

## **Disclosure: Gorbachev's Paradoxical Politics**

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### **Abstract:**

The international reception of M.S. Gorbachev's transparency policy, which came to the Soviet government in 1985, as well as how unreliable it is in domestic politics, power structures and the opposition of "Openness" are analyzed. Censorship practices, the influence of Western media and the liberalization of the domestic press will be covered in detail.

**Keywords:** Disclosure, Reconstruction, Communism, Politizdat, Reform, Historical Moment, Post-Soviet, Gulag, Ideology, Sukhoi Zakon, Political Assassination, Cold War, Voice of America, "Vzglyad", Berlin Wall.

The most important interview with Gorbachev that emphasizes this point of view is his 1988 response to the "Publication of Political Literature of the Central Committee of the CPSU (politizdat)." According to Gorbachev, "The Soviet Union now has 2.5 million propagandists and volunteers. About as many public school teachers as there are in the United States." In other words, he aimed to draw public attention to himself and portray himself as a national hero.

Gorbachev began his first reforms by criticizing the media, because he knew very well how powerful the press was., he convened a large meeting of the editors-in-chief of all Pravda publications.

The meeting was noteworthy because it was the first time that a Communist Party secretary had participated in such an event. The reason was that none of the general secretaries before him had held such a meeting. there was no need to participate, because the entire press was under the control of the Soviet power structures. Gorbachev's participation in the management of "Pravda" was mentioned in the articles of the special edition.<sup>4</sup> After Gorbachev's visit, almost all mass media reforms accelerated. Journalists were encouraged to spread the word about "Reconstruction" and ensure that its message reached everyone. However, the rules of Soviet power structures remained in force. Because Gorbachev believed that ongoing censorship was preventing him from doing so, but that didn't work either. Then Gorbachev began to change the editor-in-chiefs of all newspapers. Even the chief editors of "TASS" and "Pravda" were removed from their positions.<sup>5</sup> Leaders in communist regimes were usually fired in two ways. The first would be completely dismissed from work, the second would be transferred to another lower position. Gorbachev preferred the third way, that is, the chief editors changed their functions. He tried to set an example by distinguishing "Perestroika" from the newly formed domestic system (Stalin's typical communist regime had already drawn up a five-year state plan in 1933, which lasted until 1985).<sup>6</sup> Some Western political analysts often believe that Russian radicals made the Soviet people, who were completely conservative until Gorbachev, safe from the influence of the foreign press. But it was a very big factor, although it indirectly criticized the slow pace of political reforms in the USSR.<sup>7</sup> After 1987, the pace of changes under foreign press. But it was a

very big factor, although it indirectly criticized the slow pace of political reforms in the USSR<sup>7</sup>. After 1987, the pace of changes under Gorbachev accelerated dramatically. Of course, Eastern European governments changed quite rapidly in 1989, but this is not surprising. Most of the people of Eastern Europe wanted to get rid of their communist government and accepted the foreign press as a means of control over this government. The Warsaw Pact stipulated that communism could survive only if the Soviet leadership demonstrated its willingness to use military force. Protection of puppet states under its influence was considered as its last resort. In contrast, the Soviet Union had a "local" communist government with an authoritarian pre-revolutionary history and decades of repressive communist rule (either autocratic or oligarchic). Thus, Russia's transition from a highly centralized political structure to political pluralism and competitive elections in just 3 years was a remarkable achievement.

One of the main decisions taken by Gorbachev at the XIX Party Conference in the summer of 1988 had a political effect only in 1989. It was a controversial reform to give real powers to the parliament of the USSR. Even if powers were given, it was one of the most basic of such reforms. In 1989, it was barely possible to fire 13% of those appointed to ministerial posts. The word "reform" did not seem appropriate to describe the changes that took place within the Soviet system in the late 1980s.

