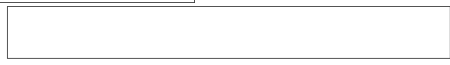


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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

26 February 1964

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 13-64 (Internal ONE Working Paper --
CIA Distribution Only)

SUBJECT: The Coming Struggle for Power in the USSR: The
Scene and the Successors

Khrushchev reaches his 71st year this spring. This could mean, if he is another Adenauer, that he has as yet to reach his political prime and has another seventeen years of party leadership left to him. But it could also mean, if he is a more normal actuarial statistic, that his allotted span may end in eight years or so. Or, of course, it could be that his luck will run out and he will leave us tomorrow. In any case, his 70th birthday seems an appropriate time for some consideration and conjecture concerning the possible political climate at the time of his departure and the nature of those who will seek to succeed him.

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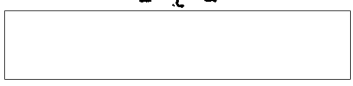
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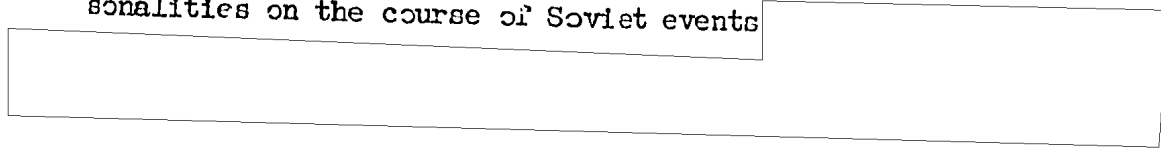
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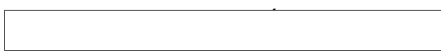
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1. Economics have more or less assumed primacy over politics in the Soviet scheme of things ever since the fall of 1962, when an obscure Soviet researcher is said to have stumbled upon a long-lost statement on the subject by someone who should know, Lenin. True, there was a period during the winter months of 1963 (coincident with other signs of Khrushchev's political difficulties) when this slogan seems to have been forgotten, and a subsequent period when the party philosophers and rationalizers sought to prove that economics were, and then again were not, prime in Soviet society. But since then the haggling has apparently ceased and the official line once again asserts the notion of economics first.

2. No doubt the Soviet powers that be have their own good reasons for so avowing, but from our point of view, and particularly within the context of this paper, the new formula could not be a balder misstatement of the facts. Politics are supreme in the USSR, especially within the dominant political group (the party), and politics, furthermore, are likely to remain supreme at least so long as the party does. The truth of this axiom can be no better demonstrated than by the events which twice took place in the aftermath of the death of the Soviet leader. Certainly the

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maneuvers which followed Lenin's death and, later, Stalin's, were politics in their starkest form; the goal was simply and neatly, power. And so it will be, we think, during the next great succession crisis, after the death of Khrushchev.

The Next Succession Crisis: The Men

3. It is for the most part the nature of the Soviet system which predetermines the shape of political tension at the top, and so long as that system remains one which is dominated by a single institution, the party, and a mere handful of men at its apex, there is little alternative to struggle and crisis when the leader himself is removed or dies. Khrushchev has shown himself on more than one occasion to be aware of both his own mortality and the struggle likely to follow his demise. So long as he wishes to remain undisputed leader, however, there are severe limits imposed on his ability to establish a pattern of succession; he cannot afford to grant too much power to any other single leader in the party lest he himself lose control in the process.

4. Anything can happen during a struggle for the succession -- accidents will almost certainly play a role -- and any attempt to name the probable winner can only be conjecture. Certainly in 1953 no one named Khrushchev, the Politburo clown, as the most

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likely to succeed, and, in fact, it took over four years for him to consolidate his position. Malenkov was Stalin's choice and the favorite candidate of Western analysts and, in truth, he remained a contender until 1955 and an active opponent of Khrushchev's until 1957. Brezhnev now seems in some ways to occupy the position once held by Malenkov (apparent heir apparent), and perhaps Mikoyan could be likened to Molotov in that Mikoyan's chances for anything better than a high position during an interregnum seem fairly remote. Podgorny, the man from the Ukraine, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] could in some ways be compared to the earlier Khrushchev. Kosygin and Kaganovitch, Kozlov and Zhdanov, Suslov and Suslov, etc., etc., -- we could go on (and, in fact, do so in the Biographic review at Annex).

5. Despite individual differences between the men now at the top, most of them seem to fit a more or less general mold. Only two of them (excluding a couple of elderly non-entities), Mikoyan and Suslov, were in high positions during the last succession crisis in 1953. Kosygin served at the time in an imposing post (candidate member of the Politburo), but his role in the contention could have been only relatively minor. The other men who are likely to figure in the next crisis were out in the oblasts or down in the Moscow apparat in 1953; they were largely impotent insofar as their

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ability to bring direct power to bear on the struggle then underway. Some of these men have had good, practical schooling in specialized affairs (engineering, agriculture, etc.), others have served almost exclusively as party hacks. With the possible and partial exception of Mikoyan and Kosygin, however, all appear to be almost exclusively party careerists, and all of them could be expected to compete with one another in the first instance within the upper reaches of the party itself. This background and this party interest will serve to limit both their initiative and their imagination. None, for example, is likely to repeal a basic law of Leninism, such as agricultural collectivization, at least not unless forced to by economic chaos or political desperation.

6. Indeed, one could say with considerable justice that the group as a whole is inclined toward conservatism. This does not suggest to us by any means that they would be inclined to revert to anything so horrendous as Stalinism, even if they had the capacity, but it does suggest within the limits of our knowledge that they lack the zeal and the talent of a Khrushchev.* Further, they may well lack the incentive; doing away with Stalinism, or even Leninism,

* It could be that there is a sort of dynastic law for such regimes, that the talents of the leaders decline in direct ratio to their distance from the revolution. Such a rule, however, would no doubt be tested by more than one exception.

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is quite a different order of work than doing away with Khrushchevism. Following Lenin and Stalin on the bill certainly posed more individual problems than are likely following Khrushchev. (Note, incidentally the different way in which Stalin and Khrushchev handled this particular problem: Stalin at first pretended to be the executor of Lenin's will and, even after his power was completely consolidated, never admittedly rejected either Lenin's policies or his image; Khrushchev, on the other hand, faced with a not totally dissimilar problem, seized the first feasible opportunity to destroy the legend of his predecessor and to claim for his own shoulders the mantle of Lenin).

