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The Impact of Soviet Political Succession on Moscow's Policy Toward Eastern Europe

An Intelligence Assessment

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The Impact of Soviet Political Succession on Moscow's Policy Toward Eastern Europe

An Intelligence Assessment

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The Impact of Soviet Political Succession on Moscow's Policy Toward Eastern Europe

Key Judgments

*Information available
as of 15 May 1983
was used in this report.*

The Soviet Union is currently confronted by an array of problems in Eastern Europe that includes economic stagnation, consumer dissatisfaction, and continuing unrest in Poland. The Soviets are also facing difficult choices about how to guarantee their strategic interests in the region while decreasing their economic assistance and getting their allies to shoulder a greater part of their collective defense burden.]

During the last decade, Moscow tolerated considerable diversity in economic policy within the Bloc, permitted the East Europeans to borrow heavily in the West, and, particularly after 1973, absorbed the shock of rising energy prices and provided other economic assistance that grew increasingly burdensome to the USSR, reaching some \$21 billion by 1981. By the time of Brezhnev's death, Soviet economic problems and the challenge to Communist rule in Poland had already led to some retreat from his policy, with a reduction in subsidized oil deliveries to several East European countries. This and the closing of the gap between CEMA and world market energy prices contributed to a decline in the subsidy to \$15 billion last year. The appointment of a new, more forceful General Secretary and—given the advanced age of several senior members of the Politburo—the additional turnover in the top-level Soviet leadership that will occur in the next few years are likely to lead to further changes in policy toward Eastern Europe.

General Secretary Andropov's track record as Ambassador to Hungary (1954-57), Bloc Relations Secretary (1957-67), and head of the KGB (1967-82) marks him as a tough-minded but flexible leader who is willing to support some modifications of the Soviet economic model in Eastern Europe but who demands strict adherence to Soviet security and foreign policy goals. To judge from his public statements and the views of his key associates, he is also likely to pursue a policy of closer economic and military integration within CEMA and the Warsaw Pact, to urge greater caution in economic ties with the West, and to continue gradually reducing Soviet economic assistance to the region.

Although Andropov is likely to be more forceful than his predecessor in dealings with Eastern Europe, he and other senior Soviet leaders, including his putative rival Konstantin Chernenko, will probably seek to avoid sharp discontinuities in policy toward the region out of concern for its political stability and the impact that a crackdown might have on relations with the West. Among the younger Politburo members, however, support for policy continuity seems less certain, particularly if Moscow's own economic

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difficulties intensify. Pressure for policy change is likely to mount as the older leaders depart the scene and are replaced by younger leaders who are less committed to the existing strategy.

Four of the current Politburo juniors—regional leaders Vladimir Sheherbitskiy and Gregoriy Romanov, and economic specialists Mikhail Gorbachev and Vladimir Dolgikh—stand out as individuals whose careers are likely to advance over the next few years, and whose views generally reflect those of many midlevel officials. The public statements of Sheherbitskiy and Romanov, **C**

Jsuggest that they are generally inflexible on foreign policy, critical of basing social stability on consumerism, and adamant on the need to maintain ideological orthodoxy. As party bosses in major industrial centers, they presumably are keenly aware of the costs to the domestic economy of supporting Eastern Europe and probably favor reducing Soviet aid. They seem, to judge from the policies they have implemented at home, to favor stepped-up ideological vigilance and police control to avert any unrest that might result from such cuts. Their approach probably would find support among the Soviet military, police, and party and state bureaucracies, groups with an institutional interest in tightening Soviet political control over Eastern Europe or reducing Soviet subsidies

Agriculture Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and Industrial Secretary Vladimir Dolgikh, to judge from their public statements and a limited number of **C** **J** reports, would be willing to accept greater divergence from the Soviet economic model than Romanov and Sheherbitskiy, but are relatively inflexible on ideological and political issues. Their positions on economic policy probably would be backed by many economic experts and academics whose writings suggest that they look to Eastern Europe as a model for domestic economic reform. These groups, however, lack the institutional clout of the police, military, and party officials.

In the post-Andropov era, then, the principal Soviet leaders and most influential elites are likely to press for greater belt-tightening in Eastern Europe, more ideological and security service vigilance, greater caution in dealing with the West, and stepped-up economic and military integration within CEMA and the Warsaw Pact. The range of views on economic management in Eastern Europe may be somewhat broader, but the odds seem to favor considerable caution about economic reform as well.

