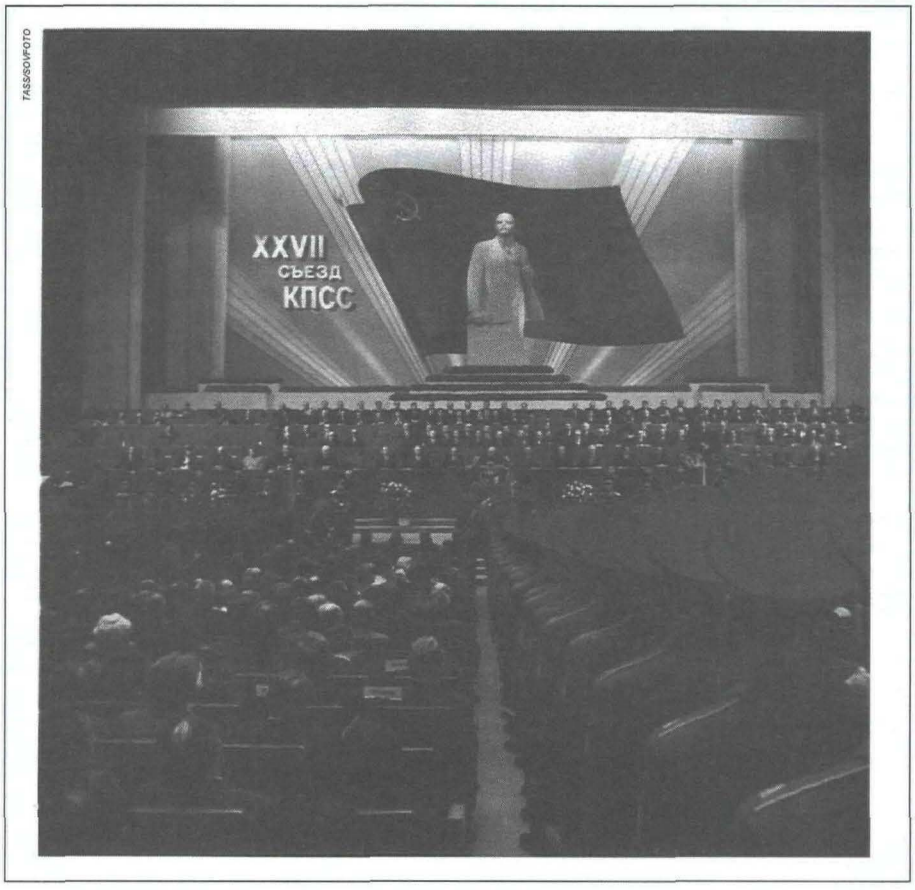
Analyzing Soviet Politics and Foreign Policy



Analyzing Soviet Politics and Foreign Policy
Author's Comments: Douglas Garthoff

The documents in this section were selected to reflect different kinds of products, including analytic memoranda as well as research studies, assessments, and estimates. Unfortunately absent is any product by analysts at the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, who produced some of the finest analysis on Soviet politics and policies.

In the wake of Stalin's death in 1953, CIA sought to understand Nikita Khrushchev's rise to power and the USSR's less rigid policies. NIE 11-4-54, the first of the comprehensive annual Soviet estimates supporting the regularized NSC policy process of the Eisenhower era, was safely wary: the USSR was being conciliatory "for the time being" but remained expansionist. In 1956, a Senior Research Staff on International Communism report found much to discuss regarding the startling 20th congress of the ruling Communist Party. In late 1961, Board of National Estimates chairman Sherman Kent covered the highlights of CIA's views on Soviet matters—including the critical issue of Sino-Soviet differences—in an analytic memorandum prepared for a new Director of Central Intelligence, John McCone.

The next two documents are broad estimates of Soviet policy that captured CIA's view of the period of Brezhnev's ascendancy as East-West "détente" began to flower. NIE 11-69 was done as President Richard Nixon was taking office, and NIE 11-72 as he was about to depart for his summit meeting in Moscow at which the initial SALT accords were signed.

As America began to view détente more skeptically by the mid-1970s, CIA expended much analytic effort trying to divine Soviet intentions. One CIA study of Soviet perceptions from this period depicted a more confident and powerful USSR conflicted between simultaneous desires for stability and for change. Another political analysis written in 1978 looked at the problems that the election of a Polish pope might cause for the USSR.

With new and disturbing Soviet actions in Afghanistan and elsewhere influencing American thinking, and with the advent of the Reagan administration, a different tone entered CIA's analysis of Soviet policy. One estimate selected from the early 1980s took up concerns about Soviet support for international terrorism (a particular concern of new Director of Central Intelligence William Casey). The last two documents of CIA political analyses in this volume were efforts to interpret what Mikhail Gorbachev and his policies meant for the United States. The first was an estimate done just before President Reagan's meeting in Reykjavik with the Soviet leader, and the other tried to foresee how Gorbachev's policy initiatives would affect the Soviet system and Soviet foreign policy. They demonstrate a timeless theme of CIA's analysis of the USSR: the struggle to understand and depict change in a country whose leaders could not themselves foresee the consequences of their decisions.

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CONCLUSIONS

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SOVIET CAPABILITIES AND PROBABLE COURSES OF ACTION THROUGH MID-1959

THE PROBLEM

To estimate Soviet capabilities and probable courses of action through mid-1959.

CONCLUSIONS

General

1. We believe that the stability and authority of the Soviet regime will not be significantly affected during the period of this estimate by conflicts for power or differences respecting policy within the ruling group. Any internal conflicts arising out of such developments would probably be resolved within the confines of the ruling group and the higher echelons of the Communist Party and would not lead to civil wars or disturbances of major proportions.

2. The appearance of new leadership in Moscow has had no apparent effect on the character of relations between the USSR and its Satellite states in Eastern Europe. We believe that Soviet authority over the Satellite regimes will remain intact during the period of this estimate.

