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May-June 1985

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USSR Review

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May-June 1985

The *USSR Review* is published by the Office of Soviet Analysis. Comments and queries regarding the articles are welcome.

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Gorbachev's political clout was exhibited dramatically at the April and July 1985 plenums, where he engineered an impressive number of promotions to the leadership. He is also off to a fast pace in replacing Brezhnev-era holdovers at the lower levels with more sympathetic officials. The 27th Party Congress scheduled for early next year affords Gorbachev the opportunity to place his stamp on the party's new program and the next five-year economic plan and to effect what could be the largest turnover in Central Committee membership since 1961. 25X1

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Economic Agenda 15 25X1

Gorbachev has outlined an economic agenda that features ambitious targets for growth. The measures he has proposed to achieve his goals are similar to proposals made before but only halfheartedly implemented. Gorbachev evidently believes that, like Andropov, he can give the economy a boost by vigorously following through on them. Although he has yet to squarely address some of the economy's major problems, he has hinted that he intends to do so and that bolder, more innovative economic proposals may be in store once he has consolidated his political strength. 25X1

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Despite shifts in tone and style during Gorbachev's first months in office, continuity has been the main theme in Soviet foreign policy. The collective nature of Politburo decisionmaking and its focus on domestic issues will limit changes in foreign policy—particularly in East-West relations—in the near term. There are a number of regional issues, however, where initiatives from a more dynamic leadership could enhance Soviet leverage and create potential problems for the United States. 25X1

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Soviet policy in Africa has changed little since early 1984. Military assistance remains the major instrument of Moscow's Africa policy, and Soviet success in obtaining military access and building political influence has been mixed.

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Gorbachev's Economic Advisers 29

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The economic advisers on whom Mikhail Gorbachev reportedly intends to rely hold mainstream policy views but share a history of involvement in controversy for criticizing aspects of the Soviet system. They probably will reinforce his inclination to press forward with measures to modernize management and planning and to increase Soviet economic competitiveness with capitalist countries.

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Afghanistan: New Emphasis on Old Military Problems 32

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The war in Afghanistan has not so much posed new problems for the Soviet military as it has highlighted longstanding problems and weaknesses in the armed forces. Recent journal articles by senior officers closely associated with the war illuminate Soviet views on a number of issues having relevance to Soviet forces as a whole and may signal moves toward corrective action.

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Gorbachev Takes Over

Perspective

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Mikhail Gorbachev has moved aggressively to take charge in his first few months as General Secretary. He has cultivated an activist image, moving quickly to strengthen his position in the Politburo and place his mark on Soviet policy. His informal and straightforward style has won him plaudits from foreign visitors and raised expectations among his domestic audiences for a meaningful improvement in the quality of Soviet life. His bold efforts to breathe new life into domestic policy and politics represent a clear challenge to the old guard and entrenched Soviet bureaucrats, but he currently has momentum in his favor. From all indications, opposition to Gorbachev will be difficult, and, as he acquires added strength, he will probably put increasing content into his far-reaching pronouncements.

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We know little about the personal qualities and circumstances that enabled Gorbachev to become, at age 54, the youngest party chief since Stalin. Luck was undoubtedly a factor—he has had the good fortune to be in the right place at the right time throughout his career and benefited from a high attrition rate in the aging senior leadership. But political shrewdness played a key role. His reported mastery of the consensus style of politics in the Politburo evidently enabled him to draw support from a wide spectrum of party leaders. However, now that he is in charge, a more aggressive and risk-taking decisionmaker has emerged.

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Gorbachev's election to the top party post seemed almost certain when Konstantin Chernenko died in March (see "Climb to the Top"). Gorbachev had emerged from the Andropov succession as the unofficial "second

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secretary"—a position that enabled him to chair Politburo and Secretariat meetings in Chernenko's absence and gave him a clear advantage in the presuccession maneuvering. 25X1

The timing of his accession, only a month before a scheduled plenum of the Central Committee, gave Gorbachev an opportunity to move quickly to strengthen his support in the Politburo (see "Consolidating Power"). He took full advantage of it, promoting three of his supporters to full Politburo membership and bringing another probable associate into the Secretariat—an impressive demonstration of political strength that no other party leader had equaled at such an early stage in his tenure. His momentum continued in July, when he succeeded in promoting three like-minded younger leaders, removed his erstwhile rival, Grigoriy Romanov, and increased his control over foreign policy through Foreign Minister Gromyko's reassignment to the presidency. 25X1

The election of a new Central Committee at the 27th Party Congress was pushed back to February 1986, giving Gorbachev additional time to prepare for a further broadening of his political base. His first steps as General Secretary indicate he will exploit it. Turnover in party and government positions that carry Central Committee membership already is proceeding at a faster pace than under his three predecessors, and the congress is likely to ratify the greatest turnover in Central Committee membership since 1961. 25X1

An institutionalization of the General Secretary's preeminence during the past decade may also give Gorbachev advantages in consolidating his power that earlier General Secretaries did not have and that Andropov and Chernenko served too briefly to exploit. He has already been referred to as the "head" of the Politburo, and probably will soon be acknowledged publicly as chairman of the Defense Council (the national security forum comprising top political, military, and defense industry officials).

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Gorbachev has moved forcefully to place his personal stamp on economic policy, telling managers that they must change the way they do business or "get out of the way" (see "Economic Agenda"). At a Central Committee conference in June, he was sharply critical of the draft guidelines for the 1986-90 economic plan, faulting it for relying too much on additional resources rather than improved productivity to achieve growth targets. He placed partial blame for this failing on a number of industrial ministers, whom he criticized by name. His frankness illustrated the strong emphasis he is placing on the need for competent personnel and for tougher standards of performance evaluation. He apparently believes both are essential to improved economic performance and presumably hopes to broaden his base of support by promoting officials beholden to him.

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Gorbachev's imprint has also been apparent in several economic decisions announced since his accession. The proposed doubling of investment in machine building in the next five-year plan reflects his long-held view that increased investment in that sector is essential for improved productivity. His earlier support for expanding production on private garden plots also was reflected in a May Politburo decision, which he later criticized as being inadequate, to give the plots increased material and technical support. 25X1

Although Gorbachev has demonstrated his commitment to streamlining the economic bureaucracy and instituting other measures to improve economic performance, few specific programs have yet been announced. In all likelihood, Gorbachev is temporizing until these programs can be fully developed and he has further consolidated his power. Gorbachev's speeches and the statements of knowledgeable Soviet officials, however, suggest that his moves, when they come, will be bold. His recent crackdown on the Soviet worker's consumption of alcohol showcases his commitment to tackle longstanding problems. His public description of the Politburo's recent decision to increase the number of private garden plots as inadequate and "fundamentally weak," moreover, manifests willingness to push for his programs against high-level resistance. 25X1

Gorbachev has cultivated the image of a vigorous and accessible leader by holding several unrehearsed meetings with the public. He is actively working to exploit popular support for his programs to undercut the bureaucratic resistance that has stymied past efforts to reduce corruption, raise productivity, and encourage innovation. He risks a political backlash, however, if he fails to follow through on his policy initiatives and falls short of the popular expectations of change that he has raised. 25X1

Gorbachev's initial impact on Soviet foreign policy has been more stylistic (see "International Affairs: A More Dynamic Diplomacy?"). But his accession also has enabled the Soviet Union to project a more vigorous, dynamic image in the international arena than was possible under his ailing predecessors. He has a disarmingly straightforward approach that has impressed many foreign leaders and has enabled him to gain a more serious hearing for Soviet positions in the West. 25X1

Continuity has been the hallmark of Gorbachev's foreign policy to date. Managing relations with the United States remains at the top of the leadership's agenda. Gorbachev appears to be encouraging a gradual restoration of bilateral contacts while—through a combination of tough rhetoric and policy actions—attempting to step up pressure on the United States to moderate its policies toward the USSR. His tough criticism of US

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policy seems calculated to signal that the Soviet Union does not intend to be forced into concessions for the sake of reduced tensions with the United States. [redacted] 25X1

We have not yet seen the more imaginative efforts to strengthen West European and other foreign opposition to US policies that many had expected. Heavyhanded criticism of the Kohl government continues to inhibit better relations with Bonn. Gorbachev is the first Soviet leader in 20 years to meet with a Chinese official but has still shown no sign of reexamining the Soviet policies that have blocked a more significant improvement of relations. The Soviets also have continued to temporize on setting a date for the Foreign Minister's trip to Japan and have shown no new flexibility on the northern territories dispute. It is too early to conclude, however, that Gorbachev's unconventional high-risk approach will be limited to domestic issues. The reassignment of Foreign Minister Gromyko will allow Gorbachev to place his personal stamp more firmly on foreign policy as well. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

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Climb to the Top

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When Konstantin Chernenko died on 10 March 1985, the issue of who would succeed him as General Secretary evidently had been settled. Gorbachev's position as Chernenko's heir had been signaled for weeks in the private remarks of Soviet officials and the public indicators of leadership ranking. The Central Committee plenum that elected Gorbachev General Secretary was concluded with unprecedented speed, suggesting that there was little if any real opposition to his selection.

Gorbachev, the Soviet Union's seventh party leader,[1] is the first from the generation of officials who began their careers after Stalin died. His election at age 54 capped a rapid rise for the former regional party chief, in a period when seniority was usually rewarded ahead of youthful vigor. His success has been based on his ability to win the approval and support of officials across a wide political spectrum, from the old guard of the Brezhnev era to those who hoped that Andropov's tenure would bring new discipline and dynamism to the leadership.

Rise to National Prominence

A combination of technical skill in agricultural administration, political acumen, and patronage fueled Gorbachev's swift rise in Stavropol' Kray. He was in a good position to join the leadership in Moscow when the party secretary for agriculture, Fedor Kulakov—who had been Gorbachev's patron and predecessor as Stavropol' party chief—died suddenly in 1978. Within two years Gorbachev had reached Kulakov's status

[1] Following Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko. This count does not include Georgiy Malenkov, who ranked first in public listings of the Secretariat during the first eight days after Stalin died, but then dropped out of that body. Nikita Khrushchev was the first leader after Stalin to be given the title of First Secretary. (The title General Secretary, used by Stalin, was restored by Brezhnev in 1966.)

