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THESIS

THE SOVIET COUP:
A COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATIONS
ANALYSIS

by

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March, 1992

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The Soviet Coup:
A Command, Control, and Communications Analysis

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents an analysis of the August 1991 Soviet coup from a command, control, and communications (C3) perspective. Through the use of C3 modeling and functional decomposition, the C3 systems developed by the State Committee for the State of the Emergency (SCSE) and the reformist opposition to the coup are examined and the most significant strengths and weaknesses are identified. The comparative model developed for the study, the Coup Operations Process Model (COPM), is an extrapolation of C3 military operations process models. The COPM incorporates the C3 characteristics of crisis management and introduces the concept of a controllable interface separating the immediate and extended operational environments. Specific political, military, and media events preceding the coup are examined to determine critical developmental factors which influenced the structure and operational dynamics of C3 systems employed at the start of the coup. Analysis of the development and execution of the coup substantiates the importance of C3 in the conduct of crisis operations and identifies the key C3 functions which directly affected the outcome of the coup.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Soviet coup of August 1991 represented the culmination of a year-long political effort on the part of Communist Party hard-liners to retain the vestiges of a centralized Soviet government. Faced with the impending signing of the All-Union treaty, the conservatives launched an "eleventh-hour" military junta which attempted to ensure the solidarity of the state. A key factor leading to the failure of the State Committee for the State of the Emergency (SCSE) was a marked inability to develop and employ a C3 system capable of managing the crisis.

The foundation for the SCSE was laid by Gorbachev's return to the right in the fall of 1990. His cultivation and indulgence of the conservatives allowed the establishment of a right-wing power base and the creation of a reactionary shadow government which was to become the SCSE. The formal structures of control required by the SCSE were likewise developed by Gorbachev through his attempt to increase the power of the executive branch of government. The measures created a Cabinet of Ministers, a Security Council, and a Coordinating Agency for the Supervision of Law and Order staffed primarily by hard-line conservatives.

Gorbachev's embracement of the conservatives came to an abrupt end in April 1991 with the announcement of the Nine-plus-One agreement. Direct political action to limit Gorbachev's authority was attempted by the reactionary Soyuz faction of the Supreme Soviet and by Pavlov and the Cabinet of Ministers. The attempts were suppressed by Gorbachev, but effective action was not taken against his would-be usurpers.

The military power structure of the SCSE reflected the deep rifts which existed within the Soviet armed forces. Control and coordination was limited to

the highest levels of Army, KGB and MVD command with minimal effort expended to cultivate the support of subordinates and commanders of other services. Although High Command rhetoric extolled the role and responsibility of the military to preserve the state, the common soldier proved to be both unable and unwilling to undertake the task.

The potential impact of Soviet media was greatly underestimated by the SCSE and late attempts at censorship and control proved to be ineffective. The SCSE further failed to accurately assess the reactions of Western powers to the coup and were unable to stem the flow of support from the West to Yeltsin and the opposition.

The events of the coup are analyzed through the use of C3 modeling and functional decomposition. The C3 systems developed by the State Committee for the State of the Emergency and the reformist opposition to the coup are examined and the most significant strengths and weaknesses are identified. The C3 deficiencies of the SCSE were key elements in the ultimate failure of the coup. Through a combination of incomplete preparation and poor implementation, the SCSE was never capable of establishing a functional C3 system. The major areas of internal weakness were determined to be in the functional areas of sense, decide, interface control, and higher and lower levels of force control. The weaknesses of the SCSE's C3I system were amplified by the strengths of the opposition's system. The major areas of strength were determined to be in the functional areas of intelligence analysis, decide, and higher levels of force control. More importantly, the individual successes culminated in the formation of a complete C3I loop structure capable of operating in a more expedient fashion than the flawed SCSE loop. As demonstrated during the coup, this advantage allowed the opposition to operate a step ahead of the SCSE.

I. INTRODUCTION

Success or failure in crisis situations is dependent upon the establishment and maintenance of a viable command, control, and communications (C3) system and the ability to deny these capabilities to opposition forces. The structure and operating dynamics of an employed C3 system are potential early indicators of success or failure during crisis management operations.

The prime focus of this study centers on the failed Soviet coup of August 1991. Traditional analysis of government upheaval has generally focused upon the various political, economic and social factors which have served as both the impetus and determinants of success or failure for a coup. The expedient and epic failure of the State Committee for the State of the Emergency (SCSE) has resulted in the popular analysis of the Soviet coup in terms which parallel the precepts of contemporary analysis of C3 systems. As stated by the author Tatyana Tolstaya:

Everybody knows how to pull off a coup d'état. You must identify and destroy your principal enemy, so that the crowd has nobody to support; you must cut off all communications that might assist your enemy in making contact with the outside world; you must dispatch troops into the centers of potential resistance (troops that differ in nationality and religion from the people you wish to suppress); and you must mollify and reassure the people with the immediate distribution of food, drinks and goods. (Tolstaya, 91, p. 18).

The situation in Moscow could not have been more different; Russian President Yeltsin was never arrested, Russian soldiers stood by, without orders or ammunition, unwilling to support the SCSE, communications were not interrupted and foreign and domestic journalists operated with minimal interference. The failure of the SCSE to seize and maintain control may be attributed to two major aspects of C3; 1) inadequate planning and 2) an ineffective C3 system.

The structural framework for analysis is developed in Chapter II. The basic principles of C3 are discussed and a series of C3 operational process models are presented. The special attributes of coup operations are represented in a model developed by the author, the Coup Operations Process Model.

Chapter III focuses on the significant participants of the coup and chronicles the major political, military and media developments which preceded the attempted imposition of hard-line rule in the Soviet Union.

Chapter IV summarizes the significant events of the three days of the coup, and through the application of the Coup Operations Process Model, presents an analysis of the C3 systems employed by the SCSE and the opposition forces. The chapter closes with the identification of the key C3 failures and successes which led to the demise of the SCSE.

II. COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COMMUNICATION PROCESS MODELS

Command, control, and communications (C3) and its derivatives are not readily nor universally defined. As stated by Kenneth L. Moll:

One of the least controversial things that can be said about command and control (C3) is that it is controversial, poorly understood, and subject to wildly different interpretations. The term can mean almost everything from military computers to the art of generalship: whatever the user wishes it to mean. (Orr, 83, p. 23).

Whereas the focus of this thesis is directed toward the analysis of C3 processes, a baseline definition of command and control is required as a structural framework. The Joint Chiefs of Staff Publication No. 1 provides the official Department of Defense definition of command and control:

The exercise of authority by a properly designated commander over assigned forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and procedures which are employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission. (Department of Defense, 84, pp. 76-77).

As defined, command and control encompasses the means and processes by which a commander may control available forces in a manner consistent with mission accomplishment. A command and control system encompasses all of the above elements and delineates the requisite structures to facilitate the command process. The system may be relatively static, as in the case as of strategic command systems, or dynamic as in the development of contingency or crisis response systems. In either case, however, the command process must be structured in a manner consistent with basic C3 system models. The models are all consistent in their depiction of C3 systems as closed loop processes linked directly with the operational environment. The remainder of this chapter addresses these basic models with an emphasis upon the unique characteristics of crisis response systems.

A. C3 PROCESS MODELS

The basic function of C3 process models is to delineate the means by which a commander may use available personnel, equipment, communications, facilities and procedures to achieve a specified goal (Orr, 83, p. 24). The models emphasize the dynamic nature of the C3 process and reinforce the cause and effect relationship inherent in command decisions. Furthermore, the models provide a means to gauge relative command effectiveness as quantified by the efficiency and expediency of an implemented C3 system and the capability to deny these system attributes to the opposition.

1. Boyd's O-O-D-A Loop Model

The basic model presented by Colonel John Boyd during a briefing to the Air War College encompasses the essential elements of a C3 system (Orr, 83, p. 26). As depicted in Figure 1, the model reinforces the concepts of a closed loop C³ process and the a cause and effect relationship between the C3 system and the operational environment. The model decomposes the C3 process into four major interrelated functional areas and the operational environment.

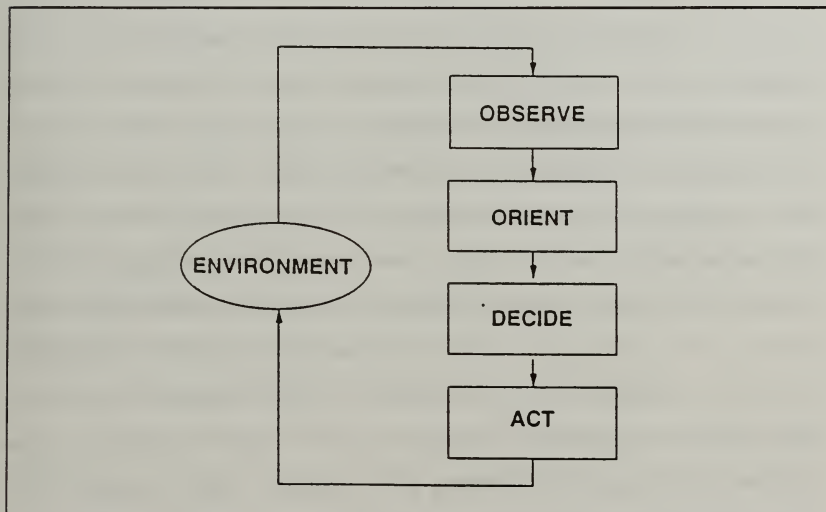


Figure 1. Boyd's O-O-D-A Loop Model

a. Observe

Boyd's observe function serves as the link between the C3 system and the environment. The function encompasses the myriad of detection, surveillance and warning equipment and facilities available to the

commander for obtaining the information to develop a comprehensive picture of the operational environment.

b. Orient

The orient function is the means by which the commander correlates the information obtained through the observe function. The function provides for the comparison of the current state of the environment with the required state consistent with mission accomplishment.

c. Decide

The decide function encompasses the many processes which interact to define the command decision process. Whereas a detailed analysis of these processes is beyond the scope of this work, the time critical nature of this process warrants discussion. The function further provides for the development of courses of action and the selection of those alternatives which are best suited to the operational environment. Given the both the responsiveness and quantity of modern information gathering, display and dissemination systems, the decide function has the greatest potential to serve as the major impediment to the expedient cycling of the loop system. As postulated by Boyd, success or failure in battle can often be directly attributed to the ability of one force to cycle through its C3 system loop faster than its opponents.

d. Act

The act function provides the means by which the selected course of actions are implemented by the commander. The function includes both the methods of dissemination and the force structure

developed in support of the commander. The act function serves as the output link between the C3 system and the environment.

e. Environment

The environment, in the strict military sense, encompasses the region of operations of direct concern to the commander and within the influence of the commander's C3 system. Depending upon the level of command, the environment can be as limited as the airspace shared by two combatant aircraft or as extensive as an entire theater of operations.

2. Lawson's C3I Process Model

As depicted in Figure 2, the C3I model developed by Dr. Joel S. Lawson has a clear relationship to the O-O-D-A loop concepts introduced by Boyd (Orr, 83, p. 25). The key differences between the combat process models of Boyd and Lawson are related to the degree of complexity and the specific inclusion of the intelligence process by Lawson. The intelligence process has been separately decomposed to accommodate the increasingly independent operation of intelligence activity within higher levels of command authority (Orr, 83, p. 27).

