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Gorbachev's Growing Confrontation With the KGB: A Coming Showdown?

An Intelligence Assessment

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An Intelligence Assessment

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the Chief, SOVA

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SOI 88-11045A
June 1988

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Gorbachev's Growing Confrontation With the KGB: A Coming Showdown? (

Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 15 June 1988
was used in this report.*

Despite evidence of significant KGB support for Gorbachev's bid for party leadership in 1985, there now appears to be a growing rift between the General Secretary and the KGB, including its chairman, Viktor Chebri- kov. This relationship began to change as Gorbachev's domestic reforms were increasingly perceived by elements in the KGB as threatening to their interests. Now, Gorbachev apparently wants to curb the power and influence of the KGB itself. There is evidence that some in the KGB are starting to fight back (

Concerns about Gorbachev's policies do not appear to be equally shared throughout the KGB. Some in the First Chief (Foreign Intelligence) Directorate may welcome *glasnost* and *perestroika* for making it easier to establish contacts with foreigners and to advance Soviet interests abroad. But those KGB officers who built their careers in the internal security area, including Chebrikov, have reason for concern. (

Differences between Chebrikov and Gorbachev came out in the open last September, when the KGB chief criticized aspects of the General Secre- tary's reform agenda for harming the country's security. Chebrikov and other senior KGB officials apparently fear that *glasnost*, greater toleration of dissent, and reforms in the legal system could sharply reduce their ability to guarantee the stability of Soviet society. Senior security officials also apparently believe that, over the long term, Gorbachev wants a reduced role for the KGB, and they are concerned that this will threaten their jobs and privileged positions

Chebrikov is now siding with more cautious members of the Politburo who are trying to slow the General Secretary's program. Recent rumors of Chebrikov's opposition to *perestroika*, reports that he was "Second Secretary" Ligachev's only supporter at a heated Politburo meeting over reform, and unconfirmed stories, leaked to Western reporters and diplo- mats, of the replacement or augmentation of Gorbachev's KGB body- guards with military troops suggest that Chebrikov is increasingly per- ceived as taking a greater role in leadership politics on the side of the conservatives

The KGB, which has become involved in party politics at several critical junctures since Stalin's death, can be a dangerous adversary. Although the KGB has never acted on its own, it has been on the winning side in party

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power struggles in 1957, 1964, 1982, and 1985. Short of a political showdown, members of the KGB could use connections at home or abroad to spread rumors to damage the General Secretary, use information in their confidential files to discredit his supporters, or even provoke incidents to embarrass him.

Gorbachev needs a loyal KGB more than ever to monitor elite compliance with policies that are unpopular at lower levels as well as to monitor political attitudes. Thus far, however, the KGB has been largely untouched by Gorbachev's restructuring of the Soviet agencies responsible for national security. This stability increasingly appears to be more a reflection of his difficulty asserting control over the KGB than his high regard for its performance.

The revival of ethnic unrest in the Caucasus has posed a serious political challenge that may force the General Secretary to accede temporarily to the demands of Politburo conservatives. However, while in the short run Gorbachev may be forced to make a tactical retreat, we believe that political reconciliation appears unlikely.

The General Secretary will need to gain control of the security service to further his reforms and to preclude its becoming involved in plotting against him by more conservative party leaders. Gorbachev already has increased party oversight of KGB activities by naming a personal ally to a position in the Central Committee Secretariat to supervise legal reform, the police, and the KGB. This action may have bought him some time but to achieve his goals he will ultimately have to replace Chebrikov.

The contest for control of the KGB will no doubt continue to be part of the intense political struggle between Gorbachev and his reformist allies and party conservatives. If Gorbachev can build on a recent victory over conservatives and bolster his political authority, he will be in a stronger position to press for reform of the KGB and the replacement of Chebrikov. His progress in this key area is likely to be an important measure of his ability to press his political agenda.

