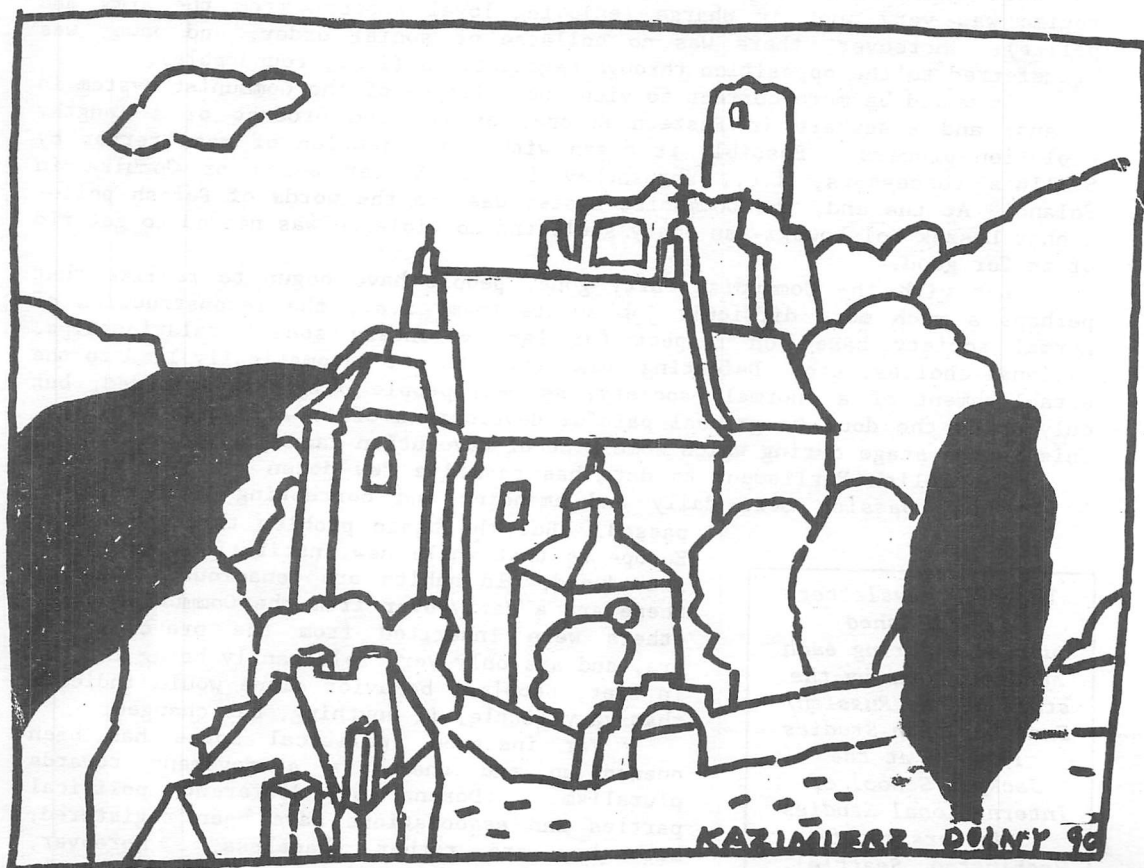


REEU NEWSLETTER

WINTER 1991



Poland in 1990

Kaz Poznanski, Associate Professor, REEU

In the slow process of dismantling the communist system in Poland, the Party was challenged by the combined forces of industrial workers and urban intellectuals, aided by the Catholic Church. The first major challenge came in 1980-81 with the formation of independent trade unions. It was not until late 1989 that the Communist Party gave up its power monopoly and allowed semi-free elections, only to lose badly to the opposition forces and since then to be marginalized.

Many observers view the change that occurred in 1989 as a revolution and even compare it to the French Revolution. Some call it 'the first real revolution,' since, according to them, the workers destroyed the system on their own. Others talk about 'the first revolution by intellectuals,' since many of the new governments are dominated by intellectuals. But it is my opinion that use of the term 'revolution,' as a theoretical concept, is not quite accurate.

Revolutions are a product of three related factors: a political vacuum (the collapse of the state as an effective agent); a lack of elementary order (i.e., a common sense of insecurity); and a violent takeover. None of these elements were present in 1989, nor are they now, in Eastern Europe--even in the most unstable country in the region, Poland. There the late communist regime was very much in charge (enjoying loyal support from the army and police). Moreover, there was no collapse of social order, and power was transferred to the opposition through negotiations (i.e., roundtable).

It would be more correct to view the collapse of the Communist system in Poland, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, as the end product of a lengthy evolution process. Possibly it began with the rejection of mass terror by Stalin's successors, i.e., Khrushchev in the Soviet Union or Gomulka in Poland. At the end, the Communist system was--in the words of Polish philosopher Leszek Kolakowski--an empty shell and no violence was needed to get rid of it for good.

But with the Communist Party gone, people have begun to realize that perhaps a much more difficult job awaits them, i.e., the reconstruction of normal society based on respect for law, voluntary social relationships, rational choices, etc. Defeating communism does not automatically lead to the establishment of a 'normal' society, as many people originally assumed, but only opens the door to gradual painful development of an alternative system. This is the stage during which some kind of revolution cannot be ruled out.

The Polish Parliament to date has passed a few dozen new regulations. It is busy passing more daily and amending and correcting those already passed. But the basic problem throughout East Europe is that while new institutions are being introduced, old habits are tenacious. Many of these are a carry-over from the Communist past; others were inherited from the pre-communist era, and are only very reluctantly being let go. In fact, peoples' behavior alone would indicate that very little, if anything, has changed.

For instance, political space has been opened up and there is a movement towards pluralism. Dozens of different political parties and associations have been registered, but they are rather shapeless. Moreover, informed political participation by the people

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is lacking. The communist system made people politically inactive and they continue to have little faith in voting, initiative to inform themselves about candidates, or ability to discriminate between symbols and substance.

The last presidential election, held in late November 1990, is a good case in point. The key candidates, Walesa and Mazowiecki, did not clearly outline their programs, but rather referred to some coded words. A completely unknown personality, Tyminski, outperformed Mazowiecki, who was Prime Minister for more than a year, and came very close to Walesa, leader of the independent labor unions for the last ten years. Interviewed voters could not clearly explain why they voted as they did. The people, it seems, are looking for a saviour, somebody with the ability to magically, painlessly solve the country's mounting problems, particularly the economic ones.