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The USSR's adoption of a more demanding and less tolerant approach toward Eastern Europe would complicate US policy in the region. Opportunities for exerting Western influence would be reduced to the extent that East European economic contacts with the West were circumscribed and the region's economies further oriented toward that of the Soviet Union. Cultural contacts would also be reduced, and, presumably, the United States would be even less able than at present to influence the Bloc's fulfillment of Helsinki human rights commitments. The adoption of a more demanding Soviet strategy, however, might also create frictions and social stresses in Eastern Europe that could be exploited to undermine Moscow's control over the region.

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The Impact of Soviet Political Succession on Moscow's Policy Toward Eastern Europe

Introduction

This paper discusses the impact that the ongoing Soviet political succession is likely to have on Moscow's policy toward Eastern Europe. It examines Brezhnev's policy legacy, reviews the key current issues in Soviet-East European relations, and assesses how recent and prospective changes in the Soviet leadership are likely to affect the resolution of these issues.

Brezhnev's Policy Legacy

Under Brezhnev, as in earlier years, Moscow required the East European regimes to adhere to a number of minimum demands:

- The maintenance of the Communist party's leading role.
- Participation in CEMA and the Warsaw Pact.
- Adherence to the general lines of Soviet foreign policy?

In the 1970s, however, the Soviets also accorded the East Europeans latitude on a wide number of issues:

- The Hungarians continued the economic reform initiated on the eve of the Czech crisis.
- The Poles and other East Europeans established extensive contacts with the West and borrowed heavily from Western banks.
- The East European regimes sought a greater degree of popular legitimacy by making promises to the consumer—a process significantly assisted by Soviet economic subsidization.

Only Czechoslovakia—which avoided wider contacts for its own domestic security reasons—and Bulgaria—Moscow's most loyal client state—seemed largely unaffected by the trend.

In the final three years of Brezhnev's tenure, events in Poland and Moscow's mounting domestic economic problems helped undermine the strategy of building stability on consumerism, Soviet subsidization, and greater ties to the West. In Poland, an ineffective

consumerist policy and the regime's tolerant attitude toward dissent, private farming, and the Church combined to create the most serious and sustained challenge to Soviet interests in Eastern Europe since the establishment of the Bloc. Moreover, the USSR's economic support of Eastern Europe became increasingly burdensome through 1981 as Moscow's hard currency position was weakened by falling prices for oil—its major cash earner—and its need to increase food imports from the West.

By the time of Brezhnev's death, some significant revisions of his earlier strategy were already under way. The USSR reduced subsidized oil deliveries to several CEMA countries (East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and, perhaps, Bulgaria) in 1982. Poland, according to published trade statistics, also received less Soviet aid last year despite its continued economic crisis. In addition, Moscow stepped up its efforts to increase CEMA integration in preparation for the forthcoming summit.

Current Policy Issues

While these steps are a move away from the policy of the previous dozen years, they have done little to resolve the major issues in Soviet relations with Eastern Europe. Information

suggests that the policy issues that are likely to be most contentious include the level of Soviet economic aid to the region, the degree of modernization of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact (NSWP) military forces, and the degree of autonomy Moscow will accept with respect to political and economic contacts with the West and handling of dissent.

Economic Support of Eastern Europe

Currently, the USSR provides economic assistance to its East European allies by supplying raw materials—particularly oil and natural gas—at below world

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market prices,¹ accepting payment in low-quality goods for materials that could be marketed for hard currency, and granting trade credits and loans. In 1982 this assistance amounted to about 15 billion dollars, down from a high of 21 billion dollars in 1981 (see table)

Despite the decline that occurred last year, this aid, in addition to commitments to other clients, places a considerable burden on the USSR. The decline in world market prices for oil this year—while it lowers the subsidy by narrowing the gap between world prices and those charged by the Soviets—will only intensify pressure on Moscow to cut its assistance to Eastern Europe and redirect supplies to the open market to maintain hard currency earnings

NSWP Modernization

The USSR has been pressing the East Europeans to accelerate the modernization of their armed forces since at least the mid-1970s. In 1978 this pressure led to public polemics with the Romanians who refused to support Pact-wide defense spending increases because of their domestic economic difficulties. The other NSWP countries, although refraining from public

¹CEMA raw material prices since 1975 have been determined according to a moving average of world market prices. In the case of oil, this ensured continuation of a large implicit subsidy to all the East European allies—except Romania—after the rapid rise in world prices in the 1970s. However, as world market prices have stabilized and even fallen over the last few years, the gap has closed substantially. It is possible that Moscow's CEMA partners could even pay more than world market prices if the formula is not revised and prices continue to drop

disputes with the Soviets, have generally failed to increase the pace of their military modernization efforts. According to [] the Soviet military continues to press the NSWP countries to acquire or produce for themselves newer and more expensive military equipment, including tanks, artillery, and aircraft

Political Control

The Polish crisis reopened the question of how much autonomy to permit the East European allies in their dealings with the West and how to treat internal dissent. Soviet ideologists are publicly debating whether Poland's experience is generally applicable and whether major social crises can emerge elsewhere in Eastern Europe. The growth of the peace movement in East Germany and Hungary's lenient policy toward dissidents also probably raise questions in Moscow about how to handle opposition to these regimes.

