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## The Violent Overthrow of Personalist Regimes Compared to the Peaceful Collapse of Single Party Regimes

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THE VIOLENT OVERTHROW OF PERSONALIST REGIMES COMPARED  
TO THE PEACEFUL COLLAPSE OF SINGLE PARTY REGIMES: CASE  
STUDIES OF LIBYA UNDER QADDAFI AND THE USSR UNDER  
GORBACHEV

by

VICTORIA J. AUSTIN

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in International and Global Studies  
in the College of Sciences  
and in The Burnett Honors College  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

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Thesis Chair: Dr. Thomas Dolan

## **ABSTRACT**

Personalist regimes tend to be violently overthrown while single party states tend to non-violently collapse from within. This paper analyzes Libya under Qaddafi as a personalist regime, and USSR under Gorbachev as a single party state, and seeks to ascertain through case studies and process tracing the reasons for the violent overthrow of personalist regimes compared to the peaceful collapse of single party regimes. Both regime types create the problems that result in their downfall, and both kinds of downfall are accelerated by the public appearance of weakness.

## **DEDICATION**

To my chair and committee, Dr. Dolan, Dr. Kinsey, and Dr. Solonari, for their patience. Thank you.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Theory

Personalist regimes tend to be violently overthrown, while single party regimes tend to collapse from peacefully from within. This paper hypothesizes that the natures of the regimes are such that they can collapse in no other way. Single party regimes collapse inward onto themselves, while personalist regimes push the people to violent revolution. Regimes that have built broad social coalitions have the capacity to deal with discontent, whereas states that use force to ensure compliance lack social coalitions and have no other choice but to resort to repression in order to survive (Gurses and Mason, 2010, p. 146). Single party regimes possess these coalitions, personalist regimes do not. Personalist regimes are unstable, and by their nature are forced to employ violence in a manner that leads them to the point of violent revolution. Single party regimes are stable, but their stability hampers their ability to adapt to new changes; when they can no longer manage rising obstacles, opposition arises, but the opposition itself is not the real threat to the system, but rather the fact that legitimate opposition was ever allowed to arise, because this a sign that the system that sustains the state is broken. I hypothesize that Personalist regimes are overthrown violently because they allow no avenue for peaceful political input and push people to the point where they are willing to face violence, while Single Party regimes collapse relatively peacefully because legitimate opposition can only arise when the system is already broken. In this paper, I use case studies and process tracing of the USSR after Stalin (particularly focusing on Gorbachev), and Libya under Qaddafi to find evidence to support my hypotheses.

## **BACKGROUND**

### Single Party Regimes

Single party regimes are states “in which the party has some influence over policy, controls most access to political power and government jobs, and has functioning local-level organization” (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 143). In single-party regimes, access to political office and control over policy are dominated by one party, though other parties may legally exist and compete in elections (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 143). Single-party regimes are resilient and are more likely to collapse due to exogenous events rather than internal splits (Geddes, 1999, p. 131). Single party regimes endure on average almost 23 years: they are the most stable of authoritarian regimes; this may be because “the presence of limited decisional constraints in single-party regimes may make them more peaceful in general (Geddes, 1999, p. 131).

The single party system is an efficient bureaucratic machine that excels at repressing rebellion before it can become a threat, or putting down threats with such extreme force that it serves as an effective warning. Single party states have their strength in the efficiency of the machine like system: people are only cogs, and can be replaced; this also helps the system remain elastic enough to last as long as it does; when “the old guard” forgets that it is not people that matter, but the system, they irreparably damage it. If serious popular opposition arises in a single party regime, it is a sign that the system is already broken and ready to collapse on itself. If a single state regime is working properly, it will effectively crush opposition before it becomes a serious threat. It is not the rebellion that overthrows single party regimes, but the fact that the system allowed a rebellion to arise. Violent opposition does sometimes arise in single party, but it is

either repressed before it becomes a serious issue, or treated disproportionately harshly to act as a warning, as in the Hungarian Revolt of 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968 (White, 2001, p. 66).

When the USSR ignored opposition and the growing dissent/changes because it was afraid to use force they revealed their weakness and accelerated their own overthrow. They had been able to conceal their weakness previously, but once opposition rose, the cracks started to show. They lacked the ruthlessness necessary to maintain power, but their reforms were too weak and half-hearted to make them democratic or to pacify the people. Their reforms only served to show that the system was too weak and broken to continue repression, and too attached to the old ways to keep up with the times. Glasnost, or policy of openness, showed that the Communist party was not the undisputed moral or political power. The party could not withstand open criticism, and the changes they made only served to show the weakness inherent in the system. Nevertheless, the greater inherent stability of the single party state means that it usually non-violently collapses through its own brittleness rather than being violently overthrown.

### Personalist Regimes

A personalist regime a state in which the leader, who often came to power by means of a military coup or as the leader of a single party government, has consolidated control of the government and state into his hands alone, and reduced the importance the input of other members of the government; such states are most vulnerable to civil war and revolution (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 144). Personalist regimes survive about 15 years on average (Geddes, 1999, p. 131): they are relatively immune to internal splits except when dire economic conditions disrupt regime loyalty, they are especially vulnerable, however, to the death of the leader and to violent overthrow (p.

131). Personalist leaders do not usually need to worry about reelection: they can repress demonstrations, ignore public opinion, and abolish un-cooperative legislatures (Peceny & Beer, 2003, p. 340), and “It is reasonable to assume that autocratic leaders are more likely to pursue repression since they are unfettered by countervailing institutions” (Regan & Henderson, 2002, p. 121).

Personalist leaders often have no other way of maintaining power except through repression, but this repression leaves no avenue for dissent or peaceful political input, so the only way for the populace to affect change is through violence. Personalist leaders who maintain their power through violence are forced to escalate that violent repression until they push the people to the point where they have nothing to lose, and are ready to risk anything to overthrow the leader. Violence as a method of suppression leaves the regime vulnerable because, having already used their ultimate weapon of suppression, they are constantly at full threat, and have no further weapons, and if they do not maintain firm control, they leave themselves open to attacks they can't win. Personalist leaders are often erratic and unpredictable, making them more susceptible to overthrow than the much more stable single party states. Qaddafi's repression and erratic use of violence pushed the people to the point where they were willing to revolt, and when that point came, he was not able to control the situation. His apparent inability to control the situation made him appear weak, encouraging the rebels and causing his supporters to abandon him.

## REVOLUTIONS

In this paper, “revolution” refers to a change of social or political structure that is not necessarily accomplished through violence. Revolutions are generally more likely in states that suffer from “weak-state syndrome,” where some sector of society does not recognize the government as legitimate and the state lacks the capacity or will to respond to the challenge to its legitimacy (Gurses and Mason, 2010, p. 145). ). Revolutions are due to “widespread, intense, and multi-faceted relative deprivation that touches both masses and elite aspirants” (Skocpol, 1979, p. 10), but they will not come into being unless “the existing social structure comes into crisis” (p. 12). Violence occurs when “many people in society become angry....and people become angry when there occurs a gap between the valued things and opportunities they feel entitled to and the things and opportunities they actually get” (Skocpol, 1979, p. 9).

