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1 November 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

THRU: Acting Director of Soviet Analysis *DBJ*

FROM:

Chief, National Issues Group  
Office of Soviet Analysis

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SUBJECT: Generational Change in the USSR

You and possibly the DDCI might be interested in the results of a recently held conference on generational change in the USSR. Our approach was to match a generational change specialist --  -- with a Sovietologist --  -- to see whether generational change analysis could be rigorously applied to the Soviet case. The  paper, which compares the Soviet situation with generational change in Western Europe, is particularly enlightening in this regard.

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I would draw your attention to the attached Memorandum for the Record. It contains a number of salient points along with avenues for future research.

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Attachment

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29 October 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: SOVA/Leadership Politics Branch Conference on Generational Change

1. On 24 October the Leadership Politics Branch conducted an in-house seminar on the implications of generational change in the Soviet elite. During the morning session papers we commissioned by [redacted] of Emory University and [redacted] of the National War College were presented. [redacted] of Harvard University commented on both papers. At the afternoon session we discussed the policy implications of generational change. The seminar was attended by analysts and managers from NIG and OLDA's USSR-EE and Political Psychology Divisions.

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2. The morning moved from a review of the papers to a more general discussion of what constitutes a generation and whether studying generational factors can help us better understand Soviet policy. Several key points were raised that will be important to consider as we analyze the Soviet leadership over the next several years:

--Given the long period of domination by the Brezhnev generation and the rapid shift to younger leaders now taking place, generational factors are probably a very important influence on the behavior of Soviet elites and will likely play an increasingly important role in the years ahead as additional members of Gorbachev's age cohort take over top positions. [redacted] estimated that it will be another 5 to 7 years before Gorbachev's generation fully takes over.

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--The characteristics of a generation are usually formed between the ages of 15 and 25. Therefore Gorbachev may belong to a younger generation than many other top Soviet leaders who are in their 60's (such as Ligachev) and form a "transitional generation" between Gorbachev's and Brezhnev's.

--More attention should be paid to the younger generation of leaders coming up behind Gorbachev that is now in its 30's. It is the first Soviet generation that has not directly experienced the traumas of World War II or Stalin and grown up in a period of relative prosperity. It may well be an increasingly importance source of pressure for change.

--A strong leader, like Gorbachev, can have much more impact shaping the views of younger generations, still in their formative years.

--These factors--the passing of the older and transitional generations, pressure for change from younger generation, and Gorbachev's ability to shape youngest generation--suggest that generational factors may have a snowballing effect and increasingly impact on Soviet policymaking over

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the next 15 years.

--The effect of generational change at the top is less than on society as a whole since bureaucracies tend to have a "homogenizing" effect on the elite, making generation differences less of a factor at higher levels.

--Generational factors are more likely to affect the decisionmaking style of leaders than their values.

3. The Gorbachev Generation. In the afternoon we discussed the characteristics of the Gorbachev generation and their likely impact on policymaking. We tried to distinguish between characteristics we attribute to Gorbachev and those that are generally shared by his generation. We came up with a list of several characteristics that appear to describe Gorbachev's generation in comparison to Brezhnev's:

--More secure and self-confident. They have grown up in a period of major Soviet successes and feel their security is less threatened.

--More pragmatic. They are less bound by traditional ideological considerations and more willing to find ideological justifications for the policies they want to pursue.

--More materialist. They are less committed to the egalitarianism and equal treatment for all and aspire to a higher standard of living for themselves.

--Less committed to the status quo. They are less responsible for current policies, thus are more willing to reject them if they are not working.

--Higher Standards. They tend to measure Soviet performance against world standards, not the hard times of the post-revolutionary period.

If these are indeed the characteristics of the up and coming generation it would appear that they will help Gorbachev in his efforts to restructure the domestic economy, make increased use of material incentives, and make officials more accountable for performance.

4. Due to the lack of data on the attitudes of different Soviet generations all participants agreed that our conclusions are highly speculative. Even for Western Europe where much more data are available, specialists have found it extremely difficult to do productive research on generational differences within elite groups. Participants agreed that there does not appear to be any path of research on Soviet elites that is likely to answer the questions raised at the session. Nevertheless, we did discuss some areas where further research might be useful:

--Making better use of the Soviet Interview Project (SIP) to study generational differences.

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--Conducting surrogate interviews--along the lines of work at USIA--that are designed to study generational differences.

--A study of generational factors among non-Russian nationalities. No work has been done in this area and given the demographic trends in the Soviet Union it appears to be a subject that is at least worth thinking about.

--Do a content analysis of the speeches and articles of members of the elite under Gorbachev. Due to increased openness in the Soviet media such a study might be more productive than previous work in this area.

5. The possibility of making better use of SIP material appears to be the best option for further research on generational factors. We plan to look into the possibility of a project drawing on this material.

6. In all, the papers and conference succeeded in stimulating our thinking on generational issues and gave us additional factors to consider as we look at Soviet elite behavior in the years ahead.



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A GENERATIONAL APPROACH TO POLITICAL CHANGE IN THE USSR

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STAT

National War College

POLITICAL SUCCESSION AND POLITICAL GENERATIONS

The Soviet Union and its East European satellites have embarked upon the most significant period of leadership change since the death of Stalin. What distinguishes this period of change from those of the past three decades is that the leadership succession of the 1980 s is also a generational changing of the guard.

The impact of this change has been magnified by the long tenure in power of a generation now in its seventies and late sixties, a stagnation associated with the "stability of cadres" policy of the Brezhnev era. The process begun in the USSR with the accession of the Gorbachev leadership is sure to follow soon in the GDR, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania.

In all these states the top leaders have been in power from at least fifteen years up to over thirty years. The top leaders of the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were all born between 1911 and 1918. A look at the Politburos (including candidate members) reveals that in 1985 leaders of Gorbachev's age or younger (born 1931 or later) comprised 3 of 25 in the GDR, 1 of 14 in Czechoslovakia, 1 of 13 in Hungary, none of 8 in Romania and 7 of 17 in Bulgaria. Only in Poland with the relatively youthful Jaruzelski (b.1923) was generational change far

along (10 of the 21 Politburo and candidate members being born 1931 or later).

This stagnation means that the new leaders will be substantially younger than those who they are replacing, in most cases a generation younger. This large age gap also reflects a generation gap as well. The emerging leaders are not simply different chronologically but in terms of their historical memories. They will be the first group of leaders to not have been decisively shaped by World War II or by Stalin. They mark the beginning of the post-post war era in the USSR and Eastern Europe. Their interlocutors in the West are also from the post war generations.

This paper will address the implications of this generational sea change in the Soviet leadership in particular. It is written by someone who is not a Soviet specialist but who has examined the impact of generational change in Western Europe. Its purpose will be to alert Soviet specialists to the types of questions to ask in assessing generational change in the USSR. It will state the questions and some of the answers to them found in research in Western Europe and will offer some speculations on the USSR based on this experience. If it is successful it will serve as a heuristic device for those with detailed knowledge in Soviet politics and will open areas of fruitful inquiry. It is accompanied by a paper by a Soviet specialist which looks at the generational issue in the Soviet context.

## KEY ASSUMPTIONS AND QUESTIONS OF A GENERATIONAL APPROACH TO POLITICAL CHANGE

The origins of modern generational explanations of political change can be traced back to the work of Karl Mannheim in the 1930 s. The approach rests on a number of assumptions.

First, political generations will emerge in response to either dramatic historical events or a radically changing social context. Generations are distinguished from different age cohorts in that age differences are associated with sharp breaks in historical memories, assumptions, values and attitudes. Generations do not refer simply to genealogical difference but rather to ideological differences associated with age and experience. Thus in periods of slow social change unmarked by dramatic historical events the passing of power from one genealogical generation to another can not be defined as the transition from one political generation to another. The new elite will simply share the same assumptions and perspective of the outgoing one.

Political or intellectual generations are the result of historical and social discontinuities so sharp that the experience and values of the preceding generation are not seen any longer as relevant to the new generation, creating generation gaps.

Second, generations are shaped during the key formative years of life when people are the most impressionable and open to change. Most studies of political socialization

identify these years as being between the fifteenth and twenty fifth years. This is the age when politics begin to directly impinge on a young person's life. It is during this stage that he or she enters the university and is confronted by political subjects and it is when males become eligible for military service.

The generational approach assumes that once basic values are formed they are unlikely to be substantially altered. Subsequent political events are likely to be viewed through the prism shaped during the early adult years.

Third, what constitutes a dramatic formative event may be difficult to define. Most analysts rely on macro historical analysis, singling out major historical events such as wars, depressions and political revolutions and then deducing their implications. Micro analysis at the individual personality level depends heavily on survey research and elite interviews, data difficult to come by in the Soviet system.

Wars remain the single most dramatic defining historical event for a generation as it is the one most likely to politically mobilize a collectivity. Other system shaking events involving rapid and radical changes in economic and political conditions such as depressions, revolutions or purges are also likely to create generations.

Generations may also be shaped not by a single event but rather by a rapidly altered socio-economic environment which sets it off from the older generation. The rapid

social and economic change of the European Economic Miracles of the 1950 s and 1960 s fostered substantial value change so that the generation of the 1960 s was in many ways cut off from the generation of the Great Depression.

Fourth, the size of a cohort also plays a role in shaping generational consciousness and impact. As a rule, the larger the size of a cohort relative to that of others, the more likely it is that the cohort will develop a sense of generational awareness and the more extensive its impact on society. A recent example is the postwar baby boom generation in the West.

