the service of third-world poverty, stood at a slightly uncomfortable halfway house on the road to globalism. Since then the music has followed the issues. "World music" records are selling more and more; artists from Mali (Salif Keita) or Panama (Ruben Blades) are becoming stars. Amnesty International's Human Rights Now tour . . . went to places most "world tours" ignore, such as India, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and Argentina; and it was a tour where a Senegalese singer, Youssou N'Dour, could share the billing with Bruce Springsteen. These influences are making rock richer as a musical form.

They will probably also keep it political. When different cultures make contact, political sparks will always fly. Musicians of the third world, besides, are not prisoners of the teenage record-buying market; they are free to write about aspects of life besides sex (thinly disguised as love); and that means politics. In all, it would have made Bob Marley, the greatest figure in the history of political pop and the third world's first home-grown superstar, a happy man.

READING REVIEW

1. Before the 1980s what did rock music focus on? Why?
2. How has involvement in politics changed rock music? Give reasons for your answer.
3. How do you think the writer of the excerpt feels about the involvement of rock musicians in politics? Explain your answer.

133 RUSSIA AFTER COMMUNISM

In the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the people of the former Soviet republics struggled to build democracy and a capitalist economy in their newly independent countries. The largest and most powerful of the Soviet republics was Russia, which for more than 70 years dominated the rest of the Soviet Union. In 1996, Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski visited Moscow, the capital of Russia and former capital of the Soviet Union. In this excerpt Kapuscinski reports on changes that have taken place in the city since the Communists lost power. As you read the excerpt, consider whether most Russians seem more interested in rights and freedoms or their standard of living.

Once again in Moscow after three years. . . . In the course of the past decade, the city has lived through three different epochs: First, that of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. At that time, in the second half

of the 1980s, Moscow was transformed into a huge debating club. . . . For the first time, there was freedom of speech. One could finally talk, express opinions. And one could write the truth. . . . Today in the cramped, cluttered apartments of intellectuals, against walls, on windowsills, on top of closets, lean stacks of dusty clippings and books from that era, like so much abandoned and sad-looking military debris in a field where a battle was once fought.

Then came the second period—the dissolution of the Soviet Union, capitalism's first steps. People in the West are surprised that so many Russians don't like capitalism. But there is nothing extraordinary about this. The capitalism that came to Russia at the start of the 1990s looked different from the one constructed in Europe several centuries ago. The capitalism of Holland or Switzerland was laboriously created by the industrious and thrifty bourgeois . . . for whom perseverance, honesty, and modesty were religious commandments, acts of faith.

But the advance guard of capitalism that arrived in Moscow was armies of speculators, barons of the black market, gangs of drug dealers, armed aggressive racketeers, brutal, ruthless, powerful mafias. People were terrified. It is not capitalism per se but the form in which it first appeared that supplied Communists with fresh followers. I remember walking around Moscow with my friend Syoma. The city was cold and dirty. . . . The squares and the streets near train and subway stations overflowed with vendors peddling rubbish, anything to make a living. In the clumsy stalls were bottles of whiskey, packs of chewing gum, piles of sunglasses. That is what the new regime offered the citizens of this great but impoverished city. Syoma, depressed and resigned, told me how twice he had tried to open a small shop and twice had to give up in the face of the mafia's demands, which he was unable to satisfy. He barely got away with his life! This dark and dangerous epoch came to an end in the fall of 1993 with the dramatic and bloody confrontation . . . between the President and Parliament.

That event marks the beginning of the present epoch of slow, difficult, and still shaky stabilization. Shaky, because . . . the Communists are still powerful, and the country's industrial production has fallen 50% in recent years. Yet at the same time, something has changed in Moscow. The city is better maintained. There are more streetlights. The mounds of garbage have disappeared. . . . There is reconstruction, mending, painting. The work is being done largely by foreign firms—Turkish, Italian, Ukrainian. . . .

So the appearance of buildings is changing. The passersby also have changed. Earlier, a large proportion of the people on Moscow's streets were the inhabitants of the countryside who traveled to the capital to shop. The Soviet Union was a superpower where one could attempt to buy something in only one, perhaps two, cities, and primarily in Moscow. Millions thus scraped together the funds for a plane, train, or bus ticket—anything, just to get to the capital

and take up position in some endless line in the hope of securing either a pair of shoes or a shirt, a jacket or a coat. Everything was considered booty, treasure. Now all that is over—transportation is expensive, and one can buy locally the same things as in Moscow. . . .

