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SUPREME SOVIET ELECTION SPEECHES:
POLITICAL AND POLICY SIGNIFICANCE


Summary

The recent Supreme Soviet election speeches, coming so close to Andropov's death and Chernenko's selection as party leader, provided a unique opportunity for making some inferences about the power and policy alignments within the Kremlin hierarchy. Considerable caution must be used in drawing any conclusions on the basis of such evidence as we do not know what politicking went into speech preparation and in some cases do not have the complete text. Nonetheless, all top leaders addressed a broad range of domestic and foreign policy issues in their speeches and shed some light on their view of Chernenko. 



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These speeches suggest that no dramatic policy changes are likely from the new Soviet leadership in the near term and that Chernenko's Politburo colleagues will be cautious in support of his policy lead. It appears from the speeches that Chernenko's principal supporters are Brezhnev's former colleagues, Ustinov and some Politburo independents. Most of Andropov's closest supporters and proteges seem less enthusiastic about his selection. 

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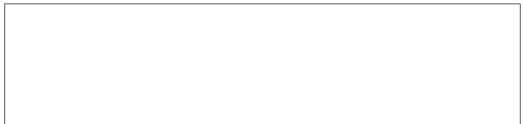
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Other recent evidence indicates that Chernenko is quickly garnering both the titles and honorific references it took his predecessors many months or even years to earn:

- o Several of his colleagues have used the formula "Politburo headed by Chernenko" to designate his position.
- o The highlighting of Chernenko's remarks at the 25 February Politburo meeting departed from former practice when remarks were reported without attribution.
- o Marshal Ogarkov indicated that Chernenko was the Chairman of the Defense Council at a reception for foreign diplomats.
- o [REDACTED] Chernenko is the leading candidate for the Presidency of the Supreme Soviet, a decision that could be taken as early as next month's Supreme Soviet session. [REDACTED]

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The effort to promote Chernenko's image seems to reflect a trend toward institutionalizing the position of the General Secretary as the Soviet Union's preeminent leader. This trend is to Chernenko's advantage, but such symbols of personal authority probably make him appear more powerful than he actually is. The election speeches contained some striking variations in praise of Chernenko indicating that the political situation is still fluid and that he still has a struggle on his hands. Moreover, the recent remarks of Soviet Politburo members in India and Syria, in speaking for the new leadership, placed emphasis on the collectivity of the new team, especially in foreign affairs. [REDACTED]

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This situation suggests that Chernenko cannot count on a coalition or even a stable majority to support his policy agenda, but will have to deal with a fluid political situation where support must be earned on a given issue. Given these constraints, he may prove to be a leader in the consensual mode promoting policies that emphasize continuity rather than sharp breaks with the past. [REDACTED]

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Beyond indicating some measure of Chernenko's political progress, these speeches also reveal leadership thinking on key policy questions.

- o US-Soviet relations: Resumption of the US-Soviet dialogue is clearly a major issue on Chernenko's agenda.
- o The Andropov legacy: Most policies associated with Andropov, such as labor discipline, the importance of scientific/technological innovation, the ongoing experiment in enterprise independence and the anticorruption campaign received support. One effect of Chernenko's support for Andropov's program is to deprive his potential opposition, comprised of Andropov allies, of a rallying point.
- o Resource allocations: The need to maintain the country's defense capabilities was acknowledged by all; certain speakers chose to highlight consumer needs while others gave it scant attention. Chernenko, despite his past record as a consumer advocate, implied that while consumption would not be cut, its share would not increase.
- o Economic reform: Soviet leaders stressed the need to adopt reforms that would be fully operational by the beginning of the 12th Five-Year Plan but they were vague on specifics. Chernenko criticized ministries that stifle initiative and called for greater autonomy for regional/enterprise authorities. [redacted]

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The order of the election speeches also provide a good indication of rankings in the new leadership.