Gorbachev's Swift Rise: A Short Chronicle

1970	*Age 39 . . . named Stavropol' Kray party chief . . . reportedly attracts favorable attention of senior leaders in Moscow.*
1978	*Age 47 . . . becomes Central Committee secretary for agriculture.*
1979	*Age 48 . . . elected candidate Politburo member.*
1980	*Age 49 . . . becomes full Politburo member . . . only other senior secretaries are Brezhnev, 74; Suslov, 78; Kirilenko, 74; and Chernenko, 69.*
1982	*Age 51 . . . Chernenko and Gorbachev emerge as senior secretaries under Andropov following deaths of Suslov and Brezhnev and retirement of Kirilenko.*
1983	*Age 52 . . . Gorbachev's role in Secretariat is expanded under Andropov to include overseeing personnel appointments.*
1984	*Age 53 . . . Gorbachev emerges as second in command and heir apparent after Andropov dies and Chernenko takes over . . . Gorbachev handles General Secretary duties as Chernenko's health fails.*
1985	*Age 54 . . . Gorbachev takes over after Chernenko dies.*

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as a senior secretary, having become a full member of the Politburo.[2]

Gorbachev benefited from fortuitous circumstances. During 1982, for instance, Suslov and Brezhnev both died and Kirilenko retired. Gorbachev and Chernenko were then the only remaining senior secretaries under General Secretary Andropov. Chernenko represented the political coalitions committed to the policies of the past, and Gorbachev was the ally Andropov needed in the Secretariat to carry out a program requiring change in personnel and policies.

Andropov was reportedly impressed with Gorbachev's intelligence and administrative skills and took advantage of Chernenko's serious illness in the spring of 1983 to increase Gorbachev's role in the Secretariat. By the time Chernenko returned to his duties in June, Gorbachev's official activities indicated that he had been entrusted with overseeing party personnel matters and supervising administrative organs in addition to handling agricultural affairs. Andropov relied heavily on Gorbachev to run the Secretariat.

Gorbachev's position—and his prospects for succeeding the ailing Andropov—suffered a setback as Andropov's health deteriorated in the second half of 1983. Chernenko emerged in protocol standings as the number-two man in the party. Honorary nominations to the USSR Supreme Soviet in December showed Chernenko and Premier Tikhonov sharing a position directly below Andropov, while Gorbachev was in the next lower echelon, among the other Politburo members.

The Andropov Succession: Gorbachev Has To Wait

The succession to Andropov showed evidence of a compromise in the leadership between the proponents and opponents of change. The choice of Chernenko as General Secretary symbolized the reassertion of authority by senior leaders in the Politburo. At the same time, Gorbachev's emergence in the unquestioned number-two spot indicated that the near-term interests of the old guard may have been assured at the expense of strengthening support for Andropov's program in the long run. 25X1

The order of Politburo speeches for the March 1984 Supreme Soviet elections revealed Gorbachev's new status within days of Chernenko's selection as General Secretary. Traditionally the General Secretary speaks last, the Premier next to last, and the party's number-two executive before that. The speakers in this case were Chernenko, Tikhonov, and Gorbachev. 25X1 25X1

in public statements of the Western—but not the Soviet—press, Soviet officials were consistent and unhesitating in identifying Gorbachev as the most probable future General Secretary. Thus, while officially there is no number-two man or designated successor to the General Secretary, in the case of Gorbachev the Soviet regime came as close as it ever has to making that status explicit. 25X1 25X1 25X1

During Chernenko's reign, the most powerful of the Politburo elders—Premier Tikhonov, Defense Minister Ustinov, and Foreign Minister Gromyko—became unusually prominent in leadership affairs. These three typically flanked Chernenko at public functions. Gromyko and other Politburo elders had reportedly blocked the broad domestic personnel replacement program that Andropov had wanted to implement, and Gromyko, Ustinov, and Tikhonov had a stronger say than ever in leadership decisionmaking under Chernenko. Central Committee official Menshikov acknowledged to foreign interviewers, for example, that Gromyko strongly influenced Politburo decisions on domestic affairs, despite his preoccupation with foreign policy. 25X1 25X1 25X1

senior Politburo members were impressed with Gorbachev's abilities and liked him personally. Nonetheless, they were apparently not yet prepared to see him take over as General Secretary. 25X1

[2] As members of both the Politburo (which formulates Soviet policy) and the Secretariat (which oversees policy implementation and controls personnel appointments), "senior secretaries" have more influence than leaders who wear only one of those hats and have a decided advantage as succession candidates. In theory, the General Secretary heads only the Secretariat; in practice, this position has given him seniority in the Politburo, which he also chairs. 25X1

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Gorbachev's Ups and Downs Under Chernenko

Events in the summer of 1984 allowed Gorbachev to strengthen his position as heir apparent. When Chernenko left Moscow on vacation in July and suffered a health crisis in August, Gorbachev began to act as General Secretary. Foreign diplomats in Moscow were told that he had chaired some Politburo sessions even before Chernenko's vacation. At the Eastern Bloc athletic games in August, Gorbachev was shown on Soviet television receiving the flowers presented at the ceremonies.

Nevertheless, when Chernenko's health began to improve in the fall of 1984, Gorbachev's position appeared to suffer. A series of developments suggested growing Politburo concern that Gorbachev's advance violated decorum and was undermining Chernenko's position:

- The chief editor of *Pravda* was reportedly called on the carpet for allowing foreign interviewers to describe Gorbachev as the "second General Secretary."

- Gorbachev's closest rival among younger leaders, Grigoriy Romanov, was given new prominence in party leadership activities relating to foreign affairs.

- Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin confided to an American that the publicity for Gorbachev had created "animosity" between Gorbachev and Chernenko.

- Gorbachev attended but did not participate in the Central Committee plenum in October that approved a major agricultural program seemingly inconsistent with his past policy preferences.

Eve of the Succession: Gorbachev in Position

Despite this apparent setback, Gorbachev's position as heir presumptive was reestablished as Chernenko's health worsened in December and January. In retrospect, Gorbachev's address to a national conference of ideological workers in December appears to have been an unofficial declaration of the policy program he intended to follow when he became General Secretary. Moreover, his much publicized trip to the United Kingdom—which had been planned since the early summer of 1984—established him as a popular and potentially dominating presence in the conduct of foreign affairs with Western countries. 25X1 25X1 25X1

During this period the ailing General Secretary apparently became increasingly dependent on his second in command, and Gorbachev acquired new authority to act on his behalf- 25X1 25X1

- Several officials, including Central Committee official Leonid Zamyatin, said that Gorbachev had acquired a special strategy-making or "coordinating" role in the leadership.

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The obviously stage-managed—and almost macabre—displaying of a seriously ill Chernenko on television during Supreme Soviet election ceremonies suggested an attempt by some in the leadership to reassert Chernenko's authority, perhaps in the hope that they could buy time and move another leader into the Secretariat to contest the succession.

Subsequently, dissident Soviet historian Roy Medvedev told US Embassy officers last May that a short-lived contest did occur in the Politburo. Medvedev said he had heard that Moscow party boss Viktor Grishin had been nominated first. Discussion of Grishin's candidacy was quickly dropped when KGB Chief Viktor Chebrikov began to cite information implicating him in graft and corruption in Moscow.

The Swift Conclusion: Gorbachev Takes Over

Chernenko's steady deterioration may have undermined efforts to block Gorbachev.

The speedy march of events after Chernenko died appeared to confirm that the issue of succession had already been decided.[3] The signs of a smooth succession—its speed and the selection of Gromyko, the most powerful remaining member of the old guard, to nominate Gorbachev—probably reflected a blend of propaganda and reality. The regime, after three years of change and turmoil in its top leadership, wanted to send a strong message of unity and purpose to the outside world as well as to the party rank and file.

[3] Andropov and Chernenko were elected two days after their predecessors died; in contrast, Gorbachev's election was accomplished in less than 24 hours.

Gorbachev's rapid rise and speedy election as General Secretary was first of all a demonstration of his broad support in the Politburo. He almost certainly enjoyed the support of most younger Politburo members as well as older members not associated with the old guard. He seems to have forged at least a temporary alliance as well with key members of the old guard:

- The April plenum's announcement that Premier Tikhonov would deliver a report to the party congress in 1986 seems to imply that he will play on Gorbachev's team for the time being.
- Foreign Minister Gromyko's comment, in his nominating speech for Gorbachev at the March plenum, that the new General Secretary's grasp of foreign events was quick and his conclusions "correct" suggests that Gromyko is also on board.

Gorbachev was apparently able to capitalize on a growing desire in the Soviet establishment for strong leadership at the top to address chronic economic and social problems. With his reputed consensus-building talents, Gorbachev apparently succeeded in holding the support of younger leaders even as he moved to reassure senior Politburo members that his succession would not mean an immediate challenge to their continued tenure in the leadership.

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Consolidating Power

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev is off to a strong start in consolidating his power. He has advanced four of his allies to full Politburo membership without any counterbalancing promotions for the old guard. He has accelerated the pace of personnel changes in key positions just below the top level and appears to be laying the groundwork for a broad-based housecleaning by giving new impetus to Andropov's discipline and anticorruption campaigns.

Gorbachev probably wants to act quickly to maintain his political momentum and to tap the enthusiasm of younger officials who want change. He still faces hurdles, however, as he moves to get his team in place for the party congress next February. Direct opposition seems increasingly unlikely, but—given the consensus nature of Politburo decisionmaking—other leaders could potentially block personnel actions as a means of resisting Gorbachev's policy program. Until he can get his allies into positions of authority, he must contend also with the foot-dragging of Brezhnev-era holdovers at lower levels.