7. If the Central Committee forms an important arena of contest, the character of this body is also of import for the succession struggle. While it has changed its composition by more than half since 1956, and by roughly two-thirds since 1952, it does not seem in the main to have altered its character very much. The members still seem to be drawn from roughly the same jobs and the same strata as they were during Stalin's times; they are party functionaries (over 40 percent) government officials (roughly a third), and a conglomeration of military men, "leading workers", and "intellectual workers". Chances are, then, that the prevailing conservative attitude of the Presidium (and of the Secretariat as well) are mirrored within the Central Committee. All in all, the top three hundred or so officials of the CPSU strike one as relatively

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ill-prepared for the changing times; they seem to be an essentially conservative vested interested group functioning within a potentially dynamic society.

7a. Indeed, the important members of the Central Committee and party functionaries in the provinces were for the most part serving in cadre functions during Stalin's times and were psychologically prepared and formally trained in the Stalinist school. Robert Conquest recently commented on the character of these men in Survey; he described them as "philistine, hypocritical, short-sighted, bigoted, ruthless, totally indoctrinated with their own right to rule." This description may reflect Conquest's own poetic sensibilities as well as his Kremlinological acumen, but, individual members of great ability and for with some allowance for/post-Stalin improvements in general sophistication, he probably is not very wide of the mark. It goes without saying that such a group will resist change; it is also true, however, that change may be forced upon them.

The Setting: Party Politics

8. If we thus cannot chose the next Soviet leader, can merely describe in general the political temperament of the leading group, perhaps we can usefully examine the environment in which the succession struggle will be waged. What are the broader forces likely to operate on this group: do they differ essentially from

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those of 1953? In some ways, of course, they do not: there still are no established procedures or statutory provisions which can serve to prevent a struggle or determine its outcome. (Indeed, constitutionally, there is no such man as the leader of the Soviet state and party). As in 1953, the struggle will at least in its early stages be centered on and conducted within the elite apparatus, the party.

9. Further, in terms of possible similarities between 1953 and the next comparable period, and despite the aforementioned lack of formal procedures, there may still be an unwritten consensus among most of the probable contenders which may serve to define the outer limits of the struggle, at least during its initial stages. The system has twice undergone the rigors of a succession crisis and in neither case did it involve either a palace coup or an open resort to violence. Rather, it was marked by period of intense contention, fierce political infighting, and then by purge, but only after the battle had really been won. Stalin's resort to murder in the early and mid-thirties enabled him to eliminate his opponents, but he had already achieved a preeminent position in the party; later, the blood purges of the late thirties removed all potential opposition but he had already achieved absolute power. In a sense, then, Stalin's use of terror was more of a means to preserve power than to attain it.

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10. Why this relatively restrained approach by politicians who otherwise demonstrate little inclination toward restraint? Partly, we think, because the Soviet leaders have always feared the people, specifically popular reactions and possible public participation should the struggle within the leadership ever spill out into the open; partly because of the longstanding myth, carefully cultivated by all the leaders, that the top men stand locked in monolithic unity, and, in this union, represent the full flowering of democratic centralism and the scientific will of the party and the workers; and partly because the men involved in such a struggle are by nature secretive (the revolutionary tradition) and in this have been encouraged by the conspiratorial character of the system itself. In short, at least to the outsider, the Soviet regime, despite its almost absolute authority and its propensity for pursuing avowedly moral ends through blatantly immoral means, has to some extent imposed ^{upon} itself certain rules which apply to the period of the succession struggle. Because of altered circumstances, these motives may not figure so heavily during the next succession crisis (see below). But, on the whole, we believe that the various players of the game are likely to agree that their problems should be settled without resort to such methods as coups, civil wars, and terror; there is, in effect, a sort of honor among thieves.*

*Thieves fall out when honor is violated. Thus it was in 1953 when Beria's apparent effort to violate the rule proscribing coups forced the other contenders to band together in order to effect his removal and execution.

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11. But beyond possible similarities such as these, the setting for the next succession crisis is likely to be quite different from that of eleven years ago. Most important, neither Soviet society as a whole nor the top leaders of the society are constrained by terror. There is no Beria in 1964 and one is unlikely to emerge so long as Khrushchev is in control. This should produce a notable political and psychological change in the next succession crisis, if only because the stakes should no longer include purely personal survival. This, in turn, might induce the various candidates to place even more emphasis on political maneuvering, less on avoiding personal risk. It also implies that the strong bond that united the post-Stalin collegium (excepting Beria), their common fear of a reversion to terror, will no longer cement the group during the initial stages of the contention.

12. Associated with Stalin's terror was the collective concern of the top leadership in the spring of 1953 about the temper of the people; we know now, though we did not at the time, that the Soviet leaders feared a popular uprising, not only in the satellites but also within the USSR itself. This too constituted a powerful bond and had a major impact on policy. While the Soviet people have demonstrated that their current mood is testy,

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it does not seem to be explosive, and the leaders are unlikely to fear open revolt. Thus, lacking a common concern about terror and a common dread of the people, the immediate Post-Khrushchev leadership may have both less reason and less desire to work in public harmony. And this, might lead to a more open and more intense political struggle during the first few months of contention than was the case in 1953.*

Other Groups

13. The growing complexity of Soviet Society, together with the end of Stalinist rule, has in effect increased the stature and the latent power of groups which do not in their own minds owe first allegiance to the ruling party. It is to these groups that potential leaders will look for support; the degree to which they in fact do so is most likely to be a function of both the presumed

*While this is our best judgment as to the most likely course of events, we cannot exclude the possibility that these differences in environment between 1953 and the present era will facilitate a more peaceful succession. The more relaxed general atmosphere and the relative confidence as to personal survival even in political defeat, may have so permeated the top councils that the old cutthroat rules have become obsolete. Thus, particularly if Khrushchev should clearly designate a "second secretary" and he, in turn, should develop a strong and loyal following within the apparatus, the leadership might acquiesce in the assumption of power by the recognized leading contender for the top position. But, if so, we would estimate that the struggle would sooner or later begin again.

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strength of these groups and, equally important, the duration of a succession struggle. The longer a crisis survives, the greater the role to be played by interested "outsiders".