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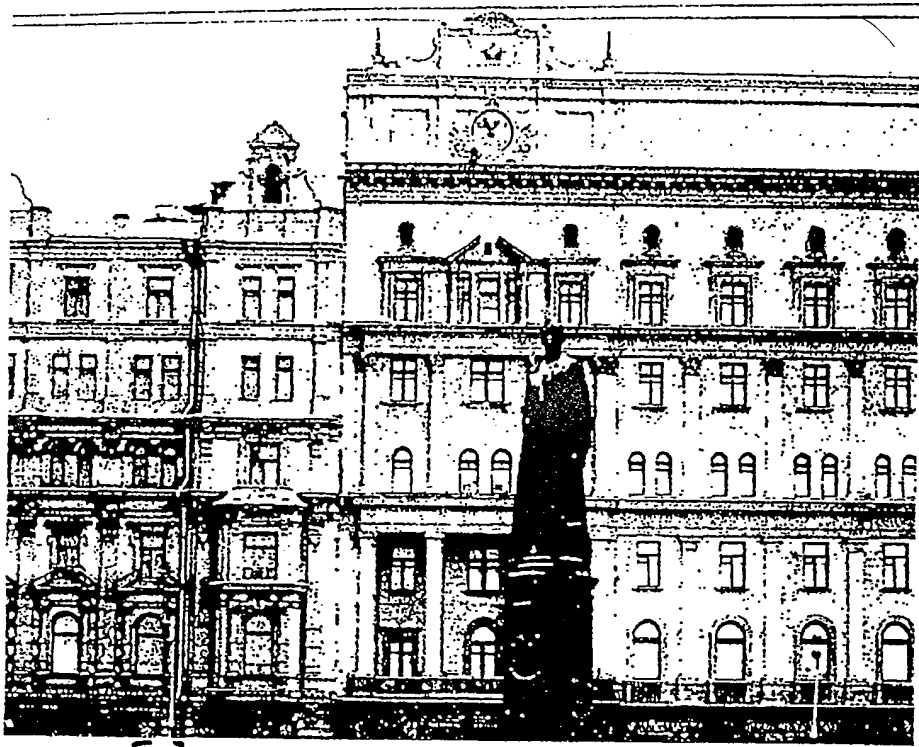
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Scope Note

Much of our information on the KGB is impressionistic and limited in scope [

Nevertheless, we know more about the KGB in the Gorbachev era than we did in the 1960s and 1970s [] We have given us a better understanding of the KGB leadership and its attitudes toward reform. Security issues are more widely debated in the press because of *glasnost*, and give us better information about KGB domestic activities, including a few significant exposures by the Soviet media of malfeasance. Recent unclassified studies have broadened our knowledge of the historical development of the KGB's bureaucratic empire. An examination of evidence reveals a fairly consistent pattern on most of the key issues addressed in this assessment. AC

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Gorbachev's Growing Confrontation With the KGB: A Coming Showdown?

Introduction

Since becoming General Secretary in March 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev has moved to strengthen his personal authority over the key Soviet agencies responsible for national security—the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, and Internal Affairs, as well as the International Department of the Central Committee. So far, however, the KGB appears to have been largely untouched. Each of these other organizations has had its chief and many of its top personnel replaced under Gorbachev and has experienced a strong dose of his restructuring efforts. In contrast, the only senior KGB leader replaced under Gorbachev was First Deputy KGB Chairman Georgiy Tsinev who was retired in 1986 on the eve of his 80th birthday. This stability increasingly appears to be more a reflection of the difficulty Gorbachev is having asserting his control over the KGB than his high regard for its performance

Early Support for Gorbachev

One reason the KGB may have initially escaped restructuring is that it appears to have helped Gorbachev's rise to power. By the late 1970s Gorbachev was already a protege of then KGB Chairman Yuriy Andropov, apparently having forged a close relationship during Andropov's vacation visits to Stavropol', where Gorbachev was the party boss. During Andropov's tenure as General Secretary from 1982 to 1984, he actively advanced Gorbachev's career and appeared to be grooming him as his successor.

Gorbachev apparently also had independent backing within the KGB because many there reportedly recognized the need to address domestic problems ignored by Leonid Brezhnev. More than any other institution, the KGB had knowledge of the negative effects on the Soviet population of the stagnation of the Brezhnev era

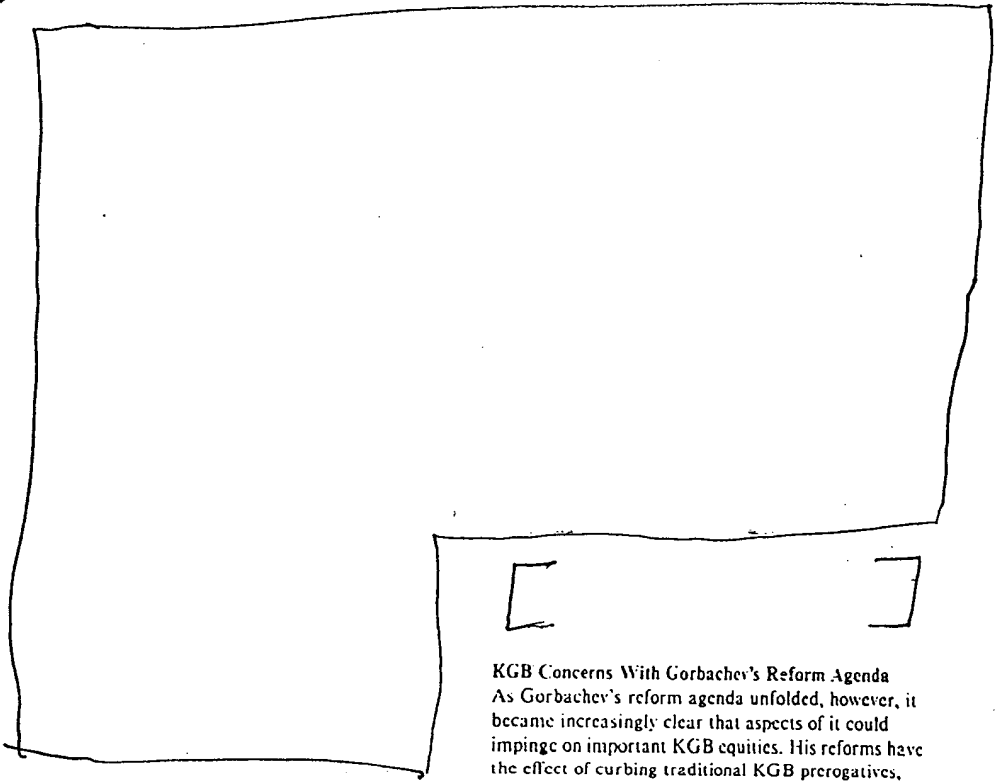
indicates that some senior officials of the KGB were more aware of this problem than was the party leadership, recognizing