Regimes characterized with repressive policies (such as personalist and single party) are more vulnerable to collapse and more prone to violence than democracies (Gurses and Mason, 2010, p. 146). Regimes that have built broad social coalitions have the capacity to deal with discontent, whereas states that use force to ensure compliance lack social coalitions and no other choice but to resort to repression in order to survive (Gurses and Mason, 2010, p. 146). Strong authoritarian regimes can be repressive enough to deter political dissent while democracies provide peaceful avenues for political influence and face constraints on the use of force (Cunningham, Gleditsch, & Salehyan, 2009, p. 576). Weak authoritarian regimes are conflict-prone because of the “combination of insufficient repressiveness to deter insurrection and a lack of political openness” (Cunningham, Gleditsch, & Salehyan, 2009, p. 576). Allowing political dissent while not

offering viable avenues for political influence (as Glasnost did) makes regimes appear weak and makes them more vulnerable to collapse. The USSR collapsed non-violently when it lacked the will to repress dissent, and allowed dissent without offering a viable alternative to the current flawed system. Qaddafi used violence to maintain his power, but his erratic behavior undermined his legitimacy and united his supporters with his enemies.

Single party regimes rarely come to the point of violent revolution. They are usually strong regimes with the ability to put down dissent. They are rarely faced with revolutionary challenges because they do not tolerate the mobilization of any form of autonomous social organization that could evolve into a threatening opposition movement (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 143). Single party regimes are incredibly efficient machines that repress dissent and run on, regardless of the will of the people. Although they are often repressive, they are also more flexible than other authoritarian regimes, allowing new people into the party (rather than holding on to power like the personalists), this allows them to adapt to the times and last longer.

Personalist regimes are often characterized by the erratic behavior of their leaders, perhaps because “of the absence of even the most limited decisional constraints in personalist regimes” (Peceny & Beer, 2003, p. 342). Personalist leaders maintain authority that is unrestrained by law or ideology; the distinction between the leaders private interests and the interests of the state are purposely blurred, loyalty to the leader is based on fear and or greed, and the leader does not tolerate creation of autonomous groups in society and does not grant autonomy to government agencies or to the economic sector (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 144). The leader can arbitrarily intervene wherever and whenever he chooses and without justification or explanation, this

creates opposition from “the military and economic elite, from landlords, businessmen, clerics, and professionals who resent the leader’s heavy handed control” (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 144); this makes personalist regimes especially vulnerable to defections by the military and middle class citizens. Violent revolutions are likely in personalist regimes because the leaders’ corruption and arbitrary and self-serving actions alienate the people and weaken his supporters (Gurses & Mason, 2010, p. 145). Violent personalist regimes leave the people little choice but to resort to violence, and weak regimes are unable to repress the revolutions they inevitably create.

## METHODOLOGY

In this paper I used case studies and process tracing to test my hypothesis that personalist regimes end violently and single party regimes end peacefully because each type of regime invariably creates the problems that lead them to end as their regime type must: personalists violently, single parties peacefully.

The case studies I chose for this paper were the USSR after Stalin (1953-1991), particularly focusing on Gorbachev, and Libya under Colonel Qaddafi (1969-2011). When choosing my cases, I excluded countries with monarchies because though the leader in a monarchy has great personal power, he is supported by society and therefore has legitimacy and stability that a personalist leader lacks. I looked for regimes that were easily defined as personalist or single party, had the major characteristics of their type, and had already collapsed or been overthrown. For these reasons, I did not analyze the USSR under Stalin, as his cult of personality made the USSR a hybrid regime with strong personalist characteristics, rather than a pure single party regime. I looked for countries that collapsed independently of one another so that the collapse of the regimes could be analyzed independently of one another. Romania, for example, was a personalist regime that was violently overthrown, but it was not overthrown in isolation from the USSR, and could not be analyzed separately, making it inappropriate for this paper. Likewise for single party Eastern European countries (i.e. Hungary) that collapsed peacefully, their downfalls were too closely connected to one another to analyze separately. Also important was making sure the case had accessible information in English, and as I was looking at recent cases, I looked for cases where relations with the West meant that the lifespan and end of the regime were well

documented in Western newspapers, books, and journals. The USSR, as possibly the most famous example of a single party regime, had all the characteristics of its regime type, and due to its hegemonic rivalry with the US and the threat it posed during its day, its end was well documented in English. Libya under Qaddafi had all the characteristics of a personalist regime, and the relationship of the United States with Libya meant that despite the regime's notorious restriction of press, there was still documentation from the US government and Western Newspapers. The significance of the Libyan revolution to other countries in the region also made it easier to get information for this case, as countries in the region followed the events of the revolution closely.

I hypothesized that by the time single party regimes collapse, they are already broken, since if the system were working, they would use the party apparatus to crush dissent before it became opposition. When gathering information, I looked for evidence of breaks in the single party system that would show that the regime was broken before it collapsed. In the case of the USSR the evidence of the party's frailty and fossilization that I found were: weak reforms that did little but highlight the party's failings; bureaucratic resistance to the reforms without offering viable alternatives; reluctance to either use force to repress dissent or to reform sufficiently enough to make force unnecessary; in-party fighting; and the party's choice of leaders who were insufficiently committed to too weak reform (Khrushchev and Gorbachev), whose clinging to the old ways kept the party stagnant (Brezhnev), or frail leaders who were dying along with the party (Andropov and Chernenko). I used newspaper articles written during the regime's lifetime, speeches by current leaders, and books and journal articles that analyzed the collapse after the fact.

I hypothesized that since personalist leaders lack the legitimacy and stability of the single party, and do not have the social coalitions that the single party uses to repress dissent, they are forced to use violence against every little threat, but this is a short term solution that exacerbates the situation and eventually pushes the regime into a violent revolution that it cannot withstand. When gathering information, I looked for evidence that Qaddafi was erratic and violent, had unchecked power, and alienated all portions of society that a single party regime would have used to maintain the legitimacy of the regime and repress dissent. In my research I found that Qaddafi interfered in every aspect of society, angering the bureaucracy and military by regularly threatening to disband them and violently punishing dissenters in their ranks, drawing the ire of religious leaders by insisting that he was linked to the prophets but that religion came second to his decrees, upsetting the middle class by interfering and damaging the economy, and angering everyone in the country by demanding that everyone follow his every whim, from raising chickens to closing businesses. I mainly used newspaper articles as the event was so recent that newspapers still have the most information, but I also found information in Qaddafi's *Green Book*, research from NGOs, and books written early in Qaddafi's reign and after the collapse of the regime.