14. The government and economic apparatus, though no longer so much the separate identity it constituted in Malenkov's time, nonetheless remains an important element. It could become a more homogenous group if events encouraged its members to assert their common interests, many of which diverge from those of the party. More so than in 1953, the military will almost certainly play an important role in any protracted succession crisis. While we do not believe that the high command as yet wishes to exercise the powers of an independent political force, it could aspire to such a position in the event that it felt its interests jeopardized by the emergence of forces basically inimical to matters of military concern, an area which, incidentally, becomes of greater and greater scope with the passage of time. Although certainly not united on all questions of strategy and no doubt rife with personal rivalries, the military does form a relatively homogenous group, one which, furthermore, controls powerful assets of its own.

15. Next, and of potentially the greatest importance, the people themselves could play a major, if largely indirect, role during a period of extended crisis. Since 1953, major changes in Soviet

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society, and in the regime's attitude toward that society, have had a profound effect on the mood and desires of the people and on the willingness of certain elements in the population, the "opinion leaders", to express those desires. These people are not impressed with the dogma and are increasingly aware that the limits of permissible expression may be tested (and expanded) without fear of dire punishment; thus the sound of discontent has become almost commonplace and, like it or not, the regime has found itself listening.

16. The most striking expressions of discontent have, of course, come from the growing and increasingly sophisticated intelligensia. Chafing under the controls of an institution, the party, which to them seems more and more to represent an anachronistic and inefficient weight on the body politic, members of the intellectual vanguard have been looking for something better. Their voice of protest has found for itself a sympathetic audience among students, scientists and various other levels of literate society. Even among the people at large, where discontent has mainly economic roots, the intellectuals can probably find a fairly sympathetic environment for their ideas; if nothing else, the post-Stalin changes in attitude may have ended the popular suspicion that it is (or will be considered) unpatriotic, even treasonous, to give vent to one's feelings of dissatisfaction.

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17. In a sense, then, one might say that for the first time in post civil war Soviet history there has appeared on the scene an only partially hidden popular opposition of sorts, one which has over the years become of increasingly vital concern to the regime. (It is one thing to build steel plants and assemble small arms with a disgruntled labor force, moved mainly by coercion; it is quite another proposition to build nuclear reactors and assemble rockets to the moon with unwilling workers, insufficiently moved by incentive.) This "opposition" is, of course, by no means united and has as yet to draft an opposition program. Indeed, much of it is no doubt apolitical, most of its "members" consider themselves to be loyal Soviet citizens, and probably few would seriously contemplate the liquidation of "socialism" (as variously defined). The peasants would probably be most interested in land, the workers in higher wages and less working time, the economic managers in more responsibility and freedom from central (and doctrinal) restraints. The intelligentsia, particularly the intellectuals, probably comes the closest to forming a more or less unified group and to questioning the right reason of the Soviet system.

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18. According to some observers, however, we should not interpret this development as necessarily indicative of a real growth of freedom in the USSR. According to Richard Pipes, for example: "We like to interpret any manifestation of libertarian tendencies as an indication of liberty itself. That such a procedure cannot be justified on logical grounds requires no elaboration."* Yet, of a more sanguine mind than Pipes, we should add here that libertarian tendencies must, in both logic and life,

*The whole question of the political meaning of these "libertarian tendencies" in Soviet literature remains for the most part unexplored territory. Various observers have recorded their impressions (as has Pipes) and some who are in fairly close contact with Soviet writers have provided us with good descriptive reports from the "inside" (as has Priscilla Johnson in the July-August 1963 issue of Problems of Communism). But what has not been provided is a comprehensive survey of the political content and political impact of Soviet literature (not to mention an estimate as to its possible future implications). In any event, until that has been done, and we are proved wrong, it is our feeling that Pipes underplays the political nature of the Soviet intellectuals' ideas. He claims, for example, that the current crop of Soviet writers are, unlike their 19th century predecessors, essentially apolitical. As he says, "Once the [Russian] intellectual had tried to change the State and society, now he tries to escape them." Our feeling is that writers, such as Nekrasov, Abramov, even Ehrenburg and Yevtushenko, represent in different degrees voices of protest and are certainly considered by the party to represent political tendencies. That most may be anxious to reform the system, rather than overthrow it, does not reflect an apolitical approach. And, of course, there are some Soviet writers, and students, who call for revolution. Finally, in disagreement with Pipes, we would suggest that the reformist notions of the intellectuals have had effects on other literate groups in Soviet society, that there is considerable sympathy among students, scientists, and various professionals for the more liberal outlook of the writers.

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precede liberty itself. Russia is no stranger to the strong political impact of a dissident intelligentsia, and should present trends in Soviet literature continue, should this articulate voice of skepticism and protest continue to mount, it could happen again. Its chances of doing so, moreover, might^{be} at their zenith during a period of uncertainty and contention at the top.

Policy Politics

19. It is perhaps impossible to place Soviet party politics and Soviet policies into separate compartments. Some observers feel that this can be done at least to the extent necessary to decide which of the two is prime. Thus, for example, Robert Conquest has implied that the formulation and execution of policy is subordinate to the game of political maneuver. He cites as evidence the switch in policy concerning the consumer made by Khrushchev after he had defeated the consumer's champion, Malenkov. Other Sovietologists, however, maintain that policy (and the forces which determine it) are the primary factors. In rebuttal to Conquest, they suggest that the fact that Khrushchev finally swung around to a policy approximating that of Malenkov indicates that he had no choice in the matter and demonstrates that broad forces, rather than the men involved, were responsible for the USSR's post-Stalin increase in emphasis on popular welfare.

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19a. To us there is truth on both sides. Thus, certainly the state of the Soviet economy in 1953 argued for greater investment in, for example, agriculture and the politicians at the top were well aware of this. But this was perhaps equally true in the immediate post-war period, and the fact that such a policy was not then adopted can be attributed to the man, Stalin. Forces create the weather but men select the shelter.

20. If policies are thus important, if not independent of the men who chose and execute them, we should turn to another major difference between the post-Stalin and likely post-Khrushchev environments, the nature of the prevailing policy winds. Stalin, in 1953, was setting the stage for another massive purge (the "doctor's plot") and relations with the West had sunk into a deep trough. The reactions of most of the contenders were away from the trends set in motion by Stalin, away from purge and confrontation with the West. There is a danger, of course, that history will repeat itself, that the potential successors will seek to halt or reverse Khrushchev's moves toward internal moderation and external relaxation. There has been considerable unease in the party about Khrushchev's policies, his relatively relaxed attitude toward the people, and his efforts to reform the apparatus. There thus has been a pronounced tendency for Khrushchev's opponents to resist innovation,

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to advocate a conservative stance; indeed, since he is the reformer, they have had little choice but to be the traditionalists. Almost certainly this tendency will persist after his death. Some contenders, for example, hoping to rally supporters to their cause, may adopt a platform calling for retrenchment at home and at least verbal militancy abroad.* On the other hand, the opposing Khrushchevian line, while not so strong as to be irreversible, has by now become well entrenched and there will also be contenders advocating a platform of continued anti-Stalinism, reform, and rapprochement.