For many ideologists and regional party leaders, especially in the Western USSR, Poland underscored the risks of political and ideological laxity and excessively close ties to the West, which worked to undermine political stability. For those who favored economic reform at home, on the other hand, Poland was a warning against retaining a basically outmoded political and economic system that is unable to carry out timely reform

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USSR: Estimated Economic Assistance to Eastern Europe

Billion US \$

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982
Total	5.4	4.7	5.1	5.7	3.9	7.5	18.0	21.0	15.0
Implicit Subsidies*	5.3	4.2	4.4	4.5	3.7	6.6	16.5	16.6	12.5
Trade Surpluses	0.1	0.5	0.7	1.2	0.2	0.9	1.5	4.4	2.5

* These subsidies represent the difference between: (1) the world market price for oil—and other raw materials—and the lower price that the Soviets charge the East Europeans and (2) the price that East European exports of machinery and equipment would command on the world market and the higher prices that the Soviets pay

The Impact of Succession

Moscow's attempts to resolve these issues will depend on a variety of factors. Historical experience suggests, however, that the political succession now under way in the Kremlin will be a key element affecting policy change.² Given the advanced age of the current Soviet leadership, the next few years will likely see the replacement of several key Politburo members. To appreciate the impact that the succession is likely to have on policy, it is necessary to examine the views not only of the new General Secretary and his senior supporters, but also those of the younger Politburo members who can be expected to advance to positions of greater influence

General Secretary Andropov's Views

Of the current leaders, Andropov has had the most extensive experience in East European affairs as Ambassador to Hungary (1954-57), head of the Central Committee's Bloc Relations Department and Secretary for Bloc Affairs (1957-67), and chairman of the KGB (1967-82). In May 1982 he was again named to the Secretariat, where he assumed the oversight

² For a review of the impact of leadership change in the immediate post-Stalin and post-Khrushchev periods on Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe, see DDI Intelligence Assessment

December 1982, *Instability and Change in Soviet Dominated Eastern Europe*

responsibilities for ideology and relations with foreign Communists formerly exercised by Mikhail Suslov.

Andropov played an important role in Moscow's management of the Hungarian revolt, the Czech invasion, and the recent Polish crisis. He has also had extensive dealings with the most maverick of the East European regimes: Romania (a member of the Warsaw Pact and CEMA) and nonaligned Yugoslavia. His record in dealing with East European issues both prior and subsequent to Brezhnev's death provides some basis for estimating his likely future policies

According to [] Andropov operated as a virtual proconsul in Hungary during his tenure as Ambassador and worked closely with arch conservative Mikhail Suslov in directing the repression of the Hungarian uprising. However

[] reports that Andropov took a realistic and moderate line when he became Bloc Relations Secretary by supporting Kadar's unorthodox plans for regaining public acceptance of the Communist regime. As head of the KGB, he played a less central role in relations with Hungary but apparently maintained his ties to Kadar

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[] has characterized Andropov as the ideal successor to Brezhnev and a "special friend" of Hungary. Since November 1982 [] have asserted that Andropov was instrumental in assuring Soviet approval of Hungarian economic reforms in the 1970s, and that he continues to be favorably disposed toward them. His close ties with Hungary were underscored at the USSR's 60th anniversary celebration last December, when Kadar was the first East European leader with whom Andropov met

Although the evidence suggests that Andropov is likely to pursue a tolerant policy toward Hungary—the most liberal of the East European regimes—it is doubtful that he can afford the luxury of increased economic generosity. Rather, a variety of reports on Soviet-Hungarian financial dealings indicate that Moscow will provide less economic support

Both during the Czech invasion and the Polish crisis, Andropov displayed the more conservative facet of his personality. In 1968 he was one of the first Soviet leaders to react to the danger of events in Czechoslovakia. According to [] KGB advisers made preparations to seize the Czech security services from within in the event of invasion, while intelligence provided by Andropov helped turn around Soviet leadership opinion and precipitated the invasion.