The non-Communist government of Mazowiecki inherited a devastated economy, with obsolete industry, tremendous foreign debt, and rapid inflation, combined with shortages of basic goods. The government applied a shock treatment strategy to stabilize the economy and force out inefficient producers. By now inflation has been largely extinguished and shortages eliminated, but this has been accomplished at the expense of a deep recession (25-30% loss in output) and severe wage cuts (above 30%).

Nobody expected the recession and unemployment to be so deep--including the government, which predicted about 5% output loss. The severity of the decline can be attributed to the prevalence of old habits. Faced with a new situation--free prices and a lack of subsidies--producers responded the same way they did to shocks under Communism, with its fixed prices and high subsidies. That is to say, they refused to economize on resources and adjust production profiles, thus making more radical cuts in output than necessary.

The domestic transition in Poland is complicated by the tremendous geopolitical changes taking place in the region, particularly in the two powerful neighboring countries--the Soviet Union and Germany. This is a source not only of uncertainty but, as some argue, of legitimate worry as well. The situation seems so different now from post-World War I when both Germany and Russia were defeated while Poland regained its sovereignty.

Poles are worried that the turmoil in the Soviet Union may not only continue but may get worse. Most of my friends in Warsaw are convinced that the Soviet Union will eventually disintegrate and that a civil war is nearly unavoidable. They fear that, should war break out, a flood of refugees will pour into Poland, and that newly created states such as the Ukraine will reopen old border disputes.

German unification poses another threat, in the minds of many Poles, namely, that the western regions of Poland will be re-incorporated into Germany, either economically--through a buy-out of Polish factories and real estate--or politically, i.e., by a renegotiation of the borders. Germany recently gave further assurances that this will not happen (Kohl-Arazowiecki agreement of November 1990), but Poles continue to be apprehensive and fearful.

This feeling played an important role in the latest elections. Tyminski gained a lot of momentum by arguing that if in office he would prevent foreigners from getting Polish industry 'cheap' and 'quick.' Walesa, who once encouraged foreign investors, has also been campaigning under the slogan: "Poland for Poles." He continues, however, to believe that the country cannot pull out of the economic crisis without joining the outside world, and is prepared to push for membership in the European Community.

Reflections on South Africa

Loretta Fleurs, REEU Graduate Student

Loretta Fleurs is our first REEU graduate student from South Africa. She plans eventually to teach courses on the Soviet Union at a university in her native land. In the paragraphs below, Miss Fleurs, holder of a Titus Ellison Fellowship, shares some insights into her country and its educational system.

Although I'm thoroughly enjoying my stay in the States, I often think of home--especially as I look out at yet another gray Seattle morning and think, "In Cape Town, it's summer--probably 80°F!" Many people assume that, having come to the States for the second time to study, I'll naturally want to stay. But I wish to emphasize that Cape Town is where I grew up, where my family and friends live, and it will always be my home. Still, I will concede incredible problems and constant tension (even if one hates to admit it). The state of emergency no longer applies, except in Natal, but rallies and marches with the potential for clashes with the police continue.

Perhaps a word is in order about the structure of South African society. The population has been segregated into four racial groups--"White," "Black," "Colored," and "Indian." Only "Whites" can vote. The groups are administered separately, which means substantial differences in the four education systems. The huge disparity in government spending on each group (at present it invests four times more money in "White" education than in "Black") obviously affects the quality of instruction and facilities available to students. For example, 'most state-run "White" schools come equipped with tennis courts, playing fields, overhead projectors, laboratory equipment, to list but a few items. In contrast, "Black" schools suffer from a lack of adequate buildings, insufficient desks and general overcrowding. This often leads to two classes being taught different subjects, by two different teachers, in the same classroom! Needless to say, this does not facilitate the learning process.

Furthermore, each racial group has its own examination system for high school graduation, and thus students entering universities do not come with the same educational backgrounds. While "Black" (a term now used by the politically aware to mean all groups that are not "White") students are aware of (and increasingly augment this awareness through special programs conducted at schools) the oppressive conditions within the country and actively attempt changes, "White" students remain 'blissfully' ignorant, due in part to the success of the divide and rule policy which apartheid engenders. The Group Areas Act (1950) ensures that population groups live separately in pre-designated areas, and this also contributes to keeping people ignorant.

Student boycotts have been one of the measures employed by "Black" students to highlight the "gutter education" they have been receiving. The years 1976, 1980, and 1985 were especially active ones, with such boycotts lasting sometimes for months. Constantly stressed was the need for a uniform education system, and although this process is receiving attention, it seems as if it will be a while before the goal is achieved. At present, white state-run schools are being asked to vote on whether they wish to open their doors to other races. Three possible models have been proposed, offering different ways of implementing this change, but only in the new year will enough have transpired to re-assess the situation.

As a "Colored" teacher in a high school, I saw how this constant political activity, which raised students' awareness, interrupted education. While agreeing that students need to know about the oppressive conditions surrounding them, many teachers are also concerned about providing them with a

good basic education--as without it, they're likely to join the ranks of the unemployed, already far too numerous.

Incessant marches and rallies take their toll not only on students (who increasingly lose their desire to study) but on teachers as well as they try to cover the syllabi in less time than counted on. The result? Students drop out of school or fail their end of year exams, and teachers wind up leaving the profession in droves. And even if one cannot leave, one wishes one could! For me it has been an incredible experience to educate students, but it has also been an incredibly stress-filled time, watching with frustration as the battle for one education system has proceeded.

To offset what reads as an incredibly depressing overview, I should note that there was a bright side to my teaching career. It's always rewarding to receive gratitude from students and most of my students, I believe, were sincere. I was also lucky enough to teach some bright, hard-working kids, who were eager to learn and who assisted with the production of a history of the school (currently celebrating its 40th anniversary). And then there were the classroom comics--bringing much needed humor to what sometimes became dreary drudgery. My colleagues too deserve a mention! Understanding and caring, always on hand with practical tips, they provided the support without which it's hard to function. Those teaching times, though frustrating, were a training ground for many skills, not the least of which was human relations.

While I have focused briefly only on the education system, there are many other problems that must be dealt with, such as scrapping of the Group Areas Act, or the formulation of a new constitution. The government seems to be slowly making concessions, e.g., the Separate Amenities Acts, which designated certain facilities and services for each race, was recently abolished. This issue has long been a matter of contention, with "Blacks" resenting the signs declaring "Whites Only" that have dotted our landscape everywhere from public toilets to fast food places. Before eliminating this bit of legislation, facilities were being opened up, but the uneasiness about frequenting them persisted. I have no doubt that it will be some time before "Blacks" and "Whites" feel totally comfortable with the change in status quo.

