

Documentary Appendix

The first four documents in this section ('Declaration', 'Fundamental Principles', 'Statutes' and 'Speech') are taken from the book *Rossiiskoye Khristianskoye Demokraticeskoye Dvizheniye: sbornik materialov* (Izd. Dumy XDD, Moscow, 1991) (67 pp.). Their Russian titles and original page numbers are as follows:

'Deklaratsiya Rossiiskogo Khristianskogo Demokraticeskogo Dvizheniya', pp. 21–35

'Osnovnyye polozheniya politicheskoi programmy Rossiiskogo Khristianskogo Demokraticeskogo Dvizheniya', pp. 36–52

'Ustav Rossiiskogo Khristianskogo Demokraticeskogo Dvizheniya', pp. 52–58

'V. Aksyuchits. Vystupleniye na I s'yezde narodnykh deputatov RSFSR', pp. 58–66

The original Russian titles of the last two documents in this section are:

'O polozhenii v strane (rezolyutsiya Dumy RKhDD)'

'Obrashcheniye Dumy RKhDD k regional'nym organizatsiyam'

The documents were translated by Philip Walters and Marite Sapiets. Some of the translations have already appeared in *Khristianskaya demokratiya*, the bulletin of the Christian Democratic International.

Declaration of the Constituent Assembly of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement

Christians often have a rather Manichaeian approach to public service and involvement in the affairs of the world.

This kind of falsely ascetic approach to secular activity, this kind of pharisaical renunciation of 'politics', is just what has opened the gates to the godless – and now also to those who wage active war on God – and has allowed them to seize hold inch by inch of the world the Christians have abandoned. The end result has been that the walls of those very churches and monasteries within which we cut ourselves off from the world have been torn down. This has been a hard lesson, and now Christians today have to answer the question once again for themselves: are they going to concede worldly power to the forces of evil, or are they going to defend and preserve the world? Does Christianity have a particular mission in this world? Or is it not of this world, not for this world, and hence is it indifferent to the fate of the world and of mankind?

In the first centuries of Christianity there was a widely-held conviction that you must accept Christ and reject the world for His sake. This view was rejected by the Church Fathers – St John Chrysostom, St Irinaeus of Lyon, St Hippolytus of Rome and others. We are living now in the age of Man as God, and the opposite conviction has prevailed: you must accept and love the world and for its sake reject Christ. This latter view is absolutely unacceptable to us: it is fatal both for the world and for man. But the former view distorts the Truth which Christ proclaimed to the world and limits the fullness of that Truth. Christ came into the world not in order to reject it but in order to accept it and to illuminate it by his deeds. Christ came not to judge the world but to save it. And our task in this life is to follow Christ's example, including the task of saving the world.

The Bible says: 'The Mysterious Wickedness is already at work, but what is going to happen will not happen until the one who holds it back is taken out of the way' (2 Thess. 2:7). The concept 'the one who holds it back' is a broad one. The Holy Fathers understood it to mean both the Grace of the Holy Spirit and also a type of kingdom which will prevent evil from establishing its sovereignty. Today, at a time when states are collapsing and when eschatological expectations are real, we can broaden it to include Christian activity in general – including political involvement. This kind of involvement nowadays keeps the world from the power of the 'wicked', who once he establishes his sovereignty extinguishes that freedom of choice which God gave to man and directs his power against the church's teaching about eternal life and salvation: 'He will speak against the Supreme God and oppress God's people. He will try to change their religious laws and festivals, and God's people will be under his power' (Dan. 7:25).

The tragedy of Russia and of Russian Orthodoxy shows us quite plainly that if we are now going to turn away from the world and wash our hands of it like Pilate, we are going to suffer an even more terrible tragedy, and it will be our fault.

The development of society is determined by spiritual principles, and hence the

denial of the Spirit leads inevitably to the 'abomination of desolation', for we are denying the very basis on which mankind stands and stays in place.

It was to precisely this 'abomination of desolation' that communism led Russia. Communist ideology does not recognise the vehicle of the Spirit, namely the individual human being. As far as this atheist ideology is concerned, a man is simply a highly developed animal. At best, he is a product of the historical mechanism, the raw material for the building (or restructuring [*perestroika*]) of a 'highly-developed Animal Farm' in some endlessly distant 'shining future'. There is really nothing surprising about the fact that the tried and trusted methods for building the godless 'Paradise on Earth' have turned out to be prisons, labour camps, psychiatric hospitals: a system for the complete suppression of the individual personality and for the destruction of men and women on an unprecedented scale.

The Christian ideal is the exact opposite of the communist ideal. For a Christian, man is God's highest creation, the image and likeness of God, his co-creator and co-worker, placed in the world by God and called on to lead this world towards transfiguration. The freedom and the intrinsic value of each individual human being and the priority of the interests of the individual over any other theories of social development: these are the characteristic features of the Christian understanding of the world. The Godmanhood of Jesus Christ, who united the earthly and the heavenly, the temporal and the eternal: this is the source of inspiration and strength for the task of realising moral ideals in the everyday life of society. The individual human being has eternal and not just temporal value: this is the basic difference of principle between Christianity and neo-pagan communism.

The Christian ideal, in contrast to the communist ideal, is not monopolitarian. It does not exclude differences of opinion or opposing views. The freedom of the individual will be preserved only when political pluralism becomes firmly established as the natural law of the state. God allows evil to exist in the world so that man's freedom of individual choice should in no way be limited. But evil is always a monopoly, destroying good. In order, then, to preserve precisely this freedom of choice between good and evil, we must make our own choice in such a way that evil does not gain a monopoly in society by abolishing freedom of choice altogether. The Christian ideal, therefore, has nothing to do with establishing a monopoly of social or political power – for it is an ideal which transcends this world. One concept sums up the Christian ideal: the concept of the Kingdom of God, which 'is not of this world'. The fact that it is intrinsically impossible to realise the Christian ideal on Earth gives Christian politicians an advantage: they are free from the temptations of any kind of utopianism, and from the fanaticism in defence of this or that socio-political doctrine which always goes with it.

Preaching a transcendent ideal does not, however, mean withdrawing from this world, because it is an ideal which is conditioned by the realities of social and political life. How can the church preach its transcendent ideal in a hospital, or a prison, or a state institution, if there are certain social forces physically preventing it from doing so? Hence it follows that, in order to preach its ideals in a way which does not contradict the principle of freedom, the church needs constantly to protect itself within society. This kind of defence of social freedom has traditionally fallen to those Christians who have had as the goal of their social and political activity the principle of individual freedom of choice – an objective principle which provides justice for all.

The Christian ideal, then, is based on:

- 1 The objective ideal of individual and social freedom of choice – the eternal gift of God to man.

- 2 The freedom of every individual, insofar as it does not infringe the freedom of others, to preach his own positive ideal.

Hence it is clear that the goal of the political activity of Christians is not a subjectively interpreted monopolistic ideal of a society to be built on Earth – which is the goal of the majority of non-Christian political parties – but the defence and reinforcing of everyone's freedom to preach and realise his own ideal without infringing the freedom of others. The Christian social and political ideal is the defence of freedom. Christian politicians are a force working to avert the possibility that one or another party will usurp power and use it to suppress freedom in order to realise its own subjective monopolistic ideal, which will be unacceptable for people with a different view of the world.

Whatever type of government a nation chooses, only a popular Christian movement can become a real social force which will defend the freedom of the individual and of society as a whole, which will respect the dignity of the individual as the creature of God, and which will guarantee social and political pluralism. The Christian Democratic Movement stands for the dissemination of Christian ideals throughout the life of society as it is – cultural life, socio-political life, economic life. It is the guarantee of the freedom of the individual and of respect for his dignity. It is the physical health of society, which is essential if people are going to be able consciously to accept spiritual truths.