3. Conceptual Combat Operations Process Model

The Conceptual Combat Operations Process Model (CCOPM) developed by Major George E. Orr provides the basic framework for remainder of this thesis. Accordingly, the model, as depicted in Figure 3, must be examined in greater depth than the models of Boyd and Lawson. The model is designed to provide a simple tool for the evaluation of C3I in combat operations while providing sufficient detail to explain the theories and principles advanced by Boyd and Lawson (Orr, 83, p. 26). The

essential differences of the CCOPM are in the inclusion of interfaces with the higher and lower levels of the force structure and the inclusion of a generic intelligence/analysis block which encompasses both information transfer and the passing of orders and queries between levels of control hierarchy (Orr, 83, p. 27). The functional decomposition of the model has been expanded to include additional attributes relevant to crisis operations with emphasis upon factors which may be directly related to the Soviet coup d'état.

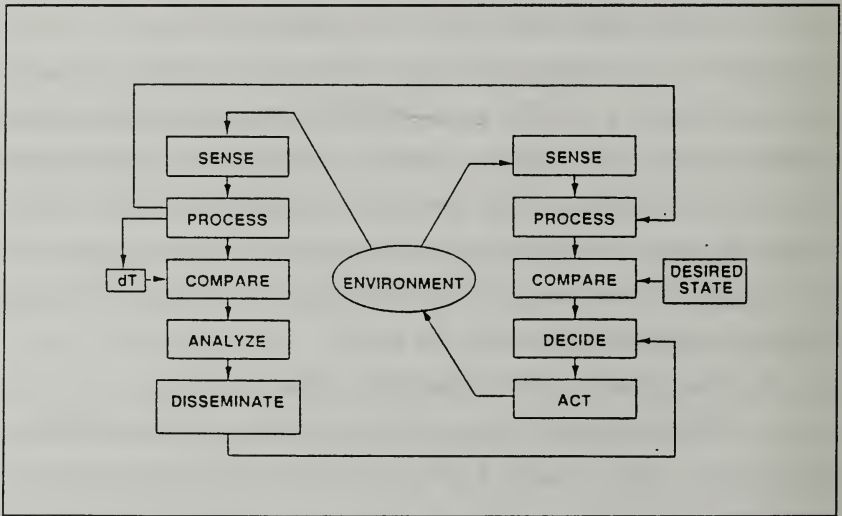


Figure 2. Lawson's C3I Process Model

a. Sense

The sense function includes the systems and procedures available to gather data on the environment. The goal of the sense function is to provide continuous coverage of the environment under all conditions

with an emphasis on accuracy and timeliness. Sensory systems include traditional military active and passive sensors (radar, optical, electromagnetic, etc.) and the improvised (foreign broadcasts, telephones, fax machines, etc.) which proved to be essential elements in the Soviet coup. Furthermore, the vulnerability of the sensors to countermeasures is included within the function. (Orr, 83, p. 28)

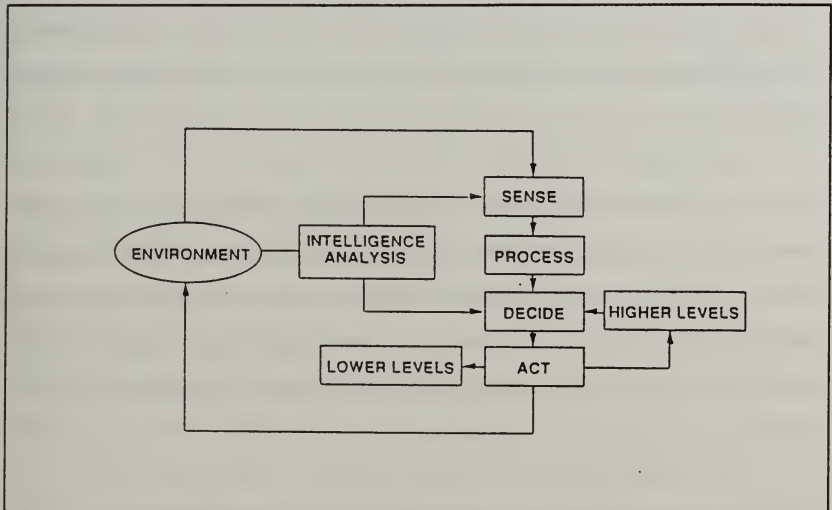


Figure 3. Orr's Conceptual Combat Operations Process Model

b. Process

The process function provides the means by which the data gathered from the environment, as amended by intelligence guidance and information, is correlated to determine the occurrence of specific events or situations (Orr, 83, p. 28).

c. Decide

The decide function and the decision-making subprocess are both exceedingly complex and not very well understood (Orr, 83, p. 29). A review of the multitude of theories concerning the human decision process is of limited value in providing a structural framework for assessing the Soviet coup. Analysis of the decide function is directed towards critical decisions points during the crisis and the effectiveness of the decisions realized and the ramifications of decisions not made by the coup and opposition command structures rather, than the actual decision process.

d. Act

The act function serves as the interface between the commander or decision-maker and the environment and is the means to force or influence changes in the environment that are determined to be desirable. The function transcends the simple application of coercive force and encompasses the full range of political, economic and military options available to control the environment. (Orr, 83, p. 29)

e. Higher and lower levels of control

The function blocks of higher and lower levels represent the force structures available to the commander for the enactment and control of measures implemented by the act function. The functions may be considered to represent a generic model of the military chain of command. With respect to the Soviet coup, the blocks serve as the basis for the analysis of both existing control hierarchies and ad hoc structures developed in response to the crisis.

f. Intelligence/Analysis

The intelligence/analysis function includes a variety of specialized processes and procedures. Whereas the exact details of these processes are not relevant to the conceptual context of the model, two essential tasks are worthy of mention. First, is the search, by both overt and covert means, for information regarding the organization, structure, capabilities, and intentions of unfriendly forces. Information on political, economic and other nonmilitary matters is also of relevance and of particular importance within the area of the Soviet coup. The information serves as a framework for assigning meaning to observed activities and situations. The second critical task is the development of forecasts with respect to changes in the current situation. The forecasts impact upon the sense and decide functions by indicating where and what to look for and providing assessments of the situation and evaluations of the probable consequences of proposed actions. As stated by Orr and reinforced by the Soviet coup, careful preparation beforehand is a critical key to success. (Orr, 83, p. 28)

g. Environment

The environment, as in Boyd's O-O-D-A model, encompasses the region of operations of concern to the commander and within the influence of his C3I system.

4. Coup Operations Process Model

An expansion of the CCOPM, the Coup Operations Process Model (COPM) has been structured to represent the interaction between coup and opposition force C3I systems. The model, as represented in Figure 4, has

been tailored to represent the arrangement of C3I systems relevant to an internal government coup, but has the capability to represent coup attempts from external forces. The functional concept of the environment has been divided into an immediate operational environment and an extended environment. The operational environment represents the local area of operations. Dependent upon the scope and nature of the coup, the operational environment may encompass a single city or extend throughout a nation. The primary interaction between C3I systems occurs within the operational environment. The extended environment represents an area of interest to the coup or opposition force that is external to the direct control of the forces' C3I system. Again, the specific boundaries of this environment is dependent upon the scope and nature of coup events. The principal refinement of the COPM is the inclusion of the extended environment and a controllable interface between this environment and the opposition C3I system. The interface serves as a secondary point of system interaction and represents a critical area of control which the author considers a key element in the conduct of a successful coup. The interface serves as the means to isolate opposition forces from the extended environment and potential sources of information, intelligence, and support. The capability to control this interface determines which C3I system is allocated to the right half of the model.

The success or failure of the coup and opposition C3I systems is dependent upon the implementation of each of the functional areas and the ability to link the areas into a responsive C3I cycle. The viability of the C3I cycle is of particular importance as concerns a crisis situation. The

compressed time-table and ad hoc organization inherent in crisis management provides a significant advantage to a C3I system capable of expedient cycling and flexible response to changing situations.

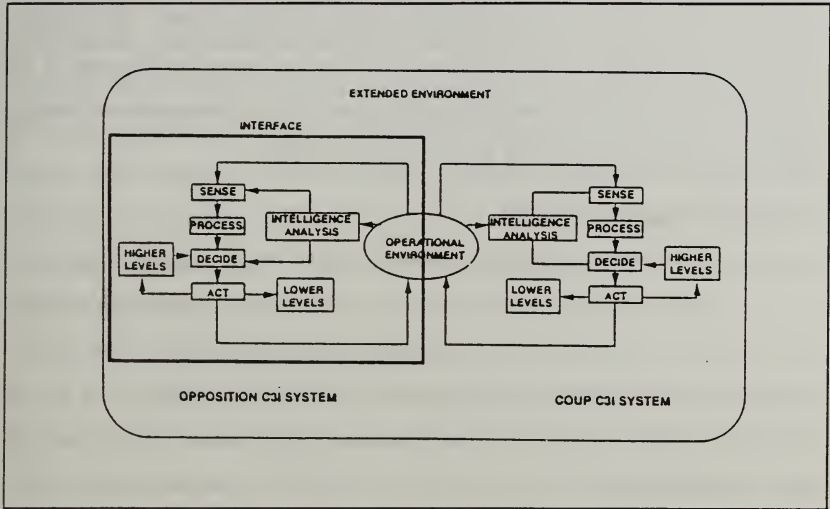


Figure 4. Coup Operations Process Model

B. SUMMARY

The chapter has outlined the significant features of C3 and C3I process models with an emphasis on crisis control attributes. The model developed by the author, the COPM, provides the framework for the subsequent analysis of the prelude to and the conduct of the Soviet coup.

III. PRELUDE TO THE COUP

An examination of the events leading up to the Soviet coup provides a solid foundation for the analysis of the events of August 1991. The chapter develops background information as concerns the major participants in the coup and the significant political, military and media developments leading up to and greatly influencing the events of the coup.