21. This then is the struggle as we foresee it. Initially, there may be a period of intense individual maneuvering and jockeying

*We may have been treated last year to an unusual preview of the sort of policy favored by conservatives. The period December 1962 to April 1963 was an extraordinary one and policy at this time seemed to reflect a non-Khrushchevian conservative consensus on the Presidium which crystallized in the wake of the Cuban missile crisis. Various signs -- public statements, propaganda, decrees, diplomatic activities, and actual events -- suggested that Khrushchev's policies were being stymied or reversed. Thus, for example, his chemical program was virtually forgotten, to the benefit apparently of more traditional areas of investment, such as defense. Thus the campaign against the liberal intellectuals reached a shrill frenzy and involved even a partial posthumous rehabilitation of Stalin. And thus a new stridency in the USSR's relations with the US became manifest and included a warning that disarmament (including a test ban treaty) might be forestalled for another decade. This hiatus in Khrushchevian policies and style ended in April, shortly after the incapacitation of Kozlov.

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for position, perhaps masked by public statements swearing fidelity to the notion of Leninist collectivity. Assuming, as we think likely, that no one man will be able to become the unquestioned single leader during this period, the leadership as a whole will tend to divide into two or three policy factions, each with its own principal champion. The longer such a situation exists, the more probable is a process of bipolarization between the conservatives and the Khrushchevites, each appealing increasingly to other elements of the body politic for support. Eventually, as in June 1957, one or another of these factions must oust the other and establish the dominant tone of Soviet life, at least until the next succession crisis.

Implications for the US

22. No matter the precise shape of the struggle to come, or its ultimate resolution, considerable uncertainties are likely to assail the successors to Khrushchev. Thus we believe that a succession crisis will present the West with a number of notable opportunities and, perhaps, grave risks. Although there may be no way in which the US can directly influence the eventual choice of a successor to Khrushchev, Western responses to Soviet policy could have a major bearing on the outcome of the struggle. It should not be thought that events and Soviet policy will remain in stasis solely because of high-level disputes and uncertainty. In the three

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odd years following Stalin's death, a period when the Soviet leaders were at each others throats and in profound disagreement over policy, the USSR agreed to the Korean armistice, suffered through the Berlin riots, ended its occupation of Eastern Austria, and had its brief moment of truth in Hungary.

23. Thus we believe with Myron Rush that US policy, deliberate or not, will have a profound impact on the Soviet leaders and on their policies.* And, to paraphrase Rush, the problem of Soviet succession should appear to Westerners in somewhat the same way as the problem of economic stability in the West appears (or at least once appeared) in the USSR, that is, "portending a crucial and systematic vulnerability."

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ANNEX

BIOGRAPHIC ANNEXIntroduction

1. One does not have to be a believer of the "great man" school to appreciate the impact of human personality on history. Even if a leader's policies are to a large extent determined by the exigencies and requirements of the times in which he lives, he nonetheless responds to his environment with individual style and prejudices. Thus, even if Stalin and his policies represented in the main a reaction to the needs of a society bent on rapid industrialization, certainly there would have been differences in degree and in tactics had someone less ruthless been in command (and Stalin's ruthlessness antedated the revolution). Similarly, even if Khrushchev's reign has been one characterized largely by a necessary reaction against Stalin at a time when the USSR could afford such a reaction, his policies have nonetheless borne the stamp of his own flair and his own proclivities.

2. So it will be with the next Soviet leader. The broad outlines of the current Soviet environment have already been indicated here, and the two most likely alternatives of response to that environment -- continued moderation or a reversion to harsher forms of rule -- have been suggested. Within either alternative, however,

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policies and events will be shaped by the individual leader. Consider, for example, the probable differences in approach of a Mikoyan and of a Suslov, even assuming that each would seek to follow a Khrushchevian course. The decline of ideology, already apparent on the Soviet scene, would almost certainly be accelerated under the former, retarded or even reversed under the latter. Because of this, and other reasons, the next US-Soviet dialogue, if Mikoyan were running things, might well be at the negotiating table and be concerned with matters of trade and credit. If, however, Suslov were the leader, such a dialogue would be more likely to take place over the hot line. And quite the contrary might be true of the Sino-Soviet dialogue.

3. These considerations indicate one reason why we feel that the outcome of the next succession crisis is of crucial interest to the US and why it would be wise to know as much as possible about the characters who will be in contention during that crisis.