The doctrines of Christianity have been conveyed to us by the Russian Church. Hence our return to our Father's house is above all a return to Russian Orthodoxy. We are called on to give back to our people the confiscated treasures of a millennium of Orthodox wisdom – the Church Fathers, Russian sainthood and piety, inspired Russian theology and philosophy, socio-political and economic ideas.

Basic Principles

Communism

The Marxist communist ideology is essentially and consistently atheist and materialist. Atheism and materialism are the source of communism's goal-directed energy. The ideology of the 'shining future' directs humanity towards illusory goals, and atheism serves to destroy the vertical spiritual dimension which unites man with heaven and eternity, in order to frustrate man's efforts to ascend spiritually. In order to compensate for the loss of spiritual values and to replace them with the fiction of material well-being, materialism is essential. But having renounced the spiritual roots of existence, communism has suffered defeat, and in constructing society on material terms it has led our country to complete ruin.

No other doctrine or political force in history has made such a radical assault on God as communism. As an ideology of the destruction of God's creation it is a concentration of concepts which are opposed to existence itself, and it is directed towards the goal of non-being. It is the intrusion into reality of 'spiritual wickedness in high places', the enslaving and corruption of man by means of the spirit of social non-being. The Biblical precursors of communism are the descendants of Cain, the builders of the Tower of Babel.

The aim of communism is not so much the destruction of civilisation as such, but rather the spiritual death of humanity. The final goal of communism is to propagate in the world those forms of existence which mark the destruction of God's creation and the establishment on earth of the kingdom of evil. One can imagine what freezing

forever in Hell would be like on earth: suppose for a minute that Stalinism had seized the entire world and had established itself forever; or that Orwell's anti-utopia had been realised in its entirety. Now that the outworn Leninist-Stalinist 'model' has passed into history, communism is quite capable of producing new forms of existence which correspond to the contemporary state of science and technology and their effect on the human psyche.

Communism allows man to exist in order to create the conditions of his spiritual death. By threatening to take away the last values of life communism forces man ever more insistently to betray his soul, his family; to renounce his highest ideals. The strong in spirit are condemned to physical destruction. This is an attempt to universalise the selection of non-being. But a hero who has been killed dies a martyr, because his soul is untouched. He increases the power of the opposition to non-being. Delusion does not lead to spiritual death.

Evil in the world can thus be withstood by spiritual strength, by wholehearted faith in the divine foundations of life and by unbending courage in the face of death. Only when we are ready to sacrifice everything, including our own life, for the sake of preserving our divine dignity and freedom will we be capable of preserving life itself and its highest meaning.

It is entirely understandable, then, that communism should concentrate on dealing a fundamental blow against the spiritual heart of existence. It aims to destroy the church as the Body of Christ in the world, and to uproot religious faith as the tie between man and his spiritual foundations.

The strategy and tactics of world communism were completely formed at the time of the seizure of power in Russia, the first and most important bridgehead of the forces of non-being. But the experience of resistance to the warriors against God was also most concentrated in Russia. Step by step, communism strives to destroy or reforge everything which carries the imprint of the image of God, the product of man's creativity in history, aiming its most powerful blow against those places where God is present in the world: against the human individual, as the crown of God's creation and the image and likeness of God; against the church, as the free union in God of free spiritual individuals; and against religion, as the link between man and his Creator. At every stage of its attempt to infiltrate itself into the real world, communism comes up against resistance. The basic impulses of struggle come from the spiritual and religious foundations of life. Hence Christianity is a fundamentally anticommunist spiritual force. As Christians we know that the line dividing good from evil is not drawn between people, but through the heart of everyone. Hence our struggle is against ideology ('spiritual wickedness in high places') and not against living people. For us every individual is the image and likeness of God. We are now putting back in place everything that has been thrown down and destroyed during our long-suffering country's 70 years of 'Babylonian captivity'. Everything we do to rebuild our world will be done according to the Christian principles of existence.

Christian Politics

The basic task of Christian life is to achieve perfection, for it is written: 'Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect'. This commandment is taken as meaning in the first place *self*-perfection, since it is prescribing to us a particular inner spiritual structure. The process of perfection consists in developing within ourselves the power of the grace of love. This becomes a kind of emanation outwards and of necessity expresses itself as moral activeness, as loving activity for the good of our neighbour,

as an outpouring of good into the world. In this way the moral activity of a Christian coincides with the task of perfecting the world.

This process of perfecting the world, however, assumes a variety of ways and methods, determined by the variety of levels and aspects of life towards which they are directed. In the first place, perfecting the world can be understood as a pathway from inside outwards, as a process of perfecting the world morally by means of increasing the quantity of goodness and love in men's souls. Secondly, the task of perfecting the world can be understood as the perfecting of the outer structure of life – of the laws and institutions which operate in it.

Understood in this way the task of Christian politics is the creative Christianisation of the general conditions of life in the world; that is, reforming them so that they correspond as much as possible to Christian truth. Politics becomes humanity's collective self-education.

Christians are conscious of the fundamental duality of the two spheres of existence, the heavenly and the earthly. In this sense all man's reforms are palliatives. Wrongs are put right, but others inevitably reveal themselves. A Christian will be inclined to give priority to gradual piecemeal reform rather than to any kind of delusory revolution of salvation involving huge upheavals. Precisely because of his religious radicalism, his transcendental position, a Christian will show moderation and realism when it comes to social and political reform. As far as the plans and preoccupations of this world are concerned, he will prefer to apply common sense and a cool wisdom, based on his experience of life, in the face of any kind of passionate enthusiasm born of blind false faith.

His experience of the spiritual foundation of life reveals to the Christian the unconditional importance of man's inner moral and spiritual transfiguration. All reforms – that is, changes in the outward conditions of life – can bear genuine fruit only when linked with the inner perfection of individuals themselves. And hence here again the Christian will prefer constant reforms aimed at man's reeducation rather than any hurried, sudden and radical changes.

From the point of view of a Christian understanding of life, preference is to be given to any social structure or system which creates the most favourable possible circumstances for the development and strengthening of free, fraternal and loving community among people.

Creative Democracy

Human morality is the result of the free self-determination of the individual. But in the state the area of human freedom is defined by law. It is therefore essential for a state based on law to be motivated first of all by the norms of Christian morality. It is our moral duty to build a free society and a democratic state.

The premises of creative democracy are as follows:

- 1 The people must understand and value freedom. They must know how to use it and how to struggle for it. Freedom consists not in 'unleashing' the people (freedom *from*), but in replacing 'external' constraint imposed 'from above' with inner self-restraint, solidarity and self-discipline (freedom *for*). The people must know their rights and at the same time keep themselves within the bounds of law and honour. If there is no understanding of freedom, 'democracy' will degenerate into either anarchy or despotism.
- 2 A sufficiently high level of legal consciousness. In order to build up one's creative legal consciousness one must overcome one's instincts by means of the spirit which

manifests itself in the thirst for what is holy, in the search for God, and in the ability to exercise self-discipline and active love. Only an individual with a developed legal consciousness can be free when subject to laws.

- 3 The economic independence of the citizen. This means, as a minimum, that everyone should be able to feed his family by means of honest work. Only independent workers organically involved in a real transformation of the life of their country can be free citizens. Only a worker who enjoys economic independence can possess independent political judgement and take part in responsible decisions about the future of his nation.
- 4 The necessary level of education and information, without which democracy degenerates into ochlocracy (mob-rule).
- 5 Political experience, which trains people to think independently and to make honest judgements.
- 6 We regard creative democracy not as an end in itself, but as the means of liberating the individual and society.