## **THE USSR UNDER GORBACHEV AS A SINGLE PARTY REGIME**

The party-state was more powerful than the tsarist regime it had overthrown, and was capable of doing more in society while paying even less attention to social opposition (Skocpol, 1979, p. 226). This was for several reasons: it was more efficiently controlled, and was larger in numbers with a larger reach (Skocpol, 1979, p. 226). The Soviet regime relied on “administratively organized coercion and terror as techniques for ruling its citizenry” (Skocpol, 1979, p. 230), seeing state coercion as a powerful tool to repress popular forces and revolutionary movements (p. 26). The USSR was a highly centralized and bureaucratic party state which propelled rapid national industrialization through command and terror (Skocpol, 1979, p. 207). All aspects of public life in the USSR were dominated by the ruling single party (White, 2001, p. 18). There was public ownership of means of production; widespread censorship, repression of dissent, and a party wide refusal to admit that the government was anything but perfect (White, 2001, p. 18).

The USSR was more personalist than single party under Stalin, thanks to his cult of personality and nearly unlimited personal power. Once Stalin had defeated his opposition, he was able to wield “unchallenged personal control of the Communist party and the Soviet State” (Daniels, 1984, p. 215). He imposed stringent control over intellectual life, imprisoning nonconformist thinkers, and ridding himself of anyone in his way during the purges (Daniels, 1984, p. 219). The death of Stalin in 1953 followed protests and a call for moderation (White, 2001, p. 21). Fearing that Malenkov would inherit Stalin’s dictatorial power, the party reorganized and Nikita Khrushchev took the post of First Secretary, and the party became a collective leadership (Daniels, 1984, p. 312).

Under Khrushchev, the party began a period of “De-Stalinization,” and in 1956, Khrushchev admitted that the Communist party had made mistakes, shedding the “aura of infallibility” the party had assumed since its beginning (Daniels, 1984, p, 322). Khrushchev said in his Secret Speech that “Stalin acted not only through persuasion, explanation, and patient operation with the people, but by imposing his concepts and demanding absolute submission to his opinion” (Daniels, 1984, V1, p. 322); he further called Stalin a man of “despotic character” (p 322) who had violated revolutionary legality when he practiced mass repression through the government apparatus (p. 323). “The Thaw” instituted under Khrushchev allowed significantly more freedom than under Stalin, but the reforms were not enough to give real freedom, and the party was not sufficiently committed either to reform or repression for either one to work.

Eventually the party, fearing that Khrushchev had acquired too much personal power, and disliking his reforms, ousted him and returned to a stricter way of life (Daniels, 1984, p. 347). Khrushchev was replaced by Brezhnev in 1964, beginning an “era of stagnations” for the USSR, the limited relaxation of party control under Khrushchev was abruptly ended and the party returned to ideological conformity (Daniels, 1984, p. 362). Under Brezhnev, the global influence of the USSR grew even stronger, but his aversion to change and desire to cling to the old ways kept the USSR stagnant. Brezhnev was replaced by the elderly Andropov in 1982, who died two years later (Daniels, 1984, p. 429). Andropov was replaced by an even older man, Chernenko, who died less than two years after gaining power (Daniels, 1984, p. 432).

The USSR’s choice of leaders shows that the system was very broken by that time. The single party’s strength lies in its ability to let new people in, keeping the system from stagnating, and its

focus on the apparatus rather than on individuals or “the old guard,” keeps the machine-like system rolling on despite turmoil in the world. When the party chose for its leaders men who were stuck in the old ways, averse to change, and lacking the energy to put down opposition, they were crippling the system by letting it die of old age and tiredness. The party was unwilling to return to Stalin’s methods of repression, but was not willing to adapt the system for less harsh methods of repression or to allow freedom and dissent.

Gorbachev’s accession to power marked a time of change. He launched a campaign for restructuring (perestroika), and on finding that it could not be implemented without allowing public criticism, implemented “glasnost,” allowing intellectuals and the press freedom to criticize the government (Daniels, 1984, p. 432). Perestroika began as a program of limited change aimed at improving the current system, not as a radical overturn (Daniels, 1995, p. xxiii). Perestroika aimed for the reconstruction of political and economic central powers, but without changing the basic principles of the regime (Suraska, 1998, p. 141). Glasnost called on the media to criticize the government for “shortcomings, inefficiency and abuse of power,” while still maintaining political power in the hands of the party (Goldfarb, 1987). Gorbachev said that “no society can exist without glasnost” because without it, the government had no way to “check up” on itself, and would keep sliding back into the past (Daniels, 1984, p. 436-7). Gorbachev conceded that USSR polices had been mistaken for the past twenty years (White, 2001, p. 58), and allowed more input from the people. He encouraged the public to criticize the system and openly criticized it himself.

Gorbachev criticized the system and its leaders, past and present. According to Gorbachev, the USSR was “a society whose ruling circles refuse to assess the realities of the world and its perspective in sober terms” and was held back from change by “social senility” (“Excerpts,” 1986). According to Gorbachev, the economic machinery lacked the “inner stimuli for self-development” (Gorbachev, 1987, p. 85). Gorbachev blamed failings by the ruling elite for the “lag in the Soviet economy, the creation of a cumbersome and self-perpetuating bureaucracy and public skepticism about its leaders” (Associated Press, 1988). And attempts to change had “been hampered by an addiction to habitual formulas and schemes, which did not reflect the new realities” (Associated Press, 1988).

Under Gorbachev, censorship was relaxed, criticism in the press was encouraged, and dissent was tolerated (Taubman, 1987). Prisoners held for criticizing the government were released and pardoned, repressive policies created under Stalin were lifted, and books dealing more honestly with the Stalin era and with “moral decay in the government” were released with Gorbachev’s consent (Taubman, 1987).

Gorbachev stopped the requirement for worship of past leaders, with Soviet authorities removing Brezhnev’s name from places of honor in Moscow as Gorbachev criticized him for saddling the USSR with “bureaucracy and stagnation” (Associated Press, 1988). He was however, mindful that Khrushchev’s pointed criticism of Stalin and attempts to change the system had led to his downfall (Taubman, 1987), and was aware of the risk the bureaucrats posed.

The bureaucracy hindered change, preferring to hold onto the old ways and look out for their own interests, and as the party reached its crisis, the KGB, the military, and the party members

continued their feuds rather than unite, contributing to the collapse of the state (Suraska, 1998, p. 142). The bureaucracy resisted reforms, as they would mean a loss of “power and privilege,” while the press, free now to criticize, accused the bureaucrats of being responsible for the goods shortages and state of health and social services (Goldfarb, 1987). Glasnost highlighted the frustrations created by the “gap between raised expectations and grim reality” (Goldfarb, 1987). Gorbachev’s economic reforms failed because he was unwilling to leave the centrally controlled economy (Silk, 1990). The economy was plagued by the “scourge of bureaucratic meddlesomeness” with 14 million farmhands being watched by 3 million apparatchiks, but doing away with the many bureaucrats involved in agriculture would anger the party and add to the unemployment problem (Silk, 1990). Reverting back to the Stalinist approach for a harsher centrally controlled economy with all the power in the hands of the leaders would mean that the state would have to go back to their former violent tactics (Silk, 1990), which Gorbachev was also unwilling to do, he wanted to keep the monster without the teeth. Gorbachev was unwilling to make deep changes to the system, and most of the reforms he attempted met with resistance from the party, while being found insufficient by the public.