A different Moscow, a different Russia. Above all, different people—in their attitudes, in their ways of thinking. I very much wanted to see Moscow on May 1 [May Day, a traditional Communist holiday]. That day's observances have always been an important event; there nature and scale were always a good barometer of the country's situation. In years past, preparations lasted a long time, and hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, paraded before Lenin's mausoleum in solemn formations.

I went out in the morning. The city was empty. People had all ready left the previous day for the weekend. Those whom I did encounter—whole families—were also in the process of leaving. I asked a policeman where the celebration, in which President Yeltsin was to participate, would take place. He thought for a moment, then answered hesitatingly that he wasn't certain: probably on Tverskaya Street.

A light rain was falling. A small crowd—perhaps several thousand—had gathered in front of the city council building. The atmosphere was one of a picnic. No one noticed that at a certain moment Yeltsin appeared. He read a charge to the labor unions that they make sure that people receive their wages on time. Workers don't get their wages for months on end—it is the bane of their existence. Some of the assembled listened, others bought ice cream, Coca-Cola. Yeltsin danced a Cossack dance with a girl from some folk ensemble and, drenched to the bone—for by then the rain was coming down harder—withdrew to the city council building. The crowd had dispersed even earlier. All that remained on the square were several policemen and some Coca-Cola vendors. So I went nearby to the statue of Marx, where the Communists were to stage their demonstration.

The Communists decided to show their muscle. The loudspeaker (of terrible quality) installed on the shaky, old-fashioned truck leading their procession croaked the *Internationale* [the Communist anthem] at deafening volume. . . . Not much else happened.

In the afternoon I went to the Arbat. The Arbat is a street in old Moscow, a traditional point for rendezvous and promenades. . . . There were many people about, especially the young. I noticed that in one spot the pedestrian flow was slowing down, stopping, gathering into a crowd. I approached. Four gentlemen were pacing up and down the sidewalk—Lenin, Hitler, Gorbachev, and Yeltsin. Naturally these were impersonators, but so well matched and made up that for a moment the apparition gave passersby the illusion they had stepped into the realm of history and world politics. For $5, one could have one's picture taken with the personality of choice. All this took place in laughter, merriment, and serenity. People most

wanted to be photographed with Lenin who, even without this gig, had plenty to keep him busy. He is often booked by nightclubs to pose with scantily dressed women. . . .

In the deluge of information about the daily life of this country, one thing is lost: a tremendous social revolution is taking place in Russia; a still weak and contradictory yet nevertheless "normal" society is coming into being here, a society of people with "normal" expectations and aspirations; this country is ruled by a new élite (or a new class), composed of varying groups with varying interests yet with a common desire to maintain stability.

When I was leaving for Moscow, a Warsaw friend urged me to find out about the new concept of Russia, to ask Russians what they regard this concept to be. But I found no volunteers for such a discussion. Conversations revolved around making money, buying a new car, a better apartment. This gold-rush atmosphere, the sudden *potential* for everything, this interpretation of freedom to mean simply the chance to acquire goods, is a source of great divisiveness. For the table at which Russian capitalism is banqueting is still small; there aren't many places around it, but everyone wants to pull up a chair. And it is over the right to take part in the feast that the battle is being waged.

READING REVIEW

1. What three phases in Russia's movement toward capitalism and democracy does the author identify?
2. According to the author, why do many Russians not like capitalism?
3. Do you think that Russia will return to Communism? Explain why or why not. Support you answer using evidence from the reading.

134 YOUNG AMERICANS IN VIETNAM

In 1973 the United States ended its long and costly involvement in the war against communism in Southeast Asia by withdrawing its troops from South Vietnam. The communists soon merged North and South Vietnam to form the Republic of Vietnam. Relations between the United States and Vietnam remained strained for years after. By the early 1990s, however, tensions had eased as Vietnam sought to improve its economy by allowing a limited amount of free enterprise. Companies from the United States and other capitalist nations rushed to do business there. In the following excerpt, writer Michael Paterniti observes