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**The Paradoxical Role
of Russian Nationalism
in a Future Soviet State**

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Peter Rutland

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**THE PARADOXICAL ROLE
OF RUSSIAN NATIONALISM
IN A FUTURE SOVIET STATE**



Peter Rutland

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FOREWORD

The Communist Party, once the center of all Soviet power, has lost its preeminence to new governmental institutions—the presidency, the Congress of People's Deputies, and the Supreme Soviet—and to new centers of power in the union republics—city governments, striking workers, and nascent political parties. Change, formerly dictated from the top, now rises from multiple centers across the vast and decaying Soviet Empire. The process of change may be blocked or accelerated by events that are unforeseen. This study focuses on the role of Russian nationalism in these changes. Paradoxically, the author concludes that Russian nationalism, in sharp contrast to its counterparts in the non-Russian Republics, has played a surprisingly small role in the dynamics that are pushing the Soviet State closer to an as yet unknowable alternative future. The "coup" of August 19, 1991, is the most recent and dramatic example of the old guard's inability to use traditional symbols of Russian nationalism to mobilize support or to discredit the supporters of Boris Yeltsin and Mikhail Gorbachev.

This research is part of a larger Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) project on Alternative Soviet Futures. The original paper was prepared for a workshop sponsored by SSI and funded by the Army Chief of Staff's Strategic Outreach Program. The author, Dr. Peter Rutland, is Professor of Political Science at Wesleyan University.

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KARL W. ROBINSON
Colonel, U.S. Army
Director, Strategic Studies Institute

THE PARADOXICAL ROLE OF RUSSIAN NATIONALISM IN A FUTURE SOVIET STATE

Introduction.

Nationalism and its symbolic appeals to the individual for loyalty and self-sacrifice to state interests is remarkably absent in the current Soviet crisis. The root cause for this can be traced to the failure of Marxist-Leninism to create an ideological melting pot for the common loyalties of a vast, multinational state. As the symbols of ideology collapse in the wake of political liberalization, traditional ethnic-based nationalism has emerged in nearly every union republic. Yet in Russia itself the "patriotic" movement has remained a marginal force. Why is this, and what are the prospects for a resurgence of Russian nationalism as conditions deteriorate?

The central contradiction of Russian nationalism is its ambiguous relationship to the state. Under the Tsars, the multinational Empire rested on force rather than on a concept of the Russian nation. The Empire was legitimized not by popular nationalism, but through such concepts as personal loyalty to the Tsar, participation in imperial adventures, and membership in a community of Orthodox believers. The bureaucratic apparatus of the state was itself seen as an alien, Germanic invention. Only in the second half of the 19th century did Tsars recognize the power of nationalism, but too late to save their regime.

The political legacy of Tsarism left an ambiguous and uncertain definition of Russian national identity. The geopolitical legacy is a state which covers a huge, sprawling expanse of territory, inhabited by peoples of bewildering ethnic heterogeneity. Among them are dispersed 25 million diaspora (scattered colonies) Russians.

After 1917, the situation became still more anomalous (by European standards), when a new, supposedly supranational

state was created. However, despite its secular character the Soviet state did, during crises, tap into Russian patriotism, beginning with the "National Bolsheviks" during the revolution and peaking during the Great Patriotic War. Russian patriots (as they call themselves) had no option—the USSR was the only state they had to defend.

But there was a nagging feeling that Russian interests were routinely being sacrificed for the sake of the Soviet state. Economic resources were diverted to the development of Central Asia; and while other republics had their own Communist parties, Academies of Sciences and other bureaucracies that mirrored their national parent organization, Russians had to make do with the all-union organizations (which, of course, they dominated). During the Brezhnev years, Russians grew increasingly exasperated with the need to hide behind the empty slogans of "Developed Socialism." There was a nationalism which could not speak its name. It also became increasingly apparent that the political system to which they had nailed their colors was proving a failure, morally and economically.

The Brezhnev leadership tolerated the emergence of a group of Russian writers who articulated these nationalist concerns—most notably, those who idealized the values of the disappearing Russian village. However, Brezhnev did not allow these writers to have any influence in the political process. After his death, the nationalists began to search for a more prominent political role, and formed an alliance with conservative officials in the party apparatus.