Gorbachev Advances His Allies

Gorbachev's success at the April plenum exceeded even the best showing of his patron, Andropov, during the latter's 15-month tenure. Gorbachev advanced three of his allies—party secretaries Yegor Ligachev and Nikolay Ryzhkov and KGB Chief Viktor Chebrikov—to full membership in the Politburo. Defense Minister Sokolov was promoted to candidate member, and Vladimir Nikonov, the RSFSR Minister of Agriculture, was named to the party Secretariat.

The promotions of Ligachev and Ryzhkov particularly underscored Gorbachev's success and add to his power base. They were advanced directly to full membership without first serving as candidate members. The last such promotions were in 1973, when the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs became full members.

Gorbachev's momentum continued at the July plenum, which promoted three officials who seem to share his policy orientation and removed his onetime rival, Grigoriy Romanov, from the Politburo and Secretariat. Georgian party chief Eduard Shevardnadze advanced to full membership in the Politburo, and Central Committee department head Boris Yel'tsin and Leningrad party chief Lev Zaykov joined the Secretariat. At the Supreme Soviet session that followed the plenum, Gromyko was named President and Shevardnadze succeeded him as Foreign Minister—moves that probably will increase Gorbachev's ability to shape Soviet foreign policy.

As a result of these personnel moves, Gorbachev can probably count on majority support on most issues before the Politburo (table 1). his closest allies are Ligachev, Ryzhkov, Chebrikov, and Vitaliy Vorotnikov. In addition, Gorbachev can probably expect support on most issues from independents like Geydar Aliyev and Mikhail Solomentsev, who were promoted under Andropov. Septuagenarians promoted under Brezhnev are now a minority among full Politburo members.

Ligachev is perhaps Gorbachev's closest supporter. He was selected by Andropov as junior secretary for cadres (overseeing the appointment of party and government officials) and in that capacity worked very closely with Gorbachev, Andropov's senior secretary for personnel. Their collaboration continued during Chernenko's brief tenure, with Ligachev playing a prominent role in reviving Andropov's anticorruption campaign. Since April, he has assumed the ideology portfolio from Gorbachev and has been identified by some Soviets as "second secretary"—a role that would accord with his high public profile at the

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Table 1
The Current Soviet Leadership

	Name and Age	Position
Full Politburo members		
	Mikhail Gorbachev, 54	General Secretary
Promoted at April plenum	Viktor Chebrikov, 62	KGB chief
	Yegor Ligachev, 64	Party secretary
	Nikolay Ryzhkov, 55	Party secretary
Promoted at July plenum	Eduard Shevardnadze, 57	Foreign Minister
Promoted under Andropov	Geydar Aliyev, 62	First Deputy Premier
	Mikhail Solomentsev, 71	Chairman, Party Control Committee
	Vitaliy Vorotnikov, 59	RSFSR Premier
Promoted under Brezhnev	Andrey Gromyko, 75	President
	Nikolay Tikhonov, 80	USSR Premier
	Viktor Grishin, 70	Moscow party chief
	Dinmukhamed Kunayev, 73	Kazakh party chief
	Vladimir Shcherbitskiy, 67	Ukraine party chief
Candidate Politburo members		
Promoted at April plenum	Sergey Sokolov, 73	Defense Minister
Promoted under Brezhnev	Boris Ponomarev, 80	Party secretary
	Vladimir Dolgikh, 60	Party secretary
	Vasiliy Kuznetsov, 84	Vice President
	Petr Demichev, 67	Culture Minister
Junior secretaries		
Promoted at April plenum	Viktor Nikonov, 56	
Promoted at July plenum	Boris Yel'tsin, 54	
	Lev Zaykov, 62	
Promoted under Brezhnev	Ivan Kapitonov, 70	
	Konstantin Rusakov, 75	
	Mikhail Zimyanin, 70	

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Science and Technology (S&T) Conference in June. He will probably continue to oversee personnel affairs, as well as ideology, and will presumably play a leading role in preparations for next year's party congress.

Like Ligachev, Ryzhkov is a member of the Andropov team, which shifted its allegiance to Gorbachev after Andropov's death. In one of his first moves as General Secretary, Andropov moved Ryzhkov to the Secretariat and put him in charge of a new Central Committee department to oversee planning and economic reform.

Gorbachev and Ryzhkov have developed a close working relationship. If Gorbachev mounts a major campaign against the central ministries, he may want to give Ryzhkov a more direct role in economic management.

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The promotion of KGB Chief Chebrikov from candidate to full Politburo membership will probably also contribute to Gorbachev's consolidation of power. Chebrikov (like Ligachev and Ryzhkov) was promoted under Andropov—to KGB chief in December 1982 and to candidate membership in December 1983. The US Embassy's Soviet contacts have usually placed him in the Gorbachev camp, an assessment bolstered by evidence that the KGB helped promote Gorbachev's political position before Chernenko's death. The KGB has also been closely identified with the discipline and anticorruption campaigns that Gorbachev champions. Roy Medvedev has passed a rumor that Chebrikov played the key role in sidetracking an effort by Romanov and Moscow party boss Grishin to block Gorbachev's accession to power in March. While the story itself may have been fabricated to embarrass Grishin and Romanov, it tracks with the other evidence that Chebrikov is a strong Gorbachev backer.

Gorbachev and the Old Guard

Gorbachev has advanced his allies without apparent counterbalancing concessions to the old guard. Soviet officials had speculated that one of the old guard, perhaps Moscow party boss Viktor Grishin or Foreign Minister Gromyko, might be named to the Secretariat as a quid pro quo for some of the appointments Gorbachev desired. Other promotions rumored by Soviet officials, like the advancement of party secretary Dolgikh to full Politburo membership, also have failed to materialize. Gorbachev may have bought support for his personnel actions, however, with a promise of at least temporary security to old guard members currently in the leadership. The April plenum, for instance, announced that Premier Tikhonov would present a report on the five-year plan to next year's congress—suggesting that Gorbachev may not move against him until after the congress. Gorbachev's unabated criticism of the ministries, however, makes Tikhonov's position increasingly untenable.

Gorbachev apparently faces no serious opposition in the Politburo at this time. His success may reflect the fact that some members of the old guard now support him, while others, like Premier Tikhonov, are too weak and isolated to block his consolidation of power. Gromyko's speech nominating Gorbachev strongly suggests that he is behind the new General Secretary and probably did not oppose the recent personnel moves. Grishin may also have decided belatedly to join the Gorbachev bandwagon. He was the first Politburo leader to identify Gorbachev as the "head of the Politburo." 25X1

Shaking Up the Bureaucracy

Gorbachev's apparent intention to shake up the bureaucracy to get the economy running more efficiently probably will result in the replacement of holdovers from the Brezhnev era with more sympathetic officials. Judging by his initial policy statements, Gorbachev apparently will favor strict penalties, including the firing of corrupt or inefficient party and state bureaucrats, to tighten discipline. At the S&T Conference, for instance, he criticized four ministers by name, implying that they would lose their jobs if they did not to turn over a new leaf. 25X1

In his speeches, Gorbachev has made it clear that he intends to demand a higher standard of accountability for party personnel and criticized the halting pace of the anticorruption campaign under Chernenko. Implying that such policies were producing a crisis within the party, he has called for replenishing the ranks of officialdom with new people and warned that those who do not adjust to the new demands must "get out of the way." He attacked the traditional Soviet practice of promotion through patronage as contributing to corruption and complacency. He indicated that competence should play a determining role in the selection of new leaders and encouraged criticism from below of those in leadership positions. By contrast, Chernenko in his initial speeches as General Secretary sought to reassure the party apparatus that he was satisfied with its performance. 25X1

Gorbachev has backed up his tough words with action. The rate of personnel change during his early weeks as General Secretary has been running ahead of the pace set by Andropov, another proponent of cadre change, and considerably higher than that under Chernenko, who appeared to be devoted to cadre stability (see table 2). As a result of Gorbachev's 25X1

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Table 2
Personnel Changes in the First Six Weeks Under New General Secretaries [a]

	Andropov	Chernenko	Gorbachev
Secretariat	1	0	2
Regional leaders	1	4	8
Economic	4	1	2
Other	5	0	2
Total	**11**	**5**	**14**

[a] Personnel changes include promotions, transfers, demotions, retirements, or deaths affecting full members of the Central Committee elected at the 26th Party Congress in March 1981. The changes are categorized according to the status of the member at the time of the personnel action. For instance, the transfer of republic first secretary Aliyev to Moscow under Andropov is counted in the "regional leaders" category, while the promotions of KGB Chief Chebrikov and Defense Minister Sokolov under Gorbachev are included in the "other" category.

initial personnel moves, a deputy premier who was a crony of Brezhnev and Chernenko has been sacked, several ministers who were criticized under Andropov have been removed, and 11 new regional first secretaries have already been named—including nine who are likely to be elected to the Central Committee for the first time in February 1986. During Chernenko's entire tenure, only seven regional first secretaries with Central Committee membership were changed, and four of those changes came during a period when Gorbachev was reportedly chairing both the Secretariat and the Politburo.

Gorbachev has received Politburo approval to follow a policy of transferring party leaders from one region to another more frequently in order to break up local cliques and minimize corruption. This report is consistent with the pattern of personnel change that is emerging under Gorbachev.

