

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

October 10, 1991

## New KGB Spymaster, Same Nasty Tricks

By J. MICHAEL WALLER

Has Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev learned his lesson? His handpicked leaders of the KGB, the military and the internal security forces, who staged the coup against him in August, were all hard-liners. After the coup failed, a shaken and somber Mr. Gorbachev admitted that was mistaken in choosing them, and wouldn't be taken in again. But last week's appointment of Yevgeny Primakov as chief of foreign intelligence shows the Soviet leader still can't break old habits.

Mr. Primakov is a Brezhnev holdover who promoted some of the old regime's worst excesses abroad, both as a propagandist and as a policy maker. He was an architect of the Kremlin's 20-year alliance with Iraq's Saddam Hussein and of long-term military and diplomatic support for the Palestine Liberation Organization. He also flacked for Brezhnev's 1979 invasion and subsequent occupation of Afghanistan.

The Kremlin's new spymaster rose to the top with other party hard-liners. Mr. Primakov was named a candidate member of the Politburo with Latvian KGB boss Boris Pugo in September 1989, the same time Soviet KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov assumed full membership in the party's top policy-making body.

### A Chilling Signal

If there was ever a chance for Mr. Gorbachev to show the West how truly committed he is to reform, it was last week when he named the man who would coordinate Kremlin espionage operations. There is no shortage in Moscow of capable professionals whose appointment would not have sent such a chilling signal. Former Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, a non-Russian who quit the Communist Party and is liked and respected in the West, comes easily to mind despite questions about his commitment to democracy.

There are even reformers from inside the KGB. Former KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin, once a top counterintelligence official who was forced to retire last year, earned his credentials when Mr. Gorbachev stripped him of his rank and his pension at

the behest of KGB hard-liners. His crime? Reviling KGB leaders for serving as tools of the Communist Party. Capitalizing on his notoriety, Mr. Kalugin was elected to parliament as a close ally of Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Mikhail Lyubimov, who headed KGB operations in Denmark, is another professional who accused the KGB of serving the party instead of the country. Shortly before the August coup, Mr. Lyubimov publicly denounced KGB Chairman Kryuchkov for his reactionary policies. Dozens of other openly anti-Communist KGB personnel surfaced well before the coup. But Mr. Gorbachev opted instead for a hard-line communist, Mr. Primakov.

Unlike his erstwhile politburo colleagues Messrs. Kryuchkov and Pugo, Mr. Prima-

kov was against the August coup. But the spin the Kremlin is putting on his appointment as intelligence chief reeks of the bad old days. Mr. Primakov's professed fondness for John Le Carre spy novels echoes the image-making machinery that sought to portray KGB Chairman Yuri Andropov, who succeeded Brezhnev in 1982, as a Scotch-sipping "closet liberal" who enjoyed American jazz. Mr. Primakov's call for cooperation between the KGB and the CIA is warmed-over rhetoric from two years ago, when KGB Chairman Kryuchkov made the same pitch, as did his predecessor Viktor Chebrikov.

The timing of Mr. Primakov's first press conference as spymaster also raises questions about the level of honesty the West can expect from the Soviet central government. His Kremlin appearance occurred within hours of Mr. Gorbachev's historic acknowledgement of the problem of anti-Semitism in the U.S.S.R. during a meeting with American Jewish leaders. The occasion diverted attention from Mr. Primakov's long career of sponsoring violence against Israel.

In 1970, as the Brezhnev regime's top Middle East expert, Mr. Primakov justified PLO terrorism as a necessary part of "the general popular struggle . . . for the liberation of occupied territory." During Moscow's international "Zionism is racism" crusade of that decade, Mr. Primakov was part of the anti-Israel propaganda ma-

chinery as a Middle East correspondent for Pravda, and dutifully supported the PLO in the midst of its most notorious and horrific atrocities around the world.

Mr. Primakov deplored the Iran-Iraq war because "It diverts the forces of Iraq and Iran from the struggle against imperialism. It promotes the strengthening of certain trends which are needed by the United States in the region as a whole, and so forth, and it is needed, naturally, by Israel."

During Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon to drive PLO forces from the country, Mr. Primakov gave his assurance that the Kremlin was giving "sufficient all-round help" to the PLO, including "military aid." He was also part of a much larger, vicious Soviet attack on Israel in which the Jewish

with the U.S. in the fight against terrorism—but stopped short of supporting sanctions against terrorist states such as Libya. Referring to Soviet arms shipments to the Gadhafi regime, Mr. Primakov said, "We don't make any conditions for the use of these arms and we're not going to trade off some conditions with Libya."