A. KEY PARTICIPANTS

1. The State Committee for the State of the Emergency

The consolidation of hard-line, conservative communists which was to evolve into the State Committee for the State of the Emergency (SCSE) was precipitated by Gorbachev's swing to the right in the fall of 1990 and resultant personnel changes initiated within the highest levels of the Soviet government. Ultimately, six of the eight members of the SCSE were appointed by Gorbachev himself. The prospects for the consolidation and implementation of power by a conservative coalition were enhanced by three major structural changes to the Soviet government. The changes announced by Gorbachev on November 17, 1990 were aimed at strengthening the executive branch and consisted of the creation of a USSR Cabinet of Ministers, directly subordinate to the president, to replace the USSR Council of Ministers; the creation of a Security Council; and the establishment of a Coordinating Agency for the supervision of Law and Order (Ross, 91, p. 1). The following paragraphs address the backgrounds of the eight members of the SCSE.

a. Gennadii Ivanovich Yanayev

Gennadii Yanayev, the nominal leader of the SCSE, was elected to his position as Vice President of the Soviet Union in December 1990. Yanayev's rise to power was through the Communist youth group, Komsomol, until his appointment to the Politburo in 1990. A committed member of the right wing, Yanayev's appointment as Vice President was strongly opposed by liberal and reformist factions of the Party. Having failed to be elected on the first ballot, Yanayev's political aspirations were sustained by President Gorbachev who pleaded to the Soviet Congress of Peoples deputies that "I want someone alongside me I can trust". (Hitchings, 91, p. 622)

b. Valentin Sergeevich Pavlov

Valentin Pavlov was appointed as Prime Minister by Gorbachev in January 1991. Formerly the Soviet Finance Minister, Pavlov had a reputation as an old-style bureaucrat with little faith in free market reforms. His distrust of the West was evidenced by his accusations in February, 1991 that Western bankers were attempting to topple the Soviet government by flooding the international market with rubles. Pavlov countered by ordering the withdrawal of large currency notes, an unpopular action with the Soviet populace. (Hitchings, 91, p. 622)

c. Dmitrii Timofeevich Yazov

Marshal Yazov was appointed Defense Minister by Gorbachev in May 1987 following the landing of a private German aircraft on Red Square. At the time of his appointment, Yazov was considered a Gorbachev-style reformist and was credited with spearheading the house

cleaning of top defense personnel during the mid-eighties. With the shifting of the Soviet political spectrum to the left, Yazov came to be regarded as a conservative opponent to reform and was increasingly angered by media criticism of the military and anti-military sentiment in the non-Russian republics. (Foye, 91, p. 12)

d. Vladimir Aleksandrovich Kryuchkov

Vladimir Kryuchkov was appointed as Chairman of the KGB by Gorbachev in 1988. Considered a conservative hard-liner, Kryuchkov had openly assailed Gorbachev's reforms as "blind radicalism" (Hitchings, 91, p. 622). Experienced in the use of force to accommodate political goals, Kryuchkov had served in the Soviet Embassy in Budapest in 1956, when Moscow brutally suppressed the Hungarian uprising, assisted in the preparations for the military coup in Poland in December 1981 and also supervised the assassination of Afghan President Amin in December, 1979 (Trimble, 91, p. 57, Kagarlitsky, 91, p. 18).

e. Boris Karlovich Pugo

Appointed Interior Minister by Gorbachev in 1990, Pugo had extensive experience within the both the Communist Party and the KGB in the the Republic of Latvia. An opponent of economic reform, Pugo had blamed liberal economic policies for the Soviet Union's growing domestic problems. (Hitchings, 91, p. 622)

f. Oleg Dmitrievich Baklanov

First Deputy Chairman of the Defense Council and Communist Party Secretary in charge of the military-industrial complex, Baklanov represented the interests of the defense industries, which had been in

turmoil because of arms treaties and the loosening of central economic controls. (Keller, 91, p. A16)

g. Vasilii Aleksandrovich Starodubstev

Chairman of the Farmer's Union and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Starodubstev was the principal spokesman for opposition to marketization, privatization, or land reform among Soviet farm managers. He was on the emergency committee as a representative of the peasantry, a group he insisted had suffered more than any other under perestroika and that would support the restoration of order (Atta, 91, p. 5).

h. Aleksandr Ivanovich Tizyakov

President of the Association of State Enterprises and Industrial, Construction, Transport, and Communications Facilities, Tizyakov was considered to be party loyalist. (Hitchings, 91, p. 622)

2. Prominent Coup Supporters

a. Valerii Ivanovich Boldin

Chief of Gorbachev's presidential staff and member of the USSR Security Council, Boldin was in a position to control the flow of information to the President and influence his perceptions of the growing unrest among hard-line government factions. (Smith, 91, p. 627)

b. Oleg Shenin

As the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Committee Secretary, Shenin was capable of controlling the flow of party information to President Gorbachev in the manner of Boldin. (Smith, 91, p. 627)

c. General Valentin Varennikov

Commander in Chief of Ground Forces, Army General Varennikov was one of the most experienced commanders in the Soviet military. A veteran of WW II and former head of the military operations group overseeing the war effort in Afghanistan, Varennikov was appointed as head of Soviet ground forces by Gorbachev in May 1989. An outspoken opponent of political liberalization and republican autonomy, he epitomized the growing politicization of the Soviet High Command as concerned the prospect of a divided union. Varennikov was among the most fervent opponents of independence for the Baltic republics and was a major figure in both negotiations and military operations conducted in the region. He is suspected as being a member of a differentiated command structure consisting of select army units and their counterparts in the KGB and MVD. (Foye, 91, p. 14)

d. Lt. Gen Yuri Plekhanov

Chief of the KGB Security Service for Soviet Leaders, Plekhanov was an essential figure in ensuring access to Gorbachev's retreat at Foros. (Smith, 91, p. 627)

e. Anatolii Ivanovich Lukyanov

Chairman of the Soviet Parliament and long term associate of Gorbachev, Lukyanov was highly critical of the prospective Union treaty which he considered "dangerous" and in need of redrafting to shift power back to the central government. Though not a direct participant, Lukyanov was considered the "chief ideologist" for the junta (Keller, 91, p. A16). The long standing patron of the reactionary "Soyuz" faction of

parliamentary deputies, Lukyanov has been considered the preferred choice of the conservative Party apparatus, the KGB, and the military-industrial complex as successor to Gorbachev as leader of the Soviet Union (Wishnevsky, 91, p. 8).

3. Opposition Leadership

a. Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin

Yeltsin's transition from a hard-driving provincial Party boss to a reformist participant in the Soviet central government began in 1985 with his promotion into the Politburo. Selected by Gorbachev for the position, Yeltsin seemingly betrayed his benefactor through a series of attacks against the General Secretary and his government. Yeltsin's public and private challenges against Gorbachev culminated at a Central Committee meeting in October 1987. In what was a moment of Party self-congratulation, Yeltsin rose to tell the Party bosses that "in the eyes of the people the Party's authority has drastically fallen", to chastise the Party for going too slow on perestroika, and to warn against leaving Gorbachev "totally immune from criticism," because such adulation could bring a new "cult of personality"-a chilling echo of the euphemism once used to describe Stalin's dictatorship (Smith, 91, p. 448). Although the statements resulted in his political excommunication to a minor ministry post, they elevated him to the status of a folk hero to the Soviet people. The Russian Republic presidential election of March 1989 marked Yeltsin's return to the political center stage. In the face of stern opposition by the Party apparatus and the military, Yeltsin staged an impressive campaign which took direct aim at the weaknesses of the Communist Party. His ability to

rally the citizens and soldiers of Russia resulted in a landslide victory in which he claimed eighty-nine percent of the popular vote, including the support of forty-four percent of the Russian military (Smith, 91, p. 450).

b. Aleksandr Rutskoi

A key element behind the military's support of Yeltsin was his selection of Colonel Aleksandr Rutskoi as his vice-president. Rutskoi, an army hero from the Afghan war, was well respected within the military and able to fully exploit his connections within the military during the course of the coup. (Smith, 91, pp. 619, 636)

c. Konstantin Kobets

Kobets, a retired Colonel General of the Soviet Army, was recruited by Yeltsin in January 1990 to lead the State Committee on Defense Issues. Kobets, in turn, assembled a small staff of reform-minded former officers and established the foundation of an extensive intelligence network which proved to be of vital importance during the coup. (Cullen, 91, p. 58)

B. DEVELOPMENTAL FACTORS

The attempt and dismal failure of the Soviet coup was the result of both immediate and long term political, military and social developments within the Soviet Union. The origins of the action may be traced to its root cause; the election of Gorbachev as CPSU General Secretary in 1985 and the announcement of perestroika and glasnost (Mann, 91, p. 1). Conservative opposition to Gorbachev's reforms and the subsequent struggles within and against the Communist Party laid the framework for the emergence of hard-line factions dedicated to the preservation of the USSR, the

fundamental precepts of communism, and the power and privileges afforded to the power elite of the Soviet government. Additionally, the freedoms afforded by the Gorbachev reforms, particularly with respect to the media and press, served to expose both the excesses of the Party elite and the shortcomings of the Soviet system of government. These long term factors were the foundation for the polarization of Soviet society and the resultant factionalization of the Soviet government and military.

The stagnation of reforms and economic programs, the shift of political power from the center to the republics and increased reformist opposition to Gorbachev in the fall of 1990 formed the prelude to Gorbachev's embracement of the conservatives as a means to restore his rapidly diminishing power base. His cultivation and indulgence of the conservatives from September 1990 to April 1991 allowed the establishment of a right-wing power base and the creation of a reactionary shadow government which ultimately sought to undermine the presidency following Gorbachev's return to the reformists and his support for the Union Treaty. This period of transition is the focus of the following sections concerning the political, military and media developments during the prelude to the coup.

1. Political Developments

In September 1990, under the pressure of conservatives in the government, in the military-industrial complex and in the military, Gorbachev withdrew his support of the radical "500 Days" plan of economic reform and began his turn to the right (Mann, 91, p. 3). His actions were an attempt to halt a process he had initiated, the gradual

rendering of his own power bases-the USSR government and the Communist party- toward obsolescence. Gorbachev's own rhetoric turned increasingly reactionary and he warned that attempts to break up the Union could result in bloodshed. He further intended to use the strengthened powers of the presidency to enforce compliance with all-Union laws.

The strengthening of the executive branch of government was the driving force behind the aforementioned proclamation by Gorbachev on November 17, 1990 which called for a radical restructuring of the Soviet government. The measures sought to overcome the paralysis that had befallen the central government in the wake of the Twenty-Eighth Party Congress and the withdrawal of the Party as the direct manager of the economy and the only partial allocation of power to the presidency (Ross, 91, p. 1). The resultant power vacuum at the center was further exacerbated by the declaration of sovereignty and independence by all of the fifteen Soviet republics. The creation of the Council of the Federation and the Cabinet of Ministers were the initial steps toward the reconsolidation of power to the center. On November 23, 1990 the power of the presidency was strengthened further with the Supreme Soviet resolution allowing the Gorbachev to rule by decree in emergencies. Although this centralization of power and administrative restructuring has been dismissed as "Krushchev-like harebrained schemes to buy time" (Ross, 91, p. 14), the underlying effect of consolidating and empowering the conservative faction cannot be overlooked. From the appointment of Pavlov as Prime Minister on January 14, 1991 to the Supreme Soviet approval of a Security Council staffed in the majority by future members

of the SCSE on March 13, 1991, Gorbachev presided over the creation of a coercive machine opposed to further political reform as evidenced by Pavlov's remarks before the Supreme Soviet on February 20, 1991:

Can we now let ourselves embark on the complete elimination of sectoral organs of management, as some comrades who consider themselves radicals are proposing? I am convinced we cannot....This is a sphere in which state ownership must prevail and in which we will delay privatization for a while. (Ross, 91, p. 4).

The proposals initiated by Gorbachev and his subsequent appointments to the new organs of government required the approval of the Supreme Soviet. This constitutional requirement is introduced not to mitigate Gorbachev's role in the development of the SCSE, but rather to illustrate the influence of the conservative parliamentary faction, Soyuz, during the prelude to the coup. The Soyuz, considered the mouthpiece of the Soviet military leadership and of the conservative Communist Party officials who suffered defeat by democrats and nationalists during republic elections, has been attributed to being the brainchild of Supreme Soviet Chairman Lukyanov (Wishnevsky, 91, p. 9). Founded in February 1990, the Soyuz was committed to the preservation of the Union and the strengthening of the KGB, the Army and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). The faction was the single largest within the Supreme Soviet and was actively courted by Gorbachev in the fall of 1990 as a means to ensure the success of his proposals and to placate growing unrest within Soyuz with respect to his policies. The combined effect was a further swing to

the right for Gorbachev and a dramatic increase in the ability of the Soyuz to affect the executive branch of the Soviet government as evidenced by the resignations of the reformist Foreign Minister Shevardnadze and Interior Minister Bakatin, as well as the Soyuz-backed approval of Vice President Yanayev.