3. Communist China is more an ally than a Satellite of the USSR. It possesses some capability for independent action, possibly even for action which the USSR might disapprove but which it would find difficult to repudiate. We believe that despite potential sources of friction between the two powers arising from occasional conflicts of national interests, the cohesive forces in the relationship will be far greater than the divisive forces throughout the period of this estimate.

Economic

4. The *rate* of growth of the Soviet economy has declined in the past five years from the very high rate of the immediate postwar period. We estimate that during the next two years Soviet gross national product (GNP) will increase by about 6 or 7 percent, and in 1956–1959 by about 5 or 6 percent, per year. If US GNP should increase during the period of this estimate at its long-range annual average of 3 percent, Soviet GNP would at the end of the period be about two-fifths of US, as compared with about one-third in 1953.

5. The pattern of resource allocation in the Soviet economy in 1953 showed about 14 percent devoted to defense, 28 percent to investment, and 56 percent to consumption. Current economic programs indicate that for at least the next two years the amount of expenditure on defense, instead of continuing the rapid increase that prevailed in 1950–1952, will

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remain about the same, while expenditure on investment and consumption will increase. We believe the chances are better than even that the Kremlin will continue its policies along these lines throughout the period of this estimate. The chief emphasis will almost certainly continue to be on further development of heavy industry.

6. The chief weakness of the Soviet economy as a whole has been in agricultural production, which has remained since 1950 at approximately the prewar level, though the population is now about 10 percent greater than in 1940. Soviet leaders appear to have recognized that continuation of the serious lag in agriculture would ultimately make it difficult to meet the food requirements of the growing urban population, the raw material requirements of the expanding industrial economy, and the export requirements of Soviet foreign trade, in which agriculture plays a major role. To remedy the situation the regime has embarked on a vigorous program, with the aim of achieving by 1956 a 50 percent increase in agricultural production over 1950. We believe that this goal will not be met, and that even in 1959 agricultural production will be no more than 15 to 20 percent higher than in 1950. Even this increase, however, would be sufficient to achieve a moderate increase in the per capita availability of foodstuffs and textiles.

Military

7. We believe that, generally speaking, the size of Soviet armed forces-in-being will remain approximately constant during the period of this estimate. However, the over-all effectiveness of these forces will increase, mainly because of the following factors:

a. A great increase in numbers of nuclear weapons, and in the range of yields derived from these weapons;

b. An increase in the number of all-weather fighters and jet medium bombers, and the introduction of jet heavy bombers in 1957;

c. A great increase in the number of long-range submarines;

d. An increase in combat effectiveness of Soviet ground forces, primarily due to improved weapons, equipment and organization, and to changes in doctrine and tactics designed to increase their capabilities for nuclear warfare.

8. The principal limitations of Bloc armed forces during the period of this estimate will be: deficiencies in experience, training, and equipment for long-range air operations and air defense; lack of capability to conduct long-range amphibious and naval operations; and the logistic problems, especially for operations in the Far East, arising from the size of Bloc territory and the relatively inadequate road and rail network and merchant fleet. The questionable political reliability of the Satellite armies places a significant limitation upon their military usefulness.

Probable Courses of Action

9. We believe that during the period of this estimate the Kremlin will try to avoid courses of action, and to deter Communist China from courses of action, which in its judgment would clearly in-

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volve substantial risk of general war.[1] However, the USSR or one of the Bloc countries might take action creating a situation in which the US or its allies, rather than yield an important position, would decide to take counteraction involving substantial risk of general war with the USSR. We believe, moreover, that the Kremlin would not be deterred by the risk of general war from taking counteraction against a Western action which it considered an imminent threat to Soviet security. Thus general war might occur during the period of this estimate as the climax of a series of actions and counteractions, initiated by either side, which neither side originally intended to lead to general war.

10. The progress being made by the USSR in the development of nuclear weapons, and the increasing Soviet capability to deliver these weapons, are changing the world power situation in important respects. Soviet leaders almost certainly believe that as Soviet nuclear capabilities increase, the unwillingness of the US, and particularly of its allies, to risk general war will correspondingly increase, and that the Kremlin will therefore have greater freedom of action to promote its objectives without running substantial risk of general war. In any case, the USSR will probably be increasingly ready to apply heavy pressure on the non-Communist world upon any signs of major dissension or weakness among the US and its allies. Nevertheless, we believe that the Kremlin will be extremely reluctant to precipitate a contest in which the USSR would expect to be subjected to nuclear attack. The extent to which the Kremlin uses its increasing freedom of action will depend primarily on the determination, strength, and cohesiveness of the non-Communist world.

11. We believe that the USSR will continue to pursue its expansionist objectives and to seek and exploit opportunities for enlarging the area of Communist control. It will be unswerving in its determination to retain the initiative in international affairs and to capitalize on successes in order to keep the Free World on the defensive. For the near term, however, the Kremlin will almost certainly continue to direct its external policies towards the immediate objectives of weakening and disrupting the mutual defense arrangements of non-Communist states, preventing or retarding the rearmament of Germany and Japan, undermining the economic and political stability of non-Communist states, and isolating the US from its allies and associates in Europe and Asia. At the same time it will continue to expand the industrial strength of the Bloc, and to maintain large modern

[1] The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, and the Director of Intelligence, USAF, believe that the following should be substituted for the first sentence of paragraph 9: "Although the Kremlin will probably try to avoid courses of action and to deter Communist China from courses of action that entail substantial risk of involving the USSR in general war, it may be more willing to support courses of action that would involve risk of a localized war between the US and Communist China. The support given such courses of action would depend largely on Soviet judgment as to the probable outcome of the war. If the Soviet leaders believed that it would result in a severe defeat to Communism, or the full-scale participation of the USSR in general war, they would probably exert pressure on the Chinese to avoid courses of action which would precipitate hostilities. On the other hand, if they estimated that the conflict could be limited to war localized in the Far East, and that it would result in greater relative damage to US strengths than to Communist strengths, they probably would support more adventurous courses of action on the part of the Chinese Communists."

