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The emergence of Yuriy Andropov as the leading candidate to succeed Brezhnev has provided considerable speculation in the Western press about his personality and policy views. Much of the press commentary on Andropov, however, has tended to oversimplify those views and even to misread the man.

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The succession process will significantly politicize policy differences within the Soviet leadership. Various contenders will seek to exploit issues facing the Politburo for personal and factional advantage. Given the seriousness and complexity of the problems a new leadership will have to face, debate and conflict over policy are likely to be particularly sharp and intense.

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The evidence concerning a possible Brezhnev retirement, while inconclusive, does suggest a growing disparity between his formal authority and actual power, a lessened ability to protect himself, and greater incentives for other Politburo members to move against him. While the

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timing of his departure cannot be predicted, his retirement or "elevation" to an honorific post may be announced at the next plenary of the CPSU Central Committee. 25X1

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Prospects for Brezhnev's Rule and His Succession 47 25X1

Andropov's election to the Secretariat in May 1982 was a turning point in Soviet politics, ending the prolonged stability that was based on Brezhnev's political strength. Now Brezhnev and his protege, Chernenko, are engaged in a political struggle with Andropov, and the outcome is uncertain. 25X1

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Leadership Succession in the USSR

Perspective: Beyond Brezhnev—Personalities and Policies 25X1

Yuriy Andropov's election to the Secretariat in May strongly suggests that the succession process in the Kremlin has truly begun. The leadership of the Soviet Communist Party has changed only four times in 65 years, and each time under dramatically different domestic and international conditions. Accordingly, precedents are fragile and the uncertainties great. The advanced age and poor health of many members of the current Politburo—the oldest in Soviet history—have added an element of unpredictability, moreover, that was not present in past succession struggles.

In our estimation, the advantage in the present contest has shifted at least twice within the past seven months—due largely to the impact that death and illness have had on the existing balance of power. The death of senior secretary Mikhail Suslov in January enabled Brezhnev to push his protege, Konstantin Chernenko, forward at the expense of Andrey Kirilenko, who previously had been the leading contender. The subsequent illness of Kirilenko, in turn, seemed to give impetus to the anti-Chernenko forces, who threw their support to Andropov, the current front-runner. In short, the poor health of key Soviet leaders, reportedly including even Andropov and Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov, complicates our efforts to declare a "projected winner" in the current succession race.

The identity of the next party chief could have an important effect on Soviet actions, but probably more vital from the US perspective is the context in which the succession will occur. Even if we could positively identify the next leader, his present views, insofar as we could discern them, probably would give us at best a general sense of the direction Soviet policy would take in the immediate post-Brezhnev period. These views probably would be modified as he attempted to gain support and even further altered by the broader perspective of his new post and the exigencies of international events.

Whatever his personal policy preferences, no new leader will initially have the power to push through a comprehensive package of domestic and foreign policy programs. The new General Secretary's colleagues, acting in their own interests, will attempt to restrict his power and probably prevent him from becoming Chief of State—a post Brezhnev acquired only after 13 years as party leader. As in the early days of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev eras, the General Secretary is likely to share the spotlight, particularly in foreign affairs, with the President and Premier.

Although the immediate post-Brezhnev period probably will be marked by a general continuity in policy, an examination of the range of views now being expressed in the leadership—the topic of one of the following articles—suggests that conflict over key issues, exacerbated by the succession struggle, could in time lead to some important shifts. The most pressing problems appear to be in economic policy, where the current investment strategy already seems to have aroused opposition within the leadership:

- Some reallocation of resources almost certainly will be undertaken after Brezhnev goes, with agriculture—in the absence of its principal patron—becoming a likely target for cuts. Previous cuts in investment may be restored. Even the defense budget, virtually sacrosanct since the 1960s, probably will come under some attack. Given the momentum of current weapon programs and a new leader's need to obtain the support of the military and security services, however, reductions in the growth of military spending seem unlikely in the near term.

- Changes in the economic management structure might be undertaken, despite bureaucratic opposition, because of concern over declining growth rates. An effort might be made to place functionally related and overlapping ministries under more centralized management, as Brezhnev and other party leaders have proposed, while at the same time decentralizing operational authority along lines recently approved for the agro-industrial sector.

Soviet foreign policy is less likely to be politicized than domestic policy, which has a more immediate impact on individual political fortunes. While the foreign policy pursued by a successor regime will be largely determined by the international environment at the time, some areas of debate already are evident among Brezhnev's likely heirs:

- Soviet leaders have shown varying degrees of enthusiasm for Brezhnev's efforts to improve relations with the United States, with some—notably Chernenko—appearing far more supportive than others, such as Kirilenko.

- The lessons of Poland seem to have been assessed differently by various leaders. Chernenko has pointed to the Polish leadership's loss of contact with the people, Andropov to its ideological deviations, and Kirilenko to its lack of vigilance against Western intrigues. The post-Brezhnev Politburo could well be at odds over how best to maintain Soviet control over Eastern Europe.
- Soviet leaders also could differ over how seriously to pursue an improvement in relations with Beijing. Although some leaders may be eager to "play the China card," others—Kirilenko among them—appear even more mistrustful of China than of the United States.

Given the advanced age of the present leadership, many members of the Politburo will be replaced in the late 1980s by a new generation of leaders whose policies are even more difficult to predict. Although they have discretionary authority in implementing the Politburo's domestic policies, these officials hold positions—in the Central Committee apparatus and regional party organizations—that provide little involvement in foreign policy.

What little evidence we have of this younger group's views—through speeches, articles, and limited contacts with foreigners—reveals no clearly dominant orientation. Although some appear to favor a more orthodox tack while others lean in the reformist direction, there is no apparent consensus regarding the direction future policies should take.

Their eventual policy course will be determined both by domestic politicking and by their perception of Soviet problems and opportunities. These policies, moreover, are likely to reflect a degree of political compromise and to defy easy characterization. Such a regime, for example, could undertake some decentralization of economic management, while at the same time tightening the enforcement of labor discipline—a move that would contain elements of both the reformist and orthodox approaches.

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Brezhnev's Political Standing

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Two recent personnel changes—the promotion of KGB Chairman Yuriy Andropov to the party Secretariat in May 1982 and his replacement in the KGB by an apparent compromise candidate—indicate that Brezhnev has been unable to dictate key succession-related decisions. As a result, Brezhnev's leadership now seems much more vulnerable to challenge, especially if his health deteriorates. Although there is no evidence that his policies are under strong attack, Brezhnev and his proteges will have to be alert to protect their political positions.

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The impetus for the Andropov promotion may have come from the leadership's growing apprehension about the increased status of Brezhnev's principal protege, Konstantin Chernenko. Chernenko reportedly has never gained the respect of Defense Minister Ustinov, Foreign Minister Gromyko, and Andropov, and the leadership in general probably did not regard him as a threat—he seemed an unlikely successor to Brezhnev, especially in view of the strong position of senior secretary Andrey Kirilenko. In recent months, however Chernenko's advancement by Brezhnev to fill the number-two spot in the Secretariat (vacant after Suslov's death in January)

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apparently mobilized the opposition to Chernenko.

By transferring Andropov to the Secretariat, Chernenko's opponents have placed a major obstacle in his path and established a new leading contender to succeed Brezhnev. This development is notable also as the first major political setback for Brezhnev since he consolidated his position in the late 1960s—and one that may ultimately endanger that position.

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The Threat From Andropov

Brezhnev is likely to have recognized that opposition to Chernenko could increase his own vulnerability. Although Brezhnev may have seen merit in having an "alternative heir" in the Secretariat, Andropov probably would not have been his choice.

Moreover, Brezhnev has always prevented the transfer of Politburo members into this key institution and kept those already in the Secretariat from amassing sufficient individual power to threaten him. Andropov has been on good terms with Brezhnev and supported his foreign policy line—factors that may have kept Brezhnev from fighting the promotion.

Brezhnev, nevertheless, knows that Andropov—with his KGB connection and his potential appeal within the Politburo—could become a rallying point for those who believe the party's interests would be best served by his "retirement." Brezhnev may be relying on Chernenko, who now appears to have some oversight responsibility for the KGB, to protect his interests. His inability to install a candidate less well equipped to challenge him, however, suggests that Brezhnev's authority within the Politburo has eroded.

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The Uncertain Allegiance of Fedorchuk

The selection of Ukrainian KGB Chairman Vitaliy Fedorchuk to replace Andropov as KGB chief reinforces our impression that Brezhnev's power has waned. Brezhnev needed a strong protege in this post, one who would isolate Andropov from his previous associations and thus reduce Brezhnev's vulnerability to a potential coup. Several candidates would have met this need.

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If the Politburo wanted a career officer as chairman, the KGB's First Deputy Chairmen, Georgiy Tsinev and Viktor Chebrikov, should have been the two leading candidates. (Tsinev is known to have, and Chebrikov probably has, ties to Brezhnev.) Alternatively, Brezhnev could have advanced a political protege from the Politburo or from one of the principal regional party organizations to the KGB to guard his position. Fedorchuk, however, does not fall in either category. In fact, the new KGB head lacks both the political status within the party elite and the professional standing within the KGB that would have made

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him a likely first choice on any list. His selection, thus, strongly suggests that he was a compromise choice.

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The selection of Fedorchuk probably was not totally objectionable to Brezhnev. He apparently was professionally associated with Brezhnev's friend, Tsinev,

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As a career KGB official, however, Fedorchuk has had a long association with Andropov—one that was probably more direct than his association with Brezhnev.

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Thus, Fedorchuk is probably less useful to Brezhnev than other candidates for KGB chief might have been. Having career ties with both Brezhnev and Andropov reduces the certainty of his loyalty to Brezhnev in the event of a challenge, and his lack of influence in Moscow reduces his ability to prevent such a challenge. He probably will be unable to cut Andropov off from his KGB associations. Brezhnev's remaining time in office, moreover, is limited, and this gives Fedorchuk little incentive to protect him from a conspiracy in the Politburo.

Implications

Taken together, the two appointments suggest that the Politburo is denying Brezhnev the power to designate his successor as party leader and possibly even to determine the timing of his departure. His authority in policy matters does not yet seem seriously affected—as demonstrated at the May plenum, when he won approval of the food program he had initiated, and by the recent movement on arms control negotiations.

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he could be forced to yield to pressures to relinquish that position. His colleagues might make this more palatable to Brezhnev, however, by allowing him to retain his more ceremonial post as President and his membership in the Politburo. Such an arrangement would give him some influence, at least in the Politburo's selection of his successor as general secretary—and this influence would make his protege, Chernenko, a stronger contender than he would be if Brezhnev were no longer on the scene.

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Key Players in the Succession

Yuriy Andropov, 68, has been a Politburo member since 1973. In May 1982 he also became a member of the Secretariat—a status that he had previously held from 1962 to 1967—and relinquished his post as KGB chief. Andropov's career has given him considerable experience in both foreign and domestic affairs. During his 15 years as KGB chief, he was responsible for implementing Soviet policies on human rights and political dissent, as well as for the USSR's foreign intelligence apparatus.

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In 1944, Andropov began his party career as a second secretary of the Petrozavodsk City Party Committee. Three years later he was elected second secretary of the Karelian party Central Committee—a position he held until 1951, when he began working in the Central Committee apparatus in Moscow. Andropov moved to the Foreign Ministry in 1953 and that same year was posted to the Embassy in Budapest, where he advanced from Charge d'Affaires to Ambassador.