- o Gorbachev, ranking third after Chernenko and Tikhonov, appears to be the party's unofficial "second secretary" and is now well positioned to succeed Chernenko if he can hold on to this spot.
- o Romanov, Gorbachev's main rival at present, is still back in the pack in seventh place.
- o Party Control Committee Chairman Solomentsev, who was just promoted to full membership in the Politburo in December, ranks much higher than his junior status would warrant, perhaps indicating that a further promotion might be in the offing. [redacted]

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Introduction

Elections to the USSR Supreme Soviet occur every five years. Although the results are predetermined, the regime devotes considerable effort to the process. Each leader in the Politburo and Secretariat makes a speech in his assigned electoral district. These speeches typically cover the broad range of Soviet domestic and foreign policy and appear to reflect the personal interest and stamp of the speaker. Coming so close to Andropov's death and Chernenko's selection as new party leader, the recent election speeches provide a unique perspective on both policy and power relationships within the new leadership. In this paper, we have used them to:

- o look at the relative support for Chernenko within the leadership, focusing on accolades accorded him by his colleagues;
- o assess the relative standing of leaders within the ruling elite;
- o examine signals of leadership thinking on a number of key policy questions--economic priorities, economic reform, the discipline and anticorruption campaign, and US-Soviet relations, among others.

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Considerable caution, of course, must be used in analyzing these speeches. We do not know about the politicking that went into their drafting or the review process used to clear them for delivery. For some leaders (those representing electoral districts in the provinces), moreover, we do not have a complete version of the speech. While Pravda provides an account of all speeches, portions of the speeches--particularly the foreign policy section--are often summarized.

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Kremlin Politics

Tributes to Chernenko

The ground rules of Kremlin politics require that the General Secretary's colleagues give him a measure of praise. In the past, such praise was usually meager early in the General Secretary's tenure, but bordered on sycophancy as he consolidated power. For Andropov and now Chernenko, these tributes have followed soon after their accession to power. Nevertheless, there are obvious differences in the degree to

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which various leaders heaped praise on Chernenko suggesting that the political situation is fluid and that room for maneuver still exists (see chart). [redacted]

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Reservations About Chernenko. Those leaders most closely associated with Andropov were coolest toward Chernenko. Such treatment was particularly evident in the remarks of Foreign Minister Gromyko and Party Secretary Ryzhkov and only slightly less apparent in the comments of Party Secretary Gorbachev and Chairman of the Russian Republic Council of Ministers Vorotnikov.

- o Gromyko declared that Andropov's "name will live forever" but said of Chernenko only that he "devoted his organizational talents" to implementing party policy.
- o Gorbachev described Andropov as an "outstanding figure" but suggested limits on Chernenko's authority by noting his great contribution to the "collective activity" of the Central Committee.
- o Vorotnikov depicted Andropov's death in grief-stricken terms, and coolly referred to Chernenko as a "talented organizer of the masses."
- o Party Secretary Ryzhkov failed to ascribe a single favorable quality to Chernenko. [redacted]

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Two other leaders, First Deputy Premier Aliyev and Party Secretary Romanov--who assumed key leadership posts in Moscow during Andropov's rule--also appeared to have reservations about Chernenko while warmly praising Andropov.

- o Romanov characterized Chernenko only as a "name well known in the country."
- o Aliyev, although more positive about Chernenko than Romanov, did not elaborate on his leadership role--saying only that he made a "weighty contribution" to the elaboration of party policy. [redacted]

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Chernenko's Supporters. Most leaders described Chernenko as "an outstanding figure of the party and state" and found other aspects of his personality, leadership role, or activity to praise. For example:

- o Moscow party leader Grishin described Chernenko as a staunch Marxist-Leninist... and unshakeable fighter for the implementation of CPSU policy."

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- [REDACTED]
- o Georgian party leader Shevardnadze and party secretary Kapitonov emphasized Chernenko's leadership-- Shevardnadze saying he "headed" the Politburo and Kapitonov noting he led the party's "combat headquarters."
 - o Regional leaders Shcherbitskiy (Ukraine) and Kunayev (Kazakhstan) pointed out that he was "a loyal colleague of such outstanding figures" as Brezhnev and Andropov.