All these democratic conditions and skills have been either extinguished or suppressed in Russia during the communist period. The people must be taught painstakingly and persistently so that they are properly prepared to make independent choices about their future.

Private Property

Man is at once a spiritual and a corporeal being. His corporeality does not just represent a restriction, however, but is an instrument of his spirituality. The spiritualising of an individual is not achieved by simply denying the bodily principle, but by enlightening it with the spirit and thereby transforming it from a restriction into an instrument of spirituality. This is why private property is a necessary principle. Private property is essentially the necessary extension of the body of a human being into the world of things and nature which surrounds and encloses him, and which also becomes the instrument of human spirituality. Private property, as the intimate link between the human individual and the world which immediately surrounds him, is thus a necessary condition for the transfiguration of the world. This is the reason why we should recognise that property is sacred.

It is precisely because man is both spiritual and corporeal that his existence in the world is strengthened by means of property – both materially and spiritually. Private property confirms a human being as a free personality, in that it satisfies the natural right to independent action and self-reliance; it invokes spiritual reasons for strenuous work; liberates creative initiative and economic enterprise; gives people self-confidence and hence confidence in others, in the land, in objects, in the world; awakens and trains a legal consciousness, teaching people to distinguish ‘mine’ from ‘his’ and to respect the rights of others; and educates people in a sense of economic solidarity (responsibility towards others and towards the whole country) which does not infringe economic freedom.

Patriotism

Patriotism is love for one’s native land, discovered by free spiritual self-determination, and it is a feeling which is justified before the face of God, inasmuch as it appears in the course of humble service in the name of fulfilling the Creator’s intentions with regard to my people and my country. These intentions of the Creator

are the idea of the nation, which the nation is free to fulfil, and so to flower as a distinctive fragrant bloom in God's garden, or not to fulfil, and so to perish. We all receive a native land from God and through God, and hence for us it is something holy which we have to guard against desecration. The patriotism of a genuine Christian consists in the fact that Russian culture is dear to him because it is based on the highest truth – Christian ideals.

A healthy patriotism is distinguished from an unhealthy patriotism by the fact that it is able to look soberly at its people, and hence see not only their virtues but also their ailments and weaknesses. But if a patriot sees the ailments and weaknesses of his native land, then love will impel him to try to heal his people through enlightenment and repentance, whatever the cost to him, and not simply to praise them because they are *his* people.

Patriotism is the only source for an understanding of the beauty and spiritual stature of other nations. True patriotism is a mountain-top we have to reach before we are in a position to see the spiritual peaks of other nations. The birth of true patriotism is the birth of universal sympathy and openness in the Russian people.

Enlightened patriotism is the acceptance of personal responsibility for one's history, for one's culture, for the environment where one was raised, for one's spiritual heritage. It means regarding one's profession as one's personal calling by God, and hence as part of one's service as a citizen. It is a vision of a new Russia where the positive creative principle is not suppressed, where communal discussion and agreement take the place of directives from bureaucrats, where the country's leaders reflect and embody the common sense of the people, where the image is reborn of the worker on the land who built Russia, replacing the political commissar who destroyed her. An impartial, sacrificial patriotic consciousness avoids the temptations of self-delusion. It is capable of critically assessing its own history and of learning from the experience of other cultures.

Patriotism is faith in one's native land. Faith in its calling, in the creative power of its spirit, in the future flowering which awaits it. So we, Russian patriots, believe that our native land, after purging itself in repentance, will, through feats of labour and prayer, arrive at that time of flowering which the bolsheviks denied it. We confess this belief together with the great Russian poet and prophet who wrote:

*But in the long punishment of temptation
Having endured the blows of fate,
Russia grew strong. A heavy hammer
Which smashes glass will forge a sword.*

(A. S. Pushkin)

The Fundamental Principles of the Political Programme of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement

Preamble

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. 6:12)

The first thing the atheist totalitarian ideology ruling our country set about intentionally destroying was the religious foundation of life. A social system constructed by force according to an atheist ideology has a corrupting effect on the human soul, leads to the loss of an individual's sense of dignity, freedom and responsibility and crushes patriotic feelings. So it is quite natural that when people are reborn for a new life they turn to the eternal truths of Christianity.

While the atheist regime was in power our country was brought to the brink of spiritual and physical ruin. Simply in order to survive our society needs to leave behind it this ideology of destruction and hatred and adopt the ideals of creation and solidarity. The only road towards a healthy transformation is a religious and moral rebirth. To be reborn we will need time and courage, a cleansing repentance, and prolonged labour to put back in place those holy things we handed over to desecration.

We know that the atheist ideology has not yet died out in Russia. We have a long struggle in front of us. But Christians are called on not to fight with man but for him, to fight to save him and the image of God within him: 'for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but . . . against spiritual wickedness in high places'.

The tragic experiences of our Homeland mean that we have to increase Christian activity in the world. Christians preach the religion of God made Man, and they are called on to make incarnate the ideals of love, goodness and community in all areas of human activity – spiritual, cultural, social, political, economic. Our starting-point is the Christian understanding of Man as the image and likeness of God who works together with God to transfigure life. Christian political activity is one type of charitable church activity in the world. The goal of the political activity of Christians is not this or that form of social or political organisation, but the confirming and defending in society of the ideal of freedom and creative responsibility which was Christ's gift to man.

Changing things in a charitable direction is possible only when Christian principles are reborn in the life of individuals and of society. A renewed Christian community will enable Russia to remember its past and to build its future creatively. So Christian movements and Christian parties are going to take a leading place in politics today. A Christian consciousness in politics is a guarantee that no new dictatorship, whether of right or left, is going to take the place of our present one. Christians are called on to make society conscious again of the fact that politicians are answerable not only to people but also to the Eternal God. Christian politics is a responsible and con-

scientious politics of creation. All the political activity of the RCDM is consonant with the norms of Christian morality. We renounce violence towards class, national or religious groups, and towards individual citizens on political, economic or any other grounds.

1 The Political Structure of the State

1.1 The Russian Christian Democratic Movement favours the preparation and summoning of a '*Zemsky Sobor*' ('National Council') with the task of restoring the continuity of legitimate ruling power in Russia which was interrupted by the revolution. The RCDM believes that only a National Council is competent to decide what form of government Russia should have.

1.2 Until a National Council is summoned the RCDM holds no preconceived views about how the Russian State should be governed.

1.3 The RCDM views the pre-Council period as a period of transition and hence regards the present legislative, executive and juridical organs as temporary until the National Council is summoned. All laws, whether adopted or in preparation, are laws of the period of transition and should be regarded as remaining in force only if they are ratified by the National Council itself, or subsequently according to procedures laid down by the Council.

1.4 For the duration of the period of transition the RCDM believes that the most viable form of government for Russia is a presidential republic, with a president elected by universal secret ballot. The president's powers are to be limited by consistent application of the principle of the separation of powers (legislative, executive and juridical), and by self-government at the level of local organisations.

1.5 The following elements constitute the current political programme of the RCDM:

1.5.1 Working for the complete abandonment of communist ideology as the official ideology of the state. Abandoning state atheism. Removing ideological structures (whether of party, *Komsomol* or other committees) in state institutions, in industrial enterprises, in the army and in the organs of law enforcement, state security and so on.

1.5.2 Helping to put parliamentary democracy in place.

1.5.3 Creatively building a civil society based on autonomous associations of free citizens.

1.5.4 Facilitating the establishment of a state based on law. Promoting, through education, a creative legal consciousness in Russian citizens.

1.5.5 Establishing and confirming the principles of freedom of speech. Creating independent mass media, including radio and television.