In 1987, he affirmed the same old policy toward the PLO, telling reporters in Czechoslovakia that the U.S.S.R. was "interested in the PLO existing as a mighty, unified anti-imperialist force," according to the Czechoslovak news agency.

Mr. Primakov's support for the PLO has been as strong in recent years as during the Brezhnev era. Visiting London in the spring of 1989, he asserted that the U.S. must involve the PLO completely in the peace process, and reiterated his view that "the PLO is the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinians." Last year, he teamed up with Mr. Arafat to try to thwart U.S.-led efforts against Saddam after the invasion of Kuwait.

### Saving Saddam

Indeed, Mr. Primakov was a key architect of the Kremlin's two decades of support of Saddam and the Iraqi war machine. In partnership with Mr. Arafat, he worked diligently to frustrate then-Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's attempts to bring the Soviet Union into the Western-led coalition against Iraq. With Mr. Shevardnadze out of the way by the time war broke out, Mr. Primakov tried to save Saddam's regime with a last-minute peace deal. He was apparently part of the PLO scheme to tie an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait to an Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories.

Mr. Gorbachev's new foreign intelligence chief has yet to exhibit reformist tendencies. Unlike many of his colleagues, he clung to his membership in the discredited Communist Party, relinquishing it only last week when he took his new post. Even then, he did not resign but "suspended" his membership, saying that as the Kremlin's new intelligence leader, he needed to be "apolitical."

The charade won't work. Indeed it shows that, far from winding down its hostile operations, the Kremlin's spy war against the West will continue as if the hard-liners who staged the August coup had never been removed.



Yevgeny Primakov

Mr. Waller is assistant director of Policy and Research at the American Security Council Foundation in Washington, D.C.

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state was compared with Nazi Germany. In this context, he pledged to maintain military aid to the PLO.

Mr. Primakov's personal intervention in internal PLO politics is credited with salvaging unity of that fractured organization. When two PLO factions in Lebanon started fighting one another in June 1983, he was dispatched to Syria as a representative of Andropov to express unequivocal support for Yasser Arafat. The message was especially important because the anti-Arafat faction had professed that it enjoyed Moscow's backing.

In 1985, lamenting deep splits in the PLO, Mr. Primakov said that the organization must remain hostile to the West because it was the PLO's "anti-imperialist nature which guaranteed the vital interests of the Palestinian people." However, this time he chided Mr. Arafat for his "enmity toward Syria," a Soviet client state.

Writing in Izvestia later that year, Mr. Primakov asserted that the U.S.-Israeli relationship served as means of aggression against the Soviet Union. "The strategic alliance between the U.S. and Israel serves to prepare the Middle Eastern theater for action against the U.S.S.R., against states that are friendly to it, and against national liberation movements..."

Mr. Primakov's rhetoric became more conciliatory after Mr. Gorbachev settled into position. On Christmas Day 1986, he said that the Kremlin wanted to cooperate

with the U.S. in the fight against terrorism—but stopped short of supporting sanctions against terrorist states such as Libya. Referring to Soviet arms shipments to the Gadhafi regime, Mr. Primakov said, "We don't make any conditions for the use of these arms and we're not going to trade off some conditions with Libya."

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Indeed, Mr. Primakov was a key architect of the Kremlin's two decades of support of Saddam and the Iraqi war machine. In partnership with Mr. Arafat, he worked diligently to frustrate then-Foreign Minister Shevardnadze's attempts to bring the Soviet Union into the Western-led coalition against Iraq. With Mr. Shevardnadze out of the way by the time war broke out, Mr. Primakov tried to save Saddam's regime with a last-minute peace deal. He was apparently part of the PLO scheme to tie an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait to an Israeli withdrawal from the Occupied Territories.

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# The KGB Isn't Dead Yet

By J. MICHAEL WALLER

Russian President Boris Yeltsin narrowly averted a constitutional crisis earlier this month by rescinding his December decree that merged part of the old KGB with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). The short-lived merger, engineered by MVD Chief Viktor Barannikov, would have formed a security mega-ministry unseen since the Stalin era. The decree, unanimously ruled illegal on Jan. 14 by the Russian Constitutional Court, was issued against the counsel of Mr. Yeltsin's democratic allies and security professionals alike. The Russian leadership initially ignored a resolution by parliament urging that the diktat be repealed. Rather than accept the court ruling, Russia's top legal deputy criticized the finding as being "not a decision of law, but a political decision."

If this attitude is allowed to prevail, Moscow's security policy could threaten democratic gains at home and undermine relations with the West. It seems that in security and intelligence matters, the old guard is very much entrenched. Despite two reshufflings in recent months and announcements that the era of repression had passed, the internal security system of the KGB has not been abolished. The KGB's Fifth Directorate, which served as the political police, was not dissolved but merely renamed Directorate Z. After being transferred to Russian control in December it was renamed again as the Department to Combat Terrorism.