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Defense Minister Ustinov's remarks about Chernenko stand out from the rest, as he alone among Andropov's closest supporters effusively praised the new General Secretary during his election speech. He cited Chernenko's organizational talents, underscored his contribution both to Marxist-Leninist theory and the formulation of foreign and domestic policy, and mentioned his relationship to Brezhnev and Andropov. His comments were much more laudatory than his lukewarm references to Chernenko in his Armed Forces Day Speech on 23 February and indicated that for now he is in Chernenko's camp. [REDACTED]

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Ustinov may have extracted a price for this support. He has moved ahead of Gromyko in the leadership rankings and may also have gotten some commitments from Chernenko about defense allocations. Ustinov stressed in both his Supreme Soviet speech and his remarks to the Ministry of Defense that Chernenko is committed to improving the defense capability of the Soviet Union. In a message directed perhaps as much at Chernenko and the party leadership as at his own military constituency, Ustinov stated: "we military men are well aware of how much he [Chernenko] does for the strengthening of the country's defense" and combat readiness. [REDACTED]

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Chernenko's Status in the Leadership

On balance, the election speeches and related leadership activity have served to promote Chernenko's image as a capable leader and have clearly elevated him above his leadership colleagues. The rapidity with which the honorific formula-- "Politburo headed by Chernenko"--has gained currency is particularly significant. Brezhnev waited five years for this accolade, and Andropov needed seven months before the term became commonly used. In Chernenko's case, the term was used by several of his leadership colleagues almost immediately after he assumed office. Soviet media accounts of the electoral meetings at which Ustinov, Grishin, Romanov, Premier

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Tikhonov, Aliyev and KGB Chairman Chebrikov addressed their constituencies, moreover, also indicated that an honorary Presidium was elected consisting of "the Politburo headed by Chernenko." [redacted]

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Events surrounding the Supreme Soviet nominating speeches also point to an enhanced leadership role for Chernenko. At the Armed Forces Day reception, Marshal Ogarkov, Chief of the General Staff, referred to Chernenko as head of the Defense Council, the country's top forum for national security decision making. Chernenko's leading role was highlighted in the Politburo meeting notes published on 25 February, which identified him as speaking at the meeting and summarized his remarks. (Since the practice of publishing Politburo summaries was initiated in 1982, the views expressed have been studiously reported without attribution.) Chernenko's address on 6 March to the party apparatus served to project a vigorous leadership style and suggested he was moving fast to exercise leadership over the apparatus. Finally, the communique on the Politburo meeting held on 7 March referred to the "propositions and conclusions" contained in Chernenko's recent speeches. [redacted]

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While most indicators point to a growing consolidation of support for the General Secretary, some signs of resistance remain. Both Ustinov in India and Aliyev in Syria conveyed greetings to their hosts from Chernenko, Tikhonov and Gromyko--a formulation that suggests collectivity in the foreign policy area at least. The Soviet media also has not reported Ogarkov's reference to Chernenko's role on the Defense Council. Pravda, moreover, did not report that a number of election meetings for Politburo members elected "an honorary Presidium consisting of the "Politburo headed by Chernenko". Such omissions indicate that a formal Politburo decision requiring a uniform treatment of Chernenko has not yet been taken and that there is some resistance to the trend. [redacted]

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Nonetheless, Chernenko has gotten off to a good start. The line of march in highlighting his leading role seems clear and suggests that he will gain the Presidency when the Supreme Soviet convenes in April. Most Soviets who comment on this subject have speculated that he will get the nod. Failure to do so--and particularly the appointment of an Andropov supporter, such as Gromyko, to the post--would signal major political weakness on his part. [redacted]

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Leadership Rankings

The electoral campaign also provides an opportunity to gauge the political standing of the entire leadership. Political status is measured by the order in which speeches are given. The most junior members speak first while the Politburo's most influential members are assigned speaking slots close to election day. A decline in rank from one election to the next, moreover, could signal political vulnerability; Aleksandr Shelepin and Dmitriy Polyanskiy spoke first in 1974 and were removed from the Politburo in 1975 and 1976 respectively. [redacted]

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On the other hand, an improved ranking in the order of speakers points to enhanced political status. Gorbachev delivered his speech just before Tikhonov and Chernenko, indicating that he now ranks third in the Politburo and is the party's unofficial "second secretary." As the ranking secretary behind Chernenko at the time of Andropov's death and probably the only serious rival to Chernenko's election, Gorbachev's move up probably stems from the political bargaining that brought Chernenko to the top. The substance of Gorbachev's speech gave no indication that he had taken on the ideological portfolio--a traditional preserve of the "second secretary"--but stressed domestic economic issues, which could indicate that his responsibilities for the supervision of agriculture have been broadened. Romanov, Gorbachev's likely rival in the next succession, was ranked seventh within the Politburo, indicating that he still has some political ground to cover. [redacted]