1.5.6 Forming independent cultural, social and professional organisations.

1.5.7 Gradual transition towards a professional army. The first step must be an alternative to military service. Strengthening the social security of those doing military service. Setting up an institute of army clergy. Restoring the spiritual traditions of the Russian army.

1.5.8 Pursuing the ideals of genuine peace and good neighbourly relations. No more aid to terrorist or totalitarian regimes.

1.5.9 An independent judiciary. A rapid, open and charitable judicial process. The introduction of trial by jury.

1.5.10 Reforming and humanising the criminal code and the penal system.

1.5.11 Restoring the symbols of the Russian national state (flag, coat of arms, anthem).

1.5.12 Restoring to towns and streets their historical names.

2 Basic Human Rights

2.1 All Russian citizens who have not had their rights restricted by the courts are equal at law. There can be no discrimination as far as civil and political rights are concerned on faith, sex, nationality, class, party or any other grounds, either juridically or in fact.

2.2 Freedom of conscience and religion. Systematic separation of religious organisations from the state and their liberation from all types of state supervision and control.

2.3 Freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Anyone guilty of a crime committed in word or in print shall be answerable to the courts alone.

2.4 Freedom of assembly. Freedom to set up and run societies and groups without prior permission. The only meetings, societies and groups prohibited by law shall be those putting forward racist or other misanthropic ideas or advocating violence.

2.5 The inviolability of the individual. Nobody shall be prosecuted or called to account except via the courts on the basis of the law. The inviolability of the home. The inviolability of property except in certain defined circumstances and in accordance with due legal procedures.

2.6 Freedom of movement. Every citizen shall be free to choose where to live, to move about, to travel abroad and to return to his country. Abolition of the passport system. An individual may have his right to free movement and his right to choose where to live restricted only by order of the courts.

2.7 The RCDM calls for compliance with international agreements in the field of human rights.

3 Religion and Freedom of Conscience

3.1 A free church in a free society is the guarantee of the moral health of the nation. The regime of state atheism in Russia ruined and enslaved the church and thereby condemned society to moral and spiritual barrenness. Our first task, then, will be to promote the restoration of the canonical freedom and purity of the church.

3.2 In order that goodwill can be restored in relations between church and state, the state must acknowledge the fact that the communist authorities persecuted the church. All church and monastery buildings must be returned to the believers. The state should be asked to compensate the church for a proportion of its losses and take over the restoration of some monasteries and churches. The major religious festivals should be declared public holidays.

3.3 The RCDM considers that the natural relationship of state to church in today's conditions is one of benevolent neutrality. A relationship of this sort can be achieved only in a state based on law, and in order to achieve it new legislation on religion is essential, together with other legal guarantees to ensure that the state, its institutions and its officials will observe it strictly.

3.4 Within the framework of the new legislation on religion it is essential:

3.4.1 That the principle of separation of church and state and of non-interference by the state in the affairs of the church be consistently applied.

3.4.2 That religious organisations and associations be granted the right to organise and run themselves autonomously.

3.4.3 That the Councils for Religious Affairs be abolished at all levels.

3.4.4 That a Committee on Religions be set up within the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic.

3.5 On the basis of these principles religious communities and associations should be granted:

3.5.1 The rights of juridical personality.

3.5.2 The right to convene meetings of their members without notifying the local authorities in advance.

3.5.3 The right to conduct economic and financial business without any kind of interference.

3.5.4 The right to hold acts of worship and to preach in people's homes and in public places.

3.5.5 The right to teach and to organise religious schools at all levels.

3.6 In order to protect the rights of believers, any material which contradicts the religious convictions of the students must be excluded from lessons on the obligatory subjects in the state educational curriculum. Lessons in religion and lessons in atheism must have equal legal status and must be voluntary.

4 The Economy

4.1 The deideologising of the state's economic policies. Our 70-year experiment shows that a totalitarian ('planned') economy is an anti-economy which has the objective result of ruining the economic system and destroying the national wealth.

4.2 To restore the national economy, economic decentralisation is essential, as is a transition from a 'planned' economy to a social market economy to be based on private property and Christian justice, competition and solidarity, personal initiative and a sense of responsibility towards one's neighbour and the country. Legal equality for all forms of property (private, collective, state) with resolute anti-monopoly legislation.

4.3 The role of the state in the economic sphere consists in generally regulating the national economy and not in directing it. The state's duty is to create the conditions in which independent economic actors can take initiatives, and to make it possible for them to work together freely.

4.4 Property in the USSR today is essentially owned corporately by the *nomenklatura* and the bureaucracy. Under these circumstances, equal rights for different forms of property-ownership will be possible only when most 'state' property has been turned into collective or private property. An urgent and essential task is to privatise a proportion of the basic property stock, either directly or through shares: the land, the means of production, housing, building materials. Only an intensive organisation of the economy on market principles will make it possible to avert economic collapse and to cope with galloping inflation and with a deficit state budget.

5 Ecology

5.1 As a consequence of the senseless and criminal economic policies of the Communist Party, Russia is now on the brink of an ecological catastrophe. If these policies continue there is a real danger that the consequences will be irreversible.

Hence extraordinary measures are essential to avert the crisis and save what can still be saved.

5.2 Among such measures the RCDM considers the following to be of most importance:

5.2.1 An immediate halt to the construction of ecologically harmful industrial plants.

5.2.2 Legislation to regulate ecological problem-areas. An independent public commission to compile a list of ecologically harmful sites. The Supreme Soviet to take a rapid decision on the findings of this commission.

5.2.3 The cleaning-up of rivers and reservoirs. The dismantling of unprofitable hydroelectric installations. The restoration where possible of rivers and reservoirs to their natural courses.

5.2.4 The conversion and regeneration of land and forest resources.

5.2.5 A reduction in the extraction of minerals at the expense of the economy. The recycling of raw materials. The introduction of new technology.

5.2.6 An immediate halt to the construction of all atomic power stations until such time as they are proved to be harmless to man and also cost-effective.

5.2.7 Independent, open, public and expert discussion about the effects of atomic power stations on man and the environment and also about their cost-effectiveness.

5.3 The only possible guarantee that the environment will be preserved is the principle of self-limitation, adopted as one of the main principles of politics.

6 Social Policies

6.1 The RCDM will struggle to guarantee that everyone in the Russian state is socially secure. In today's conditions this will only be after the whole economic system has been renovated and after transition to a market economy. But even today it is possible to increase the financing of the social sphere by reducing arms expenditure and expenditure on maintaining the ruling *apparatus*, whose privileges, especially in the sphere of medicine and social security, are incompatible with the norms of Christian morality.

6.2 In the field of social policies the RCDM will hold out for the following:

6.2.1 Social security for all Russian citizens at a minimum level compatible with a dignified human existence, and regularly adjusted to keep pace with inflation.

6.2.2 An increase in social security for pensioners, invalids, orphans and other groups who need special attention and help from the state. The abolition of personal pensions and other privileges in this area.

6.2.3 Securing the maximum possible level of economically effective activity in society.

6.2.4 Founding free trade unions.

6.2.5 Improving working conditions, 24 days' leave, not counting Saturdays, the abolition of 'working Saturdays'.

6.2.6 Encouraging the development of the family in all possible ways. The introduction of a single system of grants and benefits for children's education. Funds to be designated in the state budget for offering credit and loans to young families.

6.2.7 Working out fundamentally new legislation on housing. The administration of state housing funds to be handed over to local autonomous authorities. All restrictions on home ownership to be lifted.

6.2.8 An immediate start must be made on raising the medical services to contemporary world standards, setting aside funds for this in the state budget. The

state must be obliged to finance the construction of new state hospitals. The introduction of a law to allow private and communal hospitals which shall enjoy the same rights as the state hospitals. Doctors' salaries to be increased, especially in rural areas. No privileges of any kind to be allowed in the health service.

