become part of the problem.

Labor activism is likely to continue to take the form of strikes and strike threats and to exacerbate the already severe economic situation. [redacted] Soviet workers have come to consider strikes a legitimate protest tactic, and walkouts are threatened throughout the energy, transportation, metallurgy, and chemical sectors. The potential for sympathy strikes involving several industries is increasing. Yet the regime, fearing an escalation of tensions that will lead to a defiant call for more strikes, has been unwilling to enforce a law passed in the fall of 1989 that allows strikes only after collective bargaining and arbitration and outlaws them altogether in strategic sectors of the economy.

Independent labor strongly supports the regime's program to introduce alternatives to state ownership of enterprises, but workers want the transfer of ownership to take place much faster than the regime has thus far allowed. Recognizing that Moscow is increasingly unable to deliver on the promises it makes to pacify complaining workers, strike committees are now petitioning to convert their enterprises into leased or joint-stock companies to get out from under the thumb of the government's ministries and to sell their output to buyers of their choice, preferably abroad to earn hard currency

While independent labor's embrace of enterprise autonomy should advance economic reform in the long run, other parts of its platform will harm economic performance in the short run. Organized workers oppose caps on wages that would help control the rapid growth in money incomes that is destabilizing consumer markets. Similarly, while endorsing wholesale price reform as a way to increase profitability when selling their output, workers balk at increased prices for their inputs and retail goods. Even the labor movement's support for denationalization of industry could waver when some enterprises discover it difficult—or impossible—to make their operations profitable. If unemployment and economic hardship grow, organized labor will likely demand that the state finance a generous social safety net despite the already large budget deficit

The slow introduction of economic reforms and growing consumer distress ensures that more independent unions will form in the next few years. Establishment of a strong national union or a labor party is unlikely, however, in the very near term. Most grassroots organizations, still in their formative stage, will concentrate on local economic issues rather than subordinating their provincial interests to a national agenda. Conflicting

interests among regions and industries will probably preclude the formation of a single political organization with the recognized leadership or power of Poland's Solidarity for at least several years. In the meantime, strong regional and industrial unions are likely to emerge.

The influence of the official unions will continue to decline, paralleling the fate of the Communist party. The All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU), which oversees the official unions, has acknowledged that it is facing a crisis and will reorganize at its upcoming October congress into a looser confederation of unions. This facelift will not reverse the workers' strong distrust of the official unions, however. Moreover, some of the regional and industry trade unions that constitute the AUCCTU have already started secession proceedings, and these centrifugal forces are likely to pull the official union system apart. Independent labor organizations will continue to initiate legal and legislative actions to try to deprive the official unions of their social services role—which provides them continued leverage over workers—and to seize their considerable physical and financial assets. As these processes unfold, the independent unions are likely to eclipse the official unions

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Content

The Growing Independent Labor Movement in the USSR: Friend or Foe to *Perestroyka*?

The Rise of Labor Militancy

President Gorbachev's program of economic restructuring has caused a surge in Soviet labor militancy and assertiveness. *Perestroyka*'s slogan of "as you work, so shall you live" has challenged the longstanding "social contract" that provided a meager but state-subsidized standard of living and tolerated low worker productivity in return for political quiescence. Moreover, *glasnost* exposed to Soviet workers their comparatively poor working conditions and quality of life and gave them an outlet to complain that their interests have not been well defended by the existing trade unions and other self-professed champions of the working class

To some extent, the Soviet leadership directly encouraged the rise of the new labor militancy. To increase the workers' stake in reform and raise labor productivity, Gorbachev introduced a process of workplace democratization. The Law on State Enterprises that went into effect in January 1988 gave employees at an enterprise the right to elect managers and a labor council empowered to weigh in on management decisions. The Soviet press widely reported, however, that local party bosses and enterprise managers manipulated enterprise elections and the resultant labor councils. This bureaucratic obstructionism so enraged workers that it fueled the very militancy it was designed to prevent. Having been told by Gorbachev that they were entitled to be the "masters of their workplace," workers rejected the limits of the law and started taking matters into their own hands. Strikes started picking up in 1988 and increased dramatically in 1989 (see table), led not by the official trade unions, but by a new breed of labor activists

Reported Strikes and Strike Threats for Economic Reasons in the USSR, 1987-90

	Strikes	Strike Threats	Total
1987	16	1	17
1988	27	6	33
1989	142 [b]	30	172
1990 (January-August)	35	38	73

[a] Politically motivated strikes, usually conducted by nationalist activists, are not included in this number. A coordinated strike by several enterprises in a single city is counted as one incident.
[b] Fifty of these strikes related to the summer 1989 walkout by coal miners nationwide.

The Unofficial Trade Unions: Origins and Strength

The more objective media coverage, owing to *glasnost*, of the new labor activism focused public attention on the failure of the official unions to defend the interests of their memberships. In June 1988, *Pravda* said it could not cite one example of the official unions—the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (AUCCTU) and the industry unions that operate under its umbrella—effectively defending workers during a labor dispute. On May Day of 1989, *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya* accused the official unions of being a "servant of the state more concerned with maintaining mass calm . . . than defending workers' interests."

Soviet public opinion polls also showed low confidence in the official unions. Ninety-seven percent of respondents to a survey taken in the summer of 1989 questioned the honesty and morals of trade union functionaries. In a 23-city poll taken a few months later, only 10 percent of the respondents believed that the trade unions were actively seeking to improve working conditions

By late 1989 there already were signs that the AUCCTU might be eclipsed by its new rival. A Soviet political science journal observed that the independent labor movement enjoyed greater legitimacy than the official unions, which, according to *Pravda*, were being "left on the sidelines."

Numbers and Composition

By the spring of 1990, the independent labor movement had come to encompass millions of workers nationwide, with organizations active in 170 cities, according to the Soviet press. The political strength of the independent labor movement, however, is less than its numbers might suggest because of its lack of unity. Rather than being a unified political force, at present the movement consists of grassroots organizations that take many forms including industry unions and strike committees, regional organizations, and a host of other variants. (See appendix A for more details on individual organizations.

Industry Unions and Strike Committees. The Soviet media reported in early 1990 that strike committees in various industries then represented at least 1.5 to 2 million workers. The coal miners' strike committees, formed during the nationwide coal strike in the summer of 1989, are the only well-established interregional industry-specific labor group. Small interregional associations exist, however, among military servicemen, nuclear power workers, cooperative workers, journalists, preschool teachers, and white-collar civil aviation employees. The large number of strike committees in the metallurgical and chemical industries suggests that their interregional consolidation may be in the offing, and there are almost certainly additional associations of which we are not aware. Interregional organizations may also be established soon for railwaymen, longshoremen, and other transport workers—many of whom have recently cooperated in staging strikes and strike threats

Republic Organizations. Labor organizations allied with but not subordinate to republic popular fronts are operating in all of the western republics. The Lithuanian and Latvian Workers' Unions, while strong supporters of independence for their republics, claim generally good relations with local Russian workers because they promote programs that emphasize worker, rather than ethnic, interests. The drive in the Baltic republics this year for independence, however, has probably strained their relations with Russian workers. The unions in Estonia, Belorussia, Moldavia, Armenia, and the Ukraine are more strictly nationalist and act as counterweights to political alliances being formed in their republics by largely Russian labor collectives, apparently with support from the old-guard party and government apparatus.

