Mikhail Gorbachev has captured the imagination of the international intellectual community with his candor, energy, vision, and charismatic rhetoric. He has championed partial, democratization (demokratizatsiya) and inveighed against some aspects of authoritarianism. He has explicitly repudiated the command paradigm in favor of a controlled market system, and has made consumer welfare the centerpiece of his ambitious programs for socioeconomic reconstruction. These

initiatives have had a profound impact on scholarly assessments of Soviet reform potential across the political spectrum. Optimists understandably are elated, but even those who have tended to see the Soviet Union as an intransigently authoritarian regime have begun to have second thoughts.

It is appropriate at this juncture, therefore, to consider whether the substantive aspects of Gorbachev's industrial reforms are consistent with his radical rhetoric and justify the spectral shift in informed expectations. More precisely, is it reasonable to suppose that the deficiencies of the Soviet economic system have persuaded Gorbachev that he must abandon traditional Soviet authoritarian goals and the economic mechanism sustaining them in order to build a viable liberal, democratic socialist economic order? This essay attempts to unravel this enigma. The task is difficult because Gorbachev's radical industrial reform program is underspecified. Instead of a single model, his initiatives are compatible with diverse regimes, each exhibiting its own unique characteristics. Nonetheless, it will be shown on technical grounds that Gorbachev neither has to, nor has chosen to transform radically the prevailing Soviet economic arrangements. Careful analysis reveals that the pro-

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4. "The general meaning and thrust of a radical management reform are clear to us. They boil down to this formula: more socialism, more democracy," Gorbachev, Radical Restructuring of Economic Management, p. 40. Cf. Gorbachev, Perestroika, pp. 36-38, and Nikolai Ia. Petrakov, Demokratizatsiia khoziaistvennogo mekhanizma (Moscow: Ekonomika, 1988).