## Preserving the Network

Policies for doing away with the political police, far from being implemented, are now only in the planning stages. Moreover, serious doubts exist as to whether the abolition of the political police will take place at all.

Massive files on citizens of the former Soviet Union who collaborated in some way with the secret police—as many as 20 million, according to one KGB source—remain in government hands. There is good reason to keep the files secret: release of the names of those who betrayed their family, friends and co-workers could provoke violent outbreaks of vengeance and wreak havoc on society for years to come. Yet as long as these archives remain secret, the former collaborators can always be blackmailed to continue their betrayals.

The same is true for countries previously in the Warsaw Pact. The current chief of Russian foreign intelligence, Yevgeni Primakov, stated he would not provide "former socialist states" with the identities of KGB collaborators in those countries. This refusal preserves the old KGB agent networks in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary and Poland, giving Moscow the potential to penetrate, manipulate and destabilize those societies for a generation to come.

The choice of Mr. Primakov for Russian spymaster in December is another signal to the West that all is not yet well in Moscow. Appointed by Mikhail Gorbachev as Soviet intelligence chief last October, Mr. Primakov is a Brezhnev holdover who was an architect of Soviet support for international terrorism against the West in the 1970s and '80s. Now he is calling for cooperation with the West in the "struggle against terrorism," without granting Western intelligence services complete access to the KGB terrorist files.

Mr. Primakov is not one to abandon his old friends. For more than two decades he was Yasser Arafat's main advocate in the Communist Party leadership, and was a major proponent of building up Saddam Hussein's military dictatorship in Iraq. During the Gulf war Mr. Primakov tried to save the Iraqi regime and undermine the coalition war effort by floating "peace" proposals on Saddam's behalf.

Last October, a top FBI official reported that, unlike other countries of the former East Bloc, the Soviet Union continued its espionage operations without letup. As FBI Director William S. Sessions announced last week, "We've seen no lessening of [Russian espionage] activity," citing "aggressive" attempts to recruit agents in the U.S. With Mr. Primakov at the helm and Mr. Yeltsin distracted by internal political and economic reforms, it is unlikely that the decision will be made without pressure from the West.

With a few exceptions, Russia's top security nominations have been a disappointment. No known reformers have been named to leading foreign intelligence posts.

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Party's old *Aktiunye Meropriyatiya*, (active measures) apparatus for conducting disinformation and other political warfare operations abroad. The discredited Soviet Peace Committee, headed by aging political warfare veteran Genrikh Borovik, has been renamed to reflect its sponsorship by the Russian state. Mr. Borovik's Russian Peace Committee quickly "applied" for formal membership in the World Peace Council (WPC), an old Soviet front organization based in Finland that was a leading vehicle for such operations.

Moscow has yet to prove that the use of disinformation has ended. The months-long effort to show that the KGB's repressive apparatus was abolished came in the form of statements to the Western press by leaders of the foreign intelligence service directly under Mr. Primakov. A second disinformation campaign attempted to extort Western aid for the dying Soviet government by spreading rumors that the collapse of the U.S.S.R. would mean losing control of nuclear arms and the possibility of the world being plunged into nuclear war. This theme was debunked in late December by Eugene Marchuk, chief of the Ukrainian National Security Service. According to Mr. Marchuk, "These rumors were circulated deliberately by the center... as if incompetent people are trying to deal with this..."

There is little reason to expect the new Russian government will disregard, renounce and expose the Kremlin's practice of disinformation without a clear political directive and a major personnel shakeup. With Mr. Primakov at the helm and Mr. Yeltsin distracted by internal political and economic reforms, it is unlikely that the decision will be made without pressure from the West.

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of the culprits were from the internal security organs, fewer than 60 KGB officials were reported to have been removed in connection with the power grab, and some reports allege that as many as half of them were allowed to keep their jobs. Mr. Gorbachev's reformist internal security chief, Vadim Bakatin, was sacked by the Russian government.

On the other hand, the December appointment of Sergei Stepanishin as head of internal security for St. Petersburg is encouraging. Mr. Stepanishin, a reformist member of the Russian parliament, heads the legislative committee that oversees military and security matters. He also chaired a state commission to investigate KGB involvement in the August coup.

The September naming of Yevgeny Savostyanov as Moscow KGB chief is another promising case. Nominated by Moscow Mayor Gavril Popov, Mr. Savostyanov left his post as assistant mayor to take up offices at KGB headquarters. Mr. Savostyanov is one of the only KGB officials who was never a member of the Communist Party, and he turned down the rank of KGB colonel when he accepted the post, preferring civilian status.