[REDACTED] 25X1

[REDACTED] 25X1

A-2

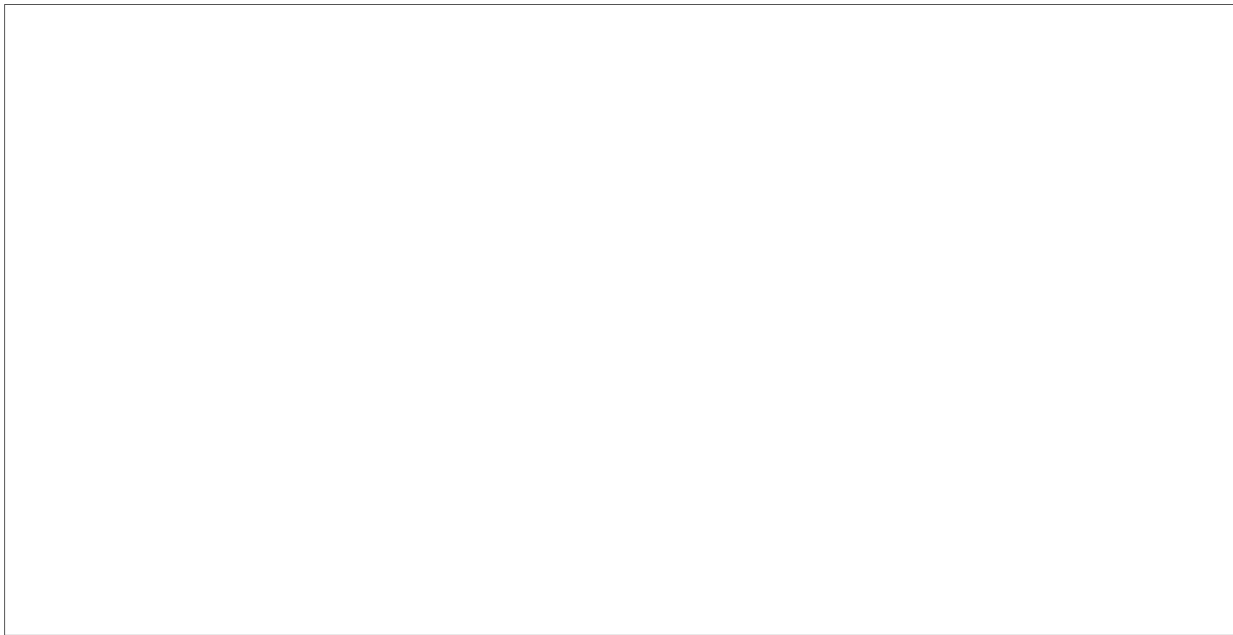
S-E-C-R-E-T



S-E-C-R-E-T

ANNEX

4. Of more vital concern are areas reflecting not only behaviour but also policy preferences. What of the reports that some Presidium members (and Malinovsky) were opposed to Khrushchev's withdrawal of missiles from Cuba? It would be more than revealing to know, for example, that, Kozlov and Suslov constituted such an opposition. At the very least, it would suggest to the US that neither man would be our favorite candidate for Soviet leadership. On the other hand, should we learn that, say, Mikoyan had been opposed to the introduction of missiles into Cuba in the first place (we have no indications of this), then he would appear to be a good man to support. And, finally, it is at least a possibility that indirect support of one or another candidate through calculated responses to Soviet policies could tip the scales in the way desired by the US.



A-3

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[Redacted]

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25X1

ANNEX

[Redacted]

6.

25X1

[Redacted]

what does Brezhnev really

think, really want? All we know is, in effect, what he and his superiors have wanted to tell us. Certainly he is not in the business of public confession! Chances do not seem very good, for example, that he will someday soon stand up to tell us that he is in fundamental disagreement with Khrushchev over the direction of the Soviet economy. Once in a while (and Kozlov can probably be included in this category), a leader will openly disagree with his boss about specific matters (in Kozlov's case this happened in regard to the question of new investment in the machine building industry). But when this happens it does so in a disguised manner, and Western observers are left to quarrel among themselves as to its portent, if any.

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S E C R E T

ANNEX

7. Be all this as it may, we append a selective set of biographies of top Soviet officials. They give the bare bones data, the subject's personal characteristics [redacted], and a conjectural commentary concerning the role the subject might play during a period of contention. Leaders who do not appear destined to play an important role, either because of their age (e.g., Presidium members Shvernik and Kuusinen) or their probable lack of real political power (e.g., candidate member of the Presidium Grishin), have been excluded regardless of their titular positions. We have, however, added some names to the list because of their age, that is, have included some younger men in high positions who are unlikely to succeed to the top spot immediately, but whose support will be cultivated. Finally, for interest and contrast, we have included a representative of the military and one of the intelligentsia; the former may play an active role in the struggle, the latter may not (but it would be nice if he did.)

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S-E-C-R-E-T

ANNEX

I. THE TWO TOP CONTENDERS: BREZHNEV AND PODGORNY

In the immediate aftermath of Khrushchev's death, one of these two men is most likely to succeed to the top party post. We have no idea whether one would be willing to stand aside for the other or whether they would contest with one another for the position. If Khrushchev has made clear his choice and most of the other leaders seem to go along with it, and if Brezhnev and Podgorny (and their wives, if Podgorny has one) do not actively dislike one another, then perhaps a peaceful decision will be possible. Even with such preconditions, however, chances would remain good that, sooner or later, the lists would be entered.

If one compares the careers of the two men, Brezhnev emerges as the young man who made good under both Stalin and Khrushchev. At age 46, he was appointed to Stalin's large Politburo as a candidate member in 1952 (and not many members of that organ are still around), at a time when Podgorny (then 49) was slowly easing himself up into the top levels and had just reached the Central Committee. Brezhnev got back onto the Presidium in 1956 and became a full member in 1957. Podgorny did not become a candidate until the following year and a full member until 1960, and even then it was clear that (aside from his friendship with Khrushchev) he owed his position to his secretaryship in the Ukraine. If these facts suggest anything, they suggest

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[REDACTED]
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ANNEX

that Brezhnev may be the more opportunistic and the more skillful of the two, and neither talent would be a handicap to a contender for top power. Thus, if the two someday engage in competition, we would place somewhat better odds on Brezhnev, largely because he appears at this distance to be the better and more personable politician (and also seems to have a wider variety of contacts.)

Brezhnev

1. With his election to the CPSU Secretariat in June 1963, Leonid I. Brezhnev, already titular head of the Soviet government (Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet) and full member of the Presidium, returned to a post which gives him a direct voice in the execution of policy and an opportunity to increase his own following within the party apparatus. He now occupies more top party and state posts than any Soviet leader other than Khrushchev.

2. An old crony of Khrushchev's, Brezhnev seems to owe his career to his boss and to have modelled his life and even his personality after Khrushchev's. He is said to possess considerable charm and to have a talent for dealing with crowds. He is apparently bright and a good administrator: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

If we had to guess, we would say that Brezhnev as the leader, would push policies resembling those of Khrushchev, but probably with more caution and less imagination.

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ANNEX

3. Brezhnev's background in party work, his long service in the army, and his qualifications as an engineer provide him with an unexcelled background for the top job. If he is, indeed, to be designated as informal heir apparent, we should soon see some signs that he is playing a more active role on the Secretariat, particularly in regard to control over the cadres. The two "second secretaries" (Kirichenko and Kozlov) once favored by Khrushchev both exercised this important power.

4. Brezhnev (born in 1906 in the Ukraine) had an early background in metallurgical engineering and later studied agriculture as well. He served as an oblast secretary in the Ukraine until 1941, when he received a commission as a political officer in the army. He worked under Khrushchev in the Ukrainian party organization until 1950, then was named first secretary of the Moldavian party, and in 1952 was appointed to the CPSU Secretariat and the Presidium as a candidate member. He returned to the army as a lieutenant general after the death of Stalin, having lost his top party posts in the post-Stalin shuffle. In 1954 he was sent to Kazakhstan, where, as a party secretary, he carried out Khrushchev's virgin lands program. Re-elected a candidate member of the Presidium and a CPSU secretary in 1956, and a full Presidium member following the ouster of the anti-party group in 1957, he was made Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in 1960 and was shortly thereafter relieved as party secretary, a move which at the time suggested some decline in his power.