Yuriy Andropov Sovfoto/Eastfoto ©

Konstantin Chernenko Liaison ©

When he returned to Moscow in 1957 he became chief of the Central Committee's Department for Liaison with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries. After his appointment as KGB Chief in 1967, he was elected a candidate member of the Politburo.

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Andropov appears to be a "moderate" in the Soviet political context. Over the years he has generally been more supportive of Brezhnev's foreign policy, especially detente and arms control, than some other Soviet leaders. On the other hand, as KGB chief he was successful in neutralizing the dissident movement in the USSR by imprisoning or "hospitalizing" its major leaders or by allowing selected members to emigrate. His relatively sophisticated approach to such problems suggests that, as General Secretary, he would be a tough, resourceful adversary.

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Konstantin Chernenko, 70, has been a secretary of the CPSU Central Committee since March 1976 and a full member of the Politburo since November 1978. Chernenko began his party career in 1941, when he was elected a secretary of the Krasnoyarsk Kray Party Committee. Two years later he moved to Moscow, where he attended the Higher School of Party Organizers. After graduation in 1945, he was elected a secretary of the Penza Oblast (RSFSR) Party Committee.

From 1948 to 1956 Chernenko was chief of the Propaganda and Agitation Department of the Moldavian party Central Committee, serving briefly under Brezhnev, who was first secretary in Moldavia during 1950-52. He was transferred to Moscow as a sector chief at the national level in 1956—shortly after Brezhnev's promotion to CPSU secretary. In 1965 Chernenko became head of the General Department of the CPSU Central Committee, a position he still holds. He became a candidate member of the Politburo in 1977.

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Chernenko has ranked second only to Brezhnev in his support for improved relations with the United States and for arms limitation, and he has been well ahead of his colleagues in warning about the consequences of nuclear war. On domestic issues, he has stressed the need to improve the lot of the Soviet consumer and called for more attention to letters from the rank and file and for greater "democracy" within the party.

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Andrey Kirilenko, 75, has been a member of the Politburo since 1962 and of the Secretariat since 1966. His association with Brezhnev goes back to the late 1930s when both were local party officials in the Ukraine. Kirilenko worked as an aircraft design engineer until he switched to party work in 1938. During the early years of World War II, he served on the

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Andrey Kirilenko *Neues Deutschland* ©

Dmitriy Ustinov *Sovetskiy Voin* ©

Military Council of the 18th Army of the Southern Front, while Brezhnev was the Council's deputy chief. Kirilenko was first secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast Party Committee (Obkom) from 1950 to 1955 and of the Sverdlovsk Obkom during 1955-56.

In 1956 Kirilenko moved to Moscow to serve as a member of the RSFSR Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee. He became a candidate member of the Presidium (now Politburo) in 1957, probably as a reward for his support of CPSU First Secretary Nikita Khrushchev in his clash with the "antiparty group." In 1961 Kirilenko's career suffered an unexplained setback when he was removed from the Presidium. He made a quick comeback six months later, however, when he rejoined the Presidium as a full member and became a first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Bureau.

Kirilenko has primary responsibility for the supervision of nonmilitary heavy industry and has considerable experience in international Communist Party affairs. On foreign policy issues, he has been equivocal in his support of Brezhnev's overtures to the United States, less optimistic than Brezhnev about the prospects for resolving Sino-Soviet differences, and less tolerant than most leaders toward East European deviations from Moscow's guidance and direction. On domestic issues, Kirilenko has been fairly consistent in his advocacy of a strong defense posture, strict cultural and ideological discipline, and the preferential development of heavy industry. 25X1

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A veteran manager of the Soviet armaments and space programs, *Marshal Dmitriy Ustinov,* now 73, became a full member of the Politburo in March 1976 and Minister of Defense one month later. He had previously served as the CPSU secretary for defense industry and a candidate member of the Politburo since 1965. 25X1

Ustinov graduated from the Leningrad Military Mechanical Academy in 1934. During World War II, he served as People's Commissar for Armaments (later Minister of the Armaments Industry); he held this position until 1953, when he became head of the newly created Ministry of Defense Industry. From 1957 until 1963 he was deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and probably also head of the Military-Industrial Commission (VPK), which coordinates Soviet defense industry production. 25X1

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The Defense Minister has been associated with the military-industrial complex for more than 40 years and obtained general officer rank in the war, but he has not been a line officer, and his Ministry appointment may have been opposed by the professional

officer corps. His policies, however, have not diverged noticeably from those of his predecessor, Marshal Grechko, or from what might have been expected if a professional military officer still headed the Ministry. Ustinov has upheld the interests of the professional military without deprecating Brezhnev's commitment to detente and arms control. He also has been able to use his position as head of the military to vote its stock on sensitive political issues—without raising some of the fears that such actions by a professional officer might have raised. The military traditionally has had increased influence during succession periods, and Ustinov, who commands considerable respect from other leaders, will have a strong voice in the selection of the next party chief.

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The Brezhnev Succession Process

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Since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the top leadership of the Soviet Union has changed only four times. Lenin was struck with an incapacitating illness in 1922, finally dying in 1924; Stalin died unexpectedly in 1953; Malenkov failed to consolidate his position, losing out to Khrushchev in 1955; and Khrushchev was removed by his colleagues in 1964. In each instance, the conflict among the remaining leaders over the succession led to considerable internal political turmoil.

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Current political conditions seem very different from those of the earlier succession periods; the stability and businesslike management style of the Brezhnev years has been well established. Nonetheless, the current period seems also to contain some uncertainties, and the top Soviet leaders may be increasingly concerned about the course of the Brezhnev succession.

the ambiguity over protocol rankings and leadership responsibilities point to presuccession political jockeying with the ultimate outcome in doubt.

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Recent political developments—opposition to Chernenko, the positioning of Andropov in the party Secretariat, the appointment of the low-ranking Vitaliy Fedorchuk as KGB chief,

suggest increased vulnerability to a coup. Conceivably Brezhnev might even take the unprecedented step for a Soviet leader and resign from one or more of his leadership posts, such as relinquishing the General Secretary post and retaining the Presidency. Alternatively, but less likely, Brezhnev might withdraw entirely from political life.

Regardless of whether the succession is precipitated by death, removal, or retirement, the mechanics of selection and the pattern of events will provide clues to the underlying politics of the succession process. This very process can determine the nature of the new leadership and how strong and secure that leadership becomes.

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The Main Participants

Although all major Soviet institutions are involved in a succession, only a few have a prominent role. Two bodies are publicly prominent in the succession, but in nearly all instances they have merely pro forma duties. The Communist Party Central Committee has de jure responsibility (under article 38 of the party statutes) for "electing" the party General Secretary. The Supreme Soviet "elects" its Presidium, including its Chairman—the Soviet President (under article 119 of the Constitution).

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The party Politburo—the highest decisionmaking organ in the Soviet political system—has the de facto power to select Brezhnev's successor unless the succession reaches truly crisis proportions. It is likely, therefore, that Brezhnev's 12 colleagues on the Politburo (the body now has 13 full or voting members and nine candidate or nonvoting members) will come to a consensus informally on leadership assignments. Indeed, informal meetings of the most powerful Politburo members are likely to precede any formal Politburo gathering. It is likely that party Secretaries Andropov and Chernenko, Premier Nikolay Tikhonov, Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov, Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko, party Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, and Moscow party secretary Viktor Grishin would first meet to develop a consensus and thereby prevent the occurrence of serious debate in the Politburo meeting itself.

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While only the Moscow-based leaders routinely attend Politburo meetings (usually held on Thursdays in the Council of Ministers building in the Kremlin), succession-related questions would probably require that the three full Politburo members from outside Moscow—Grigory Romanov (Leningrad), Vladimir

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Shcherbitskiy (Ukraine), and Dinmukhamed Kunayev (Kazakhstan)—come to Moscow for the formal meeting, which could be convened on an urgent basis if needed. The other regional leaders and candidate Politburo members—Geydar Aliyev (Azerbaijan), Tikhon Kiselev (Belorussia), Eduard Shevardnadze (Georgia), and Sharaf Rashidov (Uzbekistan)—would be summoned for the deliberations as well. The Politburo might not even take a formal vote regarding Brezhnev's successor—formal votes are taken only occasionally when there are important disagreements.

If prior maneuvering and politicking created a consensus within the entire Politburo, the Central Committee would probably be summoned quickly to ratify the Politburo's decisions. With one major exception, discussed below, the decisions to promote, demote, or remove Politburo leaders have been presented to an obedient Central Committee by the winners of struggles previously resolved behind closed doors of the top leadership itself. Support among Central Committee members for individual leaders is unquestionably an important element in these struggles, but the Central Committee as a body has not been drawn in overtly.

The Process Delayed

It is possible, however, that serious disagreement could develop within the Politburo over a successor, drawing out the pattern of succession-related events. The convening of a Central Committee meeting, for example, might be delayed a few days as the leadership attempted to work out a deal. If the Politburo became so divided that it could not present a united slate for the Central Committee to approve, the decisionmaking process would then be thrown open to the more than 300 voting Central Committee members. (The Central Committee has about 319 full members and 151 candidate members.) Such a course is not likely in the Brezhnev succession, because it is in the leadership's interest to settle things beforehand, but it did happen in 1957 when a Politburo majority sought to remove Khrushchev from office. (The Central Committee backed Khrushchev against his opponents, and five full members of the Politburo were removed from office.)

If the succession process were precipitated by Brezhnev's death, at some point a public announcement would be made. The announcement could be delayed, especially if there were prolonged deliberations concerning the leadership assignments. When Stalin died, for example, the leadership apparently delayed an announcement of his death from two to possibly five days or more to give his heirs additional time to decide leadership questions and to inform the populace gradually that Stalin's rule had ended. 25X1

More recently (January 1982), the Politburo delayed the announcement of party Secretary Mikhail Suslov's death nearly 24 hours after the fact, though it had been known for five days that Suslov was dying. Given the political maneuvering that the death of Suslov—the second most important leader in the country—engendered, Brezhnev's heirs seem likely to seek extra time when the General Secretary departs. 25X1

The Soviet leadership took almost two weeks to decide on Stalin's immediate replacement. It probably will be able to move more rapidly when Brezhnev leaves the scene. In the case of Brezhnev's largely ceremonial Supreme Soviet post, there is a formal requirement that the entire 1,500-member Supreme Soviet name his successor. This might necessitate a delay of a day or two just to convene the meeting. The Politburo, however, may not believe it is essential to fill this post at the same time as a new General Secretary is selected. Vasiliy Kuznetsov, the current first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet Presidium ("deputy President"), could act as Soviet President for a short period. 25X1

When Brezhnev Dies

If Brezhnev dies while in office, an urgent meeting of the Politburo will be convened. 25X1

After the Politburo had decided on a course of action, Brezhnev's death 25X1

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and the funeral plans would be announced. The new party chief might deliver the eulogy, and the leading members of the Politburo would receive protocol honors. The funeral commission, which is formed to make and oversee the funeral arrangements, is usually chaired by a Politburo member, but the commission does not necessarily reflect the rank order in the Kremlin.

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Should the succession remain unresolved by the time of the funeral, however, the protocol rankings could be ambiguous, and the leader selected to give Brezhnev's eulogy might not be his replacement. When Stalin died, for example, the most important Soviet leaders during the first days after the leader's death were not on the funeral commission, but all three (Beria, Malenkov, and Molotov) spoke at the funeral and headed the rank order. Khrushchev did not speak, but he did improve his ranking in the leadership at the ceremony. The indicators proved to be misleading, because soon after the funeral Beria was arrested and Khrushchev became the ranking member of the party secretariat.