that ignoring it posed a greater long-term threat to the stability of the system than reform

During the Chernenko regime (1984-85), many in the KGB hierarchy saw Gorbachev as Andropov's ideological successor and supported his bid for power. suggests that Gorbachev was popular among many senior KGB officers and that some regretted Chernenko's appointment as General Secretary and continued to support Gorbachev because he seemed to represent a force for change.

Indeed, KGB support may have played a key role in Gorbachev's selection as General Secretary

For his part, Gorbachev indicated that he held the foreign intelligence capabilities of the KGB in high regard



During his first 18 months as General Secretary, Gorbachev appeared to maintain a good working relationship with the KGB and its chairman:

- At the first plenum following Gorbachev's election, Chebrikov was made a full member of the Politburo.
- The KGB Chairman delivered the Revolution Day speech in November 1985, an indication of high status in the leadership. In the address, he enthusiastically supported the key elements of Gorbachev's program and appeared to signal his support for further change by becoming the first Politburo member to break the taboo against using the word "reform."
- At the 27th Party Congress in March 1986, KGB representation increased from four to five, despite an overall drop in the size of the Central Committee.

KGB Concerns With Gorbachev's Reform Agenda
As Gorbachev's reform agenda unfolded, however, it became increasingly clear that aspects of it could impinge on important KGB equities. His reforms have the effect of curbing traditional KGB prerogatives, unleashing forces in society that make the KGB's job of social control more difficult, and directly threatening the status of KGB officers. More recently, there have been signs that he is moving directly to reduce the administrative power of the KGB

The first hints of differences between Gorbachev and Chebrikov began to surface in the fall of 1986. Chebrikov maintained that Chebrikov was Gorbachev's most determined opponent on the Politburo, while others suggested differences on a wide range of subjects, including *glasnost* and economic reform. Since then, there have been persistent reports by a wide range of sources that Gorbachev intends to replace Chebrikov in order to establish stronger personal control over the KGB

The forces being unleashed under the banners of *glasnost* and democratization appear to be the aspects of Gorbachev's reforms that are causing the KGB the

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greatest concern. In September 1987 on the 110th anniversary of the birth of Feliks Dzerzhinskiy - first head of the Soviet security service—Chebrikov appeared to question key aspects of Gorbachev's reform agenda, suggesting that they are producing undesirable consequences. Since then, other policy differences have also come to the surface. Many of these concerns appear to be widely shared within the KGB.

While senior KGB officials have publicly emphasized "vigilance" during periods of international tension, the tone and content of Chebrikov's warnings about the threat of Western ideological subversion are unusual because they come in a period of improving relations with the United States. In contrast, Andropov—who supported detente as KGB Chairman in the early 1970s—did not mention the issue in speeches during the period 1973-76.¹

Glasnost. In his major public statements over the past three years, Chebrikov has given only limited support to *glasnost* and has suggested that media openness benefits the USSR's enemies. He seems to be increasingly concerned that, by ending tight control over public expression, *glasnost* is making societal control more difficult and that this loss of vigilance could endanger the regime:

Chebrikov's concerns are apparently shared by other top KGB officers []

- Chebrikov expressed initial reservations about *glasnost* in a September 1985 *Kommunist* article, in which he stressed the dangers of foreign espionage and said that increasing public exposure of Western intelligence activities was the KGB's contribution to *glasnost*.
- In the 1985 Revolution Day speech, Chebrikov only tepidly endorsed *glasnost*, warning that the manipulation of Soviet dissenters by foreign intelligence services continued to be a danger.
- He strongly reiterated the vigilance theme at the 27th Party Congress in early 1986, noting that Western intelligence was exploiting the ideological immaturity of Soviet citizens.
- Chebrikov stated his concerns most strongly in his Dzerzhinskiy Day speech last September. While praising the party's program of "broad *glasnost*," he noted that the Soviet media had damaged security by allowing the West "to speculate on the shortcomings and unresolved questions that exist in our country."
- In a speech in April 1988, Chebrikov did not endorse openness and noted that poor ideological education and Western radiobroadcasts were major causes of recent ethnic unrest in the Caucasus

[] KGB chiefs in Georgia, Latvia, and Leningrad. []

[] sought to halt the distribution of controversial films, such as *Is it Easy to be Young?* and *Repentance*, because they portray dissent in a favorable light.