The resignation of Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze on December 20, 1990 marked the emergence of reformist opposition to the increased influence of hard-line reactionaries within the Soviet government. In his speech to the Congress of People's Deputies, Shevardnadze warned that "dictatorship is coming" and called upon Soviet democrats to oppose right wing reactionaries (Crow, 91, p. 30). He then added that he had been haunted by "reactionaries", whom he did not name but identified as "two deputies with colonel's epaulettes", a reference to Soyuz leaders Viktor Alksnis and Nikolai Petrushenko (Wishnevsky, 91, p. 11). He then proceeded to implicate Lukyanov as the influential force behind the colonels and the key element to their success in "settling their scores" (Wishnevsky, 91, p. 11). As was the case in Gorbachev's action of November 17, the Shevardnadze resignation had implication beyond the event, namely the creation of a rallying point for reformists.

The "December-May" romance between the Gorbachev and the hard-liners came to an abrupt end on April 23, 1991 with the signing of the Nine-plus-One agreement at Novo Ogarevo (Mann, 91, p. 4). The negotiations at Novo Ogarevo, at which decisions affecting the future of the country were made privately by a small group of leaders, sent shock waves through the conservative factions of the Soviet Union. The agreement,

approved by nine of the fifteen Soviet republics, acknowledged the independence of the Baltic States, Moldavia, Georgia and Armenia and called for national elections within six months of the Union treaty's signing (Mann, 91, p. 4). The Supreme Soviet was dismayed by the Nogo Ogarevo negotiations and the apparent usurpation of their power. Additionally, the terms of the agreement would result in the premature termination of their terms of office. Upon receipt of a revised draft of the treaty, Lukyanov argued, with the support of numerous deputies, for increased Supreme Soviet influence over the structure and terms of the agreement. The Supreme Soviet, however, was without authority to reject the Union treaty which was previously approved by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Discontent with the treaty was most prevalent within the Soyuz faction of deputies which considered the agreement a grave threat to the integrity of the union. The Soyuz in response to the treaty and Gorbachev's return to reformism initiated a campaign to convene an emergency meeting of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, at which the faction hoped Gorbachev would be recalled and a state of emergency declared (Mann, 91, p. 4). Although the Soyuz deputies failed to garner adequate support within the Congress of People's Deputies, their public display of dissatisfaction was a decisive indicator of conservative discontent within the government.

An additional setback befell the conservatives on June 12, 1991 with the election of Yeltsin as the president of the Russian Republic in a landslide popular election. Yeltsin, who resigned from the CPSU in July

1990, had enacted an aggressive program to curb the power of the party within the Russian republic.

Hard-line opposition to Gorbachev and his return to reform mounted on June 17, 1991 when Prime Minister Pavlov, following a report to the Supreme Soviet on the socioeconomic and sociopolitical situation, requested an expansion of his cabinet's authority. Specifically, Pavlov requested the right of legislative initiative as a means to streamline the cabinet's oversight of the rapidly failing economy. Citing Gorbachev's demanding workload, Pavlov asserted that increased power for the cabinet was the only means to avert economic ruin. Pavlov failed to consult with Gorbachev prior to his request, but the subsequent two days of closed-door testimony in the Supreme Soviet indicated prior collaboration with Yazov, Pugo and Kryuchkov.

Debate within the Supreme Soviet echoed the conservative discontent voiced earlier by Soyuz and was directed toward the reduction of Gorbachev's power, if not his outright elimination. Soyuz proposed the introduction of testimony by cabinet ministers, with Yazov, Pugo and Kryuchkov quickly arriving with testimony already in hand. The common theme of the testimony was a direct attack on Gorbachev and perestroika, described as "cold, hunger and inadequate defense" (Mann, 91, p. 3). The ministers, affecting Cold War rhetoric, cited continuing Western threats to the Soviet Union and advocated a unified USSR as the only defense. Following two days of scathing criticism and debate, Lukyanov urged the the Supreme Soviet to grant Pavlov's request and amplified the conservatives' desire to retain centralized control:

If we do not resort to extraordinary measures, the country will perish. Will perish - do you understand this?...There is no governing center in the country today. The cabinet is making this plea: "Untie our hands, let us do something for the country." We need decisions, and instead some people are speculating what if the cabinet usurps power? This is ridiculous. (Mann, 91, p. 2).

Gorbachev responded to Pavlov's attempted "constitutional coup" in a forceful and accusatory thirty-minute address to the Supreme Soviet on June 21. In a speech seemingly more critical of the parliament than of his wayward ministers, Gorbachev accused the assembly of being completely detached from reality and stressed his continued support of Pavlov and the cabinet:

...the full support of the president, the full support. There is no crisis in relations with Pavlov, and I hope there won't be, although, you know, such a time of responsibility rests with the executive power and I don't delude myself-inasmuch as I head (the executive)-we're functioning in extreme conditions, the most difficult, perhaps, for many of us since the Great Patriotic War. (Mann, 91, p. 4).

Gorbachev ended his speech with an appeal to the deputies for greater cooperation and dismissed the conservative threat to his authority. The Supreme Soviet responded by voting to pass Pavlov's request to the president for further study, a motion tantamount to legislative death.

Confident in the progress achieved during the Novo Ogarevo negotiations and the promise of a new decentralized USSR, Gorbachev allowed his would-be usurpers to remain in power. Upon the conclusion of the Supreme Soviet Session, he appeared for the press with Pugo, Yazov and Kryuchkov and confidently quipped "the coup is over" (Keller, 91, p. A16).

Suppressed but not defeated, the conservatives emerged from the incident with their power structures relatively intact. Western concern with respect to the hard-liners was demonstrated in a private meeting between US Secretary of State Baker and USSR Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh on June 20, 1991. During the discussion, Baker asked Bessmertnykh to tell Gorbachev that the United States had been informed that a group of high ranking hard-liners were plotting against him. (Trimble, 91, p. 58)

Final planning for the August coup appears to have been initiated around August 6. On that day Gorbachev's spokesman announced August 20 as the date for the signing of the new union treaty (Keller, 91, p. A16). The preparations did not go unnoticed by government reformists. Two days prior to the launching of the coup, Aleksandr Yakolev, a former close aide to Gorbachev, resigned from the Communist Party with a warning that party hard-liners were readying for a coup (Hitchings, 91, p. 626).

2. Armed Forces Developments

The Soviet armed forces, which shall be considered to include the forces assigned to the KGB and MVD as well as the traditional elements of the Soviet military, had never directly attempted to assume power. They

have, however, lent the specter of force to support leadership changes viewed as favorable by the holders of high command. Such was the case of the August putsch; an opportunity for the conservative leadership of the military, KGB, and MVD to support a hard-line government and check what was perceived as a fatal weakening of Soviet military power. Whereas the key leadership elements of the armed forces were more than willing to assist the SCSE, the majority of forces under their command were either opposed to the junta or content with waiting out the crisis.

The serious divisions within the Soviet armed forces had mirrored the divisions within the government discussed in the preceding section. The accession to power of Gorbachev in 1985 resulted in the division of the defense community into conservative and liberal camps. The conservative faction was primarily populated by senior commanders and political officers, and its leadership was drawn from the Soviet High Command. The conservative leadership sought to maintain the leading role of the Communist Party and the preservation of military strength, both perceived as being in jeopardy as a result of Gorbachev's reforms. Liberal sentiment, on the other hand, was most prevalent among junior and mid-grade officers who opposed the military leadership and advocated radical military reform as the means to ensure a viable defense.

The advocacy of conservatism by the Soviet High Command was reflected in a radicalization of Soviet military ideology as early as 1989 (Carter, 91, p. 16). Proceeded by the unilateral force reductions proposed by Gorbachev in 1988, Soviet military journals began to publish a series of articles which reflected a distancing of the High Command from

perestroika and the development of anti-democratic ideology. The official journal of the USSR Defense Ministry, *Voenno-Istorichesky Zhurnal*, published a string of articles by the militarist writer Karem Rash which openly advocated the direct intervention of the Soviet military in the political arena. Referencing the Polish military intervention of 1981, Rash argued "Who recently saved Poland from national chaos, anarchy and humiliation? Who held her fast on the edge of an abyss? The Polish Army!" (Carter, 91, p. 16). The radicalization of *Voenno-Istorichesky Zhurnal* continued with the appointment of Rash to the editorial board. Of greater import, however, was that the journal's dramatic shift to the right was accompanied by its increased influence and popularity (Carter, 91, p. 17). Throughout 1990 and the first part of 1991, the journal conducted a concentrated campaign against the liberal press and for an all-Union Ministry of Defense. The radical views presented by the journal during this period included; hostility toward "New Political Thinking", fascination with Hitler's reich, and support for a military coup. The central theme of these views was the role and responsibility of the army as a maintainer of internal order. As stated by Viktor Eremin in the journal *Nash Sovremennik*:

The chief and only function of the army is the preservation of the statehood of the people and the territorial integrity of that statehood....And this is why, when civil state power is falling apart and is not in a condition to...defend national statehood...and begins to act in the interests of foreign groups hostile to the people, the army has not only the right but also

the duty to become extremely involved in internal affairs.
(Carter, 91, p. 18).

The radical opposition of Soviet militarist writers to reform was further manifested in the opinions presented by the Soviet High Command. In a article entitled "A Visit to General Rodionov's Office" published in the May, 1991 of Den, another reactionary journal, the prospects of a military dictatorship were discussed with Baklanov, Commander in Chief of the Navy Admiral of the Fleet Chernavin, and Commander of the General Staff Academy Colonel General Rodionov. Following a critical assessment of Gorbachev's defense policy, termed as irrational and a means to destroy the military and defense industry, the discussion turned toward the possibility of a military dictatorship. Although careful not to directly advocate military rule, those present gave the impression that such a development might be inevitable and that the armed forces would be well suited for the task. As stated by Baklanov:

The army, if it has to take the responsibility for governing the economy, transportation, and society as a whole could only maintain that governing role for a certain period of time....The armed forces have demonstrated the ability to create an entire economy,...and to provide regulation and command control to millions of components: technological, social and psychological. (McMichael, 91, p. 10).

A far more direct article appeared in the flagship newspaper of Soviet hard-line politics, Sovetskaya Rossiya, on July 23, 1991. Entitled "A Word to the People" and signed by twelve prominent Soviet citizens

including Generals Varrenikov and Gromov, the article was a direct and desperate appeal to the Soviet populace to rise up in defiance of the current government and to resist those "who do not love the country and who are dooming us to...subjection to our all-powerful neighbors" (McMichael, 91, p. 10). The authors warned "the bones of the people are being ground up, and the backbone of Russia is being broken in two" (McMichael, 91, p. 10). The authors clearly argued for the preservation of Russia as a unified nation at any cost. The article appealed to the armed forces to be prepared to be the means by which the USSR would be preserved:

We are convinced that the men of the army and navy, faithful to their sacred duty, will not allow a fratricidal war or the destruction of the fatherland, that they will step forth as the dependable guarantors of security and as the bulwark of all the healthy force in society. (McMichael, 91, p. 9).