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Brezhnev's Removal

If Brezhnev were removed by his Politburo peers, there would be little warning. Such a move would necessarily require great secrecy, and until a consensus developed among the key Soviet leaders to oust Brezhnev, the plotters would be at great risk. Those who moved against Khrushchev in October 1964—Brezhnev was probably the ringleader—were extremely secretive. Even with hindsight it seems there were no clear indications that Khrushchev's removal was imminent

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In 1964 the conspirators at first attempted to present Khrushchev's ouster as a simple retirement at his request. If Brezhnev were removed from office, the scenario would probably be similar. In that event, Brezhnev would probably be forced into requesting his retirement for "health reasons." The Central Committee in plenary session would accept the resignation and ratify the plotters' choice for his successor

The KGB might not be the driving force behind any coup against Brezhnev—it apparently was not for the ouster of Khrushchev—but the cooperation of the KGB would be essential for the successful implementation of a coup. It would probably at a minimum be called upon to play a supporting role, most likely providing logistic and communications support.

The military would also play a role in the Brezhnev succession, especially if Brezhnev was removed by a coup. The military threw its support to Khrushchev during his fight with the antiparty group in 1957 and probably acquiesced in the coup against him in 1964. In the current situation, the support of Defense Minister Dmitriy Ustinov—both as a senior party official and military chief—would seem to be crucial. Once the plotters had gained his support, however, the military would be expected to go along with the ouster. The military chiefs have never been an independent force in Soviet politics, and their most likely role in any succession would be as an ally of a faction in the party leadership.

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A Brezhnev Resignation

It would be difficult to ascertain whether a Brezhnev resignation was genuine or forced on him by his colleagues. In recent Soviet history, high officials have not simply faded away; they have died in office or have been removed. Brezhnev could surprise us and throw in the towel.

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If Brezhnev were to resign, he might initially raise the possibility before the Politburo and perhaps even indicate his preferences for the succession at that time. The Politburo could then deliberate, perhaps for some weeks, over leadership assignments before acceding to Brezhnev's wish to remove himself from political life. While the Politburo worked out new arrangements, Brezhnev might even withdraw from most political activity without publicly resigning.

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As soon as a consensus was formed in the Politburo on Brezhnev's successors, a Central Committee plenum and Supreme Soviet session would be scheduled to

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accept publicly Brezhnev's resignation and ratify the Politburo's selection of a new leader (or leaders). Brezhnev's resignation, therefore, might in the early stages of the process appear as an orderly leadership change—all the personnel decisions could be made behind the scenes and presumably under less time pressure than if Brezhnev were to die or be removed.

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Postscript

Brezhnev's death, retirement, or ouster will trigger an institutional process that brings forth a new leader (or leaders) within a relatively short period. The power and influence of the new leader will be considerable from the start. The process of amassing decisive power and the ability to exercise it, however, will take much longer—probably several years. That process, moreover, will be largely invisible, involving the new leaders in the basic political bargaining, trade-offs, and compromises used to build personal allegiances and policy support. In this sense, the Brezhnev succession will only begin with the naming of his replacement.

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Andropov in the Western Press

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The emergence of Yuriy Andropov as the major contender to succeed Brezhnev has provoked considerable speculation in the Western press about his personality and policy views, but much of the press commentary has tended to oversimplify those views and even misread the man. Several articles have suggested that he is a "closet liberal" who favors reform and was really not involved in the suppression of dissidents. Andropov's "liberal" inclinations are reportedly demonstrated by his association with the Hungarian economic reforms in the 1960s and 1970s and by his personal ties to such urbane, knowledgeable, and articulate Soviets as Georgiy Arbatov.

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While Andropov appears to be a "moderate" in the Soviet context and may be enlightened by Soviet standards, he was intimately involved in putting down the revolution in Hungary and has orchestrated the suppression of the dissident movement in the USSR. His association with Western-oriented Soviet officials does not provide a good indication of the internal—especially economic—policies he would favor. Andropov's level of sophistication mainly suggests that he would be a tough, resourceful adversary, not a leader who would try to limit Soviet global influence.

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Perceptions of Andropov

Yuriy Andropov appears more supportive of Brezhnev's foreign policies, especially detente and arms control with the United States, than some other Soviet leaders. Even dissidents and emigres have been impressed with him and tend to think of him as enlightened, intellectual, and progressive. At the same time, Andropov has duplicitously cultivated this image, attempting to use personal charm and intelligence to sugarcoat the crackdown on dissidents that he has directed. Such personality traits, as well as some KGB-inspired statements to Western observers over the years that favorably portray Andropov, explain the dubious characterizations of Andropov in the Western press—for example, that he is a "closet liberal" or that his elevation to the Secretariat is a "favorable development" that presages "significant reform fairly quickly."

Andropov's role in the KGB has limited his contact with foreigners and reduced his visibility on the Soviet political scene. His few speeches and articles over the years contain little to differentiate his position from the current party line. The impressions of foreign Communists and diplomats, and even the occasional Soviet official's comment about him, all offer no more than an occasional insight into his substantive views.

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A Reformer?

The notion of Andropov as a reformer stems from his association with Hungary, and by implication, with that country's economic reforms. Andropov's own role in Hungary from 1954 to 1957, however, was hardly reformist or progressive. He helped to implement a brutal Soviet repression of the revolution and worked to restore central control and Soviet orthodoxy in that country.

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While he may have supported Kadar's subsequent policies, they have been implemented very slowly by a regime that has demonstrated its absolute fealty to Moscow.

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Andropov's Views

Andropov is a complex figure in Soviet politics whose opinions and actions are not easily classified as "hard line" or "liberal." He is a good party soldier and an intelligent and successful Soviet administrator. Brezhnev has said of Andropov "that he is demanding of himself and others, and an uncompromising Communist."

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In contrast to what some Western journalists imply, Andropov would be a tough, demanding leader. He has repeatedly emphasized the need for internal discipline in the Soviet Union, asserting that the rights of citizens are linked to important duties and that criticism (in the context of intraparty "democracy") must be "publicly held and constructive." Such ideas set Andropov apart from Konstantin Chernenko, his principal rival for the top party post, who has cultivated the image of a leader more attuned to popular aspirations and who has called for more intraparty "democracy" in terms far less qualified than has Andropov. Moreover, Andropov acknowledges no basis for anti-Soviet activity in the USSR and finds its roots in Western influences and Western "psychological warfare." On the other hand, as a tactically flexible administrator, he may entertain the idea of limited changes in the current system of economic planning and management.

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Andropov would not countenance foreign influence on what he would perceive as purely internal Soviet affairs. He probably would also continue to support countries that are "moving" toward socialism.

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He also gave an unusually forceful defense of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in a February 1980 speech. Andropov would probably, however, try to continue Brezhnev's foreign policies toward the United States. He has, to judge from his speeches, been a key supporter of Brezhnev's "detente" and arms control policies, which he regards as serving Soviet interests well.

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In a more general sense Andropov appears confident about the course of world developments. He believes that world trends favor socialism and that "peaceful coexistence" (the terminology he uses) helps socialism and reduces the danger of war. He also supports the need for a strong Soviet military and sees it as promoting conditions for arms control negotiations with the United States.

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Policy Issues in the Succession

The succession process will significantly politicize policy differences within the Soviet leadership. Various contenders will seek to exploit issues facing the Politburo for personal and factional advantage. Given the seriousness and complexity of the problems a new leadership will have to face, moreover, debate and conflict over policy are likely to be particularly sharp and intense.

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Economic Issues

Along with Brezhnev's title, the new General Secretary will inherit a difficult and increasingly complex economic situation. Economic growth has fallen to less than 2 percent a year for the past three years—compared with rates of about 4 to 5 percent during the 1960s and most of the 1970s. This decline in growth has been largely attributable to increasingly unfavorable economic conditions, such as decreasing availability of low-cost resources (chiefly fuels) and declining increments to the working-age population. The situation also has been exacerbated by a series of harvest failures.

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With the Soviet energy, labor, and hard currency positions likely to worsen, the economic squeeze can be expected to tighten. As a result, in the next few years Soviet leaders will find their resource allocation choices—to meet the conflicting demands for capital investment, consumer satisfaction, and military power—increasingly difficult and painful.

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The slowing economic growth rate thus far has had the effect of heightening differences within the leadership over sectoral and regional investment priorities. No leader appears to have formulated or advocated a comprehensive or clearly defined economic "reform" program, and there are no indications that the basic systemic changes required to make major improvements in the operation of the economy can be expected from Brezhnev's successor.

Heavy Industry Versus Consumer Goods. As the full dimensions of the economic predicament become clear, the demands of rival claimants for shrinking resources will intensify and reinforce the tendency of contenders to stake out independent positions designed to appeal to one or another interest represented in the leadership. Differences in priorities already have emerged between one group (represented by Kirilenko, Shcherbitskiy, and others) that has advocated the priority development of heavy industry and another (represented mainly by Chernenko) that has emphasized the need to increase the availability of consumer goods; both will be marshaling support for their views.

Kirilenko has advocated the preferential development of heavy industry fairly consistently throughout his career—even at times when the consumer sector has been receiving greater public attention and rhetorical support from the leadership. Recently, for example, he has said little about the decision, so heavily promoted by Brezhnev and Chernenko, to assign a priority growth rate to the production of consumer goods in the current five-year plan.

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Kirilenko's investment preferences, moreover, seem to be shared by Shcherbitskiy and may have substantial support among other leaders, such as Tikhonov, whose past statements have indicated similar priorities. High-level differences over the current investment strategy were suggested in February 1982 by an unusual *Pravda* article that criticized the five-year plan that had just been adopted for providing inadequate resources to the machine-building industry—a sector Kirilenko has championed in the past.

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Chernenko, on the other hand, has often spoken out on the issue, emerging as the leadership's chief advocate of investment in consumer goods. In his Lenin Day speech in April 1981, in fact, he argued that the priority growth rate assigned to consumer goods in the present five-year plan should be considered just a beginning. In what appeared to be a direct retort to

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warnings from Suslov about the excesses of "consumerism," he said that if popular needs were ignored for the sake of production, not only the people, but production too, would suffer.

Chernenko's attitude toward investment priorities is consistent with his effort to cultivate the image of a leader attuned to popular aspirations by calling for commissions to study public opinion, more intraparty "democracy," and greater attention to letters from the rank and file. Neither Kirilenko nor Andropov, however, has shown much enthusiasm for this approach. Kirilenko, for example, reportedly blocked Chernenko's efforts to set up a new institute for sociological research, and Andropov, as indicated by his statements, has defined the limits of "democracy" in the Soviet system much more narrowly than Chernenko.

Defense Spending. Concern about the domestic economy also could impel one or another leader to propose some reduction in the rate of growth of military spending, if not an absolute cut as Khrushchev did in the late 1950s. The argument could reasonably be made that the military budget of the past two decades has improved the Soviet position vis-a-vis the Western alliance to the point that the country can afford some redirection of resources to urgent internal needs without jeopardizing defense requirements.

As indicated by previous public statements, Chernenko would seem more inclined to push for a slower pace of military growth than most other leaders. He has stressed, for example, the economic benefits to be derived from arms limitation. In a succession environment, however, no new leader, unless he perceives an existing consensus, is likely to risk antagonizing the military establishment and conservative forces within the party by proposing cuts in the defense budget.

Regional Competition

In addition to these sectoral clashes, the battle for resources is likely to heighten conflict between various regions of the country and their representatives in the Politburo. Succession politics typically has given regional leaders more influence on national policy, and contending factions will exploit this situation.