Andropov [] the subsequently spent considerable time coordinating efforts with other Eastern Bloc services to contain the Czech "infection"

Although the evidence on Andropov's role in Polish events is somewhat contradictory, he apparently was among the less patient members of the leadership in dealing with Warsaw's temporizing. According to [] a high Soviet official placed Andropov with Suslov and Agricultural Secretary Gorbachev in the camp that favored military intervention to crush Solidarity in late November and early December 1980. Subsequent reports, [] placed him on different sides of the issue in the summer of 1981. Presumably, Andropov fully supported the martial law crackdown—an operation that relieved Moscow of the responsibility for intervening militarily

Since becoming General Secretary, Andropov has not visibly altered Moscow's policy toward Poland, despite reports of some differences with Warsaw over tactics. [] reported that at the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee (PCC) meeting in early January, Andropov seemed generally pleased with the Polish regime's handling of the Solidarity issue and chided other CEMA countries for not doing more to aid Poland

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The Soviet press has recently criticized Polish party moderates—particularly one of Jaruzelski's close advisers, Deputy Premier Rakowski—suggesting that Moscow is dissatisfied with Jaruzelski's performance in rebuilding the party. The criticism was probably meant to pressure the Poles to strengthen ideological orthodoxy. [] subsequently told [] however, that under Andropov the Polish leadership still has a free hand to implement economic and social reforms. The Polish regime's public response to Soviet criticism seems designed to avoid intensifying the polemic.

Andropov probably realizes that the Polish problem is too complex for quick solutions. He seems willing to approve, and perhaps even encourage, some economic reforms already under way, and he might hold out Kadar's experience—repression followed by reform—as a model for the Poles.¹ He will, however, veto any reform moves that threaten to revive opposition in the factories, and he may press aggressively for a return to traditional party rule. Andropov []

[] told Polish police officials last summer that the USSR and other Bloc countries face very similar problems (youth dissatisfaction and religious revival) and hinted that Moscow's ability to help the Poles was limited by its own economic difficulties.

¹ Andropov made his first publicized visit to Hungary after many years, in December 1981, soon after martial law was introduced in Poland, perhaps to persuade Kadar to lend his advice to the Poles. The Hungarians, however, have downplayed suggestions that they became a model for other East European regimes.

Andropov appears consistently to have taken a hard-line position in dealing with Romania and Yugoslavia. Even before his appointment as KGB chief, the Romanians viewed him as "mean and unfriendly." [] []

Since succeeding Brezhnev, Andropov appears to have taken a firm line with the Romanians, and he seems more likely than his predecessor to press them to comply with Soviet demands on CEMA integration and military modernization. []

[] President Ceausescu requested a meeting with Andropov immediately after Brezhnev's funeral but was bluntly turned down. []

[] characterized the talks as "frank and comradely"—a phrase that indicates disagreement, probably over CEMA and Warsaw Pact issues. At the Warsaw Pact PCC meeting in early January 1983 []

[] reported friction with the Soviets over military spending. Moscow reportedly requested NSWP increases while the Romanians were supporting a freeze in military budgets for NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

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The Yugoslavs have also had a stormy relationship with Andropov. He clashed with Belgrade over Moscow's support for the Soviet-based anti-Tito "Cominformists" during the mid-1970s when he headed the KGB, and on occasion he acted as spokesman in Moscow's polemics with Tito in the 1960s. High-ranking Yugoslav Communist officials seemed to share the Romanians' view that Andropov would be "worse than Brezhnev."

Several reports of the meeting between Andropov and the Yugoslav leaders after the Brezhnev funeral agree that the meeting was "tough," with the Yugoslavs seeking Soviet reaffirmation of Belgrade's "different road" to socialism and nonaligned status, and the Soviets accusing the Yugoslav press of an anti-Soviet stance. During the visit of Premier Tikhonov in March 1983, however, the Soviet side seemed to avoid controversy and made a number of economic concessions, an approach certainly cleared with Andropov.

On balance, Andropov's East European track record suggests that he is a tough-minded but flexible leader who sees potential value in economic experimentation but demands strict adherence to Moscow's security and foreign policy goals. He seems to have been committed to Brezhnev's detente strategy throughout the 1970s and was apparently influential in gaining Brezhnev's support for Hungarian economic reform. These factors strongly suggest he will be inclined to maintain the broad lines of Brezhnev's East European strategy of permitting considerable economic diversity in return for political-strategic conformity.