This proved to be a tactical mistake. Voter behavior in the elections of 1989, 1990, and again in 1991 was dominated by the desire to vote against party functionaries. Debate over specific issues in which nationalists might have won some support never really took place. Voters perceived Russian nationalists as linked to the old regime, and the nationalists paid the price in those elections. Representatives of the "patriotic" groups make up only 1-3 percent of the deputies in local or national soviets in Russia.

Why didn't the patriots abandon the Communist apparatus and adopt a populist strategy, as did their liberal-Westernizer rivals? There can be little doubt that a mass following could have been mobilized through appeals to core nationalist values. Throughout this century, nationalism has been a virtually universal phenomenon in the politics of countries throughout the worlds. There is no evidence to suggest that Russians are any different in terms of their ability to rally around symbols of nationhood. The patriots held back from populism partly because they were afraid that they might succeed: they inherited the Russian intelligentsia's traditional fear of its own people. Also, the patriots had grown too accustomed to their cozy cohabitation with the party establishment.

This leaves the Russian nationalists in an increasingly untenable position; tied to a state apparatus which is sinking fast and which is structurally incapable of utilizing nationalism to save itself. Where does this leave Russian nationalism? It could be that it will continue to remain an absent force in Soviet politics. This would assume that the Soviet state can scrape together sufficient resources (of the material, not ideological, variety), to remain in power and maintain the status quo. However, if the Soviet state collapses, it is conceivable that a full-blooded Russian nationalist movement could emerge, separating itself from the Soviet state and making its own direct appeal to the masses.

What Is A Russian?

Nationalism is primarily a matter of subjective self-identification. It is a vessel that can carry a variety of contents. In the central Russian Republic, the basic building blocks are already present:

- A common language and culture;
- A sense of place that is their own;
- A sense of distinctness from foreigners; and,
- A shared (tragic) history.

Whoever takes over the leadership of a Russian nationalist state, should such a state emerge, will have to exploit these basic components of nationalism and cope with some of the ambiguities of Russian national identity including:

The Question of the Soviet State. Russians have to decide at what point the USSR went wrong, so as to reconstruct an agreed version of what is the authentic Russian history. They also have to bite the bullet and recognize that Russia's superpower days are over—something which, despite the grumbling in the army, they are probably prepared to concede. There is almost no evidence that Russian nationalists of any hue are seriously troubled by the loss of superpower status, or for that matter, fear of a resurgent Germany.

The Question of the Russian Diaspora. Some liberals and some conservatives (Alexander Solzhenitsyn) are prepared to see the Russian state contract to territories inhabited by Slavic populations. Without such a retreat, it will be impossible to separate Russian identity from the Soviet state.

However, there is the minor problem of 25 million diaspora Russians living in outlying republics, and the alleged 300,000 Russian refugees from inter-ethnic violence in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. The only organized nationalist movement to have emerged thus far is the network of "Interfronts" created by Russians in the Baltic and Moldavia. These, however, are "fronts" in more ways than one, since they are at least in part created and run by managers and CPSU officials. In allowing diaspora issues to dominate the nationalist agenda, the patriots are in danger of committing a strategic mistake akin to that committed by the French Right when they backed the Algerian *pied noirs*.

Russia's Perceived "Backwardness." The eternal debate between Slavophiles and Westernizers continues. The "right" argue for the restoration of a spiritual community, based on Orthodoxy, and reject Western materialism and democracy. The liberals embrace materialism and modernity, but this portrays Russians as inferior to the West and challenges their sense of distinctive identity.

The Lack of Heroes. Russian nationalists have a deficit of heroes. After Stalin, the Soviet political system itself generated few heroes. Children's readers rarely get beyond Lenin and Yuri Gagarin. In contrast to East Europe, there is no Russian Havel, still less a Walesa. Would-be heroes such as the Afghan veteran Colonel-General Boris Gromov occasionally surface, but do not look very convincing. (Gromov's achievement, after all, was to lead his army out of a lost war.) Such questionable fame is a reason why one can predict the emergence of unpredictable heroes.

The Economic Crisis. The economic system is in a shambles, and the Russian nationalists face a dilemma. To preserve the central planning system means to keep the CPSU in business, since the party's command structure is inextricably intertwined with the central economic bureaucracies. The idea that partial market reform would gradually weaken the political power of the Communist Party was disproved by the failure of reform communism in Eastern Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. The Russian nationalists thus have no serious economic program. (But this need not prevent them from taking power!)