Fifth, a key assumption is that a generation is "represented" by a generation unit or units which shape generational consciousness and "speak" for a generation.

Generational approaches are elitist, they stress the role of minorities in shaping political change. They assume that although not all members of an age cohort may react the same way to a formative event, an elite segment of that generation will through its influence, shape and articulate the generation's interpretation of the meaning of the event. It is this aspect of the approach which is promising in terms of understanding Soviet political change. The centralized elite of the USSR makes the problem of elite identification easier. In addition, the impact of elites is much greater than in democratic systems.

In Western research a generation unit tends to be defined as either the best educated portion of the generation, i.e. the university educated, or that segment of

the generation either in leadership positions or likely to be selected for leadership. As the university educated group has increased in relative and absolute size in the postwar period, it has become more socially heterogeneous and thus more difficult to judge which segment is likely to emerge as influential.

The expansion of the university segment has tended to foster a split between the cultural intelligensia and the political elite. Research on public opinion in Western Europe and the US has indicated that the views of the better educated can be good barometers of long term change although their views differ from those more engaged in politics. It may be useful to think of multiple generation units in those cases where politically divergent interpretations of a historical event emerge.

#### POLITICAL GENERATIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Generations are defined by national historical experience and consequently diversity characterizes political generations in Europe. Political generations are most distinctive in those nations which have experienced the most dramatic historical discontinuities.

The impact of wars varies from country to country with WWII having the most decisive effect in West Germany and Italy and the least in Britain and France. Spain, for example, defines its generations in reference to the Spanish Civil War and not to WWII.

Similarly, the legacy of postwar economic growth and value change has been most apparent in West Germany and Italy and weakest in Britain.

In summary, political generations seem to be the most distinctive in the Federal Republic and Italy (and in Spain because of the end of the Franco regime) and the least distinctive in Britain, with France in the middle of the spectrum.

There are four political generations in contemporary Europe which have an impact on contemporary politics:

The Interwar Generation: Born between 1905 and 1915 and comprising 11% of the population of Europe in 1980 this generation was shaped by the Great Depression and the rise of Fascism. It was this group that won or lost the war and became decisive in constructing the postwar world, a cohort preoccupied with Hitler and the lessons of appeasement. It no longer plays a leadership role in European politics.

The World War II Generation: Born between 1920 and 1930 and comprising 12% of the population in 1980 this group came of age during the war and was shaped decisively by it. It along with the next generation was preoccupied with rebuilding their countries after the war and enjoying the fruits of the economic recovery. This generation includes Helmut Schmidt, Francois Mitterrand, James Callaghan, Edward Heath and the leaders of the 1970's. It had faded from power by the early 1980's (with the notable exception of Mitterrand).

The Reconstruction Generation: Born between 1930 and 1940 and comprising 12% of the 1980 population, this was the generation of the Flak Helpers in Germany, too young to have played a major role in the war and shaped by the devastation of the postwar period and the confrontation of the Cold War. The current generation of leaders such as Thatcher, Kohl, Rau, Craxi, Rocard and Chirac come from this cohort. A generation of materialists and centrists, shaped by "Butskillism" or consensus politics, which compromised between capitalism and welfarism, a generation of social democrats. (Here Thatcher is an obvious and important exception in her distain for centrism but not in her materialism). Atlanticists (except in France) who identified the United States with power and economic dynamism.

The Vietnam Generation: Born between 1945 and 1955 and comprising 15% of the population in 1980, the large baby boom generation. The critical formative event for this cohort was 1968, the large scale student demonstrations against the U.S. role in Vietnam. This took place in the context of an affluent society, a context radically different from that which shaped the previous two generations.

The rapidly changing economic environment and the expansion of educational opportunities produced a generation gap in values. The postwar group shaped by the

international stability produced by detente in Europe and by the economic security of the Economic Miracles reacted to the centrism and materialism of the preceding generations. It became a generation of the new left, reacting to the Grand Coalition in Germany, de Gaulle in France, the Christian Democrats in Italy and Franco in Spain. In Britain the change was less dramatic.

Thus the key factors shaping this group in the universities were international and domestic stability and the large relative size of the cohort. The affluent society and the quiet international scene, at least in Europe, contrasted sharply with the formative experience of the two preceding generations.

This generation will provide the leaders of the 1990's and includes LaFontaine, Schroeder, Voight, Ruhe and Wissmann in West Germany, Kinnock and David Owen in Britain, Gonzalez in Spain and Fabius in France.

The Generation of the 1970's: Born after 1960 with its adult portion comprising about 8% of the population in 1980, this cohort is smaller than the preceding one. It is too soon to tell how distinctive this group will be. It has come of age in an environment of increased East-West tension, of growing economic insecurity and in a period of technological pessimism.

Lacking a consistent political profile it has tended somewhat toward the right in Scandinavia and the Low

Countries, toward the Socialists in France and toward the Greens and the SPD in the Federal Republic...

It is probable that this group will form part of the larger postwar generation given its relatively small size and the general sharing of key values with the preceding group. It may become a lost generation.

### C. POLITICAL GENERATIONS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Given this generational profile of Western Europe, how does the Soviet Union look in terms of political generations? There are currently two generations of interest in the Soviet Union, the Brezhnev generation and the Gorbachev generation. There is as well, a transitional group in between which is probably not distinctive enough to be set aside as a generation. There is also the generation of the 1960s which is still far from the seats of power but may be important to the Gorbachev generation as a source of support for a reform policy.

The Brezhnev generation was born in the decade before World War I. It is quickly fading from the scene as Gorbachev moves to replace them. The last remaining representative of this group in the Politburo is Gromyko. It is the same generation that remains in control of the East European states with the exception of Poland. Its counterpart in Western Europe, the Interwar Generation, has long ago left the positions of political influence.

If we assume that the formative years for this generation occurred between their fifteenth and twenty-fifth years this would imply that they were shaped between 1925

and 1940. If Bialer's classification (Stalin's Successors) of an elite generation is accepted then the crucial formative years would be those coincident with their entry into the CPSU, their recruitment into a bureaucratic hierarchy or the assumption of an executive position. This could push the formative years back somewhat, depending on the individual.

The Brezhnev coalition shared the experience of the great instabilities of the the Purges and Terror and the Great Patriotic War. Arising from peasant and proletarian origins with minimal technical educations, these groups sought stability and incrementalist growth. Their task was to consolidate after these great upheavals both the achievements of the Soviet state and their own personal positions.

The yardstick for these groups was the turmoil and threat of the 1930's and 1940's and they measured accomplishment by reference to this past. Risks were to be minimized or avoided, stability and control was to have priority over efficiency and the prospects of great leaps forward. Reform and innovation were seen as threats rather than as opportunities. Their painful experience with the costs of originality or dissent during Stalin's rule reinforced their aversion to risk. Khrushchev's "hare brained schemes" and his great gamble in Cuba in 1962 were viewed as the greatest dangers to the Soviet state.

They took great pride in building the USSR into a superpower and strove to gain American recognition of this

status. Their insecurity about the Soviet position in the world stemmed from their close call with defeat in World War II. Their continued concern, perhaps obsession, with Germany for decades after the division of Germany was evidence of this insecurity as was their growing sense of a Chinese threat. Their continued willingness to use military force if necessary to maintain the East European buffer from the West is another example.

The Brezhnev generation, while recognizing the shortcomings of the Soviet economy, continued to use as its reference point the deprivations of the 1930 s and 1940 s. The rapid growth of the Soviet economy in the 1950 s and 1960 s and the slow but steady rise in the standard of living allowed for a complacency fed by the fear of the destabilizing possibilities of reform.

The pre-Stalin Generation dominated for as long as it did in part because the cohorts which preceded and followed ( the Great Purge Generation, the War Generation and the Late Stalin Generation in Bialer's terms) were either coopted or decimated by the Purge and the war. Thus it makes sense to speak of a generational dividing line between pre and post-Stalin generations.

The Gorbachev generation experienced its formative years in the 1946-1956 period if those years are defined as being between the ages of 15 and 25. If Bialer's definition is used, the formative years come somewhat later, in their early 20's to their early 30's. This would place the focus on the period 1951-1961, making this group part of the post

Stalin generation in Bialer's classification and of the postwar generation in Hough's.

This generation is more middle class than the preceding ones, more highly educated and technocratic. Its crucial formative experience was Khrushchev's anti Stalin campaign and the air of reform and change after decades of orthodoxy. It is materialist and careerist, raised on the cult of professionalism and elitism. It is nationalist as well taking the Soviet state for granted and impatient with its inadequacies. It is a large cohort held back by Brezhnev's "stability of cadres" policy with its emphasis on incrementalism, predictability and stability.

It is a generation less concerned about stability as Brezhnev's was and more impatient with the technological inadequacies of the system. It is likely to take more risks at home and abroad. It is likely to wish to emulate the promised dynamism of Khrushchev without the latter's populist peasant accent. In many respects this new generation resembles the Reconstruction generation of Western Europe, technocratic, non-ideological, reform minded and materialist.

This generation then has been motivated by discontent with the stagnation of the Soviet economy and of the party accentuated by, a heightened appetite for power after waiting too long for responsibility coupled with a distain for the Brezhnev generation.

Gaining acceptance as a Great Power probably means less to this group given that it matured in the post Cuban

Missile Crisis era and has only known the USSR as a superpower. It is likely to be a more self confident generation taking the institutionalization of the Soviet state for granted but yet aware of its economic and technological deficiencies and their link to global competition. It will remain sensitive to being treated as a second class superpower in the West, and was embarrassed by the senile leadership and image of the late 1970's and early 1980's. It has probably been struck by the implications of the Solidarity challenge to a moribund party in Poland.