## Surrounded By the Old Guard

Yet the handful of democratic officials in the new KGB will not be able to pursue a democratic agenda: unable to bring aboard trusted staffs of their own, they are surrounded by the old guard. More importantly, they reportedly have not received the directives from the political leadership needed to conduct meaningful reforms.

The Russian parliament should take the lead in directing sweeping reforms of Russian security and intelligence services. Officials including Mr. Primakov have said they support being accountable to parliament—now is the time to put them to the test.

Absorption of the Soviet apparat is

easy compared to making the system accountable to parliament. Russian lawmakers have yet to harness their legal powers to challenge the central government. Yet without rapid and decisive initiative, the opportunity for permanent reform may be lost.

Mr. Waller is director of research of the American Security Council Foundation in Washington, D.C.

# The KGB Is Back in Business

By J. MICHAEL WALLER

MOSCOW - To the horror and dismay of many of his democratic supporters, President Boris Yeltsin has given the former KGB virtually free rein in post-Soviet Russia. The 1991 breakup of the hated and feared apparatus, founded in 1918 as the former Cheka, is being reversed. The KGB's renamed massive internal security machine, the Ministry of Security, is reabsorbing other ex-KGB units while its chief, General Viktor Barannikov, consolidates his power.

In May, the 100,000-strong border troops, including customs, was retaken by decree. On Wednesday, the independent Parliamentary Guard, created to ensure against attack on the Russian White House, was abolished by presidential decree and replaced with the former Ninth Directorate of the KGB. The codes and ciphers unit may be next. Internal informant files remain intact, ready to be used again at any time. The *chekist* cult mentality that permeated the KGB was never erased - the KGB is back.

Gen. Barannikov is a career police officer who served as minister of internal affairs for both Russia and the Soviet Union. In December 1991 he was named by President Yeltsin (in a decree Gen. Barannikov wrote himself) to become leader of the internal security of the former KGB. After being thwarted in an attempt to merge the former KGB with the uniformed police from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD), Gen. Barannikov went about a de

facto merger by stuffing the Ministry of Security with top MVD officers, some of them cronies alleged to have been involved in mass corruption.

This was an insult to the cult of *chekism*, which inculcated its officers with self-importance - especially over the lowly MVD. Critics call this merger *Barannizatsiya*, or "Barannikovization" of state security, a play on the word *baran* or male sheep, a symbol of stupidity.

Morale in state security today is low as a result, a mixed blessing of sorts, as the once proud *chekists* are in disarray. Yet this is not without its costs. The bureaucracy best positioned to combat rising trafficking in drugs, weapons and nuclear material is the demoralized Ministry of Security rank and file. Many of the service's best and brightest have left for the private sector. Deadwood from the old regime predominates.

go public with firsthand knowledge about Soviet-held American and European prisoners of war must remain silent, bound even though the state they served no longer exists.

When it comes to the former KGB, there is little to distinguish the Russian state from the U.S.S.R. The Ministry of Security headquarters at Lubyanka square in Moscow is still festooned with stone reliefs of the KGB emblem. Busts of Lenin and his secret police founder, Felix Dzerzhinsky, still adorn the interior, as do polished brass communist symbols and memorials to slain KGB officers set in marble and granite.

Only a black stone stump on the traffic island in front of the yellow brick building indicates that anything has changed. The stump was once the pedestal for a towering statue of Dzerzhinsky that was torn down in the post-putsch euphoria of a year ago. Atop it today is perched a large wooden cross, emplaced by a group of Cossack nationalists.

The Ministry of Security and the External Intelligence Service - like their KGB predecessors - continue to wage internal propaganda campaigns to manipulate public opinion inside Russia, and to present the "special services" in the most glowing of terms. Meanwhile, critics are feeling the KGB's heavy hand once again. Last week, the avant garde Moscow News was raided by state security agents, who searched editorial offices for the sources of a stunning story accusing the Yeltsin government of violating the spirit of its agreements with the West by developing a new generation of ultratoxic chemical weapons.

Even former KGB officers who wish to

Press Secretary Gurov, for one, reportedly said that tanks should have been used against the unarmed crowds who protested the Russian parliament building during the August 1991 coup attempt. Indeed, Barannikov is starting to dispense with the fiction of reform. The security service's once-hyped openness is disappearing; Russian journalists complain of reduced access to even the most routine information.

Moreover, the legal framework of censorship remains. Foreigners traveling to Russia must certify on the new Commonwealth of Independent States customs declaration, "I must submit for inspection printed matter, manuscripts, films, sound recordings." In effect, a visiting businessman must waive his right to keep proprietary information confidential, and is bound by law to hand it over to state security if so instructed.

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