Gorbachev was right when he called the results of the XIX Party Conference a "historic moment," as his keynote speech at the conference solemnly emphasized that the goal of these reforms was an attempt to "make a peaceful, seamless transition from one political system to another." The goal of change has shifted from liberalization to full-scale democratization, but democratization has become a process rather than an end goal. Although the Soviet system did not become a full democracy under Gorbachev or his successors in post-Soviet Russia, it was, at least in theory, a multicultural and distinct communist society. In short, the USSR collapsed in 1991, but by 1989-90, Soviet communism had already ended. Miroslav Bujkevich's analysis of Gorbachev's policy gives a clearer picture. In his 1989 article "Thoughts, Thoughts, Thoughts (Mneniya, Mneniya, Mneniya)" published in Pravda newspaper, Buykevich notes: Today, Gorbachev's reforms are proving to be successful. However, several parliamentarians who do not recognize this situation are against the reform. In fact, most people don't know that it all depends on our thinking. The appearance of these objections among the representatives themselves can be considered as a result of the reforms that have begun, - the author's report says.<sup>11</sup> After Gorbachev announced "Openness" in 1986, the political scene revived again. This situation did not satisfy some deputies and Soviet power structures. Especially the behavior of Gorbachev. In 1989, Gorbachev's statements began to seem contradictory to him, he began to understand the importance of regulating the distribution of information. Let's remind that in 1988-1991 publications began to publicly oppose the actions of the government. He even went so far as to directly criticize the Soviet power structures. However, after the changes in Central and Eastern Europe, the government in general came under criticism. Gorbachev's new policies reflected the need for censorship.<sup>12</sup> Russia's transition from communism to democracy may have been swift, but it was a combination of democracy and arbitrariness. Unlike the transition to democracy in the United Kingdom (England), if the changes were so gradual, it would be almost impossible to pinpoint a specific time for social reform. In the USSR, this process can be directly traced back to 1989. A more vibrant and effective institutionalized democracy would probably be there. But Gorbachev was faced with a conflicting choice regarding two specific problems (returning to pre-formed communism or adapting the new concept of communism to the old one). That is, the process of democratization, which turned these into the opposite, happened very quickly. Gorbachev also stated this in an interview with "Time" magazine.<sup>13</sup>

Gorbachev indicated in this discussion session that "anti-communist activity" would begin in the USSR and that he had already determined his future position on these issues. Many people, especially the Soviet power structures, initially took this conversation as a simple question and answer. However, by 1989, his theories began to be consistently demonstrated in practice. Noting that the USSR's economic problems were intensifying, Gorbachev did not expect that this

scenario (media freedom) would lead to significant reforms. As a result, Gorbachev once again tried to control the media, and by 1989, the Soviet power establishment had resumed censorship of several media outlets.<sup>14</sup> Censorship of the media has been strengthened once again. In 1988, Vadim Medvedev, the chairman of the Ideology (Ideology) Committee, responded positively to a number of critical articles about the Gulag. This, in his opinion, was a positive aspect of Gorbachev's "Openness".<sup>15</sup> Unexpected tensions began to be felt again in the press, which prompted the publication of this analysis. To hide these tensions, the government began publishing articles that openly acknowledged these criticisms and were working to address the issues mentioned. Critical broadcasts and publications dominated the press in 1989-1991.<sup>16</sup> The main explanation for this is that in the earlier history of the Union, it was very difficult for critical articles to be published or broadcast without censorship by the Soviet power structures. Now this situation has aroused great interest for the general public. But the popularization of such criticism did not please the political class. Because many of the events criticized can affect real people in their lives. In 1989-1991, the Soviet power structures also began to ignore the censorship of important programs broadcast by "Voice of America" or Western media.<sup>17</sup> In 2006, Leonid Mamut, an expert on the Soviet Union, gave an interview to the reporter of "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" and described the Gorbachev era as follows:...the entire Union began to want to get rid of the totalitarian regime thanks to the influence of publicity and mass media. This is the unifying goal of all his analyses, as his open discussion of Soviet power structures' censorship and economic hardships fueled growing public discontent. The results of the referendum on the survival of the Soviet Union on March 17, 1991 were also considered to have been influenced by Soviet power structures, as the results were positive. We can see that the censorship of the Soviet power structures continued until the end of the Soviet Union. However, Gorbachev has been betting on the Soviet power structures for the past two years (he wanted to tighten censorship).<sup>18</sup> At the end of 1988, Gorbachev's counter-strategy was formulated, and when it was launched in earnest at the end of 1989, the proceedings became very tense. Gorbachev began to promote his new media policy in official meetings<sup>19</sup>