The development of radical ideology coincided with the restructuring of the armed forces to facilitate the coordination of the various elements of a coercive apparatus. The joint coordination of joint internal security operations was assigned to Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Gromov in October, 1990 under the auspices of "Operation Snowstorm", an emergency program dating back to the Brezhnev era. The program was developed as a means of imposing an emergency regime in support of the central government. The viability of the program was greatly enhanced by Gorbachev through his request, and subsequent Supreme Soviet approval for the establishment of a Coordinating Agency for the Supervision of Law and Order. The resultant Army-KGB-MVD

troika was to provide the requisite force structure for the preservation of the state.

The lead organization for the preservation of domestic order and the main security force of the MVD was the 350,000-man strong Internal Forces. The force embarked upon an extensive redeployment and reequipping under the direction of Gromov. The restructuring focused on the conversion of the Internal Forces from a static organization of security guards and prison warders to a mobile force spearheaded by Opnaz (Operational Designation) elements. The emphasis on mobile, operational units was reflected in the almost doubling of Opnaz strength to 70,000 men in less than a year (Galeotti, 91, p. 6). The OMON (Special Mission Militia Detachments) of the police forces were also under the formal control of the MVD. The "black beret" riot squads were first established in Leningrad and Moscow in 1987 with the recruitment of older professionals of proven maturity. Under Gromov, the OMON experienced an expansion to over 9,000 men and the development of a decidedly paramilitary style with recruitment of a "second generation" of young ethnic Russians, typically just detached from the military (Galeotti, 91, p. 6). By the summer of 1991, the OMON had thirty city and regional units distributed throughout the USSR and had embarked upon a program to establish paramilitary units in the lower echelons of the police. In addition, entire divisions of the army were transferred to the MVD, including the 55th Guards Motorized Rifle Division and Dzerzhinsky Mechanized Division (Galeotti, 91, p. 5).

The KGB force structure mirrored the MVD in the division of elements between special operational units and static guard elements. The

majority of manpower belonged to the 230,000-strong Border Guards, though these forces were dispersed along the expansive Soviet border and of little potential effectiveness in the enforcement of civil order. Of greater importance were the special purpose troops or Spetznaz which mustered approximately 40,000 men. The Spetznaz's primary missions are counterinsurgency, counterterrorism and, in wartime, deep interdiction behind enemy lines. The army had also transferred units to the KGB, including the 103rd Guards Airborne Division, and the KGB had established a special a special operations command center in the Lubyanka to coordinate the employment of it's diversified force structure.

The regular army, as a whole, afforded the SCSE with it's weightiest, but dullest sword. With 1,473,000 troops, the ground forces represented a major element of force. However, severe internal conflicts, lack of mobility and disillusionment were serious barriers to effective employment.

The Army-KGB-MVD troika had ample opportunity to exercise the command structure developed by the formation of the Coordinating Agency for the Supervision of Law and Order. The violent crackdown on Lithuanian and Latvian nationalism in January, 1991 provided the first major dress rehearsal. Following a carefully orchestrated prelude, which included the exposing of the dubious "Committee of National Salvation" by the KGB, the armed forces embarked upon a campaign of intimidation and terror in Lithuania. The effort culminated in the violent attack on January 13 against a Vilnius television station which left 14 dead. The forces involved consisted of army paratroopers, MVD OMON forces, the KGB

special operations "Alpha Group", and special control elements from Moscow. The action was followed on January 20 with an attack on the Latvian Interior Ministry by combined MVD and KGB forces. Again under the guise of a response to an overthrow of the legitimate government by the "Committee of National Salvation", the troika attempted to turn the tide of nationalism in the Baltics. Although neither effort proved to be successful, the troika was able to develop the requisite command and control techniques for civil intervention and developed a boldness and independence which was to be reflected in its actions of the succeeding months.

In February 1991, Gromov commanded an exercise in Moscow designed to test the ability to secure the city in the event of massive industrial disorder. The event also provided a means to explore the viability of occupying key centers of power within the government. The Moscow plans were put to the test on March 28 with a massive security force effort to control popular protests in support of Yeltsin. The forces were effective and the authorities proved capable of deploying over 50,000 men from the combined arms of the security apparatus.

Subsequent activities by the armed forces seemed more directed at weakening Gorbachev's authority and prestige. In early June the official report of the crackdown in Vilnius was released, coincident with Gorbachev's visit to Norway for the Nobel Peace Prize. The report exonerated Soviet forces and attributed the civilian death toll to local militants. The release was followed by renewed security force activity in Vilnius which included the establishment of checkpoints and the detainment

of two members of the Lithuanian Defense Ministry (McMichael, 91, p. 10). Security force activity expanded throughout the region on June 8 with OMON attacks against border posts in all three Baltic republics. Despite Western protests and Gorbachev's own efforts toward Baltic independence vis-a-vis the Nine-Plus One Agreement, the attacks continued and greatly undermined Gorbachev's bargaining position in his attempts to obtain commitments for Western aid at the mid-summer Group of Seven economic summit.

The proceeding paragraphs chronicled the development and implementation of a high level command and control structure for the violent enforcement of hard-line policy. The apparatus was dependent upon the unquestioning support of the troops under its control. The armed forces as a whole and the army in particular, however, were suffering from a growing disillusionment toward the conservative elements of the High Command. The long-term effects of reform and the rising tide of nationalism had served to significantly undermine the lock-step loyalty expected of the lower echelons of the armed forces.

Historically, life in the Soviet military has been very harsh. Over the past fifteen years 120,000 soldiers have died, without counting the casualties of Afghanistan, with fifty percent of these deaths resulting from suicide. Another twenty percent may be attributed to "inflicted injuries", the official term for homicide, as a result of hazing and ethnic conflict. The internal discipline problems of the military have been further complicated by a rapidly diminishing draft pool and the resultant decline in quality of conscripts. The faltering Soviet health system has resulted in the

deferment of a substantial portion of the draft-age population. The reduction of the draft pool has led to the overall lowering of educational standards within the military with the number of inductees lacking a high school education increasing six-fold in the past three years. An additional obstacle to discipline and combat readiness came in the form of one in four conscripts having a criminal record. Among those eligible to serve there developed an increasing tendency to resist the draft. According to Lieutenant General Ivan Matveyev, a manpower specialist, 86,000 recruits failed to report to induction centers. Although the republics of Russia, Belorussia, Azerbaijan and the Ukraine were able to meet enlistment quotas, results throughout the remaining republics were uniformly poor with many potential conscripts choosing to serve in local militia units. The manpower shortfalls, according to the top ranking political commissar in the military, General Nikolai Shlyaga, resulted in "increasing the tension of military service" as well as heightening "physical and moral and psychological fatigue." For those in the military the politics of reform has imposed serious shortfalls in the quality of military life. The withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan and Eastern Europe has severely strained the military's housing resources. By April, 1991 there were an estimated 192,000 military families without housing. In Moscow alone, 10,800 officers' families were without apartments. The availability of food was an additional concern, particularly for troops stationed in the Baltics and the Caucasus. (Schoenfeld, 91, p. 10)

The mounting hardships of military life, in conjunction with the growth of nationalism and liberalism within the lower echelons of the

armed forces, fostered an atmosphere conducive to the development of non-traditional loyalties. This was most evident in the growing support for Yeltsin by Russian members of the military. Yeltsin's popularity was a decisive departure from his reputation as being anti-military. His new found appeal to the military was the result of a careful campaign keyed by his association with respected members of the military.

3. Media developments

Under glasnost and perestroika the Soviet media had developed an ever increasing ability to successfully mold public opinion. A spirit of independence from political patronage had developed and fostered a generation of editors and journalists difficult for the Kremlin to intimidate. The media emerged at the forefront of political opposition to the Communist Party through their exposure of official corruption, the privileges of the elite and the mismanagement of the economy (Smith, 91, pp. 150-151). The growing liberalism of the media, encouraged by the anti-censorship law of 1990, was to become a major point of contention for Gorbachev during his return to conservatism.

Soviet central state television, Gostel, flourished during the height of glasnost. A wealth of new programming was developed which were to become object lessons of democratic debate. Programs such as Vzgl'yad, 600 Seconds, and Fifth Wheel actively sought to expose the past and present failings of the Communist Party. By late 1990, Gorbachev clearly had endured as much criticism as he was willing to accept from Gostel, which the Party regarded as their outlet (Smith, 91, p. 566). In an effort to reverse the process he had initiated in 1985, Gorbachev appointed Leonid

Kravchenko as the new head of Gostel. Kravchenko, a hard-line Party loyalist, instituted a program of tight control and firm discipline as concerned Soviet television. First to fall was Vzglyad, which pressed to air Shevardnadze's dramatic resignation as Foreign Minister and was cancelled as a result. Kravchenko converted Gostel into a state-owned corporation, serving Gorbachev, and required all key journalists and producers to renegotiate their contracts. Those considered to be too independent were simply not rehired. In the end Gorbachev got what he wanted, a media organ which toed the Party line, but at the cost of credibility and the development of a rival television station politically sponsored, protected and financed by Yeltsin and the Russian republic (Smith, 91, pp. 570-571). The new network reinstated many of the programs banned by Gostel and served as an open conduit for the reformists.

Non-government radio also developed during this period, the prime example being the creation of Radio Echo Moscow in August of 1990. The station sought to fill the role occupied by Radio Liberty, regarded as the best medium of dissemination by government reformists, and provide uncensored reporting from within the Soviet Union (Korzun, 91, p. 3). Supported by the non-Communist Moscow City Council, the station was to become a major outlet of information during the coup.

The 1990 press law had a similar impact on the print media. The easing of government restrictions spawned the proliferation of new publications and news services throughout the Soviet Union. In Moscow, the reforms led to the development of an independent news service and a wealth of periodicals tailored to the tastes of their respective audiences.

Under the new conditions of competition, the traditional print outlets of the Communist Party, Pravda and Izvestia, suffered from plummeting circulation (Smith, 91, p. 577). In their place rose reformist periodicals, such as Moscow News, Kuranty and Roissiya, which would later play a major role in the dissemination of information during the coup.

The attempted crackdown on the press which accompanied Gorbachev's return to the right was accomplished through economic means. Reluctant to repeal the anti-censorship legislation, the State and Party sought to restrict the lifeblood of the new press - paper supplies, distribution, and printing plants. The effort proved to be insufficient and resulted in the increased detachment of the independent media from the vestiges of the state. In turn, the hard-liners forged strong alliances with press outlets favorable to their views. Krasnaya Zvezda, Pravda and Sovetskaya Rossiya became the mouthpieces of conservatism. Ultimately, the SCSE appeared to fall victim to the age-old pitfall of politics - they began to believe their own press.

C. SUMMARY

The SCSE represented the long-term failing of the Communist Party, the development of a leadership based on Party loyalty and longevity rather than competence and public approval. In contrast, the opposition was able to provide a leadership freely elected by the Russian populace. The opposition was further distinguished by their ability to function during a crisis situation in a manner far superior to the SCSE.