The contrasts between these two generations is reinforced by the size of the incoming leadership group and its long time on the fringes of power. The new leaders resemble American leaders in the Kennedy years, coming in after years of old leaders and what they saw as stagnation. The new group is likely to be more risk taking and innovative and more future oriented than the past generation of Soviet leaders.

In addition to Gorbachev, other new Soviet leaders of this generation include Ryzhov (56), Medvedev (56), Nikonov (56) as well as Yeltsin and Yakovlev. The group of leaders in their sixties, Ligachev, Zaikov and Chebrikov, fall in between the two larger generations.

#### LIMITATIONS TO A GENERATIONAL APPROACH

Generational approaches have generated increasing interest in the West because of the growing sense that the Vietnam generation is on the verge of coming into power and

that its values and perspectives represent a break from the postwar consensus. It will be the first clearly postwar generation in Western Europe. Yet most analyses and critiques of the approach conclude that generation is only one factor in the equation. Clearly partisan affiliation, educational level, occupation and other factors must be included in any analysis.

In the Soviet case a number of factors are likely to diminish the impact of the generational factor. The most important is the all pervasive role of the CPSU in the socialization and recruitment of elites. It is important to note that the Gorbachev generation has come to power at the same age that the Brezhnev generation gained control of the Soviet state. This means that they have spent a good deal of time being socialized into the folkways of the party and their promotion has been monitored by the Brezhnev cadres. As Elizabeth Teague has noted,

the data suggest that forces for stability and continuity remain strong and continue to determine the way in which the mature Soviet system selects and grooms candidates for high office. On present evidence it does not appear that Gorbachev's new team is made up of men who arrived at their posts any faster than their predecessors or by significantly different routes. On the contrary, they are in many striking ways very similar to those they have replaced. (Radio Liberty Research Bulletin, July 8, 1986)

Beissinger has also raised this issue in his analysis of generational cleavages in the USSR. (Mark Beissinger, "In Search of Generations in Soviet Politics", World Politics, (January 1986):290) He argues that the important issue is not whether generational differences in attitudes exist, but whether an elite running a highly centralized and well organized political system can transcend those generational cleavages... whether it is capable of coopting members of the younger generation who reproduce its values and outlooks to prevent generation from becoming a major source of cleavage within the elite itself.

As Beissinger notes, the key question is whether the political controls of the Soviet system are capable of counteracting the impact of formative experiences or whether individual members of the elite carry with them into their elite positions differences in perspectives based on their specific generational experiences despite the regime's efforts to prevent this from happening?

In this respect the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe differ from Western Europe. The circulation of elites due to competing political parties and elections allows generational cleavages greater opportunities for expression in the political system. The closest analogy to the CPSU would be the elite bureaucracies of Western Europe. The work of Ezra Suleiman on the French bureaucracy, for example, suggests the impact of a cohesive bureaucracy on

recruits. He found that the few working class French able to enter the bureaucratic elite shifted their attitudes to conform to the dominant milieu. (Power, Politics and Bureaucracy in France).

The implications of this argument will be discussed in the concluding section, but it does not dismiss the impact of generational change, it just implies that the new elite is likely to be as attached to the maintenance of its status and the party which guarantees it as were its predecessors.

A second limitation on the impact of generational change is diversity within the elite, both across generations and within them. The changing of the guard is moving at a rapid pace but there will remain substantial opposition from older groups still in the system as well as from segments of the Gorbachev generation which differ because of regional, bureaucratic and other factors from the views of the generation unit. The degree of generational cohesiveness among the elite generation is still not known. An important question to address is whether one can speak of general agreement between Gorbachev, Ryzhkov and the other leaders of the generation.

Finally, generational analyses are limited by the data problem and the gap between attitudes and behavior. Most analyses in the West rely upon survey research, elite interviews and elite background studies. These studies reveal some important age related differences between the general public and the better educated portions of the

public, but there have been few studies which have dealt with the degree of difference between old and new elites.

Even if these data were available the further problem remains that attitudes and preferences do not necessarily predict behavior. A number of important environmental constraints can intervene. Thus a new generation of leaders may wish to move in a certain direction but can be constrained by resource limitations, resistance from the public or other elites and constraints from the international environment to name only a few.

Having listed these limitations and cautioning that generational change is only one factor in a complex equation, it is highly probable that generational change will be a significant factor in the Gorbachev era. This is likely because of the sharp breaks in historical and social experience between the new and old leaderships, the excessively long tenure of the old guard which resulted in a twenty year drop in the age of leaders, the large size of the Gorbachev cohort and the potential for change directed by an elite generation in a Leninist state. The new generation comes to power at a time when the nature of the problems facing the USSR are reaching a crucial stage and would have to be addressed by any leadership.

#### IMPLICATIONS AND SPECULATIONS

In this concluding section a number of speculations about the policy impact of generational change will be

offered. They remain speculations because of the lack of a data base to act as a foundation for more informed analysis. In the case of research into generational change in Western Europe and the United States a wide range of surveys and studies exist on the nature and impact of age upon political attitudes. The best that is available in the Soviet context is a collection of emigre interviews, analyses of speeches and social backgrounds and informed guesses as to the impact of historical experience upon cohorts. A record of behavior of the Gorbachev leadership is beginning to emerge as well, and it is that which offers the best evidence of the importance and limitations of generational change.

Secondly, these speculations can be helpful in constructing null hypotheses. If they prove to be wrong the alternate view that the impact of generations is un consequential will have to be accepted.

Finally, these views are offered by someone who is a specialist in West European, not Soviet, politics.

The discussion of implications will begin with a consideration of areas of likely continuity and then will move into those in which change is more likely to be more pronounced. The most obvious area of continuity will be the new generation's commitment to maintain the leading role of the CPSU in the USSR, including the leading role of Russians, and the superpower status of the Soviet Union, including the maintenance of Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe.

The new leaders are Russians and nationalists. They are unlikely to be more willing to share power with the other Soviet nationalities than the group they are replacing. While perhaps less ideological than earlier cadres the Gorbachev generation is acutely aware that their status and future prospects rest upon the continued domination of the CPSU. They are unlikely to be, therefore, tolerant of dissidents or opposition. The quick rebuff to Pravda's reprinting of a letter complaining about the special shops and other elite privileges is an indication that the new leaders are just as wedded to their status as the Brezhnev group.

Similarly in the foreign policy arena, there is no reason to believe from the new leadership's behavior in Eastern Europe that it is any less jealous of its prerogatives than previous Soviet elites. The firm snub of Kadar's efforts to act as an "elder statesman paternally accepting Gorbachev into the family" at a Warsaw Pact summit illustrates the point. (Vladimir Kusin, "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe", Problems of Communism, Jan/Feb, 1986, p. 39)

Yet within even these obvious continuities a new approach is already apparent. This new generational style can be characterized by pragmatism, a greater degree of openness, self-confidence and dynamism. What is most striking is the swiftness that Gorbachev and his associates have moved to replace the old guard. As Archie Brown has noted, by this spring twelve of the top twenty-seven leaders

had been already replaced. These changes were most notable in the foreign policy and agriculture sectors. Change at the top has been mirrored by change in the Central Committee and the ministries. (Archie Brown, "Change in the Soviet Union", Foreign Affairs, Summer 1986)

The rapidity of change has been accompanied by a new style which encourages criticism and sees complacency as a major problem. As Bialer has argued, the old generation was incrementalist and measured progress by how much things had changed from the past rather than by how much still remains to be done. Much as Kennedy promised to get the country moving again after a period of old leadership, the new Soviet generation is clearly impatient after years spent in the antechambers of power. It is impatient as well because it is more self-confident about the stability and predictability of the Soviet state. At the same time it is unhappy with the state of the economy because its standard of comparison is not that of the pre-war period, but rather that of the thaw and rapid growth followed by the stagnation of the 1970 s.

Again this impatience in the economic realm is clearly closer to Andropov's approach, that is one of making the system work better without restructuring it. This is clear from the official reaction of the new Soviet leadership to the reform course in Hungary which has been characterized as one of qualified acceptance. The new leaders have indicated they might take parts of the Hungarian innovations while making it clear that the overall reformist course will not be

endorsed for either the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. (see Kusun)

The openness of the new leaders to larger changes if the more incremental approach fails remains likely. The non-ideological approach characterized by Gorbachev's failure to visit Marx's grave during his visit to Britain indicates a willingness to try other approaches so long as they do not compromise CPSU control.

It is in the foreign policy arena where the new generation's impact may be the most profound. Research in Western Europe has indicated a general decline in perception of threat in those generations furthest from the experience of World War II. It needs to be kept in mind, however, that the Europeans no longer think of themselves as Great Powers and their attitudes are shaped by feelings of dependency and limited autonomy not likely to be found among the population of a superpower.

Yet it is quite likely that the post-Stalin generation has a different perception of threat from the preceding elite. The Brezhnev generation was fixated by the German threat because of its experience in World War II. This fear tempered its policies toward Western and Eastern Europe after the war and resulted in a grudging acceptance of the US role in Europe, in part because the Americans could act as a check on German power.

It is quite likely that the new generation's view is less apprehensive. The new leadership grew up with a divided Germany. It looks at the GDR as a permanent and stable

state, and one which is the keystone of the Warsaw Pact. It is unlikely to view reunification as an option in return for a neutralized Germany. The view of the FRG has been shaped as much by Ostpolitik and detente as by fascism or the Cold War. While the threat of German revanchism will remain a useful tool in Soviet dealings with Eastern Europe, especially Poland, it is likely to be taken less seriously.