While in Cape Town, I did not feel like I was living history but was simply living day to day. Now from the vantage point of Seattle, and with the luxury of time to reflect on how much has changed during my brief lifetime, I realize that history has indeed been in the making in South Africa and continues to be made. People's lives are being altered daily by revised legislation. While the final outcome of this process is hard to predict, I only hope that no more blood will be shed, as too much has been lost already.

Georgian Film at UW

To honor a visit by ten Soviet screenwriters, *The Swimmer* will be shown on January 29 at 7:30 in Kane 120. Irakly Kvirikadze, was awarded first prize in this year's Hartley-Merrill screenwriting contest and is much celebrated for his brilliant and unique talents as a screenwriter. He will be present at the showing to discuss the film, described as "an off-beat, eccentric comedy about a film-maker making a film about three generations of extraordinary Georgian swimmers (in sepia tone)." A modest fee will be charged to help defray expenses. The Soviet visitors--who are sponsored by REEU, Slavic Department, and Centrum (arts organization) of Pt. Townsend--will be in Seattle on the 28th and 29th of January, then go to Pt. Townsend on the 30th.

NEWS FROM THE LITHUANIAN-AMERICAN COMMUNITY
Ina Bertulyte Bray, President

With events unfolding so rapidly in Eastern Europe, the term "Lithuania" has become something of a household word. The local Lithuanian community, some 150 families, has long been preparing for these events. During recent years, their activities have been three-pronged: ethnic, "trans-Atlantic," and political.

Characteristic of immigrant groups, for generations the primary task of the community has been ethnic in nature--to keep alive Lithuanian culture. However, prolonged Russification of their homeland became a profound threat to the survival of its ethnic identity. Thus, the caretaker role of the exiles took on added significance. To foster ethnic survival, a folk dance group came into being some ten years ago and a bilingual newsletter was established to keep the membership informed. Study groups and meetings were frequent, highlighted by the annual independence day commemoration. Events such as the successful series of programs and the Baltic exhibit at the Nordic Heritage Museum this past summer and the Lithuanian Mass at Saint James Cathedral, brought in a wider audience. Through these activities, opportunities were created to speak the language, sing the folk songs, hear the music, observe the traditions that have enriched lives and maintained bonds, thus remembering the past and rejoicing in the perceived possibilities of the future.

Over the past 15 years, the second vital task has been the maintenance and expansion of contacts with Lithuania--the "trans-Atlantic" activity. "Glasnost" has exposed the appalling backwardness and moral disintegration of much of Eastern Europe, Lithuania included. But "glasnost" also has provided possibilities for an infusion of Western thought and support. The most significant direct assistance that the West can provide is to train the minds of Eastern Europe regarding democratic principles and Western values and knowledge. With this objective, the local community is assisting student exchanges, such as those between Pacific Lutheran University and the Kaunas Polytechnic Institute (as well as Latvian and Estonian institutions), book exchanges between Suzzallo Library and the Academy of Sciences in Vilnius and the University of Vilnius. Beyond the official book exchanges, individual members of the Lithuanian community have shipped hundreds of books to various educational institutions. Still in the planning stages are visits by Lithuanian scholars to some departments at the University of Washington. Professor Ilse Cirtautas created the "Friends of Lithuania," a campus interest group.

The Baltic Conference of June 1990 (co-sponsored by the Jackson School) attracted a considerable number of distinguished scholars, including a small representation from the Baltic States. The local Lithuanian community was delighted to host these visitors. And, less than two weeks later, the Goodwill Games again brought some of the best and the brightest from Lithuania: athletes, coaches, editors, politicians, scientists, scholars, doctors, a cosmonaut, and many non-notables. They all had some impact on the local community, but the greater significance of their stay was in the fact that they carried back with them a measure of American freedom.

In addition to these adult interactions, some 300 American teenagers from the greater Seattle area now have pen pals in Lithuania. The phrase "my dream has come true--I have a pen friend in America!" has become almost a standard line in letters from Lithuania. Our American youngsters may never comprehend their enormous symbolic significance to the other side.

The third vital task of the Lithuanian community, locally as well as nation-wide, has direct bearing on the reestablishment of Lithuania as an independent country. With the bold steps taken in Lithuania in the spring of 1990 toward democratization and independence from the USSR, the Northwest community has become very visible indeed. In the media, they repeatedly have been discussing the turn of events in Lithuania. They demonstrated in the streets of Seattle. They give speeches to innumerable groups and assemblies, and lobbied the Congressional delegation. In spite of 50 years of assurances that the American government does not recognize the incorporation of the Baltic States into the USSR, President Bush seemed particularly reluctant to support the independence movements in the three Baltic States. Thus, political action has become paramount. Presently, there is grave concern that the policies of the Kremlin will result in renewed oppression and bloodshed. The local community is again poised to respond.

Perhaps in global terms, Lithuania does not have the strategic significance of some countries whose status is currently disputed. That fact, however, in no way diminishes the determination of the Lithuanian community to stand by its homeland in its quest for survival and independence.

For additional information, please call Ina Bray, 523-1620.



UZBEK NEWS

In October 1990, two exchange students from Tashkent University arrived for a ten-month stay: Ibrat Usmonov, who has studied Chinese and is doing research on Islam in early China; and Rawshan Dalimov, who continues his studies in the Physics Department. In their turn, two UW students are now studying at Tashkent University: Alan Fahnestock from the REEU program and Anthony Qualin from Slavic Department.

During November 1990, Goga Hidayotov, Professor of History and Director of the National Research Institute at Tashkent University, was a visiting professor in the History Department. He gave lectures on Islam in Uzbekistan and other issues of Soviet Central Asia in the History Department, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, and the Middle East Center. The REEU Grad Students Weekly Brown Bag Lunch joined the Uzbek Circle one Friday to listen to and talk with Dr. Hidayotov.

Agreement with Academy of Sciences

In September 1990, Gene Woodruff, Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Research, visited Tashkent University and the Uzbek Academy of Sciences. An agreement of exchange and cooperation between the UW and the Uzbek Academy of Sciences was discussed and subsequently signed by both parties. In March 1991, two vice presidents of the Uzbek Academy of Sciences will be at the UW for an official visit. Several departments already expressed an interest in developing contacts with institutes at the Uzbek Academy of Sciences.