At the November 1982 Central Committee plenum, Andropov generally endorsed the idea of greater economic integration under CEMA, a long-term Soviet policy, which was given renewed prominence by an authoritative *Pravda* editorial shortly before Brezhnev's death. Andropov may support changes in CEMA that entail creating a stronger supranational authority—as several Soviet proponents advocate—but, judging by several reports, he appears to be meeting strong resistance from Romania and perhaps other allies and will probably be forced to compromise.

Military integration could also prove an issue on which Andropov will be forced to make some tough choices. He has displayed considerable sensitivity to the problem of East European political stability and is probably sympathetic to East European arguments that increasing defense spending at a time of economic stringency risks political unrest. Yet Andropov is also sensitive to the Soviet military's desire for accelerated NSWP military modernization, and he owes a debt to Defense Minister Ustinov for his support in besting his chief rival Chernenko.

[] may now feel the East Europeans have to assume an increasing share in the burden of maintaining the empire. So far, he seems determined to continue the gradual weaning of the East Europeans from Soviet economic assistance, a trend already visible under Brezhnev.

Other Politburo Seniors. Of all other senior members of the Politburo, Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov will probably have the greatest influence with Andropov on policy toward Eastern Europe, both because of their long and close working relationship and because of the military's key interest in the region. As in the past, Ustinov will probably act as a conduit for the professional military's demands to tighten Soviet control over the Warsaw Pact forces—a process that has been proceeding rapidly in recent years—and to step up the pace of NSWP military modernization—a process that has lagged. On most political issues, he is probably willing to go along with Andropov as long as the military's concerns are addressed.

Along with Ustinov, Foreign Minister and First Deputy Premier Andrey Gromyko will be a key player in shaping policy toward Eastern Europe within the Politburo. He will probably continue to be especially visible in his dealings with Poland and East Germany.

[] * It is doubtful that anyone in the USSR is now arguing that: (1) the subsidy should be increased or (2) that the Soviet Union can afford to maintain the subsidy at its present level. The debate within the Soviet Union seems to be... the timetable for cutting it.

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given their importance in East-West relations. Gromyko generally has a strong interest in preserving the Brezhnev strategy of benign toleration to limit friction in East-West relations. The advice received from Soviet ambassadors in Eastern Europe—all former local party secretaries—is likely to be ideologically orthodox, but Gromyko, according to [redacted] is more pragmatic. He also has an interest in seeing that Eastern Europe remains peaceful so that it does not further complicate relations with the United States or Western Europe [redacted]

Gromyko has taken a particularly important personal role in relations with Romania, which, according to [redacted] is perceived by Moscow as a foreign policy—not an intra-Bloc problem. In 1980, for instance, Gromyko engaged in tough talks with Ceausescu following Romania's public criticism of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

Gromyko has also taken an important part in Soviet relations with Yugoslavia. In 1979 [redacted] his Moscow meeting with Yugoslav leaders stormy, with differences expressed over the Nonaligned Movement, Kampuchea, China, and bilateral relations. When Gromyko visited Belgrade in 1982, according to [redacted] he demanded balanced trade with the Yugoslavs and the delivery of more food. He attacked several important officials for their purported anti-Soviet attitudes [redacted]

Party Secretary Chernenko and Premier Nikolay Tikhonov—the other two key senior leaders—can be expected to act as watchdogs over the collectivity of the leadership and protectors of Brezhnev's policies in Eastern Europe. Although they may be tempted to exploit any Andropov errors or to capitalize on dissatisfaction of key elite groups, they currently seem largely in agreement with him on East European policy. Premier Tikhonov, as head of the government, can be expected to support a continuation of Brezhnev's caution, given his concern over the economic cost of the subsidy and its negative impact on Soviet economic performance. Since 1980 he has articulated the Soviet position on the need to improve East European energy efficiency. He has also urged that CEMA make greater efforts to resist Western economic sanctions through stepped-up economic integration and specialization

Overall, therefore, the senior leaders, including Andropov's potential opponents among the Brezhnevites, seem content to go along with the existing mixed strategy of continued economic assistance—albeit at a reduced level—in return for political loyalty and internal stability

The Politburo Juniors

Over the next few years, many younger leaders, now in their late fifties or early sixties, will advance to more influential positions and will thus play a greater role in formulating policy toward Eastern Europe as

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older members are removed, retire, or die. As a group, the juniors currently seem less committed to the existing strategy and more inclined to revise it, although their perspective could change as they attain greater power. Those leaders who are most likely to increase their influence fall into two categories: regional officials and technocrats.