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Gorbachev's prefatory references to Chernenko in his election speech suggest that his rise in the rankings cannot be accounted for by his support for Chernenko's candidacy, but other leaders did appear to profit from their championing of the General Secretary. Ustinov now ranks fourth above Gromyko, who was cool in his treatment of Chernenko. Shevardnadze moved up several notches among candidate members, and Grishin, whose laudatory comments have also been noted, now outranks other regional chiefs. [redacted]

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As the two latest additions to the Politburo, Solomentsev and Vorotnikov should have been ranked below all other Politburo members in their speaking turns. Solomentsev, however, was vaulted above several Politburo members senior to him, while Vorotnikov remained at the bottom. Such a sharp departure from rank order suggests that Vorotnikov may no longer be a leading contender to replace Premier Tikhonov, who

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has indicated to foreigners that he may soon retire.

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Conversely, Solomentsev's move raises the possibility that he threw his support to Chernenko at a crucial moment in succession maneuverings. Perhaps significantly, Solomentsev's speech covered a broad sweep of Soviet domestic policy and not merely the work of the Party Control Committee which he heads. If Tikhonov does retire, Solomentsev might be a strong candidate to replace him. [redacted]

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The International Situation

The round of election speeches as well as Chernenko's meetings with foreign heads of state after Andropov's funeral indicates that he is already the regime's most authoritative spokesman on international affairs. His speech contained the most definitive treatment of East-West relations, and it announced what amounted to the Kremlin's platform on foreign affairs. [redacted]

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The attention given by Pravda and other central newspapers to remarks by Ustinov and Gromyko gave the impression that they also will be major players on foreign policy. Despite his ranking in leadership speeches, Gromyko's new prominence in protocol messages to foreign governments since Andropov's death suggests that his foreign policy role, at least, may have been strengthened by the succession. While the heads of the Central Committee's two foreign departments also got extensive play in Pravda, the remarks on foreign policy by other members of the Leadership were given customary short shrift. Even Gorbachev's remarks on foreign affairs were reported only briefly, while his assessment of the state of the economy was reported at length. [redacted]

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Relations with the US

The speeches left no doubt that restarting the US-Soviet dialogue is a dominant issue on Chernenko's agenda. Chernenko's speech was addressed largely to the US-Soviet impasse and dealt only cursorily with other international issues. Gromyko touched briefly on the Middle East, calling again for an international conference, but no other regional crises were addressed in the leaders' remarks as reported in the central press. [redacted]

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The speeches gave no indication that Moscow is less determined to frustrate what it claims are the Reagan Administration's efforts to shift the terms of reference in US-Soviet negotiations in Washington's favor. Many leaders underscored their insistence on a return to the past by posing US embrace of "equality and equal security"--the guiding principles written into the 1974 Vladivostok accord and the 1979 SALT II treaty--as a necessary condition for renewing the relationship. Soviet media commentaries on the election speeches singled out what was said to be their message that Moscow would not "bow to diktat" and agree to conduct negotiations "on Mr. Reagan's terms." [REDACTED]

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Chernenko and Gorbachev, nonetheless, made a point of expressing optimism that the status quo ante could be restored. Chernenko cited opposition to current US policy among some Western leaders and a "considerable segment" of the US public in predicting that "developments will eventually be turned around." Gorbachev--in one of the passages of his speech disseminated abroad but not published in Soviet papers--predicted that "realism will take the upper hand in the leading circles of Western countries," and "an aspiration for reaching accords will emerge." Gromyko and Boris Ponomarev, head of the Central Committee's International Department, were even more explicit than Chernenko in suggesting that Moscow is still counting on the pressures of Western public opinion to steer US policy in a more favorable direction. Gromyko claimed that popular anti-war sentiment cannot now be "disregarded" by Western leaders. [REDACTED]

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Gromyko and Ustinov were the most critical of US policy and seemingly the most rigid in their conditions for a resumption of dialogue. Ustinov claimed that US expressions of interest in serious negotiations were a "deception," and he insisted that a "return to the former state of Soviet-US relations was needed to open the way to a resumption of talks. Gromyko suggested that the Administration renounce its "crusade" against the Soviet system as a first step toward improved relations. [REDACTED]