The new openness showed that the system was too flawed to stand up to criticism, and too weak to put down opposition. There was a “growing sense of exhilaration that freedoms were being openly debated” alongside the “the continuing - or worsening - shortages of food and consumer goods” (Luers, 1988). The new openness allowed people to talk about the many things wrong with the system, but did not change the problems that people could now talk about.

Glasnost had revolutionary implications for some aspects of the Soviet system (Daniels, 1993, p. 17). “De-ideologizing” meant that the regime was giving up its main form of control (Daniels, 1993, p. 17). Bringing the truth to light did not rest well with old party members, and Gorbachev faced serious opposition from within his own government (Daniels, 1993, p. 18). The bureaucracy fought amongst themselves and opposed Gorbachev’s reforms, making it difficult for anything to be accomplished.

By the late 1980s, it was clear that Perestroika would not be enough to save the USSR. Even the strongest supporters of perestroika, including Gorbachev, expressed grave concern that it is producing no material benefits for the people, and “that their standard of living may actually be declining and that it may be years before this bleak picture changes” (Luers, 1988). Gorbachev said that “The existing political system proved incapable of protecting us from the growth of stagnation phenomena in economic and social life in the latter decades, and doomed the reforms undertaken at the time of failure” (“Key Sections,” 1988).

The new openness allowed simmering nationalist and anti-Russian feelings to come to the surface, along with suppressed anger over the past mistreatments that glasnost was now allowing to be discussed. Countries called for more political independence from Moscow, setting up their own governments, then calling for complete independence (Riding, 1990). In the 1990s, countries were demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops (Riding, 1990). This increasing nationalism, and the USSR’s inability to check the loss of its subordinates further weakened the single party system.

Nationalist feeling in Poland had always been strong (White, 2001, p. 52), and when the Soviets began allowing more political freedoms, the Poles did away with the communist government in favor of a more nationalist one (p. 52). When popular political action in Poland overthrew the Soviet regime in 1989 (White, 2001, p. 52), the Soviets, unable to repress the rising tide of revolution, ignored it, and instituted a new policy of not intervening in the revolutions occurring in Soviet Satellites/Soviet sphere of influence, giving other countries the courage to overthrow the Soviet regime (p. 52).

In 1989, Hungary legalized opposition groups, ending four decades of single party rule, and the Communist party was ordered to disband its cells in the workplace (Rueters). Gorbachev did nothing to stop this, and had paved the way for it to happen with the loosening of control.

Gorbachev did intervene several times when the USSR was collapsing. When Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare its independence (Fein, 1990), Gorbachev, in his “harshest attempt thus far” threatened them with cutting off needed supplies (Clines, 1990), a far cry from the USSR’s former readiness to use force against rebellions. Gorbachev feared that the Lithuanian rebellion would encourage other republics to challenge state authority (Clines 1990). The Soviet Parliament described the resolution as “not legally binding,” but at Gorbachev’s encouragement, the Parliament did not deal harshly with the Lithuanians, confirming “the right of every republic to secede,” but saying that until the mechanisms for seceding were made law, the Lithuanian Parliament could not legally secede (Fein, 1990).

In 1991, Gorbachev used violence against Lithuanian rebels, resulting in the deaths of 15 protestors (Whitney, 1991), and the wounding of over a 100 (Fein, 1991). Hundreds of thousands

of Russians, Poles, and Byelorussians walked to Vilnius to attend the funerals and protest Moscow's actions (Whitney, 1991). Many newspapers sharply criticized Soviet actions, and accused Soviet leaders (who blamed Lithuanians for the violence) of giving false versions of events (Fein, 1991).

State run media attempted to sway public opinion on the use of force in Lithuania by justifying the violence with a version contradicted by eyewitness reports (Fein, 1991). The authorities also used its monopoly on the paper supply as a more insidious way of controlling information (Fein, 1991). When freedom of the press began to backfire on him, Gorbachev attempted (too late) to crack down. To contain the criticism against him, Gorbachev called for suspension of freedom of the press (Fein, 1991). The freedom of the press and the ability to criticize the government that Gorbachev had insisted was necessary was undermining the legitimacy and control of the party. The idea of restricting the press and the freedom to criticize the government was frightening to many people and Gorbachev's proposal was met with widespread consternation (Fein, 1991). Gorbachev's crackdown caused accusations of him wanting to hide his crimes and avoid the same criticism he had doled out to his predecessors. (Fein, 1991). Feebly trying to restrict newly granted freedoms once they got in the way caused anger and discontent and further undermined party legitimacy.

Gorbachev also rejected the independence bids of Estonia and Latvia when they attempted to follow Lithuania's example, but did not threaten them, merely stated that they had no legal right to secede (Bohlen, 1990). He did not punish or threaten Latvia and Estonia, instead leaving the "door open for dialogue" (Bohlen, 1990). Considering that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had all

been forcibly incorporated in to the Soviet Union (Fein, 1990), even the USSR's actions against Lithuania were incredibly mild, and seemed more out of a desperate attempt at stemming the trend towards independence than an assertion of party control.

Czechoslovakia demanded that Soviet troops be withdrawn, and gave a deadline; the Soviets complained that the deadline was too short, but considered the demands reasonable (Kamm, 1991). Removing the troops after practically being ordered to do so by Czechoslovakia showed the weakening Soviet power and the strengthening nationalist hold. Hungary followed suit and also demanded removal of Soviet troops (Riding, 1990), and other countries followed in their demands.

As it became more obvious that Perestroika had failed, Gorbachev faced increasing criticism from within his own party. Yeltsin called for Gorbachev's resignation over his failed plans, and stirred up party and public disapproval (Clines, 1991a). In August 1991, military and KGB authorities led a coup against Gorbachev's government, accusing him of weakening the country through his reform programs (Clines, 1991, b). The attempted failed after two days, but it showed that the in-fighting party was no longer capable of governing the country (White, 2001, p. 69). Though the coup was not begun by the Communist Party, the leadership "did little to resist it," allowing Yeltsin to suspend the CPSU (White, 2001, p. 69). The coup signaled the end of the USSR.

After the coup, it was apparent that the USSR was broken, and Soviet countries increased their efforts at independence. Faced with the mass exodus of Soviet countries, Gorbachev, in an attempt to force party unity and "stem the flight of republics from a disintegrating nation,"

threatened to resign unless the Union could be preserved (Bohlen, 1991). This did not stop other nations from demanding independence (Bohlen, 1991).

The single party state is more predictable than a personalist state, and is thus more reliable and stable, but also much harder to change (Suraska, 1998, p. 121). The resistance to change makes it vulnerable to internal decay and corruption, and makes it so resistant to new ideas that it becomes brittle and unable to cope with newly arising challenges, leading it to collapse inward on itself.

