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The 1991 August Putsch, in Historical Photographs

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On Aug. 19, 1991, hard-line members of the Communist Party attempted to wrest control of the Soviet Union from Soviet President and General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev. The grab for power was partially in response to talks Gorbachev had begun with the leaders of the Soviet Union's most influential republics, with a view to offering them greater powers and independence. Today, the event is considered to have been pivotal in the fall of the USSR.

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