6.3 The RCDM will encourage in every possible way the setting up of Christian charitable organisations and foundations: houses and communities of Sisters of Mercy, old people's homes, hospitals and nursing-homes, homes for invalids, communities for drug addicts, convalescent cultural centres.

7 The Nationalities Question

7.1 Equal rights for and effective defence of the interests of all citizens regardless of their nationality are to be guaranteed in the Russian state. Propaganda promoting national hatred and discrimination on the basis of nationality must be prevented by law. Accusations against any nation and manifestations of national egotism are not allowed.

7.2 The RCDM supports the guaranteeing of the right to national autonomy to all nationalities in the Russian state. All national minorities are to have the possibility of developing their own culture, of studying their native language in educational establishments at all levels created for this purpose and of using it in local institutions, schools, theatres, the press and public gatherings. These rights are to be put into effect by the local organs of self-government and protected by the Russian state.

7.3 The RCDM believes that the Russian state should organically comprise a variety of forms of national state: autonomous states, federations, confederations and others.

7.4 Complete and mutually beneficial national self-determination and the transition to a new type of relationship between nations will be possible only after the Communist Party's monopoly on power has been overcome. If national groups direct their attention to settling old scores they lose their points of reference. People lose sight of the fact that there can be no moral relationships, including relationships between nations, within the framework of communist ideology. At the present time *all* nations in our country are enslaved. It is only together, uniting our efforts, that we will be able to set ourselves free.

7.5 The RCDM notes the complex nature of the problems which exist between nations. But we hope that in conditions of freedom the goodwill and good sense of the peoples of our country will open the way to mutually acceptable solutions of these problems.

7.6 The RCDM supports the 'deimperialisation' of that ideocratic monster the USSR. The RCDM will strive to work out balanced forms for this deimperialisation, taking world experience into account. Nations wishing to secede from the metropolis should be granted the opportunity to do so. On the other hand, the process of secession must not degenerate into a senseless and irresponsible proliferation of splinter-states. We believe that in the context of the Russian state complete secession must be justified on deep historical, cultural and economic grounds. Any act of secession must be accomplished only by means of a plebiscite of the *whole population* of the territory in question.

7.7 Foreseeing the inevitable departure of some national territories from the USSR, the RCDM believes that it is essential to create favourable conditions for each nation to exist on its historical territory. The immigration policy of the Russian state must be based on this principle. At the same time Russia must defend the interests of

the Russian population remaining in the territories which have seceded. Consistent application of these two principles would help, for example, to ease the 'Baltic problem' and perhaps even finally solve it.

7.8 Tolerance, responsibility and respect for one's own and other people's freedom must be the key to solving the nationalities problem.

8 Science and Culture

8.1 The development of scientific research in all possible ways in order to bring about the spiritual and economic regeneration of Russia. It will be essential to reduce the scope and improve the planning of scientific and technical research, and to set up national programmes on the most important problems. Basic research to be subsidised by the state. The creation of scientific and technical information centres whose task will be to facilitate the exchange of information and the application of scientific research.

8.2 A law must be passed to allow private research (including the founding of private and public research centres), with appropriate controls. There must be aid for research conducted in the private sphere in the form of tax concessions, the extension of credit etc. Tax concessions must extend to the sponsors of private research.

8.3 Humanitarian research must be freed from the ideological control of the state. The establishment of private and public humanitarian research centres and foundations to be encouraged in all possible ways.

8.4 The state budget must allocate sufficient funds for the development of literature, music, art, the theatre, the cinema, and a network of libraries and museums. Special attention must be paid to libraries and museums as repositories of the national historical memory.

8.5 All possible support for the establishment of private foundations to develop art and culture, and for the establishment of private and public museums, libraries, concert halls and galleries.

8.6 Cultural institutions must be open to all.

9 Education

9.1 The standard of education is a decisive factor in the development both of the individual and of society as a whole.

9.2 The RCDM believes that the following are essential:

9.2.1 The deideologising of the educational system without delay. All ideological organisations which currently exercise influence in the educational system to be abolished (*Komsomol* and Pioneer organisations, as well as others).

9.2.2 Compulsory primary education to be retained; full secondary education must be available to all, but not compulsory.

9.2.3 Universities and institutes of higher education to be given wide autonomy. Students' rights to self-government to be increased.

9.2.4 Promoting the setting up of an international student exchange programme. Sending especially gifted students on courses to educational institutes abroad, at the expense of the state or of private foundations.

9.2.5 Assisting the setting up of private and locally run schools at all levels, alongside the state system. An appropriate law to be passed.

9.2.6 Creating private and locally run religious educational institutes at all levels.

9.2.7 A policy of tax concessions should operate towards private and locally run educational establishments, in the interests of the development of education.

Statutes of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement

Section 1 Aims and Tasks

Article 1 The Russian Christian Democratic Movement (RCDM) is a socio-political organisation (party) that unites supporters of radical reforms in all spheres of life in this country, on the basis of Christian moral norms.

Article 2 The RCDM organises religious, cultural and social funds and initiatives, charitable organisations and a youth movement, as well as setting up free-market enterprises whose activities correspond in principle to the RCDM Declaration.

Section 2 Membership of the RCDM

Article 3 Anyone can participate in the Movement if he or she is over 16 years old, agrees with the Movement's Declaration or political Programme and is prepared to carry out the requirements of these Statutes. People are admitted to membership of the RCDM in accordance with Articles 17 and 18 of these Statutes.

Article 4 The political organisation of the RCDM consists of those who are members of the Movement and support its political programme.

Article 5 Relations between members of the Movement are based on the principles of trust and solidarity.

Article 6 Collective membership is also permitted. An organisation whose official programme and practical activities do not contradict the RCDM's Declaration or Programme can join the Movement as a collective. Collective members are admitted in accordance with Article 19 of these Statutes.

Section 3 Organisational Structure

Article 7 Three or more members of the Movement can form an RCDM group, in order to coordinate their activities. The group's most important organ is its council. The council can take binding decisions if over half the group are present. Groups can form any structures that reflect their activities and facilitate their links with other groups and with the centre.

Article 8 In order to coordinate their activities in a given area or to carry out particular functions more successfully, three or more groups can form local (functional) RCDM associations. The RCDM associations' conference, chosen by direct vote through the groups, is their highest organ. Conferences can create permanent executive structures – executive committees, which coordinate the associations' activities, represent them and provide links with the centre and other associations during the period between conferences.

Article 9 Groups and their associations are autonomous in their activity. If RCDM members or groups carry out actions that are contrary to the decisions of the majority or of higher organs, they are acting only in their own name.

Section 4 The Highest Organs of the RCDM

Article 10 The Movement's highest organ is the RCDM Assembly. It has the right to decide all questions concerning the RCDM's activities. Delegates to the Assembly are chosen by direct secret elections at group councils or association conferences. The Assembly has the exclusive authority to make changes in the Declaration, Programme and Statutes and to dissolve organisations. The Assembly's decisions take precedence over all others.

Article 11 During the period between Assemblies, the Movement's highest organ is the Duma. The Duma is elected by the Assembly. The Duma has the right to decide all questions except those on which the Assembly has exclusive authority. The Duma has full authority to speak in the name of the Movement. The decisions of the Duma must not contradict documents or decisions passed by the Assembly. The Duma chooses its own co-chairmen.

Article 12 During the period between sessions of the Duma, its authority passes to its co-chairmen. The co-chairmen are accountable to the Duma.