All nationalist movements face dilemmas of this sort—although dilemmas of this complexity are perhaps unique to the Russian case. Nor, it should be stressed, should one expect to see these issues resolved before a nationalist movement can arise. It would be sufficient for leaders to emerge who could provide some sort of plausible rhetoric, capable of accommodating these problems.

Alternative Scenarios For The Future of Russian Nationalism.

The tinder for a Russian nationalist movement is lying around waiting for a spark. In a sense, such a movement is long overdue historically. The biggest unresolved question is who would constitute the leadership of a resurgent Russian nationalism. Five possibilities spring to mind:

Military rule. Following the pattern which prevails in more than 50 percent of the world's countries, military leaders could ease themselves into power in defense of "national interest."

The Soviet military is indeed taking an increasingly prominent political role—thanks, ironically, to the emergence of elected legislatures.

However, this variant is implausible. Military governments are not politically sophisticated or innovative. They appeal to a preexisting sense of national identity and *la patrie en danger*, and typically shun political controversy. This strategy will not work in the Russian case. A new military leadership would have to define anew what national interest is being defended. Military leaders would have to choose between the Russian and the Soviet, or at least explain how they can reconcile these two.

Communist Nationalism. The CPSU itself could drop its lip service to socialist internationalism and embrace nationalist rhetoric. The Serbian-Communists made such a move in 1988, and it led them to victory in subsequent elections. However, this scenario is unlikely to unfold in Russia. There is little sign that CPSU leaders are sufficiently flexible and innovative to be able to pull off such a switch. Party conservatives who have been moving in this direction, such as Ivan Polozkov, head of the newly-created Russian Communist Party, are probably too discredited to be taken seriously, being seen as mere holdovers from the Brezhnev era.

Additionally, the CPSU is still thinking in imperial, and not Russian, terms. Its answer to the position of diaspora Russians is the preservation of the union, which in turn requires the maintenance of the ethnically-neutral facade at union level.

Fascism. One can rule out the idea that one of the anti-Semitic sects, such as *Pamyat*, could emerge at the head of a Russian nationalist movement. *Pamyat* is a lunatic fringe with members numbering only in the dozens, and an importance that has been grossly exaggerated in the West.*

* At the Moscow demonstration I identified no more than 25 people as *Pamyat* supporters. During a month in Novosibirsk in 1989, allegedly one of the strongholds of *Pamyat* outside Moscow, I noted about 10 *Pamyat* activists.

Fascism is a phenomenon with certain distinctive characteristics which seem thankfully absent from the Soviet scene. The essence of fascism is the creation of a large organization to defeat a mass mobilization by Communists. In the Russian case, we have a disaffected, anomic mass which is not being mobilized by anybody. Of course, popular mobilization exists in the peripheral republics, but rallying Russians in defense of their diaspora brethren is a different exercise altogether.

Liberal Nationalism. An alternative scenario would be one in which the democrats make more effective use of nationalist rhetoric. Several factors are working in the democrats' favor:

- They have control (more or less) over the Russian parliament—the first institution to emerge from perestroika as an authoritative spokesman for Russian interests. Unlike the conservatives, the democrats have already accepted that holding republics inside the union by force is a mistake.
- Their program of economic liberalization and opening to international trade has considerable appeal to Russian nationalist sentiment, since Russia's vast mineral wealth makes it a likely beneficiary of such measures. Studies of trade flows suggest that Russia runs a large ruble and hard currency trade surplus with the other republics.
- The democrats currently hold a monopoly over the symbols of Russian nationalism.

At the moment, despite the fact that the democrats control several important legislative bodies (the Russian Republic Parliament, the Moscow and Leningrad Soviets, for example), they lack a common program and are divided into feuding personal factions. The forging of a clear liberal-nationalist program could provide them with the coherence they currently lack.

The problem with this scenario is that the democrats are extremely reluctant to adopt nationalist rhetoric. They see

themselves as internationalists, bringing in Western ideas of democracy and the market concept. Also, like the patriots, they are not sure how the Russian people will react to their ideas. Liberal nationalism does not have much of a foothold in Soviet or Russian history. For years the liberals have been taught, and have apparently believed, that nationalism is a negative phenomenon, connected with Russia's dark past and with anti-Semitism and fascism.

One bright spot is that many of the democrats have been observing the process of political change in East Europe and the Baltics, and are learning that national pride and modernity are not irreconcilable opposites. A second positive development is that the first mass mobilization of the perestroika period—the miners' strikes—was interpreted by the liberal intelligentsia as showing that the workers were open to ideas of markets and democracy.