This opens up new possibilities in Western Europe for Soviet policy. The Soviets may be less concerned about the possibility of American withdrawal from Europe and more willing to drive wedges between the US and the FRG. It is not a foregone conclusion that the new Soviet leaders will be less fixated on the US, but the Yakovlev-Dobrynin team indicates that alternatives to the bipolar approach are being actively considered.

It is quite possible that Western Europe will take on a greater importance on its own in Soviet eyes over the next decade. The new Soviet team dealing with propaganda is appreciably more sophisticated in its approach to Western opinion. With the accession of the post-Stalin generation, the Soviet leadership is back in the generational mainstream of European leadership. The new Soviet leaders are of the same age group as that of the leaders of Western Europe and share many of the same experiences. Gorbachev's frequent trips to the West and his willingness to open himself to press conferences and other confrontations with a critical public are indicators of a new flexibility and self-confidence.

Given the importance of economic renewal to the new leaders, Western technology is likely to strengthen their interest in the region. In short Western Europe will be seen more as an opportunity than a threat.

In conclusion, generational change in the Soviet Union should be taken seriously by American policy makers. It will be more dangerous to overestimate the force of continuity than to overestimate the forces of change. The Reykjavik summit indicated the dangers of underestimating the openness of the new Soviet leadership and its willingness to innovate. Similarly in Europe, it would be a miscalculation to assume that the Soviets will continue to shoot themselves in the foot. The US is now confronted by a new generation of Soviet leadership which is likely to be the most formidable one it has yet faced.

## Soviet Political Change and the Gorbachev Generation

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## I. Generations in Soviet Politics

The election of a new Central Committee at the 27th Party Congress culminated a period of high turnover in the Soviet leadership that has brought about a marked rejuvenation. Nearly half of the 1981 Central Committee full members were 63 years old and older. Only 40% of the 1986 Central Committee are 61 and older. Those born between 1926 and 1936 now account for 134 of the 307 full members elected in 1986 (43.5%). The same cohort had only 79 members of the 1981 Central Committee (24.8%). Representation of the "Brezhnev generation" (born in the decade of 1900-1909) declined by an even greater magnitude. From 43 full members in 1981 (13.5%), this cohort dropped to 11 members in 1986 (3.6%).<sup>1</sup>

Among current provincial 1st secretaries whose birthyears are known, those appointed from 1983 on are, on average, four years younger than those appointed earlier. The average birthyear for the post-1982 appointees is 1932. That for the pre-1983 appointments is 1928. If birthdates were known for the remaining 37--35 of whom were named after 1983--the age gap would doubtless be still greater.<sup>2</sup>

A process of "juvenation" of the party at large has been underway as well: 90% of the current members of the party joined after 1945; of them 44% joined after 1970.<sup>3</sup> In 1986, 41.3% of the party's members were 40 or younger, compared to 38.8% in 1981. 58.7% were over 40, compared to 61.2% in 1981.<sup>4</sup> Emphasis on

<sup>1</sup>I am indebted to the calculations carried out by  the Emory Political Science Department for these figures.

<sup>2</sup>Calculated from information provided in Dawn Mann, "First Secretaries of the Krai and Oblast' Party Committees," RL 256/86, July 7, 1986.

<sup>3</sup>"KPSS v tsifrakh," *Partiinaiia zhizn'* (July 1986), p. 25.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p. 24; "KPSS v tsifrakh," *Partiinaiia zhizn'* (July 1981), p. 18.

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recruitment of younger members, combined with deaths among the World War II cohort, has lowered the median age of the party.

The present paper explores the possible impact of generational influences on the Soviet political elite, focusing in particular on a cohort identified as the Gorbachev generation.

#### A. Do Generational Differences Matter?

It is clear that consciousness of generational differences is widely diffused in Soviet society. Jerry Hough observes, and a great deal of published material, both in Soviet and emigre sources, bears him out, that "In the Soviet Union...people are quite conscious of generations and refer to them repeatedly both in print and in private conversations."<sup>5</sup> In particular, the generational issue in Soviet politics, following the classical 19th century tradition, usually is conceived in terms of a perceptible gap in formative experiences and hence outlook between "fathers" and "sons," that is, generations close enough in age to have had immediate contact but far enough apart to have undergone significantly different socialization. Two examples will suffice to suggest that the "fathers" vs. "sons" cleavage remains an active part of social consciousness.

First is an incident recalled by the writer Viktor Nekrasov, born in 1911, that occurred at Red Square in 1961, just after Stalin's remains had been removed from the mausoleum. A group of people standing near the mausoleum were talking, and one, a passionate youth, shouted at the older people around him, in accusation, "we do not trust you, the fathers; you lied to us and are still lying. We who are in our twenties won't believe anyone over thirty." This was only three years before the slogan of the Berkeley Free Speech movement, "you can't trust anyone over 30."<sup>6</sup>

The other is taken from an article published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia* in January 1986 by a writer named Ivan Vasil'ev. In the third of a three-part series of articles appearing in the newspaper, which calls for cadres inspired by "enthusiasm" rather than venality

<sup>5</sup>Jerry F. Hough, *Soviet Leadership in Transition* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1980), p. 8.

<sup>6</sup>See Valeri Chalidze, *Otvetsvennost' pokoleniia*, interview with Nekrasov, (NY: Chalidze Publications, 1981), pp. 35-6. The entire book is an exploration, through interviews with some prominent dissidents, of the question of the moral responsibility of the "fathers" for the nature of the Soviet system.

and legalism, Vasil'ev introduces the generational theme as his motif. Musing on the responsibility his generation bears for the attenuated sense of civic responsibility observed among the younger generation, he imagines a kind of dialogue:

"My generation is [the] military [one]. We gained self-consciousness in the war. Gained consciousness of our responsibility before our ancestors and our descendants, before land and people. All our rights and obligations turned into a single word--duty. Passing into unbeing, my generation left our children a free land and a great spirit. It left its successors a priceless spiritual treasure."

--It also left something else, not so praiseworthy. You reproach us, the young, for a lack of faith, for parasitism [izhdivenchestvo], for cynicism... Are these not the products of your seed?"

The author proceeds to weigh the respective shares of responsibility for the negative attitudes of the present day between his generation and the younger generation, blaming his generation for many of the problems which the party is now calling upon the people to overcome. The article poses the problem of political change as a test of the succession of generations, in particular the war-time and the post-war generations, much as the generation gap in the de-Stalinization period cited in the Nekrasov incident revolved around the theme of complicity in the indefensible crimes of Stalin's rule.<sup>7</sup> The "fathers and sons" theme in Soviet political consciousness refers to discontinuities in experience and outlook between successive, self-aware genealogical generations.

Moreover, several characteristics of Soviet society suggest that generation might be a useful determinant of elite attitudes. In discussing the US case, Samuel Huntington makes several observations in support of a generational hypothesis that are pertinent to the Soviet Union. The United States is, he notes, a "founded" polity with a distinct starting point, conducive to the self-differentiation of elite cohorts. Second, class, ethnic, confessional and other social cleavages are relatively weak in American society, facilitating the formation of a moving political consensus which evolves, in part, with the succession of generations. Finally, he notes that public favor for liberal or conservative domestic policies and isolationist or interventionist foreign policies tends to oscillate in a cyclical fashion, a pattern he suggests might be linked to generational

<sup>7</sup>Ivan Vasil'ev, "Ne chastnoe litso," *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 22 January 1986.

succession.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, generations of Soviet political elites date their history from the Bolshevik movement and the Soviet revolution, with an idealized "Old Bolshevik" generation representing the first or founding generation of fathers. Second, the concentration of power in the Soviet political elite prevents other social cleavages from becoming the basis for political mobilization and therefore magnifies intra-elite differences. Finally, one might postulate that the cyclical alternation between value patterns associated with "right" and "left" policy orientations--or, in Stephen Cohen's terms, the "friends and foes of change"--is associated with generational change.<sup>9</sup> Alternation of policy orientations between tension and relaxation, centralism and decentralization, future and present welfare, orthodoxy and pragmatism, world revolution and conciliation, and other values on the left/right continuum might conceivably be correlated with generational turnover.

#### B. The Significance of Definition

Both Jerry Hough and Seweryn Bialer define generations by the different character of opportunities and experiences to which each successive birth-cohort since the revolution has been exposed. For Hough, the first of the four politically significant generations into which he divides the political elite comprises those "who were of the right age to be affected by almost all the events that shook Russia in this century"--i.e., those born between 1900 and 1909 (the Brezhnev group). Next are those born between 1910 and 1918, who were "too young to be returned to college in the 1928-32 period" and "too young to experience a sensational rise during the Great Purge." Third are "those who entered adulthood just before or during World War II"--mostly born between 1919 and 1925--whom Hough terms the "wartime generation." Last are those born since 1925, who were "too young to have had their college education interrupted by the war"--the postwar generation.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Ibid, pp. 13-16.

<sup>9</sup>Stephen F. Cohen, "The Friends and Foes of Change: Soviet Reformism and Conservatism," in idem, *Rethinking the Soviet Experience* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 128-57. Cohen does not associate the reform impulse with the rebellion of sons against fathers, but roots reformism rather in a persistent though often dormant tradition in Russian political culture.

<sup>10</sup>Hough, ch. 3.