Gorbachev realized that there were many problems with the old ways, but he did not want to completely overhaul the system. He did not want to completely indict the system, and insisted that “Naturally, Party organizations worked and the overwhelming majority of communists did their duty to the people sincerely and selflessly” (Gorbachev, 1987, p. 23). But he admitted that the party “lagged behind the requirements of the times and of life itself” (Gorbachev, 1987, p. 23), the party had stagnated, and corruption was widespread (p. 22). Gorbachev failed to realize that the party was not capable of reform: the party members had only their own interests at stake, and the Central Committee foiled his attempts to change (Sternthal, 1997, p. 210).

When Gorbachev called for a revision of history that would deal openly and honestly with the Stalin’s years, he did not realize the “possible consequences that such openness would have on the legitimacy of his own government” (Suraska, 1998, p. 13); Gorbachev and the ruling system faced criticism, and could not fix the problems without changing more than they were willing to. Gorbachev did not intend to change the regime’s core, only to better manage it, but the system was broken, and his attempts at openness only made that more obvious. Gorbachev’s reforms

undermined the legitimacy of his government, and failed to offer a viable replacement to the system they were undermining. The party had not let in new blood, and had no new ideas, but still clung to the old, failing ways. The predictability of the bureaucratic system gives it stability (Suraska, 1998, p. 121), taking away stability while undermining the system's legitimacy made the already fragile system even more vulnerable to collapse. Gorbachev further undermined an already broken system without offering a good replacement.

Gorbachev was ousted from power in 1991, only six years after beginning perestroika (Clines, 1991). Before his fall, Gorbachev had backed down on some of his reforms in an attempt to pacify hard line party members (Clines, 1991b), and had swayed between allowing more freedom of the press, and trying to limit it when it criticized him (Fein, 1991). But the USSR had already collapsed by the time Gorbachev was removed from power. Republics had declared independence, and aside from the few times the regime tried to use violence, had gone peacefully. By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union had collapsed, Gorbachev resigned, and the Russia that was left had very little control over the remaining associated republics (Clines, 1991c).

## **LIBYA UNDER COLONEL QADDAFI AS A PERSONALIST REGIME**

Typical of a personalist leader, Qaddafi came to power by means of a military coup (Bernstein, 1984b). Under Qaddafi, power theoretically lay with a system of people's committees and the indirectly elected General People's Congress, but in practice those structures were manipulated to ensure the continued dominance of Qaddafi (Freedom House, 2010). In December 1969, Egyptian intelligence helped disrupt a plot by the Libyan defense and interior ministers to overthrow Qaddafi, apparently triggered by unease over the growing radicalism of Qaddafi's regime (Eljahmi, 2006). Qaddafi survived the attempted coup, but "concluded that his power depended upon tight control" (Eljahmi, 2006). His Revolutionary Command Council issued a "Law for the Protection of the Revolution," which made it a criminal offense to "proselytize against the state, to arouse class hatred, to spread falsehood, or to participate in strikes and demonstrations" (Eljahmi, 2006). Within weeks, the Revolutionary Command Council assumed total public control over Libya, and Qaddafi took control as both prime minister and defense minister; in this role, he restricted any significant authority beyond family and his closest associates (Eljahmi, 2006). Qaddafi acted without worry about reelection, repressed political dissent, and was not checked in his actions by any institutions since they were all subject to him. Qaddafi was willing to "kill potential rivals" and he ruthlessly repressed dissent in his erratic but relatively efficient police state (Miller, 1986b). Amnesty International accused him of "liquidating" his opponents and expressed outrage at the "arbitrary" arrest and execution without public trial of his opponents and the arrest and torture of Libyans detained after the May 8<sup>th</sup>

attack (Associated Press, 1984). Throughout his rule, he faced discontent from his troops and people, which he met with violence.

At first, thanks to Libya's oil money, roads, hospitals, schools, and housing were built, while life expectancy, literacy rates, and per capita income drastically increased (MacFarquhar, p. 3, 2011). But at the same time, Qaddafi, introduced "Orwellian revolutionary committees in every neighborhood to purge the country of the ideologically unsound" and began demanding that the entire country follow his every whim, from his views on sports (boxing is barbaric), to his (very short-lived) insistence that people raise chickens (MacFarquhar, p. 3, 2011). His "mercurial changes in policy and personality...began in earnest" with the publishing of his *Green Book* (MacFarquhar, p. 3, 2011). His *Green Book* contained "a mixture of Islamic belief and socialist theory" that were meant to provide "principle and structures of government" but the document lacked "legal status" (Freedom House, 1998). Qaddafi's *Green Book* was, at his insistence, taught in schools as a foundation of education, and teachers were forced to teach his profound views on the differences between men and women (women menstruate, men do not), or risk imprisonment and possible execution (BBC, 2011f).

Under Qaddafi, there was no independent press: state-owned media largely operated as "mouthpieces for the authorities, and journalists worked in a climate of fear and self-censorship" (Freedom House, 2010), and those who displeased the regime face harassment or imprisonment on trumped-up charges (Freedom House, 2010). It was necessary for Qaddafi to minimize any kind of dissent, or widespread unification among the masses, and he used his control of the media to achieve that end. Qaddafi also used the media to encourage obedience to him, covering

the streets in posters bearing slogans such as “Obey those in authority” and “Every shepherd has his own flock” (Elijahmi, 2006). Qaddafi espoused Islam in his *Green Book*, and tried to use religion to legitimize himself, often paralleling himself with Muhammad, Abraham, and the angel Gabriel (Elijahmi, 2006), but the fact that religion went second to his personal decisions detracted from any semblance of religious right to rule. In his book, he claimed to believe in democracy and the will of the people (Qaddafi, 1988, p. 15), but his revolutionary committees forced their will on the congresses against the will of the people.

Under his rule, it was illegal for any political group to oppose the principles of the 1969 revolution, laid out in the *Green Book*, political parties were outlawed, and the government strictly monitored political activity (Freedom House, 2010). Organizing or joining anything remotely like a political party was punishable by long prison terms and the death sentence (Freedom House, 2010). Elections included mandatory voting, but elections were a sham, and the real power lay with Qaddafi and his small group of supporters (Freedom House, 1998).

Qaddafi built “a network of controls and repression” that existed at every level of society; the press was censored, private commerce was restricted, his *Green Book* was taught in every school, and every level of society from the police to government bureaus was ruled by his Revolutionary Committees, who “encouraged political ardor” and watched every move of the other institutions (Bernstein, 1984c). His Revolutionary Committees, ostensibly created to allow Libyans to rule themselves, were seen as “instruments of the deepening political oppression,” and were described by Libyans as “an open sham” and “merely a screen for the real power” (Miller, 1984b). When opposition increased, so too did the power of the Revolutionary

Committees (Miller, 1984b). His regime restricted personal freedoms and quashed political dissent, often resorting to violence. Qaddafi warned that anyone who tried to organize politically that he could “at any moment send them to the People's Court ... and the People’s Court will issue a sentence of death based on this law, because execution is the fate of anyone who forms a political party,” and publicly hung and mutilated his opponents (Eljhami, 2006).