City-Based Workers' Clubs. City-based workers' clubs are prominent in the Russian Republic (RSFSR) because weak communication links across its wide expanse have thus far made interregional coalitions less practical. Leningrad has the largest number of such clubs, with at least four prominent organizations seeking contact with workers in other regions and abroad. Other cities with well-established workers' clubs are Moscow and nearby Yaroslavl', Gorkiy', and Lipetsk; Sverdlovsk, Magnitogorsk, Chelyabinsk, and Novosibirsk in the Urals-Siberian area; Khabarovsk, Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk, and Vladivostok in the Far East; and Gomel' in Belorussia. All these cities are home to heavy industrial plants employing many thousands of workers

Coalitions. Coalitions that have platforms designed to appeal to workers across a wide variety of industries and regions arguably still have the greatest potential for leading a nationwide workers' movement. To date, the growth of coalitions has been slow as the merging of groups has been hampered by dissension and personal rivalries among various leaders—a problem that has generally plagued Soviet "informal groups." Because the ties that bind their member groups are loose, the few coalitions of worker organizations that have formed usually have exerted less clout during specific worker protests than more specialized or localized organizations

Nonetheless, there have been success stories. For example, at least three meetings have been held since 1989 to bring together workers' clubs from around the country. The latest, held in late April 1990, gathered delegates from over 50 clubs representing mining, metalworking, auto, and transportation workers for

what was billed as the "First Congress of Independent Workers' Movements and Organizations." It formed a national "Confederation of Labor" that sponsored the most broad-based single-day labor protest in recent Soviet history on 11 July. In addition, the Association of Socialist Trade Unions, or Sotsprof, was founded in June 1989 with activists from 10 cities claiming to represent 5,000 workers. It has now established contact with many workers' clubs around the USSR and with a few Western trade unions (see inset).

The Coal Miners' Leading Role

The coal miners' committees stand out among all grassroots labor organizations and are the most powerful force in the Soviet independent labor movement. To coordinate the massive walkouts in the summer of 1989 (see inset), individual mines elected strike committees that chose representatives to city committees, which, in turn, selected delegates to regional committees. The committees reportedly collect dues. Regional committees exist today in all four major mining basins: Pechora in arctic Russia, Donetsk in the Ukraine (Donbass), Kuznetsk in western Siberia (Kuzbass), and Karaganda in Kazakhstan (see map on page 6). In addition, there is a national-level, interregional miners' strike committee that has four full-time lobbyists in Moscow. Gorbachev acknowledged the miners as the leaders of the independent workers' movement when he granted them five seats at the February 1990 Central Committee plenum.

The power of the strike committees—now sometimes called workers' committees—is concentrated at the regional and city levels rather than in the national organization. It is in the regions and cities that the committees have been said by the Soviet press to be in a power-sharing "dyarchy" with party and soviet authorities. Government commissions dispatched by Premier Ryzhkov to the four major regions to monitor implementation of the 1989 strike settlement, for example, negotiate with the regional workers' committees, while official trade union officials sit on the government's side of the table.

Independent Unionists Reach Out to the West

Soviet independent unionists have begun to look to labor groups in the West for material and financial support and technical assistance and to legitimize their position at home. While contacts between West European labor organizations and the Soviet labor movement are beginning to develop, Soviet workers may be somewhat mistrustful of the West European unions because of their established relations with the AUCCTU. Individual Soviet labor leaders have had contacts with trade unions in the United Kingdom, France, Japan, West Germany, and Norway, as well as with Polish Solidarity and some international labor federations, but to our knowledge, lasting ties have not yet been established.

The AFL-CIO is well out in front of its European counterparts in developing contacts with the emerging Soviet independent labor movement.

Moscow's unprecedented decision to allow AFL-CIO representatives to attend the miners' conference held in Donetsk in July 1990—a forum that openly posed purely political demands—suggests that Moscow will tolerate some contacts between independent labor leaders and the West. The Soviet leadership may believe that training from US labor organizations will be a stabilizing influence by schooling Soviet independent unions in collective bargaining and other peaceful means of resolving labor disputes.

Each regional committee has adopted a specialized local agenda:

- Kuzbass, home of the country's most profitable mines, has the best organized and most powerful workers' committee. It strongly advocates radical economic reform—especially regional economic autonomy and nonstate ownership of property— and

The Nationwide Coal Strike Settlement of the Summer of 1989: How Much Has Been Implemented?

The coal strike that began 11 July 1989 in the Kuzbass city of Mezhdurechensk spread within weeks to all the major coal-producing basins of the USSR. Over 650,000 miners and their supporters from 41 cities participated. The miners greatly strengthened their hand during negotiations by pooling forces and demanding a nationwide agreement. While there were some specific regional variations in the settlement reached in August 1989, the basic provisions were to:

- *Increase miners' wages by restoring differentials for the evening and swing shifts and by paying miners for time spent getting to the coal face.*
- *Grant mining enterprises greater economic independence, including the right to move out of ministerial control and become leased, joint-stock, or cooperative enterprises.*
- *Allow mining enterprises to sell above-plan output to any purchaser inside or outside the USSR at whatever price they can negotiate.*
- *Work out plans to improve the living standards in mining regions.*
- *Increase the wholesale price of coal by 1991.*
- *Offer miners pensions at an earlier age, increase their vacation time, and compensate them for occupational illnesses.*

Since the agreement, miners' wages have been increased, a few mines have moved out of ministerial control, some are in the process of marketing their above-plan coal themselves, and the USSR laws on pensions and leave have been revised. Some modest, special deliveries of food and consumer goods have been made to mining areas. Despite Premier Ryzhkov's claim that Moscow is spending 2 billion rubles this year on fulfilling the settlement, miners have been profoundly disappointed with the meager gains so far in their living and working conditions, and they periodically threaten to strike again

has worked hardest to reach out to other workers. In November 1989 it sponsored the formation of the Kuzbass Union of Toilers, an independent sociopolitical organization open to all workers and farmers that publishes a newspaper with a circulation of 135,000.

- The Pechora miners of arctic Russia, many of whom are descended from political prisoners sent by Stalin to labor camps, have a highly political, anti-Communist platform and have had the most intense conflicts with local officials. Their walkout in the fall of 1989 was the first strike to be declared illegal under the Law on Collective Labor Disputes. Fines against the strikers were ultimately forgiven, however, in exchange for the miners' returning to work.
- The workers' committee in the Karaganda basin of Kazakhstan has largely turned its attention to environmentalism, lobbying for an end to nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Weapons Proving Ground.
- Donbass, one of the oldest and most important industrial areas of the USSR, has won concessions from management and the government for many years in reaction to labor complaints. For this reason, its committees initially were the most moderate politically, generally judging the source of their problems to be not Soviet socialism per se, but poor performance by the ministries, the party, and the official trade unions. Frustration over unfulfilled promises has led them to take on a vocal antiparty and antiregime stance in 1990

Electoral Clout

The independent labor movement expanded its influence over policymaking by winning seats to city, oblast, and republic soviets in the major industrial areas during elections in the spring of 1990 (see inset):

- In Donetsk, miners' candidates won one-third of the 150 seats on the city soviet.

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Figure 1
Personal Guarantee of the Strike Settlement by Gorbachev and Ryzhkov

СОВЕТ МИНИСТРОВ СССР
Москва, Кремль

Согласовано.
М. Горбачев

В соответствии с положениями настоящего Протокола Совет Министров СССР по вопросам, входящим в его компетенцию, в 10-дневный срок примет постановление, а по вопросам, входящим в компетенцию Верховного Совета СССР, внесет соответствующие предложения.

Н. Рыжков

"24." июля 1989 г.

USSR Council of Ministers
Moscow, The Kremlin

Agreed.

[signed] M. Gorbachev

In accordance with the provisions of this Protocol, within 10 days the USSR Council of Ministers will enact the points of the decree under its purview, and the USSR Supreme Soviet will accept the appropriate recommendations on issues within its responsibilities.