Article 13 The RCDM has a secretariat to carry out its technical functions. The work of the secretariat is managed by the co-chairmen. All appointments to the secretariat must be confirmed by the Duma.

Article 14 Sessions of the Duma are summoned by the co-chairmen according to need, but at least once a quarter.

Article 15 A Duma session is competent to take decisions if over half the Duma's members are present. The Duma takes decisions by an absolute majority vote of those present.

Article 16 The Assembly is summoned by decision of the Duma as required, but at least once a year. The norms of representation at the Assembly are determined by the Duma. In exceptional circumstances, the Assembly can be summoned by the co-chairmen. The Assembly can also be summoned at the expressed wish of over one-third of the Movement's members. The Assembly is considered competent to take decisions if it represents at least half of the RCDM's members. The Assembly takes decisions by an absolute majority of votes. Decisions on questions concerning the exclusive competence of the Assembly are decided by a qualified majority.

Section 5 Admittance to Membership of the RCDM

Article 17 RCDM groups admit new members of the RCDM at their councils by absolute majority vote, after an application by the candidate. If there is no RCDM group in the area, persons desirous of joining the Movement can be admitted by groups active in the districts closest to them, or directly by the Duma.

Article 18 If there are members of the RCDM in a given district, but no groups belonging to the Movement (i.e. less than three members altogether), the Duma can temporarily grant a particular member of the Movement the right to admit new members.

Article 19 The admittance and exclusion of collective members is within the competence of the Duma and the Assembly alone. The norms of representation of collective members at the Assembly and the Duma are agreed upon when they join.

Section 6 Leaving the RCDM

Article 20 A member of the Movement can leave the RCDM in the following circumstances:

- at his or her own wish;
- as a result of expulsion from the RCDM.

Article 21 A member of the Movement can be expelled from the RCDM by decision of his or her group, by a two-thirds majority vote, if there has been a gross violation of these Statutes.

Section 7 The RCDM's Financial Resources

Article 22 The financial resources of the RCDM, its groups and associations, consist of the voluntary dues of its members, donations from citizens and organisations, and profits from its publications, commercial ventures and other enterprises.

Article 23 The co-chairmen of the Duma have the right to manage the Movement's finances – within the limits of a budget approved by the Duma. In their financial dealings, the co-chairmen are accountable to the Duma.

Article 24 Groups and associations are in charge of their own financial resources.

Section 8 Concluding Statutes

Article 25 The RCDM is founding publications needed for the dissemination of its ideas. The chief editor of the RCDM newspaper is appointed by the Duma. All the Duma's decisions are to be published in the RCDM newspaper.

Article 26 According to the legislation of the USSR, the RCDM is a juridical person, as represented by its permanently functioning executive organ – the RCDM Duma – and has all the requisites appropriate to a juridical person: its own title and seal, its own bank balance and account, its emblem and symbols, forms bearing its title etc.

Article 27 The RCDM is establishing branches, sections, commercial ventures, educational institutions of all levels and kinds, various funds and charitable organisations, which operate with the sanction of local or functional associations and are juridical persons according to the laws of the USSR, with all the rights and requisites of juridical persons.

Article 28 The RCDM has the right to join international organisations, to set up its own sections and representative groups abroad and to carry on economic activities in the established legal manner.

Article 29 The RCDM is establishing organisational, socio-political, cultural, commercial and other contacts – either through representatives or on its own initiative – with organisations, institutions and citizens abroad.

Article 30 Changes in the legislation of the USSR entailing the abolition of individual articles of the Charter of the RCDM will not entail abolition of the RCDM Charter as a whole.

Speech at the First Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR

VIKTOR AKSYUCHITS*

In addressing this honourable assembly, I should like to make a few statements of principle which have not as yet been heard from this rostrum but could serve as a basis for specific reform projects. The opinions I shall be expressing reflect not only my own position but also the official programme of the Russian Christian Democratic Movement. This is a new party, which I represent here, but at present it is unregistered, as indeed the CPSU is unregistered today. So I have the right to expound its programme.

We all know that the elections in our country did not take place according to a multi-party system and that during them party programmes could not be publicised. However, the fact that I was proposed by a miner from Vorkuta also gives me support in the opportunity I have of speaking out from this platform.

The basic aim of Christian Democracy is the spiritual rebirth of society – in this case, the rebirth of Russia. It is this spiritual rebirth on which all other beneficial reforms in the country are based.

The situation in our country is so catastrophic that, in order to avoid this catastrophe, society must make a superhuman effort. Human historical experience teaches us that a society can only make superhuman efforts if it is inspired by some higher ideal. Men are capable of great daring, when they are faced not by the dust of the earth, but by heavenly, eternal values – absolute values. For a society to adopt the highest ideals, it must have a religious-national revival. History bears witness to this.

Let us take the example of two countries that are now the most materially prosperous: the United States of America and Japan. In America, the nation found its higher ideal in the fight for freedom. Japan too did not see its aim in terms of material prosperity. For Japan, its basic goal and higher ideal was national revival.

In our country, we can experience spiritual values not in some utopian vacuum, but as part of our national culture. That is why enlightened patriotism must be the foundation of all programmes of reform. What is enlightened patriotism? Above all it is love of your nation, its history and culture. However, like all true love, it excludes national arrogance, enmity and chauvinistic hatred. Enlightened patriotism means really knowing your national culture and history.

* Viktor Vladimirovich Aksyuchits, People's Deputy for the 45th territorial electoral district; born 1949, Belorussian, studied at naval college, served in the Navy, graduated from the Philosophy Faculty of Moscow State University. Eleven years ago, he left the CPSU on political and religious grounds.

Despite five years of *glasnost* ', our great nation is still forced to live apart from the basic sources of our culture. In 1922, on Lenin's personal orders, 200 of the best minds in Russia – philosophers, writers, academics and commentators on current affairs – were exiled from Russia, as an alternative to the death penalty, so it was stated. I must say that even today their works are not published in our country, or if they are published, then it is only in minute doses. We must recover our national spiritual heritage and restore to political and cultural circulation the works of Russian philosophy and Russian political, economic and social thought.

The future is closed to us without a full and responsible evaluation of the past. We face a decisive question: after 70 years of revolution, struggle, re forging, construction and *perestroika*, why is it that this very rich country and great people find themselves on the outer reaches of civilisation? If we had asked this question in an abstract way about some abstract subject, all of us would have found an obvious answer: because they were being led in the wrong direction. I feel that we must say just the same about Russia.

Nowadays people say the command-administrative system was to blame. But why was that system created? I am quite convinced that the main reason for it was the communist ideology. In all the countries of the world, communist parties could not and did not create any systems other than command-administrative systems. So we must admit that the fundamental blame for the calamitous situation of our country lies at the door of the leading force in our society, that is, the CPSU. Only after expressing public repentance before the people for the disintegration and ruin of our very rich country and the genocide of its people will the CPSU have a moral right, not to a leading role, but to participation in political life.

However, at present the ideological dogmatism of the authorities and their failure to recognise these fundamental facts are a basic obstacle to any possible reform in any sphere of life. Hence the rapidly growing gap in understanding between the authorities and society. Public opinion is becoming more and more radical, but the authorities are still hanging on to dogma. The country is in the grip of an undeclared general strike. This comes out in people's attitudes to work, in the completely unproductive nature of that work. Indeed, this is a protest against inhuman living conditions and an inhuman regime. By the nature of things man is unable to work productively if it is against his basic interests in life.

What I am saying, respected delegates, is not extremism at all. Radical judgements and assessments in no way rule out constructive attitudes or solidarity in action and in politics. It is time to call things by their right names, making clear what is good and what is evil, and trying to find the way to solidarity, consolidation and reform. Only thus can we clear the way for any fruitful change in the country.

