

Stylish Global Transitions

This is the first part of a Washington Post article. Read it from beginning to end, and as you read it note how smoothly one idea connects with the next idea. Then look again at the first sentence in each paragraph, and try to see the method that they use to remind the reader of the previous paragraph's central idea as well as introduce the reader to the next central idea. Note how they achieve the two objectives without being so obvious about it. The writer did not depend on fancy language to do this; in each case, it is the idea itself that achieves the transition.

Gorbachev Polishes His Image

Defense of Embattled TV Station Raises Ex-Leader's Stature

By Peter Baker and Susan B. Glasser
Washington Post Foreign Service
Friday, April 13, 2001; Page A14

MOSCOW, April 12 -- The last time Mikhail Gorbachev confronted a clash over a television station, he was sitting in the Kremlin while troops opened fire on demonstrators in Lithuania. Last week, a decade later, Gorbachev took to the barricades himself, this time in solidarity with those fighting to keep the airwaves out of government hands.

The scene -- a hale-looking Gorbachev mingling with the protesting journalists at NTV, where he serves as chairman of the advisory board -- was broadcast live as he dispensed suggestions on how to resist a hostile takeover of Russia's only major independent television network. "You are not doomed," he assured them.

He might have been speaking to himself as well. The battle over NTV has given the man who brought glasnost to the Soviet Union one more chance to get back into the middle of the action -- and one more chance to seek the redemption he craves. Gorbachev's emergence as NTV's most prominent defender comes at a time when he is laboring to repair his fractured legacy in a country that has begun to hate him just a little less. While still the toast of the West, where he travels frequently collecting sizable lecture fees and honors such as the George Bush Public Service Award bestowed on him today in Texas, Gorbachev has spent most of the 10 years since surrendering power in ignominy at home, where he was widely blamed for the collapse of a superpower. He received a humiliating half of 1 percent of the vote in a vain comeback attempt in the 1996 presidential election, and his name is widely reviled among those who suffered from the transition to a market economy.

Only now has Russia ever so haltingly started to come to terms with Gorbachev and his role in history. Even before the NTV showdown, Gorbachev and his allies used his 70th birthday in February to try to rehabilitate his image within the country, through an aggressive program of seminars, interviews and parties. "He was a hated politician in

the beginning of the '90s," said Alexei Simonov, president of the Glasnost Defense Foundation, created to fight for free speech in the new Russia. "Now Russians don't hate him anymore, that's definite."

At least not as much. "His support is growing," agreed Alexei Podberiozkhin, a former Communist leader in parliament who now works with Gorbachev's tiny Russian United Social Democratic Party. "Maybe some people finally understand that it is not so wise to judge Mr. Gorbachev as personally responsible for all the changes that were happening in our country in the '80s and '90s."

Still, like others, he cautioned, "We should not overestimate this shift in thinking about Gorbachev. He is still very unpopular in Russia -- just much less so than five years ago." Indeed, old foes such as Viktor Anpilov, leader of a labor party that advocates a return to the Soviet Union, still view him as a traitor and maintain that those who have changed their minds are limited to the intelligentsia who sided with Boris Yeltsin in pushing Gorbachev out in 1991. "This reevaluation may be taking place, but only among a very narrow circle of people, the democrats of the first wave, who at some point saw that Yeltsin was a monster no better than Gorbachev," Anpilov said. "But the people still hate Gorbachev."

Recent opinion polls suggest that while the public may not love him, it gives him more grudging respect. One found that 56 percent of Russians considered Gorbachev an "outstanding politician." Another showed that just 16 percent gave him high approval ratings, but that was 7 percentage points higher than six years ago, and another 49 percent saw him in neutral terms. . .

