

continually evokes strong misgivings and protest within the Party. As indicated above, Gorbachev has resisted pressures so far to clamp down on growing freedom of expression, but he has been obliged to appeal to the intellectuals to observe more responsibility and to concentrate on the theme of the successful implementation of *perestroika*.

It is claimed that there can be no prohibited topics in the media (*Pravda*, 5 April 1988). While this is largely the case, and the powers of censorship are greatly reduced, the press does tend to avoid critical comment on certain subjects, such as foreign policy, the KGB, the military, Gorbachev and high government and Party officials. All press editors are appointed by the Party apparatus. Unofficial journals are more numerous now but still face legal uncertainty, constant harassment and shortages of paper and equipment.

Democratization, launched earlier in the context of economic *perestroika* with the emphasis on workers' participation in the self-management of enterprises, has in the economic sector, apart from the gains achieved by the big miners' strikes in 1989, suffered from the retarding effect of the structural difficulties of the transition to the new system of economic management. In contrast, as mentioned further below, the significant changes taking place in the political system represent important gains for democratization.

Towards a New Political System

As was evident in the remarkable openness of the first short session of the new Congress of People's Deputies in June 1989 and in the continuing meetings of the new Supreme Soviet which the Congress elected, the critical spirit of *glasnost* and the principle of democratization obtained their first dramatic institutional impulse. This system of political representation, stemming from the new parliamentary and constitutional arrangements promoted by Gorbachev, is to be completed shortly by the "revitalization" of representative institutions at the republican and local levels in elections that are also to feature multi-candidate choice. This latter feature will, as in the outcome of the 1989 elections to the central parliament, undoubtedly assist Gorbachev in his continuing task of weeding out at all levels the old guard of the Party and of constructing a leaner, more efficient, and representative governing structure. In conformity with the decentralizing