In Qaddafi’s Libya, corruption was pervasive in the private sector and the government, ranking 130 out of 180 countries surveyed in Transparency International’s 2009 Corruption Perceptions Index (Freedom House, 2010). Qaddafi ruled Libya by decree, with an almost total absence of accountability and transparency (Freedom House, 1998). Qaddafi acquired more and more personal power, and used that to place his family and friends in positions of power. The NYT reported the state department as describing Libya as “a kleptocracy in which the regime — either the al-Qadhafi family itself or its close political allies — has a direct stake in anything worth buying, selling or owning” (Lichtblau, Rohde, & Risen, 2011). Qaddafi’s family acquired vast personal wealth, with family members in the energy sector, security, health, aviation, construction and more, with many of them frequently demanding bribes (Lichtblau, Rohde, & Risen, 2011). His sons were known for their debauchery and lavish lifestyles (Pargeter, 2012, p. 6), living in palatial homes and partying with Hollywood stars (Lichtblau, Rohde, & Risen, 2011). Qaddafi allowed this because personalist leaders must maintain their support base, usually made up of family and close friends. If he did not allow the widespread corruption that was rife in his regime, then his supporters had no reason to side with him against the people they were stealing from.

Qaddafi arbitrarily changed rules, keeping Libya in a constant state of disarray. He switched the calendar from the standard Muslim one to one that counted from Muhammad's death rather than his birth, he renamed February to "Lights" and August to "Hannibal" because he did not like their original names (MacFarquhar, 2001). Qaddafi's "erratic" decision making was evident in abruptly suggested agendas at sessions that were randomly called: when these sessions were called, all offices, schools, government offices, airlines, and shops, were forced to close for the sometimes weeks long sessions, meaning a huge loss of revenue, but failure to comply meant stiff fines and license suspension, while people were also required to show their stamped session attendance records on demand (MacFarquhar, 2001).

Declining oil revenues in the 1980s meant austerity measures along with raised prices and taxes, and added to popular discontent (Miller, 1984b). Private enterprise was discouraged, resulting in the closing (sometimes by government order, sometimes through pressure) of many small stores and in shortage of many items, such as groceries (Miller, 1984b). The drop in oil prices cut Libya's income by more than two-thirds, and led to shortages of food and other commodities and lines "rivaling those of Eastern Europe;" Critics accused Qaddafi of taking an oil-rich nation and turning it an "impoverished police state" (Miller, 1986b). In the midst of the austerity, Qaddafi spent an estimated \$10 billion in a "solidarity conference" aimed at solidifying his status (Miller, 1984b). The failing economy combined with the lavish lifestyles of Qaddafi and his family further alienated the public and his support base.

When oil prices went back up, Libyans still saw little benefit from the increase, and complained about the poor condition of the roads, and the inadequacy of the health care and transportation

services (MacFarquhar, 2001). The youth of Libya lacked meaningful employment, and many people had not seen a wage increase in 20 years, and income steadily declined (MacFarquhar, 2001).

The military resented Qaddafi's stated plan to replace them with "an armed people" (Miller, 1986b). Qaddafi's statement that he wanted "a society without police or traditional armed forces" and that "the regular army will disappear in the future and the people will replace them" (Miller, 1986a), weakened his support base in the military, without really giving him credence with the people. The suspected killing of an officer who had protested Qaddafi's policies towards Egypt added to military discontent with his leadership (Miller, 1986a). His erratic violence against his supporters angered them and gave them no reason to remain loyal to him. When Qaddafi used force to put down a rebellion attempt by high ranking army officers, the state media made no mention of the event and Libyan officials stated that there was no unrest, despite Western reports of casualties, bombing raids, explosions at arms depots, and purges of senior military officers (Hedges, 1993). Qaddafi used his control of the press to keep opposition as secret as possible, preventing any widespread unification, and preventing the further undermining of his legitimacy.

Dissent in the early part of his rule was difficult to measure because Qaddafi insisted that none existed, the state-run media corroborated his claim, and Libyans were "largely sealed off from contact with foreigners," still, an increase in discontent was apparent (Bernstein, 1984a). After public hangings of two student dissidents (hangings carried out by student activists, but with the apparent support of the government), Qaddafi faced "the most volatile opposition" he had faced since coming to power (Bernstein, 1984a). One of the executioners was stabbed to death a day

after the hanging, anti-government slogans were carved into roadways, a fire created by arsonists destroyed the main auditorium of the campus where the hangings took place, and attacks on military installations and acts of sabotage were reported in the weeks following the hangings (Bernstein, 1984a). Two failed assassination attempts in 1985 were orchestrated by dissident military men who were “said to be in a power struggle with the Revolutionary Committees,” and resulted in the execution of about 75 officers (Associated Press, 1985). Dissent slowly increased throughout his rule, and his actions caused him to lose many supporters.

This friction supports the findings of those who said that personalist regimes are highly vulnerable to internal and civil conflict, and Qaddafi took the route that personalist leaders are bound by their type to take: an increase of personal control, implemented forcefully. Raising security measures was Qaddafi’s response to opposition (Bernstein, 1984a). After a May 8th insurgent attack, the Revolutionary Committees arrested between 2,000 and 20,000 people, and though the actual attackers were found and killed within hours, the arrests and interrogations continued for weeks as Qaddafi used the situation to “root out the regime’s other political and economic opponents” (Miller, 1984b). All the May 8<sup>th</sup> attackers were killed and Qaddafi insisted that they were not representative of his adoring Libyan public, but were carried out by enemies from outside, possibly the US and Britain working through the Muslim Brotherhood, and denounced the US, Britain, and the Muslim Brotherhood as terrorists and enemies of the revolution (Dionne, 1984). This path of action is the one that most personalist leaders take; their regime type leaves them little choice but to resort to violent repression, but it also leads to their downfall, because their actions force the situation to escalate to the point where violent uprising

is the only option, and eventually, their support base is so weakened that they must lose in a confrontation.

Despite Qaddafi's enormous personal power, he was not able to maintain perfect control (Bernstein, 1984c). His programs that called to abolish elementary schools and his mandatory military training for schoolgirls met with resistance, and his resolution for military training did not pass before parliament, but despite this, was passed after Qaddafi made a speech that criticized parliament (Bernstein, 1984c). In 1984, Qaddafi was facing "quiet but growing resistance to his radical economic and social policies" in Libya (Miller, 1984a). Between May and September of 1984, thousands of Libyans were arrested or detained due to their resistance to Qaddafi's policies, and Qaddafi was described as "a leader increasingly at war with his own country" (Miller, 1984b).

15 years after coming to power, Qaddafi was firmly in control, but faced "growing opposition and a dwindling support base" (Miller, 1984b). The failing economy, poor public services, and his harsh treatment of dissenters made enemies of those not directly benefiting from his rule (his friends and family); his constant interference in the economy stifled growth and angered business men and consumers alike; and by threatening to make the military obsolete and punishing senior officers, he was making enemies of the military. Qaddafi was not only alienating his support base, but he was giving them far more reasons to risk fighting him than to stay under a regime where there seemed to be no hope of things becoming better, and a very good chance of being killed if they tried for change.