Gorbachev's Prospects

Gorbachev is likely to gather some additional trappings of power. Already identified as "head" of the Politburo by Grishin and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, he will probably be acknowledged publicly as chairman of the Defense Council sometime soon, despite reports of his personal modesty. he may even assume the premiership when Tikhonov retires. 25X1 25X1

Gorbachev also appears to be in position to build a solid base of support for his policies. With the party congress now scheduled for next February (instead of later this year, as earlier rumored), he has additional time to make personnel changes at the Central Committee level. Over the next several years many of the current party leaders could retire or die. Five full Politburo members, three candidate members, and three junior secretaries are over 70, and three of them are over 80. 25X1

Having shown his frustration with the current management of the economy, Gorbachev may try to get his supporters into key positions on the Council of Ministers, a likely center of opposition to his efforts to reform the economy. Nearly a dozen holdovers from the beginning of the Brezhnev era remain on the Council, including Nikolay Baybakov, chairman of the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), who is rumored to be a Gorbachev target. Premier Tikhonov, must also be considered as particularly vulnerable. 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

Soviet officials have speculated that Gorbachev would like to name Russian Republic Premier Vorotnikov, an Andropov appointee, or Ryzhkov to head the Council of Ministers. Tikhonov's designation as rapporteur to next year's party congress probably means he is safe for now, however; and, given his age, Gorbachev may wait until Tikhonov retires or dies, to avoid a confrontation. 25X1 25X1 25X1 25X1

Gorbachev probably plans more changes in the party apparatus. He has already replaced three Central Committee department chiefs, most recently naming

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Georgiy Razumovskiy—a protege who was first secretary in Krasnodar Kray—to head the Central Committee department in charge of personnel appointments. [redacted] he may want to move into the Central Committee other individuals who have impressed him, such as Aleksandr Yakovlev, director of the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO). [redacted]

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Gorbachev may still face resistance in this area. Key senior leaders, including Tikhonov, Grishin, and Gromyko—who reportedly objected to Andropov's personnel policies—could still oppose personnel decisions before the Politburo. [redacted]

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Gorbachev has strong incentives, however, to press his political advantage and move boldly. His speeches have raised expectations for change and put the entrenched bureaucracy on the defensive. He must take decisive action to match his tough rhetoric or risk sending a signal of business as usual to the bureaucracy. He probably also wants to avoid the disappointment that reportedly materialized midway through Andropov's tenure, when many supporters of the General Secretary in the middle levels of the apparatus became discouraged by the old guard's ability to block personnel and policy change. Finally, he needs to seize the opportunity offered by the upcoming congress to put his supporters in place throughout the bureaucracy, place his stamp on the party's new program, and use the five-year plan discussion to set his economic priorities. All indicators so far point to his determination to push decisively ahead on the personnel and policy fronts. [redacted]

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[redacted]

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Economic Agenda

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Since succeeding Chernenko three months ago, Mikhail Gorbachev has outlined an economic agenda that features ambitious targets for growth. The measures he has proposed to achieve his goals are similar to proposals made before but only halfheartedly implemented. Gorbachev has been increasingly blunt in making this point and evidently believes that, like Andropov, he can give the economy a boost by vigorously following through on them. Although he has yet to squarely address some of the economy's major problems, he has hinted that he intends to do so and that bolder, more innovative economic proposals may be in store.

Economic Goals and Means

In his speech to the Central Committee in April, Gorbachev described the acceleration of economic growth as his major domestic goal and laid out a growth strategy that includes increasing the pace of scientific and technological (S&T) progress, restructuring investment, reorganizing management and planning, and tightening economic discipline. In a more recent speech, he called for an annual increase in national income of at least 4 percent during 1986-90.

According to a source of the US Embassy in Moscow, however, CEMA economic leaders more recently set growth targets for industrial production at 5 percent. All of these goals are ambitious. Tightening economic constraints caused by the labor shortage and the increasing inaccessibility of vital resources—oil, coal, and iron ore, for example—will make their achievement difficult.

S&T Progress. Gorbachev clearly views the acceleration of S&T progress as crucial to the success of his economic program. A special conference was held in June to develop a comprehensive strategy for dealing with S&T issues. In his address to the conference, as in past speeches, Gorbachev focused on the need for a rapid introduction of new production technology, insisting that the Soviet Union must launch a revolutionary program to reequip its factories and farms with the most up-to-date machinery.

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Restructuring Investment. To further this modernization effort, Gorbachev has also called for a significant restructuring of investment policy. In a particularly forceful statement in his speech to an ideological conference in December, he insisted that the current practice of allocating economic branches the same proportions of new investment from one plan to another must be "changed decisively" and urged that special priority be given to the "development and introduction of fundamentally new systems of machines and technologies."

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Gorbachev has pressed hard for the incorporation of his views in the guidelines for the 1986-90 Five-Year Plan—a draft of which was largely completed under General Secretary Chernenko—and is evidently prepared to do battle publicly with bureaucratic foot-draggers to ensure that they are fully reflected. In his speech to the S&T conference, Gorbachev faulted the draft for failing to concentrate capital investments in priority areas and for relying too much on additional resources to achieve growth targets and not enough on improving productivity. He placed partial blame on the irresponsibility of high-level officials, specifically castigating four industrial ministers for squandering resources. Gorbachev also complained that the draft did not go far enough in shifting funds away from new construction to the retooling of existing plants. Investment in the latter, he insisted, should be increased from the present one-third to one-half of total investments.

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Gorbachev has stressed in all his recent speeches that to meet this goal for retooling industry, priority should go to the development of the machine-building sector. In his S&T speech, he accused Gosplan of paying "verbal tribute" to the role of machine build-

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ing while continuing to starve it of resources, and called for a twofold increase in investments for the sector in the next plan period. He suggested that this increase could be achieved by the partial redistribution of capital investments from the industries that use the machines, noting that most of these industries were far better funded.

At the same time, Gorbachev hinted that the emphasis on machine building might affect the priority status of two of the biggest claimants on investment resources, energy and the agro-industrial complex. He suggested that investment in energy could be "stabilized" by giving greater attention to conservation and described the present level of investment in the agro-industrial complex as having reached the "rational" limit. Moreover, the return on this investment, he said, continues to be unsatisfactory because of the inadequate concentration of resources on the "decisive" sectors. Despite repeated "talk" of the effectiveness of investment in the development of storage, transportation, and processing, there has been no perceptible improvement, he claimed, and nearly one-fifth of the harvest is lost.

Reorganizing Management and Planning. Previous attempts to redirect investment resources and other economic initiatives have often been frustrated by entrenched bureaucratic interests—a problem that Gorbachev clearly recognizes. He has been particularly caustic in describing the adverse effects of such interests on the large-scale planning and management experiment launched under Andropov. "The ministries," he charged in his S&T speech, "in their present form, in the way they operate, have no interest in the experiment." They have no interest, he continued, in extending the independence of enterprises and—with "the aid" of the Ministry of Finance, the State Committee on Labor and Wages, and Gosplan—have had little trouble ensuring that "nothing is left" of the principles of the experiment.

Gorbachev indicated in this and other speeches that a reorganization of the economic bureaucracy will be a major part of his strategy. His June speech in Dnepropetrovsk suggested that plans for such a reorganization have now reached an advanced stage and that they include the creation of superministerial bodies, starting with agro-industrial and machine-building sectors. His speeches also suggest that these superministries will be restricted to "strategic" planning and leave operational control of enterprises in the hands of the managers on the scene. 25X1

Economic Discipline. Gorbachev is banking on a stepped-up discipline campaign to bolster economic growth while waiting for the more long-term benefits of his modernization program to accrue. The threat of imposing penalties for poor performance is part of this campaign, but the party chief has also suggested that he sees a close link between the demand for greater "accountability" of managers and workers and such measures as the expansion of enterprise autonomy and greater use of collective contracts in agriculture. He also has pledged to increase the material rewards for good performance as well as the penalties for violations of economic discipline. 25X1 25X1

Prospects for Implementation

The economic strategy that Gorbachev has outlined has much in common with proposals that his predecessors made but, as the new party chief has bluntly pointed out, never fully implemented. For example: 25X1

- For years, Brezhnev reiterated the need to streamline economic management and planning and urged the creation of a new ministerial structure. Repeatedly, however, he proved unwilling to try to overcome the bureaucratic resistance that these proposals generated. As an Andropov supporter later commented, there was no lack of sound reforms enacted under Brezhnev, but in the lax political atmosphere that prevailed at the time they remained only paper measures.

- Andropov set about to rectify this and achieved some success—as witnessed by the economy's improved performance in 1983 and 1984. His efforts, however, were cut short by illness and political difficulties. Chernenko, who was hampered by even more serious problems than Andropov, marked time throughout his tenure. 25X1 25X1

Gorbachev's speeches indicate that he is extremely impatient with the failure to implement past decisions

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and equally impatient, as one Soviet official stated in private, "to get on with the job at hand." He appears to have important political assets to bring to bear on the economy's problems. Compared with Andropov and Chernenko, he has youth and energy on his side. He has taken charge in the leadership with remarkable speed. The elevation of three of his political allies to full membership in the Politburo at the April plenum gives him a strong core of top-level support. In addition, because of the advanced age of many members of the top government hierarchy, he will probably soon have the opportunity to appoint officials of his own choosing who will be sympathetic to his policy views. [redacted] Premier Tikhonov will retire at or before next year's party congress, and Gorbachev's scathing criticism of Gosplan and the four ministers suggests that other changes may be imminent. His control of personnel assignments, moreover, gives him a powerful weapon against bureaucratic obstructionism. [redacted]

Gorbachev's program is likely to result in improved economic performance if vigorously pushed. Priority development of the food industry, for instance, coupled with greater attention to transportation and storage facilities could considerably reduce the present enormous waste and spoilage of agricultural produce. Moreover, the discipline campaign, which was evidently a significant factor in the economic upswing during Andropov's tenure, could again have a favorable impact on economic performance. [redacted]

Nevertheless, the outlook for Gorbachev's critically important modernization program seems problematical. Successful implementation would require a degree of innovation in machinery manufacturing that heretofore has been lacking. Furthermore, Gorbachev's apparent determination to step up investment in machinery manufacturing capacity even if this means squeezing other critical sectors, is likely to cause serious bottlenecks and is certain to be hard fought by the managers who will be expected to do more with less. Allocating more investment to the machinery sector also could divert resources from consumption and defense to a degree the regime would consider unacceptable. [redacted]