An alternative formulation, at first glance not greatly dissimilar to Hough's, is provided by Seweryn Bialer. Delineating four elite generations by their exposure to key political experiences at a particularly formative point in their careers--the period, normally in his twenties and thirties, when an individual enters the party, takes an administrative post, and finally assumes executive rank--Bialer identifies a Great Purge generation, a war generation, a late-Stalin generation, and a post-Stalin generation.<sup>11</sup> By this definition, however, many of Gorbachev's contemporaries, those born, let us say, between 1926 and 1936, qualify as post-war for Hough but late-Stalin for Bialer. The difference in definition has significant implications for the characteristics ascribed to this group. For example, Hough observes that the postwar generation (born between 1926 and 1937) "had to function effectively in the freer atmosphere of the post-Stalin period." They also experienced the denunciation of Stalin at an earlier and more impressionable age than did their elders.<sup>12</sup> Hough also notes that compared with older generations, the postwar elite rose more frequently from white-collar family backgrounds and was more likely to have had uninterrupted higher educations.<sup>13</sup>

Like Hough and Bialer, I assume that generational influences represent the interaction of salient events and a formative stage of personal life-histories. Consistent with Hough's scheme, the present paper distinguishes between those born early enough to have fought in the war and those entering adolescence and adulthood after the war. We will use 1926 as the birthdate marking the older end of this cohort, and, considering a decade to be the maximum spread of years compatible with generational homogeneity, 1936 as the latest birthyear marking the first post-war cohort. By this definition, the "Gorbachev generation" will be treated as a post-war *but not necessarily a post-Stalin* cohort. In keeping with Bialer's treatment, the imprint of political lessons at a time of initiation into politics will be treated as more significant than influences at other times in individual life-histories. The degree to which an event was "formative" in shaping basic outlooks would thus be a joint function of its salience and the openness of those experiencing it to its lessons.

<sup>11</sup>Seweryn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 102.

<sup>12</sup>Hough, p. 60.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid, pp. 57-59.

The paper also differs with Hough and Bialer in certain respects. For example, elsewhere Hough has drawn more direct conclusions about generational differences in foreign policy outlooks: men of the Brezhnev generation, he asserts, are likely to be preoccupied with the threat Germany and Japan pose to Soviet security, since these have been the country's major adversaries in the wars of this century, both of which directly affected the Brezhnev generation. Their basic orientation accordingly disposed them to treat Soviet-American relations as the key to global stability. By contrast, Hough finds a "multipolar" outlook prevalent among younger foreign policy elites, which he associates with their different socialization.<sup>14</sup>

In refutation of Hough, it has been observed that a test of this generational hypothesis for the United States would fail to predict the ready adaptation of American elite policy-makers to the changed international alignments of the post-war period, when the defeated Germany and Japan became, within a decade following the Second World War, major US allies. Similarly a simplistic generational model would fail to predict the emergence of "neo-conservatism" among a significant part of the liberal American intellectual elite in the 1970s. Evolution of views and divergences within generations cannot be explained by experiential models, although life-cycle (maturational) models can explain changes over time within a generational cohort. As Bialer notes, even more striking than generational differences in political socialization is the ability of society to maintain broad continuities of outlooks across generations.

Likewise, Bialer would explain the outlooks of at least some of Gorbachev's contemporaries by their exposure to the "re-Stalinizing" phase of the post-war period when they were entering professional political life. Bialer therefore expects significant political change to be likely only when the post-Stalin generation reaches top positions.<sup>15</sup> An individual who, like Gorbachev, won a state medal, entered the party, graduated from university, and rose to a senior Komsomol post all before Khrushchev's secret speech, might better be considered a member of Bialer's "late-Stalin" generation than his "post-Stalin" generation. In any case, some members of the 1926-36 group had to rise in the post-war period, then adapt successfully to the post-Stalin period, whereas others of them, as well as most of those born later, lived through the late fifties and early sixties

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<sup>14</sup>Jerry F. Hough, "Gorbachev's Strategy," *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 64, no. 1 (1985), pp. 45-47.

<sup>15</sup>Bialer, p. 102.

without having had exposure as adults to Stalin's rule. For Bialer, therefore, the year of birth is less salient as a generational marker than the point in life-cycle at which the individual enters professional political life, and this criterion would probably divide the 1926-36 cohort into "late-Stalin" and "post-Stalin" sub-groups.

The test of the generational hypothesis conducted by Mark Beissinger finds that these *definitional* issues affect the results.<sup>16</sup> Classifying members of a sample of 74 officials who had published articles on problems of industrial management by generation, Beissinger found that the patterns of difference in key issues identified by the authors were affected by which definition of elite generation was used, Hough's or Bialer's. Overall, however, Beissinger found that generation was a relatively poor predictor of outlook, but that within categories demarcated by other characteristics, particularly regional growth rates and educational specialization, generational differences were observable.

A final theoretical issue to be raised is that of the importance of the relative magnitude of a generational cohort in the population structure of a society. In societies where market forces drive media organizations to maximize audience exposure, those segments of the populace that, for reasons of size or relative affluence, constitute important audiences are likely to find their values disproportionately shaped and reflected in the communications media. A large group (such as the postwar American "baby boomers") would have a higher sense of generational distinctiveness than cohorts preceding or following it. On the other hand, where generational cohesiveness is fostered by the intensity of a common socializing experience, generational self-consciousness would be enhanced by the narrowness of the cohort, facilitating a high degree of interaction. Examples would be certain groups of "Oxbridge" elites in Britain or the wartime generation in the Soviet Union, which suffered extremely high casualty rates in comparison with the postwar

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<sup>16</sup>Mark R. Beissinger, "In Search of Generations in Soviet Politics," *World Politics* vol. 38, no. 2 (January 1986), pp. 288-314.

generation.<sup>17</sup> By itself, therefore, size of cohort, like other objective characteristics, may have little direct impact on the outlook or self-awareness of a generation.

Where a distinctive generational outlook develops, it is likely to appeal to a broader segment of the populace than only those comprising the genealogical cohort. The cultural flowering of the late 1950s and early 1960s, for example, is associated with the simultaneous attainment of both artistic and political self-consciousness for a generation of younger poets and writers. The dominant voices of the "thaw" period were "new" poets and writers who linked themselves to the widening sphere of public freedom in conjunction with Khrushchev's political reforms and denunciation of Stalin and who challenged the ideological and cultural establishment. Among the most prominent members of the new generation were poets Evgenii Evtushenko (b. 1933), Andrei Voznesenskii (1933), Bulat Okudzhava (1924), Evgenii Vinokurov (1925), Bella Akhmadulina (1937) and Robert Rozhdestvenskii (1932); and writers Vasilii Aksenov (1932) and Yuri Kazakov (1928), plus a few older writers who were identified with the new wave: Viktor Nekrasov (1911), Boris Slutskii (1919), Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918), Vasilii Bykov (1924), Daniil Granin (1919) and Yurii Nagibin (1920). The latter had served in the war but identified themselves with the "liberal" current of the younger generation. There clearly is a generational effect at work here, but the genealogical "core" is joined by a periphery of self-affiliated fellow-travellers.

Moroevoer, generational themes figured prominently in the work of the "new" writers and poets of late 50s and early 60s, including conflict between "fathers" and "sons" over compromise with

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<sup>17</sup>Taking the *male* part of the Soviet population and grouping it into 10-year age brackets, the group born between 1925 and 1934, of whom only a minority served in the army, had survived in sharply higher numbers to 1979 than their elders. There were over *twice* as many of them as males born in the 1915-24 period--who were between 17 and 30 during the war years. (15.2 million as against 6.7 million.) That the war by and large spared the postwar generation is also indicated by the fact that they were almost as numerous as the next younger 10-year group (15.2 million : 16.9 million). Males are in a deficit vis-a-vis females, but the deficit is far less marked for this generation than it is for their elders. See Murray Feshbach, "The Age Structure of Soviet Population: Preliminary Analysis of Unpublished Data," *Soviet Economy*, v. 1, no. 2 (April/June 1985), pp. 177-193.

Stalinism and bureaucratism. Aksenov's stories dramatized generational alienation and conflict. Universalism, individualism, moral absolutism, intolerance for traits associated with bureaucratism (such as self-protective secrecy, resistance to change, pettiness, careerism, etc.) were important themes in the new generation's writings. By and large, this literary generation did not cling to nationalistic and patriotic values, being closer in spirit to "Westernizers;" but some were drawn to Russian nationalism (Solzhenitsyn; Vladimir Maksimov (1932)). Organizing motifs were not the war and the revolution, but the struggle to reaffirm universal human values in the face of soulless, morally compromised holdovers from the Stalin era. For this group generation refers less to a pattern of formative experiences than to the literary expression of a common outlook by a predominantly youthful and generationally self-conscious group of artists.

So far the argument is that when generation is used as an explanatory variable for outlooks, its explanatory power is low if interaction or self-awareness within the cohorts identified is low.<sup>18</sup> Common political experiences for a generation may have little impact on outlooks if they are of low salience. When events of high salience help forge an identifiable generational outlook, it will probably be shared more broadly across genealogical generations. These general observations are meant as cautionary warnings against assuming any direct correlation between events and outlooks for a given birth cohort.

All the same, having defined a Gorbachev generation, what formative experiences might be thought to have affected its outlook, especially as contrasted to the "Brezhnev" generation?

