

Union of Sovereign Soviet States

By Matthew R. Haney

With the War in the Gulfraging, and our men dying in the Kuwait Theater, every American has been shackled to their televisions, watching events unfold before thier eyes. We hear the explosions and see the carnage, visions of destruction stay with us in our dreams and they occupy our thoughts. Yet throughout this conflict, while we watch history happen, let us not lose our world perspective. Kuwait is but a tiny nation, and Iraq, though controlled by a madman, has only one real natural resource, oil. This event, though it will surely be a significant part of our future history books may not affect the future of the world as much as the most recent actions within the U.S.S.R.

When Gorbachev set his reforms into action just a few short years ago, he had little idea where they would lead. His plans, his ideas, stand to mold the destiny and drive the course of 'The Soviet Empire' for years to come. When our grandchildren look back at this period will Gorbachev be remembered as a genius or as a fool?

Gorbachev hoped that the general freedom of the press and the opening of elections would solidify and unify his republics. Gorbachev believed that the

slow freeing of the economy would increase productivity through competition. Yet what have we seen? This slackening of Soviet control allowed revolution to sweep Eastern Europe, her biggest trading partner, freeing these oppressed nations from communist rule. We have seen the fall of the Berlin Wall and the reunification of Germany. Within the Soviet Union we see not a rise of Soviet Nationalism, but rather a rise in Lithuanian Nationalism, Ukrainian Nationalism, Russian Nationalism, and Georgian Nationalism. We see the store shelves in Leningrad and Moscow empty, and the Soviet people enduring a cold hungry winter.

Today, Gorbachev struggles to hold his fragile Empire together. The Baltic Republics scream for the independence that they knew between World War I and II. Azerbaijanis and Armenians are at war with each other within the so-called Soviet Union. Boris Yelstin now leads the massive Russian Federation on a course of reform which very well might eventually lead to freedom from the Soviet Union. Today, Gorbachev may now be regretting and is certainly now repealing some of the reforms he fought so valiantly to

introduce. He surely feels he must be tough just to survive.

Though many of the Soviet republics scream for freedom, many in the west question whether or not they can survive independently. These nay-sayers claim that the ties that bind the republics together are overwhelming. They claim the Baltic republics are too small to stand independently, and that they are overdependent on oil from Russia. Russia, though full of natural resources' has few factories and is dependent on wheat from Georgia. While Georgia is dependent on Uzbekistan for cotton, and so on.

Others argue that even if and when a free-market economy is implemented fully, each Soviet republic can and would act as an independent Republic. This so-called economic coalition would be similar to the European Common Market, where agricultural giants like the

Caucuses produce the raw materials, and manufacturing states like Lithuania process them; similar to the relationship of Spain and Germany.

Even with all of these questions and ideas, one thing is positive, as the Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics (As Gorbachev now calls the Nation) stumbles into the next century, we as future leaders must pay her close attention.

(Editor's Note: One must ask him/herself if these reforms are for the worse? Maybe this is but another, third step in the Soviet Republic's government, like that of Peter the Great or the Russian Revolution at the beginning of this century.)

Night Light

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust.

--Psalm 91

Quotables

To find faults in another takes only a fool, but to help one overcome his faults is nothing but love.

--Ken Schmidt

Don't point to the splinter in a brother's eye when you have a log in your own...

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