

bureaucratic obstruction and a lack of interest on the part of peasants comfortably integrated in collectivized farming. In this general perspective the entrepreneurial advantages of economic reform so far would seem to be limited to what can be derived from the modestly growing number of joint ventures with Western countries. The Soviet aim of a convertible rouble also becomes a more remote prospect, and, in general, unless Western aid can make a substantial difference, the whole complex of problems just mentioned will also substantially delay the emergence of the economic infrastructure needed to enable the Soviet Union to realize greatly expanded trading relations with the West and the advantages expected from the Soviet economy's integration in the world economy.

## 2. Political, Social and Cultural Reform

As the process of restructuring ran up against wide-spread inertia and conservatism, attitudes to be found in the public at large as well as in the governing, economic, and party institutions, Gorbachev began to place increasing emphasis on the wider application of *glasnost* and on the democratization of society. He has continued to defend the need for greater freedom but has had to take into account the strong and open criticism of these trends at Party meetings in Moscow and throughout the country during 1989 and in recent weeks. As he himself has complained, he has had to contend with a society characterized by a backward and authoritarian political culture in which Soviet citizens have had no say, and to which most of them are apathetically accustomed. At the same time he cannot be sure that a new system designed to draw them into effective participation in the decision-making process might not become an open-ended process, the results of which could lead to the end of the Communist Party itself.

### Glasnost and Democratization

In encouraging *glasnost's* expanding role and the "new thinking" he is also promoting, Gorbachev has appealed to intellectuals and artists to take a key part in producing the mental climate favourable to social criticism and innovation. In their journalistic, scholarly and literary writings and discussions they are responding with an enthusiasm and range of political, cultural and moral thinking and questioning that