A Spontaneous Movement. The safest prognosis might be to predict that an unknown leader will emerge to head renescent Russian nationalism. This may not be as implausible as it initially appears. One of the distinctive features of Soviet political life over the past 3 years has been the appearance of popular heroes as if from nowhere, who rise to prominence by launching a personal assault on the current regime. Think of the mud-raking prosecutors T. Gdlyan and N. Ivanov, the dissident KGB General Oleg Kalugin, or Boris Yeltsin himself. The polls show them to be among the most popular politicians in the country, having recently been joined by another lone dissident, Eduard Shevardnadze. This despite the fact that no one can explain what concrete policies they stand for. Obviously, figures such as the 'Black Colonel' Viktor Alksnis would like to play such a role.

Federal Union and Great Russian Nationalism.

The federation option means a continuation of the present system, and is a fairly safe prediction for the immediate future. In what ways would the future differ from the past under this scenario?

Gorbachev's presence at the helm of the state, in the newly-created post of President, is seen as the critical factor in determining the viability of this scenario. Only Gorbachev is seen as having the ability to balance the contending forces of Left and Right. According to optimists such as Jerry Hough, the Presidency provides Gorbachev with a platform to overcome bureaucratic resistance and cultural inertia, and will enable him to drag Russia into the modern world. Analogies are drawn with authoritarian-modernizing regimes in peripheral societies such as Franco's Spain or Pinochet's Chile. The scenario envisions Gorbachev using these powers to open the economy to foreign trade and market forces. There are at least two problems with the scenario:

1) *The Democrats.* Democracy is not seen as part of the picture, at least for the time being. The assumption is that the new democratic forces (in the legislatures and in the press) will be tolerated only to the extent that they do not interfere with the implementation of Gorbachev's reform programs. If they cause trouble they will be harassed (administratively, economically and, perhaps, legally), in the way that independent political actors are marginalized in many authoritarian regimes (such as Mexico under the PRI). The other way to deal with the democrats is to try to incorporate them by seducing them with job offers, and allowing them to enrich themselves through joint ventures, foreign travel and consultancies with Westerners.

It is not clear that the Presidency is strong enough to maintain the stability of the political system. The democratic forces are deeply divided and poorly organized, and lack a clear program. Nevertheless, they may continue to enjoy enough public support to thwart Gorbachev's plans. Gorbachev's best strategy is to continue to allow the democratically-elected soviets to fester as talking shops, divorced from real decision making, while the official establishment systematically steals their ideas and appropriates their slogans. Note, for example, how quickly Gorbachev latched onto the word 'sovereignty,' or the fact that in October 1990 the official trade union organization reorganized itself as the 'Federation of Independent Unions.'

2) *The CPSU*. Even if Gorbachev fends off the democrats, he still needs the regional party apparatus in order to run the country. Like the democrats, its loyalty to him has been exhausted. Gorbachev tried in a half-hearted manner to 'democratize' the CPSU in 1987-88, with the aim of turning it into a real political party, capable of winning elections on the basis of its program.

This was a profound mistake. The CPSU was not a political party at all in the modern sense of the word. (It had some parallels with Tammany Hall, but without the need to gather votes.) It was a bureaucratic machine, built around the allocation of scarce resources, and functioning on the basis of patronage deals and consensus decision making. It was not designed to debate and evaluate policy alternatives.

Gorbachev's efforts to transform the CPSU failed. The 19th Party Conference in June 1988 did not see pro-reform delegates being elected, and party conservatives went down to crashing defeats in the March 1989 elections to the Congress of Deputies. Gorbachev's grip on the party progressively weakened. The Central Committee staff stopped issuing detailed instructions to regional party organizations, and ceased their close monitoring of appointments in the provinces.

By 1990, the regional party machines were fighting back. Not only had they refused to yield their grip on the reigns of power in the provinces, but also by forming the Russian Communist Party in June 1990 they started to rebuild a central apparatus—outside Gorbachev's control. Reformist currents within the CPSU, such as the democratic platform, proved to be a small minority and were brushed off by the organization despite behind-the-scenes assistance from Gorbachev. Despite their institutional strength, the party conservatives are devoid of ideas and are discredited, fearful and confused. They much prefer to see Gorbachev in the 'hot seat' for the time being.