In the debate over regional investment priorities, some leaders will urge more attention to the economic interests of the Russian Republic (RSFSR)—a position earlier taken by Suslov and an assistant to Kirilenko. While there are "objective" reasons for following such a course (Soviet oil and gas reserves, for example, are concentrated there), these arguments also could be advanced as part of a larger appeal to Russian nationalism—a traditional refuge of Soviet leaders in difficult times. Such proposals would be strongly supported by local officials in the RSFSR, who are heavily represented on the Central Committee. 25X1

Leaders of other republics, several of whom hold candidate or full membership on the Politburo, can be expected to argue for more investment in their own areas, where consumer and ethnic discontent seem most likely to converge and cause problems for the regime. The Central Asians, for example, are pressing hard for the construction of new industrial facilities and for the costly diversion of Siberian rivers to provide irrigation water for the southern republics. 25X1

Management Reform. The economic dilemma that Brezhnev's successor will inherit has been heightened by the regime's failure to deal effectively with the underlying problem of chronic inefficiencies in economic management. Concern over declining growth rates will prompt some debate in the post-Brezhnev Politburo over new approaches to this problem. 25X1

Kirilenko has demonstrated more openness than many leaders to new ideas in the area of economic management. He was one of the few Soviet leaders to associate himself with the establishment of the Soviet Union's first Western-style business management school and was the first Politburo member to endorse the concept of production associations—a mode of rationalizing industrial management that aroused some resistance from the ministerial bureaucracy. 25X1

Chernenko and Andropov, by contrast, have said relatively little about management reform. Recently, however, Chernenko has spoken out strongly in favor of the new district agro-industrial associations

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(RAPOs), approved at the Central Committee plenum in May. These organizations, which could bring some devolution of authority to the local level at the expense of the ministries in Moscow, have the support of many regional party leaders—a group whose support Chernenko is soliciting. Andropov, to judge from an article by a former assistant, may oppose this approach, preferring instead reforms that would rely on economic stimuli and improved central planning to increase efficiency.

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Foreign Policy Issues

Foreign policy issues also could become a bone of contention in the post-Brezhnev Politburo. Although these issues will be determined largely by the international situation at the time, a successor regime today would face a number of serious foreign challenges, including:

- The effort by the United States to bolster its military capabilities.
- Improved relations between China and the United States.
- A situation in Afghanistan that is proving more troublesome than the leadership expected.
- A crisis in Poland, a pivotal country in the Soviet empire.

Political trends in such areas as Central America, the Middle East, and Europe, nonetheless, will continue to give the Soviet leadership both problems to deal with and favorable opportunities to pursue policies hostile to US interests.

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Soviet-US Relations. Brezhnev has made detente a cornerstone of his foreign policy, and his departure undoubtedly will bring further review of its relative merits. Enthusiasm about the pursuit of improved Soviet-US relations, nevertheless, has been on the wane in the Politburo since 1974, when the US Congress passed the Jackson-Vanik Amendment linking trade to an increase in Jewish emigration. US policy has been actively debated in Moscow since Washington's unexpectedly severe reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

Chernenko has been far more enthusiastic than Kirilenko and most other leaders in his support of improved relations with the West, particularly the United States, and of arms limitation. In his Supreme Soviet election speech in 1979, for example, he went further than any leader other than Brezhnev in stressing the importance of what would have been the next step in strategic arms limitation talks (SALT III). Kirilenko, by contrast, coupled his endorsement of the SALT II treaty with calls for "vigilance and more vigilance" against Western intrigues. Chernenko also has been well ahead of his Politburo colleagues in warnings about the consequences of nuclear war, noting in his April 1981 Lenin Day speech that it posed a threat to "all civilization."

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Andropov ranks somewhere behind Chernenko in his support for improved Soviet-US relations but has been a relatively strong supporter of Brezhnev's "detente" and arms control policies, which he regards as serving Soviet interests. His statements indicate, however, that he would not tolerate foreign interference in what he considers an internal Soviet matter, such as Jewish emigration policy.

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Although such shades of opinion are still discernible, the Politburo as a whole seems to believe the prospects for improved Soviet-US relations are more remote now than they have been in the past—an assessment that could lead it to endorse efforts to counter, distract, or embroil US policy. Chernenko's views on arms limitation and relations with the United States, thus, seem outside the current mainstream of Politburo opinion and may require some modification if he is to gain the support he needs once Brezhnev goes. As economic growth declines and resources become increasingly scarce, however, other members of the leadership, possibly even Kirilenko, may become more amenable to US proposals for arms control, seeing them as a way of avoiding the cost of arms they may perceive as necessary to counter the emergence of new US weapons.

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Soviet–East European Relations. Various Soviet leaders appear to have assessed the lessons of Poland differently. Chernenko, for example, seems to place the greatest blame on the Polish leadership's loss of contact with the people. Some leaders, such as Andropov, chastise the Poles for losing their ideological bearings, while still others, such as Kirilenko, point

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their fingers at alleged Western interference. The leadership as a whole, nonetheless, remains committed to maintaining control over Poland and the rest of its East European empire.

Soviet leaders, however, could well be at odds over how best to maintain that control. Subsidization of Eastern Europe may be viewed as an increasingly costly burden for the Soviets, but allowing Eastern Europe to become economically dependent on the West—as in the case of Poland—is politically dangerous. Continued economic shortages in Eastern Europe on the other hand could increase popular discontent there to perilously high levels.

The Politburo, therefore, is likely to continue its vacillation between courses designed to counter whichever danger in Eastern Europe seems more pressing at a given time. Andropov, in particular, has shown a certain flexibility in that regard. After helping to implement Soviet repression of the Hungarian revolution in 1956, he is believed to have supported Hungarian efforts to rebuild the economy along lines significantly different from the Soviet model. The Politburo's basic inclination, however, will be to require the East Europeans to place more emphasis on discipline and control to fill the void left by declining Soviet and Western economic support.

Triangular Politics? Those leaders who believe there is virtually no prospect for US-Soviet cooperation, especially on arms control issues, might favor playing the China card and normalizing relations with Beijing. That option appears to have been left open, at least, by recent leadership statements—most recently by Brezhnev's speech in March that offered to resume border talks and establish new economic, scientific, and cultural ties.

Even if the Chinese were receptive to such overtures, however, full normalization of relations would be difficult to achieve. Those Soviet leaders who have been suspicious of US motives appear to have been at least equally suspicious of the Chinese. Kirilenko, in particular, has shown his pique toward the Chinese on several occasions.

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Other Topics

Ideological Atmospherics and the Polish Crisis [redacted] 25X1

The ongoing crisis in Poland, the death of Moscow's chief ideologue Suslov, and a growing debate over domestic economic reform are all contributing to a public discussion of ideological policy in the USSR. Succession contenders Konstantin Chernenko and Yuriy Andropov recently staked out ideological positions suggesting some modest differences from one another, but more significant differences from the orthodox line associated with Suslov. Recent theoretical articles have also taken a pragmatic line—that is, they have:

- Attributed the threat of counterrevolution in the Warsaw Pact not only to a failure to maintain political vigilance but also to a failure to resolve social problems.
- Provided an ideological rationale for military rule in Poland.

The Succession Contenders Weigh In

Andropov and Chernenko have recently addressed a number of ideological issues that have implications for Eastern Europe. On the dangers of political pluralism and the legitimacy of the Soviet experience, both have taken positions that suggest definite limits to tolerable divergence from that model. They seem to differ somewhat on the seriousness of the threat to socialist regimes, but they both advocate ideological flexibility and acceptance of "national peculiarities" within the socialist community. These views place them more at odds with the orthodox ideological associates of Suslov than with one another.

Andropov, in his Lenin Day speech on 22 April, made an obvious effort to record his, as well as the leadership's, positions and to burnish his image as an ideologist. Mixing orthodox shibboleths with calls for ideological adaptability, he addressed two issues particularly applicable to Eastern Europe: political pluralism and different national models of Communism.

On pluralism, he noted the "essential difference" between capitalism, where pluralism manifests itself as a class struggle, and socialism, where class antagonism cannot arise. Because hostile political parties have no place under socialism, "pluralism" is an irrelevant concept. In East European countries, where several parties do exist, each can represent a different social base, but all must adhere to socialism. Western advocates of "pluralism" for Warsaw Pact countries really want "organized opposition to socialism," but this the USSR will not tolerate.

In tackling the delicate issue of "different roads to socialism," Andropov argued that diversity within socialism was inevitable. However, he warned that "decisive objections" arise when "the general laws of socialist construction are effectively rejected." Peculiarities are tolerable, but if debate is allowed to focus on "various models, various notions of the very essence of socialism" instead of on "its radical difference from capitalism," serious problems can ensue. Andropov strongly hinted his own support for the Brezhnev doctrine that there is no turning back from

the socialist path and reaffirmed that a Leninist vanguard party is essential. His remarks suggest a degree of toleration for divergence within the bloc—but only under the banner of the Communist Party.

Chernenko, at the same time that Andropov was drafting his speech, submitted an article to The CPSU ideological journal *Kommunist* addressing the same issues. His line was similar to Andropov's on the negative consequences of pluralism, but he seemed to evaluate differently the issue of the gravity of "contradictions inherent under socialism." Andropov's speech stressed the qualitative differences between "contradictions" under socialism and capitalism, and Chernenko (in remarks most likely drafted with Andropov's views in mind) argued that "the art of political leadership . . . lies in revealing" these contradictions and "outlining ways of overcoming them." Chernenko seemed to be implying that Andropov, then still head of the KGB, saw the solution of such problems simply in terms of increased control—a strategy which did not confront growing social problems.

The Advocates of Orthodoxy

The positions of both competitors contrast sharply with the orthodox views associated with Suslov and his supporters. Suslov's formulations (particularly those made in mid-1981 at the height of the "revisionist" threat in the Polish party) struck an inflexible note, warning that the "slightest deviation from Marxism-Leninism"—by which he meant the Soviet model—would have grave consequences.

Although Suslov died in January 1982, his adherents are still well entrenched in the Soviet ideological apparatus. Their voices have been muted since his death, but in the months preceding martial law, they made their viewpoint heard. In November 1981, in the most authoritative assessment of the general lessons of the crisis up to that time, Petr Fedoseyev (a Central Committee member and Suslov protege) asserted that the bloc must guard against "private property habits, nationalism, religious fanaticism, and petit bourgeois psychology."

> "*Where the struggle is not sufficiently resolute,* views and convictions hostile to socialism imperceptibly penetrate the tiny pores of the way of life, threatening to corrupt social institutions from within. . . . The current domestic political crisis in Poland was preceded . . . by a sharp deterioration in the ideological climate, the spread of narrow-minded, consumerist sentiments and nationalist prejudices, and the weakening of class vigilance." [Emphasis added.]

According to Fedoseyev, the basic problem in the East European countries was that their transition to socialism—without genuine revolution or civil war—had left "remnants of the exploiting classes and antiproletarian parties" unpurged. Those remnants were well placed to attack the foundations of the socialist system whenever it might be ideologically weakened. His exposition clearly implied the need for a thoroughgoing purge of all dissidents and a major effort to restructure Eastern Europe along Soviet lines—for example, to attack religion, further socialize agriculture, and intimidate intellectuals. The warning on the cost of ideological laxity and petit bourgeois consumerism clearly had implications not only for Eastern Europe, but for the USSR as well—and is implicitly critical of the policies associated with Brezhnev.