Prospects for Bolder Measures

While Gorbachev's economic strategy is politically bold, he has yet to indicate whether he intends to address more basic problems plaguing the economy. He has not, for example, squarely addressed such problems as the arbitrary nature of Soviet prices, which prevent planners from making economically rational decisions, or the lack of sufficient consumer input into decisions on what to produce. Nor has he explained how, in a period of likely resource stringency, with investment to grow at an accelerated rate and defense likely to have a strong claim on resources, the consumer's needs can also be addressed. [redacted] 25X1

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There have, however, been hints in Gorbachev's past and recent speeches and in the statements of some knowledgeable Soviet officials that the General Secretary may eventually tackle some of these problems. In his Lenin Day address in April 1983, for example, Gorbachev stressed the importance of greater reliance on prices as an economic lever. Gorbachev returned to this theme in his June 1985 address to the S&T conference, calling for a more decisive shift from administration to economic methods of regulating the economy. In the same address he also called for an end to "the domination of the consumer by the producer." [redacted] 25X1

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There is also growing evidence that Gorbachev favors an expanded role for private initiative as a way of improving the consumer's lot. Such a policy could help alleviate some consumer problems without requiring much additional state investment or affecting the way the socialized sector is organized and managed. [redacted] 25X1

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In the past Gorbachev has been a staunch supporter of expanding production on private agricultural plots, and in his speech to the Central Committee plenum in April he twice referred to the contribution that the private farming sector can make to improving the quality of life. In May he returned to this subject in a speech in Leningrad and expressed disagreement with the Politburo's recent handling of the issue. He contrasted the Politburo decision to earmark land for

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an additional 1 million private market gardens with Soviet citizens' requests for some 15 million new plots. "Mathematically," he noted with evident sarcasm, "our approach to this problem is fundamentally weak." 25X1

Gorbachev's remarks in Leningrad also lend credibility to earlier reports that he favors the more controversial policy of allowing a greater role for private initiative in the service sector. He called for a "more realistic evaluation" of the major role "moonlighters" currently play in providing such services as home repairs and seemed to suggest that the state should not just tolerate such activity but should actively support it. Materials used, he said, are generally stolen and "come from the state anyway." 25X1

Gorbachev may well have decided to refrain from translating such vague expressions of support for controversial measures into specific proposals until he has fully formulated his plans and/or consolidated his political strength. 25X1

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Gorbachev may have refrained from bolder measures because he hopes that the steps he has already proposed will be sufficient to remedy the economy's ills. In either event, the political momentum he already enjoys augurs well for his future ability to take bolder steps, and the ambitious nature of the goals he has set increases the chances that he will have to do so. 25X1

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International Affairs: A More Dynamic Diplomacy?

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The election of Mikhail Gorbachev as the Soviet Union's new leader aroused expectations, in the USSR and abroad, of new foreign policy initiatives.

Gorbachev has already demonstrated a more dynamic style of personal diplomacy. He quickly endorsed in principle a summit meeting with President Reagan, received the Chinese delegation to Chernenko's funeral—the first meeting between top Soviet and Chinese leaders since 1969—and established a busy schedule of meetings with foreign leaders. So far the shifts have been mainly in tone and style, however, and continuity has been the main theme in foreign policy.

Gorbachev's Reputation—Expectations of Change

A number of Soviet and Western observers expected that the transfer of power from the Kremlin's old guard to a younger leadership would result in a fresh approach to Soviet foreign policy. In the months preceding Gorbachev's succession,

a generation gap in the Politburo, blaming the downward spiral in East-West relations on party elders.

East European officials also spoke optimistically about the leadership change in the Soviet Union. Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Polish officials pointed in particular to what they saw as Gorbachev's apparent tolerance of divergent approaches to economic reform. Unlike his putative rival in the Secretariat, Grigoriy Romanov—whom they considered a strict hardliner—Gorbachev was viewed as a pragmatist who would not react to East European reforms along strictly doctrinal lines.

Despite the expectations of change, there is no direct evidence to suggest that Gorbachev's foreign policy views diverge significantly from those of his Politburo colleagues. As might be expected of a leader with relatively little experience in foreign affairs, Gorbachev's statements on international issues have hewed closely to well-established Soviet positions; expressions of support for better relations with the United States, for instance, have blended with increasingly caustic criticism of the Reagan administration.

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The Regime's First Steps

Since he came to power the new General Secretary has projected a vigorous public image, maintaining an ambitious schedule of meetings with foreign leaders and issuing several policy statements and initiatives. In meetings with foreign officials he has demonstrated an ability to skillfully repackage familiar Soviet positions. In contrast to his highly publicized steps to improve domestic economic performance, however, Gorbachev apparently has no urgent agenda on the international side. Continuity has been the prevailing theme of foreign policy during his several months in office.

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The United States. By all accounts, managing relations with the United States is the new leadership's first priority. Gorbachev's strategy, like that of his immediate predecessors, appears designed to blunt current policies of the United States by cultivating ties to Western Europe and encouraging US domestic opposition to the administration's policies toward the USSR. He appears to be encouraging a resumption of bilateral contacts while—through a combination of tough rhetoric and policy actions—attempting to step up pressure on the United States to moderate its policies.

the new General Secretary sees Soviet interests as best served, for now, by tough talk to the United States.

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Gorbachev initially adopted a position more flexible than that of either Chernenko or Andropov on the prospect of a meeting with President Reagan—dropping any requirement of "appropriate preparations" prior to the event. He went to unusual lengths in his

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8 April *Pravda* interview to emphasize the potential benefits of a move to "break the ice" of recent tensions. In mid-March, Soviet officials stated that Gorbachev was encouraging new trade agreements with the United States, particularly in the agricultural sector. The Soviets, in fact, agreed to an early meeting of the US-USSR Commercial Commission (held on 20-21 May), laying the groundwork for a possible expansion in US-Soviet economic ties.

Gorbachev has since emerged—in his public comments and private meetings with foreign leaders—as a tough critic of the United States. His 23 April plenum speech explicitly attacked the Reagan administration on a number of fronts, accusing Washington of "sabotaging disarmament" and violating the accords governing the resumption of the US-Soviet arms talks in Geneva only days after the first round had ended. Gorbachev's 8 May Kremlin address marking the 40th anniversary of the defeat of Nazi Germany—while alluding favorably to past episodes of US-Soviet cooperation—portrayed current US policy as increasingly "bellicose." Although a summit meeting is now on the agenda, Gorbachev's tough rhetoric has continued.

Gorbachev's rhetoric and recent Soviet actions appear designed to convince the United States that the USSR will not be pushed into making concessions. Soviet statements in the aftermath of the shooting of US military liaison officer Maj. Arthur Nicholson in East Germany, for example, held Washington entirely responsible and publicly repudiated the US interpretation of an agreement supposedly worked out between the two superpowers to prevent a reoccurrence. Soviet intransigence during the first round of the renewed arms talks was followed by Gorbachev's veiled threat in April to repeat the USSR's 1983 walkout—a threat that he made more explicit in an address delivered in June.

Western Europe. Gorbachev's major foreign policy initiative so far, the moratorium on Soviet missile deployments in Europe announced on 8 April, underscores the continuity in the new leadership's European policy. In substance, it repeated a move by Brezhnev in March 1982 that the Soviets rescinded in November 1983; its manner of presentation—an interview in *Pravda*—was patterned after a number of similar gestures on European arms beginning with Brezhnev.

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Other initiatives publicized by Moscow also indicate that the Gorbachev leadership will continue to rely heavily on appeals to Western Europe to influence US arms policies and restrict the deployment of US missiles. In a 28 March letter to a West German peace group, Gorbachev charged that the United States was using the Geneva negotiations as a cover for a defense buildup and implied that US policies would be responsible for any failure of the talks to produce results. Gorbachev's frequent calls for a return to detente and appeals to political forces in the West who favor such a course also appear designed to exploit European doubts about US policies and create problems for the Reagan administration.

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Soviet officials have been frank in asserting Moscow's intention to exploit differences between the United States and its allies in an effort to undermine the US Strategic Defense Initiative. Appearing on a Soviet news program recently, Director of the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada Georgiy Arbatov stressed the "community of interests" existing between the Soviet Union and Western Europe and expressed the hope that increased pressure from the Europeans would be a decisive factor in producing results at Geneva.

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Recent visits to Moscow by Italian Prime Minister Bettino Craxi and West German Social Democratic Party Chairman Willy Brandt highlighted Soviet efforts to build support in Western Europe for its positions at the Geneva talks, particularly on the issues of space weapons and INF. Moscow's desire to cultivate improved relations with Western Europe was underscored by Gorbachev's proposal—going beyond proposals by previous Soviet leaders—endorsing a political dialogue between the CEMA countries and the European Economic Community to facilitate expanded trade and economic contacts.

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As part of this strategy, Moscow may be moving haltingly toward a more conciliatory posture toward

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West Germany. Soviet media have continued to attack the Kohl government's alleged encouragement of West German "revanchism." But, in a 28 March letter to an FRG peace group, Gorbachev vehemently denied that Moscow harbored any hostility toward the German people or that the 40th anniversary of V-E Day would be an occasion for "fanning anti-German sentiments." Although he assailed the growth of revanchism in his anniversary address, he appeared to place much of the blame on Washington rather than Bonn.

Eastern Europe. Gorbachev took advantage of the recently concluded Warsaw summit meeting to reassert leadership of the "socialist commonwealth." The lack of strong policy direction from Moscow in the last two years has encouraged the East Europeans to pursue independent policies and has weakened Moscow's ability to impose a coherent Bloc strategy. In April, Gorbachev's speech to enterprise directors in Moscow was extremely critical of the economies of other CEMA members. Apparently referring to the corruption and inefficiency of East European Communist parties, Gorbachev stated that "something is rotten in Denmark." The tone of his public remarks suggests that he may push for greater economic integration among CEMA members. On security issues, Gorbachev's unilateral moratorium on deployment of Soviet missiles opposite Europe has already received strong endorsement from the East Europeans, suggesting that he may be more successful than his predecessors in managing East European concerns.

