

COMMUNIST

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cialism, which, he adds, may also not be lost.

"The theory has not failed, only the people implementing it," he said, adding that the idea of communism as "community-ism" is very much alive.

He said that the Soviet Union was only a socialist country in its economics but not in its politics.

"Socialism is still in its experimental stage," he said. "Socialism may not be lost. People aren't going to give up the right to an apartment, the right to a job."

Hemmingson said he hopes the Soviet government will not allow the system to become a

disaster, as it could turn into a primitive capitalistic system where workers are forced to work in sweat shops.

Additionally, if the Soviet government is able to "seize the reigns of government (like they've done here), then people will have a long, hard struggle to regain their rights."

Hemmingson said the recent events in the Soviet Union have demoralized some members of the Party in the United States, but the Party is still drawing new members.

"I'm an optimist," he said, explaining he has faith in people's judgment to recognize the benefits of socialism. "We have a lot of faith in people. If you don't have faith in people you really wouldn't make a good Communist."

Hemmingson blames the demise of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union in part on the leaders' neglect to include the populace in decision-making and general mismanagement in the country. He also believes the U.S. and Soviet arms race was a contributing factor.

He said he believes the arms race was probably the biggest culprit because it caused a fabricated nuclear threat that kept the Soviets in fear and from demanding a different form of government.

Moreover, he said, the Americans are also indirectly responsible for the failed Soviet system because they contributed to the arms race by not questioning it.

"The real enemies of socialism always knew the arms race was a fraud," he said. "(The political left and others) suckered into the notion that jobs were good...a paycheck (to help build the military) was all that mattered."

"We were making plans in 1945 to bomb them (Soviets) off

the face of the earth," he said. "They never were an enemy. Even under Stalin they wanted peace."

Despite the demise of the Communist Party, Hemmingson believes that American capitalism is not an exemplary model to follow, nor should Americans gloat over the recent events in the Soviet Union.

"The struggle for democracy here in the U.S. is much more important than the struggle for democracy in socialist countries."

"Soviet people have more control of their government now than Americans can even think of," he said referring to Soviet citizens who blocked tanks during the attempted August coup as a case in point.

Hemmingson added that if Americans wanted, they too could change their form of government and improve living conditions in this country.

"Americans are the real losers because we pay the bill of

imperialism," he said, adding that U.S. involvement in other areas of the world causes Americans' standard of living to decline when Americans spend money on the military and not at home.

According to Hemmingson, capitalism is inherently undemocratic.

"Socialism, although it might fail ... is by definition a democratic system," he said.

He said the Communist Party in this country will continue to use legal means to try and change the political system.

Specifically, he said the Party plans to work to keep President George Bush from getting elected in 1992 while supporting other like-minded candidates or parties.

"We work within the system to get people to oppose the system," he said. "We have to work together and that's where it's at."

To illustrate his point he offered a suggestion.

"If we surrounded Washington, D.C. with 10 million people, I think they would listen to us."



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SOVIET

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The coup was an attempt by conservative hardliners of the Communist Party to restore the old ways of the government to Russia. The day following President Mikhail Gorbachev's imprisonment in his home by the conservatives, he was to have signed a treaty with the former republics of the Soviet Union, recognizing their independence.

According to Political Science Professor Michael Huelshoff, the Conservative Party was afraid things were getting out of their control.

"This treaty was seen as a threat to their power," he said.

On the second day of the coup, Lukanova and her husband went to the center of Moscow to listen to the speeches that the progressives were making. Lukanova was surprised to see that so many people were of the "same spirit" and were uniting to protest.

"My father called to tell me that it would be very dangerous to go to the demonstrations because the soldiers would put us in prison, which shows how the older generations knew a lot about the prison camps and so on," Lukanova said. "We were afraid but he was even more so."

During those two frightening days of the coup attempt, Lukanova and her husband joined the thousands of other protesters in an actual ring around the Russian Parliament, protecting it from the armed Conservative soldiers.

"They couldn't attack the Parliament unless they wanted a sea of blood," Lukanova said.

On the second night of the coup, the soldiers did try and attack, making this the most violent night since it started. Three people were killed

and at least 20 were injured.

Since the failed coup attack, Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin have been working together, with Yeltsin having the bulk of the power.

Lukanova supports the policy of Yeltsin and likes that he is surrounded by intellectual advisers and well-known, honest professionals, she said.

In contrast, Gorbachev was betrayed by his advisers, who imprisoned him in his home during the coup attack, Lukanova said.

"That was a good lesson for him because he now sees that his friends aren't the KGB and the armed force but they are the radicals who actually saved his life (during the coup).

"Gorbachev was afraid to change from a Communist to a capitalist society," Lukanova said. "Yeltsin is not afraid."

Lukanova has faith in Yeltsin. However, if things don't change within next few months, she believes he will no longer be in power.

With ten of the Soviet republics declaring their independence, both Lukanova and Huelshoff believe that the independent republics should work together as a union.

Lukanova believes the republic's political realm should be independent, however, she thinks the republics should have the same economic policy.

"We need each other to survive," Lukanova said.

Similarly, Huelshoff feels the republics need to unite for economic reasons.

"This is a time of extreme transition in the Soviet Union," Huelshoff said. "I am predicting that in the future in the republics there will be looser political situations and somewhat tighter economic relations."

VOTE

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ing for special rights for the homosexual community.

"These are not special rights, these are rights that everybody has but us," Dockstader said. "The minute someone finds out you're lesbian or gay, then we can be thrown out of our jobs irregardless of our service and they can say to our faces 'it's because you're gay or lesbian.'"

While most of the testimony at Mondays night's meeting centers on the issue of gay and lesbian rights, one issue that will inevitably lead to more strife is Morrisette's repeated request

that Walters, Schanz and Berg resign. He said he was outraged by the council member's blatant violation of the public trust when they conspired by private computer messages to vote out a liberal affirmative action specialist and replace him with a longtime anti-gay rights advocate.

Morisette called Schanz "a religious zealot with an agenda." He also stated that Walters has long been supported by the Oregon Citizens Alliance, a staunchly conservative group proposing a state law that would declare homosexuality a perversion.

That group is leading a recall effort against Morrisette,

who said both Schanz, Walters and Berg have violated the public trust and that the council needs to go through a "cleansing" process, either by resignation or recall, before it has regained the public's trust.

Berg apologized for using the computer message system to discuss public business, though he did say the use of the computer messages was legal. Berg said he was not answerable to Morrisette, but to the Springfield people, and "if a large enough segment of the populace has no confidence in me because of my actions then I'll resign."

He said he had heard from no one as of late Tuesday.