Coming to Grips With the Polish Crisis

Within the Soviet leadership, the dominant assessment of the situation in Poland to date has been far closer to the flexible approach associated with Brezhnev and his two most likely successors than to Suslovian orthodoxy. The March issue of *Kommunist* carried two articles on the Polish crisis—the first attempt since martial law to put the lessons of the Polish crisis into an ideological context. These summarized the dominant line:

- The crisis grew out of both internal and external factors.
- Martial law is ideologically justifiable as a necessity in the medium term.
- A degree of national divergence within the bloc may continue, but the party's leading role must be maintained.
- Any efforts to introduce concepts of pluralism or nonalignment are anathema and threaten the security interests of the Soviet Union.

The articles did not touch on certain equally critical issues:

- The long-term legitimacy of martial law in Poland.
- The degree of toleration for political reform within the Warsaw Pact.

These issues may be under debate within the leadership.

The article by Jaroslav Kase, chief editor of the Czechoslovak Communist theoretical journal, is the more broad ranging. Kase argued that "imperialism" has made use of dissidents and internal contradictions in Eastern Europe to discredit the Communist system but asserted that "the real danger of counterrevolution" only emerges when an internal foe "becomes organically linked with *severe and longstanding errors* committed in the building of socialism" [emphasis added]. Signs of such errors were visible in Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and in Poland in 1980-81. According to Kase, prevention of this danger requires not only ideological vigilance (an approach associated with ideological conservatives) but also a willingness to tackle problems (a more pragmatic approach like that advocated by Chernenko).

Contemporary anti-Communism, Kase cautioned, has become sophisticated and dangerous. In place of the restoration of capitalism, it seeks a "marketplace economy" (that is, market socialism) and bourgeois freedoms. Anti-Communists have shifted from political to economic demands and from cultivating the intellectuals to appealing to the workers, as in the case of the Solidarity movement in Poland. The call for "pluralism" signifies in Poland and elsewhere an attempt to weaken the Communist Party's leading role. Religion also plays a significant role in the assault on socialism, since it has now adapted to the modern world and has taken up social causes. Finally, the imperialist powers—the United States and Western Europe—themselves assist internal counterrevolution by applying economic pressure through entangling credits and threats of economic boycott.

Kase clearly sought to present a balanced retrospective assessment of a threat that could crop up elsewhere in the bloc. On the one hand, by focusing on the critical failure of Poland's political leadership, he seemed to agree with the pragmatists in suggesting that the problem is social and economic as well as political and external. On the other, by arguing that ideological neglect and entanglement with the West contributed to the crisis, he provided ammunition for the more orthodox Leninist critics of Polish policies. The article strongly implied that the threat of anti-Communism would not disappear and might even grow stronger.

Addressing the idea that the martial law regime in Poland smacks of "Bonapartism"—an ideologically embarrassing accusation that surely troubled conservatives of the Suslov school—Kase counters rather weakly that Bonapartism is a "specific historic product of the bourgeoisie," and is therefore inapplicable to Poland. He ignores the question of martial law's longevity, an omission that suggests both sensitivity and uncertainty on this point. His balanced assessment of the causes of Polish unrest is close to the positions espoused by less ideologically rigid Soviet leaders like Andropov and Chernenko.

The other *Kommunist* article, by Polish party secretary Marian Orzechowski, agreed that "errors and deformation in the leadership of the party and state [that is, bad management] had resulted in weakening the link with the masses and prompted discontent and protest among them." Trying to strike a middle ground, he defended both the Polish program of "renewal"—as fully in accord with Marxism-Leninism and "our country's specific national nature"—and martial law. Reflecting concern over the threat of pluralism, he also rejected "interpretations [of the party rules approved in 1981] which disrupt the cohesion of the ranks and the effectiveness of action associated with unity and centralism" and asserted that any "factionalism" would be disastrous for the party. Instead, he called for "an ideologically and organizationally cohesive and morally pure party" capable of winning the allegiance of the masses. With Kremlin security concerns in mind, he warned that the desire for "Finlandization" was a "first step" in separating Poland from its allies and could not be permitted.

The two authors clearly attempted to provide a theoretical framework for interpreting the Polish crisis by attributing it primarily to leadership failures rather than to concessions to national peculiarities and by

defining some of the limits of reform (for example, in the party). They carefully skirted certain possibly contentious issues, however—the legitimacy of protracted military rule in a socialist state and the precise limits of toleration for reform.

Prognosis

Andropov and Chernenko have taken public positions that allow for the possibility of a degree of experimentation and accommodation in Eastern Europe. Nevertheless, these two leading contenders to succeed Brezhnev have emphasized the necessity of maintaining order and the supremacy of the existing regimes and have opposed any major departure from the general "laws of socialism" (that is, the Soviet model). The latter emphasis suggests that they would oppose any significant economic or political reform that threatened to diminish the party's control.

Despite their insistence on party supremacy, neither Andropov nor Chernenko appears particularly disturbed about the current continuation of the martial law regime—that is, Poland's domination by the military rather than the party. Neither seems to endorse the legitimacy of such a system, however, and both would clearly prefer a return to the normal pattern of party hegemony as soon as it is feasible.

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Moscow and the Eastern Mediterranean Communist Parties

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Moscow's insistence that Communist parties give first priority to Soviet goals, particularly those opposing NATO and US policies, threatens the attainment of other, local Communist goals in Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus.

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Moscow's Options

The USSR's foreign policy options in the eastern Mediterranean are limited by a number of interrelated factors. The hostility between Greece and Turkey, symbolized by a divided Cyprus, invites Moscow to play each side against the other. Yet, in each country, a traditional suspicion of Soviet subversion thwarts such ploys. Moreover, the enduring identification of both sides with the West means that both Athens and Ankara continue to look to the United States for solutions even though the United States often is blamed for problems in the region

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The Communist parties in these three countries would, moreover, be of limited help in any Soviet effort to exploit tensions in the region. The Cypriot Party, one of Cyprus's largest parties, seeks political respectability through cooperation with the government and other responsible behavior; the Greek Party, far smaller in electoral strength, must contend with a government more vulnerable to pressures from the right than from the left; and the Turkish Party—small, illegal, and exiled—is of negligible political importance.

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With little prospect of successful involvement in the internal politics of the region, Moscow has pressed the Cypriot, Greek, and Turkish parties with special single-mindedness to concentrate on "international" issues, such as the peace movement. In this way the USSR advances its own interests but neglects the parties' more parochial concerns, raising serious implications for their future strength and political effectiveness.

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The Cypriot Communist Party, Partner in Government

Cyprus's status as a neutral/nonaligned country gives a certain legitimacy to the local Communists' propaganda. The party (AKEL, the Progressive Party of the Working People) can, in obedience to Moscow, espouse principles and express criticism that rarely are in serious conflict with official government policy. Further, Cyprus's sad experience of invasion and military occupation by one NATO member, Turkey, in conflict with another NATO member, Greece, stands for some as an indictment of NATO and its leading member, the United States, as imperialistic and belligerent.

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To be accepted as a responsible political force, the Communist Party has generally cooperated with the Cypriot Government but has done so as a "silent partner." In April of this year, however, it promulgated a program of formal political cooperation with the right-of-center Democratic Party (DEKO) of Cypriot President Kyprianou.

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The provisions of the "common program" suggest that DEKO made significant concessions to AKEL. Notably, the program advocates resolution of the Cyprus problem by means of: UN-sponsored negotiations between representatives of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities and, if that fails, recourse to an international conference under UN auspices—a Soviet proposal first advanced in 1974.[1] The program reaffirms Cyprus's nonalignment and its

[1] The Soviets advocate "internationalization" of the Cyprus problem as meaning establishment of an international conference in which the USSR and its allies would, for the first time, be given a direct role in determining Cyprus's future. Greek Prime Minister Papandreou's intention in promoting "internationalization," however, is to expand the role that Greece and other Western countries would play in negotiations. He believes Kyprianou subscribed to this approach during his visit to Athens early this year and that the AKEL-DEKO program undercuts this approach.

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The Pro-Soviet Communist Parties in the Eastern Mediterranean Countries

	Mid-1981 Population (Estimate)	Communist Party Membership	Percentage of Vote; Seats in Legislature	Status
Cyprus	636,000	12,000 (estimate)	32.8 (1981); 12 of 35 Greek Cypriot seats	Legal
Greece	9,671,000	33,500 (estimate)	10.9 (1981); 13 of 300	Legal
Turkey	46,700,000	NEGL		Proscribed

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special tie to Greece but stresses the need for support from the socialist countries, appearing to slight the West.

The Communists—who may have damaged their domestic political image by openly allying themselves with Kyprianou, the man they publicly rejected as undependable two years ago—also made concessions.

The gamble by Moscow and AKEL for their individual and shared goals might ultimately fail. Reported uneasiness among the Communist rank and file about collaboration with the "unreliable" Kyprianou could eventually disrupt the alliance. Other parties—notably the Socialist (EDEK) and far right Rally parties—have vociferously protested the AKEL-DEKO pact, and Kyprianou's overt collaboration with the Communists could help bring about his defeat in the presidential election scheduled to be held before next February.

Should continued opposition by Papandreou indicate that the alliance is counterproductive to Soviet interests even before the election next year, Moscow may urge AKEL to make additional concessions to DEKO to allay concern in Athens about the extent of Communist power, or even to dissociate itself again from Kyprianou. Either way, the Cypriot Communist Party would see its progress toward political legitimacy at least temporarily checked by the USSR.

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The Greek Communist Party, the Government's Conscience on the Left

In Greece, the Communist Party (KKE)[2] is smaller than in Cyprus in terms of electoral strength. It regularly reminds the Greek electorate of the dangers of rightwing government, condemning the United States for sustaining the military junta through the early 1970s and for trying—by means of the US bases in Greece and other aspects of military cooperation—to regain such control.

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Demonstrations in mid-May to protest the visit of US Secretary of State Haig and to mark the opening of the UN Special Session on Disarmament were among their successes.

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[2] The pro-Soviet Communist Party is called by the Greeks the Party "of the Exterior" (KKE/Ext) to distinguish it from the tiny, Eurocommunist-oriented Party "of the Interior" (KKE/Int).

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The KKE has also, since Papandreou's election last October, tried to serve as the Socialist Prime Minister's conscience, urging him to build on the leftwing rhetoric of his campaign and criticizing him for failing to distance himself from the United States and NATO. Disappointed that the new Prime Minister has not acted more in accordance with his campaign rhetoric about removing nuclear weapons from Greece and reducing the US presence there, Moscow encourages the KKE's criticism as a means of keeping pressure on the government. Because the Soviets want, however, to avoid driving Papandreou further to the right, they probably have advised the Greek Communists not to push him too far. Consequently, neither the KKE nor the Soviets have so far criticized Papandreou by name.

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The AKEL-DEKO agreement has provoked the sharpest disagreement thus far between Papandreou and the Greek Communists.

The KKE strenuously criticized his public statements as interference in Cyprus's internal affairs but did not exercise its more potent options of mobilizing its supporters in labor, youth organizations, and the intelligentsia.

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Indeed, as its public criticism has sharpened, the KKE has seemed in other ways to be trying quietly to reassure the ruling Socialists that it wants to maintain smooth relations. The day before Secretary Haig arrived in Athens in mid-May, for example, the party staged a demonstration to protest US and NATO policies on INF and other issues.

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The restrained tone of Soviet criticism of Papandreou and Moscow's encouragement of—if not insistence upon—a degree of accommodation by the Communists to the Socialist government indicate that—at least for the moment—Moscow seeks only to prod Papandreou toward policies more amenable to Soviet interests, not to foment active opposition to his government. This accommodation almost certainly has entailed costs to the Greek Communist Party. It no doubt has discredited the KKE in the eyes of some who may be disillusioned with the performance of the Socialist government and are seeking a more principled leftist opposition.