Conference on "The Revolutions of 1989"

Daniel Chirot, Director, REEU

Knowing very well that any final judgement is premature, but that 1989 was far too consequential and interesting a year to let it lie unexamined for a few decades, The Henry M. Jackson Foundation funded a gathering for a few days in Seattle in late October 1990, so that a small number of scholars could discuss some of the most critical questions posed by the events of the past year. The nine essays that were presented at the conference will be published by the University of Washington Press in 1991.

We seemed to disagree about two important issues. One key disagreement was between those of us who have specialized in studying European societies (including the United States and Canada) and the "Asianists." Elizabeth Perry from Berkeley, Nicholas Lardy from the University of Washington, and Bruce Cumings from the University of Chicago presented papers that emphasized the survival of communism in Asia, despite the trauma of Tiananmen in China, the economic difficulties in China, Vietnam, and North Korea, and the loss of almost all hope of future political, military, and economic aid from their former European allies in the last two of these countries. On the other hand, Ken Jowitt from Berkeley strongly stated his position that Leninism, that is, rigorous one-party rule guided by the vision of a future classless socialist utopia, and characterized by harsh economic central planning as the only road toward rapid modernization and industrialization, died once and for all in 1989. He ascribed the ostensible survival of Leninist regimes in East Asia and Cuba to the simple fact that there the original generation of tough old revolutionaries still live. These leaders who have devoted their lives to unending war and struggle cannot renounce their dreams, and so do not admit that their goals cannot be realized. But in all cases, these are old men, especially in China, and after them, Jowitt claims, Leninism, which has been morally disgraced and shown to be an inferior economic model, will collapse as quickly as in Eastern Europe in 1989. Stephen Hanson, from the University of Washington, presented an exceptionally original analysis of how Gorbachev tried to revive Marxism-Leninism, and how he failed. He concurs with Jowitt's judgement, as does my essay on Eastern Europe. The Hoover Institution's Seymour Martin Lipset gave a detailed exposition of how the left has been failing throughout the non-communist world for over a decade. This supports implicitly the notion that the remaining communist dinosaurs may be walking corpses rather than the living, growing embodiments of a future they once claimed to herald.

But on closer inspection, the disagreement between these two sets of views was not that large. Nicholas Lardy explained that communist China's economic reforms have succeeded far better than those tried in European communist countries, but that has been done by allowing the private sector to grow so quickly that it now represents over half of all production in China. It can be argued that if the Soviet Union, or any of the East European countries had managed such a feat during the 1980s, they would not have been reduced to such dire straights by the end of the decade. Elizabeth Perry, by also mentioning Taiwan, emphasized the very important fact that there is nothing inherent in Chinese culture that will always block democracy and capitalism. On the contrary, the reason the demonstrations during the spring of 1989 failed to revolutionize China was that their student leaders did not make enough of an effort to mobilize the broad popular support that might have been forthcoming. The scope of the demonstrations suggests that the student leaders, who played out the role of traditional Confucian literati more than

of popular leaders, could have done much better, and that there exists the moral basis for a future overthrow of communism. Bruce Cumings, in that part of his essay which discussed North Korea, reminded us that Kim Il Sung may be a living anachronism, but he is also the product of a long history of internal civil conflict in Korea and intense international rivalries around Korea. The bases for these internal and external conflicts have not disappeared, even if they have changed, so unlike the rapid reunion of West and East Germany, the easy dismantling of the border between North and South Korea, even after Kim's death, is unlikely. In all, then, the articles of the "Asianists" reminded us of something we all know, but too often forget. Each country is distinctive, and understanding the general forces at work throughout the world should not make us neglect the specific historical and cultural histories that make seemingly similar global forces have such different effects in various parts of the world.

The other major disagreement that appeared was between the liberal optimists and those who see a problematic future for the liberal capitalist model. Not all papers discussed this dichotomy, but the important program set forth by Walt Rostow, from the University of Texas, made his faith in the power of liberalism evident. His suggestions amounted to nothing less than a call for the United States, in conjunction with Western Europe and Japan, to set out on the path originally envisioned by a confident, rich, powerful America at the time of the Marshall Plan in the late 1940s. It was a welcome reminder to think broadly about the immense forces for good that can be unleashed by combining capitalist dynamism with reasonable government planning and help. Seymour Martin Lipset's argument about the global decline of the left indicated his broad agreement with Rostow's faith in the power of liberal capitalist democracy to solve the major problems faced by modern societies. If the socialist model has failed so badly, what is left but the liberal model? In fact, as Lipset pointed out, that is the direction in which the democratic parts of the world have moved in the past two decades, and with good reason. But Ken Jowitt, whose admiration for liberalism was evident, remained much more pessimistic. In much of the world, including the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, he fears the rise of hysterical nationalism, anti-Westernism, and a turning toward religious rejections of modernity. Bruce Cumings discussed how liberalism's limitations viewed from both the left and the right have been the basis of the most disturbing ideological movements in the twentieth century. Not all economic modernization is liberal, and the obvious failure of an antiquated Stalinist model does not mean that the only alternative is the American way. David Calleo from the School of Advanced International Studies, John Hopkins, whose essay explored the relationship between the United States and Western Europe, pointed out that great tensions remain, and that there is now less basis for agreement than when there was a powerful external enemy. Unless we develop more imaginative ways of understanding the world, we risk seeing the growth of very serious divisions within the advanced capitalist democratic world. Calleo, in fact, views the United States as a country as bereft of a viable world vision as the Soviet Union, and implies that both the super powers have failed, not just the Soviets. To hold on to the fossilized doctrines of the Cold War can only lead to disaster.

Again, however, the differences were not as great as they first seemed to be. Rostow subtly included an attack against the Anglo-American conservative ideologues of the 1980s by insisting that government involvement is crucial if economic development is to occur. Nor did the Marshall Plan succeed just because there existed a free market. There had to be a vision, a

belief that great accomplishments were possible. American aid was important for its own sake, of course, but even more, it provided a "jump start," and confidence that recovery and growth were possible. To promote economic development in the former communist countries devastated by decades of technological backwardness and mismanagement, there has to be the faith that it is all possible, too, and this is something that only capital and aid from the West can provide. Someone must now provide a vision like that offered by the United States to Western Europe in the late 1940s, otherwise, the immense problems that beset the former communist countries will prove to be insurmountable. Calleo, whose skepticism about the United States seemed to be in opposition to Rostow's optimism, was really calling for the same thing in defining American foreign policy, a new and viable vision. And ultimately, Calleo believes that the main barrier to a successful American policy is the mistaken domestic policies of the 1970s and 1980s which have led to a stagnant American economy, an unworkable deficit, a narrow, pinched view of the role of government, and a loss of faith in our ability to solve our own problems. If we fail to solve those problems, how can we impart any vision at all to a doubting world?