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Chernenko was relatively restrained in his rhetoric about the Administration and called for movement from Washington on more specific issues. He evoked the prospect of a "dramatic breakthrough" in the US-Soviet relationship if the US were to "act" on five secondary arms control fronts, including the unratified 1976 threshold nuclear test ban treaty, a comprehensive test ban, a nuclear freeze, and an agreement restricting weapons in outer space. He appeared to stress the

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[redacted]

prospects for a treaty limiting chemical weapons, suggesting that the prerequisites for resolving outstanding differences are "beginning to ripen." [redacted]

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By sidestepping the impasse on INF and START and calling for movement on what might be less contentious issues, Chernenko gave the impression of looking for areas where some early progress could be made--an impression that Soviet media commentaries on his address have attempted to foster. Chernenko gave no signal, however, that Moscow was prepared to move on its own part to resolve the substantial US-Soviet differences remaining on the issues he raised. [redacted]

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Cuba, China

While relations with other Communist countries held the usual pride of place in the published remarks of Soviet leaders, their treatment was routine. Measured against the passing mention given the bloc and the Third World, however, Chernenko gave unusual attention to Cuba. He criticized American pressure on Havana and, although offering no new commitments, promised that Moscow would be "on Cuba's side" in "fair weather and in storm." A Central Committee official in effect confirmed on Soviet radio three days later that Chernenko was trying to send a message, singling out the passage on Cuba and predicting that its message would be "easily deciphered by those to whom it is addressed." The remarks were probably designed to reassure Cuba in the wake of Grenada and to ease frictions between Havana and Moscow reportedly prompted by the coup against Maurice Bishop and the subsequent invasion. [redacted]

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Only Chernenko and Gromyko--along with the head of the Central Committee's socialist countries department--were reported as commenting on China, suggesting that the effort to improve relations with Beijing may be a sensitive question in the Kremlin. Their remarks underscored the impression that Moscow is gratified by the progress that has been made in expanding bilateral cultural and economic contacts but does not anticipate any dramatic breakthroughs in the foreseeable future. Chernenko's authoritative reaffirmation that Moscow would not make any moves "to the prejudice of third countries" was a gesture to Hanoi. [redacted]

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Domestic PolicyGeneral Economic Themes

There was general unanimity on many major economic themes, with variations often due to the speaker's area of responsibility. Most of the speakers directly attributed the economic upturn last year to measures initiated at the November 1982 plenum, and Chernenko and others specifically identified the campaign for discipline and order as a key factor. Criticism of specific economic sectors was generally soft-pedaled. The most frequently mentioned laggards were the construction and transportation sectors but several leaders (including Aliyev who is responsible for this sector) contended that transport was improving. [redacted]

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Virtually all endorsed the 1984 campaign for over fulfillment of targets for labor productivity and cost reduction that Andropov advocated at the December plenum. Chernenko, in his maiden speech as General Secretary in February, gave this a new twist by proposing that the rubles earned from this effort be directed toward "improving the conditions of work and life of Soviet people, medical services and housing construction." Only three of the election speakers picked up on this theme. [redacted]

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Looking to the future, the leadership uniformly recognized intensive growth as the economic imperative and agreed that reforms in economic management and the acceleration of scientific-technical progress were prerequisites. All speakers agreed on the need for comprehensive programs to attack problem areas that span departmental lines. The food program was most frequently mentioned, followed by the consumer and energy programs. [redacted]

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Resource Allocations

Leadership remarks on resource allocations provided no clear picture of how the new regime will resolve the demands of competing claimants--consumption, investment, and defense--in the next Five-Year Plan (1986-90). The range of apparent differences over resource priorities, however, suggests that this issue may become increasingly heated as the leadership

*In Soviet parlance intensive growth refers to more efficient use of economic inputs such as labor and capital where as extensive growth results from using more economic inputs.