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The Turkish Communist Party, a Negligible Political Force

Within Turkey, where it is proscribed and its members hunted, the tiny Turkish Communist Party (TKP) can do little to promote Soviet interests. The exiled party is headquartered in East Germany and is heavily dependent on the Soviets and East Europeans for support.

Evidently, the Soviets have decided that it makes more sense to channel Turkish discontent toward a more attainable goal—the erosion of West European support for NATO policies—than to encourage futile efforts against the government in Ankara. Despite Moscow's desire to woo Papandreou and its recognition that the generals currently in power in Ankara are not favorably inclined toward the USSR, the Soviets still tend to avoid antagonizing the Turks. Ankara's promulgation in late April of new regulations concerning navigation in the Turkish Straits

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reminded the Soviets of their stake in relations with the government that could deny their ships access to the Mediterranean Sea.

Far more than in Greece, moreover, the Soviets regard the probable costs of promoting effective opposition to the government through the Communist Party as outweighing the questionable benefits.

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Conclusion

The Soviets have always regarded other Communist parties to some extent as fodder for the USSR's crusades. While they seem to impose their priorities with special single-mindedness in the eastern Mediterranean, the parties there, like other pro-Soviet parties, accept the argument that the need to focus on the INF controversy and other Western policies is crucial. Nevertheless, by concentrating on the more general "peace" themes, local Communists may undercut or neglect their other, more parochial interests. Over the longer term, Moscow may have to ponder the precedents of the Yugoslavs, the Italians, and other proponents of national adaptations of Communism to determine the wisdom of neglecting Communist party interests other than its own.

Soviet VIP Health Care

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The death in January 1982 of 79-year-old Mikhail Suslov, leading ideologue of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), underscored the mortality of the aging Soviet leadership. Several of these men, including Brezhnev, have been afflicted with life-threatening illnesses, and the preservation of their lives and health is due largely to a special subsection of the USSR Ministry of Health called the Fourth Main Administration. This health-care organization has sustained, beyond what might have been expected, the longevity in office of the current leaders. Although it may have given the Western world the security of dealing with men whose past behavior and ideas are well known, it has also helped saddle the Soviet Union with a moribund Politburo, whose full members, at an average age of 70, seem ill equipped to handle the kind of political and diplomatic changes that confront the nation.

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The Fourth Main Administration

Background. Shortly after the Soviet Government moved to Moscow from Petrograd (now Leningrad) in 1918, the Kremlin Medical-Sanitary Administration was established; it later became a part of the CPSU Central Committee and was renamed the Medical Department of the Affairs Administration. During the 1920s and 1930s this department developed a network of hospitals, outpatient clinics, sanatoriums, and pharmacies established especially to serve party and state officials. Just before World War II, the Ministry of Health established the Fourth Main Administration (Fourth MA) to assume responsibility for these special health-care facilities and for VIP treatment. The CPSU Medical Department was relegated to basically administrative functions.

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Scope of the System. The Fourth MA is responsible for serving the medical needs of:

- Senior Soviet leaders and their immediate families.
- Other high-level CPSU officials.
- Senior officers of the Committee for State Security (KGB).
- Prominent public figures and other officials down to the republic ministry level.
- Foreign dignitaries.

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The care that each patient receives is governed by rigid rules. These include guidelines for the assignment of physicians:

- Every top Soviet official is assigned a permanent, personal physician (usually of his choice).
- Middle-level, but still senior, government and party officials and their families are under the care of a junior physician supervised by a higher level consultant.
- Further down the hierarchy, several officials and their families may be under the care of a single doctor.

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The VIP health network is extensive: every major Soviet city has at least one clinic for the exclusive use of VIPs. Numerous facilities dot the Baltic and Black Sea coasts.

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Administration Director Chazov. Since 1976 the director of the Fourth MA has been cardiologist Yevgeniy Ivanovich Chazov. He heads the Kremlin Polyclinic and is personal physician to General Secretary Brezhnev. Chazov is also a consultant on health problems of other Kremlin leaders. His duties include:

- Making house and office calls on Soviet leaders.
- Writing medical reports and findings on VIPs.
- Arranging for the transfer of patients to Fourth MA facilities.
- Arranging staff consultations with outside medical specialists on difficult VIP cases.
- Keeping the leaders informed of the medical progress of their ailing peers.

Chazov's status was publicly acknowledged in July 1978, when Brezhnev awarded him the Order of Lenin, a Hammer and Sickle Gold Medal, and the

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title Hero of Socialist Labor during a nationally televised ceremony. Chazov was made a full member of the CPSU Central Committee in May 1982.

Advantages to Elite

The system of preferential health care affords substantial advantages to the Soviet elite, including:

- Excellent prophylactic care.
- Best equipped and most modern facilities.
- Ready access to scarce medications.

Limitations

Political Considerations. Doctors on Fourth MA hospital staffs obtain their positions not only because of skill but also because of political or personal connections. Such nonmedical considerations have usually ruled out Jews, Armenians, or others considered politically unreliable, even though qualified professionally. Thus, VIP facilities may not always possess the best staff doctors. Prominent outside specialists are called in whenever serious medical problems are encountered.

Separation From Research. Because of the administrative and physical separation of medical research facilities from medical institutes, VIP and other physicians are often unaware of new medical discoveries, while researchers are frequently out of touch with the needs of practicing doctors.

Retarded Professional Development. Because of the limited patient admission policies of VIP facilities and consequent light workload, staff physicians get less day-to-day work experience than their counterparts in the public health system. In addition, because VIP doctors and nurses often perform daily services that are beneath the level of their professional abilities, the sharpening of their medical skills is further impeded.

Conservative Approach

Physicians treating VIPs are reluctant to take chances. They still remember the arrest in January 1953 of Kremlin doctors (most with Jewish names) for allegedly plotting to murder senior party and military personnel. Only the death of then-CPSU General Secretary Josif Stalin forestalled the execution of those doctors.

Surgeons know that they and their procedures will be investigated should a patient die while undergoing surgery. A physician involved in two such deaths is barred from further participation in the work of the Fourth MA.

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Using outside specialists as consultants on as many as 80 percent of all cases, Fourth MA doctors have sought to minimize improper treatment and career risk. If the patient being treated is important enough, Western equipment and pharmaceuticals are obtained, and foreign doctors are brought in to consult on or even to conduct treatment.

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Major VIP Health Facilities

Central Clinical Hospital. The Central Clinical Hospital is variously referred to as the Kremlin Hospital, the Kuntsevo Hospital, or the Zagorodnaya Hospital. It has all the facilities of a general hospital, and it is apparently limited to VIP patients. Treatment ranges from outpatient care to intensive care for the seriously ill who require extensive hospitalization or major surgery.

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Kremlin Polyclinic. The Kremlin Polyclinic, a branch of the Central Clinical Hospital, is a system of physically separate clinics and hospitals. The headquarters, which is the building generally referred to when discussing the Kremlin Polyclinic, is especially well equipped for resuscitation. Patients are generally treated on an outpatient basis.

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M. V. Lomonosov Central Polyclinic. The Lomonosov Central Polyclinic is sometimes referred to as the Medical Directorate in Lenin Hills, the New Central Clinical Hospital, or the Leadership Hospital. The polyclinic has both inpatient and outpatient facilities; VIP patients with both serious and minor illnesses are admitted to the hospital section of the polyclinic. Little information is available on the polyclinic's facilities, but they are believed to be among the best in Moscow.

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Barvikha and Other VIP Sanatoriums. Barvikha and other special sanatoriums are exclusive facilities for the treatment of VIPs. In addition to receiving medical care, officials can rest and have mud baths,

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massages, and heat treatments. They can also enjoy recreational activities, film showings, and luxuries unavailable to the public. No surgery is performed.

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Unusual Treatment

In addition to the several major medical facilities, other units exist for the treatment of special VIP medical problems:

Emergencies. Emergency treatment for high-level officials taken ill inside the Moscow Kremlin is available in the Kremlin First Aid Unit, also called the Inside Polyclinic. Physicians specializing in reanimation and pulmonary resuscitation are on 24-hour duty in a special room maintained solely for General Secretary Brezhnev.

Alcoholism. The V. P. Serbskiy Psychiatric Institute in Moscow has an unnumbered, unnamed section devoted to the care of VIP alcoholics.

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Psychiatry. The V. M. Bakhterev Psychoneurological Institute in Leningrad has treated VIP patients with psychiatric problems. Officials seeking psychiatric help usually turn to private practitioners, however, because they are afraid that if they go to a hospital, they will be removed from their posts.

Faith Healing. The most unusual health care service available to Soviet VIPs is provided by a 33-year-old "Assyrian" faith healer (a native of the Georgian SSR) named Yevgeniya (Dzhuna) Davitashvili. Rumors abound concerning the healing abilities of this woman, and despite increasing official unease, her clientele continues to grow; it may even have included General Secretary Brezhnev and former Health Minister Boris Petrovskiy. In the land of scientific socialism, medical mysticism apparently remains as deeply rooted as it was 66 years ago when Rasputin influenced another group of Russian leaders.

Yevgeniya Davitashvili *Der Spiegel* ©

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Briefs

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Soviets Improve Hard Currency Payments Position

Recently released trade and financial data indicate Moscow's effort to reverse the bad turn its payments position took last year paid some sizable dividends in the first quarter of 1982. A 50-percent jump in exports combined with a slight drop in imports sliced the trade deficit to $1.3 billion, or only a third the size of the first quarter 1981 deficit. Larger sales to West Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Italy accounted for 60 percent of the increase in exports. We believe that the export surge to these countries was due largely to stepped-up sales of oil. Increased sales to Iraq—presumably of machinery and equipment—accounted for another fourth of the rise in exports. Meanwhile, gross debt to Western banks, which was up $2.5 billion in 1981, declined by $1.5 billion in the first quarter, and the usual drawdown of assets in Western banks was held to less than $2 billion compared with the $3 billion fall in the first quarter of 1981.

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Soviets Seek Foreign Technology as a Remedy to Oil Problems

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Thus far in 1982 Soviet oil production is behind target. By the end of May the Soviets were 63,000 barrels per day (b/d) ahead of the same period last year, but still short of the 100,000 b/d increase targeted for the full year. Soviet drillers achieved record rates in April and May but still will be hard pressed to meet this year's drilling goal. The Soviets are seeking foreign technology and equipment as short- and long-term remedies to their problems. Much of the technology acquisition planned for the longer term would increase Soviet self-sufficiency in oil equipment. Some recent examples:

- *Production.* In May the Soviets met with foreign representatives to discuss tubing requirements for development of the Tenghiz field in Kazakhstan. This project will require the import of corrosion-resistant, high-pressure pipe. On another project in Kazakhstan, they are seeking technical assistance to remedy the inefficient use of previously purchased US steam generators at the giant Uzen' field. (The generators were operating at only 7-percent capacity as of June.)

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- *Drilling.* press reports point to drill-pipe shortages as a critical bottleneck. A recent order of seamless pipe from Japan could be part of an effort to ease the situation. In addition, a Soviet attempt to purchase a turn-key drilling equipment plant (for drill collars and kellys) may eventually lead to a long-term solution to part of the pipe problem.