Treatment of Dissidents. In his Dzerzhinskiy Day speech, Chebrikov implicitly criticized the release of political prisoners, charging that they continue to act as agents of Western intelligence services. He also forcefully noted that regime tolerance of independent political associations—which Gorbachev has supported as necessary for enhancing the process of reform—allowed "extremist elements" to penetrate certain organizations and exploit the "democratization" process to split the "monolithic unity of party and people." By arguing that the release of dissidents had contributed to massive protests that took place last

¹ It should be noted that in the early 1970s there had not been the fundamental questioning of party control as there is under Gorbachev. In addition, there is at least the possibility that Chebrikov's talk of vigilance is reflective of Western intelligence penetrations that have been unrequited and is bureaucratic posturing to preserve cadres and budget.

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summer by Baltic and Crimean Tatar nationalists. Chebrikov implied that Gorbachev's concessions on human rights had not worked.

Other senior KGB officers appear to share Chebrikov's negative assessment of the impact of Gorbachev's policy toward political dissenters.

Legal Reforms. A major feature of Gorbachev's domestic program is legal reform. He appears to be trying to curb extralegal activities and give a fuller platform to the rule of law in the USSR.

Gorbachev told that he wanted to transform the Soviet Union into a "state of law." He apparently hopes that these reforms will help overcome alienation from the system and give Soviet citizens confidence that they can participate in the reform process without fear of retribution.

To accomplish this, Gorbachev has proposed changes in the Soviet legal system that would repeal laws restricting political dissent, give the accused greater access to attorneys, and streamline the procuracy and courts. He is also supporting laws that would allow Soviet citizens to sue the government, and the abolition of laws that allowed prosecution for anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda—under which the KGB persecuted thousands of dissenters in the 1960s and 1970s. Laws have already been adopted to curb KGB abuses of psychiatric institutions by placing them under the Ministry of Health and by prohibiting outside authorities from administratively interring dissenters. While the proposed legal reforms will not radically transform the Soviet system, they would reduce the ability of the KGB to administer punishment.

It would seem natural that these policies would cause unease in an organization that sees itself as the ultimate guard of public order. KGB officers, who have in the past frequently circumvented legal procedure in dealing with "enemies of the people," no doubt resent the prospect of having to operate within tighter legal norms.

Historical Revisionism. Reporting from a number of sources indicates that senior KGB officers are nervous that articles exposing secret police abuses during the Stalin era could tarnish the image of their service. The publication of a spate of recent novels, histories, and memoirs about the Stalin era contain details about the role of the security services that surely discomferts the KGB. Three recent examples are:

- A piece in *Literaturnaya gazeta* about the Stalinist terror quoting secret police documents advocating the use of torture in connection with the "Doctors' Plot."
- An article in a Moscow newspaper by a noted military historian recalling the execution of 50 percent of the Soviet officer corps in the 1930s and calling for the exposure and punishment of those who perpetrated the terror.
- A history of the arrest and execution of the leadership of the Leningrad party organization, reporting that mental and physical torture was used against senior party officials in the late 1940s, including a member of the Politburo.

This approach is in marked contrast to the Andropov years when Soviet literature on the KGB was unflinchingly favorable, creating an image of the "security organs" as the lawful protector of Soviet society.

According to this campaign enhanced the legitimacy of the KGB and the prestige of its officer corps.

In late 1932 several prominent physicians—most of them Jews—were charged with working with Western intelligence services to poison Stalin and other Soviet leaders.

Historically, A Strained Relationship

During previous periods of political strain, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev dismissed or even executed KGB chairmen who had once been political allies:

- *Dzerzhinskiy (1917-26) ... founder of the Cheka (Security Service) ... began practice of mass reprisals against hostages during Russian Civil War ... died in office.*
- *Menzhinskiy (1926-34) ... never a significant political figure ... died in office.*
- *Yagoda (1934-36) ... founder of forced labor camp system ... once close ally of Stalin ... shot in 1938.*
- *Yezhov (1936-38) ... carried out Great Purge (Yezhovshchina) in which millions perished, including 591 of 634 leading security officials ... purged in 1938 and executed.*
- *Beriya (1938-53) ... security czar for entire period ... periodically as head of the security police himself ... managed Gulag as well as secret police empire, responsible for nuclear weapons research and development ... executed in 1953.*
- *Merkulov (1941, 1943-46) ... protege of Beriya ... executed in 1953.*
- *Abakumov (1946-52) ... professional security officer, promoted at Stalin's behest in mid-1940s ... executed in 1955.*
- *Kruglov (1953-54) ... security professional promoted by Politburo as interim security chief ... retired and died in obscurity.*
- *Serov (1954-58) ... professional security officer ... political protege of Khrushchev ... demoted in 1958.*
- *Shelepin (1958-61) ... following career in Komsomol, Khrushchev appointed him to rebuild KGB ... later promoted to Central Committee Secretariat and Politburo.*
- *Semichastnyy (1961-67) ... a protege of Shelepin who also began career in Komsomol ... played critical role in coup against Khrushchev ... in 1967, following defeat of Shelepin by Brezhnev, appointed to minor party post.*
- *Andropov (1967-82) ... career party apparatchik who served in Budapest as Ambassador during revolution ... following 15 years as Chairman, recentered the Secretariat.*
- *Fedorchuk (1982) ... career security official ... head of Third Chief (Military Counterintelligence) Directorate in late 1960s, head of Ukrainian KGB 1972-82 ... demoted, served as Minister of Interior 1982-86.*
- *Chebrikov (1982-present) ... following service in World War II, party apparatchik in Ukraine 1949-67 ... chief of KGB Personnel Department in late 1960s ... Deputy Chairman and First Deputy Chairman under Andropov.*