[redacted]

grapples with the task of preparing guidelines for the new plan. [redacted]

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Defense. There was virtual unanimity among the speakers on the need to improve the country's defense capability, but most described this as a longstanding concern--not one that required any new diversion of resources. Ustinov said that the Soviet Armed Forces already had "everything necessary" to defend the country, and devoted considerable attention to problems of the economy in general, noting that a stronger economy would strengthen Soviet prestige in the international arena. Chernenko noted that the Soviet Union had diverted considerable resources to defense during the past five years but "did not even think of curtailing social programs." [redacted]

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Romanov and Shcherbitskiy appeared to stray somewhat from the above formulations, possibly indicating a belief that additional resources are needed for defense. Romanov said that the Communist Party "will equip" the Army and Navy with everything necessary--a slight deviation from the prevailing line that the armed forces already have everything they need. Shcherbitskiy's remark that the Soviets would return to detente "only when the defense might of the Soviet Union and our allies is sufficient" could also be interpreted as a call for increased resources. [redacted]

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Consumer Needs. There was a marked difference in the treatment of consumer needs by various leaders, but no hint that a significant increase was being contemplated in the share of designated resources for the consumer sector. Vorotnikov took the lead in promoting the consumers' cause, noting that the party "strictly holds to task those who consider this to be a secondary objective of economic activity." Each industrial enterprise, he said, "regardless of its departmental jurisdiction," must be involved in the production of goods for the people. Tikhonov and Gorbachev also gave strong emphasis to fulfilling consumer needs. [redacted]

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Others were more restrained. Chernenko said that "we did not even think of" diverting funds from social programs to the defense effort, but did not suggest a need to increase resources in the consumer area. Romanov joined Aliyev, Demichev and Solomentsev in calling for the development of "sensible" patterns of consumption--remarks reminiscent of concerns once voiced by former Party Secretary Suslov about the excesses of "consumerism." [redacted]

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[REDACTED]

Chernenko's scant attention to the consumer sector relative to that of some of his colleagues appears to be a departure from his previous stand on this issue. During the Brezhnev years, he was generally regarded as the regime's leading consumer advocate and had warned of grave consequences if this sector was slighted. His new rhetoric may stem from the broader responsibility he now has as General Secretary, his need to consolidate support among Politburo members who might oppose diversion of funds from defense or investment, or a pragmatic judgment that the workers must be made to realize that the only source for increased "well-being" is a boost in their own productivity. [REDACTED]

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Investment. Although virtually every leader picked up on the party's call to accelerate scientific and technical progress, only a few seemed to see any investment implications in adopting such a course. Georgian party leader Shevardnadze said that an increase in industrial potential required the preferential development of sectors that determine scientific and technical progress: electrical engineering, instrument making, the chemical industry, and others. Tikhonov--putting in a plug for a sector he has favored in the past--observed that in the conditions of a scientific and technical revolution, machine building was becoming "more than ever before a powerful accelerator" of economic growth. Gorbachev, too, declared that the development of machine building "must be made a priority matter." This remark is consistent with the new investment priorities of the food program but may also have been intended to broaden his support by appealing to representatives of the industrial sector--a natural constituency of his likely rival, Romanov. As the champion of the consumer sector, however, Vorotnikov seemed determined to dampen such notions and endorsed the fuller utilization of the country's scientific and technical potential as a means of boosting the economy--"without any additional investment." [REDACTED]

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Economic Reform

Andropov did not make much headway on economic reform, but he did take some action in this area, and the election speeches indicate that his approach is going forward. In general, the new leadership is in agreement with Andropov over the urgent need to adopt reforms that will be fully operational by the beginning of the 12th Five-Year Plan period (1986). They also uniformly endorsed the economic experiment proposed last July--Andropov's major initiative that attempted to increase the economic independence of five ministries. The leaders were, however, even more vague than Andropov had been about the form that future changes will take. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

Andropov consistently had said that perfecting the economic system involved changes in three distinct areas--the organizational structure, the planning process, and the "economic mechanism" or the system of economic levers and incentives. None of the election speakers picked up on the formulation in this fashion. [REDACTED]

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The speeches did indicate, however, that some decisions about changing the economic mechanism have been or are about to be made. Vorotnikov, Romanov and Tikhonov noted that the Central Committee was working on a "program for the comprehensive improvement of the entire management mechanism to bring it fully into line with the economy of developed socialism and the nature of the tasks being resolved today." Tikhonov said that this work would be completed "in the very near future," and Chernenko indicated that the main guidelines for improving economic machinery "have been defined." Romanov provided the only specifics on the program, saying that it was aimed at "improving the structure of ministries and departments." [REDACTED]