## II. Generational History and Soviet History

To summarize: some generations, exposed to a common set of socializing experiences, acquire a distinctive outlook on society, particularly if they become conscious of themselves as a distinct cohort. For all their diversity in other respects, their similar response to salient events experienced at a formative period in their life-histories creates commonalities of outlook. The cohorts now

<sup>18</sup>Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, "Generations, Cycles, and their Role in American Development," in Richard J. Samuels, ed., *Political Generations and Political Development* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1977), pp. 9-16.

assuming positions of power in the Soviet political system are generally those born too late to have fought in the war; the 1926-36 generation is now the senior segment of the post-war generations and has become, by far, the predominant age group represented in the Central Committee and provincial elite. In view of the long tenure of members of the "Brezhnev generation," what might be the formative experiences affecting the consciousness of the "Gorbachev generation?" How might the national history be reflected in the generational history of the officials now coming to power?

First some observations about the historical experiences of the Brezhnev generation. Following is a capsule summary of relevant experiences for politicians born in 1906:

1914-18	age 8-12	war: privation, disillusionment, disorder
1917	11	year of revolution: intense class war
1929-32	23-26	violent collectivization, famine; industrial expansion, reconstruction.
1934-40	27-33	purges and terror: rapid turnover; commitment, insecurity and blindness
1941-45	34-38	war as test of generation and of system
1946-52	39-46	all-out mobilization for reconstruction; ideological and political rigidity
1953-62	47-56	containing consequences of reform: cautious managerialism
1965-69	59-63	restabilization of party and government
1970-79	64-72	managing parity and global power

As Hough has argued, of paramount importance for leaders of Brezhnev's generation were Russia's vast social crises in the twentieth century: foreign invasions; revolution and civil war; and massive famines in 1921-22, 1931-32, 1946-47. Against such primary values as the survival of the system, other values, such as efficiency and productivity, must have been secondary. The enormous importance this generation placed on systemic stability, combined with the long hold on power it enjoyed, helps account for the diminished vigor and flexibility observed in the system's leadership in the 1970s.

Among other common experiences that might have affected outlooks--their salience helping make up for the less impressionable age at which the Brezhnev generation coped with them-- are two worth citing: the management of global power in the nuclear age, and the stress of de-Stalinization. If the goal of the first was to expand

power while avoiding crisis, that of the second lay in the need to revitalize a stagnant political system while maintaining overall political and ideological control over change. It is more than likely that the net impact of these phases for middle-aged elites was to reinforce a preference for incremental over radical change, for stabilization of change processes rather than risk-taking, and for policies and processes that would minimize personal political insecurity. This hypothesis would be consistent with the Brezhnev-era policy of a "tranquil atmosphere" and "stability of cadres."

The point is that the long-term decline in system performance, which became so visible to Western observers of Soviet affairs at the end of the 1970s and has since become a standard topic in Soviet discussions under Gorbachev, is likely to have been largely invisible to the older generation. The gradual but steady slowing of Soviet progress would not have constituted a critical situation for a coterie of septuagenarians that had survived invasions, civil war and near civil war, and the decimation of the populace by terror and famine.

By contrast, consider the experiences of a member of the "postwar generation" and specifically of a leader born in 1931. [See the timeline in the appendix.]

By and large, this generation would not have been conscious of the Great Purges; the war would dominate early memories as a time of national unity, privation, sacrifice and heroism; perhaps the symbolic identification of Stalin and the feats of national resistance and conquest would have left an indelible impression. Still more salient for those in their late teens and early twenties would have been the urgency of reconstruction after the war, the desperate struggle to avert famine, the remobilization of the populace.

In this deeply tense environment, the contradictions of post-war reconstruction were at their sharpest. The regime reestablished pre-war controls over agriculture while seeking to raise production levels; pressed for reconstruction and expansion of the industrial base; rapidly reimposed social discipline on the basis of a particularly dogmatic and xenophobic ideological policy.<sup>19</sup> There were immensely ambitious, grandiose plans advanced in the twilight late Stalin period--"agro-gorods" (developing urban-type living and working conditions in the farms), the reforestation project of surrounding the country with new forests, the grand scheme for the

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<sup>19</sup>Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation, 1946-53* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), p. 67.

"transformation of nature," the advance of socialism through Asia and Europe. But technology was stagnant, the populace was demoralized and apathetic, agriculture was in a state of near crisis, and political leaders were deeply insecure. The last impulses of revolutionary modernization and national reconstruction were being played out along with the stagnant, ritualized, personalized, fear-ridden aspects of the late Stalin period. High politics was violent and paranoid, illustrated by the excommunication of Yugoslavia, the Leningrad case, the Varga affair, and the doctors' plot. The political system grew inflexible and stagnant. For those just entering political life, the pressure for performance must have been equivalent to that of the war for their elders but the system itself far more stultifying.

My guiding premise is that it is neither the "re-Stalinizing" influences of the 1946-53 period nor the reformism and utopianism of the 1950s that constitute the major formative influences on members of the 1926-36 generation, but rather the need to perform well in *both* phases and the opportunity to compare them. The 1926-36 cohort is the last generation to have had first-hand contact with the Stalin era and the first to respond to post-Stalinist change. Straddling the last impulse of revolutionary Bolshevism and the first "modern" period, the Gorbachev generation is a product of both.

The next phase brought equally demanding challenges, requiring adeptness of another kind as political elites sought simultaneously to eliminate the worse effects of Stalinism while containing the consequences of the reform process. Those who came of age in the immediate post-Stalin period experienced ideological disorientation. Soviet specialists have alluded to this and are apt to talk about "fortunate" and "unfortunate" generations. The ideologist G. L. Smirnov notes that those born in the 1930s and 1940s had to experience "complicated political changes tied with criticism of the cult of personality and subjectivism" as they were forming their views. As a result, they tended to look critically at the past, and not all were able to cope with these dislocations.<sup>20</sup> A study published in 1981 studying the age make-up of discipline-violators in the construction industry found that the generation born between 1931 and 1940 was over 5 times more likely to be a discipline violator

<sup>20</sup>G. L. Smirnov, *Soverskii chelovek: formirovanie sotsialisticheskogo tipa lichnosti* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1980), p. 344.

than a conscientious worker and was thus an "entirely unfortunate generation."<sup>21</sup>

The "thaw" seems to have had the strongest impact on, first, the cultural intelligentsia, whose anti-Stalinist searchings contributed to the emergence of the public dissent movement; and, second, those born just after what we have called the "Gorbachev generation," which was born in the late twenties and early thirties. It would have been those born in the late thirties who came of age as Khrushchev denounced Stalin. In contrast, politically involved members of Gorbachev's generation probably escaped personal disorientation: for them de-Stalinization was a managerial problem. Zhores Medvedev's comment on this is apt: "Life was difficult for a professional Komsomol propagandist in 1962. Young people in the early 1960s had neither the inhibitions nor the inertia born of fear that kept the more experienced, older generation silent. They asked difficult and uncomfortable questions....It must, therefore, have been difficult for Gorbachev to follow the controversial instructions from the Komsomol Central Committee...without offending the more traditional and conservative views of the local Party bosses in Stavropol."<sup>22</sup> In the generation gap between "fathers" and "sons" (illustrated by the incident cited at the beginning) over complicity in Stalinism, Gorbachev's generation is intermediate, and the political elite that rose out of it would not have shared in the ethical soul-searching characteristic of the cultural intelligentsia, the tendency which the political elite pejoratively calls "abstraktnoe moralizatorstvo." But the impatience for change, the intolerance of complacency, the preoccupation with global solutions, may well unite the post-Stalinist "sons" and the political elites of the post-war generation.

The related complex of problems of the Khrushchev period, when successive waves of organizational and policy reform yielded diminishing and eventually negative returns, again posed the problem of the relationship between openness and change at the level of the political system and the pace of progress in its performance. The contrasts and parallels between the late Stalin period and the Khrushchev period must have had an impact on a generation attaining political maturity in time to experience both phases: the dilemma of system reform must have been acutely challenging--how to find the right balance between flexibility and

<sup>21</sup>Cited in "Aktual'nye voprosy politiki KPSS i pressa," *Zhurnalist*, no. 3 (1983), p. 32.

<sup>22</sup>Zhores A. Medvedev, *Gorbachev* (NY: Norton, 1986), p. 52.

firmness in rule, orthodoxy and revisionism in ideology, centralism and decentralization of bureaucracy, initiative from above and from below; how to guide public debate; how to handle social and political deviation; how to define the party's role vis-a-vis government and society.

In this period policy changes, while essential to improving the system's productivity, also clearly served political purposes in the power struggle among Stalin's successors. The objective of change was to open the political system without encouraging pluralism or parochialism. Under Khrushchev utopianism became a deliberate and effective policy for raising social productivity, along with certain populist and reformist measures: their impact, however, derived from the regeneration of a spirit of enthusiasm and urgency, especially among youth, among whom a revolt against discredited "fathers" was encouraged. A limited return to social mobilization was fostered by opening the political process: given the erratic quality of policy changes, it must have been apparent to young cadres that organizational reform alone accomplished little, though it could well jeopardize the power base of a leader, if it failed to generate a dynamic momentum of change. It would be in keeping for a political leader thirty years later to remember the lesson that good policy alone did not guarantee results: that the content of policy was irrelevant if it was not backed up by improving the mixture of moral, material and coercive incentives for executing policy.