Among these, four individuals have seemed to benefit most from the passing of several senior leaders during 1982. They are regional bosses Vladimir Sheherbitskiy and Grigoriy Romanov and economic specialists Mikhail Gorbachev and Vladimir Dolgikh.⁷ Given their relative youth and current standing in the leadership, any of them could move into the inner circle of senior leaders within the next few years and eventually assume the post of General Secretary.

Although not identical in their views, Sheherbitskiy and Romanov share a parochial and ideologically conservative approach to East European affairs. In his public statements on domestic issues, Sheherbitskiy has scored consumerism, particularly among youth, championed stringent controls over artists and intellectuals, and taken a hard line toward dissidents. He has been critical of forms of "national Communism"—a charge that led to the ouster of Sheherbitskiy's predecessor as Ukrainian First Secretary. He

⁷ The Central Committee plenum in June 1983 promoted Romanov to the Secretariat in Moscow. As a result, he became one of the senior party secretaries along with Andropov, Chernenko, and Gorbachev.

has frequently called for more ideological vigilance and stressed Bloc cohesion and adherence to the Soviet model.

Sheherbitskiy appears to have supported the crushing of Czech reform in 1968 and to have taken a rigid line on Polish reform, perhaps because of his concern that unrest could spread across the border to infect his own republic. A report on Politburo alignments in July 1981 placed him among those critical of Brezhnev's moderation. His public statements during the crisis tend to confirm this. He endorsed the imposition of martial law before any other Soviet leader, which suggests that he may have felt the crackdown was long overdue.

During his tenure in the Ukraine, Sheherbitskiy has consistently called for greater conformity and control, favored repression of dissent and nationalism, and advocated orthodox Leninist solutions to problems. Such an approach, if extended to the Bloc, would be troublesome for the more domestically liberal regimes, like Hungary. He might also be less inclined to support market-style reforms; in 1968 he asserted that Czech counterrevolutionaries (that is, reformers) were really interested in reinstating capitalism. His apparent concern about Soviet domestic stability and the outmoded capital stock in the Ukraine presumably also make him less willing to subsidize the USSR's Warsaw Pact allies at the expense of the domestic economy.

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Romanov, like Shcherbatskiy, has called publicly for vigilance to avert "apolitical attitudes, nationalism, ... and a consumerist mentality" and taken a generally hard line on foreign policy issues. To our knowledge, he did not play a prominent role during the Polish crisis. The one report on alignments in July 1981 places him in the hardline camp.

Romanov seems to share many of the ideological and security concerns of the other regional leaders. One [] who met him in 1977 termed him a "tough autocrat" and "strict hardliner." His parochial views, purported narrowmindedness, and concern over domestic control would probably dispose him to favor greater Bloc conformity and to back it up with tough security measures.

Party Secretaries Gorbachev and Dolgikh are the two youngest members of the current leadership at 52 and 58, respectively. Mikhail Gorbachev is party secretary with responsibility for agriculture, and, as a result, he has made comparatively few public statements about policy toward Eastern Europe. Since Brezhnev's death, he has been the most vocal proponent of the "food program," a policy closely tied to consumerism at home. His statements on agricultural policy also indicate a pragmatic and mildly reformist streak—he favors a greater role for the private plots, advocates more decentralization of farm management, and has touted Georgian agricultural experiments, which draw heavily on Hungarian practice. Gorbachev's

support for economic decentralization at home and endorsement of experiments based largely on Hungarian reforms suggest that he would be sympathetic to seeing limited economic reform continue in Eastern Europe to improve efficiency and reduce the need for Soviet assistance.

Gorbachev's stance on political reform, however, is probably negative, though the evidence here is weaker. As noted previously, [] reported [] that Gorbachev joined Suslov and Andropov in favoring military intervention in Poland in late 1980. [] however, reported hearing information that he opposed undertaking "a crucial foreign endeavor"—presumably an invasion—in the spring of 1981. In a speech to the Vietnamese Party Congress in late March 1982, he made a point of defending Polish martial law, which he said had saved Poland "from counterrevolution and anarchy."