- *Offshore.* The Soviets are heavily dependent on foreign technology for their offshore development. They recently received the second of three drill ships from Finland and are now negotiating for five offshore jack-up rigs for ice conditions. 25X1

Soviet Economic Aid to Eastern Europe

Oleg Bogomolov, the influential director of the Economic Institute for the World Socialist System, the Soviet Union was feeling the pinch from its economic assistance to its East European allies. He complained that Soviet planned oil deliveries to Eastern Europe are an increasing burden to the Soviet Union. He fixed the Soviet overall subsidy to Eastern Europe at $7.5 billion in 1980—a figure 60 percent less than CIA estimates—mostly resulting from subsidized oil deliveries. His other comments suggest that the East Europeans would have to pursue conservation efforts strenuously for both oil and nonoil products because the USSR would not be increasing its economic support. 25X1 25X1 25X1

Bogomolov also explicitly repudiated any Soviet responsibility for the debts incurred by "our East European allies." He took issue with extensive borrowing from the West to modernize industry, arguing that such support often retarded the development of domestic industries. Officials of the USSR State Bank took a similar line flatly asserting that the USSR would not pay any part of the interest on Poland's 1982 debt and expressing deep resentment toward American efforts to cut credits to the USSR. 25X1 25X1

USSR-Mozambique: More Soviet Advisers

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The Mozambican Government has been dissatisfied with the performance of the Soviet advisers—reportedly numbering as many as 800—already in the country. Their main task has been high-level planning, instruction, and technical support. Seven advisers were reported killed last month by guerrillas about 150 kilometers from Maputo. 25X1 25X1

Moscow apparently intends to increase its counterinsurgency support to Mozambique to protect its influence. It also wants to ensure the survival of the leftist regime, which is under intense pressure from the insurgents. In addition, the USSR values Mozambique as a base from which to exert guerrilla pressure on South Africa and as a center for commercial fishing. 25X1

New Soviet Ambassador to Iran

Vil Konstantinovich Boldyrev has been named Soviet Ambassador to Iran. For the past four years (1978-82) he has been chief of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's Middle Eastern Countries Department, which is responsible for relations with Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkey. 25X1 25X1

A candidate of philological sciences, Boldyrev specialized in Iranian studies and Farsi at Moscow State University. His first assignment was at the Embassy in Tehran (1956-60), where he rapidly advanced from attache to second secretary. While in Tehran, he served as the principal interpreter for then-Ambassador N. M. Pegov. Pegov, now head of the Cadres Abroad Department of the Communist Party's Central Committee, was also Boldyrev's chief later in New Delhi, where Boldyrev acted as a counselor. Within a year, he was promoted to minister-counselor. When he left New Delhi in 1974, he became deputy chief of the Foreign Ministry's South Asian Department, where he remained until his appointment to the Middle Eastern Countries Department. 25X1

New Soviet Ambassador to PDRY

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Vladislav Petrovich Zhukov, who most recently served as Ambassador to the Sudan (December 1978–March 1982), has been appointed Chief of Mission in Aden. From 1973 to 1974 he was deputy chief of the Soviet delegation to the Geneva Middle Eastern Conference. As a first secretary and later as a counselor at the Embassy in Beirut (1966-71), Zhukov was the principal Soviet contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization and with the Lebanese Communist Party. His other assignments have included working as vice consul in Damascus (1956-62) and as a first secretary in Baghdad (1963-64). 25X1

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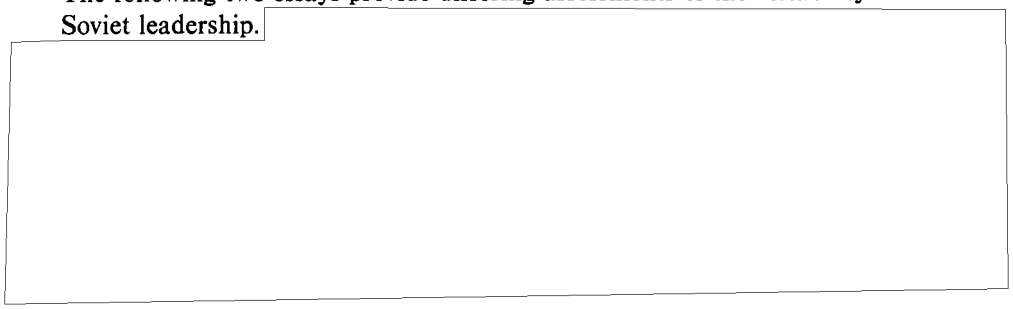
Viewpoint

The following two essays provide differing assessments of the instability in the Soviet leadership.



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Prospects for Brezhnev's Retirement

An assessment of the prospects for Brezhnev's retirement depends on the judgment of how much power he currently exercises and on whether other Politburo members have a sufficiently strong desire to remove him. The evidence, although inconclusive, suggests a growing disparity between Brezhnev's formal authority and his actual power, a decrease in his ability to protect himself from attack, and the presence of stronger incentives than heretofore for other Politburo members to move against him.

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Brezhnev's Political Position

On the surface, Brezhnev remains the preeminent party and state leader. Although he has missed several recent meetings at which protocol required his presence, he continues to perform many of the official functions of his job such as giving speeches, making policy pronouncements, and presiding over important meetings.

Brezhnev's public prominence, however, constitutes virtually the only evidence that he continues to play a significant role in the leadership, and it is not necessarily a valid indicator of how much influence he wields behind the scenes. We cannot ascertain on the basis of Brezhnev's appearances and his reading of prepared statements whether he is now an independent actor, a figurehead who is articulating policies worked out within the Politburo as a whole, or a leader whose preferences cannot be ignored but who is "propped up" and manipulated by a small group of aides and close associates.

There is no question, however, that Brezhnev's health is precarious and deteriorating. The state of his health is germane to the question of his political power, for power surely evaporates if a leader lacks the physical or mental capacity to exercise it. While Brezhnev has apparently recovered from the physical setback he suffered in late March, his condition is degenerative in character and is progressively eroding his mental and physical capabilities. Despite fluctuations from day to day and week to week, no long-term improvement is possible. The contraction of his attention span, the weakening of his powers of concentration, and the curtailment of his working hours have developed over a period of several years and have cumulatively increased his dependence on others. His reliance on the few people who have regular access to him and enjoy his confidence—specifically, his personal staff and Chernenko—certainly reduces his ability to exercise independent influence, and may to some extent make him their creature or puppet.

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Viktor Louis—the Soviet journalist with KGB connections—told US Embassy officials that Brezhnev was no longer able to provide effective leadership. Early this month he indicated that he doubted whether Brezhnev would be able to hold his position much longer. There are also indications that other Politburo members—including Chernenko, Andropov, Gromyko, and Tikhonov—are expanding their roles and receiving a greater share of the limelight than previously. And recent appointments to key KGB positions suggest that Brezhnev may not have effective control over the security apparatus.

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At the same time, unflattering rumors about Brezhnev and his family persist. These and the appearance of indirect public criticism of Brezhnev indicate a breakdown in party discipline and an erosion in the leader's prestige.

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Heretofore, most Politburo members presumably saw an advantage in Brezhnev's continuation in office. They may have collectively believed that his remaining made their own positions secure, while projecting the appearance of leadership unity at a time of serious economic and foreign policy problems. Inability to agree on a replacement for Brezhnev may also have been a key restraining factor. Finally, even those

eager to see him leave may have believed that his poor medical prognosis counseled waiting for nature to take its course rather than taking the risk of attempting to oust him.

The system, however, cannot function indefinitely with an impaired and inactive party head, and the arguments for moving against Brezhnev have become more compelling in recent months. The emergence of Chernenko and Andropov as the leading contenders to succeed Brezhnev has destroyed the equilibrium in the leadership. Other leaders, increasingly aware that Brezhnev's remaining time is limited, now have a greater incentive to make deals to protect their interests once he is gone. Under these circumstances, their awareness that derogatory rumors have tarnished Brezhnev's image, embarrassment at his poor performance in carrying out even the ceremonial and mechanical aspects of his job, and cognizance that his political defenses have weakened, could combine to galvanize Brezhnev's peers into action. Conceivably, lack of confidence in Brezhnev's ability to perform adequately in a summit with President Reagan could give a sense of urgency to the need to resolve the succession.

Political opportunism will count for more than past loyalties in determining where various leaders line up. Even Chernenko would abandon Brezhnev if he concluded that allegiance to his chief had become a political liability and saw the opportunity to strike a bargain that offered him some promise of a share of power in the post-Brezhnev leadership. Chernenko has recently been involved in a wide range of activities and apparently has important responsibilities in several key areas of party work. Although originally dependent on Brezhnev, by now he may have established himself as someone in a position to claim a significant share of the spoils, should he choose to cooperate in a move against Brezhnev.

The Mechanics of Removing Brezhnev

In the final analysis, Brezhnev serves at the pleasure of the Politburo. Any move to replace him would have to involve several key Politburo figures, and would require the acquiescence of a majority of the Politburo membership. In securing the compliance of the Politburo as a whole and ensuring the secrecy of the proceedings, the support of the security forces and military would be important, if not essential. 25X1

If Brezhnev has not already effectively retired in place, he would perhaps be able to block a move to oust him, provided that he learned about a conspiracy before the Politburo as a whole had made a decision. He or Chernenko could call a Politburo meeting and, if he were healthy, he could perhaps dominate the proceedings through his powers as chairman. Alternatively, he could call a meeting of the Central Committee, where he probably enjoys greater support than on the Politburo. Khrushchev prevented his removal in 1957 by such an action. 25X1 25X1

Even if Brezhnev still has considerable power, however, his ability to prevent the emergence of opposition appears to be reduced. With the recent appointment of the relatively unknown Fedorchuk as KGB head, bypassing Brezhnev's long-time crony Tsinev, the KGB's commitment to Brezhnev is no longer assured. The loyalty and effectiveness of the KGB, which monitors leadership communications and is therefore in an excellent position to detect conspiracies, is necessary to any Soviet leader's security. 25X1 25X1

Moreover, Politburo members under Brezhnev have enjoyed greater physical and career security than in the past and consequently have less reason to fear opposing the party leader. Police terror has dissipated as a credible political weapon, and Brezhnev's power of appointment and removal from office has always been constrained to some degree. If he discovered that powerful figures such as Ustinov and Andropov were in league against him, it is not certain that he could marshal Politburo support for their removal. In any event, once the Politburo acted, it would be too late for Brezhnev to reverse the outcome. 25X1 25X1

The Modalities of Retirement

Brezhnev is not likely to step down voluntarily. 25X1 25X1

Brezhnev's desire to cling to office is probably as strong as that of past Communist leaders. 25X1

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In over 20 successions in Communist states since 1917, not once has a party leader relinquished power of his own volition.

If Brezhnev is forced out, however, other leaders might prefer that his retirement appear voluntary to minimize the unsettling effect of the succession on the Polish and other East European regimes. The belief that Brezhnev continues to command considerable respect among rank-and-file party members in the Soviet Union could also impel other leaders to retire
25X1 Brezhnev with full honors.

Under these circumstances, there is a strong possibility that Brezhnev will be kicked upstairs, retaining his prestige but not his power. If confronted with the option of retiring in disgrace or elevation to a senior statesman position, Brezhnev would probably make
25X1 the same choice that Ulbricht made in 1971. The East German leader yielded his party post, but was allowed to retain the presidency briefly until his death.

25X1 Another possibility is that the Politburo would allow Brezhnev formally to retain both the Presidency and the General Secretaryship, while relinquishing the substance of power to the man chosen to be his ultimate successor as party head. This could be done either informally with no public announcement, or by the creation of a new position for the intended heir.
25X1 This situation, however, would not be tenable for very long.