It could be said that communism is itself a left-wing, radical, extremist doctrine and ideology, as it has been in history. The evidence shows, without exception, that the incarnations of communist ideology throughout the world have had exactly the same sad consequences as in our own country.

The rules of the liberation from communist ideology in all countries are also the same, like the rules of enslavement. We see that in all the countries which have experienced the communist ideology, a return to traditional values is taking place. This is being expressed mainly in a national-religious revival. Traditional values are above all a rejection of revolutionary ideology, of revolutions, of extremism.

You might ask me why I, a Christian, take such a principled stand against communism. I must state, among other things, that communism is the most radical anti-Christian doctrine and force in the history of the world. The unprecedented

destruction and annihilation that communism brought in its wake were directed not only against Christians but, as we now see, against society as a whole. Thus the battle against God turned, naturally, into a battle against man.

We could say that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was given a great opportunity: 70 years to carry out all kinds of experiments in a very rich country with a hard-working people. But the results of those experiments, however you look at them, are absolutely lamentable – which demonstrates the completely unreal nature of communist doctrines.

As a result, communist ideology must be rejected consistently and in principle. Only that will open the way for reform. In this, we might find a Christian principle helpful: to fight not against men, but against dogma and ideology. To Christians, each man is the image and likeness of God and is of the highest value.

I should like to appeal to the communists who are in power. Do not reassure yourselves by calling your opponents extremist, unofficial, amateur associations. Look around you, look at what is going on in the countries of Eastern Europe and you will see that today's opposition will become a powerful force tomorrow. If you want to escape a hostile reaction, if you want to achieve a national consensus tomorrow, then show good will today and renounce voluntarily your monopoly on power, the economy and culture. [*Applause.*]

We support a broad consensus. At this Congress, we have said a great deal every day about consensus. But is such a consensus possible on the basis of a destructive utopia? No. Any consensus is possible only if it is based on a return to the organic life of this society, that is to the way of life that has been characteristic of our nation historically. I ask that our approach to all reforms be governed by three fundamental principles: the primacy of spiritual values, enlightened patriotism and rejection of communist ideology. Let us pass from the ideology of hatred and destruction to the ideals of solidarity and creativeness!

Respected deputies! As a rule, politicians think and act according to general principles, not working out the details. So today I am laying the fundamental principles before you. At the same time, I should like to end my speech with some concrete proposals concerning the direction reforms are to take. Above all, any laws which we pass will take effect only if we carry out a thorough deideologisation of the state, the economy and culture. Human experience as a whole shows that the best type of government for a huge multi-national country probably combines the principles of strong central power with full self-government for local and public organisations. All economic reforms are bound to fail unless the economy is decentralised and all forms of property become equal at law. However, we must remember that at all times, as well as now, private property has been a guarantee of civil, economic and political human freedoms, while the State Plan (*Gosplan*) – that is, ideological planning – was always like a 'black hole' in the economy.

I support the projects for privatisation of the economy which have been put forward by our talented economists, particularly Piyasheva and Selyunin.

All our laws should be aimed at deideologising our culture. Taken as a whole, this should lead to the creation of a civil society in our country. If we do not want extremism on the streets, then we must embark on radical resolutions and reforms here, in this hall.

I am convinced that a declaration of sovereignty should proclaim that the laws of the Russian Republic take precedence over the All-Soviet laws, as the Soviet parliament's activity has until now been blocked by the partocracy. Only this will open the way for the Russian parliament to pass a principled set of laws on freedom

of conscience, of the press and of political parties, laws introducing the market economy, and clearly worked-out legislation against monopolies and laws on social welfare for the needy and on ecological protection. In social policies a great role will be played by the state but, in our catastrophic situation, society itself could play just as great a role. For this, we need the ideals of spiritual and religious revival.

I call for an end to attempts, in laws worked out by our parliament, to foist the usual sort of utopias on our people. The laws passed must be aimed at the creative liberation from serfdom of men and society. Only if society is granted freedom of initiative will it survive the difficult transitional period of reform. That will create a real fund of trust in the authorities and the government.

Moreover, such a competent, balanced approach will make use of previously unused basic reserves of strength for the first time: creative freedom, human responsibility and self-government by citizens in society.

Finally, in my opinion, the time has come to call things by their real names. I feel that the name of our country – the RSFSR – in no way corresponds to reality. I propose that it be changed to the Russian Federation. Thank you. [*Applause.*]

Question: What is your conception of Russian sovereignty?

Aksyuchits: I have already said a few words about this. However, I consider it most important to proclaim that sovereignty is a declaration of independence. We must understand why we are declaring independence and on whose behalf. In my opinion, our main aim is to become independent of the present political structure, which is a force holding back all reforms. That is what the Declaration on the sovereignty of Russia basically means.

Question: How do you feel national conflicts in the Union should be resolved – for example, in the Baltic area?

Aksyuchits: I am absolutely convinced that the nations on the borders of our country are trying to escape from the communist regime, not from Russia. No-one can be forcibly prevented from leaving. The more force is used, the more divisions there will be among the nationalities. At the moment, all those who want to leave must be allowed to do so. Only thus will the road to truly constructive consolidation be opened up.

I am sure that all the problems in the Baltic, as well as those in Ukraine and the Caucasus, and all the problems of Eastern Europe too, will be solved here in Moscow, in Russia. Only when Russia becomes democratic will it become possible to solve all these problems, including those of the nationalities. I think we are giving birth, painfully, to a new kind of state system, which will combine the principles of autonomy, federation and confederation.

The Situation in Our Country (a Resolution of the RCDM Duma)

Recent events: tragedy in the Baltic states; decrees by the President and his ministers; gross violations of the USSR press law by central television and radio, including an information blockade extending as far as the supreme organs of state power in the Russian Federation. All these events prove that a 'creeping' coup has been planned and is now being put into effect. The coup is being organised by anonymous unconstitutional forces – just like the events in the Baltic states. On closer examination, these forces turn out to be top functionaries in the CPSU – just as they did in the Baltic states. Under their control they have the army, the KGB and the USSR Ministry of the Interior, and the President is either giving them his support or doesn't know what they are doing – just like what happened in the Baltic states.

Meanwhile the Union authorities and the mass media under their control are using demagoguery to justify their actions to the people; but these official explanations are completely worthless. The authorities justify armed patrols, for instance, by talking about a crackdown on crime; but everyone knows that to fight crime you do not need to use the armed forces and install a regime to repress the whole of society. In any case, when the coup is accomplished it will no longer need justifying to anyone. We can already follow the coup as it proceeds stage by stage.

A state of emergency has effectively been in force since 1 February. The armed patrols were on a fairly harmless scale to start with, but as far as one can judge they are going to become gradually more aggressive. The level of patrolling can be sharply escalated on any pretext: peaceful popular demonstrations, or disturbances produced by deliberate provocation. Legal sanctions will not be able to prevent the patrols metamorphosing into what is in fact a martial law regime.

The next stage is to do away with *glasnost*: this can be done under the guise of placing limits on *glasnost* in the interests of 'objective information'. The President has already put a proposal to the USSR Supreme Soviet to suspend the press law. When he did not succeed in achieving this through legislation, he took a decisive step towards the same goal. His Decree establishing a new all-Union state broadcasting committee authorised a state-party monopoly over radio and television. L. P. Kravchenko, the Director, has already introduced the phrase 'discipline on the airwaves', which essentially amounts to the reintroduction of censorship. It is quite likely that this will shortly be extended to cover the press too.