Vladmir Dolgikh, the party secretary responsible for industry, has also risen rapidly at a comparatively young age, due largely to his technical expertise. In May 1982 he was elevated to candidate membership in the Politburo. He, too, has taken a rather progressive economic line, favoring management reforms and a degree of experimentation. He is probably less inclined than Gorbachev to support shifting resources

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to the consumer sector, given the industrial sector's crying need for investment [

] claimed, however, that Dolgikh is flexible, suggesting that he approves the continuance of Hungarian economic reform. Dolgikh has also publicly praised the more centralized East German variant of economic reform, particularly its effective use of resources. There are some indications in his speeches that he supports greater coordination of efforts within CEMA as a basis for rationalizing the socialist economy [

Dolgikh's approach to foreign policy is apparently conservative, and he has termed the "unity and cohesion" of the Bloc its basis of strength [

] that speculated that Dolgikh was among several key economic officials who opposed military intervention in Poland, because it would further complicate economic policy [

Gorbachev and Dolgikh probably would pursue a policy toward Eastern Europe that mixes elements of political conservatism and economic toleration. They might not only encourage but draw on East European economic reform to increase domestic efficiency. As economic realists, they probably realize East European economic ties with the West cannot be broken without causing a deterioration of an already precarious economic situation. Dolgikh has probably contributed to the relatively cautious manner in which Moscow has approached the problem of reducing its economic assistance to Eastern Europe. He might, of course, feel compelled by the USSR's own deteriorating economic situation to act more precipitously in the future. It seems likely that he would be more willing than the ideologically oriented regional leaders to compensate the East Europeans by allowing room for maneuver, rather than simply to prescribe belt tightening and augmented controls [

Soviet Elite Groups and Their Role in Succession

Members of the Soviet elite and key institutions will exert pressure on Andropov and his successors to shape Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe in line with their interests. The military, the police, and the party bureaucracy—whose representatives make up

the majority of the party Central Committee membership—will probably support greater ideological orthodoxy, economic belt tightening, and greater caution on economic reform and relations with the West. Industrial managers, while taking a somewhat more flexible position on economic reform and trade with the West, will probably also favor reducing Soviet economic assistance to Eastern Europe. Most foreign policy specialists are likely to favor continuing the current Soviet approach to the region. Only a handful of economic reformers in the academic institutes would be likely to support a policy of encouraging extensive economic reform.

The Military and Police

Soviet military leaders, especially Warsaw Pact Commander in Chief Viktor Kulikov, have called for greater Bloc solidarity and Warsaw Pact integration during the past few years. According to [

] Moscow succeeded in getting its allies to ratify a statute in early 1980 that formalizes de facto Soviet military dominance in the Pact in wartime. Still, the Soviet military has a number of outstanding concerns related to Eastern Europe:

- Its leaders are likely to urge the Politburo to press Romania to participate fully in Pact military exercises and allow other Pact forces to exercise on its soil.
- They may also press for increases in NSWP defense spending, despite opposition in Eastern Europe based on economic considerations [

The KGB shares many of the same concerns as the military, and it has the additional concern of potential spillover of East European unrest into the USSR. Its career officers probably favor a tough line on dissent and blame laxity for the emergence of the Polish problem. According to [] KGB officers complained about being forced to remain on the sidelines during the spring of 1981 at the height of the Polish crisis. The martial law crackdown in Poland has presumably reduced the chances for friction between the political leadership and the security services. The KGB, however, probably will press for a

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less tolerant and less flexible policy toward Eastern Europe, favor reduced contacts with the West, and oppose any sort of potentially destabilizing reforms.

Party Officials

East European policy affects the regional party secretaries primarily via the economy. If aid to Eastern Europe makes their jobs more difficult, they resent the drain. According to most accounts, they favor a strong defense and are skeptical—even distrustful—of change and reform. [] reports that these groups have opposed economic reforms and contacts with the West and endorse tighter political controls and a "Russia-first" policy.

Party ideologists have also taken a hard line toward Eastern Europe, and they probably will continue to press for greater cohesiveness and uniformity both in CEMA and the Warsaw Pact. They also are likely to favor decreased emphasis on consumerism—a major theme of the ideological conferences initiated by their longtime spokesman Mikhail Suslov in 1981.

Economic Managers

The viewpoint of economic managers is probably quite similar to that of the party officials who oversee them, and domestic resource constraints will dispose them to favor cutting economic assistance to Eastern Europe. Some economic planners have also supported greater CEMA integration as a means of rationalizing the Bloc's economic efforts and as insurance against Western embargoes. Influential Soviet economists have publicly argued the case for making CEMA decisions by majority vote in an effort to augment Soviet control—an "innovation" that the East Europeans have until now successfully blocked. Soviet economic officials probably favor using the forthcoming CEMA summit to press these aims, but, according to [] the Romanians and Hungarians are resisting the Soviet agenda, and this has resulted in several postponements of the summit.