Few politicians of the Gorbachev generation could have taken a significant part in the decision-making on foreign and defense policy that occurred in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev's fall, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the strategy of detente. On the other hand, the deterioration of social and political performance that became marked in the 1970s would have assumed great importance for the Gorbachev generation, not because it coincided with the age window associated with formative experiences, but because it was linked with frustrated mobility, and because it eroded the system's legitimacy and its international power at a point, moreover, when shortages of both labor and material resources were growing severe. The exceptionally high re-election rates to the CPSU Central Committee under Brezhnev--80%, 80%, 89%, and 87% in 1966, 1971, 1976, and 1981 respectively<sup>23</sup>--created evident frustration for

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<sup>23</sup>These are rates of reelection of surviving full members of the Central Committee, calculated and presented by Thane Gustafson and Dawn Mann, "Gorbachëv's First Year: Building Power and Authority," *Problems of Communism*, vol. 35, no. 3 (May-June 1986), p. 4.

younger cadres. One prominent theme in the press, especially before the 27th congress, for example, is the difficulty of persuading older officials who have outlived their usefulness to retire. Obstacles to the adoption and implementation of effective policy, along with various bureaucratic pathologies such as fraud, window-dressing, and ritualism, have been attributed to the weakness of the party as a mobilizing and energizing force in government and society. "Bureaucratism," abetted by the tendency for officials to remain entrenched in power till death, seems to be the diagnosis of the system's malady. This view would reinforce the lessons learned under Stalin and Khrushchev: that without reviving a spirit of national renewal, policy change simply worsens the erosion of central power through bureaucratic self-aggrandizement.

In short, for younger officials poised to take over senior party and government positions as the Brezhnev generation left power, the performance problems of the system, the chronic failure of agriculture, low or negative growth rates, lack of innovation, false reporting, corruption, flourishing illegal commerce, declining social discipline, rising alcohol abuse and associated mortality rates, must appear as far more central, even critical, than was the case for the Brezhnev generation. Having less to protect and more to lose, the younger generation's sense of the urgency of the need for change is more acute. As Gorbachev put it in the April 1985 Central Committee Plenum address: "the historical destiny of our country, the position of socialism in the contemporary world depend in large measure on how we conduct matters henceforth." Here, however, "usable history" would not necessarily point toward reformism in the sense of decentralization, legality and marketization. An idealized image, drawn from the thirties and wartime, of a mobilized, solidary society, is part of the Gorbachev generation's historical memory, assuming that the argument above is correct. Among cultural elites, reformism (though without a unifying symbol of evil such as that provided by Stalin) may revive. Writers of Gorbachev's generation, such as Evtushenko and Voznesensky, have again become spokesmen for change, championing such Gorbachevian themes as anti-bureaucratism, glasnost', "new thinking," and creativity. But the critical intelligentsia and the political elite must be distinguished in their patterns of opinion and value orientation, as a number of surveys inside and outside the country indicate. For the late-Stalin and post-Stalin cultural elite, Stalinism would be an overwhelmingly negative symbolic reference point. But to the political elite, in all likelihood, the "Stalinist" system is a very contradictory reference point: it mixes dynamism with stagnation, popular mobilization and

demobilization, chauvinism and internationalism, pragmatism and orthodoxy. It would not be surprising, therefore, if members of the Gorbachev generation imagined they could combine the most effective aspects of Stalinism with those of the period of reform that followed it in order to find the right balance of openness and mobilization to ensure a rapid pace of social and economic progress.

The case for formative influences on the Gorbachev generation is therefore modest and in some respects ambiguous. No one set of common experiences that defines the generation as "sons" against "fathers" or the reverse stands out: it has been in many ways an "in-between" generation that *mediated* between Stalinism and de-Stalinization. That part of it that came to prominence in the arts in the late fifties and early sixties was characterized by generational self-consciousness, but such attitudes should not be imputed directly to the political elite which first entered positions of power in the late Stalin period. The argument here is that political elites of Gorbachev's generation were uniquely positioned to gauge the effects of system-level change on social performance. The regularization of procedure and incrementalism in policy under Brezhnev led to a perilous degree of decay. Neither liberalization (not least among its risks is the danger of antagonizing key power blocs) nor personal dictatorship would be an acceptable means of popular mobilization. But some combination of openness to new ideas, risk-taking, innovativeness and reformism with the social discipline and solidarity of Stalinism must appear the ideal. Particular policy ideas are probably of secondary importance compared to the need for invigoration of the system itself. The best case for a clear stamp of experience on the Gorbachev generation is the evidence for its awareness of and frustration at the long, slow slide toward impotence under Brezhnev and memories of attempts at remobilizing the society for rapid economic development under Stalin and Khrushchev.

### III. Policy Perspectives of the Gorbachev Generation

The major influences on the 1926-36 cohort, as outlined above, are, first, that system-level change, even radical change, is required to achieve significant progress in productivity: policy measures serving to invigorate popular energy may tend to mobilize society around common policy goals but stagnation may arise either from overconcentration of political power at the center or pluralization and parochialism in society. Second, the generation reacted strongly against the immobilism and decay of the 1970s, doubtless idealizing

earlier phases of national unity, achievement and conviction. This perspective probably contains rather few substantive policy ideas. "Left" ideas--more centralism, social discipline and solidarity--are probably joined with "reformist" ideas, such as greater pragmatism and openness in ideological policy, plant-level autonomy, and economic incentives for private farm production. Probably different groups within the generation lean more towards the "Stalinist" or the "Khrushchevian" outlooks.

Can some characteristic generational outlooks on particular policy issues nonetheless be inferred? In the final section, possible views on five problems will be discussed: law, ideology, nationalities, US-Soviet relations, and military security.

The years 1955-62 were a period of significant legal reform, together with the dramatic rehabilitation of many thousands of Stalin's victims. These changes gave rise to hopes in the West, and among many in Soviet society, that a secular shift in the direction of a Soviet "Rechtsstaat" had begun. There is little reason to think that the Gorbachev generation, the political elite among it, that is, would wish to resume this direction of change. Apathy, demoralization, and fear were the consequences of a terror-ridden police state; legality thus served Khrushchev's aims of reviving the popular élan necessary to improve system performance. Today the political elite must fear a possible increase in the level of organized dissent if individual legal and civic rights were to be reinforced. Liberal individualism would find little support in the political ideology of this generation or among the cultural intelligentsia with which it is allied. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that many leaders of this generation would regard the KGB's political power and autonomy as excessive and threatening; and that legal reforms might be enacted as a way of curbing it.

Gorbachev's leadership began with clarion signals about the need for reform of ideological policy, and there is every reason to think that these views are widely popular among the post-Brezhnev political elites. The turn from ritualism, formalism, bureaucratism and the dull repetition of hollow orthodoxy has been demanded time and again by members of the new power elite both in political and media positions. Presumably, therefore, a phase of sustained pragmatism in ideological policy has begun: propaganda and mass communications should be oriented around problem-solving, not with the ethical dimension so strongly expressed in the immediate aftermath of Stalinism, but perhaps with greater openness and objectivity of discussion. With this, values of public-mindedness and social discipline are underlined. In the face of socially pathological

forms of private behavior--drinking, drugs, hooliganism, speculation--ideological policy attempts to restore the primacy of the public interest.

The reversal of tendencies toward "bureaucratic pluralism" under Brezhnev, considered now an impediment to the renewal of the socialist community, would extend to nationality policy. Tolerance for the development of corrupt private fiefdoms under the guise of the "flourishing of nationalities" or liberality toward ethnic minorities would no longer find sympathy among Brezhnev's successors. Here one would expect the emergence of tensions between upwardly mobile members of non-Russian nationalities, sympathetic to elements of the reform program but aspiring toward still greater national autonomy, and the centralizing, mobilizing spirit of the ethnic Russian core among the Gorbachev generation. One of their principal points of reference is the national effort during World War II, when Soviet nationalism and Russian nationalism were virtually indistinguishable. On the other hand, Russian nationalism, which also gained significant ground in the Brezhnev period, will find its potential checked. The final cancellation of the river diversion schemes, apparently a victory for Russian nationalists and a defeat for the Central Asian lobby, may be vitiated by large-scale energy development in Siberia.

In the realm of foreign policy, Soviet history has probably taught the Gorbachev generation no single set of lessons other than the need to infuse old instruments with new life. For example, the current opening to China simply repeats a policy attempted when Khrushchev first succeeded to power, then again with Brezhnev, and still again when Mao died. In all likelihood there are significant differences among members of the Gorbachev elite over how much Japan or the United States should be accommodated. The diplomatic and media offensives that began under Andropov resemble the opening to the West and the third world initiated in the mid-1950s. Probably the current line (associated with Alexander Bovin and Georgii Arbatov) to the effect that 'we don't need to deal with the US--we will deal instead with Europe and Japan'--a line associated by Jerry Hough with the Gorbachev generation's sophistication and multi-lateralism--should not be taken too seriously. Two factors suggest a long-term interest in a new accommodation (a new "detente") with the United States: the first is urgent economic pressure, particularly the long-term prospect for insufficient foreign exchange earnings from energy and arms exports, resulting in large-scale credit requirements; second is the urgent need for stabilization of the arms race. In this field, we are not dealing with a new

outlook, but rather of the pressure of circumstances combined with an adroit use of existing policy instruments.

Finally, the Gorbachev generation, as good "neo-Bolsheviks," and in keeping with both Stalin's and Khrushchev's policies, might well be more attuned to the benefit-cost ratio of political, as opposed to military, instruments of foreign policy. After WWII, in the face of what was called an implacable imperialist enemy bent on eventual war with the socialist camp, Stalin demobilized the bulk of the Soviet armed forces. Khrushchev, faced with similar economic pressure, also reduced the size of the standing army. Both relied heavily on political measures--international organizations, front groups, propaganda, clandestine measures, alliances and diplomacy--to achieve foreign policy goals. Brezhnev's relentless pursuit of extravagantly expensive military superiority seems an anomaly by comparison, to be explained by his leadership's strong reaction against the erratic policies of their predecessor. The opportunity for the new leadership to implement significant changes in investment priorities from the military to the civilian sectors will depend on two circumstances: sufficient stability in the international security arena, and consolidation of power domestically.