Both Jowitz and Cumings agreed that the problem with the emerging ideological smugness in the United States is that it fails to examine why, despite the evident material successes of liberal capitalism in the twentieth century, most of the last eight decades have been occupied by struggles between that order and its fascist, communist, and anti-Western opponents. In other words, if we're so good, why has it taken so much violence and suffering in the twentieth century to prove it? To ask the question is not to be anti-liberal, anti-democratic, or anti-capitalist; it is, however, to recognize history. Why, after all, did most of the intellectuals in most of the world remain anti-liberal, anti-democratic, and anti-capitalist until they were forced by war or catastrophic political and economic failures to recognize that they had been wrong? And what makes us think that the lesson has been learned? Americans thought theirs was the natural order for the whole world in 1918 at the end of World War I, and again in 1945, after World War II. Should we be confident now in 1990, after the Cold War? Or are the events in the Near East merely the prelude to another set of desperate struggles that will again test liberal democracy? Is there any proof that the virtues of the eighteenth century European Enlightenment are now all that obvious to the majority of the world? Even Lipset's paper, which celebrates the triumph of liberal democracy, ends with the reminder that it would be an error to project an eternal future from a trend that only really took hold in the last couple of decades, and that could be reversed once more in the future.



SLAVIC DEPARTMENT NEWS

Professor James West Named Editor of Literature Encyclopedia

Last September Academic International Press appointed Professor James West of the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature to the editorship of their Modern Encyclopedia of Russian and Soviet Literatures (MERSL). An ongoing multi-volume publication, the encyclopedia covers literature, film and theater of every nationality represented in the Soviet Union and in the Russian Empire before the revolution, together with relevant topics in the fields of art, music, history, society, religion and politics. West inherited the project after the first nine volumes had been published, covering up to the Ukrainian poet, Holovko. Just beginning his five year term as editor, West already has completion of volume 10 scheduled for August 1991, with volume 11 expected to go to press in February of 1992.

The new editor is looking forward to taking advantage of glasnost' to improve the encyclopedia's coverage. Due to vastly improved prospects for involvement by Soviet scholars, future volumes are expected to address topics on which there is little or no expertise outside of the USSR. Thus far contributions have come mainly from America and Europe.

Slavic Department Graduate student Jennifer Harris is acting as editorial research assistant, a position currently funded by the Graduate School. The College of Arts and Sciences is to assume the funding after this year, and is looking for potential financial resources for that purpose. To James West we wish success with the project, and a MERSL Christmas!

Russian Contemporary Culture and Literature Through the Eyes of a Writer and a Critic

Tatiana Tolstaia and Alla Latynina, who are coming to give lectures at the University of Washington in February 1991 (Feb. 4 and Feb. 11 respectively) are among the most prominent figures in the contemporary Russian literary scene. Tolstaia is a writer whose collection of stories--"On the Golden Porch"--has been translated into numerous languages. She enjoys quite a following not only in the Soviet Union but also in the United States. In addition to her lecture here, which will be given in English and will deal with her views on contemporary Russian culture and literature, Tolstaia will also give a reading at Elliott Bay Book Company (Feb. 2). A supremely talented writer, a wonderful speaker and an original thinker, Tolstaia will prove a rare treat for anyone who is interested in present-day Russia.

Latynina is a leading Soviet literary critic who writes for major Soviet literary newspapers and magazines; she is also the official biographer of Solzhenitsyn. A self-proclaimed "centrist" in most of her views, Latynina has been trying to maintain a precarious balance between "west" and "east," liberalism and nationalism, despite the intensely polarized ideological and cultural atmosphere in the country. As a result she is often viewed by liberals as being too conservative and by conservatives as being too liberal. Latynina will present in Russian her views on the state of contemporary Russian literature and culture. For more information on the upcoming visits, contact Professor Galya Diment at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature (3-7344).

Innovative New Evening Course in 20th-Century Russian Lit

Spring Quarter the Slavic Department will offer an exciting new evening course in Russian literature guaranteed to turn passive listeners into eager participants in the drama of 20th-century Russian life. Dr. James Peters, winner of a Teacher of the Year award at the University of Missouri for his innovative style, will focus on the question: How best can the individual live in relation to the pressures of mass conformity and the demands of the State. Blok, Pasternak, Bulgakov, and others are brought forth to address this issue. Peters' lectures and in-class "performances" a la Willis Konick promise to irresistably involve even the shyest (or sleepest) of students. Call Extension Office (543-2300) to register.



NEWS FOR TEACHERS

The dramatic events in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union have made many of our resources out of date. We are attempting to remedy this problem and also increase our teacher-related activities. We are looking for new print materials to purchase but, unfortunately, the publishers seem to be slow in producing K-12 materials which reflect the recent changes in our world area. If you have any suggestions or recommendations, please let us know. In the meantime, we have several items of interest.

1. We have purchased several new videotapes (described elsewhere in the Newsletter).
2. We are refurbishing our slide collection and creating a computerized data base of all our slides. This should make the slides more accessible, and also give us the ability to create computer-assisted slide programs.
3. On April 13, we will be hosting a one-day teachers' workshop titled, "The Great Awakening: The Transformation of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe."
5. We are presently exploring the possibility of creating a new graduate degree for teachers: a Masters of Arts in Teaching International Studies with emphasis on the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

Russian Programming on Cablearn

Beginning October 1st, there will be Russian programming on Cablearn at 8:00 each Friday. It will be put together from Russian TV broadcasts by REEU, Slavic Department, and the American Association of Retired Persons. Following it, from 8:30-9:30 Friday, there will be Russian language lessons--"Let's Get Acquainted"--which will range in difficulty from beginning level to regular conversation. On most cable systems, Cablearn is Channel 27.