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ANNEX

Podgorny

1. Perhaps Khrushchev's oldest colleague (he began serving under him before the war), Nikolay Podgorny has been a member of the Party since 1930 and of its Central Committee since 1952. He has had a long administrative career in the food industry and did not begin to serve as a full-time party functionary until 1950, when he was appointed First Secretary of the Kharkhov Oblast. He was named First Secretary of the Ukrainian Party in 1957, a candidate member of the CPSU Presidium in 1958, and a full member in 1960. He was subjected to serious criticism for a bad agricultural harvest in the Ukraine in 1960 and was accused of mismanagement by Khrushchev himself, but retained all of his top posts in the party. Khrushchev presumably gave his old friend another chance, and since then he has been appointed to the Secretariat (June 1963), along with Brezhnev.

2. Seemingly solemn and aloof, Podgorny (born in the Ukraine in 1903) does not fit the image of the Khrushchevian politician but almost certainly has gone along with Khrushchev's policies. With a background both in industry and the apparat, his qualifications for leadership are good. Further, he is a powerful man in his own right and could probably count on the Ukrainian party organization to support him for the top CPSU spot.

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ANNEX

3. A Brezhnev-Podgornv alliance could probably dominate the leadership for quite some time after Khrushchev's death. But since each man undoubtedly has high ambitions of his own, is a Khrushchev favorite, and probably has support within the party, such an alliance might be short lived.

II. TWO OLD HANDS: MIKOYAN AND SUSLOV

Chances are that neither of these men, despite their long service in the cause, could achieve the top position in the party (unless, of course, one or the other served temporarily as titular chief of a Presidium collective). Mikoyan and Suslov offer a study in contrasts, both in terms of their personalities and their interests. Mikoyan is well known for his wit and intelligence and if Orders of Lenin were ever awarded for socialist charm, he would be a winner. In terms of political maneuverability, his remarkable staying power must reflect, among other things, a shrewd and opportunistic approach; his apparent disinclination to seek the top spot also suggests considerable realism. He has never been regarded as a dogmatist; his interests have been very largely in practical activities, such as trade, and he appears to be far more concerned with results than doctrine. Suslov, on the other hand, is dour and doctrinaire; he has spent almost all his career in ideological work of one sort or another. Indeed, though his surviving power testifies both to his

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ANNEX

usefulness and his abilities, his mind seems to relish a ponderous and detailed approach to matters of very little immediate or practical consequence.* His ability to maneuver himself to the very top may thus be quite limited.

Mikoyan

1. Anastas Mikoyan (born Tiflis Oblast, Armenia, 1895) is the senior member of the Soviet leadership and has served on the top policy making body of the CPSU since his appointment to the Politburo as a candidate member in 1926. Much of his active service, however, has been in the government as chief of the USSR's trade program and he still serves as a First Deputy Premier. Mikoyan has survived innumerable purges and remains a personal friend of Khrushchev.

2. Mikoyan seems to work well with his boss and is probably devoted to the Khrushchevian line concerning both foreign affairs

*A colleague has suggested that Suslov is the sort of leader who hides his light from outside observers. It may be that he is disliked by his contemporaries and certainly, even by Communist standards, he does not appear to be a very likable fellow. But they may find him particularly valuable (perhaps for the very reason that he is not likable) in discussions with other Communist parties; and this is a function he has often performed, as with the Chinese. In any event, his colleagues may have that old, familiar feeling that "somebody has to go to those meetings!"

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S-E-C-R-E-T

ANNEX

and domestic development. He does not owe his career to the First Secretary, however, and at times almost certainly has expressed his disagreement with some of Khrushchev's proposals. He, Suslov, and others, for example, seemed to form a group (in 1961 and 1962) united to prevent further denigration and moves against their old colleagues on the anti-party group.

3. His age [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] would seem to preclude him from the top position in the party following Khrushchev's demise, unless he were chosen to serve for a time as titular leader of a collective. As with Suslov, however, his support and his political skill would presumably be much sought after by the other leaders.

Suslov

1. One of the leading members of the CPSU Presidium and the Secretariat and the leading Soviet theoretician, Mikhail A Suslov (born Shakovsky, RSFSR, 1902) has been a prominent party leader since 1947, when he was appointed by Stalin to the Secretariat. He may be content with his role as doctrinal apologist for the regime and

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[REDACTED]

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ANNEX

may not aspire to the top post himself, which, if so, is just as well since in his position he has had little opportunity to build a personal following. Suslov has long been identified as a conservative and has probably opposed a number of Khrushchevian initiatives (including the MTS reform in 1957) perhaps sometimes in league with Kozlov.

2. A onetime editor of Pravda and head of the party's agitprop commission, Suslov was closely identified with Stalin's anti-Yugoslav campaign and, subsequently with Stalin's incipient purge of the party leadership known as the "Doctor's Plot". He has given the impression to Westerners of being dogmatic, bitter, and anti-Western; he probably would not be trusted by his colleagues to follow a genuine Khrushchevian line in either domestic or foreign affairs.

3. Suslov, whose health is declining, and who apparently has, largely been/inactive since last summer, is almost certainly not in a good position to compete for the top job, but his support may be sought by other conservatives. It is possible, however, that Khrushchev may remove him this year from the Secretariat or even the Presidium.

III. THREE SECOND-TEAM CHALLENGERS: KIRILENKO, KOSYGIN, AND VORONOV

[REDACTED] each is a powerful figure and will almost certainly play an important role in

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25X1

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[REDACTED]
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the next succession crisis. [REDACTED] 25X1

we have decided that Kosygin may be the most able of the three and the one currently playing the most significant policy role (mainly in economics). Kirilenko may be a man of manifold talents, but seems for the most part to appear in public as a sycophant. Voronov, though probably ambitious, has been used mainly as a high party overseer of agriculture. Of a middle generation, too young to have been participants in the October Revolution, too old to dispute with their elders on a father-son basis, they may lack the zeal of the Bolsheviks and the enthusiasm (or cynicism) of the youth; in short, they strike us as neither fish nor fowl but essentially as successful careerists.