The political, military, and media developments leading up to the coup revealed the common theme of a failure on the part of Party hard-liners to

fully stem the tide of reform within the Soviet Union. The efforts of the SCSE, however, reflected a concerted effort to prepare for a military backed coup. The reasons behind the inability of the SCSE to carry through with their plans is the focus of the Chapter IV.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE COUP AND CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the coup is presented in two sections. The first section outlines the significant events of the coup with an emphasis on major turning points. The second section examines the coup within the framework of the Coup Operations Process Model (COPM) developed in Chapter II. The analysis focuses upon the functional areas that encompassed the key strengths and weaknesses of the SCSE and the opposition.

A. CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. August 16

The first reported official act of the SCSE was the distribution of a secret KGB memo, signed by Kryuchkov, which immediately doubled the pay of all KGB agents. Two subsequent cables raised all KGB bureaus to an alert status and directed the destruction of documents. (Keller, 91, p. A16)

2. August 18

The SCSE delegation to Foros was preceded by Yazov, presumably to oversee the security arrangements required for the detainment of Gorbachev (Keller, 91, p. A16). The actual five-man delegation, consisting of Boldin, Baklanov, Varrenikov, Shenin and Plekhanov, was to arrive at Gorbachev's villa at 4:50 P.M. (Teague, 91, p. 35). Despite concern on the part of Gorbachev's bodyguards, the delegation was admitted into the estate and presented the demands of the SCSE to Gorbachev. By his own account, Gorbachev was afforded two

options; 1) officially declare a state of emergency and remain at Foros or 2) relinquish his powers to the Vice-President (Gorbachev, 91, p. 20). Refusing to accept either option, Gorbachev was placed under detention and his estate was surrounded by frontier ground and naval units under the direct control of Plekhanov (Gorbachev, 91, p. 20).

Upon the return of the delegation from Foros, a secret meeting was convened by Kryuchkov at the Kremlin under the pretense of the development of a grave situation. In addition to Kryuchkov, the meeting was attended by Lukyanov, Bessmertnykh, Shenin, Boldin, Plekhanov and the membership of the SCSE, less Tizyakov and Starodubstev. Shenin, Boldin and Baklanov recounted their visit to Foros with the embellishment of having seen Gorbachev lying unconscious in bed. While the exact nature of his "illness" had not been determined, the SCSE was certain that he would be unable to carry out his duties for some time. Kryuchkov then darkened the picture with a report of armed concentrations of citizens gathering around the main post office, the Ukraine Hotel and other points in Moscow and of the confiscation of four "hit lists", including one which listed the names of government members marked for immediate execution. Kryuchkov was followed by Plekhanov who reported on similar gatherings around the Kremlin, KGB headquarters and Pushkin Square, from which an additional two hit lists had been confiscated. Kryuchkov proceeded to wave the lists in the air and demanded a declaration of a state of emergency. The meeting adjourned with the decision to call a session of the Supreme Soviet on August 26 to ratify the the actions of the SCSE. (Robinson, 91, pp. A4-A5)

3. August 19

Kryuchkov's call for action was answered at 4:00 A.M. when Yanayev declared a state of emergency in parts of the Soviet Union and assumed the presidency under the provisions of Article 127-7 of the Soviet Constitution (Trimble, 91, p. 55). Shortly thereafter, Yazov issued Coded Telegram 8825 which ordered the military to a heightened alert status, recalled furloughed personnel and increased security at key military installations. The Taman Guards, Dzerzhinsky and Kantimirovskaya Mechanized Divisions and units of the Rayazan Airborne Division were ordered to secure strategic points in Moscow (Trimble, 91, p. 55).

In sharp contrast to the measures taken to ensure Gorbachev's isolation, the SCSE failed from the start to effectively isolate Yeltsin. Warned by aides and reformist politicians as early as 5:00 A.M., Yeltsin was able to gather the Russian Republic leadership by 7:00 A.M. and begin the development of a plan to oppose the coup prior to the official announcements of the formation of the SCSE by TASS and Radio Moscow (Trimble, 91, p. 57). The announcement of the assumption of power by Yanayev and the SCSE was immediately followed by the release of declarations which were broadcast on all channels of Soviet television throughout the day. They included "An Address to the Soviet People", "A Declaration of Soviet Leadership" and the sixteen-point Resolution No. 1 of the emergency committee which placed a ban on strikes, demonstrations and rallies and imposed press censorship. The resolution specifically tasked the MVD, KGB, Prosecutor's Office and the Ministry of Defense with the maintenance of public order and state security. Finally, Yanayev issued an

address to foreign heads of state and the UN Secretary General assuring them that the introduction of emergency rule would in no way alter the Soviet Union's international obligations, treaties and agreements. (Teague, 91, p.36)

As the first official reports of the SCSE were being broadcast, Yazov was meeting with his chief generals in a 6:00 A.M. meeting at the Defense Ministry. Yazov repeated Kryuchkov's ruse that unidentified forces were planning to seize power and demanded the military back the SCSE in order to preserve order. Yazov directly warned his generals to avoid the use of force and not to allow themselves to be provoked. Yazov concluded the conference by advising his generals that further information would be disseminated by radio reports. (Trimble, 91, p. 57)

The first sign of overt military activity in Moscow occurred at 9:00 A.M. with the arrival of several columns of armored vehicles and tanks. The military vehicles took up key positions outside key state buildings, including the Russian parliament, and along main thoroughfares of the capital. (Trimble, 91, p. 57, Teague, 91, p. 38)

The initial civil reaction to the SCSE has been characterized as one of indifference and timidity (Trimble, 91, p. 55). The initial protest at Manezh square numbered less than two hundred people out of eleven million people in the Moscow area. Those present were cursing the junta and calling for an opposition movement. As the protest slowly grew, an armored column of the Dzerzhinsky Division arrived and was met head on by the protesters. Rather than risk death or injury to civilians, the column

stopped, setting the tone for military action throughout the coup. (Cullen, 91, p. 64)

The "official" voice of opposition was first heard at 11:00 A.M. with the CNN broadcast of a Yeltsin press. Yeltsin described the coup as a mad and illegal act and vowed "never to be removed by anyone but the people of Russia" (Teague, 91, p. 39). He demanded the reinstatement of Gorbachev and appealed to the Russian population to stage protests in support of democracy. Following the conference, Yeltsin ventured out to address the citizens of Russia that had gathered around the parliament. Speaking to a crowd of no more than 3,000 people, Yeltsin called for an immediate general strike to protest against Gorbachev's unconstitutional ouster and the establishment of a "right-wing, reactionary and anticonstitutional" government (Trimble, 91, p. 57). Yeltsin also issued a presidential edict declaring the SCSE illegal, its members guilty of treason and its orders invalid in the Russian republic. He ordered all army and KGB units involved in the coup to stand down and declared that he was assuming control throughout the Russian republic. (Teague, 91, p. 39)

Yanayev and the SCSE conducted a press conference at the Press Center of the USSR Foreign Ministry at 5:00 P.M.. The conference was broadcast live on Soviet television and attended by the world's press corps. Flanked by the other members of the SCSE, Yanayev told reporters that he had assumed the title of acting president and was the chief spokesman for the committee. Yanayev said the declaration of a state of emergency had been necessary because the country had become ungovernable and faced a "slide into catastrophe" following the "emergence of multiple power

centers" (Teague, 91, p. 39). Yanayev asserted that Gorbachev was "undergoing treatment in the south of the country" and "it is our hope that Mikhail Gorbachev, as soon as he feels better, will take up again his office" (Hitchings, 91, p. 622). The same explanation was offered in 1964, when Nikita Krushchev was toppled from power. The conference closed with a warning from Yanayev to the Russian populace that their acts of resistance, the manning of barricades in particular, could result in military response (Teague, 91, p. 40).

In an edict released by TASS, Yanayev declared a state of emergency in Moscow and appointed Colonel General Nikolai Kalinin as military commandant of the city. The state of emergency was the direct result of the failure of citizens to obey the resolution issued earlier in the day banning rallies, demonstrations and strikes (Teague, 91, p. 40).

As the first day of the coup drew to a close, elements of the Taman Guards and Rayazan Airborne Divisions were reported to have disobeyed orders and assumed defensive positions around the perimeter of the Russian parliament. Soldiers, nominally under the control of the coup leaders, repeatedly told reporters that they would not fire on civilians (Foye, 91, p. 7).

4. August 20

Yeltsin's opposition to the SCSE was formalized with the issuance of an ultimatum addressed to Lukyanov. Yeltsin demanded that he be allowed to meet with Gorbachev within twenty-four hours in the presence of Yanayev; that Gorbachev be given a full medical examination; and, if found to be in good health, be restored to power; that all media restrictions

be lifted; that all troops be withdrawn from Moscow; and that the SCSE be disbanded. The ultimatum was followed by the promulgation of a presidential edict which announced that Yeltsin was taking control of all units of forces on the territory of the Russian republic. He declared all orders issued by Yazov and Kryuchkov invalid and ordered the formation of an independent Russian National Guard. The edict was read on Radio Triana, which broadcast from the Russian parliament throughout the coup. (Teague, 91, pp. 45-46)

The growing strength of the opposition was mirrored by the breakdown of cohesion amongst those who had organized the coup. This was due partly to the failure of the CPSU leadership to fully back the SCSE and partly due to disagreements within the SCSE over the use of force against Yeltsin and others barricaded inside the Russian parliament. The end result was the gradual disillusionment of the SCSE, with Pavlov the first to resign. (Hitchings, 91, p. 623)

As night fell in Moscow, Kalinin announced on Central Television that a curfew was being declared in the capital (Teague, 91, p. 51). Yeltsin and the opposition leadership interpreted this as a prelude to military action against the Russian parliament. The pro-resistance attitude of the army, particularly its paratroops, indicated that any action would be on the part of the KGB Alpha Group and KGB paratroop units. Forces thought to be both capable of seizing the building and willing to follow an order to do so (Cullen, 91, p. 78). The feared attack never materialized, prompting calls from Yanayev and Kryuchkov to Yeltsin which indicated the SCSE

was becoming aware that they would be obliged to negotiate with the Russian president (Teague, 91, p. 51).

5. August 21

The failure to assault the Russian parliament marked the decisive turning point of the coup. The SCSE would not, or could not, use violence to control the population and, therefore, could not enforce their will and were doomed to failure. The demise of the SCSE was accelerated by a series of denouncements issued by the CPSU and the Supreme Soviet (Teague, 91, p. 52).

The actions of the Soviet central government were paralleled in the military leadership. In a heated exchange at the Defense Ministry, Shaposhnikov and supporters from the Navy and Airborne Forces presented Yazov with an ultimatum to denounce the SCSE and order the withdrawal of forces. When Yazov refused, the senior military leaders overruled him and approved the order for the withdrawal of troops from Moscow (Trimble, 91, p. 67).

In the Kremlin, the remaining members of the SCSE met to consider how to deal with the loss of political and military support. The conspirators decided to send a delegation to Gorbachev to negotiate an end to the coup. The delegation, consisting of Yazov, Kryuchkov, Baklanov and Tizyakov, was refused by Gorbachev and instead arrested. The delegation and Gorbachev returned to Moscow, arriving early on 22 August. In the subsequent days, the remainder of the SCSE were arrested, with the exception of the deceased Pugo, as well as Lukyanov, Bessmertnykh, Boldin, Varennikov, Shenin, Plekhanov, KGB First Deputy

General Grishko, and Colonel General Generalov, Plekhanov's deputy (Hitchings, 91, p. 654).