Slime Line Soviet Studies

Peter Christiansen, REEU Graduate Student

Can you say, 'Our catcher boat is hauling back his trawl and should be ready to deliver fish to us in 20 minutes' in Russian? How about, 'The "Sleep Robber" has to go to port to get his net transducer fixed, and the "Annihilator" can't find anything to set on, so it looks like we won't be getting any fish for at least four hours'? Have you ever been roused out of bed at 4 in the morning to watch a deck crew dump a 40-ton bag of fish onto a trawl deck, and then spent a half an hour arguing with the factory manager about when to order the next bag? If this sounds challenging, you may want to sign on as a company representative with Seattle's Marine Resources Corporation International.

MRCI has been running joint fishing ventures with the Soviet Union since the mid-70's, when the first codend of hake was delivered to a Soviet factory ship by an American catcher boat off the Oregon coast. Since then MRCI has conducted 2-3 fisheries a year with their Soviet counterparts, Dalriba, in the Bering Sea and in the Pacific Northwest. The joint venture (one of the first ever between the United States and the Soviet Union) operates exclusively in American waters. Americans catch the fish and Soviets process them. Faced with the problem of insuring smooth relations between the American catchers and the Soviet processors, MRCI regularly hires Russian speakers to spend 2-3 months working at sea.

Company representatives (or just 'reps', among the more printable monikers) are vital to the success of the joint fishing venture. Their job includes coordinating the Soviet processor with their American catcher boats, overseeing transfers of fish from catcher to processor, scheduling deliveries of fish, and monitoring factory production. Conditions at sea are demanding. Reps work closely with Soviet captains, mates, factory managers, and deck crews. They live and work as a crew member on a 300-foot factory ship, as one of two Americans onboard (there is usually a National Marine Fisheries Service observer on board).

The life of a rep at sea is a strange combination of boredom, adrenaline, sleep deprivation, and bilingual insanity. I worked for MRCI at sea for 6 months in 1986 and again for 9 months in 1989-90. It is difficult to describe a typical day in the life of a rep, because there are no typical days in a job like this. In a 24-hour period, for example, a rep generally sets up three or four deliveries from catcher boats, watches the deliveries to make sure they go smoothly, checks in on the factory slime line to make sure the fish is being processed correctly, fills out seven different forms for each delivery, and reports processor activity to the lead rep on twice-daily radio talks. A rep spends most of the day on the bridge, talking to catcher boats on the VHF and making sure the Soviets are kept abreast of the latest developments. Sound exhausting? It is. Working 24 or 48 hour shifts is not uncommon, as reps struggle beyond the outer limits of endurance to answer the eternal question, 'Where are the fish?'

Living on a Soviet factory processor is a dirty, noisy, smelly experience. Boats are usually cockroach infested, and filthy with grime from years of grinding labor on the high seas. The aromas from the factory and the RMU (fishmeal plant) mingle with the perfume of diesel oil and the ever present reek of tobacco to create an overwhelming olfactory sensation. Showers on most boats are available once every ten days or so, depending on how much hot water the chief engineer can spare from the main. The clang of the ship's engines and the groan of the winches from the trawldeck reverberates con-

stantly through the corridors. Radio Moscow pipes through speakers in every room with ghostly, electronic insistence. As one rep put it, 'It ain't the Ritz.'

Quarters are cramped, but reps are officers, so at least they have their own rooms. Sometimes these rooms have amenities, like a sink. Once the Soviets even provided me with a refrigerator. Unfortunately, it didn't close properly, so every cockroach in my room flocked to it for dinner or snacks. This, however, turned out to be a blessing in disguise, as it kept them out of my bed. Reps learn to live with these things. Some of them, driven to desperation, even construct cockroach circuses out of old tin cans and candy wrappers.

Despite the hardships, though, this is a job well worth doing. Reps are bombarded with Russian, and their language skills improve dramatically from constant practice. They pick up an eclectic mix of fishing terminology, slang, and swear words that can't be learned in any school. Conversations cover every possible topic. The Soviets are endlessly curious about America, and their only source of information about life 'over the border' is the rep. In turn, the rep has an opportunity to learn more about the Soviet Union than in virtually any other job. I recall my shock at learning how the mates receive their pay at the end of a tour. Instead of having their hard-earned rubles deposited electronically in a bank, they are forced to trudge from bureaucrat to bureaucrat to get documents, stamps, and signatures. Then they can wait in line with the other 99 crew members until payment is approved and the money is handed over. The trawlmaster who told me this said that the whole process usually took only a week or two, less if a few palms were greased along the way.

Working on Soviet processors is also an excellent way to get acquainted first-hand with some of the changes and reforms now sweeping Gorbachev's Russia. One of the big changes is the phasing out of the dreaded 'pompolit,' political officers responsible for enforcing Party policy and keeping an eye on the foreigners in the fleet. In contrast with 1986, when the pompolit was viewed with fear and respect, they are now openly derided as 'zastoinii' (unprogressive) and on some ships have been demoted to announcing crew member birthdays over the loud hailer.

Other changes are evident as well. Some of the more productive processors are being leased by their crews on the 'arend' system. I worked on one of these processors in 1989 and was impressed by the enthusiasm and unabashed capitalism of the crew. They worked for their own gain, not for some faceless Moscow paperpusher in the far-off 'center.' Their initiative was infectious and was wholeheartedly supported by the American catcher boats. Once, half in jest and half in admiration, an American captain said, 'If this is the way they work when they turn into businessmen, we don't stand a chance!'

One of the great experiences a rep can have is escorting the crew of his ship around an American city during a port call. I have taken Soviet sailors to Dutch Harbor, Alaska; Astoria, Oregon; and Everett, Washington. For many of the sailors, it is their first time in America. With precious hard currency in hand, the Soviets work themselves into a consumer frenzy, descending on Fred Meyers, Payless, and Radio Shack. For some, the abundance of consumer goods in the cornucopias of retail America is overwhelming. I once saw a political officer stand in the middle of Everett Mall, shaking his head and mumbling, 'I never thought it possible.' Reps turn to mush during port calls. Everyone needs an interpreter, and you're it. How do you explain 40 different kinds of toothpaste? Where are the frilly condoms and 'Playboy' magazines? Does the magnifone (tape-deck) work on 220 volts? It's all in good fun and

makes for great cocktail party chat after you've recovered your voice and your sanity. And when the ship pulls out of port, you'll have memories for a lifetime.

Marine Resources is always looking for a few new reps to fill in the ranks. This year, they have fisheries starting in December and May. Exact starting dates are being worked out now. Give their Operations Department a call for employment possibilities. The local address is 192 Nickerson Street, Suite 307, Seattle, Washington, 98109, telephone (206) 285-6424.



