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Gorbachev Appoints 3 to Soviet Politburo, Stresses Need for Broad Economic Change

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MOSCOW—Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev added three of his supporters to the ruling Politburo, preparing the way for what he asserted will be a broad program of economic change.

The Soviet news agency Tass announced the appointments yesterday, following a plenary meeting of the Communist Party Central Committee. The changes provide the clearest evidence yet that Mr. Gorbachev is firmly in control of the Soviet leadership and is moving quickly to build a party structure that can carry out his policies.

Mr. Gorbachev, in a speech yesterday to the Central Committee, underlined his intentions to press for domestic political and economic changes. "Revolutionary changes are needed" in the Soviet economy, he said.

The Soviet leader also announced the date of the political event—the party's five-year congress—that Western analysts contend will provide the broad political base for his efforts. He said the congress will begin next Feb. 25 and will adopt a new party program and set of rules, adding discipline and ideological clarity to an organization that has seemed to stumble in recent years. The session also will appoint a new central committee; at least half the members probably will be new.

Less-Rigid Planning

Mr. Gorbachev sketched his economic goals yesterday. He called for less-rigid economic planning, more independence for Soviet enterprises, improved management techniques, increased emphasis on consumer products and service industries, and a "retooling" of the economy to install advanced technology.

Many Western officials doubt Mr. Gorbachev can achieve such ambitious changes, and nobody expects him to depart from the basic structure of state socialism and tight Communist political control.

But his speech yesterday was a signal to the Soviet party apparatus that he is willing to consider extensive economic experimentation.

In Washington, a Reagan administration analyst said he expected the Soviet leader to proceed cautiously. "There won't be any quick, dramatic changes. It'll be slow and along-the-established-path type

changes," he predicted. The analyst also said that Mr. Gorbachev is moving toward consolidating his power, but that "more things have to happen" before the process is completed.

The new Soviet leader also sharpened his criticism of the Reagan administration, saying that the U.S. refusal at the Geneva arms talks to consider limits on space weapons "violates" the agreement last January that led to the resumption of negotiations. However, Mr. Gorbachev didn't give any indication that the Soviets intend to break off the talks.

The new full members of the Politburo are Viktor Chebrikov, 61 years old, the head of the KGB, the secret police; Yegor Ligachev, 64, the man responsible for maintaining discipline in the party apparatus; and Nikolai Ryzhkov, 55, a technocrat who heads the party economic department. All three, like Mr. Gorbachev, are regarded as members of the new generation of leaders who rose to prominence during the brief tenure of Soviet leader Yuri Andropov.

Also, Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Sergei Sokolov, 73, was named a candidate member of the Politburo. Mr. Ligachev and Mr. Ryzhkov both skipped this intermediate status by jumping to full membership of the ruling body.

Yesterday's appointments strengthen the basic coalition—of the party, the military and secret police—that has dominated the Politburo in recent years. As Marshal Sokolov has only a non-voting candidate membership, however, the military appears to have been cut down a notch and is currently a junior partner in the coalition.

Mr. Gorbachev can now count on a solid seven-man majority in the expanded 13-member body, composed of members appointed in the 1980s. Moreover, he appears to have consolidated power without offending the party's Old Guard.

"Gorbachev is carrying out the Andropov game plan, but he is doing it in a way that maintains the party's established conventions," says Thane Gustafson, the director of Soviet studies for Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"He's making changes," Mr. Gustafson adds, "but there aren't any harebrained schemes, and there isn't any overnight reform."