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Chebrikov is clearly unenthusiastic about a more open examination of Soviet history, including the repression of the Stalin era. In his Dzerzhinskiy Day address, he limited criticism of the Stalin purges to events in 1937-38 and tried to deflect blame from the security service by claiming that senior Chekists had opposed mass arrests and executions and that many colleagues of Dzerzhinskiy had become innocent victims. Moreover, according to [redacted]

In March 1988 Chebrikov vociferously protested to the Central Committee about the publication of the World War II diary of a senior scientist in a proreformist journal that referred to the security service as the "gangrene eating away at the party." In addition to damaging the reputation of the security service, Chebrikov may fear that the kind of frank discussion now permitted could call into question the legitimacy of the political system itself.

Economic Reform. Information on KGB attitudes toward Gorbachev's economic reforms is limited. [redacted]

[redacted] suggests that, while many senior KGB officials welcomed such administrative measures in 1985 as the antialcohol campaign that strengthened social discipline, they became concerned that economic reform would reduce their role in managing sensitive industries in the defense-industrial sector.

There also appear to be differences over agricultural reform between the General Secretary and the KGB Chairman. In the Dzerzhinskiy Day speech, Chebrikov implicitly supported the current agricultural system by defending collectivization as necessary for industrialization, making no mention of its human costs. Gorbachev increasingly over the past two years has been pressing for agricultural reform by criticizing Soviet agriculture and promoting collectives as a crucial measure to increase food production, a step that Chebrikov may oppose because the breakdown of agricultural organizations may make it more difficult for the KGB to maintain local control.

Foreign Policy. Chebrikov's speeches and articles strongly suggest that he is worried about the domestic consequences of expanded ties to the West, especially

the new opportunities for Western intelligence services to gather information. There is evidence of distance between Gorbachev and Chebrikov on two important foreign policy issues:

- Chebrikov has not publicly endorsed the INF Treaty. He is probably concerned with its verification provisions giving Westerners access to sensitive military installations. In a speech in 1984, he accused the United States of making an artificial issue of verification as a means of prolonging the negotiations.
- Chebrikov appears to be unenthusiastic about the pullout from Afghanistan, despite the fact that some KGB components believe the war has damaged the Soviet Union's foreign prestige and intensified domestic societal stresses. Since the early 1980s, Chebrikov has spoken about the danger to the USSR's southern frontier posed by fundamentalist Islamic organizations operating from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Senior KGB officials in Muslim Central Asia repeatedly warned in their speeches and published articles in the 1980s that the threat of Islamic extremism was a major reason for Soviet intervention in 1979.

Divisions Within the KGB

Concerns over Gorbachev do not appear to be equally shared throughout the KGB. Senior KGB officers, for example, are probably divided over the question of reform. KGB Deputy Chairman Georgiy Agcev took a more positive view of *glasnost* than Chebrikov in an article last April arguing that "open discussions of statewide problems—augments our strength and at the same time deprives our enemies abroad of their threadbare arguments." Some in the First Chief (Foreign Intelligence) Directorate may welcome *glasnost* and *perestroika* for making it easier to establish contacts with foreigners and advance Soviet interests abroad. Other KGB components unaffected by Gorbachev's reforms—for example, the Eighth (Communication), 15th (Protection of Government Facilities), and 16th (Signals Intercept) Chief Directorates—may remain on the sidelines.

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Moreover, some aspects of Gorbachev's agenda may be generally popular within the KGB as a whole.

[] many senior KGB officers in Moscow appear to appreciate the need for the antialcohol and discipline campaigns, for example. At the same time [] increasing concern by the KGB that other parts of the Gorbachev program may destabilize society []

[] Concern is probably highest in the provincial KGB, where some security officials protected corrupt party leaders under Brezhnev, and in fact probably shared in the spoils of corruption. A Soviet journal reported in March that in Uzbekistan former First Secretary Rashidov, a notoriously corrupt ally of Brezhnev, had been able to control the appointment and promotion of senior KGB officials in his republic []

[] Outright Stalinists are probably becoming a rare species even in the provincial KGB, yet many Chekists probably share the dictator's concern about political and social discipline.

