This is especially the case with Gorbachev's only detailed expression of views on Party history, his speech on the seventieth anniversary of the revolution in November 1987. With regard to Ali's first desideratum, the political rehabilitation of Stalin's opponents, he cannot claim that the address was anything but a defense of Stalin's record, with even fewer qualifiers than given by Khrushchev in 1956. Khrushchev, it is worth noting, at least made it clear that Lenin wanted to remove Stalin, while Gorbachev obscured the fact and insisted that Stalin was Lenin's true heir. Ali tells us that "various party members" informed him that the first draft of Gorbachev's speech was in this respect "different and better" (p. 43), but was changed by the conservatives after they defeated El'tsin at the plenary session of October 21. However, the minutes of that meeting have now been published, and they show El'tsin expressing essential agreement with the contents of the speech. Neither Gorbachev nor El'tsin has ever claimed that Stalin was politically wrong against any of his opponents. Their determined centrist about the Party's past is a peculiar fact of the devolution of Soviet Communism.

Ali is at his best when he compares the Communist Party's position with that of the Congress party in India, coming to the conclusion that in both cases only democracy can hold the centrifugal forces in check, and that a military regime would quickly lead to further balkanization. He finds the better-paid Soviet worker (as of 1988) to be in an inferior position as a consumer to his counterpart in India or Pakistan, not in terms of durable goods like autos or televisions, but simple items that ease life's pain, like razor blades, toilet paper, toothpaste, and transistor radios. Cheap restaurants and food stalls on the subcontinent, in contrast to the Soviet Union, have a variety of fare for the ordinary citizen. If this gap could be made good by perestroika, he reasons, the change could buy time for further reforms.

Yet the Soviet economic problems can only be addressed fundamentally, he thinks, by a Soviet-German economic bloc. Here he continues in the tradition of Marx and Engels, and even of Lenin and the early Bolsheviks, who assumed that this bloc, the centerpiece of a projected United States of Europe, would have to be preceded by a socialist revolution in Germany. Soviet commitment to the idea of the bloc was so strong as to consider it even with Weimar Germany or, in the case of Stalin and Radek, to think that a pact with Hitler would be underpinned by all the economic and political forces of the Reich. Ali is of course reckoning with a democratic West Germany rather than today's united German state. Even so, he foresees a new European political balance "which downgrades the role of U.S. power and embraces both the Soviet Union and the Germans." (p. 194)

The volume contains interesting material from interviews with Iurii Afanasiev, Iurii Kariakin, the poet Robert Rozhdestvenskii, Ogonek deputy editor Vladimir Nikolaev, and others, as well as striking illustrations from the work of artists such as Erik Bulatov, Arkadii Petrov, and Aleksei Sundukov.

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Political leaders in the Soviet Union come and go, but the KGB security police remains. Even Mikhail Gorbachev's most radical reforms have not resulted in any fun-
damental change in this mammoth organization. In fact, the KGB has come through
the Gorbachev era as powerful as ever.

And what is the role of this awesome police and espionage apparatus?

In the immediate years after 1917, of course, its purpose was to protect the
Revolution from enemies foreign and domestic. In recent decades, the KGB has taken
on many other functions, making it a key lever of power any top Soviet leader must
reckon with.

Imagine for a moment a U.S. government agency with an annual budget of $12
billion, employing 90,000 officers and 150,000 technicians. Assume this agency has
taken over the work of the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of
Investigation, the Coast Guard, the Secret Service, the Border Patrol and the intelli-
genence units of several other executive departments. Add to that a military force of air-
craft, helicopters, patrol boats, tanks, and 250,000 troops (more men than the U.S.
Marine Corps).

Now consider this: The Soviet leadership uses this powerful agency—the KGB—not just to provide body guards, physical security for important buildings, protection
of nuclear weapons and intelligence on foreign nations. It deploys the KGB to track
dissidents and potential conspirators. It orders the KGB to pressure political opponents:
old Party hacks who refuse to retire; maybe even on occasion political challenger,
Boris Yeltsin.

All of that can happen so long as the top political leader retains the cooperation
and respect of the KGB chief. Should anarchy overwhelm Soviet society, however, it
is conceivable the KGB might be tempted to move against the ultimate leader. Secret
police chief Lavrentii Beria tried such a move on Stalin's death. In 1953, the attempt
failed.

Amy W. Knight, a researcher at the Library of Congress, has written a generally
useful monograph on this Big Brother octopus. Drawing on published Soviet materi-
als, observations by Soviet emigres, disclosures by Western writers with close ties to
the intelligence community, she has put together an admirably documented volume.
But in my opinion, *The KGB* suffers from several serious shortcomings. First, this re-
search was first published in 1988, and now three years later, it is out of date in a
number of respects. Vladimir A. Kriuchkov, for example, is no longer chief of the
overseas espionage branch (the First Chief Department) but is head of the entire orga-
nization.

The Communist Party's Politburo has been reorganized and downgraded in impor-
tance. And Gorbachev has gone much further than Knight believed possible to permit
criticism directed at the very fundamentals of the Soviet system, of Lenin, and of
Gorbachev himself. As of this writing, the pendulum is swinging back with a conse-
quent enhancement of KGB powers. Events are moving very fast indeed.

Second, one of the inevitable difficulties of writing about the KGB is that the
archives of the Soviet secret police still remain very tightly locked. No Soviet re-
searchers, not to speak of Western scholars, have been granted anything like adequate
access to the files, either historic or contemporary.

In 1986, at the time of the Sakharov-Daniloff incident, some observers believed
that KGB hardliners were using that episode to derail the projected Gorbachev-Reagan
summit and slow down any rapproachment with the West. More recently, Soviet liber-
als have tried—unsuccessfully—to break the KGB into two smaller, more controllable
agencies—similar to the CIA and FBI. Not surprisingly, Knight has been unable to
shed light on such developments or even to offer an authoritative account of how the
Soviet President controls the KGB or is, perhaps, himself manipulated by it.