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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D. C. 20505

22 April 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: The President  
The Vice President  
Secretary of State  
Secretary of Defense  
Counsellor to the President  
Chief of Staff to the President  
Deputy Chief of Staff to the President  
Assistant to the President for  
National Security Affairs

SUBJECT: Soviet Political Succession: Institutions,  
People and Policies

1. With Suslov's death, Kirilenko fading away, and the inception of the Chernenko boom, I tasked our Soviet analysts to evaluate the prospects for the Soviet succession.

2. In recent weeks Chernenko appears to have peaked too soon, with Andropov emerging as the present favorite. Ustinov has the military clout and seems to be lining up with Andropov, but may be positioning himself for partnership or even competition. Under pressure, forced to stick our necks out on a dark horse, we pick Grishin, the 67 year old Moscow party boss and fourth youngest member of the Politburo, and Gorbachev, at 51 the youngest Politburo member, who is Party Secretary for Agriculture, a post which Khrushchev held on his way to the top. Brezhnev also was deeply involved in agricultural matters on his way up.

3. If I had to bet money, I'd take Andropov on the nose and Gorbachev across the board.

4. This paper analyzes the influence of various Soviet institutions, the policy issues which might be influential in the outcome, and the policy implications of possible resolutions.

  
William J. Casey

Attachment

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