China and Japan. The succession brought indications of an invigorated Soviet commitment to improved relations with China but no sign of concessions on substantive issues. Responding to Chinese gestures to the new General Secretary, Gorbachev met with Vice Premier Li Peng at Chernenko's funeral, the first such meeting at that level in 20 years. Gorbachev's plenum speech on 11 March called for a "serious improvement" in relations with China, a goal since reaffirmed in other leadership speeches. Press attacks on China also have become less strident. Nonetheless, Gorbachev and other leaders have made a point in public remarks of making improved relations dependent on "reciprocity" by Beijing. To date, little progress has been made in this direction. The sixth round of political talks between deputy foreign ministers in April resulted in no change in Moscow's position on substantive issues. 25X1

The Soviets have continued to temporize on setting a date for the Foreign Minister's long-awaited visit to Tokyo and have shown no new flexibility on the Northern territories dispute. Gorbachev's initial refusal to meet with Prime Minister Nakasone at Chernenko's funeral reflects the Soviet Union's apparent unhappiness with Nakasone's strong pro-US stance. 25X1 25X1

Third World. The regime's initial actions have given no hint of new initiatives or of increased Soviet sensitivity to the broader consequences of its actions in the Third World. Gorbachev's speech to the plenum that elected him General Secretary confirmed continuing Soviet support for Third World nations following a path of "independence and social change." 25X1

In May, Gorbachev's highly publicized meeting with Indian Prime Minister Gandhi signaled that Moscow continues to give priority to nurturing close relations with India. Gorbachev used the occasion of Gandhi's visit to suggest a "common comprehensive approach to the problem of Asian security," apparently borrowing an idea originally broached by Leonid Brezhnev. Gandhi declined to endorse the proposal, however, and it was not mentioned in the joint communique published after the visit. 25X1

Early actions by the regime have also signaled strong support for allies in Afghanistan and Central America. Gorbachev's tough line on Afghanistan in discussions with Pakistani President Zia following Chernenko's funeral has been echoed in a continuing Soviet media propaganda campaign against Islamabad's support for the insurgents. 25X1

The regime may be adopting a higher profile on Central America. In a highly publicized 24 April meeting with Nicaraguan President Ortega, Gorbachev promised continuing assistance and political support to the Sandinistas. In his speech to the April

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Central Committee plenum the previous day, Nicaragua was the only Third World country singled out for a rhetorical gesture of Soviet support.

Moscow has also demonstrated some receptivity to recent Iranian overtures to improve ties between the two nations. a high-level Soviet official will visit Tehran soon, and the Soviets have toned down media criticism of Iran. Although the Soviets may expand economic cooperation with Tehran, they will not risk destroying their carefully cultivated alliance with Iraq.

Prospects for Policy Change

Gorbachev's chief preoccupation for the time being will be with internal affairs. Soviet officials have acknowledged in private remarks that the extension of Soviet influence abroad depends to a large extent on improved economic performance at home. The lethargy of the "Brezhnev era" has left a crowded agenda of unresolved domestic problems. In addition, because of the collective nature of the Soviet decisionmaking process, Gorbachev must concentrate on consolidating his power base at home before lobbying for major new programs or policies abroad.

The increased complexity and bureaucratic nature of the foreign policy making process also reduces the chances of rapid policy change. Since the Brezhnev era, the number of individuals and institutions involved in foreign policy formulation has greatly increased. The promotions of the Defense Minister, Foreign Minister, and KGB Chairman to the Politburo in 1973 were symbolic of the more prominent role in foreign policy decisionmaking of the major bureaucracies involved. This pattern has been restored with the recent promotions of KGB Chairman Chebrikov, Defense Minister Sokolov, and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze.

Gromyko's replacement as Foreign Minister by the inexperienced Shevardnadze, however, is likely to give Gorbachev more influence in the conduct of foreign policy and increase his ability to impart a more dynamic image to Soviet diplomacy. His success in advancing his allies will limit the ability of the Brezhnev old guard to oppose policy changes. The likelihood of an extended tenure as General Secretary also may strengthen his ability to gain support for new policies.

As he consolidates power and sorts out his foreign policy agenda, moreover, Gorbachev will find a domestic political climate conducive to more vigorous initiative. Dissatisfaction over a lack of direction in Soviet foreign policy is reportedly widespread among

Possible International Initiatives

The intractable issues involved in East-West relations make dramatic moves in that area unlikely in the near term, even if the regime moves more forcefully than now seems likely. But there are a number of regional issues where initiatives by Moscow could enhance Soviet leverage and create potential problems for the United States. Gorbachev could:

- *Attempt to disrupt expanding Sino-US ties by offering some token concessions on the long-stagnated Sino-Soviet border issue or related military deployments.*
- *Exploit recent US-Japanese trade frictions by agreeing to a visit by Foreign Minister Gromyko to Japan.*
- *Increase pressure on Pakistan, provoking President Zia to request expanded US support, which, if granted, would impede any US-India rapprochement under the Rajiv Gandhi government.*
- *Respond more aggressively to recent Iranian overtures by expanding economic cooperation and easing restrictions on the flow of arms, thereby strengthening Tehran's anti-US posture and giving the Soviets added leverage with Iraq.*
- *Attempt to exploit increasing US pressure on Managua by stepping up economic and military support for the Sandinistas and encouraging the Cubans and Nicaraguans to improve Salvadoran guerrilla capabilities.*

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the younger members of the Soviet elite. Gorbachev may want to move aggressively to capitalize on the desire for strong leadership. [redacted] 25X1

[redacted] 25X1

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Other Topics

The USSR in Africa: An Update

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The Soviet-Ethiopian Relationship

Moscow gains a key ally in the strategically significant Horn of Africa and the use of Ethiopian air and naval facilities. The Mengistu regime in turn gets the large-scale military equipment and advisory support that it needs to protect itself against a variety of internal and external challenges. We noted points of friction in the relationship—Ethiopian resistance to Soviet attempts to broaden the role of civilians in the government, Soviet stinginess with much-needed economic aid, and Mengistu's reluctance to allow Moscow regular access to the ports of Mits'iwa and Aseb—but concluded that, largely because of the regime's need for Soviet military backing, these tensions would not significantly disrupt ties.

Since January 1984, several additional factors promoting continued and even intensified mutual dependence have emerged:

- The Ethiopian famine has forced Moscow and Addis Ababa to demonstrate solidarity in order to save political face.
- Growing pressure from the northern insurgencies and Mengistu's attempted spring counteroffensive have heightened Addis Ababa's military dependence on the USSR. 25X1
- Mengistu's formation last year of the Workers Party of Ethiopia, the vanguard Marxist-Leninist party long sought by the Soviets, improved Moscow's chances of institutionalizing its influence in the Ethiopian Government. 25X1 25X1
- The continued upgrading of the Western naval posture in the Indian Ocean has reinforced the importance of Ethiopian naval facilities to the Soviets. 25X1

We believe tensions are likely to persist in the relationship, notably over the amount and terms of economic assistance Moscow extends to Addis Ababa and the possible renewal of Soviet lobbying for a negotiated settlement between the Mengistu regime and at least some antigovernment rebel groups. The basic interests that underlie the Soviet-Ethiopian relationship remain strong, however, and probably will ensure Moscow's solid position in Ethiopia for the foreseeable future. 25X1 25X1

Soviet Military Involvement in Southern Africa

the Soviet military role in southern Africa focused on the deteriorating econom- 25X1

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ic and security conditions facing Moscow's allies in the region and the potential problems they posed for Soviet influence there. In late 1983, both Angola and Mozambique confronted severe economic difficulties and expanding insurgencies backed by South Africa. We noted that Moscow responded by stepping up shipments of military equipment but was providing very little economic aid, leading both Luanda and Maputo to turn to the West for such assistance. Moscow's lack of success in building influence elsewhere in southern Africa.

We judged that the Soviet position in Angola and Mozambique had not deteriorated sufficiently to force Moscow to reassess its policy in the region and that the costs of military support to its allies were outweighed by the potential returns in Namibia and, eventually, South Africa. We also noted, however, that the economic and military trends in the area were running against Luanda and Maputo and discussed what we viewed as growing Soviet concern that Western economic inroads and pressure from South African–backed insurgencies might lead Angola or Mozambique to reorient its policies. Finally, we speculated that the Soviets might be interested in exploring a negotiated settlement between the Luanda regime and the UNITA [1] insurgents and that they might eventually welcome a deal between Maputo and Pretoria that would counter the RENAMO [2] challenge to Mozambique.

Several key developments have unfolded in southern Africa since January 1984:

- A South African military incursion deep into Angola pointed up Moscow's inability to guarantee the security of its client.
- Luanda signed an agreement with South Africa in February 1984—apparently without consulting the Soviets—that committed Angola to stop its support for the Namibian guerrillas of the South-West Africa People's Organization in return for a staged withdrawal of South African forces from Angola.
- In March Mozambique signed a nonaggression pact with Pretoria in an effort to gain military and economic relief from the burdens of the RENAMO insurgency, again apparently without consulting with the USSR.
- In August the Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister announced that Luanda "accepted the principle" of a partial Cuban troop withdrawal as part of a Namibian settlement, potentially opening the way for progress in the US-sponsored Namibian negotiations.

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We probably overestimated Moscow's support for negotiations between its allies and their internal and external adversaries. This revised judgment is based on Soviet warnings to their allies on the futility of making a deal with Pretoria, Moscow's generally unenthusiastic public statements, and its attempts to discredit the accord in the eyes of other African leaders. Our overestimation was probably rooted in our assumption that Luanda and Maputo would have consulted the Soviets in advance of any dealings with South Africa or their insurgent opponents. The apparent absence of consultation undoubtedly raised Moscow's concern over a serious loss of influence in Angola and Mozambique and led the Soviets to sharply oppose the accords with Pretoria.