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This last point appears to be consistent with Chernenko's publicly stated view that the over-bureaucratized ministerial system stifles change in the economic mechanism. The desire to break the hold of the ministerial bureaucracy, in fact, may have been one of the motivations behind Chernenko's strong endorsement of Andropov's call for giving greater initiative and independence to regional or enterprise authorities. He called on "national level economic bodies" to hand over "some of their present duties" to subordinate organizations claiming that "local initiative is fettered under the pretext of curbing parochialism." This message would appeal to provincial authorities, Chernenko's main power base. As Andropov before him, however, Chernenko made it clear that this process will not go too far and that there will be no significant transfer of control over key economic decisions such as new investment or price formation. [REDACTED]

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Labor Discipline/Anticorruption Campaign

Chernenko's speech appeared to endorse Andropov's campaign to make workers work harder, make management more efficient and halt the waste and theft of state property. Andropov evidently viewed this as a long term policy option designed to restore personal accountability in all sectors of Soviet society. [REDACTED]

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The emphasis on eliminating corrupt practices, particularly among the party elite, was an important component of the campaign. Andropov's removal of some Brezhnev clients sent a strong signal that party members were not above the law and that the abuse of privilege tolerated by his predecessor was about to end. [REDACTED]

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Although Chernenko's past ties to the Brezhnev machine might have given him good reason to deemphasize this aspect of Andropov's policy, he has chosen for the present not to do so. Instead, in his election speech, he strongly endorsed it as a line "which will be pursued permanently and undeviatingly. There will be no indulgence to anybody in this respect." These remarks were followed on 7 March by a Tass report that the Party Control Committee has expelled the Deputy Minister of Tractor and Agricultural Machine Building from the party for abuse of office. The expulsion serves to underscore Chernenko's pledge to continue the anticorruption campaign. [REDACTED]

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Because so many higher officials are themselves vulnerable to charges of corruption, they would probably resist the expansion of the campaign. Indeed, most of the leadership failed to discuss this issue and were much more at ease in treating labor discipline as one of the keys to increased labor productivity. Only Gorbachev, Chebrikov, and Zimyanin endorsed the effort to attack corruption, with Gorbachev emphasizing that "the demands of social discipline and the norms of morality are the same for everyone." [REDACTED]

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Chernenko's motives for supporting the anticorruption effort are not clear. Possibly he felt it would not be politically wise to sound a retreat so soon after Andropov's death. The pervasiveness of corruption within the system, moreover, may have led him to believe that he can use the campaign for his own political ends. [REDACTED]

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Politics and Policy: Systemic Implications

Chernenko has already received more tribute from his colleagues than his predecessors did in a comparable time. Unless he makes serious political mistakes or becomes seriously ill, this trend will probably continue and his stature and authority within the leadership could grow. Nevertheless, his success in attaining the trappings of power may be attributable to the trend toward institutionalizing the position of General Secretary as the Soviet Union's preeminent leader. Based on the two recent successions, the Politburo

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seems increasingly inclined to vest the trappings of authority in the party leader from the beginning. Neither Andropov nor Chernenko had to fight as hard as Khrushchev or Brezhnev to get them. [redacted]

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This recent practice is not irreversible and does not make Chernenko less vulnerable to maneuvering against him. In fact, Chernenko may not be as powerful as many of the public indications would suggest. He may have gotten these tributes and titles because he is the leader rather than because of the power he has. Even so Chernenko, like Andropov before him, clearly benefits from this process. The period of consolidation has been shortened, and he has less ground to cover. He can concentrate on achieving more lasting political victories on the personnel and policy fronts. [redacted]

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It is not yet clear, however, whether he will be able to place his personal stamp on the direction of Soviet domestic and foreign policy. Although warm words of praise for Chernenko were offered by most of the leadership, those that most profusely praised him did not always appear to follow his policy lead. In fact, there appeared to be little correlation in the election speeches between support for Chernenko and individual policy preferences. On particular issues, former Andropov loyalists and Chernenko boosters lined up on the same side.