Active Opposition?

Although the evidence is far from conclusive, there have been subtle signs that some within the KGB may be trying to undermine Gorbachev's authority. It seems quite likely that, as in previous periods of leadership tension, some senior KGB officers may have become involved with party factions. Given their control of communications facilities and their role as bodyguards, KGB components can play a crucial role in political coups. While this is a risky business, there is a long history of KGB involvement in high Kremlin politics. For example:

- In 1957, the KGB Chairman refused to cooperate with the so-called Antiparty Group trying to depose Khrushchev, and this enabled Khrushchev to learn

of the plot against him and to rapidly convene a Central Committee meeting to thwart it.

- In 1964, KGB elements helped isolate Khrushchev, keeping him incommunicado at a Black Sea resort while his Politburo colleagues in Moscow made arrangements for removing him from office.
- In early 1982, KGB elements in Moscow and abroad spread damaging rumors about General Secretary Brezhnev and his family that appeared to help pave the way for Andropov's rise to power.
- Gorbachev's association with KGB officials allowed him to utilize confidential information against his rivals in the struggle for succession in early 1985.

Also feeding rumors about opposition within the KGB to the General Secretary are persistent stories of assassination attempts against Gorbachev during the past two years. [] reported that he was shot in 1986, the target of a bomb attack by Latvian dissidents in April 1987, and poisoned in August 1987. It is possible that the KGB has spread these rumors in an attempt to embarrass Gorbachev or that the KGB's Ninth Directorate, responsible for leadership security, has been lax in preventing assassination attempts on Gorbachev.

Some reporting also indicates that lower level KGB officials in some areas have been involved in "plotting" against Gorbachev. []

[] It is quite possible that KGB officials at the organizations' highest levels would consider joining with Politburo conservatives in a move to oust Gorbachev—as they did in 1964 against Khrushchev. In fact, there are indications that Gorbachev is concerned about the loyalty of the KGB. [] reported that he met with individual army commanders to ask their support should the KGB join a political coup, although there is no other reporting to this effect. [] It is not plausible, however, that KGB officials at the lower levels would

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be informed about such machinations at the top. Nor is it plausible they would participate on their own in plotting a coup that is beyond their capabilities. More likely, the reports are referring to KGB cooperation with conservatives in efforts to sabotage Gorbachev's policy initiatives.

Short of becoming actively involved in a coup, there are a number of ways elements of the KGB who are opposed to Gorbachev could try to undermine his position:

- They could use their connections at home or abroad to spread rumors to damage the General Secretary, which Western journalists and diplomats stationed in Moscow speculate is being done. Several times in the last two years there have been reports that KGB officials allied with the conservative opposition have floated rumors that portray Gorbachev as a weak embattled leader and his wife Raisa as pushy, ambitious, and a profligate spender.
- KGB officials could use unflattering information in their files to discredit Gorbachev supporters, as Chebrikov apparently did in the 1985 succession debate to impugn Grishin.

- KGB officers could allow or even provoke incidents to discredit the General Secretary.

Gorbachev's Discontent With the KGB

Gorbachev's regard for the KGB may have declined as he became more aware of its shortcomings and as he saw its resistance to his broader programs. According to reporting from a variety of sources over the past two years, he has become concerned about the KGB's level of nepotism. He is no doubt also angered by KGB collusion with corrupt party officials as has recently been reported in the Soviet media.

Gorbachev may also have lost faith in the KGB because of its failure to prevent nationalist demonstrations and its sloppy handling of the Cessna incident:

- The KGB apparently did not alert the Politburo to the danger of nationalist unrest when it replaced Kazakh's First Secretary Kunayev with a Russian in December 1986. The Kirghiz KGB Chairman admitted publicly in March 1987 that the Kazakh riots had "alerted" the KGB to the potential threat posed by anti-Soviet nationalism in Central Asia.

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- Political demonstrations in Yerevan and a pogrom against Armenians in Azerbaijan earlier this year may also be seen as "intelligence failures" by the General Secretary. Given the responsibility of the KGB for monitoring elite compliance with the center's policies, it seems most likely that Gorbachev holds the KGB responsible for not warning the Central Committee of the level of nationalist feelings in the Armenian party.

- Gorbachev reportedly was angered by the slow reaction of troops of the KGB Ninth (Guards) Directorate to the Cessna landing in Red Square in May 1987. According to Western press reports it took KGB forces over 30 minutes to arrive after the landing.

Gorbachev may also be concerned about the loyalty and competence of the Ninth Directorate, which is responsible for his protection and

is personally supervised by the KGB CHAIRMAN

repeated a rumor to z that Gorbachev replaced his KGB bodyguards with paratroopers in March 1988. Such an action would be a clear signal of the General Secretary's distrust of the KGB. We have no other information to confirm this claim, however, which appears to reflect popular perceptions of sharp differences between the General Secretary and the KGB CHAIRMAN

Reforming the KGB

Discontent in the KGB also appears to be fueled by concern that Gorbachev is pushing for a restructuring or purging of the security service.