24 July 1989

[signed] N. Ryzhkov

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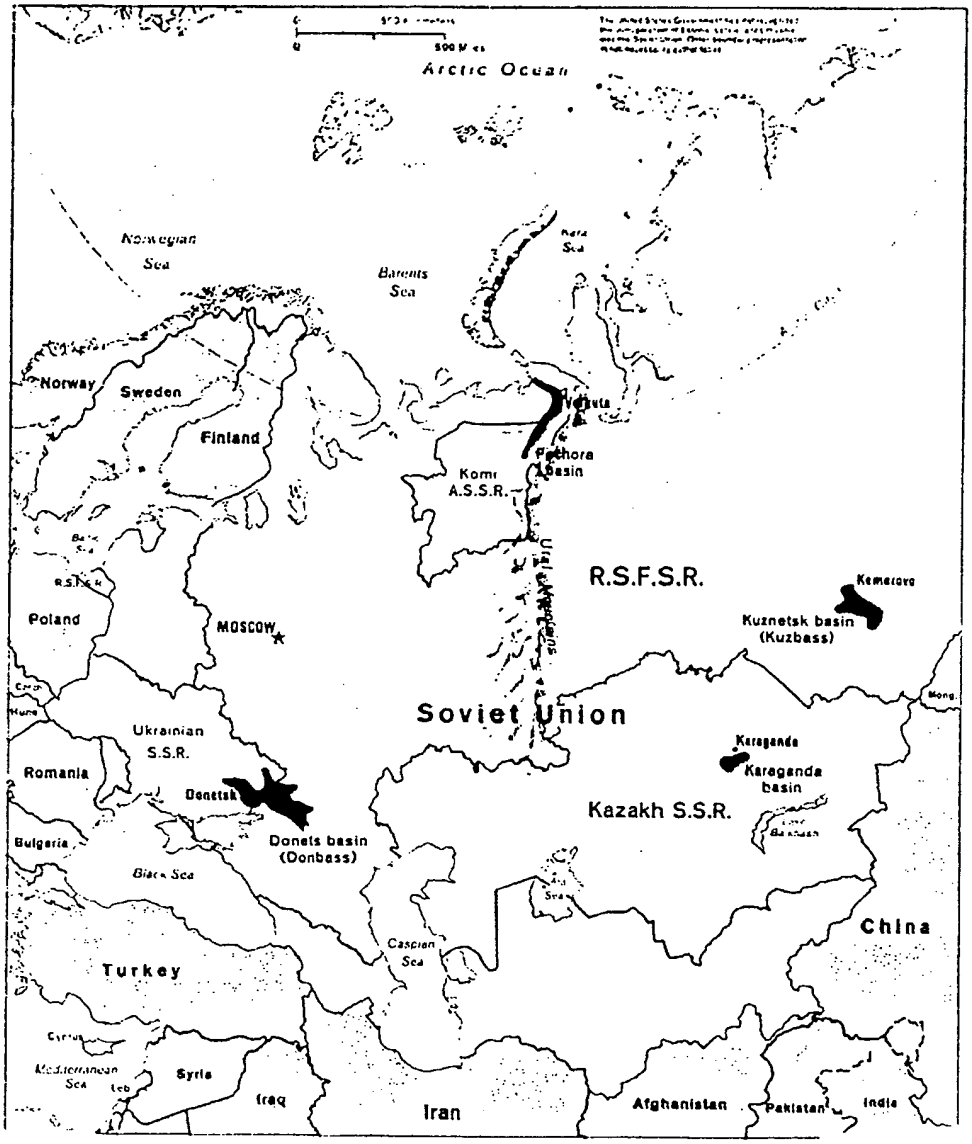
Figure 2
Major Centers of Soviet Coal Miners' Labor Activism



What the Competing Unions Stand for: Comparing the Economic Agendas of the Independent and Official Unions

The various independent unions and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions published their platforms in advance of elections in the spring of 1990 to local, regional, and republic legislative councils (soviets).

The platform of the Union of Kuzbass Workers, *the most successful independent union in the USSR, supports economic reforms that would give enterprises and localities the right and responsibility to make their own decisions and solve local problems, thereby shifting power away from the central planners and ministries. It closely resembles the proposals advanced by the USSR's most reformist economists, calling for:*

- *A broad shift from state to nonstate ownership.*
- *Development of market forces to promote rational economic decision making.*
- *Regulation of the market through taxes and interest rates.*
- *Local taxation to pay for infrastructure development.*
- *Distribution of land to farmers.*
- *Encouragement of foreign investment.*
- *Creation of management schools.*
- *Environmental protection.*

The platform of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, *whose candidates performed poorly in the elections, endorses much broader goals while supporting few specific policies. It calls on the national government to give priority to social spending, specifically demanding:*

- *Guaranteed full employment.*
- *Greater discipline and order in society, including stronger anticrime efforts.*
- *More rural development, housing construction, and pension and welfare payments.*
- *Strict limits on cooperatives (small private businesses).*
- *Less manual labor and shorter workweeks.*

- In Vorkuta, miners won a large bloc of seats to the city and regional soviets. A miner beat out Coal Minister Shchadov for the region's seat in the Russian Republic's legislature.
- Kuzbass miners won three-quarters of the soviet seats in the city of Novokuznetsk and a quarter of those on the Kemerovo Oblast soviet. Labor leaders head the soviets in several Kuzbass cities.
- The chairmen of the Lithuanian and the Estonian Workers' Unions, already USSR People's Deputies, also won seats to their republic's Supreme Soviets.[1]

In some regions, independent labor activists joined forces with new political parties and ran under their sponsorship. Labor activists were part of the Democratic Elections–90 coalition in Leningrad, which won 250 of 400 seats on the city soviet. The People's Fronts in the Baltic republics, running some candidates from local independent unions, captured the majority of seats in their republic Supreme Soviets. The platforms of these popular fronts and political parties call for the development of independent trade unions. Other parties that did well, apparently in part because of their support for legalizing independent unions, include the Social-Democratic Party, Moscow People's Front, and Russian Popular Front

[1] Kazimieraz Uoka, then chairman of the Lithuanian Workers' Union, resigned his USSR Supreme Soviet seat when all Lithuanian deputies left the USSR legislature in early 1990. He has since also resigned as union chairman to accept a position in the Lithuanian Government

The independent labor movement has several prominent spokesmen in the USSR's legislative bodies—the Supreme Soviet and larger Congress of People's Deputies:

- Teymuraz Avaliani, a people's deputy from Kemerovo, was the first chairman of the regional workers' committee there and the coal miners' chief negotiator during talks to settle the nationwide strike during the summer of 1989.
- During the strike in the summer of 1989, several deputies—particularly Kazimieraz Uoka, who until recently headed the Lithuanian Workers' Union—championed the miners' cause at sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies that were televised live and generated considerable public sympathy for the strikers.
- Donbass deputy Aleksey Boyko, who is well connected to the miners, is a member of the Supreme Soviet Council of the Union Commission on Labor, Prices, and Social Policy, which has been one of the most activist legislative committees

The Traditionalist Alternative: The Official Trade Unions

Although the numbers, zeal, and grassroots popularity of the independent labor organizations make them formidable adversaries, the official trade unions retain impressive weapons for defending their power and privileges. These weapons include size, money, and connections to the Communist party. The official trade union system consists of about 30 industry unions that are administered by the AUCCTU. In practice, membership is mandatory and, at 140 million, includes virtually the entire Soviet labor force.