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In general, other judgments made prior to these events have held up quite well. The Soviets continued to count on the military dependence of Angola and Mozambique to ensure Soviet influence and presence and limit any gains in Western political influence. Rather than change its policy, Moscow made a virtue of the necessity of taking a wait-and-see attitude toward its allies' dealings with Pretoria and Washington, asserting that these dealings would ultimately fail to provide Luanda and Maputo with the economic and security benefits they sought. Both states reportedly have become disenchanted with their accords with South Africa and apparently have decided to reemphasize military solutions to their insurgency problems. The Soviets probably are encouraged by this

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[1] National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.
[2] National Resistance of Mozambique.

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development because it ensures that these countries will remain militarily dependent on the USSR.

Soviet Military Presence in Sub-Saharan Africa

described Moscow's extensive use of military assistance in pursuit of its goals in Sub-Saharan Africa, which include obtaining access to air and naval facilities and building Soviet political influence. We noted that African governments that perceive internal or external threats are frequently vulnerable to Soviet offers of military support, which Moscow subsequently attempts to translate into expanded presence, heightened political influence, and military access.

We characterized the Soviets' record in achieving their goals as a mixed one. Moscow has done well in turning its willingness to supply the extensive military needs of a handful of states to its advantage, obtaining varying degrees of military access, and establishing itself as a major player in Angola, Ethiopia, and, to a lesser extent, in Mozambique. The Soviets have also been able to use arms transfers and advisory support to expand their presence in a number of states, including Congo, Zambia, Seychelles, and Benin. They have not been very successful, however, in obtaining access to military facilities as a result of these arms transfer relationships, mainly because recipient states fear alienating Western suppliers of vital development aid.

We expected that Moscow would continue its efforts to expand its presence and access to facilities using military aid as its primary inducement, and that it would continue to have mixed success. We noted that naval access probably is not a major priority for the Soviets, but that access in Sub-Saharan Africa for air transport and long-range reconnaissance flights is of some importance to the Soviets, especially in West Africa and the southern Indian Ocean, and that this might lead the Soviets to intensify their efforts in this area.

Military assistance continues to be Moscow's main policy instrument in Sub-Saharan Africa. The past year and a half has seen greatly increased arms supplies to Angola and Ethiopia, and Mozambique is expecting new deliveries in the near future. The Soviets have also concluded new deals with traditional customers such as Nigeria, Tanzania, and Madagascar. But Seychelles has reduced the number of Soviet advisers present, and several countries are unhappy with the poor quality of Soviet arms and support.

Moscow has not obtained new access in West Africa, nor has it made extensive efforts to gain such concessions in recent months. The Soviets have been more active in the Indian Ocean, showing the flag with ship visits to Seychelles and deploying two IL-38 ASW aircraft to Mozambique for 12 days. Whether the aircraft deployment represents the beginning of regular Soviet access to Mozambican airfields or a one-time concession by the Machel government, it probably presages continued Soviet efforts to acquire such access in the region.

Soviet Economic Ties

Soviet economic links with Sub-Saharan Africa, describing the rapid expansion of trade and aid ties in the 1970s, the concentration of Soviet trade with a handful of key partners, and the heavy Soviet emphasis on military as opposed to economic assistance. political and military factors are often decisive in determining Soviet trade patterns but that Moscow expects to be paid back in some form by even its most favored clients. We judged that the Soviets were not likely to make much headway in building influence in Africa through their trade and aid policies, and that military assistance would dominate Soviet policy in the region.

Nothing has happened in the past 18 months that would lead us to revise these judgments. The Soviets remain unwilling to supply substantial development aid to African states, even when this policy leads Soviet arms recipients such as Congo and Guinea—which were once quite close to Moscow—to seek

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Western aid and investment. The Soviets probably calculate that these states will not be able to obtain much military aid from the West, leaving these countries militarily dependent on the USSR to a degree that ensures a continued Soviet role there.

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The Soviets have increased their economic aid to Ethiopia in recent months in response to the famine emergency, but the quantity of Soviet assistance falls far short of Ethiopia's needs and is much less than that being supplied by the West. Moscow's main concern in Ethiopia appears to have been to avoid the unfavorable publicity generated by its apparent unwillingness to help a client in desperate economic straits. Soviet policy continues to be centered on military assistance to the Mengistu regime.

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Gorbachev's Economic Advisers

The economic advisers on whom Mikhail Gorbachev reportedly intends to rely are a diverse group, including a supporter of greater enterprise autonomy, the director of a center for international economic research, and a specialist in economic forecasting. Only the first of these—the economist Abel Aganbegyan—has been an outright advocate of economic reform, and even he has taken pains to emphasize the compatability of his views with the central planning system. Nonetheless, all three have been critical of some aspects of the Soviet system and have been involved in controversy with the Soviet establishment. They probably will reinforce Gorbachev's inclination to press forward with measures to modernize management and planning and to increase Soviet economic competitiveness with capitalist countries.

Abel Aganbegyan, Aleksandr Yakovlev, and Aleksandr Anchishkin as individuals whose advice the new General Secretary will seek in devising his economic program. The three enjoy prestigious positions that give them access to top political leaders, and Aganbegyan and Anchishkin have particular economic concerns that Gorbachev has said he shares. Yakovlev is not an economist by training but, of the three, enjoys the closest ties to Gorbachev, and the Institute of World Economics and International Relations (IMEMO), which he heads, is one of Moscow's leading economic "think tanks."

their statements and articles may shed some light on the economic policies the new party chief will pursue.

Abel Aganbegyan

said that the 52-year-old Aganbegyan would be one of Gorbachev's key economic advisers. Aganbegyan is director of the Institute of the Economics and Organization of Industrial Production of the Siberian Department of the Academy of Sciences (the Novosibirsk Institute) and is well known in the West, where he has a reputation as a critic of the Soviet economic system. In 1965 he wrote a report exposing Soviet economic defects that was leaked to Western reporters and received much attention abroad, but the incident did not prevent his promotion the following year to directorship of the Novosibirsk Institute.

Abel Gezevich Aganbegyan

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In the early 1980s, Aganbegyan supported arguments for the expansion of small-scale private enterprise in the service sector—a controversial issue but one on which members of then party secretary Gorbachev's staff were reported to hold similar views. In apparent recognition of the controversial nature of the subject, Aganbegyan subsequently took care to clarify his position. In conversations with a US Embassy official in May 1984, he insisted that small-scale service units could operate on a private basis without detracting from the planned nature of the Soviet economy.

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Aganbegyan was on the fringes of another economic controversy in mid-1983, when a seminar paper delivered by Tatyana Zaslavskaya at Aganbegyan's institute was leaked to the Western press. The paper criticized excessive centralization and bureaucratization and called for a restructuring of Soviet economic

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management. Once again, however, Aganbegyan did not seem to suffer from the publicity this incident received. Indeed, the industrial management experiment introduced in enterprises of five ministries in January 1984 addressed criticisms presented in the Zaslavskaya paper. The experiment increases enterprises' rights and responsibilities by giving them greater control over investment and incentive funds and by linking managerial and worker bonuses to fulfillment of delivery contracts. It was expanded this year to 20 additional industrial ministries and is to be extended throughout the industrial sector during the 12th Five-Year Plan (1986-90).

Aganbegyan has supported the experiment in the Soviet press but has called for its continued improvement. At the same time, he has accompanied his support for greater autonomy for enterprise managers with a critical appraisal of their capabilities. In an interview with *Izvestiya* in March, for example, he noted that the typical Soviet enterprise manager lacks the educational background of his Western counterpart and has little formalized training in management or experience in using computers and other modern managerial tools. He implied that a massive reeducation program will be required to improve lower level economic management and described the management training provided at his institute as far too little to meet the economy's needs. He has recommended managerial and computer training for enterprise directors, greater use of the brigade form of labor,[1] and closer linkage between incentive payments and results.

Gorbachev echoed Aganbegyan's views on 8 April at a Central Committee meeting with industrial and agricultural managers, suggesting that a major effort be made to improve the lower levels of management. He also supported the current experiment to increase enterprise rights and responsibilities and stated the need for further measures. He criticized higher level bodies, including the ministries, for persisting in old styles of work and hindering successful implementation of the experiment. Gorbachev also complained that enterprises have not made full use of rights granted to them because managers were not properly prepared for the change in procedures.

[1] In the brigade form of labor, small groups of workers are assigned resources and tasks according to a contract with enterprise management, and remuneration is tied to output of the brigade as a whole and to the individual's contribution to this output.

Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev

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Aleksandr Yakovlev

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Yakovlev, who has headed IMEMO since September 1983, as another individual who is likely to influence Gorbachev's economic program. Yakovlev, 61, is a historian rather than an economist by training. In the past two years he has written several crude anti-American diatribes that US Embassy officers have attributed to his desire to ingratiate himself with Soviet hardliners. Earlier, however, Yakovlev had been involved in controversy with Soviet conservatives. According to an emigre source, an article Yakovlev wrote in 1972 that was critical of Russian nationalism met with party secretary Suslov's displeasure and led to Yakovlev's dismissal from the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee. Yakovlev was then "reassigned" as Ambassador to Canada, losing his position on the editorial board of the party journal *Kommunist*. He was serving as Ambassador during Gorbachev's successful visit to Canada in May 1983. His contacts with Gorbachev during the visit and his connections on the Central Committee probably were instrumental in winning his appointment to head IMEMO in September 1983. He subsequently accompanied Gorbachev on his state visit to the United Kingdom in December 1984.

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Upon his appointment as director of IMEMO, Yakovlev indicated that he wanted the institute to have a greater role in formulating and implementing domes-

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tic policy. Gorbachev's ascendancy may give him the opportunity to realize this goal. In February of this year, when Chernenko's illness had evidently already left Gorbachev effectively in control of the Politburo, Yakovlev's deputy had been tapped to play a major role in preparing the 1986-90 Five-Year Plan in an effort to draw upon his knowledge of managerial practices in capitalist economic systems. This is an area in which IMEMO has considerable expertise.

planners hoped to draw upon IMEMO's expertise in international economics. Yakovlev himself has experience in this area from his days as Ambassador to Canada, when he helped achieve sizable increases in Soviet-Canadian trade and concluded general agreements on scientific, technological, and agricultural cooperation. Shortly after his appointment as IMEMO's director, a member of his staff told US Embassy officers that the institute was studying ways of increasing Soviet exports of machinery to the West. Gorbachev recently mentioned this goal in his speech to enterprise managers in early April.