He has used his anticorruption drive to help purge other ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

There are indications that Gorbachev may try to reduce the functions of the KGB that appear to conflict with his reform program.

Gorbachev wanted to trim the KGB on a selective basis, reducing the provincial KGB offices and the directorates responsible for the surveillance of Soviet citizens by 30 percent. Although such a move would no doubt be resisted by KGB Chairman Chebrikov and First Deputy Chairman Bobkov, who spent most of their careers in internal security, it would signal the intelligentsia that Gorbachev is serious about curbing the arbitrary power of the KGB.

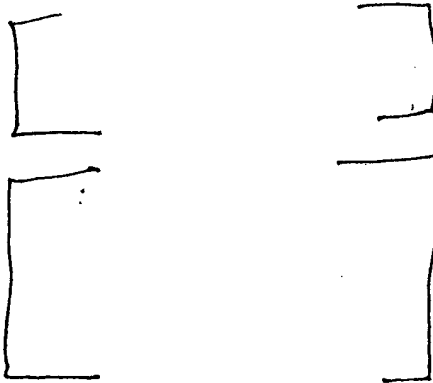
Gorbachev could also curb the influence of the KGB without reducing its effectiveness by dividing it into foreign intelligence and internal security services-- Khrushchev used this tactic in the mid-1950s, hiving off the criminal police and the labor camp administration from Beriya's high security apparatus.

Such a division would limit the authority of present and future KGB chairmen by effectively reducing their role as the security generalissimo.

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Over the past year, Gorbachev has taken a number of steps that could help pave the way for reducing the size of the KGB and strengthen his control over it:

- In early 1987, he moved Anatoliy Luk'yanov, a personal ally, into the party Secretariat with responsibility for the judiciary, police, and the KGB. According to Chebrikov has now relinquished some direction of the KGB to Luk'yanov.



- A recent letter in a pro-reform weekly also argued for tighter control by pointing out that the party's loss of control over the security services in the past "led to arbitrariness and lawlessness in their work which produced such sad consequences."
- An article in the prestigious literary journal *Novyy mir* in June blamed Lenin and Dzerzhinskiy for establishing concentration camps in 1920-21. The article noted that the human rights abuses of Dzerzhinskiy's Cheka made the Stalinist atrocities more possible.
- A Soviet journalist with ties to Gorbachev called for "public control" of the KGB, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the military on a television documentary in June.

Criticism of the KGB in the provincial press has also increased. Last January, the chief of the Tadzhik KGB was censured in the local press, and last April the Turkmen press noted that the Republic KGB chairman and his family were occupying a building originally built as an orphanage.

Nevertheless, in addition to the lack of change in the KGB, Gorbachev's apparent difficulty appointing a new head of the Central Committee's Administrative Organs Department (AOD) suggests he is meeting resistance in his efforts to assert control over the security service. Since Stalin's death, the AOD has been the designated instrument of day-to-day party control over the KGB, although in practice there has sometimes been an incestuous relationship between the watchdogs and those being watched. AOD chief Nikolay Savinkin, 74, the last Brezhnev appointment serving as a Central Committee department chief, appears to have been removed because he has not appeared in public since last fall. So far, it seems that he has not been replaced and that the first deputy head has been acting in his position. While the AOD is supervised by Gorbachev's ally Luk'yanov, the replacement of Savinkin by a Gorbachev supporter would strengthen the General Secretary's control of the KGB.

Unflattering Soviet press treatment of the KGB could also be laying the ground for further increasing party oversight or reforming the KGB:

- Although it is unclear if Chebrikov was trying to get his own house in order or was forced to acknowledge problems by the Politburo, his unprecedented rebuke of a KGB officer published in a January 1987 *Pravda* ended a long period of immunity from public criticism enjoyed by the KGB.
- In January 1988 *Pravda* reported that two provincial KGB officials had been disciplined for the illegal arrest and prosecution of a police officer investigating corruption in Odessa.
- A *Pravda* article last December appeared to suggest the need for tighter oversight of the KGB, noting that "Lenin reacted sharply to mistaken views and actions on the part of some Chekists and misuse of rights given to them."

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Chebrikov and the Conservative Opposition
Many of the concerns in the KGB about Gorbachev appear to be shared by a conservative group in the leadership that would prefer to pursue a slower pace of reform than does Gorbachev. Increasingly, "Second Secretary" Ligachev has been particularly outspoken on many of the same issues, delivering two speeches about the time of Chebrikov's Dzerzhinskiy address that echoed many of the same concerns about *glasnost* and democratization getting out of hand. President Gromyko and Defense Minister Yazov have also expressed similar concerns about *glasnost*. Furthermore, Chebrikov has career ties to Ukrainian First Secretary Vladimir Shecherbitskiy, who is also part of this more conservative group in the leadership.