The member unions of the AUCCTU are supervised by a vast apparatus (see figure 3). At the top of the hierarchy is the AUCCTU presidium and its several hundred staff employees in Moscow. At the bottom of the hierarchy are 700,000 primary organizations at individual enterprises, each headed by a trade union committee secretary. The primary organizations have a dual subordination—to industry and to regional trade union committees:

- Each of the industry unions is headed by a central committee located at AUCCTU headquarters in Moscow (see appendix B for a list of the industry unions).
- Industry unions also have regional representatives; the coal miners' union, for example, has a chief for the Ukraine.
- Interunion councils at the republic, oblast, and, sometimes, city and *rayon* levels oversee union issues in their regions

Weaknesses and Strengths

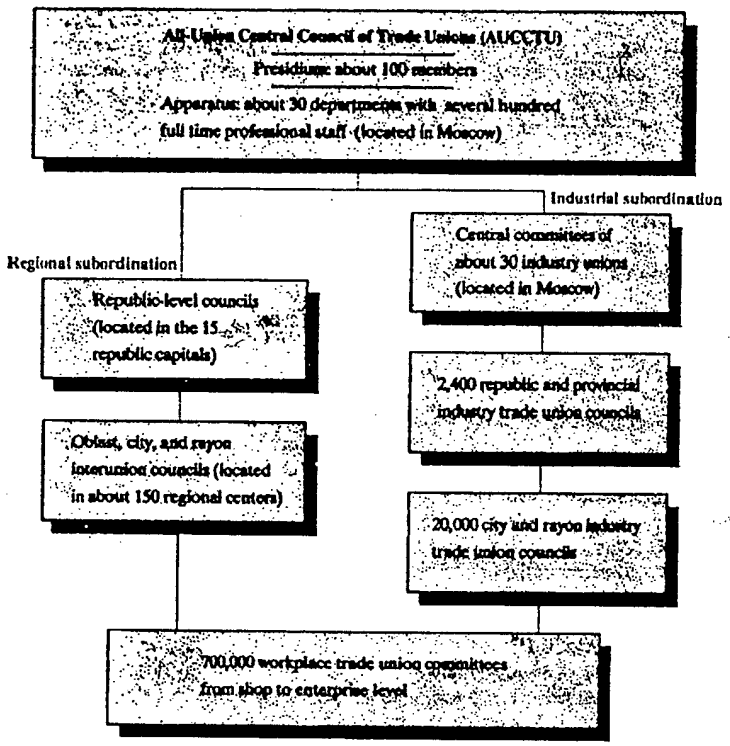
The trade union apparatus traditionally has been staffed by career apparatchiks who were demoted to union work after performing poorly in party positions or as enterprise managers. Even former AUCCTU chairman Stepan Shalayev publicly accused the party in 1988 of long using the unions as a dumping ground for incompetent officials. Because many union officials have never been workers themselves, they have little feel for the issues that concern union members. They are instead allies of enterprise managers, who determine their salary

The official trade unions' control over workers comes primarily through the unions' function as provider of social services, such as vacation homes and child care centers and as distributor of housing and scarce consumer durables. To finance their activities, the unions automatically deduct 1 percent of workers' salaries as dues. In 1989 the AUCCTU's budget was 4.38 billion rubles, nearly twice that of the Communist party

Efforts at Self-Reform

[redacted] as early as the spring of 1989, even before the nationwide coal strikes, high-ranking union functionaries were admitting [redacted] that their influence was waning and that the official unions would have to branch out from their social services orientation if they were

Figure 3
Organization of the Soviet Official Trade Union System



to survive and protect their bureaucratic interests. Although acknowledging the problem, the official trade unions made only a feeble effort to cope with it. Their modest program for rejuvenation—codified in the draft law on trade union rights published for national discussion in April 1989—in many ways mimicks the strategy adopted by the Communist party. Specifically, the draft law calls for:

- A new cadre policy including cuts in the size of the unions' administrative apparatus; multicandidate elections of workplace, local, and regional trade

union leaders; and more authority for workplace trade union committees.

- An aggressive, activist role in national-level socio-economic policymaking, if necessary, challenging reforms being pushed by the party and government that undermine the so-called social contract.

The new policy affecting cadre cutbacks and the official trade unions' apparatus has been unimpressive, however, and has not slowed the movement to create alternative, independent trade unions. While many trade union secretaries at enterprises have been replaced by workers who have the respect of their colleagues—strike leaders, for example, have been elected as trade union secretaries at most coal mines—the new secretaries' attempts to change the union have been frustrated by obstructionism from higher levels, where old style apparatchiks are still firmly in control. At its September and December 1989 plenums, the AUCCTU passed up chances to retire its chairman Stepan Shalayev, a Brezhnev-era holdover who had low credibility with workers because he sided with the government during negotiations to settle the 1989 miners' strike. Shalayev was finally retired in April 1990 and replaced by Gennadiy Yanayev, at most a moderate reformer. Yanayev resigned the chairmanship in July 1990, when he was elected to the CPSU Politburo, and the AUCCTU decided to leave his post vacant until its next Congress in October 1990

Since the fall of 1989, the AUCCTU has tried to boost its popularity by opposing economic reform policies sponsored by the government that would raise prices, cause unemployment, or violate other principles of the traditional social contract:

- In October 1989 the Moscow city trade unions organized a rally that called for tight restrictions on legal private business.

- Legislators chosen by the AUCCTU, which was granted a 100-seat bloc in the Congress of People's Deputies, called in the fall of 1989 for a price freeze and an anti-inflation law and opposed the government's program to limit wage growth.

- In February the AUCCTU persuaded the government to postpone wholesale price increases on energy and transport until 1 April and to compensate workers for wages lost when higher prices reduce enterprise earnings.

- Two weeks later the official unions successfully petitioned the government to scale back plans to auction, presumably at very high prices, quality consumer goods in high demand and short supply.

To judge from numerous reports in the Soviet press, however, these seeming victories for the official unions have not altered workers' distrust of the AUCCTU. Furthermore, workers are looking not to the official unions to defend their interests in the USSR legislature, but to the new political parties that have impressed them as being more committed to their cause.

Independent Labor's Struggle To Supplant the Establishment

Disappointed with union leadership that is reforming too slowly, some independent activists are trying to seize control of their industry or regional unions, particularly the physical and financial assets. The miners' strike leaders, for example, have tried to gain control of membership dues of 80 million rubles per year and extensive property holdings owned by the official miners' union.

These efforts to supplant the establishment have generally faltered. At the official coal miners' union plenum in September 1989, for example, independent activists were granted nearly half the seats, but their proposal to secede from the AUCCTU was narrowly defeated. The independents tried to raise the secession issue again at the union's extraordinary congress in March 1990. The old-guard leadership, however, successfully stacked the delegation with managers, trade union functionaries, and white-collar workers, leaving only one-quarter of the seats for miners.

Some regional trade union committees have made headway in breaking from parent organs in Moscow:

- Mines in Kuzbass are holding union dues locally instead of sending them to Moscow.
- The new leadership of the Estonian trade unions has also withheld monies from the AUCCTU this year and is reportedly planning a formal break.
- The Lithuanian, Latvian, and Georgian trade unions have initiated steps aimed at secession from the AUCCTU.

The Regime's Response

The sharpening struggle between the new worker representatives and the old union officials for influence over Soviet labor has led the national political leadership to sharpen its own criticism of the official unions and to seek to distance itself from them. In the early days of *perestroyka*, Gorbachev attempted to spur the official unions to reform from within. At a party meeting in his home district of Krasnodar in September 1986, Gorbachev called on the official unions to stop "dancing on the manager's arm." Similarly, in February 1987 at the 18th Trade Union Conference, he [ ] urged them to be protagonists for reform by becoming a counterpower to the ministerial bureaucracy. By late 1988, however, Gorbachev apparently became convinced that the official unions were unwilling to take up the reformist flag and had allied themselves instead with the entrenched party and managerial bureaucracy that he was trying to oust. At the July 1989 party Central Committee conference, he singled out the trade unions' inadequate performance as a reason for the party's declining influence.