In 1986, a bomb exploded in a West Berlin disco, killing two U.S servicemen and a Turkish woman, and 229 people (Malinarich, 2011). Reagan blamed Libya, and said that the US had intercepted messages from Tripoli that proved that Qaddafi was behind the attack (Malinarich, 2011). The US Air Force targeted Tripoli and Benghazi, and in the failed attempt to kill Qaddafi, killed his baby daughter and 15 civilians (Malinarich, 2011). In 1988, the Lockerbie bombing was widely attributed to Libya and Qaddafi, possibly in retaliation for the air raid that killed his daughter, and UN sanctions were imposed (Freedom House, 1998). Despite international anger and the UN sanctions Qaddafi protected the accused bombers, and did not accept responsibility for the bombing until 2003, and then only in vague terms that did not implicate him personally (BBC, 2011g). Qaddafi lost international support due to his terrorist activities, UN and US sanctions severely affected Libya, and although it still had money from its oil exports, the economy suffered (Freedom House, 1998).

Throughout the 90s, Qaddafi faced continual opposition from his people, and showed his willingness to punish large groups of people on suspicion alone, as well as his ability to punish dissenters abroad. When faced with another assassination attempt in 1998, he imprisoned at least 100 people on the suspicion that they might have been involved (Freedom House, 1998). In 1997, Qaddafi enacted a law that allowed “collective punishment” for communities accused of supporting his opposers, cutting off public services and food subsidies to areas where he believed people opposed him (Freedom House 1998). In 1996, one of Qaddafi’s most prominent critics, Mansur Kikhiya, a secretary general of the exile opposition National Libyan Alliance, disappeared from Cairo; it was believed that he had been brought back to Libya, and executed (Freedom House 1998).

In the 1990s, Qaddafi was facing serious conflict within his group of elite supporters, and even within his own family (Freedom House, 1998). By 1999, the economy was stagnate thanks to the sanctions imposed after the Lockerbie bombing, unemployment was high, and the infrastructure of the government was falling apart thanks to the friction amongst his supporters (Freedom House, 2002). As the already chaotic regime was losing all semblance of order, Qaddafi began trying to repair his international image. In 1999, he gave up the two Libyan nationals accused in the Lockerbie bombing (Freedom House 2002), and in 2003, accepted Libyan responsibility for Lockerbie, giving compensation to the families of the dead (Malinarich, 2011). In response, the UN suspended sanctions which were completely done away with after the trial of the bombing suspects, and the US eased trade restrictions (Freedom House, 2002). Qaddafi's attempts to improve his image made it seem that the situation would improve in Libya, but even after the sanctions were lifted he acted erratically, accusing the US of coercing the judges in the bombing trial, and demanded compensation for the victims of the US's foreign policy (Freedom House 2002). Qaddafi continued to face conflict among his supporters, he was forced to allow widespread corruption to maintain loyalty, further impoverishing the people in a troubled economy (Freedom House, 2002). In an attempt to improve the economy, Qaddafi eased state control of the economy and jailed 47 bank and government officials for corruption (Freedom House, 2002).

In 2003, Qaddafi renounced weapons of destruction and agreed to pay millions more to the families of the Lockerbie and Berlin bombings in hopes of removing the sanctions that were

hampering its failing economy (Freedom House, 2004). The US suspended sanctions and Qaddafi resumed some diplomatic relations with Europe and the US, but it faced accusations of supporting an assassination plot in Saudi Arabia and a failed coup in Mauritania, weakening international support (Freedom House, 2005).

In the 2000s, Qaddafi began making moves to improve conditions in Libya (Freedom House, 2005). State control of the economy and media were loosened, and Libya began to repair its international relations (Freedom House, 2007). Qaddafi's son, Saif al-Islam, was considered to be largely responsible for the policy changes; he criticized the leadership and the conditions in Libya and facilitated reports of abuse through his charitable organization (Freedom House, 2007). The shift in economic policy in the 2000s gave little actual benefit to the people, and though state control was loosened, there was still next to no political freedom (Freedom House, 2007). Additionally, Qaddafi still had complete control and spoke of the need to kill Libya's enemies (Freedom House, 2010).

In 2009, the government faced opposition in the Southeast of Libya which it met with violence that resulted in considerable loss of life (Freedom House, 2009). In 2009, the convicted Lockerbie bomber was released due to his terminal illness, and Libya welcomed him back as a hero (Freedom House, 2010). In 2009, the regime restricted the press still more, and state run media became nothing but a mouthpiece for the regime, doing away with any hope for freedom of the press (Freedom House, 2010).

Qaddafi's attempts to change and public assurances that the situation would improve turned out to be empty promises, and by 2010, Libya had returned to its violent ways, but kept up the

promise that things would get better. The loosening of state control followed by the regime's return to control angered the people because the regime was taking away the freedoms Libyans had grown accustomed to, and was only offering them the (now obviously empty) assurance that things would change. The criticisms of Saif al-Islam weakened the regime further, his criticisms highlighted the failings of the regime, and the reforms passed in response to his criticisms gave little to no actual improvement.

According to Condoleezza Rice, Libya suffered from conditions that were “inherently unstable — a youth bulge, high unemployment, a lack of political openness” (Schmitt, 2011). In 2009, Qaddafi admitted that “the administration has failed and the state economy has failed” though he did not take personal responsibility for these failings (Slackman). He made a few half-hearted concessions, but in 2006, Qaddafi urged his supporters to “kill enemies” who asked for political change (Rueters), quashing hopes that his regime may have changed.

Influenced by uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, and pushed to anger by the arrest of a human rights activist in Benghazi, Libyans began to rebel against Qaddafi's regime (Freedom House, 2012). In 2011, Libyans began peaceful demonstrations, Qaddafi responded by killing “hundreds of people” (Schmitt). As late as February 2011, Qaddafi was insisting not only that all his people loved him, but that there were not and had not been any protests in Tripoli, and that he could not step down because that power lay with the people, not with him (“Libya Protests”). After being forced to admit that at least some of Libya did not love him, Qaddafi vowed to track down and kill protesters “house by house,” and the crackdown in the capital resulted in a high death count, but outside the capital, a growing number of towns declared their independence without security

forces making any apparent attempt to stop them (Fahim & Kirkpatrick, 2011a). Qaddafi tried some concessions, releasing journalists who had been detained (Kirkpatrick, 2011b), and allowing some freedom of press (before quickly changing his mind) (Kirkpatrick, 2011a): these concessions contrasted sharply with his simultaneous shows of violence, and his erratic behavior made him appear weak.

Despite his grandiose vows to “fight on to the last drop of my blood,” Qaddafi was seen as “weak” and “a liar” by the rebels, and defections continued among the military, many of whom were described as just taking off their uniforms and switching sides (Fahim & Kirkpatrick, 2011a). When Qaddafi showed signs of weakening, large numbers of government officials and military personnel defected to join the revolt, and several senior officials publicly broke with Qaddafi, resigning over his actions towards the rebels (Kirkpatrick & El-Naggar, 2011b). Rebel forces benefitted from the experience and leadership of the defecting military personnel, who established a unified command, and brought tanks, antiaircraft guns, and weapons to the rebel side (Kirkpatrick & Fahim, 2011).