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forces-in-being as a guarantee of the integrity of the Bloc and as an instrument of intimidation in support of its policies abroad.

12. The Communists will vary the methods used to accomplish the foregoing aims and will time their actions so as to exploit situations that in their judgment offer the most favorable opportunities. For the time being, the Kremlin seems to feel that its foreign objectives will be best served by a generally conciliatory pose in foreign relations, by gestures of "peaceful co-existence" and proposals for mutual security pacts, by tempting proffers of trade, and by playing on the themes of peace and disarmament. The purpose of these tactics is to allay fear in some parts of the non-Communist world, to create the impression that there has been a basic change in Soviet policy, and thereby to destroy the incentive for Western defense and to undermine US polices. At the same time, however, the Communists continue to support and encourage nationalist and anticolonial movements, and to maintain their efforts to subvert governments outside the Bloc. We believe that the Kremlin will revert to more aggressive and threatening conduct whenever it feels that such conduct will bring increased returns. By such varieties and combinations of tactics the Soviet leaders almost certainly consider that they can improve the chances for further Communist strategic advances. We do not believe that such tactics indicate any change in basic Communist objectives, or that they will involve any substantial concessions on the part of the Kremlin.

13. We believe that Southeast Asia offers, in the Communist view, the most favorable opportunities for expansion in the near future. The Communists will attempt to extend their gains in Indochina, and will expand their efforts to intimidate and subvert neighboring countries by political infiltration and covert support of local insurrections. We do not believe that the Communists will attempt to secure their objectives in Southeast Asia by the commitment of identifiable combat units of Chinese Communist armed forces, at least during the early period of this estimate. However, we find the situation in this area so fluid that we are unable to estimate beyond this early period.

DISCUSSION

I. BASIC COMMUNIST OBJECTIVES AND BELIEFS

14. The Communist leaders now in power in the USSR, or any that are likely to succeed them, almost certainly will continue to consider their basic objective to be the consolidation and expansion of their own power, internally and externally. In pursuing this policy most Soviet leaders probably envisage ultimately: (a) the elimination of every world power center capable of competing with the USSR; (b) the spread of Communism to all parts of the world; and (c) Soviet domination over all other Communist regimes.

15. Soviet leaders probably are also committed to the following propositions concerning the expansion of the power of the USSR:

a. The struggle between the Communist and the non-Communist world is irreconcilable;

b. This struggle may go on for a long time, with periods of strategic retreat possibly intervening before the final Communist triumph;

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THE 20th CPSU CONGRESS IN RETROSPECT:
ITS PRINCIPAL ISSUES AND POSSIBLE EFFECTS
ON INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM

Pertinent Background Factors

1. The CPSU is the leading Communist Party in the world. Its ideological leadership has been acknowledged even by the Chinese Communist Party. Being in control of the Soviet state, it controls the political, military and economic power of the USSR, the stronghold of World Communism. Thus its pronouncements on doctrine, strategy, and tactics are of decisive importance to International Communism. Communist courses of action are determined primarily in Moscow; the Chinese "People's Republic", for all its potential strength, is still dependent upon Soviet guidance and assistance. The USSR remains the base of world Communism, and there is no indication that this situation is about to change. If now, at the fountain of Communist wisdom, a new course is set which appears to deviate considerably from that of the Stalin era, repercussions are likely to occur which may be of great moment for both the Communist and the non-Communist world, if not immediately, at least in the foreseeable future.

2. The reasons for the announced changes must be sought far back in the Stalin regime. Long before his death, the men around Stalin must have recognized that he paid only lip service to the doctrine of flexibility. After World War II, when the USSR had become a great power, the rigidity

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of Stalinist thought and action produced a stalemate in Europe, fear of Soviet interference in non-committed nations, and a widening gap between the Party and the Soviet people. It is probable that designs for altering the basis of the regime were pondered - and perhaps to some extent discussed - in the dictator's entourage. When it became obvious that Stalin's days were numbered, immediate plans for a reorganization of government and Party were made, and these were put into action upon his death. The successors to Stalin must have realized that the reorganization and economic incentives, initiated by Malenkov's "new course", could not, by themselves, create the desired political climate at home and abroad. Even the liquidation of Beriya and the sharp limitation of police power were not sufficient to demonstrate that Soviet Communism had embarked on a new, less violent, more gradualistic approach toward its objectives. Only an official break with the symbol of past policies, Stalin, could really impress the Soviet people and the world. The underlying purpose of the leadership was to promote political security and socio-economic incentives internally, to develop the concept of "competitive coexistence" externally, and to achieve global Communist "respectability". These objectives were defined during the three years following Stalin's death; they were confirmed and explained by the 20th CPSU Congress and made explicit through the denigration of Stalin. It is against this background that the 20th Congress must be understood.

The Main Issues of the Congress

3. The institution of Communist Party Congresses cannot be likened

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to democratic conventions. Primarily, these Congresses are used as sounding boards for the justification of past policies and the outlining of new ones. The 20th Congress served these traditional purposes, even though it differed from previous Congresses in both tone and substance. The results did not indicate that Communist fundamentals are to be sacrificed. On the contrary, the Congress emphasized that Communism is, and remains the wave of the future. But it did point out that the successes of International Communism have given the "Socialist camp" a more solid status in world politics and have thereby rendered Stalinist tactics obsolete. The revolution has not been called off, the Congress admitted; revolutionary techniques, however, are being changed. Revolution can become more gradual and respectable. In other words, the policies set forth by the 20th Congress are designed to make the anticipated eventual victory of Communism more easily acceptable and to eliminate at least the more dangerous tensions which have troubled the world throughout the cold war. To put this new approach on a firm ideological basis, some doctrinal "modifications" were announced, primarily with a view to rationalizing the type of successor regime, discarding some of the more obnoxious Stalinist principles, and advertising the so-called "return to Leninism".