An increase in the influence of conservatives last fall may have contributed to an apparent leadership consensus to slow the pace of the reforms. Most significantly, over the past year Soviet policy on human rights has toughened. Restrictions have been placed on demonstrations by human rights organizations; Ukrainian and Baltic activists have been summarily deported to the West; protests by Baltic, Crimean Tatar, and Armenian nationalists have been repressed violently; and criminal charges have been manufactured by the security organs to incarcerate dissidents. Although the toughening up may reflect a general leadership reaction to the negative effects of *glasnost*, it is clearly a victory for the conservatives.

Chebrikov's increased influence in the regime was reflected in the Politburo lineup at the Red Square parade on 7 November 1987 and at the April 1988 Lenin Day celebration, where he had a higher status than he had previously. Chebrikov may also have benefited from the removal of Gorbachev ally Boris Yel'tsin as Moscow First Secretary. In his speech to the Central Committee, Yel'tsin criticized the KGB, maintaining that it needed to be cut back in size and authority. Chebrikov also spoke at the plenum, and, according to [redacted] directly criticized Yel'tsin for seeing too many foreigners and talking too freely to them.

Chebrikov is clearly seen as a mainstay of the conservative group in the Politburo by Gorbachev supporters. Recent rumors of Chebrikov's opposition to *perestroika* reports—including [redacted] that he was Ligachev's only supporter at a heated Politburo meeting over reform, and stories of the replacement of KGB bodyguards with military troops that have been leaked to the Western press suggest that Chebrikov is increasingly perceived as taking a greater role in leadership debates on the side of the conservatives.

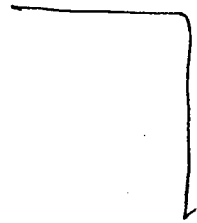
Nationalist violence in the Caucasus since February is posing a serious challenge to Gorbachev and has probably helped coalesce the conservative opposition. Furthermore, as a result of this political violence, Gorbachev probably will have to make concessions—at least temporarily—to the demands of party conservatives on law-and-order issues.

Prospects

Tensions between Gorbachev and the KGB are likely to rise. Although nationalist violence in the Caucasus may force him to accommodate for tactical reasons some demands of conservatives in the leadership, we believe he will not retreat on his overall reform program. For this reason, many in the KGB who are accustomed to tight regime control over society and to operating with impunity will remain opposed to the General Secretary and his policies. They will probably continue to try to undermine Gorbachev and his policies within the party leadership and at the local levels. Moreover, they could pose a direct danger to the General Secretary if a conservative faction coalesces further in the Politburo or the Central Committee.

Gorbachev—for his part—will continue to try to strengthen his control over the KGB. While he may want to weaken its political power or harness it to his own ends, he will not want to damage its effectiveness.

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in foreign intelligence or essential domestic security work. Furthermore, in a period of radical change, Gorbachev needs a loyal KGB more than ever to monitor elite compliance with policies that are unpopular at lower levels as well as to monitor political attitudes.

The General Secretary's best hope for accomplishing this may be moving selectively against Brezhnev-era appointees in the security forces, slowly replacing the

senior leadership with his supporters. Although it would be difficult in the near term to remove Chebrikov from the Politburo, Gorbachev may seek to win his colleagues' agreement to transfer him to a less sensitive post—chief of the Party Control Commission or First Secretary of the Ukrainian Party.

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So far, the combination of increased party oversight and lack of turnover in the KGB suggests there is a standoff between Gorbachev and the KGB. The following indicators would suggest that Gorbachev is making headway in gaining control over the KGB:

- Replacement of Chebrikov as KGB chairman, particularly with a Gorbachev supporter such as Luk'yanov.
- Increased turnover in other top KGB positions, especially if key posts are filled with outsiders.
- Cuts in the size of the KGB.
- Reorganization of the security services, especially its division into domestic and foreign components.
- Increased public exposure of recent KGB abuses and prosecution of KGB officials.
- The selection of a Gorbachev ally to head the Administrative Organs Department.
- Legal changes that restrict KGB room for arbitrary action against citizens or that remove legal bases for preemptive measures against dissent.

In addition to the absence of any of the above steps, indicators that the more traditional elements in the KGB are continuing to resist successfully would include:

- Evidence that Gorbachev's legalization campaign had been watered down or delayed.
- The continuation of "administrative measures" of law control sanctioned by the regime such as the deportation of nationalists, or the arrest and sentencing of activists.
- Restrictions on "informal" groups that had been active since 1985.

The contest for control over the KGB will no doubt continue to be part of the intense political struggle taking place between Gorbachev and his reformist allies and party conservatives. If Gorbachev can build on a recent victory over conservatives and bolster his political authority, he will be in a stronger position to press for reform of the KGB and the replacement of Chebrikov. His progress in this key area is likely to be an important measure of his ability to press his political agenda.

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