Aleksandr Anchishkin

Anchishkin, an adviser to Gorbachev on economic issues, is less well known in the West than Aganbegyan or Yakovlev. At 51, he was elected last December to full membership in the Economics Department of the Academy of Sciences. He had served since 1971 as chief of the economic forecasting department in the Academy's Central Mathematical Economics Institute (TsEMI) headed by Nikolay Fedorenko.

Fedorenko was removed from his post in mid-May and TsEMI was replaced with two new institutes, one of which is headed by Anchishkin. This might herald an effort to placate TsEMI's bureaucratic critics and at the same time continue much of its work under Anchishkin's leadership. TsEMI came under high-level official attack in June 1983 for failing to address economic problems in a practical way, and Fedorenko, as head of TsEMI, bore the brunt of that criticism. Anchishkin was able to maintain a lower profile, although as a protege of Fedorenko he at times shared criticism directed at his mentor by planning officials.

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Anchishkin's research on planning methods and his emphasis on long-term forecasting complement the leadership's recent interest in improving planning—yet another theme of Gorbachev's 8 April speech to Soviet managers and his 23 April speech to the Central Committee plenum. Gorbachev apparently hopes to draw upon Anchishkin's expertise to promote work long under way on setting stable indicators for industrial enterprises for entire five-year planning periods and on devising a long-range economic plan until the year 2000.

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Shared Views

Aganbegyan, Yakovlev, and Anchishkin—like Gorbachev himself—subscribe to views that lie well within the mainstream of Soviet economic thinking. They all have described themselves as advocates of more effective central planning, and none has given any hint of support for radical changes in the Soviet economic system such as moves toward market socialism. Yet, each at some time in the past has antagonized conservative forces by questioning traditional procedures or by criticizing the way the Soviet system works. Gorbachev's speeches since he became General Secretary indicate that he shares this critical attitude toward the economy and a willingness to experiment. Advisers such as Aganbegyan, Yakovlev, and Anchishkin are likely to reinforce his determination to streamline and modernize the Soviet economic system and may provide the intellectual direction for such change.

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Afghanistan: New Emphasis on Old Military Problems

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Several recent articles in *Military Herald*—the professional journal of the Soviet Ground Forces—by senior Soviet officers closely associated with Afghanistan provide insight into problems the Soviets are experiencing and lessons they are learning in Afghanistan. Such issues as troop management, tactical intelligence, and an aggressive approach to combat operations have relevance to Soviet forces as a whole but are particularly acute in Afghanistan, where shortcomings are less easily concealed and have more serious consequences.[1] Among the solutions the senior officers propose are closer ties between officers and their men, better reconnaissance at the battalion level, and more aggressiveness on the part of unit commanders.

Problems of Troop Management

One recurring theme in the Soviet military press is a campaign to improve management at the troop level. In a broad sense, this encompasses all activities of commanders and staffs directed toward the accomplishment of a unit's mission both in combat and in the development and maintenance of training standards, readiness, discipline, and morale. In a word, it concerns the concept of leadership.

the Soviet military press—have noted troop management problems in Afghanistan that are also typical of those experienced by Soviet units elsewhere: dereliction of duty and lack of professional competence by officers; black marketeering by officers and soldiers; poor and sometimes brutal relationships between officers and soldiers, between sergeants and soldiers, and between senior and junior enlisted men; alcoholism in all ranks; and ethnic tensions. Soviet efforts to solve such problems concentrate on the officer corps itself—both because the commander is held accountable for the actions of his subordinates and because the officer corps is a major part of the problem.

Commanders are reminded of the importance of individual work with their subordinates and the necessity to avoid "coarseness" in superior-subordinate relations. This was the subject of an article by Army Gen. Dmitriy Sukhorukhov, commander of the Airborne Troops, in the October 1984 issue of *Military Herald*. The article, directed specifically at junior officers, cites three airborne officers who served with distinction in Afghanistan and who had excellent relations with their troops. Leadership principles that these officers used and that Sukhorukhov recommends to others include leading by example; taking an individualized approach to each soldier and paying attention to his strengths, weaknesses, problems, personal background, and interests; and supporting subordinates and considering their suggestions. Sukhorukhov emphasizes that commanders need to "mix" with their troops—in the field and in garrison—in order to develop personal relationships with each.

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Sukhorukhov's views reflect longstanding "prescriptions" for recurring problems, but his emphasis on Afghanistan is significant. The shortcomings previously noted are disruptive enough in a peacetime army but have even more serious consequences in wartime. In this sense, combat experience in Afghanistan probably has highlighted weaknesses in Soviet junior and middle-level leadership and given impetus to efforts to improve the Soviet officer corps forcewide.

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Problems in Tactical Intelligence

One of the most serious and persistent problems for the Soviets in Afghanistan has been the organization and effective operation of their tactical intelligence effort. They repeatedly have been frustrated in attempts to locate elusive insurgent forces in a sufficiently accurate and timely manner to enable combat forces to engage them. Augmentations and organizational changes in the Soviet intelligence structure in Afghanistan in 1984 were designed to improve intelligence support for the counterinsurgency campaign.

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In the October and December 1984 issues of *Military Herald,* Col. Gen. Fedor Gredasov and Army Gen. Aleksandr Mayorov addressed tactical intelligence from the perspective of their considerable experience in Afghanistan. Gredasov, associated with the Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet Ground Forces, was a frequent visitor to Afghanistan in the entourage of Marshal Sergey Sokolov during the period 1979-84 when Sokolov, then First Deputy Minister of Defense, oversaw the direction of the war. Mayorov is the First Deputy Commander in Chief of the Soviet Ground Forces and a former chief of the Soviet Military Assistance Group in Kabul.

Gredasov's article deals with the necessity for units at battalion level and below to conduct reconnaissance effectively. It emphasizes the commander's (and staff's) responsibility to organize reconnaissance using all resources available. Suggestions include establishing specific tasks for reconnaissance as far in advance as possible, conducting reconnaissance by foot patrols in mountainous regions in advance of units in vehicles, and maintaining constant communication with reconnaissance elements.

General Mayorov touches on some of the same themes in his article discussing factors that contribute to combat effectiveness. Citing Gredasov's article, he notes that reconnaissance is the most complex and most important type of combat support. He charges, however, that many Soviet battalion commanders tend to rely too heavily on intelligence support from other units rather than fully utilizing organic reconnaissance assets. Mayorov criticizes commanders who complain of inadequate resources to conduct effective reconnaissance and says that battalions should be able to accomplish their intelligence missions if commanders use their assets wisely.

The repeated failures of Soviet tactical intelligence efforts in Afghanistan—of which both Gredasov and Mayorov are well aware—may serve as an impetus for increased attention to this area forcewide. Soviet commanders probably recognize that tactical intelligence must be improved not only to pursue the Afghan war successfully, but also for units to be able to cope with targeting problems in a more conventional war. Mayorov specifically notes, for example, that developments in foreign armies, such as the use of precision-guided munitions and advanced fire-control and target-acquisition systems, will demand more effective reconnaissance on the part of Soviet forces.

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Aggressiveness in Combat

The ultimate measure of a military unit's effectiveness is its ability to close with and defeat an opposing force. To a considerable extent, this depends on a unit's aggressiveness and ability to react in a quickly changing combat situation. This, in turn, depends largely on the commander's ability to exercise initiative and take decisive action at critical junctures in the battle.

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In this respect the Soviet combat record in Afghanistan has been mixed. The insurgents as well as senior Soviet officers have commented on the lack of aggressiveness by Soviet units in combat. for the most part have been more impressed with the performance of Soviet airborne and special-purpose troops than with that of regular motorized rifle units.

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The importance of combat "activeness," decisiveness, and initiative on the part of units and commanders is addressed by Lt. Gen. Valentin Kostylev, the first deputy commander of the Airborne Troops, in a January 1985 article. Kostylev has firsthand knowledge of Afghanistan, having made several trips there to visit airborne forces in 1983 and 1984. He sees the goal of officer training to be the development of tactical maturity on the part of commanders—a maturity that will enable them at a given moment to cast aside a previous plan, evaluate a new situation, and develop a new plan. Commanders, he argues, must be unafraid to take calculated risks to conduct aggressive combat operations.

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Kostylev notes approvingly the achievements of some airborne units and commanders in Afghanistan and elsewhere, but also admits that not all commanders and units measure up. Many commanders are still characterized by inertia and rigidity of thought, and Kostylev undoubtedly knows the consequences some airborne units have suffered in Afghanistan because of this.

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Breaking the mold of the "school solution" and displaying initiative and aggressiveness in Afghanistan may be hindered by two unique factors. First, the Soviets have pursued an economy-of-force approach to the war to keep down the personnel and material costs. Commanders may, therefore, be more concerned with limiting losses than with inflicting maximum casualties on the insurgents. Second, the high-level direction of the war—evident, for example, in repeated and prolonged visits to Afghanistan by senior Soviet military officers—would suggest that commanders at all levels probably perceive themselves to be on a "tight rein" and may not be willing to risk great displays of initiative.

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Implications

The war in Afghanistan has not so much posed new problems for the Soviet military as it has highlighted longstanding problems and weaknesses in the armed forces. By exposing these deficiencies, the Soviet experience in Afghanistan will more clearly focus the attention of military leaders on the need for corrective action. Most of the problems noted are common to warfighting in general—not unique to a guerrilla war—and journal articles by senior officers drawing on experience in Afghanistan suggest that the Soviet military recognizes the relevance of this experience in their efforts to better prepare for combat forcewide.

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