Kirilenko

1. One of Khrushchev's stalwarts, Andrey P. Kirilenko (born Voronezh Oblast, RSFSR, 1906) has been a member of the Presidium since the spring of 1962. For six years an oblast First Secretary and now a member of the important party Bureau for the RSFSR, perhaps as the supervisor for industry, Kirilenko has been a party member since 1931 and a Central Committee member since 1956. His association with Khrushchev dates back to his service on the Southern Front during the war and his long service as a party functionary in the Ukraine, where he also served under Brezhnev.

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2. Kirilenko became a candidate member of the Presidium in 1957 at the time of the defeat of the anti-party group, but was dropped from this position in 1961 for reasons which remain obscure (particularly since he did not at that time lose his post on the CPSU Bureau). He became a full member the following spring when the Leningrader Spiridonov, presumably a Kozlov protege, was dropped from the Presidium. The party press several times listed Kirilenko out of the usual alphabetical order for the Presidium (below his customary spot) during the winter months, a possible indication that during this period of Khrushchev's difficulties Kirilenko had also suffered a loss of status. Kirilenko, if not a front-running candidate himself, would probably support Brezhnev to succeed Khrushchev.

Kosygin

1. Aleksey N. Kosygin (b. Leningrad 1904) has served in high office in both the party and government since 1960. He has been a member of the Central Committee since 1939 and became a candidate member of its Presidium in 1946 (though he lost this spot after Stalin's death). Since he owes his rise in the hierarchy chiefly to his abilities as an economic administrator in the government apparatus, and has never served as a full-time member of the

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apparatus, Kosygin does not fill the qualifications for the First Secretaryship. As a candidate for the premiership, however, he may in fact be the top contender.

2. Kosygin has been described as a "quiet, determined, able, and confident man." During a visit to Great Britain in 1955 he favorably impressed observers with his knowledge and, at times, his wit. He has also travelled to Italy and Argentina.

3. Kosygin does not seem entirely to fill the bill as a Khrushchevian protege and he may indeed be one of those members of the Presidium who have at times opposed some of the First Secretary's policies. His support would be eagerly sought during a succession crisis and might be won with a promise of the highest government post.

Voronov

1. A member of the Central Committee since 1952, the Presidium since 1961, and the Bureau for the RSFSR since the same year, Gennady I. Voronov apparently has served as a party careerist principally in the field of agriculture. Borne in Kalinin in 1910, he became an oblast First Secretary in 1948 and served as such (in Chita Oblast) until 1955 when he came to the attention of

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Khrushchev as an expert in agricultural affairs; shortly thereafter he was made a deputy minister of agriculture in the Soviet government. Subsequently, in 1957 he became First Secretary of the Orenburg Oblast in the Virgin Lands area of the RSFSR and was given credit for three good harvest years. He was awarded in 1961 with candidate membership on the Presidium and deputy chairmanship of the RSFSR Bureau. He was made Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers in 1962, an appointment which need not have represented a promotion.

2. It seems likely that Voronov owes his political career to affability, vigor, a talent for organization, his agricultural experience, and luck (particularly during his service in the Virgin Lands). Khrushchev probably has not considered him to be one of the top policy-making officers of the party but as a high-level specialist in agricultural administration. Voronov is reportedly a bitter personal rival of one of Khrushchev's favorites, Kirilenko, and his career may have suffered somewhat as a result. He may soon suffer even more if he provided any support to Kozlov during the winter months, a distinct possibility.

3. Though relatively young and with a good background in administration and the apparat, Voronov is too junior to be a likely

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candidate for the First Secretaryship. His talent and support, however, would be welcomed by the other contenders. If he plays his cards right, he might be rewarded with a major position and subsequently enter the lists as a top contender.

IV. THREE YOUNG COMERS: DEMICHEV, POLYANSKY, AND SHELEPIN

These three men are in key positions and are well known as comers on the political scene. We have chosen them for these reasons, not necessarily because one or the other might someday succeed to party leadership;

25X1

Unlike their contemporary, Adzhubei, Izvestia

editor, bon vivant, and Khrushchev's son-in-law, these men seem never to have demonstrated even a passing fancy for modern art or an inclination for banter with capitalist journalists. (Polyansky however, has been known to cross himself before eating a meal, presumably out of respect for his old orthodox mother). Thus, we find these men to be essentially humorless careerists, and though they might not prove to be slavish adherents of Marxist dogma, they nonetheless take their system seriously and probably cannot comprehend an alternative (either personally or philosophically).

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ANNEX

Demichev

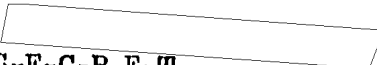
1. Associated with the Moscow city party organization since the end of the war, Petr Demichev, (b. RSFSR, 1918) joined the party in 1939. Rising through the ranks of the apparat in Moscow, he became a secretary of the Oblast committee in 1956, apparently specializing in agitprop work. In 1958 he was assigned to the Council of Ministers of the USSR where he may have worked as a special assistant to Khrushchev. In 1952 he was named First Secretary of the Moscow Oblast, in 1959 was appointed, in addition, to the Bureau of the RSFSR, and in 1960 was appointed First Secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee, a prized position within the apparat. Finally, in 1961, he was raised to the CPSU Secretariat.

2. Demichev is a protege of Khrushchev's and is on record as a vigorous anti-Stalinist and as a proponent of light industry. With an appropriate educational background, he is currently serving as Chairman of the Central Committee Bureau for Light and Chemical Industries, an organ created by Khrushchev in 1962.

3. One of the youngest members of the hierarchy, Demichev would play a role in the succession struggle. Not a Leningrader or Ukrainian, completely identified with Khrushchev and his policies, Demichev might throw his support to Brezhnev.

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Polyansky


1. Another of the up-and-coming generation of Soviet party leaders, Dmitry S. Polyansky, (b. Donbas region of the Ukraine, 1917) has been a full member of the Presidium since 1960. With a background in agriculture, Polyansky rose through the party apparatus to become First Secretary of the Crimean Oblast (1953-55), Ohrenburg Oblast (1955-57), and Krasnodar Kray (1957-58). He became a member of the Central Committee in 1956 and in 1958 was named Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers.

2. Despite his Ukrainian background, Polyansky has not been too closely identified with Khrushchev and, in fact, has at times worked with Kozlov. His appointment as a deputy minister of the USSR in 1962 seemed to be an anomaly and his political future may be uncertain. He has, however, been described as energetic, intelligent, and a skillful politician. He presumably has followed the Khrushchev line, but his possible association with Kozlov and his narrow party background suggest that he may be conservatively inclined.