4. However, a change from violence to "diplomacy" and from tension to relaxation, no matter how well explained, cannot but have a deep psychological impact on the people inside the Communist orbit and on the Communist parties outside. Even if such "mellowing" process is only superficial, it may set in motion forces extending far beyond the contemplation of the present

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collective leaders of the CPSU. These leaders must be mindful that the Bolshevik regime is a unique historic phenomenon. It has been able to maintain itself in power for almost four decades after its original objective, the victory of the Bolshevik revolution, was achieved. It has achieved this extraordinary feat by what might be called "permanent revolution from above". Tensions had to be kept high in order to prevent a peaceful post-revolutionary development. Totalitarian dictatorship had to be justified by alleging the necessity for an unending struggle against the "class enemy" within and "capitalist imperialism" without, according to Lenin's concept of the "inevitable death struggle between the socialist and capitalist camps". Stalin merely extended and exacerbated this struggle, and, since the significance of nuclear weapons apparently escaped him, he continued it without letup after World War II. Since the new Soviet-Communist platform calls for a general relaxation of tensions, the question naturally arises whether the leaders of the CPSU and other parties can dispense with permanent tension without at the same time undermining their monolithic dictatorship. The 20th Congress refrained from exhorting the people to continue the "relentless struggle against the class enemy"; the bugaboo of internal danger was, for the time being, played down. However, it maintained the theory of hostile camps, albeit in a much milder form. The Party has modified its strategy against the capitalist camp enough to tone down the "struggle against foreign enemies of socialism", thereby weakening the argument that socialist vigilance requires the continuation of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is unlikely that the shrewd managers

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of the USSR have not recognized these problems. The fact that they nonetheless decided to launch their new approach, suggests that their reasons must have been weighty indeed, and their confidence great.

Internal Aspects

5. Stalin's successors, generally speaking, have heavily emphasized inducements rather than force. There is apparently less of arbitrary police cruelty; slave labor camps are allegedly being dismantled. Labor laws have been liberalized, and - with few exceptions - economic inducements, first introduced by Malenkov, have been continued by Khrushchev though with changed emphasis. But while Malenkov, still very much under Stalin's spell, counted on the support of the governmental bureaucracy against the Party whose influence had been waning, Party leader Khrushchev re-established Party predominance and turned dictatorial power back to it. At the same time, Khrushchev sought to improve relations between the Party and the people, which in the Stalin era had seriously deteriorated. This method is likely to strengthen Party dictatorship in a time of diminishing tensions. The Soviet leaders are as unwilling now as they have ever been - and will be in the foreseeable future - to democratize their system and to permit public discussion of political problems. This was demonstrated by the lack of discussion during the 20th Congress, as well as by PRAVDA's recent warning not to extend criticism to include the Party and the system.

6. It is clear, therefore, that the "return to Leninism" does not mean the return to "Party democracy". Nor is the substitution of Party dictatorship for one-man rule necessarily an improvement from the viewpoint of US security.

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There is no reason to assume that the modified "Neo"-Leninism, now so heavily propagandized, is more than formally different from the Soviet system as we have known it. It may be recalled that the practice of "Party democracy", or "democratic centralism", was severely limited by Lenin, who warned against "fractionalization" as early as 1921, after the Kronstadt revolt. At the 10th CPSU Congress in the same year, Lenin justified his position by referring to the danger of hostile class interests using the instrument of debate for their own counter-revolutionary purposes. Nevertheless, there still occurred occasional intra-Party discussions, cautiously airing opposing views. So strong was this habit that Stalin, having succeeded Lenin, could not completely eliminate its remnants until 1928 when his position was firmly consolidated. During the remainder of Stalin's regime "party democracy" disappeared under the secret police terror. The collective leaders of the USSR now claim that they are re-instating this principle. However, the mere fact that Khrushchev has called for more frequent plenary meetings of the Central Committee is no proof that genuine "democratic centralism" has been restored. He may permit perfunctory discussions so long as they do not show any deviationist tendency. Generally, however, such meetings probably can and will be used as a means of maintaining better control of this body and of coaxing - or pressuring - it into rubberstamping the edicts of the collective leaders without resort to the overt threat of police action. In truth, the heavily advertised "return to Leninism" consists primarily of a change in methods. The leaders of the CPSU have given up the Byzantine trimmings of the Stalin "cult of personality" without relinquishing any of their powers.

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7. The return to Leninism, we are told, means the return to "collective leadership". There were, indeed, traces of this principle under Lenin, which Stalin managed to eliminate by 1928, prior to forced collectivization. Its highly vaunted renovation does not mean that power will now be distributed with checks and balances; it merely indicates a different method of using power. At best, "collective leadership" might develop into an oligarchy with quasi-"democratic" trappings. It might transform the present despotism into a form of "enlightened absolutism". Collective leadership at present is a euphemism for the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Within this Presidium, predominant power is exercised by the half-dozen active "old Bolsheviks", of whom Khrushchev seems to be primus inter pares. In contrast to Stalin, Khrushchev and his colleagues appear to be willing to listen to arguments and consult with experts. They may be demanding and receiving more objective intelligence reports. As they develop a more realistic attitude toward the facts of international life, they may be able to look beyond the narrow confines of their ideology and formulate more realistic and subtle policies to achieve their goal peacefully. The result of this change can already be seen. The Soviet leaders have recognized both the destructive consequences of war and its futility in the nuclear age. They have therefore resorted to such peaceful methods as economic competition in lieu of military pressure. They are trying to stabilize their own economy by stimulating productivity; and they have introduced measures improving the lot of their own underdogs while at the same time whittling down the incomes of the nouveaux riches .

