

DAY TWO OF OUR EXCLUSIVE SERIES BY THE
MAN WHO KNOWS THE GORBACHEVS' SECRETS

THE DIARY OF

THE DAY

How President Gorbachev faced
leaders of the coup who stormed
him on holiday in the Crimea



CONFRONTATION: Gorbachev with Boris Yeltsin after the failed coup

● **TOMORROW** in Moscow, the "trial of the century" begins with most of Mikhail Gorbachev's top guard facing charges of treason for their coup plot.

● In our second exclusive extract from his new book, Gorbachev's bodyguard, Major Yevgeny Glubkov, reveals how the Soviet leader swore and shouted at the plotters when they confronted him at his Foros dacha. Yet, even when he arrived for his holiday, it seemed Gorbachev sensed his time was up . . .

NONE of us knew anything, but we felt there was something wrong. There was a striking change in the Gorbachev who came to Foros in the August of 1991: his hair had gone grey, he looked haggard and he gave up hiking in the mountains.

In a word, he had grown old. While Raisa had found lots of opportunities to relax and amuse herself in the company of her acquaintances, Gorbachev had not had a single day off.

On August 18, after lunch, Gorbachev and Raisa were resting at home. Since midday, I had been at my post. No visitors were expected.

So I was extremely surprised when, at 4.30 pm, four Volgas pulled up at the guest cottage near the main house.

To find out what was happening, I picked up the intercom telephone, but it was silent. I rushed to the main city phone line, but that was switched off too. I tried the house telephone, which connected me with the secu-



DESPAIR: The strain begins to take its toll

By Major **YEVGENY GLUBKOV**

rity officer on duty, but in vain.

The radio station was the only means left. As I reached the officer, he told me that nothing, including the communication with the Kremlin, was working.

Suddenly, Vladimir Medvedev, head of the KGB security guards, burst out of the cottage and galloped to the mansion with an envelope in his hand. He returned five minutes later, silent and frowning. The envelope contained a message announcing the arrival of the coup leaders to confront Gorbachev.

It was then that I saw

the faces of the unwelcome guests from the Politburo.

Oleg Baklanov (chief of military industrial complex), Oleg Shenin (top Party apparatchik), Valentin Varennikov (Interior Minister) and Yuri Plekhanov (chief of 9th KGB Inspectorate) appeared from the direction of Medvedev's room. They passed me in complete silence. They stood in line, waiting. I thought they had come to report someone's death, perhaps that of Gorbachev's mother.

Then, with long faces, they made for the dacha

We raise a glass to glasnost

ON GORBACHEV'S first official trip to the United States, less than a year after the attempt on Ronald Reagan's life, the KGB and the U.S. Secret Service conducted their own vodka glasnost.

After going to the observation platform of the Empire State Building with Gorbachev, we had an evening free.

My chief, Vladimir Medvedev, told us: "Reagan's bodyguards want to invite you to dinner."

We were bewildered. Like other KGB officers, we were not allowed to mix with foreigners, the more so with American agents. We had to follow very rigorous instructions.

Medvedev insisted: "This is my order: go to the party. After all, Americans are merry people . . ."

"My second order is that you should outdo the Americans."

"In a fist fight?" I asked.

"In drinking, I'll give you a box of vodka."

Naturally, we went to the party.

We were welcomed by half a dozen Americans, looking much like us.

I knew only a dozen English expressions and the Americans spoke no Russian. But, as we took out photos of our wives, girlfriends and children and showed them to each other, we realised how much we had in common.

Then, as the party drew to a close, we reached for our gift, to the Americans' delight.

We held our vodka with no problem, but soon one of the Americans was weeping, another teaching us swear words and a man named Alan invited me to spend Christmas with his family.

We left at 3 am, our hosts hardly able to stand up.

Later Medvedev told me: "You've fulfilled my assignment with honours."

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A KGB BODYGUARD OF THE JACKALS



HOMEcoming: The dishevelled Gorbachevs arrive in Moscow after being held captive at their Crimean dacha during the takeover attempt

in the company of General Vyacheslav Generalov (deputy chief of 9th KGB Inspectorate). After five minutes, Plekhanov emerged and asked me: "Has Mikhail Sergeevich come out?" "No," I replied. I asked the radio station operator on duty: "Has anybody died?" I was thunderstruck by his answer: "I don't know anything, but there seems to be a coup." In the meantime, I heard loud bickering in foul language from the dacha. Half an hour later, the "guests" left the dacha and disappeared into one of the side houses.