B. ANALYSIS

The COPM provides the structural framework for the analysis of the coup. The following sections highlight specific weaknesses and strengths of the SCSE and the opposition as concerns the development and implementation of their respective C3I processes.

1. Environments

The COPM contains two distinct environments; an immediate operational environment and an extended environment. For the purpose of this analysis, the immediate operational environment has been defined as the city of Moscow and the extended environment as foreign nations with an emphasis on Western democracies.

2. Sense

The sense function includes the the systems and procedures available to gather data on the environment and deny this capability to the opposition. The function is of critical importance in the conduct of a coup with respect to controlling the flow of information within the environment. The SCSE possessed a decisive advantage at the onset of operations through the official channels of censorship and control as concerned the print and broadcast media, and internal communication services. The inability of the SCSE to exercise this advantage and effectively control the flow of information during the coup was a major cause of their failure.

The SCSE placed the crackdown on the Soviet mass media high on the list of priorities. Announcing the group's media policy, Yanayev said

the media bore much of the responsibility for the "current chaos" in the Soviet Union (Tolz, 91, p. 23). Accordingly, the second resolution of the SCSE was devoted to the media and the imposition of strict censorship. The resolution temporarily banned the publication of newspapers in Moscow and Moscow Oblast with the exception of those specifically approved by the SCSE. Seven of the the original nine publications approved were published by the CPSU. The selection of publications directly mirrored the alliances formed between the hard-liners and the conservative press in the months preceding the coup. The SCSE's resolution also stated that all periodicals published in the Union would have to be approved by a special body that the committee intended to establish. In the interim, the responsibility for censorship was tasked to the military (Tolz, 91, p. 24).

The resolutions concerning the press were accompanied by similar measures aimed at the broadcast media. The SCSE replaced all regular programming on Russian Television with Central Television programs devoted to sports, music and the decrees and hourly announcements of the SCSE. Radio Rossii was banned and the frequency used by Radio Mayak was turned over to the sanctioned Radio Moscow-1. Independent Moscow radio stations were surrounded by troops and ordered to cease broadcasting (Tolz, 91, p. 24, Hitchings, 91, p. 622). The extent of the SCSE's intent to control the internal flow of information can be summarized in order issued by General Moiseyev to major military commands and MVD directorates:

...make maximum use of all means and methods to explain the correctness of the measures being taken by the emergency committee. In order to close off the channels of information and agitation against the measures being taken by the emergency committee, it was ordered to take account of and, as necessary, guard all technical equipment for the transmission of information, regardless of the departments to which they belong: television, radio, broadcasting stations, communications of the USSR Ministry of Railways, the weather service, traffic control points on the subway, taxi stands, and other sites. (Burnov, 91, p. 32).

The extensive measures proposed by the SCSE proved, with a few exceptions in the Baltics, to be impossible to implement. Despite the press ban, the Moscow periodicals *Moscow News*, *Megapolis-Express*, *Kuranty*, and *Rossiya* managed to publish emergency issues. The coalition produced four copies using a typewriter and distributed xeroxed copies in Moscow. A second coalition of suppressed periodicals prepared a joint periodical, *Obshchaya Gazeta*, which was printed outside Moscow and then smuggled back into the city (Tolz, 91, p. 25).

The control of broadcast media within Moscow proved equally difficult to implement due in equal part to the tenacity of the journalists and ineptitude in enforcement. The case of *Radio Echo Moscow* provides an excellent example. The station, Moscow's first independent, began its broadcast on 19 August with a mix of official TASS statements and unofficial news provided by station reporters. Soviet KGB officials did not arrive at the station until 7:40 A.M. The leader of the contingent ordered the station manager to cease broadcasting, but in the absence of written

orders or an explanation, the manager refused. The KGB continued trying to persuade the manager to shut down, claiming they themselves did not know what was happening. During the conversation Radio Echo Moscow fell silent, the main switch to the transmitter which belonged to the Ministry of Communication had been opened. The KGB cleared and locked the studio and posted a three-man guard which disappeared within an hour. In the words of the station manager, "It just didn't seem serious" (Cullen, 91, p. 70). Radio Echo Moscow was to remain silent only until the following afternoon when the Ministry of Communications, under pressure from the Moscow City Council, restored the connection between the studio and its transmitter. The station was able to establish a direct phone link with the Russian parliament and broadcast tapes of Yeltsin's statements and interviews with resistance leaders for the duration of the coup. The dissemination of resistance information was furthered by the establishment of Radio Triana within the parliament and the allotment of frequencies to Radio Rossii from the BBC (Cullen, 91, pp. 69-70).

The SCSE proved incapable of even controlling the media which they had sanctioned. The conservative Central Television news program *Vremya* managed to give the impression that it supported Yeltsin on the evening of August 19. The program screened footage of protest demonstrations in Moscow and interviews with citizens who had come to defend the Russian parliament. During the SCSE press conference a correspondent from *Pravda* managed to inform listeners and viewers of Yeltsin's decree outlawing the coup by carefully posing questions to the committee (Tolz, 91, p. 24).

The SCSE also failed to control internal phone communications during the course of the coup. Although they successfully isolated Gorbachev, the committee only severed the special government phone lines of the Russian parliament. With the remaining circuits, Yeltsin and the resistance were able to establish a viable network for the gathering of information and the dissemination of instructions (Cullen, 91, p. 71).

In summary, the SCSE had the means and the intent to effectively control the flow of information within the Soviet Union. Conceivably, the committee could have replicated the total news blackout imposed during the establishment of martial law in Poland in December 1981. Their failure to do so demonstrated a clear lack of planning and resolve as well as a decided underestimation of the resistance to be expected from the Soviet media.

3. Decide

The decision function encompasses the critical juncture between analysis and action. The decision processes of the SCSE were hampered by a lack of resolve within the committee to use the necessary force that might have insured their hold on power. The committee members were distinguished neither by their intelligence nor by their decisiveness and acted accordingly during the crisis (Foye, 91, p. 8).

The indecisiveness of the committee was evident from the start as chronicled by SCSE member Starodubstev. Recounting the meeting convened by Kryuchkov on August 18, Starodubstev stated:

But, when the issue was raised of the president having been ill, and no one could give us any intelligent explanation as to what was wrong with him and how ill he was...then "everyone

began to have doubts at once...whether the whole affair should be delegated to the Supreme Soviet and postponed....and Yanayev didn't want to sign anything for a very long time because he had thought and said this to us: Gentlemen, he said, I don't really know whether to put this down that he is ill or not. I cannot know about his illness for certain. I just heard about it from someone else. So the others simply said to him: It's up to you to make the decision. You've got to decide for yourself after all. (Burnov, 91, pp. 31-32).

The indecisiveness of the SCSE was also pronounced by Colonel Viktor Alksinis in his explanation of his wavering of support for the committee:

We got an order from by telegram from Moscow to get the troops ready for battle....I was told that the order said to place a guard around the important points in the city. But after that there was nothing but silence from Moscow. Just before I left Riga, I went to the headquarters of the OMON, the special police unit. And they were also ready, but had no commands to act. I can't guess why. Obviously, if you make a decision you've got to move on it. Every hour is important. Otherwise you lose the initiative. (Cullen, 91, p. 75).

The SCSE's inability to reach decisions and the resultant loss of initiative plagued them throughout the course of the coup. Key indicators of indecisiveness included the failure to deploy forces until twelve hours after the arrest of Gorbachev, the dispatching of troops to arrest Yeltsin after the official announcement of the coup, the arrival of KGB and MVD units

late on the nineteenth and the issuance of vague orders to forces under their control (Schweizer, 91, p. 27).

The reasons behind the SCSE's decision-making shortcoming became apparent during investigations of the coup. The failure to include either Yazov or Moiseyev in the critical meeting of August 18 isolated the military from the inception of the coup and caused a crucial delay in the movement of forces which was never rectified. The behavior of the SCSE membership during the coup was also brought to light with reports of drunkenness on the part of Yanayev and Pavlov (Hitchings, 91, p. 655). The committee was also hampered by the growing disillusion of its membership. Prior to the conclusion of the junta three of the eight members would succumb to what has been labeled the "coup flu" (Trimble, 91, p. 64). In short, the SCSE lacked the internal fortitude to effectively deal with a crisis of its own creation and did not allow those capable of action to take the lead. The inability to implement an effective decision-making process precluded the formation of an effective pro-coup C3I loop.

4. Act

The act function serves as the interface between the decision-maker and the environment. The function includes the direct application of force as well as the full range of economic and political options available to control the environment. The failure of the SCSE to utilize the application of force has been discussed and will be further developed in the following sections. In the area of political action, the SCSE sought unsuccessfully to legitimize its actions and to appease both the Western world and the Soviet populace. The leading edge of the campaign for political credibility was

the announcement of the imposition of a state of emergency within the context of Soviet constitutional law. Yanayev's assumption of the presidency and the declaration of a state of emergency was reported to be in accordance with Article 127 of the Soviet Constitution. The SCSE was careful to establish both the surrounding scenario, Gorbachev's illness, and the limits of the state of emergency, "in particular localities" and for six months only, to preclude the requirement to notify and obtain the permission of the Supreme Soviet (Thorsen, 91, pp. 20-21). This isolated attention to detail clearly reflected the political vice military shadings of the SCSE. The committee also demonstrated its desire for global legitimacy by ensuring the West that all of the Soviet Union's international obligations, treaties and agreements would remain in effect (Teague, 91, p. 36). Western powers, however, summarily refused to recognize the SCSE.

In summary, the SCSE was not able to exert the requisite levels of influence over either the internal or external environments through both military and political action.

5. Higher levels of control

The higher level force structures of the SCSE were developed during Gorbachev's swing to the right in the year preceding the coup. As previously discussed, the political and military leaders of the junta had ample opportunity to develop the requisite chains of command for a successful assumption of power. As the events unfolded, however, the weaknesses of the actual command hierarchy of the SCSE were soon revealed, as were the strengths of the opposition leadership.

A fatal flaw in the development of the SCSE was in the enlistment of support from the military leadership. In the months prior to the coup, the military High Command had been characterized as being controlled by "a clan of Far Easterners"(Hough, 91, p. 306). The writer was referring to the close personal relationships between Yazov, Varrenikov and Moiseyev. The remaining members of the High Command clearly could have felt left out and by all indications were. The extent of the rift between the "clan" and the remainder of the general staff was apparent from the inception of the coup. Leading the resistance to the proposed actions of the SCSE was Shaposhnikov who issued the following statement concerning the actions of military commanders during the coup:

We soldiers are obliged to carry out orders, but there is no place for tanks in the city. They must be pulled out, the barricades dismantled and the confrontation must be replaced by a dialogue with the president and government of Russia. The following commanders-in-chief spoke at the collegium session with the minister: the Air Force (Air Force General Shaposhnikov), the Navy (Fleet Admiral Chernavin), the Strategic Rocket Forces (Army General Maksimov). They called for troops to withdraw from the city. (Krayniy, 91, p. 62).