Another stage in the creation of a fascist society was the President's Decree on stronger measures to counter economic sabotage. (The bloodthirsty *Cheka* also had its origins in the fight against economic sabotage.) This Decree places all private and social organisations concerned with economic, political or cultural matters into the arbitrary hands of the regime, thereby making it impossible for them to work independently and threatening them with extinction.

It is not difficult to predict what the last stage of this 'creeping' coup is going to be. It will start with the introduction of direct presidential rule in the Baltic states and the

other 'hot' republics. This presidential rule will then inevitably be extended to cover the whole country, which means the Russian Federation as well. The republican parliaments will be prevented from functioning properly or even, in the worst scenario, dissolved. The inevitable next step will be to dissolve or suspend the activity of all political organisations except the CPSU. For it is quite obvious that it is the communist *nomenklatura* which is trying to turn back the course of history, relying on the help of the KGB and the bosses of the military-industrial complex. In a speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU on 31 January 1991 the leader of the Russian Communist Party, I. Polozkov, clearly stated that there is only one party in our country – the Communist Party. Polozkov had evidently forgotten the fact that the CPSU has never registered itself at any time since 1917: from a legal point of view it is an informal organisation which has been unconstitutionally (since the abolition of Articles 6 and 7 of the Soviet Constitution) and illegally (since the adoption of the Soviet law 'On Social Organisations') exercising the most important functions in the state and enjoying a whole range of privileges, including the right to issue orders to the army. All this has been cynically displayed in the events in the Baltic states.

The President's actions show that he has evidently made his choice and thrown in his lot with the neo-Bolshevik forces of reaction. He has alienated himself from clear-sighted democrats. The 'Unionists' are now trying to compel him to go all the way, to the point where they will be able to dispense with the President himself.

In the present situation there are basically three possible ways in which events could now develop. Gorbachev could remain as President, relying on reactionary elements in the army, the KGB and the party *apparatus*. There could be a popular revolution which would bring radical democratic forces to power under the leadership of Yel'tsin. Or else there could be a coup organised by the army or the partocracy aimed at preserving the Soviet Union from disintegration. The latter could be either a reactionary or a democratic coup. The most likely outcome will be a pseudo-authoritarian government under Gorbachev with limitations placed to a greater or lesser extent on civil, political and economic freedom.

How far this 'creeping' antipopular coup will go depends primarily on what kind of opposition it encounters from society. The communist regime does not now have the power to institute totalitarian terror. In order to arrest millions of people and terrorise tens of millions you need a huge repressive apparatus. There are now simply not enough fanatically loyal 'recruits' ready to risk their lives in a campaign against the people for the sake of communist dogma or the rule of the *nomenklatura*. No section of society now has the ideological enthusiasm essential for repression on a mass scale. What the regime can do, however, is unleash savage local repression aimed at terrorising the community. Georgia and the Baltic states show that aggressive actions of this type simply provoke outbursts of indignation on the part of the people.

For social opposition to be effective the first essential is to consolidate all democratic forces in the country. It is still not too late for the republican parliaments to adopt resolutions to prevent an outburst of reaction. It is vital to expose the main cause of the catastrophe we are suffering: the dogmatic blindness and selfish interests of the communist *nomenklatura*.

Finally, the most important thing: the voice of society. There must be acts of peaceful civil disobedience, general strikes, marches and demonstrations in the big cities, a general boycott of all those who are promoting and defending the neobolshevik coup. A climate must be created throughout society in which people will be ashamed to belong to a party which usurped power, which has inflicted

unprecedented genocide on the people and which is still enslaving this huge country. Any action society takes will contribute to our salvation only if it is both peaceful and on a mass scale.

Historical experience and common sense tell us that measures like these are capable of halting the coup in the middle of its iron march forwards.

It is now that the question is being decided: are we finally going to break through to the democratic reforms we have been looking forward to for so long? If we are going to do so, one fundamental hindrance has to be removed: the monopoly of the Communist Party and ideology.

What the future holds for us and for our children depends on us alone, on our courage as citizens, on our sense of civic responsibility, on our consciences, on our resolve.

We are in extremely difficult circumstances. We do not have the right to give way to despondency or despair. Our response to the approaching political reaction must not be one of helpless fear, but one of determined solidarity to fight the forces of evil to the end. A human being can preserve his dignity and his life only if he is ready to sacrifice his immediate interests, and perhaps even his life, for the sake of that which is greater than life – for the sake of the God-given freedom of the human individual. Those who understand this are capable of becoming the fulcrum for the liberation and regeneration of the whole of our society.

*The Duma of the RCDM
Moscow, 11 February 1991*

The Duma of the RCDM Appeals to Its Regional Organisations

The Duma of the RCDM recently issued a resolution entitled 'The Situation in Our Country'. On the basis of this assessment of the present state of affairs the Duma sees it as its duty at this critical time for our society to make the following recommendations to the regional organisations of the RCDM.

1 All RCDM regional organisations must be ready to work under possible conditions of repression and prohibition. Our response to the advancing political reaction must be to activate the work of the Movement and to increase its membership.

2 RCDM regional organisations must launch a broad campaign to attract into the Movement anyone who values the dignity and freedom of the individual, who wants to save our motherland, and who is prepared to stand up for eternal values on the basis of Christian ideals and morally-motivated political action.

3 More attention must be paid to work with the local population. In view of a possible prohibition on the publication of opposition newspapers and of publicity material by the RCDM, local RCDM groups must be set up in city districts and subdistricts, in towns and in villages, in workers' collectives, in educational institutions and in military units. This will both allow us to propagate our ideas in direct contact with potential supporters, and also reduce to a minimum the potential losses which the destruction of the RCDM's central institutions would entail.

4 Regional organisations should help to organise mass protest events, attempting to consolidate all anti-totalitarian forces and insisting that all forms of struggle must be morally justifiable.

5 Special attention must be paid to prudence and accuracy when preparing documentation.

If the move towards dictatorship, the establishment of a pseudo-authoritarian regime and the disbanding of opposition parties continues, it will be necessary:

1 To move towards a system of complete autonomy for the regional organisations, acting in accordance with the RCDM manifesto and the resolutions of the Duma, and in the light of the situation as it develops.

2 To recommend to the RCDM regional organisations that they register themselves as social organisations (charitable foundations, societies and so on).

3 Depending on local conditions, it might be advisable to make a clear distinction between the structures of the RCDM as a 'party' on the one hand and as a 'movement' on the other, in order to shield the Movement from any blow which might be aimed at political organisations. It may be appropriate for RCDM organisations to concentrate on religious, cultural and charitable initiatives, since the authorities are not likely to try to forbid this kind of activity.

4 All regional organisations must use all available means to explain to the people the harmfulness of the communist ideology of violence, lies and hatred, and to expose the criminal antipopular activity of the communist *nomenklatura*, which is driven by

self-interest to struggle for power by amoral means. We must appeal to all men of honour to leave the CPSU and to renounce all forms of compromise with communist structures – state structures, social structures, structures at work, structures in the mass media.

5 Carry on educational work through available mass media channels, and if necessary start producing *samizdat* for mass circulation.

6 Start cooperating closely with the local organisations of other oppositional parties and movements.

7 If conditions become critical, the leaders and coordinators of local organisations have the right to destroy documentation, including lists of members.

If opposition to the dictatorship increases and there is growing anarchy, chaos and social unrest it will be necessary:

1 To make every effort to avert acts of violence from whatever quarter.

2 To propagate as widely as possible the ideas of Christian solidarity and responsibility, so as to direct the energy of the social explosion into constructive rather than destructive channels.

3 To call for the summoning of a Constituent Assembly (*Zemsky Sobor*) as providing the only means of escape from the dead end we are in and the only means of restoring order.

*The Duma of the RCDM
Moscow, 11 February 1991*