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8. In order to carry out these policies, the break with Stalin had to be complete. The break itself was not a surprise. Surprising, only, was the violence of Khrushchev's attack against Stalin in his "secret" speech of 25 February. This action may have been designed to perform psychological surgery on the Party. But it was also conceived as a warning to the Communists throughout the world that flexibility had been restored to Soviet policy, which could now employ tactics adequate to cope with the fact that the nature of revolution had changed. The reversal of more than 25 years of Stalinist indoctrination unquestionably will force many communists throughout the world to make difficult adjustments. But such adjustments have been made before and have not impaired the continuing vigor of the International Communist movement. The Soviet leaders must have known that the 20th Congress would produce a period of confusion, particularly among the parties outside the orbit. But they probably calculated that eventually adjustments could and would be made. In any case, the interests of the USSR both as a nation and as the base of world Communism had to take precedence. We suggest that the Soviet leaders earnestly pondered these problems for many months and, having come to their conclusion, felt no hesitation to consummate the break with Stalin. If this assumption is correct, it would appear that they had not been forced to make the violent attack against Stalin on 25 February because of internal or external pressures.

External Aspects

9. It was stated above that the CPSU leaders left the "class enemy"

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within unmentioned. The same cannot be said of the "capitalist imperialists". even though the noise of sabre rattling sounded rather muffled. The Soviet leaders have continued to emphasize the differences between the socialist and imperialist camps; by implication they have retained the thesis of basic irreconcilability. Nevertheless, they did transform their once rude and vitriolic aggressiveness into a politer version of Communist verbiage, which was made more tolerable, if not actually conciliatory, by diplomatic flourishes and by some actual "concessions" such as the withdrawal from Austria. The development of nuclear weapons and jet propulsion, together with the growing belief, especially since the Summit Meeting, that the West does not now harbor aggressive designs, probably contributed decisively to Communist confidence in the future and led to the reinvigoration of what had long been known as "peaceful coexistence". Stalin had used this term in the Twenties but never gave it practical meaning. Malenkov reintroduced the concept, and Khrushchev, applying "creative interpretation", transformed it into "competitive coexistence". This new doctrine harmonizes admirably with the de-emphasis of armed power. At the same time the Soviet leaders may believe that it will stimulate the domestic Soviet economy while at the same time weakening the Western economic system. This, in turn, would stimulate the "contradictions among capitalist states fighting for world markets". Moreover, by inferring that the USSR is no longer isolated but has become the center of a world-wide system of socialist states, the Soviet and Communist leaders have admitted implicitly that at least some of the former "colonial and semi-colonial countries" have become politically independent. Their policy of creating a non-committed

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"peace bloc", of keeping it at least neutral, and perhaps winning it over to the socialist camp, may have led to revisions of their classic colonial doctrine.

10. The break with Stalin signifies that the leaders of the CPSU will no longer insist that they have a monopoly on the "correct" way to "socialism". During Stalin's lifetime the only ex-post-facto blessing of a deviation from this Soviet doctrine was that which he had reluctantly given to Mao. A Canossa trip to Belgrade would have been unthinkable. The Leninist formula that various ways can lead to Socialism - with the end of the road always the conquest by Communist revolution - was not used by Stalin. The reaffirmation of this formula by the 20th Congress has probably quelled some misgivings on the part of the less sophisticated neutrals. It is likely to create increasing demands from the satellites to follow their own path to "socialism". If Moscow denies them this right, it will have proved its insincerity before the world and may lose, thereby, much of the good will it now possesses in some non-committed countries. Nor will it, in the long run, be able to maintain the appearance of respectability, particularly vis-a-vis potential United Front partners. Much less will it be able to impress non-Communist democracies with its claim that it will attempt to gain power legally by parliamentary means, and not by violent overthrow of governments.

11. It should be restated here, and it cannot be emphasized too strongly that recognition by the Soviet leaders of the significance of nuclear weapons is the underlying cause for their policy shift. For the present, at least, atom and jet are the basic deterrents to general war, and probably also

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to local wars. Despite repeated pronouncements that a nuclear war would destroy only Capitalism, the Communists have no real ideological "guide to action" in this field; they surely must realize that the atom knows no ideological preferences. Stalin probably tried hard but in vain to come to grips with this problem since the day of Hiroshima. His successors appear to have found a temporary solution by shifting from dangerous military pressures to less dangerous economic blandishments. Nevertheless, although their policies are designed to avoid war and to let capitalism die "peacefully", there is no prohibition for Communists to divide the capitalist camp and render it harmless. Meanwhile, the "socialist" camp will continue to solicit allies among the imperialists, be they states, groups, or individuals. 20th century changes in capitalist economy are minimized or ridiculed. The Leninist view of the inevitable downfall of capitalism at its highest stage, imperialism, has remained intact. Evolutionary tendencies, which goaded Lenin into writing vitriolic pamphlets, are still outlawed in spite of United Front overtures to socialist "opportunists".

The Meaning of the Congress for International Communism

12. The basic structure of Marxist-Leninist Communism has remained untouched. There is no indication that the present Soviet leaders have renounced the goal of world domination. However, they no longer insist that this conquest can and must come to pass under exclusive Soviet leadership. Nor is there any hint that a Communist world would have to be dominated by the USSR. This means the acceptance of a gradualist approach

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to Communist objectives which not only is considered feasible in view of the strength of the Sino-Soviet bloc and the growth of the uncommitted neutralist "peace camp", but also is made necessary by the destructiveness of nuclear weapons and by the great jeopardy to Communism's continued existence in the event of war. The post-Stalinist concept of Communist victory is the achievement of "socialism" in individual countries in a manner suited to national conditions, followed by the joining of such countries in a loose community of "socialist" states. At first, these states would retain their national identities but as time goes by they would gradually merge into a World-Communist community which would rule itself according to ideologically motivated universal laws, having discarded national governments as we know them today. Apparently the Soviet leaders anticipate the completion of the first step, the end of capitalism in individual nations, by the end of the century. It is conceivable that they think in terms of a classless society emerging only in the 21st century, inasmuch as the establishment of such a society is hardly possible so long as politically inimical camps continue to exist.