Given that these comments were made on August 21, reasonable doubt could exist as to the validity of the stated opposition. However, actions by each of the commanders mentioned indicated a steadfast resistance to the SCSE. Shaposhnikov had ordered all helicopter assets to stand-down and

issued instructions for fighters to be ready to intercept and shoot down, if necessary, Army helicopters enroute to the Russian parliament (Auster, 91, p. 66). Maksimov directed that no land-based missiles could be launched without direct orders from him and returned the SS-25 single warhead mobile missiles to garrison to preclude an accidental nuclear incident (Hitchings, 91, p. 639). The Navy also refused to follow an order to mobilize ballistic missile submarines (Auster, 91, p. 66).

The uniform failures of the SCSE were also apparent within the command hierarchy of the Army, the institution most critical to the success of the coup. The failure of the coup leaders to adequately prepare their immediate subordinates was clearly evidenced in the statements of Colonel General Kolesnikov, the acting commander in chief of the Ground Forces in the absence of Varrenikov:

The defense minister's report came as a surprise to me, but the troops are undoubtedly ready to perform the tasks assigned to them. (Krayniy, 91, p. 61).

Clearly, however, Kolesnikov was incorrect with respect to the preparedness of his forces.

The gravest blow to the military structure of the SCSE was the outright defection of Colonel General Grachev, the commander of Army Airborne Forces, to the opposition. Contacted by Yeltsin on the morning of August 19, Grachev immediately offered the services of the Rayazan Airborne Division, under Major General Lebed, to protect the Russian

parliament (Burbyga, 91, p. 59). Lebed's troops were joined by elements of the Taman Guards in the defense of Yeltsin and the parliament (Church, 91, p. 37). The planned attack on the parliament also fell victim to high level defection when General Karpulikin, commander of the KGB Alpha Unit, refused to engage his forces against the opposition (Burbyga, 91, p. 59). Faced with a rapidly diminishing power base, the SCSE attempted to send in the KGB's Vitebskaya airborne division. The division commander, however, halted his troops twelve miles from the Russian parliament and refused to enter the city (Church, 91, p. 37).

The failure of the military leadership to support the SCSE should have come as no surprise to Yeltsin. The Russian president and his key advisors, Rutskoi and Kobets, had actively courted reformists within the High Command prior to the coup. Earlier in the year, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe had invited one of Kobet's deputies to assemble a group of high-ranking officers to attend a conference in Germany and among the first to be included were Shaposhnikov and Grachev (Cullen, 91, p. 65). Kobets' staff made maximum use of contacts within the Soviet military to interrupt established chains of command and prevent the movement of forces against the parliament (Cullen, 91, pp. 64-66). The opposition was able to ensure that the SCSE would be unable to launch an airborne assault against the Russian parliament, considered to be their last viable option, by enlisting the support of Army helicopter squadron commanders who had served in Afghanistan with members of Kobet's staff (Cullen, 91, p. 67).

The SCSE's chain of command never extended as far as was required for a successful military coup. Even if the SCSE been capable of effective decisionmaking, it is unlikely they would have been able to effect their decisions. A combination of defection and opposition intervention effectively severed the head of the coup from its body of forces.

6. Lower levels of control

The lower levels of the command structure, the troops themselves, proved reluctant to follow the few orders they were able to receive. As discussed in the military development section, the Army was plagued by morale and discipline problems. Had the SCSE been capable of moving elite KGB and MVD units into Moscow prior to the coup, this would have been of minimal impact. Instead, the forced reliance on reluctant forces during the first critical hours of the junta became a major factor in the SCSE's failure. Faced with the possibility of injuring or killing residents of their own city, the Moscow-based troops readily abandoned the idea of using force. For the SCSE, the failure of the common fighting man to support the coup was a final blow to a flawed command structure.

7. Intelligence/Analysis

The intelligence/analysis function serves to assign meaning to observed activities and situations and to assist in the development of forecasts with respect to changes in the environment. In the case of the Soviet coup, the ramifications of the function were most pronounced as concerned the opposition forces. The SCSE, with the wealth of sources available and the assumed support of the KGB, had an apparent advantage which was never fully realized. The coup leadership, as discussed

previously, proved incapable of exploiting any edge afforded by the proper use of intelligence. In fact, the intelligence apparatus of the SCSE proved to be a significant weakness due to widespread leaks to the opposition forces.

The infiltration of the Soviet intelligence apparatus by the opposition was, in many ways, similar to their penetration of the Soviet military leadership. Yeltsin and his staff depended upon long term relationships and the independent actions of reformers within intelligence organizations. These intelligence windfalls were supplemented by the active gathering of intelligence and aggressive correlation of sources by Yeltsin's staff. The system was detailed by staff member Dmitri Rosnin:

We were warned by several sources. We got calls from KGB officers and from military intelligence. My job was to try to confirm the information that came in over the phone. They had warned us that there may be disinformation, so each source of information had to be verified by two or more sources....The whole collective worked that way. We were well informed (Cullen, 91, p. 78).

The apparatus established by the opposition was to serve it well throughout the crisis. The following examples illustrate the significant command and control edge obtained by the aggressive exploitation of intelligence sources. The first significant leak occurred on the Sunday preceding the coup, when Rosnin received a call from a former associate at the Defense Ministry. The friend, who was the duty officer, informed Rosnin that he had heard rumors of preparations for a military action in

Moscow (Cullen, 91, p. 59). The rumors were substantiated early the following morning by calls from Kazakhstan and Central Asia, which are several time zones ahead of Moscow, that a state of emergency had been declared (Trimble, 91, p. 56). This prior notification was the key factor which allowed Yeltsin to flee his dacha minutes before the arrival of an Alpha Unit and to arrive at the parliament ahead of advancing troops. The opposition's intelligence network was also a key factor in the preemption of the movement of forces required to seize the Russian parliament (Cullen, 91, p. 78). The flow of information to Yeltsin was to continue, without interference for the remainder of the coup, much of it provided by Kryuchkov's KGB (Trimble, 91, p. 58).

The advantage gained by the opposition through the aggressive implementation of the intelligence function was a key element of strength leading to their success.

8. Interface

As stated in the description of the CCOPM, control of the functional interface separating the immediate operational and extended environments is a key element in the successful conduct of a coup. Successful control of the interface by the SCSE would have afforded the ability to isolate the opposition and the Soviet populace from the extended environment and potential sources of information, intelligence and support. The SCSE possessed this capability, but failed to effectively exploit its advantage.

Control of the interface by the SCSE was dependent upon the effective censorship of foreign correspondents in Moscow. The decisions

not to expel foreign journalists nor sever the the central satellite link at Oostankinko appeared to have been taken deliberately by the SCSE to avoid open confrontation with Western countries (Tolz, 91, p. 25). As a result, the foreign media was able to show Western viewers up-to-the-minute film of the situation in the Moscow streets. CNN, for example, broadcast the striking footage of Yeltsin standing on a tank and delivering a speech to the crowd gathered outside the Russian parliament. The transfer of information out of the Soviet Union was by no means limited to television. Radio Liberty was able to provide a direct conduit from the eleventh floor of the parliament to broadcast facilities in Munich (Cullen, 91, p. 72). The availability of information to foreign governments allowed the rapid assessment and denouncement of the coup. The Bush administration expressed its doubts for success as early as the second day of the coup, when administration sources had predicted a no more than a fifty-fifty chance of the SCSE's survival (Oberdorfer, 91, p. A1). President Bush, acting on the assessment, subsequently released the following statement:

We're making very clear to the coup plotters and the coup people that there will not be normal relations with the United States as long as the illegal coup remains in effect (Devroy, 91, p. A1).

The impact of Western action served to undermine the confidence of the SCSE and to bolster Soviet civilian and military support for Yeltsin.

The failure of the SCSE to control the flow of information out of the Soviet Union resulted in the subsequent, though more significant, retransmission of the information back into the country. Although the government possessed the capability to jam foreign transmissions, the flow of reports continued without interference for the duration of the crisis. The opportunity was readily seized by Western broadcasters as evidenced by the doubling of Russian-language programs and the relaying of the banned broadcasts of Radio Russia by the BBC. Radio Liberty's 24-hour broadcasts in Russian and eleven other Soviet languages reached an estimated Soviet audience of 50 million persons. The network suspended regular programming to run live news from the Russian parliament and Yeltsin's outright pleas for international support. (Masland, 91, p. 39)

The SCSE also failed to control the telecommunications interface between the operational and extended environments. All international telephone calls to and from Moscow are routed through a single switch, but the SCSE did not attempt to restrict the placement of calls (Masland, 91, p. 39). This failure allowed Yeltsin and the opposition to know they were being supported by the outside world (Hitchings, 91, p. 623). In turn, the communications channels allowed Yeltsin to provide important advice to the outside and to urge a concerted public outcry against the coup by Western governments (Hoffman, 91, p. A27). Yeltsin's efforts were to have a dramatic impact as evidenced by the statements of President Bush and Prime Minister Major which denounced the SCSE and pledged support to the reformers (Hitchings, 91, p. 623).

C. SUMMARY

The C3I systems of the SCSE and the opposition, as amended by the strengths and weaknesses discussed above, are presented in Figure 5.

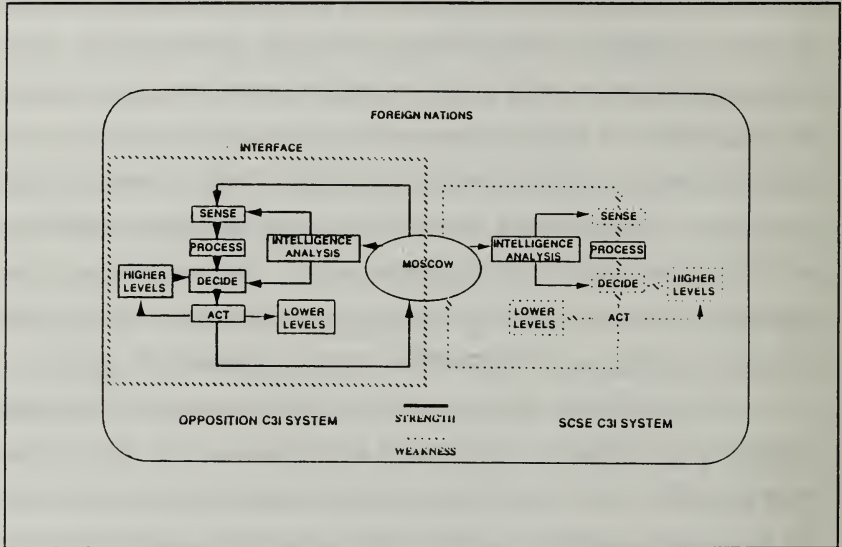


Figure 5. Amended Coup Operations Process Model

The C3I deficiencies of the SCSE were key elements in the ultimate failure of the coup. Through a combination of incomplete preparation and poor implementation, the SCSE was never capable of establishing a functional C3I system. The major areas of internal weakness are determined to be in the functional areas of sense, decide, interface control, and higher and lower levels of force control.

The weaknesses of the SCSE's C3I system were amplified by the strengths of the opposition's system. The major areas of strength are

determined to be in the functional areas of intelligence analysis, decide, and higher levels of force control. More importantly, the individual successes culminated in the formation of a complete opposition C3I loop structure capable of operating in a more expedient fashion than the flawed SCSE loop. As demonstrated during the coup, this advantage allowed the opposition to operate a step ahead of the SCSE.

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