Economic officials, however, probably also have an interest in maintaining access to Western technology and may—as in the late 1960s and early 1970s—see better East-West relations as an argument for shifting resources from the military to the civilian sector. Such

a viewpoint could make them wary of exerting pressure on Eastern Europe, which might further damage Soviet relations with the West.

Foreign Policy Specialists

Among those groups likely to support the status quo, only the foreign policy specialists at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in the Central Committee, and at academic institutes have significant influence. Like Foreign Minister Gromyko himself, these policy specialists have an interest in seeing that Eastern Europe remains tranquil so that it does not further complicate relations with Western Europe and the United States. Although this probably will discipline them to support major reform in Eastern Europe, it also is likely to predispose them against harsher and more demanding policies toward the region.

Economic Reformers

Economic reformers, concentrated in the Academy of Sciences Institutes, have a direct interest in policy toward Eastern Europe because it is the only "approved laboratory" for testing out economic innovations they might favor for the USSR. People like Oleg Bogomolov, Director of the Institute of Economics of the World Socialist System and onetime Andropov subordinate, or Abel Aganbegyan, an influential economic expert, have drawn on East European experience to discuss and even advocate ideas that would be viewed as heretical if they came directly from the West. Although concerned primarily with the Soviet economy, they probably would press for toleration of economic reform in Eastern Europe. Reformers can remember that the crushing of Czech reform in 1968 also meant the death of hopes for meaningful economic reform in the USSR.

Prospects for Policy

Succession has had an impact on Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe in the past. East European leaders clearly feel that it will again. Analysis of the views of the post-Brezhnev Soviet leadership and key institutions suggests that policy change is likely to occur in stages.

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In the Andropov period, the Soviet leadership will continue to tolerate considerable economic diversity within the Bloc while gradually attempting to wean the East European regimes from economic subsidization. Andropov's support for such a policy gives it an advantage over competing strategies. Andropov has shown a degree of ideological flexibility and displayed an awareness of the complexity of Eastern Europe's internal problems and a willingness to tailor policy to the peculiar situation in each of these countries. He is also aware that precipitous cuts in economic assistance could cause unrest in the region. While favoring tight controls on dissent, he probably sees maintenance of Soviet security interest as best served by permitting the East European regimes a fair amount of autonomy in formulating economic and social policy. This strategy would allow the continuation or initiation of economic reform in the region. Although there is a risk that economic reform could spill over into the political sphere, a successful reform of the East European economies could reduce the need for Soviet assistance.

In the longer term, the Soviet leaders who succeed Andropov are likely to place increasing emphasis on a strategy of heightened orthodoxy and austerity in Eastern Europe. Indeed, Andropov himself might favor such a strategy if Soviet economic problems worsen significantly. Such an approach apparently has substantial support among some of the younger Politburo members and key elite groups like the military, police, party functionaries, and many economic managers. They view it as a low-cost policy that would free some resources for Soviet economic growth while lessening the risk of contamination from the West and harnessing Soviet allies even more closely to Moscow's policies by closing off other options. Key Soviet institutional actors probably feel that instead of catering to the East European allies, the USSR should demand more from them in terms of economic and military burden sharing. Such a policy, moreover, logically flows from the deteriorating East-West climate and can be blamed on the United States.

This strategy, however, does entail an increased risk of East European unrest, and it would be difficult to calculate how far aid could be reduced before it might affect political stability. Some Soviet leaders may feel that Poland can serve as a model of how austerity can be introduced by a regime determined to maintain control.

The USSR's adoption of such a demanding and less tolerant approach would complicate the current US policy of differentiating among the East European regimes and encouraging diversity within the Bloc. Differentiation would become increasingly more problematic for the United States as Moscow moved to reverse trends—such as limited toleration of dissent or economic reform—which the United States views positively. Opportunities for exerting Western influence would also be reduced to the extent that East European economic contacts were circumscribed and the East European economies further oriented toward that of the USSR. Cultural contacts between Eastern Europe and the West would also be reduced and, presumably, the United States would be even less able than at present to influence the Bloc's fulfillment of Helsinki human rights commitments.

The adoption of a more demanding Soviet strategy, however, might also create frictions and social stresses in Eastern Europe, which could undermine Moscow's control over the region. East Europeans, for example, would resent greater Soviet assertiveness and the harnessing of their economies to that of the USSR. Austerity could also generate social unrest that might possibly: (1) force liberalization of individual regimes, (2) compel the USSR to restore some economic support and/or grant more autonomy, or (3) force Soviet intervention that would complicate Moscow's policies and undermine its relationship with the West Europeans.

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