Gorbachev continued to promote his "Openness" agenda: "We need openness, but we must make sure that it is compatible with social freedom. In other words, we want transparency to solve social problems and find solutions. We can't just stick to democracy and transparency. Transparency is a key goal in achieving our social democracy. Ideas that influence our social consciousness should not be tied to publicity. An example of transparency is a "window curtain". ... Opening the curtain is good, but opening the window is still dangerous."<sup>20</sup> This statement of the General Secretary gave the censorship of the Soviet power structures a fighting chance. An explanation to these words of Gorbachev, that is, because the activities of the "Voice of America" and other Western mass media were very dominant in the territory of the USSR and caused the rapid development of internal social life. I may have caught. After this statement, opinions against him began to be openly expressed in the press. For example, Gorbachev's historian and Lithuanian literary critic Tomas Venclova: The idea of "openness" clearly reflects changes in Gorbachev's heart. That is, "...openness is an invention of bureaucrats to cancel the ideal freedom of speech."<sup>21</sup>

After such statements, the censor was hesitant to do anything. Unexpected revelations and articles continued to proliferate in the late 1980s. Articles such as "Openness during the Gulag" or "KGB and Openness"<sup>22</sup> were written specifically to limit the influence of Soviet power structures. Since 1989, the number of such articles has increased. As a result of resurgent censorship and propaganda, the press and media slowed down, and the experiment in hiding information came into play again. In the end, another operation of the Soviet power structures continued and began to control the press: Censorship policy, which began to think about the restoration of previously established processes such as the GULAG. These changes were partly caused by the upcoming presidential elections. Even "Samizdat", which was a serious critic of the regime, suddenly began to protect the interests of the Politburo and the Communist Party.<sup>23</sup>

Censorship again covered all publications and mass media, but on the other hand "Oshkoralik" denied it. It was in this situation that the opposite political process was taking place.

On December 25, 1991, the President of the USSR M.S. Gorbachev resigned from his post. He left of his own free will - this has never happened in the history of the country. We cannot interpret his path in this position as the glorious pages of history. But there are different opinions about it. Someone wants to justify his work by saying that he took this mission upon himself. He calls the end of the totalitarian regime the highest work, and as a confirmation of this, he cites the example of the Nobel Prize awarded to him.

Many others blame him for the disintegration of a great society and the prosperity of a powerful state. They show the incompetence of the Soviet Union in the face of the crisis.

There is one truth that is equally relevant for everyone - this is what Islam instilled in us: "Speak with evidence", God blessed us in "Baqarah Surah". Therefore, we pay attention to the conclusions of political scientists and historians, who have scientifically researched the activities of Gorbachev, who played a major role in the fate of the USSR, and noted a number of mistakes he made.

### **1. "Sukhoy Zakon" - the ban on alcohol production**

One of Gorbachev's mistakes during his tenure was the passing of the Sukhoi Zakon, a law that ended the production of alcohol. This law was in force for a very short period of time: 1985-87. This caused the destruction of thousands of hectares of vineyards and people's discontent. In the end, it led to the abandonment of their goals. "At the same time, says Sergey Markin, the population has increased, the average age has increased, but the opposite effect has been even worse: distrust and dissatisfaction with the authorities have increased in society."

### **2. Distraction in getting the target right**

Another mistake Mikhail Gorbachev made, which he himself admitted, was the emphasis on the development of light industry and agriculture, rather than heavy industry, as in the post-revolutionary period. should have given. However, he launched an anti-liquor campaign shortly after he came to power in 1985. It seems that an impartial goal is implied: the fight for people's health. But in the end, it turned into hours-long queues at liquor stores, mass poisoning from fake substitutes, the destruction of almost the entire agricultural sector, and as a result, the campaign was stopped, writes publicist Vladimir Kornilov.

### **3. He reformed the CPSU**

One of Gorbachev's first and most important mistakes was his eagerness to democratize the CPSU. Historians say that it was wrong to leave the task of reforming the party to all the branches, it should be managed from one center.

It can be explained simply. For example, there is hardly anyone who has not watched the movie "Operation y". In this film, the process of Vitsin taking one of the high-pitched tuvaks is shown. It grabs a bottom tile, not the top one, and causes several top tiles to collapse. From this point of view, Gorbachev's reform in the party sphere served to destroy it rather than to strengthen it.