13. If this view of the Soviet leaders' estimate is correct, it would follow that they can give considerably more leeway to the satellite parties. From the Soviet point of view, the military and economic integration of these countries with the USSR is sufficiently strong to permit a modicum of what Stalinists used to call "nationalist deviation". Communism in the Far East has to be adapted to conditions prevailing in that area, as was already recognized in the Soviet acceptance of Maoism. While there is, and

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probably will continue for some time to be, confusion among the Party rank and file, resulting from the break with the Stalin idol, this confusion is unlikely to provoke many defections. Outside the USSR, it will be easier to achieve socialism by the "national" road than under the Soviet yoke. Soviet control and influence will be maintained, but in a subtler manner. Resistance against Communism will thus be overcome by a process of attrition rather than revolution.

14. The confusion resulting from the break with Stalin will last longer and probably have deeper consequences in the parties outside the Communist orbit. Their doubts will be shared by leaders of international Front organizations. This period of efforts to adjust policies and methods to the new Soviet approach could be lengthened, and confusion could be widened if Western political warfare adequately exploits this unique opportunity. Nevertheless, the climate of political relaxation in non-Communist governments and the prospect of broader interpretation of the Communist objectives will enable the leaders of these parties and fronts to maneuver overtly with a minimum degree of obnoxiousness, while covertly strengthening their cadres for the tasks ahead.

15. It is suggested that the long-range result of the 20th CPSU Congress will turn out to be beneficial from the Communist point of view - provided the lack of tension does not soften the movement's hard core vanguard. The Soviet approach is realistic and ingenious. It takes into account military facts of life. It explores the increased stature of the Communist part of the world and the nationalistic sensitivities of the former "colonial

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and semi-colonial" countries. It feels strong enough to engage the US in an economic popularity contest. It tries hard, and not altogether unsuccessfully, to raise the level of Communist respectability. On the other hand, it does not hesitate to stir up trouble in areas of political vacuum, such as the Middle East, if it can thereby advance its influence to hitherto closed parts of the world. Unless it is stopped, it will do the same in Latin America and Africa. Altogether, Moscow, under Stalin, has learned its lesson. It now uses psychology, taking initiatives designed to put the West on the defense. With this strategy, and appropriate tactics, it appears hopeful of a bloodless victory over a system which, in the Communist belief, is doomed to collapse sooner or later - probably sooner.

16. The question arises whether the new Soviet-Communist line will require more of an organization than is presently at its disposal. Not enough is known about the intricacies of Communist international communications to come to definite conclusions. Overtly at least, the Soviet missions abroad avoid contact with national Party and Front leaders. Covert connections exist to provide personnel guidance, policy directives, and financial assistance. This machinery, however, is expensive, cumbersome, haphazard, and dangerous. Thus the problem may arise how to give comprehensive guidance to the apparatus in different countries whose political, social and economic developments vary. Better means of overall coordination may have to be developed. It is therefore possible that sometime in the future a new device may be put into operation which would take care of

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Communist communication in a more systematic way. This would probably not be an organization as such. Rather, it might be an international Party "conference", possibly under an "innocent" cover, and conceivably with participation of non-Communist Marxists, set up to transmit policy directives and solve operational problems. Such a "conference" would be particularly necessary if the Communist leaders came to the conclusion that the relaxation of tensions had produced a slackening of Party discipline and a deterioration of Communist resourcefulness. This possibility raises certain fundamental questions: Can Communism withstand the changes resulting from the 20th Party Congress without losing its revolutionary zeal? Is there in preparation a "mellowing process" which in time will bring about a metamorphosis of Communism? Or, is the present line merely a gigantic shift of tactics, imposed by the development of nuclear weapons and their jet-propelled delivery and made possible by both the greater strength of the Communist bloc and the emerging independence of former colonial nations?

17. We cannot but assume that the Communist leaders would reject a "mellowing" process. They will try to do all in their power to prevent it from developing. Their only concept of Communist metamorphosis is linked to the shift from socialism to Communism, i. e. from the dictatorship of the proletariat to a classless society. They are likely to seek a period of some years of relaxation during which they can extend their influence with the help of overt respectability while building up and toughening their covert organizations and, what is more important, strengthen-

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ing the overall potential of the USSR. At the same time, they might also consider the usefulness of permitting the Satellites a greater show of independence. As national states, remaining under veiled Soviet control, they would testify to Moscow's good faith. They might assist in the development of relations with Western Europe, possibly through their own liberated socialists who might be put in touch with Free World socialist parties. This would greatly advance the United Front tactic on an international scale. But all these measures would be designed only to further basic Communist objectives. Since violence has characterized Communist actions in the past, subtler methods could be mistaken, even by Party members, as an indication of "mellowing". Nothing would be farther from Soviet-Communist intentions.

18. There is, however, an outside chance that Khrushchev's newer course, deviating as it were from the irreconcilable, aggressive precepts of Lenin and Stalin, may carry the germs of revolutionary paralysis within itself. It is conceivable that a psychological transformation could vitiate the Marxist doctrine of historical materialism. Once freed from the confines of permanent tensions, mental attitudes may develop which could become stronger than Communist faith and discipline. Such a transformation would be slow, at first hardly noticeable, but it might work itself up persistently from the grass roots to the "leading circles". It is impossible to estimate how long such a process would need to become apparent, nor is it possible to foresee its ultimate outcome. Much would depend upon the character of future Soviet leadership.