LIBRARY NEWS

In addition to obtaining books and journals for the library collection, the Slavic and East European section of Suzzallo Library assists undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty with their papers, research and teaching. Some assistance is also available to members of the community. Services provided by the library include:

FOR CLASSES: Bibliographic instruction sessions are offered to introduce library facilities and services. These sessions may include tours, introduction to pertinent reference materials, and discussion of research/reference help available at the library. Please schedule at least one week in advance to allow preparation time.

FOR INDIVIDUALS: The Librarians provide research and reference help to all patrons. This may include helping answer questions, finding bibliographies and sources for papers and research, and finding locations at other libraries for materials not owned by the University of Washington. Materials from other libraries may be borrowed on interlibrary loan, but please allow at least one month for materials to arrive.

CENTER FOR RESEARCH LIBRARIES: UW is a CRL member library which makes material owned by CRL easily available. The Center has an extensive collection of Slavic and East European material not widely owned in this country, including periodical publications. To member libraries, the Center will loan any quantity of material or will provide photocopies of articles or pages (when copyright compliance is indicated). There is no time limit on loans; however, material may be recalled if requested by another patron. For more information on CRL collections, stop by Suzzallo.

The Slavic Section office is open M-F 1 pm-5 pm for walk-in assistance. It is open for calls as well in the morning at 543-5588. Ask for George Klim or Susan Burke.

An Organizational-Activity Game in the Soviet Union:
Personal Reflections of an American Participant-Observer
Craig ZumBrunnen, Associate Professor, Geography

Despite doing all my graduate work in California in the sixties, I somehow managed to miss completely "EST," "Lifespring," and the other various encounter groups and human potential movements of the time. How ironic that a veteran of southern California and Berkeley would first come into contact with these group-process techniques, combined with practical business simulation game themes, in the Soviet Union!

The week in Winter 1989 I spent as one of the first two non-Soviets ever to participate in an "organizatsionno-deyatel'nostnaya igra" ("organizational-activity game") was one of the most intellectually insightful, psychologically stimulating, and emotionally challenging experiences of my life. Entitled "Analysis of the Perspective Development of the Orenburg Region under Conditions of Self-Management and Self-Financing," this was indeed at one level an accurate description of the game's theme and structure; but, as I was to discover, the "igra" (game) had (has) many levels.

It took place at a Young Pioneer Camp near Orenburg (two and one half hours by jet east of Moscow). My purpose in attending the games was to explore the role of Soviet non-governmental organizations in engendering social and economic change.

The leader, Sergei Popov, a self-proclaimed *methodologist*, kept alluding to the "Soviet system" as a "sticky tape" onto which all individual members of Soviet society had "become stuck." This "sticky tape" was everywhere, and once stuck, it was very difficult for an individual to escape. The tape supposedly drained Soviet people of their individuality, their initiative, their ability to articulate their values and interests, their self-esteem, and their capacity for individual as well as collective innovative problem solving and decision-making. In other words, the "system" made them into "risk avoiding automatons." Thus, this game was about much more than simply what its theme denoted. For instance, to address the theme of the game, the *methodologists* argued bluntly and directly that all of the various psychological and even emotional implications of the "sticky tape" phenomena would have to be addressed first. The players of the game would have to strip away the "public masks" that they have subconsciously learned to wear so well since childhood.

Soon I learned that the game's leaders were, in effect, claiming that both a different socialization process and resocialization process were necessary. From his first speech, Popov provoked the game's participants to introspect about who they are, their values and goals, and how and why they perpetuate the "sticky tape" in their daily lives. He goaded us with assertions that "Soviet people are merely sheep without souls, afraid to find their own pasture."

I recalled the many times such themes about the national character have appeared in Russian anecdotes, in literature, in daily experiences. In his new book, Hedrick Smith claims that "Before he can reform the economy, Gorbachev must purge his country of its inbred escapism, lethargy, and envy." He cites a Russian proverb that drives home Popov's point about the lack of Soviet entrepreneurship in the sense of risk-taking or trying something new. "Remember, the tallest blade of grass is the first to be cut down by the scythe. Lesson: Do not try to stand above the crowd, the collective."

The game was sponsored by Orenburg Oblast's Executive Committee and Communist Party. Why would the local power structure sponsor a game in which many of the ideas and emotions were hostile to the Party and its function in

the region? Perhaps because the Soviet Union's ideological allegiance to Communism is in fact very thin. The Communist Party being the only avenue to upward mobility, there is a strong incentive to join regardless of one's true thoughts. Perhaps the fact that glasnost is very real and far advanced. Or perhaps because local authorities are supposed to be converting to "self management" and "self-financing," and--as we spent much of the first two days discovering--nobody really knows what these twin concepts mean operationally. Accordingly, officials are rather desperate to "do something."

The producer of this game was the Moscow Methodological Circle and the Interregional Methodological Association, of which Popov is a leader. Essentially, Popov's games are a private enterprise paid for in this case by the local Party, industrial enterprises, and governments in Orenburg Oblast.

Of the 160 or so participants, about 120 were Party members, elected officials, plant managers, planners, professionals, ministry officials, some workers and even active members of the "Green Movement." In a real sense, the participants represented a microcosm of the Orenburg region, biased towards the regional decision-making power structure. In addition, there were about 40 other participants representing similar organizations from other republics. And of course there were the two American "interlopers."

After an initial welcome, we were given a very detailed oral and written briefing about the conditions in the region from a number of perspectives. Mornings were spent in small groups doing "reflective analysis of the situation in the game." After lunch, plenary sessions were held, and group reports on the theme of the day were presented. Popov and the other *metodologi* were very confrontational during these plenary sessions, producing some absolutely fascinating and highly charged exchanges.

Perhaps the most fundamental task of the game was to facilitate the players' individual and collective abilities to "self-determine." I was invited to join the "co-op" group, which "self-determined" from the first day. It split into small groups from time to time to discuss particular themes such as joint ventures with foreign firms or establishing legal guidelines for fostering their movement.

Sleep deprivation was a deliberate technique. The game's daily regime in fact usually continued well past 2 AM and the loudspeakers awakened us promptly at 7:30 AM.

Two processes rapidly evolved. First, we were forced to carefully consider the words we were using. Upon inspection, such central phrases as "self-management" and "self-financing" were revealed as rather meaningless non-operational slogans of the *perestroika* campaign. An animated exchange about the meaning of communism and capitalism ended when I remarked that it seemed from the discussion that "under capitalism there is exploitation of man by man while under communism it is just the opposite."