As the independent labor movement has gained influence, Gorbachev has increasingly snubbed the official unions. During the AUCCTU's key September 1989 plenum—when union officials needed a show of support from the regime to breathe new life into their organization—the noninvolvement of Gorbachev or any of his Politburo allies sounded loudly as a vote of no confidence [ ] that Gorbachev favors breaking up the AUCCTU and fostering a variety of labor groups. He has refrained from even mentioning the official unions in his statements this year, and reform economists have publicly criticized the AUCCTU's obstruction of Gorbachev's recent economic initiatives.

Gorbachev Gives Independents the Green Light

Beginning in mid-1989, Gorbachev publicly encouraged the independent labor movement to assert itself and join his battle against the entrenched midlevel bureaucracy that was sabotaging important political and economic reforms:

- By late summer 1989 independent workers' groups, such as Sotsprof, which had been denied permission to register as legal organizations or to gain office space, suddenly found these decisions reversed.
- During the coal miners' strike, Gorbachev praised the miners for "taking matters into their own hands," adding that their initiative had encouraged him very much.
- When then Lithuanian Workers' Union president Uoka told the Supreme Soviet in July 1989 that strikes would subside only if workers were allowed to organize independently, Gorbachev replied that he basically agreed

As the winter of 1989-90 approached and strike threats continued, however, the leadership grew increasingly concerned that labor unrest could cause shortages that would paralyze the economy and changed its tactics considerably. Press coverage thereafter painted the potential strikers as economic saboteurs willing to risk public well-being. At one point, Premier Ryzhkov called repeated short work stoppages by miners in Vorkuta during the late fall "immoral," and the leadership discussed the use of force to stop them

In an effort to avoid a direct confrontation between the state and the strikers, Gorbachev [ ] threatened to resign if force were used and proposed instead that the Supreme Soviet adopt an emergency measure banning strikes for 15 months. In response, within a week the legislature passed the Law on

The Law on Collective Labor Disputes

The 1989 Law on Collective Labor Disputes, commonly referred to as the strike law, was the first Soviet legislation to legalize strikes under some circumstances. Previously, strikes were not mentioned in Soviet law because, according to the prevailing ideology, such occurrences were impossible in a country where workers purportedly owned the means of production. Enacted in October 1989, the law provides that:

- *Strikes be allowed only after a cooling off period of three days of negotiation with management, five days of collective bargainning, seven days of arbitration, and five days of advance notice of the walkout—and, then, only if two-thirds of all employees at the enterprise vote to support the strike.*
- *Strikes are prohibited under any circumstances in railroads or other public transport, civil aviation, public utilities, the defense sector (broadly defined), or in continuously operating enterprises—for example, those that produce coal, steel, or chemicals.*
- *Strike committees lose legal standing once a negotiated settlement of a specific labor conflict is reached, but they can be reinstated if the agreement goes unfulfilled.*
- *The USSR or republic Supreme Soviet—or, if they are not in session, their presidiums—can suspend a strike for up to two months*

The law does not directly state whether politically motivated strikes are legal, although strikes that violate the rights of nationalities or call for secession are specifically prohibited

To our knowledge, only two strikes have been declared illegal by Soviet courts under the terms of this legislation: a strike by miners in arctic Russia and a strike by journalists opposed to the firing of their newspaper's editor, both in the fall of 1989. Fines levied against the miners were forgiven in exchange for their return to work. The newspaper employees who struck were fired, according to the Soviet press

Collective Labor Disputes, which recognized strikes as legitimate forms of protest but mandated weeks of negotiation before a strike can be called and completely banned walkouts in sectors such as mining that are criticial to the economy (see inset).

At the same time, the regime continued its war of nerves with the miners. In several meetings, Deputy Premier Voronin suggested to strike leaders that arrests or steep fines against illegal strikers were being given serious consideration. Gorbachev also, in an unusual move, wrote a letter to *Izvestiya* praising workers at a metallurgical combine who negotiated an end to a labor disagreement without resorting to striking. The combined influence of threatened arrest and behind-the-scenes political pressure had the desired effect. Miners generally stayed on the job over the winter

In February, Gorbachev attempted once again to mobilize independent labor in support of his battle with the midlevel bureaucracy. In a meeting with leaders of the miners' strike committees, he urged them to "go back home and kick out of office your local party officials if you do not like them." He also called on the workers' movement "to enrich the restructuring of the party, of the soviets, and of the economic apparatus" and emphasized that he saw the independents, not the AUCCTU, as the future of Soviet labor. Indeed, Gorbachev went so far as to say that he would not stand in the way if the miners pulled their union out of the AUCCTU and took control of its assets. In the wake of these statements, workers' protests against party bosses occurred in Donetsk, Kemerovo, Vorkuta, Sverdlovsk, and Tyumen'—in some cases resulting in the resignation of the party first secretary

The Bureaucracy Reacts

In contrast with Gorbachev's encouragement of independent labor militancy, local party leaders, feeling threatened by the independents, have responded by harassing labor activists:

- Labor leaders in Donetsk and Vorkuta have reported, since the fall of 1989, that they are being watched by the local KGB.
- In Kuzbass, workers' committee leaders have accused the party-controlled press of character defamation for falsely reporting that they have criminal records.
- Local party bosses have at times ordered that independent labor organizations be denied access to the media and to printing equipment

Government ministers have usually responded in a more pragmatic fashion. Since the summer of 1989, the ministers of the coal, metallurgy, railroad, petroleum and gas, power and electrification, and fishing industries have been engaged—some nearly full-time—in shuttle diplomacy to settle labor disputes around the country. Their concessions have helped preempt or end strikes but at times at the cost of diverting scarce material resources from their rightful contract recipients. The chairman of the State Committee for Material and Technical Supply (Gossnab), for example, apparently ordered in late 1989 that construction materials be diverted from other recipients to coal-mining areas for five days and dispatched Gossnab officials to monitor and ensure deliveries.

Prospects

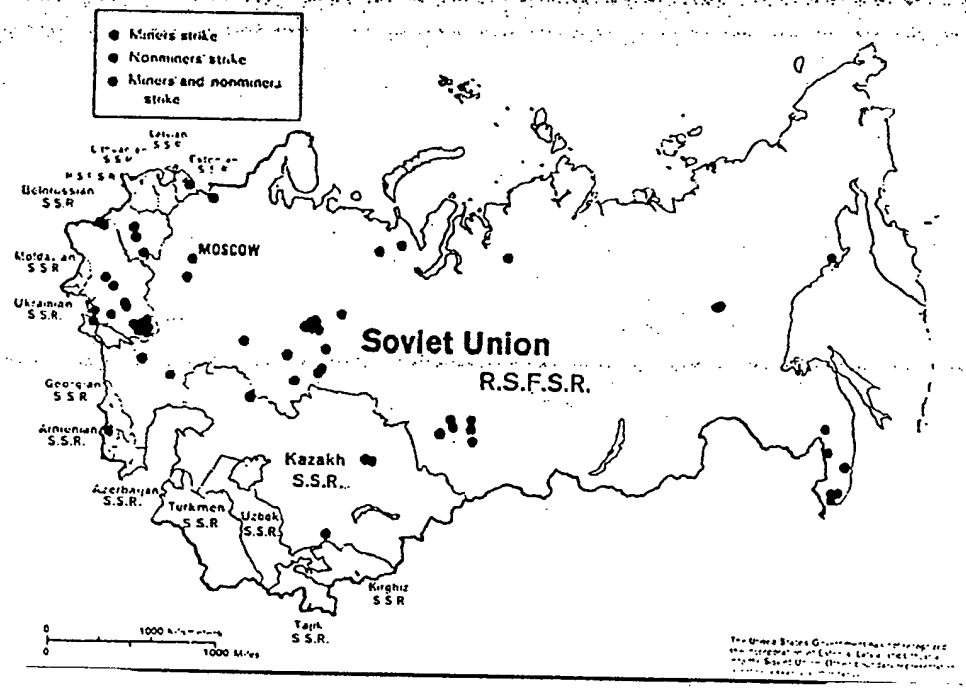
The size and political clout of the independent labor movement is certain to grow in the next few years. As evidenced by recent strikes and strike threats, workers are becoming better organized both in heavy industry and in other sectors that had previously not been associated with worker activism:

- Energy industry workers in the Tyumen' region of Russia, the largest producer of Soviet oil and gas, have been threatening to strike since April. Hundreds of thousands of workers could engage in new activism there, particularly insofar as this area is dependent on nonlocally produced food and consumer goods.
- Farmers throughout Yaroslavl', Kostroma, and Perm' oblasts have organized strike committees. Teachers and cultural workers are among the professional groups that have established interregional ties and called strikes this year.
- The 11 July one-day walkout organized by the miner-led Confederation of Labor was supported by several nonmining industrial cities (see figure 4). While workers' groups in the heavy industrial cities of Russia may still be small in size—the Magnitogorsk club has 150 active members, for example—the number of cities with labor organizations has increased significantly this year.

Although the 11 July strike was the most impressive yet in the Gorbachev period in terms of cooperation among various regions and industries, it is unlikely that a strong national union or labor party will form in the very near term. Most workers' groups are still in their formative stage, concentrating on local economic issues, and unwilling to subordinate their provincial goals to those of a larger, national organization. Moreover, as of yet, no labor organizer has shown the will or charisma to lead a national movement. Even the best organized groups in the independent labor movement—the coal miners' strike committees—have been plagued by interregional and intraregional infighting among their leaders

Conflicting interests among regions and industries make more difficult the formation of a single organization with the power that Solidarity amassed in Poland (see inset). Some strong regional and industrial unions are likely to emerge in the near term, however. This, moreover, would reflect the independent labor movement's primary goal: achieving much greater control over economic decision making at the workplaces and localities

Figure 4
Soviet Worker Strikes and Rallies, 11 July 1990



The regime's growing inability to fulfill its agreements with complaining workers has convinced labor groups to pursue economic self-reliance instead of looking to Moscow for handouts, therefore further reducing the center's leverage. The breakdown of the command-administrative economic system has marginalized Moscow's role in curing the problems that lead to labor complaints. For example, despite its apparent good faith in negotiating the miners' strike settlement in summer 1989, the Soviet Government—aware that miners are considering another walkout—has not been able to divert many physical resources to mining regions to improve living and working conditions there. Premier Ryzhkov expressed his fury at a meeting this April over the slow implementation of plans designed to head off the Tyumen' strike, for example.

A further result of the independent labor movement's heightened disdain for Moscow and regime policies is its strong and growing support of alternatives to state ownership of enterprises. Many workers' committees have applied to convert their enterprises into leased, joint-stock, or cooperative enterprises to get out from under the thumb of the government ministries, operate independently, and sell their output freely. Even enterprises that expect to remain within the state-run system have sometimes rejected state orders that

Worker Strikes and Rallies, 11 July 1990

On 11 July several hundred thousand workers in over 60 cities around the USSR held strikes and rallies in the largest single labor action of the Gorbachev era. The Confederation of Labor workers' alliance, the miner-led organization that organized the event, called the walkout during the 28th Communist Party Congress and focused it on political demands because, according to one of the organizers, "by making economic demands, we have achieved virtually nothing." Disappointed with the slow pace of political and economic reform, the workers called for:

- *The resignation of Premier Ryzhkov's government.*
- *"Depoliticization" of the military and KGB.*
- *Elimination of Communist party committees at workplaces.*
- *Nationalization of property owned by the Communist party and official trade unions.*

While support from nonminers was probably not as widespread as the Confederation had hoped for, a greater variety of workers joined in the protest than ever before

Judging from his defensive reaction, President Gorbachev was shaken by the size and antiparty focus of the protests. In his public comments, he vastly understated the size of the strikes and rallies and claimed that opportunists—implicating but not naming his political rivals, RSFSR president Yel'tsin and USSR People's Deputy Nikolay Travkin—were "stirring the workers" for their own political gain. The miners in Vorkuta retorted that they had been "stirred up" only by the poor performance of Premier Ryzhkov and his deputies, coal minister Shchadov, and traditionalist leader Ligachev. Gorbachev acknowledged that the working relationship and trust he had established with the miners during their walkout in the summer of 1989 had eroded.

Workers' Banners

The depth of the workers' antiparty feeling was demonstrated by their banners, shown on the Soviet evening news coverage of the protests:

- *The Cult of Lenin is the Basis of the Tyranny of the KGB.*
- *The Communist System Is an Obstacle to the Progress and Well-Being of the People.*
- *CPSU! Return the Plunder to the People.*
- *Leninism is the Obscurantists' Utopia.*
- *The Coal Miners Are for the Creation of Independent Leftist Trade Unions—Without the AUCCTU.*

stipulate to whom they should sell their output and at what price. Workers' groups are also promoting foreign trade as a way for their workplaces to acquire high-quality Western machinery and consumer goods.

As part of their move to gain greater control over their economic fate, workers are also debating how to best gain control over social services—key to their quality of life—that are now under the control of the official trade unions. Most labor activists have concluded that they face better prospects of success by forming new unions from scratch than by attempting to take over and reform the existing, official unions. At a self-organized congress in June, coal miners declared their intent to form a new union, and they will convene again later this year to decide on its structure. Industries likely to eventually follow suit are chemicals, energy, metallurgy, railroads, and fisheries.

An effort is under way to deny the official unions' control over social services by transferring their physical assets—child care centers, resorts, and housing, for example—to the local soviets. The state gave these facilities to the official unions free of charge in 1960. Under current Soviet property law, however, the AUCCTU must agree to a switch in ownership; it

Polish Solidarity's Example

Solidarity's rise to ruling status in Poland in 1989 and the USSR's recognition of its legitimacy have inspired Soviet labor activists to persist in their own struggle. In one year, the Soviet foreign ministry went from stating that, "For us, Lech Walesa does not exist as a leader of a trade union," to formally inviting Walesa to visit the USSR and guaranteeing him a meeting with Gorbachev

Since the USSR's nationwide miners' strike in the summer of 1989, at least two prominent Soviet commentators have compared the current Soviet situation with Poland's during 1979-80—when labor unrest reached an unprecedented level—and have warned that the regime should draw the appropriate conclusion and speed up political and economic reform. In addition, Solidarity has volunteered to train Soviet labor activists in union organization, and contacts between the Polish and Soviet unionists have already begun.