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19. The premise for a successful Communist holding operation is the continuation in power of the CPSU's Presidium as presently constituted. The shrewd "old Bolsheviks" will ruthlessly (and noiselessly) suppress any evidence of "mellowing". Nor can it be expected that the middle and higher ranks of functionaries and officers have any intention of jeopardizing their position by crowding the present leaders. It is futile to speculate on the character of the regime which will succeed today's collective leaders, but it is possible that the present constellation may last 5-10 years, provided "peaceful coexistence" continues. If antibiotics of transformation have penetrated the Communist body politic, their effect, if any, probably will not show during this period. If transformation is permitted to come to the surface later, it will do so very slowly, almost unnoticeably. It may be a generation or two before tangible changes become apparent. Moreover, any major disruptive event, such as internal upheavals or local wars, would be likely to interrupt the healing process. Thus it cannot be expected that a "mellowing process" could become effective during the next decade. Nor is it overly pessimistic to predict that a healthy transformation of Communism into a movement of constructive social endeavors cannot be expected in the foreseeable future. Meanwhile we shall be compelled to continue warding off a diabolically clever opponent whose ingenuity and resourcefulness, unfortunately, is growing.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

21 December 1961

350.07

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: An Appraisal of Soviet Intentions

1. In pursuing their struggle against the West, the Soviet leaders follow a strategy which they call "peaceful coexistence." By this they declare their intention to wage a persistent and aggressive campaign by a variety of means — propaganda and political pressure, military threat, economic and scientific competition, subversion and internal war — aimed at the victory of their cause on a world scale. The new aspect in Khrushchev's formulation of Soviet foreign policy is the explicit proposition that general war is an unacceptable means of prosecuting this struggle. Unlike Stalin, he has founded Soviet policy on the belief that the "imperialists" can be forced into final submission by a steady undermining of their world position and that, during this process, Soviet military power will deter them from a resort to arms.

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2. This is but one of a series of innovations which Khrushchev has sponsored in the total range of Communist internal and foreign policies. His revisions of doctrine and practice have frequently been radical in Communist terms, and they have not gone unopposed within the Soviet party and the international movement. The XXII Congress was the scene of a great effort by Khrushchev, using the most dramatic means available to him, to make these policies binding, both at home and abroad. This effort embraced domestic, Bloc, and foreign problems, and while the main lines of the peaceful coexistence strategy have been firmly reasserted, crucial questions have been raised concerning the Soviet Party's commanding role in world communism. The cource of political controversy within the Soviet Party, and more importantly, of the mounting tensions in Soviet relations with China will obviously have a significant bearing on the conduct of Soviet relations with the non-Communist world.

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Internal Problems

3. We believe that Khrushchev has not had to fear for his position since his victory over the so-called antiparty group in 1957. Despite this victory, however, and despite the cult which subsequently developed around his own personality, he has continually met with difficulties within the party, and on two counts. In the first place, in the past year or two other high level leaders appear to have succeeded in limiting the revisions which he wished to make in economic priorities (greater benefits for the consumer) and military policy (downgrading conventional forces and traditional doctrine). In the second place, Khrushchev has found the party apparatus which he inherited a far from satisfactory instrument for carrying out his numerous reforms. The great majority of party officials were trained in the Stalinist period to execute mechanically orders from above and to regard the population as recalcitrant and untrustworthy subjects. They have tended to become bewildered, resentful, and concerned for their careers as Khrushchev demands of them that they display initiative, elicit it from others, and draw the masses into a positive identification with the regime and active support of its policies.

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4. The savage attack upon Stalin was meant, in the domestic context, to break the emotional attachment to Stalin's person and methods which still exists in the Soviet Party. It was also meant to discredit certain Stalinist dogmas, such as the proposition that heavy industry must at all times grow faster than light industry, which had become imbedded in Soviet ideology and stood in the way of Khrushchev's reforms. The concurrent blackening of the antiparty group served to dramatize the penalties of resisting Khrushchev's demands for a new style of work and to destroy any luster which the unrepentant and still argumentative Molotov retains as a "conservative" spokesman among the middle and lower reaches of the apparatus.

5. The full internal consequences of the Congress will be a long time in working themselves out. Certainly Khrushchev has succeeded in putting his stamp upon the present era and establishing a direct succession to Lenin. The present compromise formulations of economic and defense policy, however, indicate that his programs remain subject to some sort of consensus among the top leaders, who share his general outlook but cannot be equated to the terrorized yesmen around Stalin. Remaking the entire party apparatus in Khrushchev's own image will, we believe,

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continue to be a long and difficult process. And among critically-minded elements of Soviet society — the youth, the cultural intelligentsia, perhaps even younger party members — virtually the whole of Soviet history has been brought into question, and along with it the activities of present party leaders during that period. We doubt that the attack on Stalin and the cult of Khrushchev will strengthen belief in the party's claim to wisdom and the right of absolute leadership. These factors are more likely to work in the long run toward a weakening of the propositions on which party rule is based, and to complicate the problems which Khrushchev's successors must face.

Bloc Politics

6. The consequences of the Congress for Bloc relations are much more immediate and far-reaching. With his surprise attack upon the proxy target of Albania, Khrushchev made his third attempt (the Bucharest meeting in June 1960, the Moscow Conference later in the year) to repulse the Chinese Communist challenge to Soviet leadership. In doing so, he chose a time of great Chinese weakness. He also gave his attack the greatest possible force, short of an explicit challenge, by coupling it

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with the condemnation of Stalinist principles and practices in the sharpest form. He intended by this to force the Chinese to choose between submitting and being openly condemned as deviationist. Yet in the ensuing two months Peiping, while withholding an equally dramatic response, has made clear its determination to hold to its positions. It appears that a showdown of historic proportions may be imminent.

7. For Soviet policy, this is but the latest in a long series of problems arising from the Soviet leaders' inability to reconcile the contradiction between the force of nationalism and their own insistence upon Soviet hegemony over world communism. For the Sino-Soviet conflict is at bottom a clash of national interests. While each professes devotion to Communist unity, each seeks to mobilize the entire world Communist movement in the service of its own aims. The ideological element, far from providing a basis for reconciliation, imparts a special bitterness and intensity to this rivalry.