Though cities all along Libya’s eastern coast appeared to be controlled by Qaddafi’s opponents, supported by defecting soldiers and police officers, that control “seemed tenuous and largely subject to the whims of the colonel’s feared militias and mercenaries, along with helicopters and fighter planes” (Fahim, 2011). Qaddafi’s power “dissolved with astonishing speed” as rebels marched into the capital and took control of the city, and though Qaddafi and the officials loyal to him still claimed he was in power, he still went into hiding (Fahim & Kirkpatrick, 2011b). The revolution ended in his overthrow and violent death (Fahim, Shadid, & Gladstone, 2011).

Once the revolution came fully under way, anger and desire for change combined with the knowledge that “failure to remove Colonel Qaddafi would mean death” (Fahim, 2011), forcing the rebels to commit to unify and commit to the revolution. By the time people were ready to violently rebel, the risk of losing was too great for them to back down. Qaddafi’s actions against those who opposed him in the past meant certain death for the rebels if Qaddafi remained in power, so continuing to fight was worth the risk as there was at least an opportunity for hope.

In Libya, the people revolted violently out of anger and frustration, and because they saw a chance of success thanks to the revolutions occurring elsewhere in the Arab world, but the revolt might not have become a revolution if the regime had not vacillated in its use of force. Qaddafi began to loosen control to a very small extent, but that worked against him because he gave enough to give his people the hope and expectation that things could be better, without giving them enough to keep them satisfied with his regime. His concessions gave the appearance of weakness, and made him vulnerable to opposition. The revolution in Libya occurred when people did not get what they felt entitled to, when the regime gave the appearance of weakness, and when people were angered enough to risk the consequences of fighting.

Libyans seized the chance and began a rebellion when the regime’s inconsistencies gave the appearance of weakness. Qaddafi’s sporadic use of violence angered people while giving them hope that his inconsistency was a sign of weakness. And by the time that Qaddafi began trying to firmly put down dissent, the opposition had picked up enough power that it could face the weakening state. Qaddafi’s actions made life seem continually more unpleasant, making people angry that he was taking away things they had grown used to. The regime gave the appearance of

weakness when it hesitated in using force, and since Qaddafi had no loyal support throughout society, his appearance of weakness made him weak because he suffered defections.

## CONCLUSIONS

### THE USSR

I hypothesized that single party regimes collapse peacefully because opposition can only arise once the system has already broken. In my research, I found evidence that the USSR undermined its own system to the point where it could not withstand opposition. The USSR's strength lay in its complete control that permeated every level of society and its adaptability. When it became too afraid to use its social coalitions to repress dissent and crush opposition, and too attached to the old ways and the old leaders to make the necessary changes for survival, the regime became fossilized, and when opposition arose, the regime simply fell apart.

The USSR consistently acted in a way that undermined its own legitimacy, power, and control without being willing to adapt sufficiently to survive without them. The regime's choice of leaders after Stalin showed a resistance to change, that combined with an apparent inability to use sufficient force to crush dissent, proved fatal to the regime. The party chose Khrushchev because they could not continue in Stalin's violent footsteps, but the regime also failed to adapt to a new way of doing things. Khrushchev's criticisms of Stalin and his regime undermined the legitimacy of a regime that had based much of its power in its public infallibility, while his inability to force the party to pass reforms left the party weaker than when he came to it.

Khrushchev publicly criticized a system he could not fix, causing discontent that threatened the party. The regime returned to harsher leadership out of fear, not strength, and the choice of Brezhnev as a leader reflected that. The party was trying to cling to the old ways when it was

already too weak to continue in them. Brezhnev's shows of force kept the regime afloat, but the period of stagnation under his leadership weakened the regime further.

The choice of Andropov and Chernenko as leaders show the party clinging to the old ways, their choice of leaders who were dying of old ages shows that the party had lost its ability to adapt, and was favoring individuals and old habits over the machine like apparatus that made the party strong.

Gorbachev was chosen when it was becoming painfully obvious that the party had to change, but though Gorbachev's reforms were too drastic for the party, even he was not interested in changing the system. His reforms were too weak to begin, and once they made it through the party, they were significantly watered down. The half-hearted attempts at modernization and liberalization, stifled by the bureaucracy, were more detrimental to the system than outright oppression. They showed a weakness in the leadership, and were not strong enough to achieve the goals of a more prosperous economy and more employment that would have kept the system afloat. They failed to offer a viable alternative to communism, or to improve the current system enough to allow it to remain in place.

The USSR made concessions that showed weakness, ignored uprisings instead of repressing them, and ultimately showed themselves to be too brittle to continue to rule. The USSR's concessions show they had lost the will to govern. They were too afraid, too old, and too brittle to use their state apparatus to rid themselves of opposition. The Soviets grew too inflexible to keep up with the times, and too old and frightened to use the necessary force to keep themselves in power. They irreparably damaged the system that had made them strong, and when opposition

arose, they collapsed because they were incapable of doing anything else. My research supports my hypothesis that single party regimes collapse peacefully because the system is already broken.

### LIBYA

I hypothesized that personalist regimes are overthrown violently because they allow no avenue for peaceful political input, push people to the point where they are willing to face violence, and lack the social coalitions to repress the dissent they inevitably create. Qaddafi supporters were loyal to him for what they could get out of it, so he was forced to allow corruption to keep supporters, and the corruption and erratic took away legitimacy from his regime, and continually created opposition that had to be put down violently, in turn creating more opposition.

Qaddafi alienated the bureaucracy by continually overruling them and threatening to disband them, alienated the military by killing high ranking and respected leaders who opposed him and by threatening to replace them with an armed society, alienated educators by threatening them with violence if they did not teach his book, alienated business people by interfering in the economy, alienated religious leaders by putting himself before religion, and alienated all his people with his erratic violent punishments of dissent. Qaddafi's actions meant that he had no strong, loyal support base throughout society that would support him and work to put down dissent. Because of this, he was continually forced to use violence against all the sectors of society that could have given him the legitimacy and support to put down dissent. The

bureaucracy could have given him legitimacy in putting down dissent, the military could support him in use of force and in maintaining order, business people could have supported him, and educators and religious leaders could have taught ideology that would make Qaddafi appear to be a legitimate leader. If Qaddafi had these social coalitions backing him, his decisions would have gone deep into every level of society, and his opposers would not be facing one man and his few friends, but all of society. But by continually violently forcing people to obey his every edict, and handing irrational, arbitrary punishments, Qaddafi alienated those who could have supported him in repressing dissent. Qaddafi was therefore forced to use violence to repress dissent, which in turn created more dissent, which escalated to where he could not put it down, and he was violently overthrown. This supports my hypothesis that personalist regimes collapse violently because they social coalitions to put down the dissent they create.

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