Although looking to Solidarity for instruction, the Soviet independent labor movement differs from its Polish counterpart in ways that will impede and perhaps preclude its development into a single organization of the power and stature of Solidarity:

- *Polish workers are united by culture, nationality and language, and religion, while the differing ethnic interests of Soviet workers often take precedence over their common status as laborers.*
- *Solidarity has been not just a labor union, but the focal point for opposition to widely hated Communism and Soviet hegemony and therefore could command a broad base of support among workers. Soviet workers differ over who deserves blame for their poor working and living conditions and how to best solve their problems, and the independent labor movement does not speak for all workers*

cannot be accomplished by a court challenge alone. Lithuania and Kemerovo oblasts have already initiated action aimed at nationalizing AUCCTU assets.

Centrifugal forces will continue to pull apart the AUCCTU. Its influence will almost certainly decline dramatically over the next several years, paralleling the fall of the CPSU and the party's youth wing, the Komsomol. The AUCCTU plans to reorganize at its upcoming October congress into a looser confederation of unions, but this face-lift will not reverse the strong negative attitudes that workers have toward the unions. Moreover, as its prestige wanes and the fiction that the official unions speak for the working class becomes more self-evident, the Soviet Government and Supreme Soviet will feel less pressure to accede to the AUCCTU's proposals to water down economic reforms. The AUCCTU will also almost certainly lose its constitutional guarantee of 100 seats in the Congress of People's Deputies by the time the next Congress is elected, by 1994 at the latest. In the meantime, those 100 deputies have a reduced chance of being selected to the Supreme Soviet, which does most of the legislating.

Implications

The independent labor movement is now pushing Gorbachev to go farther and faster than he has shown a willingness to go in distancing himself from the party and decentralizing economic decision making, raising the level of confrontation between the workers' movement and the regime. Although it still suffers from organizational weaknesses, in the one year since it was launched by the miners' strike, the independent labor movement has shown a significant and growing ability to mobilize large numbers of workers to participate in specific labor protests and has hence become a force to be reckoned with in Soviet politics

Over the past year, the regime has repeatedly acknowledged that a major benefit of the independent labor movement has been its identification of a new

cadre of local leaders willing to tackle longstanding problems. Labor leaders showed their willingness to participate in the political reform process by running for election to local soviets in major areas of the country

Still, as workers have become politicized out of frustration with unfulfilled government promises, the labor movement's support for Gorbachev, conditional from the start, has waned. Initial gratitude to him for political reforms that made their movement possible has been supplanted by an attitude of "what have you done for me lately?" When asked the significance of Gorbachev's accession to the Soviet presidency this spring, one miner replied, "I don't care if he calls himself the Pope of Rome; he still is doing nothing for us!"

Since April, the independent labor movement has been much more vocal about its dissatisfaction with the CPSU, and its antiparty hostility will continue to rise. Both the Confederation of Labor and the independent miners' congress have declared the Communist party incapable of representing workers' interests. Party membership among workers is declining dramatically, and [redacted] who visited a mine in Kuzbass saw the slogan "Death to the Communist party" chalked on coal railcars

The politization of the miners' movement is representative of a cycle of development that is affecting almost all Soviet labor organizations. Once a strike committee discovers that the chances for fulfillment of a settlement it negotiated with management and the state are slim, it usually undergoes a fast political maturation. The first step is to become a permanent workers' organization. Next, the organization usually adopts a philosophy of self-reliance and takes a wide range of matters into its own hands. Lobbying efforts to influence the local government, party, and enterprise management increase dramatically

This self-reliance is good news for economic reform because it places emphasis on profitmaking and raising revenues locally to pay for improvements to living and working standards. The labor movement is thereby advancing the pace of economic decentralization in the USSR, breaking down the command-administrative system as enterprises refuse to honor economically irrational directives issued by the state. Nevertheless, independent labor's short-term concerns and growing political strength also pose obstacles to stabilization of the economy and reform:

- Organized workers oppose wage caps that would help prevent the growth in money incomes from exceeding the growth in the production of consumer goods and services, the leading source of inflationary pressures in the past two years.
- While labor groups in heavy industry endorse wholesale price reform as a way to increase profitability when selling their output, they balk at increases in the prices of their inputs and of retail goods.
- Having suffered a low living standard for many years, workers—who are likely to have an increasingly greater say over the operation of their enterprise—will probably insist that profits are invested in social amenities rather than in new production equipment.
- Many Soviet strikers have the false impression that their walkouts have a negligible effect on economic performance because strikes are less disruptive than systemic problems such as the poor transportation and distribution networks and inept management.

Even the independent labor movement's support for denationalization of industry, which is now very strong, could waver when some enterprises discover it difficult—or impossible—to make their operations profitable. Mines in Donbass, for example, are generally played out and will have trouble competing with other Soviet mines, even after wholesale coal prices are increased. Rational economic decision making will sometimes call for closing down or restructuring parts of enterprises, increasing unemployment. Under such

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conditions, workers are likely to demand the promised, if not delivered, pledges of the old social contract, such as a strong state-provided social security net that Moscow is ill prepared to finance.

Finally, a resurgence of strike activity would play havoc with efforts to stabilize the economy [redacted] a strong majority of Soviet citizens now consider strikes a legitimate tactic to press economic grievances. Workers appear undaunted by the law's provisions against striking, especially since the regime has declined to enforce the law by imposing severe fines or firing workers who violate its provisions

Appendix A

Prominent Independent Labor Organizations

[redacted] Because, during their formative stage, workers' organizations frequently splinter, combine, or reorganize, some of the organizations described may currently be smaller than stated below or may have merged with other organizations identified as separate entities. Claimed membership figures are best interpreted as the number of workers that the organization believes it can mobilize during a strike or other protest, rather than as a count of "card-carrying" members

Coalitions

Confederation of Labor
Founded in April 1990 by 300 delegates from 50 labor organizations, mostly miners, at a conference in Novokuznetsk . . . organized the 11 July 1990 political strike held in over 60 cities . . . led by a 52-member council

Association of Socialist Trade Unions (Sotsprof)
Founded in Moscow in June 1989 by 30 activists from 10 cities representing 5,000 workers . . . claimed in mid-1990 to have 35 territorial affiliates representing 50,000 workers . . . in contact with a few Western trade unions . . . formation of the Confederation of Labor indicates Sotsprof was unable to consolidate the workers' movement on its own

Intercity Workers' Club
Formed in 1985 . . . claimed affiliates in 23 cities in late 1989 . . . sponsored conferences in Moscow in July and September 1989 under the title "Organizing Congress of the Workers' Movement" . . . agendas of the participating groups varied greatly, preventing consensus on future direction

Free Interprofessional Association of Working People (SMOT)
Only independent labor organization with roots in the human rights movement of the Brezhnev era . . . formed in 1978 by intellectuals . . . limited appeal among blue-collar workers . . . leaders imprisoned and eventually expelled to the West in the 1980s . . . specializes in publishing an information bulletin on a wide variety of unofficial political activity

Industry-Specific Strike Committees and Unions

Kuzbass Council of Workers' Committees
During the strike of the summer of 1989, coordinated the activity of 180,000 miners and led the negotiations with the government that resulted in a nationwide strike settlement . . . now limited to monitoring fulfillment of the strike protocol . . . has transferred rest of its functions to the Union of Kuzbass Toilers, which it founded

Regional Council of Donbass Strike Committees
Formed in August 1989 by local strike committees of the four oblasts comprising Donbass, which had led 300,000 miners during the July walkouts . . . strike committees' power remains centered at city level.

Karaganda Oblast Workers' (Strike) Committee
Represents 110,000 miners . . . joined forces with other regional activists to lobby for an end to nuclear testing at nearby Semipalatinsk . . . still attempting in spring 1990 to rejuvenate the official unions by successfully running candidates for union posts . . . plans a conference in 1990 to form an intersectoral "Union of Working People" for Karaganda

Pechora Basin Committees
No regional committee . . . primary role played by the Vorkuta City Strike Committee, which led 35,000

miners in various walkouts . . . some leaders formed breakaway Democratic Workers' Movement in November 1989 . . . another committee active in the city of Inta sponsored formation of the Union of Inta Working People in March 1990 to reach out to other workers . . . internecine fighting and political pressure from local party authorities have led to the disbanding of many strike committees at individual mines.

