

# Gorbachev home alone

**B**ARVIKHA, the Gorbachevs' spacious dacha about 15 miles west of Moscow, was surrounded by a pine forest and had a swimming-pool, a cinema and billiard hall.

It was divided into two parts — one for Mikhail Sergeyeovich and Raisa, and the other for members of their family; beloved daughter Irina, her husband Anatoli and granddaughters Kseniya and Anastasia.

The KGB bodyguards were always present. Apart from servants and a couple of visits by some Communist Party leaders, there were no guests in Barvikha during Gorbachev's five years there.

*The house was full of books, presents and pictures. But while the books belonged to Irina, virtually all other things were state-owned. That is why, on leaving the dacha, most of the things were confiscated by the KGB.*

If Gorbachev returned from work before 10.30 pm, it was considered very early. Politics absorbed him utterly. He managed to attend the theatre not more than once a month, and considered this a great victory over his schedule.

When he was home early, there were regular film shows. Gorbachev had a catholic taste, enjoying recent hits, melodramas and detective stories. The whole family had a liking for the Italian serial *La Piovra*,

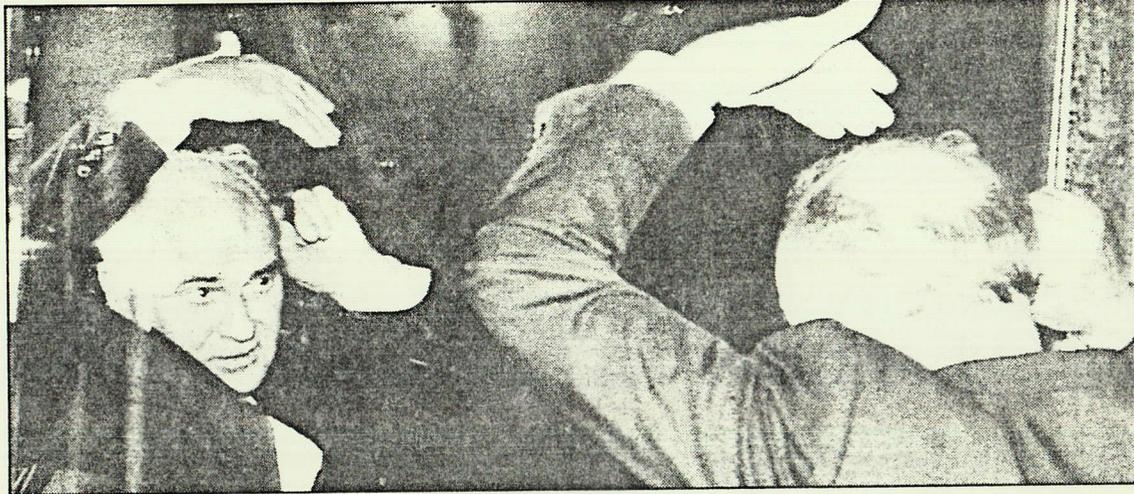
**● DESPITE his fame, Mikhail Gorbachev was a private, lonely man, without real friends. In the final part of our exclusive serialisation by KGB bodyguard Major Yevgeny Glubkov, we see inside his official dachas near Moscow and on the Black Sea. His every need was taken care of by the omnipresent KGB, who were usually his only company.**

**By Major YEVGENY GLUBKOV**

about a police inspector who, alone, stood up to the all-powerful Mafia.

Loneliness was Gorbachev's constant state. Except for "our family Party Secretary", as he called Raisa, who never actually left him alone, there were no guests in the house. Things were exactly the same at the summer holiday dacha in Foros on the Black Sea.

Holidays and birthdays were celebrated by the two of them or the whole family. He never let his party allies into his family circle. He had no friends at all. God knows why Foros appealed to Gorbachev. I dis-



**MIRROR IMAGE: Lonely Gorbachev often had only his own thoughts for company**

liked the Crimean dacha, with its stones, cliffs and lack of vegetation. The place can only have been chosen because there was nothing for miles around. In summer, the heat was unbearable.

**T**HERE was a bad omen when the dacha was completed. In anticipation of praise and decoration, Red Army chiefs had speeded up construction, using unskilled soldiers as builders, to complete it ahead of schedule.

Disaster followed the gala entry of the family. Irina tried to close a curtain, causing an

oak cornice to crash down on her head. She spent a week in the Livadia Hospital.

To say that Gorbachev was in a fury is to understate the truth. Quite a number of military chiefs lost their ranks.

Holidays were monotonous. In the morning, the Gorbachevs would descend a 20-metre escalator to a shingle beach, where there was a swimming-pool, gym and a grotto, used by Gorbachev as a study.

Two gunboats and a submarine were off-shore and a team of combat swimmers were on duty day and night. When it wasn't raining, the Gorbachevs

went on mountain hikes followed by a trail of men with sporting bags which contained sub-machine guns.

At 9 pm, the family went to the outdoor cinema hall. During the day Gorbachev would scan a list of films and mark the ones he wanted to watch.

If they didn't like the beginning, they would ask for a new one. The only certainty was that they would watch their favourite, *La Piovra*.

*©Diary Of A Bodyguard, by Major Yevgeny Glubkov, will be published in September by RussLit. Adapted here by WILL STEWART.*

## Domestic brigade

ALL the domestic staff, including nurses and cleaners, were from the so-called 9th KGB Inspectorate.

There were just under 100 in all, including a matron who acted as a maid for Raisa and a nurse who took the little granddaughters for a walk.

None, except Raisa's maid, slept in the house.

Both the Barvikha and Foros dachas had several pairs of "mechanics" — actually dog-breeders who guarded the estate with Alsatians. All had ranks in the KGB.

For instance, Raisa's maid was a Sergeant with a monthly salary of 500 roubles (at the time worth £500, now worth just 50p because of Russia's enormous inflation and the collapse of the rouble).

But it wasn't the money that lured the domestic staff to the Gorbachevs.

A girl who joined the KGB government dacha service at the age of 20 could retire at 40 with a number of benefits.

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