### **4. Disasters under the guise of democratic values**

This is how Sergey Kurginyan explains another mistake of Gorbachev. In his opinion, the President of the USSR took the path of reforming the entire country, losing territories for the well-being of a small part of the population. He achieved the indicator of economic stability at the expense of impoverishment of millions of citizens.

### **5. Political reform to the detriment of the economy**

This is also one of the mistakes of the General Secretary, the consequences of which were tragic, - says Vyacheslav Nikonov, political scientist, doctor of history. - Openness shook the financial system of the country in the conditions that did not transition to market economy relations.

"The policy of economic planning had the opposite effect, ultimately causing the collapse of the USSR," the expert believes. The transition from the planning policy to the market economy was announced late. The reason is that there was no political power to regulate the process.

## **6. Political assassination**

The worst mistake of Mikhail Gorbachev, political scientists believe. - It was a "political self-immolation" and the incident happened in September 1991. At that time, under the pressure of the leaders of the regions, he allowed himself to be dispersed in the meeting of people's deputies. With that, he gave a long blow to his shaking position.

According to Sergei Markin, he has lost control over the mass media. As a result, he became preoccupied with political changes at the expense of the economy.

## **7. He retreated to Foros**

In these areas, the result would be visible faster and would have gained the attention of the population. This made it possible to continue the reforms. Another mistake was that he retreated to the island of Pharos. Because of this, his political opponents agreed to join hands. As another mistake, Gorbachev admitted that he was wrong about Yeltsin.

It is not for nothing that we listed a number of mistakes made by the former leader of the former USSR. Indeed, the same mistakes were hailed as Gorbachev's achievements at that time. Western political leaders praised him. They took him to heaven. They made it an immortal topic of foreign mass media. As a result, he was dismissed. Figuratively speaking, it looked like an inflated balloon. He tied a string around his neck and took the color of a toy that would go where he was led. The fate of the bubble is the same: if you blow it, it will inflate, if you don't blow it, it will burst.

The revival of the Gulag system coincided with a significant increase in the number of international refugees leaving the GDR in particular.<sup>24</sup> Information about the freedom and comforts of West Germany was constantly sent to the permanent residents of the GDR. It attracted skilled workers to a new way of living and working, and West Germany as a whole attracted a lot of people's attention with the help of the media. In particular, GDR citizens were more attracted to the GDR than to other countries in the Eastern Bloc due to their interest in West German lifestyles and quality products, as well as the Western concept of human rights.<sup>25</sup>

As a result, for many East Germans, the Gulag became an undeniable example of a brutal political system. There was a "brain drain" in East Germany that continued until the Berlin Wall was built.<sup>26</sup> For this reason, the Communist Party, in turn, has taken continuous additional measures to make it difficult for foreign media to distribute messages and to strengthen control over the materials distributed through them. Advised by the Politburo, the Communist Party has passed ever more stringent laws restricting press freedom over the years.<sup>27</sup>

This gave the Soviet government the ability to distribute and control information as it wanted for years. It was interpreted that the main reason why establishing complete control over information is one of the priority tasks of government policy is for the security of the state. Because, ideologically, diversity was not beneficial for communism. However, such an approach to the issue is expressed by the acceleration of the process of despair and mistrust in Eastern Europe for years in relation to the USSR.

To increase mistrust of information and cold attitudes towards the Soviet government, media conditions and opportunities in the West began to improve. In particular, the American mass media brought to the public's attention various issues, especially problems related to the socio-economic sphere, were published or broadcast in comparison with the Western world. The ideologues of the Soviet government always intensified ideological work in response. The reason is that the hegemonic countries (USSR, USA and Great Britain), which were allies in the Second World War, were at odds with each other after the war.

Figuratively speaking, a cat passed through the fields between which there was no blood during the day and night. Especially, the tensions between America and the USSR grew stronger. Both of them were trying to be the leading power in the process of "cold war" due to their conflicting interests. As interests collide, not only the arms race, but also the media battle has intensified. Near and Eastern Europe has become the field of contentious struggle of media policy of USA and USSR. In order to better control the part of Europe under the influence of the Soviets, the Soviet government also used the services of military structures.