Shelepin

1. A fast comer who owes his career almost entirely to his patron, Khrushchev, Aleksandr N. Shelepin is currently a member

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of the party Secretariat and is chairman of the Party-State Control Commission, an organ of the Central Committee which could become a powerful and nationwide base of political support. Born in 1918 in the RSFSR, he has been a member of the Party since 1940, served in the Red Army during the war, and was head of the Komsomol from 1952 until 1958. In 1958 he was appointed chief of the Central Committee Section for Party Organs, an important political post, and seven months later, in December, he was named Chairman of the KGB.

2. Few young members of the top organs can claim a comparable background and one so neatly tailored to future advancement. His experience in the Komsomol, the Central Committee apparatus, the secret police, and, currently, the Secretariat, gives him a wide-ranging background in party politics and has provided him with an opportunity to lay the groundwork for future political maneuvering. Personally, Schlepkin has been described as able, articulate, and ambitious. If he succeeds to a top post, he could be expected to follow a generally Khrushchevian line, though there is certainly little in his background to suggest a "liberal" approach to policy.

3. He will almost certainly someday be a major actor in the succession struggle. Of all the younger generation of party leaders

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ANNEX

he might be rated as the leading candidate for party leadership; this could be confirmed by his elevation to the Presidium during 1964.

V. A REGIONAL STRONGMAN: SHELEST

Though not a determinate, the role of regional associations in Soviet politics is by no means a minor one. The CPSU has long been dominated at second and third rank by functionaries with backgrounds in the Ukraine, Leningrad, or Moscow itself (obviously, the three principal loci of power within the USSR). Stalin's moves against the Leningrad organization reflected his awareness of such regional structures and his concern that such bases of power could be used against him. Khrushchev himself, beginning in the spring of 1962, may have been moving to curb the power of the Leningraders (e.g., Spiridonov, even Kozlov). Be that as it may, such considerations must enter into the calculations of all aspirants to the top position and will play a role in the next succession struggle.

Shelest

1. Petr Y. Shelest (b. Kharkhov, Ukraine, 1908) was suddenly and unexpectedly appointed First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party in July of this year, succeeding N.V. Podgorny. In December 1963,

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Shelest was elevated to candidate membership in the Presidium, a concomitant of his rank in the Ukrainian party. A full member of the CPSU Central Committee only since 1961 and a member of the Ukrainian Secretariat only since August 1962, Shelest has been a member of the Party since 1928 and long served in various capacities and areas as an administrator and engineer. From 1961 to 1962 he served as First Secretary of the Kiev Oblast.

2. [redacted] His rapid rise to eminence in the Ukrainian Party, however, testifies either to real ability, political skill, or both. And since he is but 55 years old, he may become, as head of the Ukrainian apparat, a major factor in the future succession struggle in the CPSU. We doubt that he will become a major candidate for the top position, but his support -- and that of his Ukrainian colleagues -- will be cultivated by other contenders. He would presumably be most likely to throw his support to his former superior and benefactor, Podgorny.

25X1

VI. TWO OUTSIDERS: THE MARSHAL AND THE POET (MALINOVSKY AND TVARDOVSKY)

Malinovsky is included here mainly because he is the senior Soviet military leader, not because he is necessarily typical of Soviet marshals. If he is still Minister of Defense after Khrushchev's

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departure, however, he will exercise considerable power in his own right as the representative of the military. Tvardovsky, on the other hand, will exercise very little power, other than as a spokesman for interests which are essentially out of harmony with those of the party, and which might someday be the object of efforts by the top contenders to buy off the opposition. Tvardovsky's inclusion here is testimony in itself to the fact that the "liberal" trend in Soviet politics has as yet to find an active political champion and represents as yet a very amorphous (though increasingly important) tendency within the elite groupings.

Malinovsky, Rodion Y.

1. Rodion Y. Malinovsky (b. Odessa, 1898), who served with Khrushchev on the Southern Front during World War II, is the leading military man in the USSR; he has served as Minister of Defense since 1957. He became a member of the Party in 1926 and was elected to its Central Committee in 1952.

2. Malinovsky has on occasion appeared to be at odds with his superior on military matters, such as the question of the proper balance of forces (ground vs. strategic strength), and sometimes seems to reflect a more conservative political line as

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ANNEX

well. It could be that Malinovsky, though ^{somewhat} independent concerning matters of direct interest, is retained by Khrushchev primarily as a buffer between himself and the rest of the top military command. 25X1

4. Almost certainly, Khrushchev has marshals more to his personal taste and policy inclinations (such as Biryuzov, Chief of the General Staff and former commander of the rocket forces); indeed, Malinovsky may be replaced before Khrushchev. If not, Malinovsky's support would be avidly sought during a succession crisis and his views would swing considerable weight in the top councils. He would not be himself, of course, a candidate for the succession, but should he join the winning side, he might be rewarded with a post on the Presidium.

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Tvardovsky, Aleksandr T.

1. A leading Soviet intellectual, writer and poet, Aleksandr T. Tvardovsky (b. 1910) is a candidate member of the Central Committee and has been a member of the party since 1940. He has served as editor-in-chief of the influential literary journal, Novy Mir (New World) since 1958 (having previously occupied that post from 1954 to 1958). He is also a member of the Board of the USSR Writers Union. He apparently is something of a favorite of Khrushchev's and, in an interview with a US correspondent in the spring of 1963, heralded the end of the strident campaign against liberal writers. Tvardovsky is perhaps best known in the West for his "discovery" and first publication (in Novy Mir) of the anti-Stalinist novella, One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch. Most recently, a long poem of his, "Vasili Terkin in the Other World," also anti-Stalinist in character, was read to Khrushchev and subsequently printed in the government paper, (Izvestia, a move which could be interpreted ^{as} Khrushchev's personal sanction for the resumption of anti-Stalinist literature.)

2. Tvardovsky has never served in an official full-time party capacity, almost certainly has no political ambitions of his own, owes allegiance to the party and Khrushchev, but is,

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[REDACTED]
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nonetheless, perhaps the highest placed liberal intellectual within the party. His ability to continue to wield considerable literary influence testifies to his talent, courage, and political acumen. His voice thus commands both respect and opposition.

3. As the spokesman for the new trend in Soviet literature, he almost certainly can count on the support of similar-minded writers, scientists, and other intellectuals, and, during the succession struggle, would probably throw whatever weight he could to the candidate with the most liberal inclinations. His support, since it might also involve favorable publicity in the journals, might be sought by moderate leaders, though others might shun it as a possible kiss of death.

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