- o On US-Soviet relations both Chernenko and Gorbachev, who gives no indication of being a strong Chernenko backer, were somewhat optimistic about the prospect for positive developments in the future. In contrast Ustinov, who apparently supports Chernenko, appeared more skeptical.
- o Regarding the anticorruption campaign Chernenko echoed the views of Andropov's closest supporters on the need to fight corruption, while his own supporters were silent on the issue.
- o On consumer issues, Chernenko seemed to take a more moderate position than he has taken in the past, while his supporters and opponents were on both sides of the issue.
- o Concerning the need to trim the bloated ministerial system, Chernenko seemed to be at odds with a key supporter, Tikhonov, but probably in tune with regional Politburo leaders. [redacted]

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[REDACTED]

These examples suggest that Chernenko does not have policy support across the board--even from his backers. He will have to deal with fluid political coalitions whose support for particular policy initiatives must be earned. He will need considerable political skill to frame a policy approach that garners sufficient support, addresses the principal problems facing the Soviet Union, and placates opponents. Chernenko will have to proceed cautiously, moreover, to avoid creating an issue around which a broad based opposition might form. Such political facts of life argue for a "consensual" leadership style and increase the likelihood of policy continuity rather than sharp breaks with past practices.

[REDACTED] 25X1

Relative Political Standings as Revealed in Speech Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Comment</u>
2 March	Chernenko	Topmost slot, as expected
1 March	Tikhonov	Traditional for Premier
29 February	Gorbachev	Senior Secretary under Chernenko
28 February	Ustinov	Defense Minister...gained in rankings since last election, 1979
27 February	Gromyko	Foreign Minister...preceded Ustinov in last election
25 February	Grishin	Moscow party chief...now precedes other regional chiefs
25 February	Romanov	Secretary...shows he is not even close second in rank to Gorbachev
24 February	Shcherbitskiy	Ukrainian party chief...preceded Grishin in 1979
24 February	Solomentsev	Heads party discipline unit...has high standing for new full member of Politburo
24 February	Ponomarev	Secretary, and senior among candidate members of Politburo
23 February	Kurfayev	Kazakh party chief and full Politburo member...under Brezhnev, outranked other regional party chiefs
23 February	Aliyev Vorotnikov	Aliyev is a First Deputy Premier, Vorotnikov the RSFSR Premier...are in proper rank as new full Politburo members
23 February	Kuznetsov	Candidate Politburo Member
21 February	Dolgikh	Candidate Politburo Member
21 February	Shevardnadze	Candidate Politburo Member
20 February	Chebrikov	Candidate Politburo Member
20 February	Demichev	Candidate Politburo Member
18 February	Ryzhkov	CPSU Secretary
18 February	Kapitonov	CPSU Secretary
18 February	Zimyanin	CPSU Secretary
10 February	Rusakov	CPSU Secretary
9 February	Ligachev	CPSU Secretary

PRAISE OF CHERNENKO

LEADER ¹	"OUTSTANDING FIGURE OF OUR PARTY & STATE"	"HEAD OF POLITBURO"	COMRADE-IN-ARMS OF BREZHNEV & ANDROPOV	UNANIMOUSLY EJECTED	OUTSTANDING PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	MEETING ELECTED HONORING PRESIDIUM OF POLITBURO "HEADED" BY CHERNENKO
Aliyev (M)	XXX					XXX
Gorbachev (M, S)					XXX	
Grishin (M)	XXX	XXX ³		XXX	XXX	XXX
Gramyko (M)			XXX	XXX		
Kunayev (M)	XXX		XXX	XXX	XXX	
Romanov (M, S)				XXX		XXX
Shcherbitskiy (M)	XXX ⁴		XXX	XXX	XXX	
Solamentsev (M)				XXX	XXX	
Tikhonov (M)	XXX			XXX	XXX	XXX ⁵
Ustinov (M)	XXX		XXX	XXX	XXX	XXX
Vorotnikov (M)				XXX	XXX	
Chebrikov (C)	XXX			XXX	XXX	XXX
Demichev (C)	XXX			XXX	XXX	
Dolgikh (C, S)	XXX			XXX	XXX	
Kuznetsov (C)	XXX			XXX	XXX	
Ponomarev (C, S)	XXX					
Shevardnadze (C)		XXX			XXX	
Zimyanin (S)	XXX			XXX		
Kapitonov (S)	XXX	XXX ²		XXX	XXX	
Ryzhkov (S)						

¹Ligachev and Rusakov spoke before Chernenko's election.

²Heads "our party's combat headquarters."

³Used this phrase in address to Moscow City Party Plenum on 20 Feb.

⁴Used this phrase in address to Ukrainian Central Committee Plenum 7 March.

⁵Only reference of this type reported in Pravda.

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