They took measures to force the population to fall in love with communist ideas and to ensure that they adhere to socialist laws - they used political pressure. Every country has been effectively using mass media to implement its goals and tasks in political, economic, social and other spheres. The place and role of the press in informing about national news and changes, state policy, elections and referendums, in raising social opinion among people, in forming a warm attitude in their minds is incomparable: that is why every country considers the press as its beacon. . Also, as much as the role of propaganda inside and outside the country is important, counter-propaganda is especially important to protect against external information attacks outside the country.

Publicism plays a leading role in creating a negative opinion about the opponent and in defaming him. That is why the Soviet Union provided special privileges and financial support to the press service in order to strengthen its censorship activities inside and outside the country. This policy of the Soviet government, formed over the years, softened a little after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985. Significant changes have also taken place in the activities of the structures of the use of force. With the end of censorship, the tensions that had built up over the past few decades began to end. The weakening of the USSR opened the door to new opportunities for the American and Western European mass media: listening to the programs of "Voice of America" (Voice of America) began to take place without hindrance throughout the USSR. It should be said that by 1989, M. S. Gorbachev's policy of openness and transparency began to create a number of complications for the USSR government. This prompted Gorbachev's government to resume censorship of the press by force-using structures. However, his several statements in the media about openness and transparency, positive attitude to criticism, became a serious obstacle to the restoration of censorship by power structures.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the liberalization of the Soviet press in the middle of 1989, the introduction of censorship caused great problems in Central and Eastern Europe. Because it was precisely because of this freedom of the press that the Berlin Wall fell, which accelerated the practical work to end communism in most countries of the Eastern Bloc. As a result, the fall of the Berlin Wall was seen by many in Europe as the end of Soviet censorship. Because it is precisely in this situation that the Soviet government did not control the press, especially the live broadcasts, and its negligent attitude to propaganda work has been remembered in recent history.

General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU M.S. Gorbachev's abolition of KGB (Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti - State Security Committee) censorship of the press was not the only factor that weakened the USSR's media policy. In 1987, the announcement of a new policy called "Perestroika i glasnost" - "Restructuring and Transparency" - eased restrictions on foreign media broadcasting, which changed the domestic media landscape of the USSR. One of the TV projects that effectively used this opportunity was "Vzglyad". It is the shows in this project column that are currently being studied as the Soviet equivalent of Western journalistic shows. This is because "Vzglyad" managed to bypass the KGB censorship and gain fame in the country through its live broadcasts. His programs in the "VZGLYaD" column, in which he conducted live interviews with former KGB officers and other government officials, aroused special interest in social life.

At this point, it should be said that Gorbachev personally does not admit that the "Reconstruction" policy, which he led in the country, was a failure and made a powerful state proud. His lawyers also blindly try to deflect from him the responsibility for the overall negative

consequences of this policy: that is, if it were not for the "August Putsch" of 1991, Gorbachev's unfinished reforms might have produced honorable results. they do. At the same time, they want to blame the "Putches" for the shortage of consumer goods, poverty, and eventually the disintegration of the USSR, which occurred in the country in the 90s of the last century. There is a proverb that says, "If you hide the sick, the fever will be revealed." No matter how Gorbachev's supporters try to embellish the truth, they don't even realize that they are unknowingly contradicting themselves. For example, Alexander Sipko, one of the founders of the Gorbachev Foundation, doctor of philosophy, challenged the Russian liberals in his article entitled "Crucified Reconstruction Policy" and pointed out that Gorbachev, the last general secretary of the USSR, and his policies played a decisive role in this process. Protests against those trying to deny Gorbachev's mana favors. With this opinion, he does not realize that he is admitting that the main goal of the reconstruction policy is to break up the USSR.

The question of the role and importance of the person in society has been a constant topic of the science of wisdom - philosophy. Someone believes in it, someone looks at it with disbelief. From this point of view, there are two different approaches to the issue of the disintegration of the USSR. If someone puts forward the hypothesis that regardless of the leader of the country, it was inevitable that he would suffer such a fate, some people will attribute the main reason for this decline to the unwillingness of Gorbachev, who was mute to Raisa Maksimovna.

According to historians and sociologists, Mikhail Sergeevich Gorobchev made a number of mistakes during his career: the policy of "openness", ending the production of alcohol plants, reforming the CPSU and a number of similar reforms were far-sighted policies. they emphasize that it is not, even that the political figures of the USA and England have talked about it in their speeches.

That's why we studied the factors that caused the decline of the USSR using these facts and figures above.

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