**Appendix: Timeline of events for a leader born in 1931**

	<b>Age:</b>	<b>Event:</b>
1936-38	5-7	elementary political consciousness: faith in system <sup>24</sup>
1941-45	10-14	war. privation and national purpose. conscious respect for sacrifices and heroism
1946-53	15-22	post-war reconstruction. Critical time: famine. Struggle to raise agric. production: [Gorbachev at 18 is awarded Order of Red Banner of Labor--helps him get in MGU] <sup>25</sup> ; intense pressure to reconstruct and expand industry; assimilation and sovietization of newly annexed or reconquered regions.
1948		Yugoslavia expelled from Cominform. First open rupture in communist movement. Exposure of "Leningrad plot;" height of "Zhdanovshchina" and of fear of contaminating foreign influences.
1949-50		establishment of communist government in China and of alliance between PRC and USSR.
1950		outbreak of war in Korea

<sup>24</sup>Cf comments by Arkady Shevchenko, in *Breaking with Moscow* (NY: Knopf, 1985), p. 54. Shevchenko was born in 1930. Living in the Crimea, too young to follow political affairs, he seems to have been completely unaware of purges and terror.

Born in 1927 and living in Moscow, Mstislav Rostropovich also understood nothing of the Great Purges (he writes, "I knew absolutely nothing"), but became aware of something strange when once in 1937 his father warned him against ever visiting a certain family again. But he indicates that such experiences had no lasting effect on him: he believed that in general everything was normal. Valerii Chalidze, ed., *Otvetsvennost' pokoleniia* (Interview with Rostropovich) (NY: Chalidze Publications, 1981), pp. 52-3.

Even many who were adolescents lived through the period of the Great Terror without any sense of fear or oppression, as is attested by Dina Kaminskaya. See *Final Judgment* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1982), pp. 20-21, 40.

<sup>25</sup>Zhores Medvedev, *Gorbachev* (NY: Norton, 1986), p. 34.

1950-51 discussion of "agro-gorods," ie intensive development of villages to bring them to level of development of cities. Raises issue of urban-rural gap (class-political, economic dimensions). Scheme rejected as too radical.

1952-53 "doctor's plot" and wave of suspicion directed against Jews. Last campaign of Stalinist repression.

1953 death of Stalin. Country gripped by uncertainty. Early limited reaction against Stalinism--openness in culture, openness to West.

1953-56 22-25 period of succession struggle and limited de-Stalinization.

1953 Malenkov and Khrushchev assume government and party leadership. Presidium unites against Beria, secret police. Beria removed, police lose independent political power. Rivals appeal to political constituencies for favor--policy alternatives serve political interests.

1953-55 Khrushchev initiatives in agricultural policy consolidate his power: 1953, reforms of state-kolkhoz relations; 1954, Virgin Lands scheme; 1955, new agricultural program emphasizing milk and meat; 1953-62, pressure to plant corn--North Caucasus to be Khrushchev's "corn state".<sup>26</sup> In same period, Lysenko loses most influence--falls from presidency of Academy of Agricultural Sciences. But retains Khrushchev's confidence.

1955 Khrushchev defeats Malenkov, who resigns as head of government. Party and party leader clearly preeminent.

1955-57. reexamination of cases of persons convicted of counterrevolutionary crimes; release from labor camps and legal rehabilitation of great majority of victims.<sup>27</sup>

1955-62 Period of significant legal reform.

<sup>26</sup>Roy A. Medvedev and Zhores A. Medvedev, *Khrushchev: The Years in Power* (NY: Norton, 1978), p. 127.

<sup>27</sup>Harold J. Berman, *Justice in the USSR*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 71.

1956 25 start of de-Stalinization. Need for political agility. Excitement of possibility of change but consciousness of need to manage reform carefully. Awareness that reform capable of getting out of hand. Major cultural ferment--new literature of criticism, truth-seeking, reform. Significant impact on youth and intelligentsia.

1956 Riots and rebellion<sup>1</sup> in Poland and Hungary. Beginnings of break with PRC.

1957 26 1. Feb.: indus. admin. reorg.--indus. branch ministries dissolved; regional eco. councils created  
2. May: Khrushchev scheme to overtake US in milk, meat and butter production in 3-4 years  
3. June: crisis in leadership. Intense Presidium effort to remove Khrushchev; countered by gaining CC majority; removal of "anti-party" group  
4. August: successful test flight of SS-6 ICBM  
5. October: SS-6 launches sputnik into orbit  
6. Oct.: Zhukov dismissed as Minister of

#### Defense

7. Stavropol krai becomes test site for experiment to dissolve MTS's and merge them with kolkhozy. Experiment is successful.  
8. Major new program of housing construction begun

1958 27 Khrushchev replaces Bulganin as govt. head; launches major chemicals industry drive; institutes major accelerated campaign to dissolve MTS's and sell their inventory to kolkhozy; school reform enacted

1959 28 Khrushchev visits US, PRC

1960 29 Sharp reduction of size of armed forces; U-2 incident; open breach with China

1961 30 22nd party congress. Adoption of new party program (utopian commitments to building communism); new party rules--including mandatory rotation rule  
failure of US Bay of Pigs operation in Cuba

- 1962 31 New scheme for agricultural organization--  
territorial production administrations  
Cuban missile crisis;  
November--separation of party at oblast level  
into agricultural and industrial branches
- 1963 32 Test Ban Treaty /  
new ideological crackdown
- 1964 33 Khrushchev falls.  
1964-65 reversal of certain Khrushchev-era  
reorganization schemes: ministries reestablished; division of party  
ended; calls for new style of leadership, condemnation of impulsive  
decision making and promises of respect for cadres  
1965-66, 1966-67 new measures to expand rights of PPO's  
and of central party apparatus
- 1965 34 "Kosygin reform"--expanded enterprise  
responsibility + restoration of ministries. Reform fails.  
Significant shift in plan priorities: all-services  
increases in investment in defense production. Significant campaign  
to develop blue-water navy, conventional forces, tactical and  
strategic nuclear forces.
- 1965-70 Substantial increase in investment devoted to  
agricultural production
- mid-1960s beginning of experiments with "link" system  
in agriculture; Khudenko affair; conservative pressure kills idea
- 1966 35 Beginning of series of waves of repression of  
intellectual dissent
- 1967 36 Shchekino experiment begun  
1969 endorsed strongly by CC;  
1971 endorsed strongly by Brezhnev  
1973 again endorsed by Brezhnev  
1977 new round of favorable press publicity  
1978 new regulations permit modest revival
- 1968 37 Prague Spring and invasion of Czechoslovakia

- 1969 38 USSR achieves strategic nuclear parity w/ US;  
SALT negotiations begin;  
evident victory of "arms control" lobby
- 1970 39 Soviet military intervention in Egypt;  
non-proliferation treaty ratified;  
Soviet-German treaty signed
- 1971 40 Brezhnev's "Peace Program" adopted at 24th  
party congress; likewise commitment to expanded development of  
consumer goods production; avowed policy of increasing foreign  
trade to obtain benefits of technology infusion from West; announces  
strong support for consolidation of production and R&D into  
production associations  
Nixon visit to China announced  
Berlin agreement signed  
PPO's "right of control" extended
- 1972 41 Nixon visits USSR: summit meeting in Moscow  
Soviet advisers expelled from Egypt
- 1973 42 Middle-East crisis: US-Soviet confrontation  
over Arab-Israeli war  
Brezhnev pushes for expansion of inter-farm  
cooperation
- 1974-75 43-44 Collapse of US-Soviet trade agreement; Nixon  
resigns; following 1973 US withdrawal from Vietnam, 1975  
reunification of Vietnam under Northern rule
- 1977 46 Brezhnev Constitution adopted; Brezhnev  
reaches peak of formal power and status and begins to decline in

vitality. Gap between rising cult of Brezhnev and visible loss of powers becomes acute and embarrassing.<sup>28</sup>

1979            48            SALT II signed, aborted; detente collapses  
fall of Shah regime in Iran, establishment and  
consolidation of Khomeini regime  
Crisis of Afghan regime; invasion  
Enactment of set of economic measures to  
stiffen plan discipline and contract fulfillment. Weak law, even more  
weakly implemented  
Promulgation of major CC resolution on  
restructuring and revitalizing party ideological work

1980-81    49-50            Polish crisis

1981            50            At 26th party congress, Brezhnev stresses  
agriculture (calls for major food program) and energy development.  
Soviet economy in middle of serious slow-down and agricultural  
decline. Recognition of serious demographic problems.

1982            CC adopts Food Program

1981-82    50-1            Brezhnev regime in final throes. Rise and  
coalescence of political opposition to Brezhnev; beginning of  
Andropov manoeuvres to replace Brezhnev.

<sup>28</sup>It is apparently acceptable to refer to this, obliquely at any rate, in public now, as opposed to merely recounting Brezhnev anecdotes in private. Among the political experiences which Ivan Vasil'ev mentions having undergone, together with his generation, are the following regrettable phenomena: "the cult of personality...the results of subjectivism and voluntarism...unrestrained praise for certain leaders....This is the voice of my generation. Yes, we ourselves have to remove the gilding from the icons we ourselves have painted. The cult, voluntarism, flattery and servility.... It's quite a lot for one life, no doubt about it." See above, note 4.