The long-term prospects for this renewed federation scenario are bleak, however. First, too much hinges on the personal leadership of Gorbachev. Were he to disappear,

through assassination, electoral defeat, or simple exhaustion, the system could be plunged into chaos. Second, the emergence of the rival camps of democrats and party conservatives means that the preconditions for the old type of federation have eroded, but forces capable of generating a new federation have not emerged, and are unlikely to do so. Third, the mounting economic crisis means that the old politics of equal shares ('an earring for each sister') are no longer viable. More drastic and visionary allocative decisions need to be made, and neither the CPSU nor the Gorbachev presidency is up to the task.

Confederation: An End to Great Russian Nationalism?

The confederation solution suggests the possible emergence of a new type of state in which power is dispersed between nine or more republics. Moscow would merely serve as a power broker or clearing house for the resolution of conflicts between the republics, which would be roughly equal in power and status. Most advocates of this scenario are optimists, suggesting that many of the constituent republics could turn out to be market-oriented democracies.

Evidence for this scenario has started to emerge in the past year, with the sovereignty declarations of the republics, the transformation of the Politburo into a body where all republic first secretaries are formally represented, and the increasing reliance on direct negotiations between Gorbachev and republic presidents.

There are, however, several reasons for suggesting that these developments, important though they are, do not represent a qualitative break with the past. First, there are virtually no examples in history of a successful confederation, where equal partners are able to form an alliance strong enough to function as a nation state. They either collapse into separate states or merge into a unitary state.

Second, Moscow retains too much power—over the military, over foreign policy, and above all over the economy—to be regarded simply as a broker between member republics. Even supposedly confederalist measures such

as Shatalin's 500 Days' Plan are much more centralist than their protagonists suggested. The Shatalin Plan, for example, kept the power to issue currency with a single central bank. In theory this bank would be independent: in practice there is hardly a central bank in the world that is immune to political pressure. In a society where the President still decides what goes on the evening news, the idea of an independent central bank is ludicrous. Republican leaders (for example, from the Ukraine) were aware of these flaws in the Shatalin Plan, but didn't get a chance to air their doubts before it was torpedoed by Gorbachev. Similarly, the much-heralded 'horizontal' trade pacts concluded between the republics are largely illusory. Most of them have remained empty, paper commitments, and among those that have been acted upon, the majority were signed to secure inputs for enterprises trying to meet Moscow's annual plan targets, but who had left to find their own supplies under the new 'decentralized' planning system.

Third, it can be argued that the real issue in the current 'confederation' negotiations is decentralization, and not democratization. Far from being a vehicle for modernization, confederation may be simply a device for regional elites to preserve their power. (A parallel here perhaps with the Confederacy of the South.) This applies most clearly to the well-entrenched elites in Central Asia, but may also apply to Ukraine and even Russia itself. It is pertinent to remember that the stability of the Brezhnev era rested largely on Moscow's willingness to leave the republican party bosses to their own devices (Rashidov, Kunaev, Shcherbitski, for example). This political alliance based on regional loyalties (i.e., nationalism) was disrupted by the attempts of Andropov and Gorbachev to 'modernize' the system.

Thus confederation may turn out to be a step towards the past rather than a step into a new future. A lot depends on how one interprets the motives of Yeltsin, Popov and the other leaders of Democratic Russia. Are they revolutionaries, or people whose gut instinct is to work within the system? Yeltsin's role is particularly ambiguous, given his remarkable, chameleon-like qualities. He is able to sense what an audience wants to hear, and then serve it up to them; oblivious to the

fact that it might contradict what he told another audience the day before. One feels that they are effect rather than cause. Deep shifts in society have pushed these leaders into prominence, but they themselves did not shape or lead these forces in any conventional sense. This implies that if the winds of history started to blow in another direction, they would quickly adapt to the new environment.

Revolt and Fragmentation.

This scenario is arguably the least plausible. The Soviet/Russian state is not an Angola or Ethiopia which can simply fall apart in a matter of months. It is built around a core sense of national identity and a military/administrative structure which have a centuries old history, and which have been among the most powerful national structures of this century. For all its political demoralization, ethnic diversity, and budgetary cutbacks, the Soviet Army remains well capable of maintaining domestic law and order. Russia may well be the 'sick man of Eurasia,' but, like the Ottoman Empire, its collapse will take decades.