Concomitantly with these thematic debates, the players were confronted with the reality of their daily lives in new ways. The most poignant turning point in the game came on the second day during a heated exchange between Popov and the young leader of the Orenburg Komsomol (Young Communist League). During a plenary session earlier in the day, this same young man had presented a very candid and depressing assessment of the problems of agricultural development in the region. Now, late in the evening, Popov was provoking the players with his comments that the new Congress of Peoples Deputies was a ridiculous circus and charade. Speaking from his heart, this man--a newly elected member of the congress--vehemently defended it. Calmly, Popov replied, "When you spoke this afternoon, I thought, there is a brave man, but a kamikaze." Popov had clearly identified this man as one of the "tall blades of grass"

previously mentioned. There was a hushed silence, as almost every player bowed his or her head. It was a moment when all recognized their own public masks, their own sense of shame for not acting on their values, and their collective sense of despair about their complicity with "the system."

After a long follow-up speech, Popov officially disbanded all the groups and told the players "you are now ready to genuinely 'self-determine' your own groups" for the rest of the game. Late into the night people were caucusing, disbanding or reconstituting their old groups or forming new ones. From this point on, clearly the participants and groups who were best able to articulate their own values, wants, and desires, or in the words of the *metodologi* to "self-activate" were the "winners" in the game. Beyond any question, these were the members of the kooperativny movement.

At 10:30 PM on next to the last night of the game, the local Communist Party sponsors put on a lavish feast. The toast at this affair provided the most provocative moment of the entire eight days. One of the *metodologi* rose and very slowly and deliberately spoke these words:

"If we are successful in civilizing this country, events like this will be rare in the future. I don't mean to insult our hosts this evening, the Communist Party of Orenburg, but we are not here by any process of self-determination. We are here because of the roles we play in this region or in this game. And one of my roles is thus to propose a toast. So I propose a toast to humor, to the humor of the Soviet people. It is our one strength in the face of our hopelessness, our despair, and the hopelessness of the system we live under."

One had such high hopes about the possibility of real change in the Soviet Union while participating in the "igra" and seeing the tremendous changes in peoples' modes of thinking and acting in this time-warped microcosm of society way out in the snowy wind-swept steppes of the Soviet heartland. The reality of the magnitude of the problems which need to be addressed, unfortunately, was soon brought home as we returned to the city of Orenburg, with its beautiful pre-revolutionary buildings surrounded by the monolithic prisms of Soviet architectural realism. A visit to the Orenburg museum commemorating Pugachev, the famous peasant leader of the late Eighteenth Century serf revolt in the Orenburg region, rather profoundly made me realize the gargantuan tasks for Gorbachev and such driven people as Popov to overcome in their own ways the tragic legacy of centuries of painful suffering in Russia. I thanked Popov for providing me with the unique opportunity to try to crawl inside the Soviet/Russian soul and view the Soviet Union from inside. Before I had known the country and her peoples only through the eyes of an observer. This new vision, I believe, will not fade away very quickly nor easily.

P.S. One of Popov's games actually resulted in the workers' selection of a new factory manager at the Riga Automobile Factory (RAF). Other examples of recent Organization and Action Games include a socio-ecological examination of Lake Baykal, examination of development in the Far East, regional ecological planning around Leningrad, military conversion in Omsk, and an ecological school in Irkutsk. Perhaps most fascinating of all will be a game scheduled for January 1991 with the members of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic being the clients. Popov is scheduled to be in the Seattle area in late January 1991. Hopefully, he will be willing to share some of his methods and results of his "games" with us.

New Soviet Videotapes

The following videotapes have been recently acquired by the UW's Educational Media Collection, 35 Kane Hall, 543-9909. These materials are available to all faculty and departments of the UW and most can also be borrowed by institutions, businesses, and individuals in the Northwest and throughout the country. The usual rental period is for 3 days with a rental fee. Teachers interested in obtaining a catalogue of the Russian/East European selection only, for use with their classes, should call our REEU program at 543-4852.

Inside Gorbachev's USSR series (all 1990, Color, 58 minutes, \$18.00):

Part I: The Taste of Democracy. From emotion-charged sessions at the Congress to defiant meetings of neighborhood councils, ordinary citizens are confronting powerful institutions in ways novel to Soviet society.

Part II: Comfortable Lies, Bitter Truths. Gorbachev fights a powerful bureaucracy as he tries to replace party slogans with fresh thinking. Teachers and media, enjoying a new freedom of the press, expose historical lies in an effort to stimulate independent thought; hard-liners resist change.

Part III: Looking for Perestroika. Plans for economic reform are stymied by fear of taking risks or losing power. Visits a coal mine, a state farm, a private enterprise, and the economic ministry in the Kremlin. How restructuring has affected the standard of living and new private business.

Part IV: Coming Apart. A resurgence of religious movements, ethnic rivalries, and demands for independence are bringing the USSR to the verge of implosion. Focuses on Uzbekistan, Armenia, and Lithuania.

Soviet Union series (all 1989, Color, 19 minutes, \$20.00):

Part I: Socialist City. In Moscow, as throughout the USSR, the State controls all aspects of daily life. Hardships persist in spite of reforms, but candid interviews with Muscovites reveal a new optimism under Gorbachev.

Part II: Siberian Riches. The Soviet Union exploits Siberia's timber, oil, gas, coal, and minerals. To attract workers, higher wages and an apartment are promised. But life is bitter, with severe cold, acute shortages of food, and serious environmental problems.

Part III: Steel Town. Looks at working and living conditions in the planned Siberian town of Novokuznetsk, which has undergone forced industrialization without regard to the environment or workers' safety and health.

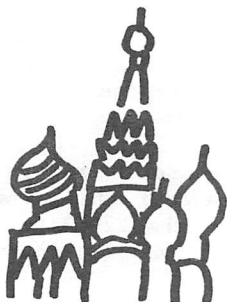
Part IV: Collective Farm. Shows collectivized cotton farming in Uzbekistan. Life is better than in Moscow, but poisonous chemicals endanger workers and irrigation drains water from communities, increasing unemployment.

Part V: Villages in the Clouds. Visits Georgian villages set in almost inaccessible valleys, where fiercely independent people live and work as they have for centuries in an area of small-scale, private farming.

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