MEDVEDEV and Plekhanov were the first to come out. There was a demand that Medvedev should leave Gorbachev and go to Moscow. Generalov explained to us: "I assume the control of Gorbachev's personal security.

"The situation in Moscow is unfavourable. There are attempts to fail the Union Treaty. (This

was Gorbachev's attempt to save the Soviet Union). "Therefore, Gorbachev has decided to stay here. He is very upset, so try and keep away from him — better if he doesn't see you at all." Were we dismissed? Suspended? Should we continue our work? But how? We were being told not to approach the person we were protecting. Gorbachev appeared outside the house only at 11 pm. Accompanied by Anatoli Chernyayev (his senior personal aide), they strolled about the dacha for two hours and had a very animated conversation.

On August 19, after breakfast, Generalov gathered us together and was more specific. "Because of his illness, Gorbachev has signed a document about his resignation. Therefore, you may continue guarding him, but you are no longer the President's personal bodyguards." (For Gorbachev was no longer the President.) Everything was clear and there was even a choice. Either we stayed with Gorbachev as before, or we came under the command of Generalov (who had also brought his own guards to Foros). We decided to stay. We

distributed guns and cartridges. We had been well trained to face unexpected situations. We reinforced our posts and several men went inside the dacha, shocking the Gorbachevs' daughter, Irina, and her little girls. In the meantime, the dacha gates were closed. The guards who had arrived with Generalov entered into a silent confrontation with us.

THERE weren't many of them and we were strong enough to break through and, if we had wanted to, free Gorbachev from the blockade. We even wondered if the blockade was deliberately weak to provoke us into making an attack — as a means of killing Gorbachev. But, most important of all, Gorbachev gave no orders at all, though he knew we were on his side. The outcome of the coup attempt was quick and unexpected. In Moscow, Gorbachev's adversary Boris Yeltsin had halted the tanks outside the Russian "white house" parliament building. By the evening of August 21, we were told that more guests were coming. It was already

dark when I saw an excited Alexander Rutskoi (an Afghan war hero, then a close ally of Yeltsin and now his Vice President, though the two have fallen out over Russian reforms) bursting into the dacha grounds. Gorbachev was, at first, opposed to returning to Moscow late at night, having heard from Rutskoi of Yeltsin's success and the coup's failure. But it became clear he and his family had to go and, at the airport, Rutskoi led the group to an Aeroflot TU-134, hardly visible at the remote corner of the airfield. Then it turned out that Gorbachev had summoned Dmitry Yazov and Vladimir Kravchukov (respectively, Defence Minister and head of the KGB, both now facing trial with a maximum penalty of death). Both came to his plane. Finally Gorbachev felt he could relax and, flying back to Moscow, drank quite a lot. That is how the Foros epic ended for Gorbachev. As for me, it ended a bit later when, on the Soviet leader's orders, I was given a prize the size of my monthly salary, "for excellent service in the Crimea". I got just 600 roubles.



IN SAFE HANDS: Irina and one of her children

Public battles, private praise

BORIS YELTSIN and Mikhail Gorbachev are as much adversaries as ever, at least in public. Yet I always believed that their public disagreements amounted to well-rehearsed performances. In private, before and after quarrelling, they stuck to the friendly Russian equivalent of the French "tu". Publicly, they were enemies, as shown by their intonations, glances and grimaces. But they changed completely once in each other's company. There was no trace of animosity, they were almost on friendly terms.

The following scene was quite usual after a stormy Politburo or central committee meeting.

Red-faced and excited, Gorbachev seemed to take no notice of Yeltsin. But the moment their aides dispersed, the pair went to an inconspicuous side office and, from behind closed doors, I heard: "You Boris, might be right in general, but I think maybe you've chosen a somewhat unhappy way of..." Or "I'm quite aware we can hardly find a better General Secretary than you, Mikhail..."

Dogged by difficulty

THERE was one more guest at the Foros dacha, an apricot-coloured poodle, which gave a huge headache to the KGB. The Gorbachevs' granddaughter, Kseniya, had been given the dog by the mother of a classmate at her ballet school, probably for the sake of coming into contact with Irina. The poodle was very charming, but too frisky. Kseniya was very happy, of course, but for me and my colleagues it meant additional trouble. Medvedev demanded that we kept an eye on Kseniya, but she chased the poodle all the time and was terribly hard to follow, especially from our look-out posts.

TOMORROW: THE GORBACHEVS HOME ALONE

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