Even the case of Yugoslavia, now frequently cited as a precursor of the Soviet future, is an example which can cut both ways. Yugoslavia is a much younger and more artificial creation than Russia, and despite severe ethnic antagonisms and diverging economic interests it has been a long time a-dying, and may yet stagger into the 21st century.

Of course, some of the peripheral national republics will continue trying to exit from the union—i.e., the six who refused to take part in the April 23 agreement on a new union (Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and the Baltics). The six comprise only 5 percent of the total Soviet population, and unrest in those regions will not cause the whole state to collapse. Instead, the question to consider is how will the center try to manage this fragmentation? Moscow is likely to pursue the following strategies:

- The center will do what is necessary to keep a monopoly of armed force, control over Soviet borders, and internal security.

- After the debacle of January 1991, the center will not try to use military force to destabilize the independence-seeking republics.
- The center will use tightening economic pressure to squeeze them into compromise. The numbers (on trade flows, on energy dependency, on the likely level of Western assistance) seem to be on Moscow's side.
- The carrot which accompanies these sticks will be the offer of a special constitutional arrangement (such as Finland enjoyed in the Russian Empire), giving these peoples more economic and political freedom than they presently enjoy.

If these strategies do not work, and hard-line groups within the six try to mount a military challenge to Moscow, then we can expect a lengthy period of counterinsurgency operations similar to Northern Ireland or to Poland in the 19th century. Recall also, for example, that at any one time about 40 million of India's population are living under martial law—and yet the state survives, and even manages to function as a democracy.

Conclusion.

Forecasting the Soviet future is a tricky business because it requires keeping a sharp eye and an open mind on parallel developments in economic, political, and military institutions. The anomalous if not unique role of Russian nationalism in political change, coalition building and factionalism complicates the task even further. The main conclusion of this study is that to date (and for the mid-term future), Russian nationalism has played a surprisingly small role in the dynamics that are pushing the Soviet state closer to an as yet unknowable alternative future.

The relatively marginal role of Russian nationalism in this process is encouraging, because if the revolution that Gorbachev unleashed is eventually captured by Great Russian nationalists with appeals for delivering order out of chaos, the prospects for democratization and the peaceful transition of

political power to the union republics will diminish dramatically. It is, therefore, in our interest to aid the process of change in a way that reduces the appeals of traditional and antidemocratic Russian Nationalism. This study is intended to assist those who have that responsibility. Their task is not an easy one. It is easy to predict the fall of the Berlin Wall or elections in the USSR. What 5 years ago seemed inconceivable, now looks as if it was inevitable. The future may hold similar surprises. The safest prediction therefore is that the Soviet system is unlikely to revert to the dull monotony of the Brezhnev years when Soviet specialists and forecasters had at least a 50 percent chance of "getting it right."

APPENDIX A

SOVIET ARMY DAY 1991: A CASE STUDY OF IMPOTENT NATIONALISM

A rally was called on February 23 to display "popular" support for Gorbachev's efforts to preserve the union—sending troops to the Baltic, and calling a referendum for March 17. However, the orators who addressed the rally spoke in a perfunctory and unconvincing manner. Gorbachev's name was hardly mentioned—which is curious, since the purpose of the meeting was to defend his policies.

The 40,000 or so demonstrators themselves did not seem to know quite why they were there. At least one quarter of the crowd were soldiers, who had been ordered to attend. They carried posters asserting "The Army is for Socialism!" and "The parachutists and the people are united!" The civilian demonstrators, almost all elderly people, carried posters supporting the army, and some officially-prepared placards calling for a "yes" vote in the March 17 referendum. The crowd did not have any slogans of their own to chant. Groups of soldiers in the crowd occasionally chanted "Hurrah," or "Molodets" in praise of a speaker, but these calls were not taken up by the crowd.

The conservative demonstrators exiting from the square stared in curious silence at an energetic and noisy counterdemonstration of 50 Yeltsin supporters, standing on top of the subway entrance. Interestingly, it was the Yeltsinites who were waving the prerevolutionary Russian tricolor, and shouting "Rossiya!"—while a group of conservatives were waving the red flag. The conservatives were not able to come up with any counterslogans. They clearly did not want to

counter "Rossiya!" with shouts of "Soyuz!" (Union), still less meet "Yeltsin!" with cries of "Gorbachev!" Isolated individuals in the crowd contented themselves with throwing coins and shouting "Traitors!" and "Zionists !", to which the Yeltsinites replied with cries of "Fascists!"