Preschool Teachers Strike Committees
Strike committees in at least four major Russian cities including Moscow joined forces in April 1990 . . . threatened to lead nationwide strike.

Amalgamation of Soviet Cooperative Societies
Two unions of Russian cooperative workers founded December 1989 in Leningrad . . . representatives from Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev, as well as from other cities in Russia, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Central Asia founded Amalgamation of Cooperative Societies at conference in Odessa in April 1990 . . . some of constituent organizations operate under the name Yedeniye (Unity).

Union for the Protection of Servicemen, Draftees, and Their Families (Shield)
Founded in October 1989 . . . in January 1990, claimed 600 active members—half of them officers—from 63 cities, but influence is reportedly much broader than membership numbers suggest . . . has organized and participated regularly in political rallies in Moscow, particularly to protest involvement of the armed forces in quelling domestic unrest . . . calls for depoliticization of the Soviet military and creation of a professional, volunteer force . . . successfully ran candidates for seats in the USSR, RSFSR, and Moscow city legislatures

Regional and Republic Organizations

Kuzbass Union of Toilers
Founded in November 1989 by miners . . . claimed thousands of members and a paid staff as of the spring of 1990 . . . successfully ran many candidates for seats to the local and regional city soviets in spring 1990 on a platform of radical economic reform . . . publishes a popular newspaper, *Nasha Gazeta*.

Lithuanian Workers' Union
Founded by national labor spokesman Kazimieraz Uoka . . . had reportedly signed up 20,000 workers as of late in the summer of 1990 . . . particularly well established in the city of Kaunas.

Latvian Workers' Union
Founded in September 1989 with over 1,200 supporters at over 100 enterprises . . . claims to model itself on Polish Solidarity and apparently signed a cooperative agreement with that organization in late 1989.

Workers' Union of Belorussia
Founded in September 1989 by 200 representatives from 72 enterprises . . . claims over 8,000 signatures from workers on petitions supporting the formation of an independent trade union . . . led by blue-collar members on the governing board of the Belorussian People's Front, Renewal . . . acts as a counterweight to the largely Russian Council of Work Collectives.

Estonian Council of Work Collectives
Actively participates in calls for Estonian independence . . . engaged in ongoing political battle with the United Council of Work Collectives, an organization allied with the Russian organization Intermovement, which has conducted political strikes protesting the republic's independence drive at factories employing mainly Russian workers

Straykom
Formed in early 1990 . . . considers itself one of the most radical elements of the nationalist Ukrainian Movement for Support of *Perestroyka*, Rukh . . . in conflict with the anti-Rukh Union of Working People of the Ukraine for Socialist Restructuring, which supports stronger labor discipline and opposes the calling of labor strikes and rallies

Cooperative Armenian Free Trade Union
Founded in June 1990 . . . views itself as part of the effort to form a free and independent Armenian nation

City-Based Clubs

Chelyabinsk, RSFSR
Workers' clubs in existence as of mid-1989, now operate under the name "Workers' Alliance" . . . a major industrial center for ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy, production of agricultural equipment and soft goods, and food processing . . . site of multi-industry protests in August 1989 over poor working and living conditions.

Gomel', Belorussia
Local strike committee unites representatives from 80 enterprises in Gomel' and surrounding areas . . . protested the lasting effects on the region of the 1986 accident at the Chernobyl' nuclear reactor . . . organized a one-day walkout on 26 April 1990 at the large Gomelmash and Kirov tool-building factories.

Gorlovka, Ukraine
Independent Union of Gorlovka Workers founded in early 1990 . . . marshaled thousands of residents for a warning strike in May 1990 after chemical leaks from a nearby plant poisoned several mine workers . . . forced the government to investigate local safety conditions.

Leningrad, RSFSR
New clubs formed regularly in response to internecine fighting among city labor leaders . . . Club for the Democratization of Trade Unions (KDP), founded in the summer of 1988, was first to gain prominence; tried to change the official unions from within . . . publishes journal, Rubikon, with a circulation reportedly in the thousands . . . more confrontational splinter group, Yedinstvo (Unity), formed in January 1989 . . . Yedinstvo evolved into the Union of Workers' Committees, a coalition of smaller groups at about 20 enterprises, including Leningrad's famous Baltic shipyard . . . another group, alternatively known as IKAR (expansion unknown) and Independence, is especially militant . . . city labor leaders are also active in the antiregime Democratic Union, the Leningrad People's Front, and the Democratic Elections-90 coalition that swept local soviet elections this past spring.

Magnitogorsk, RSFSR
Workers' club claimed 150 active members plus many informal supporters in the summer of 1990 . . . allied with local environmental lobbyists . . . city hosts the huge Magnitogorsk Metallurgical Combine, one of the largest steel plants in the USSR, as well as plants producing construction materials.

Moscow, RSFSR
Labor activism largely subsumed by broader political activism and the efforts to form labor coalitions . . . both Sotsprof and the Intercity Workers Club coalitions based there . . . New Socialists organization cooperates with Sotsprof and several strike committees around the USSR, particularly in Kuzbass . . . some major factories with own workers' clubs; such an organization at the Lenin Komsomol' automotive plant claims 1,500 members.

Nadym, RSFSR
Nadym Action Group of the Tyumen' gas and oil region collected 1,200 signatures in autumn 1989 on petition protesting investment cuts that would result in layoffs . . . although name may have changed, certainly involved in recent strike threats over poor living conditions . . . 70 percent of region's residents employed in the energy sector

Sverdlovsk, RSFSR
Workers' clubs active since at least 1988, when they still operated underground and distributed leaflets secretly . . . home of the huge Uralmash machine-building factory . . . city hosted several conferences of informal groups in the past year . . . workers' protests led to ouster of the party first secretary in February 1990

Vladivostok, RSFSR
Fishermen, seamen, and ship-repair workers, who dominate the local economy, joined forces this year into a Coordinating Council . . . organized a protest rally in February calling for reorganization of the local trade union

Yaroslavl', RSFSR
Workers' Club well represented at the Yaroslavl' Motor Works . . . set a precedent in the independent labor movement by holding a large strike in December 1987 protesting unpaid work demanded on Saturdays . . . was first strike to receive extensive and objective coverage in the Soviet media

Appendix B

Industry Trade Unions in the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions

Aviation Workers Union
Chemical and Petrochemical Industry Workers Union
Coal Industry Workers Union
Communication Workers Union
Construction and Building Materials Industry Workers Union
Cultural Workers Union
Defense Industry Workers Union
Education, Higher Schools, and Scientific Institutions Workers Union
Electric Power Station and Electrical Industry Workers Union
Fish Industry Workers Union
Geological Survey Workers Union
Heavy Machine Building Workers Union
Local Industry and Municipal Services Workers Union
Machine Building and Instrumentmaking Workers Union
Maritime and River Fleet Workers Union
Medical Workers Union
Metallurgical Industry Workers Union
Motor Transport and Highway Workers Union
Petroleum and Gas Industry Workers Union
Radio and Electronics Industry Workers Union
Railway Transport Workers Union
Shipbuilding Industry Workers Union
State Institution Workers Union
State Trade and Consumer Cooperatives Workers Union
Textile and Light Industry Workers Union
Timber, Paper, and Woodworking Industry Workers Union