Recent Developments

Several developments suggest that the Politburo may have acted around 24 June to expand Andropov's responsibilities, and perhaps to arrange for his succession to Brezhnev:

- On Thursday, 24 June, the day the Politburo usually holds its regular weekly meeting, Andropov represented the leadership at a Kremlin award ceremony that Brezhnev did not attend. The ceremony was a manufactured event that could have been canceled or delayed if Brezhnev was indisposed.

- On 25 June a European diplomat posted to Czechoslovakia told the American Ambassador that Andropov had formally assumed Suslov's portfolio within the Secretariat. The Soviet Ambassador in Prague subsequently reiterated this, and indicated that the question had only recently been decided. According to the diplomat, preparations were under way to ensure Andropov's orderly succession to Brezhnev, and word to this effect was being passed to East European Communist parties. 25X1

- Brezhnev did not meet as scheduled with Jordan's King Hussein during the King's 25-28 June visit to Moscow, On 3 July, TASS announced that Brezhnev had departed Moscow that day for a rest. 25X1 25X1

Brezhnev usually vacations in the Crimea in July, so his departure does not necessarily have any political significance. Absence from Moscow, however, may increase his isolation. If Brezhnev's Politburo peers have decided to remove him, they might do so while he is out of town. Khrushchev's absence from Moscow facilitated his ouster in 1964.

A Politburo decision to retire Brezhnev would require the calling of a plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. Earlier in June a Yugoslav correspondent in Moscow claimed to have heard that a plenum would be held this summer. More recent reporting, however, suggests that a plenum may be held in September. 25X1

Several months ago Brezhnev called for two plenums this year—one for agriculture and one for management issues. The one dealing with the farm program has been held, and it is conceivable that the next plenum will deal only with management reform. Considering Brezhnev's political circumstances, however, there is a strong possibility that the next plenum—whenever it takes place—will be the occasion for his retirement or a major change in his formal status. 25X1

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Prospects for Brezhnev's Rule and His Succession

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Expectations about what will happen in the Brezhnev succession are necessarily shaped by our understanding of Soviet politics during Brezhnev's tenure as General Secretary. My own view is that Brezhnev dominated the Soviet leadership in the past decade, that his position grew even stronger after the 25th Party Congress in 1976, but that it now is in jeopardy.

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Brezhnev's increasing dominance in the 1970s was reflected in a substantial turnover in the core leadership (the Politburo and the Secretariat) and in the burgeoning Brezhnev personality cult. His power grew despite the manifest decline in his physical capacities and the economy's worsening performance in carrying out policies that were publicly attributed to him and, as I believe, largely originated with him.

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It is often said that Brezhnev ruled by consensus, but this judgment requires qualification. True, unlike Khrushchev, Brezhnev did not force radical organizational reforms on reluctant colleagues, but he made many difficult decisions and adopted strong policies that are not likely to have commanded a consensus. His response to the reduced growth of national income, for example, was not to make balanced reductions in the growth of consumption, defense, and investment, but to make deep cuts in investment growth. The series of decisions reducing growth of investment adopted between 1975 and 1981 adversely affected metallurgy, transportation, and machine building, and probably was vigorously opposed by responsible officials in those sectors. Similarly, his insistence on giving a large share of investment to agriculture, especially his concentration of large agricultural investment in the non-black-earth regions, probably was not a consensual decision.

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Brezhnev's power has also been evident in his leadership arrangements. In his first decade in office (1964-73) he brought a number of established figures into the Politburo, but he was careful thereafter to limit the access of ambitious younger leaders to residence in Moscow and especially to places of power in the Secretariat. As his power continued to grow after 1976 he advanced cronies, such as Konstantin Chernenko and Nikolay Tikhonov, into the Politburo. His aim, it appears, was not only to protect his own position but in time to arrange the succession in favor of his septuagenarian protege, Chernenko. While this strategy enabled Brezhnev to increase his power despite his growing infirmities and the economy's poor performance, it had serious vulnerabilities:

- Production of a debilitated central leadership reportedly leading to calls for restoring vigor to the top bodies.
- Dependence on the central leadership's acquiescence in Brezhnev's choice of an heir presumptive.

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While Mikhail Suslov was alive, Brezhnev moved at a deliberate pace and with characteristic prudence. He did position Tikhonov to succeed Aleksey Kosygin as head of government and effected this even before Kosygin died. Brezhnev was more cautious, however, in advancing Chernenko, who had served during the past two decades as his direct subordinate. Having brought Chernenko into the Secretariat in 1976, and into the Politburo thereafter, Brezhnev allowed him to remain in the fourth-ranking position, after himself, Suslov, and Andrey Kirilenko. When Suslov's death opened a vacancy in the second-ranking post in the Secretariat, however, Brezhnev moved rapidly to assure that Chernenko filled it, despite Kirilenko's seniority.

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At this point the vulnerabilities in Brezhnev's strategy proved costly. Chernenko's credentials as heir presumptive were dubious. He has never been the responsible leader of a regional party committee or even of a government ministry. Almost his entire career has been as a staff official close to Brezhnev. Senior Politburo members have known him as a paper shuffler and as Brezhnev's armor bearer. Brezhnev's effort to establish him as the second-ranking member of the

Secretariat and the heir presumptive evidently provoked powerful resistance. Had Brezhnev not kept his younger proteges at a distance, he might have been better able then to advance one of them as a counterweight to Chernenko and thus appease Chernenko's opponents. Instead, Yuriy Andropov, the head of the KGB, evidently capitalized on the opposition to Chernenko to force his way into the Secretariat.

Andropov's accession to the Secretariat may not have been the outcome of a political process simply. It is hard to conceive of a majority in the Politburo that would freely choose him for the post. The Brezhnev faction itself (Brezhnev, Tikhonov, Pelshe, Kunaev, and Chernenko) and allies like Ustinov and Gromyko had good reason to keep the knowledgeable police chief out of the Secretariat, as did ambitious provincial leaders like Romanov and Shcherbitskiy. Conceivably Andropov found allies among Kirilenko, Grishin, and Gorbachev who were willing to pay the price of accepting Andropov into the Secretariat in order to create a counterweight to Chernenko. Once Andropov decided to make his move in opposition to Chernenko, his 15-year service in the KGB provided him with useful information about his colleagues, including medical details, social ties, political tendencies, policy preferences, incipient political alignments, and personal indiscretions. Such information may have proved valuable in efforts to forge an ad hoc alliance against Chernenko. In addition, the rumors about Brezhnev's family that circulated last April suggest other ways in which such information could be employed. Inasmuch as violations of "Leninist norms"—nepotism, abuse of privilege, and "factionalism"—are widespread in the top leadership, opportunities for political blackmail doubtless are present. Of course, blackmail when the potential victims are so numerous can be a dangerous game.

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Andropov's election to the Secretariat is a turning point in Soviet politics, putting in question the prolonged stability that was based on Brezhnev's political strength. The succession process, whose onset has been proclaimed by observers numerous times in the past, has now truly begun. A triad of senior secretaries has emerged made up of Brezhnev, Chernenko, and Andropov. It differs, however, from earlier triads such as those formed by Joseph Stalin—in 1949 when he brought Khrushchev into the Secretariat to balance Georgi Malenkov—or by Nikita Khrushchev—in 1963 when he brought Nikolai Podgorny into the Secretariat to balance Brezhnev. Brezhnev does not seem to have formed this triad to counterbalance one contender with another; it evidently resulted from Andropov's efforts. The new Secretariat—made up of five full Politburo members (Brezhnev, Chernenko, Andropov, Kirilenko, and Mikhail Gorbachev), two candidate Politburo members (Boris Ponomarev and V. I. Dolgikh) and three non-Politburo members (I. V. Kapitonov, M. V. Zimyanin, and K. V. Rusakov)—must redistribute the organ's tasks and powers in circumstances of intensified political struggle.

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Andropov is now in a position to choose between two strategies: to lie low until Brezhnev's departure, when he would try to assert himself from his vantage point in the Secretariat, or to try immediately to enhance his powers in order to limit Chernenko's. The second strategy risks an early confrontation with Brezhnev, perhaps before Andropov is ready for it, and would probably produce intense conflict that could not readily be concealed from the outside world. The first, quiescent strategy risks permitting Chernenko to gain

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control over the key levers of power, leaving Andropov in an inferior position. Although the strategy might permit short-term surface stability, it would probably lead to intense conflict once Brezhnev left the scene if Chernenko attempted to consolidate his power against strong, perhaps widespread, opposition.

Prospects for the succession also have been radically affected by Andropov's promotion. For several years Chernenko has served as Brezhnev's alter ego, compensating for such physical infirmities as Brezhnev's poor hearing and speech articulation and his need to rest even after short periods of activity. Having now shown that he plans to make Chernenko his heir presumptive, Brezhnev cannot draw back easily even though his intent has provoked resistance. Ironically, just when he has finally shown a determination to arrange his succession, his ability to do so has been brought into question. Brezhnev is wed to Chernenko as his alter ego and heir presumptive both; Chernenko is unlikely to try to break free despite the tensions generated by such closeness and mutual dependence.

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Brezhnev's recognition that he needs an alter ego and that his own days as General Secretary are numbered (granted the number he has in mind may be as high as a thousand) might lead him to go far in conferring authority on Chernenko. In the past, such arrangements made in advance have eased the succession. In this instance, however, there is reason to question whether Chernenko, because of his poor qualifications and the opposition he has already provoked, could consolidate his position once Brezhnev departed. But Chernenko may never be put to the test. The Brezhnev-Chernenko duo's capacity to maintain its strength, or even to protect itself against opponents, is uncertain. The KGB cannot be relied on to protect Brezhnev against palace conspiracies because of Andropov's continuing ties to KGB personnel and the appointment of one of his regional subordinates (Fedorchuk) to replace him as KGB head. Perhaps Brezhnev's weakened political authority will encourage resistance to his measures and increased criticism of the economy's performance. Already individual leaders are withholding support from favored Brezhnev measures, such as decentralization in the food program.

If this analysis is valid, key inferences follow:

- In the period ahead we may expect an increased drawing together of Brezhnev and Chernenko because of their mutual dependence, as well as the emergence of polarized factions supporting and opposing this duo.

- Leadership instability is now probable, perhaps leading to a weakening of Brezhnev's authority by attacks from an anti-Brezhnev faction or, less likely, to a Brezhnev counterstroke against Andropov. Brezhnev's capacity to engage in productive summitry consequently cannot be assumed.

- The likelihood that the Brezhnev succession will be initiated by his ouster or by a medical episode precipitated by a domestic political crisis is now substantially higher than before Andropov entered the Secretariat.

- If the Brezhnev-Chernenko duo were to survive and maintain its political strength, Chernenko's chances of succeeding to Brezhnev's post would improve, although his chances of subsequently consolidating power still would not be good. The outcome might be a prolonged succession lasting several years before the leadership once more became stable.

- Were Andropov to succeed Brezhnev, the element of uncertainty would be appreciably heightened. Granted, Chernenko could surprise us by displaying personal qualities and far-reaching goals we never thought he possessed, but our understanding of Andropov is even less developed. Without our realizing it, he may possess the superior intelligence, ambition, drive, and tactical skill that would enable him to defeat his rivals and quickly consolidate power.

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In any event, the superannuated condition of the leadership will rapidly create vacancies in the succession that an able General Secretary would fill with his own people. A strong new general secretary would be in a position to address the regime's deep and long neglected problems. While he would probably not

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institute fundamental reforms in institutions and practices, he might substantially alter the country's foreign and domestic policies to enhance the regime's performance and strengthen his control over the machinery of rule. Whether Andropov or any other succession candidate has the capacity and political imagination to take control and make such changes is questionable, but the opportunity is there. Someone may try to seize it.

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