8. As the lines are now drawn, it seems unlikely that the dispute can be papered over by a compromise along the lines of last December's 81-party conference. Economic relations have

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been substantially reduced, and military cooperation, never very high, is minimal. The entire Communist world has been made aware of the deep differences between the two, and each is vigorously using all the weapons of pressure and persuasion to hold and enlarge its retinue of supporters. At the least, it appears certain that full harmony cannot be restored. Yet the question of whether the two powers, poised now on the brink of an overt break in party relations, take this final step remains an important one. So long as they do not, the way remains open for a return to tolerable cooperation and a surface appearance of unity, and the strains on other parties can be kept within manageable proportions. If they do, the resulting hostility would be more profound and probably longer lasting than that which divided the Yugoslavs from the Communist camp after 1948, and few Communist regimes or parties would escape its effects.

9. From their present behavior, it appears that both parties are able to contemplate this possibility. Each still hopes that the other will in the last analysis make the concessions necessary to avoid a final split, but neither seems prepared to retreat on the fundamental issue of the locus of authority over world

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communism. At this moment, a trial of strength is occurring in the Soviet campaign to bring down the Albanian leaders; success here would deal a major blow to Chinese pretensions and to any inclinations in other parties to escape Soviet domination. We believe that the odds are against Moscow in this campaign, but even if it succeeds, the present Chinese leadership would almost certainly return to the lists.

10. In appraising Sino-Soviet relations, we have regularly stressed the great benefits of a close alliance to the national interests of both partners and, conversely, the great losses which each would suffer from a true rupture. Yet the record of the past 18 months shows a consistent refusal, on the part of the Soviets, to limit their authority in matters of general Communist policy. Over the same period, the Chinese have persistently proven unwilling to remain content with the role which the Soviets would assign them in the movement. Barring a radical change in Chinese outlook or leadership, we now believe that the chances of a full break in party relations between the two during the next year or so have increased very substantially.

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11. Should such a break occur, the logic of ideological conflict and the history of Communist parties everywhere make it likely that the result would be an acrimonious and protracted struggle. Each side would be impelled to proclaim itself the repository of doctrinal truth and to call for the overthrow of the competing leadership. Communists everywhere would be pressed to declare themselves; purges and splits would probably occur in many parties; some, especially those in Asia, might eventually align themselves with the Chinese.

12. In these circumstances, the military alliance between the USSR and Communist China would in effect become inoperative. The Chinese probably already consider it of dubious value; they probably do not feel able any longer to count on full Soviet support in the event that they become embroiled in military hostilities with the US.

13. The Soviet and Chinese leaders may still find some way to get past the current tensions. Even if they do, we believe that the result will be an uneasy and distrustful truce, marked by cooperation at various times and places and by competition at

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others. In short, we believe that the Sino-Soviet relationship rests upon an unstable foundation, and that a breach, if it is avoided for the present, will remain in the foreground as a continuing possibility.

Foreign Policy

14. A central problem in Sino-Soviet contention has been policy toward the non-Communist world. This has involved a great deal of misrepresentation on both sides. Thus Khrushchev's allegation that the Chinese regard general war as either inevitable or desirable, while a telling argument insofar as he can make it convincing, is not true. Similarly, Chinese charges that Khrushchev's strategy of peaceful coexistence is a denial of revolutionary aims are a gross exaggeration, although the zeal with which Molotov's parallel criticisms were attacked at the Congress suggests that this indictment finds considerable resonance in the Soviet and other parties.

15. The peaceful coexistence line, far from being an abandonment of Soviet expansionist goals, is a tactical prescription considerably more effective than the compound of heavy-handedness and isolationism which was Stalin's foreign policy.

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It is informed by an appreciation of the manifold opportunities presented by all the great strains and disharmonies of the non-Communist world -- national rivalry, colonialism, the desire for economic development, the yearning for peace and disarmament. Peaceful coexistence seeks to capture these sentiments and turn them against the "imperialist" states, using all the weapons of political struggle, economic assistance, and subversion, and underlining its points with demonstrations of Soviet military, scientific, and economic prowess.

16. At the same time, this policy also embraces the proposition that general nuclear war would bring intolerable damage upon the USSR itself and should therefore be avoided. The Soviets are continuing to develop their already formidable defense establishment. But the programs presently underway do not reflect a belief that it is possible to achieve a decisive advantage over the West, one which would permit them to launch general war with assurance of success at some acceptable cost. Rather, what we know of these programs, and of Soviet strategic thinking as well, suggests that the Soviet leaders are aiming in

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the first instance at a capability large enough to deter a Western resort to general war.

17. The Soviets apparently believe that they have already in large measure achieved this end. But they recognize that the forward policies which they wish to pursue involve some element of risk, and that they may not always be able to control these risks. In building their forces, they are probably seeking an offensive nuclear capability large enough, not only to deter their opponent, but also to bring under attack those elements of Western striking power and national strength which can be effectively attacked by ICBMs and other long-range delivery systems. On the defensive side, in addition to improving their defenses against manned bombers and cruise-type missiles, they are exerting major efforts to develop and deploy an effective anti-ballistic missile system. At the same time, they also intend to retain large and modernized ground and naval forces. In all these programs, the Soviets will be seeking a combination of forces which would permit them to undertake a pre-emptive attack on the US, should they conclude that a US attack was imminent, and to prosecute general war effectively if deterrence should fail.

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18. The Soviet leaders are alert to search out areas where their military power can be brought into play to shield Communist efforts to advance by safer means, such as internal war in Southeast Asia or political blackmail in Berlin. We believe, however, that the USSR will wish to avoid involvement of its own forces in limited combat on the Bloc periphery and, if such conflict should occur, to minimize the chances of escalation to general war. Consequently, it would not in most circumstances take the initiative to expand the scope of such a conflict. The degree of Soviet commitment and the actual circumstances of the conflict would of course determine this decision. But we believe that, in general, the Soviet leaders would expand the scope of the conflict, even at greater risk of escalating to general war, only if a prospective defeat would, in their view, have grave political repercussions within the Bloc itself or constitute a major setback to the Soviet world position.

19. Within the limits set by these appraisals, the Soviet leaders have purposefully displayed both militancy and conciliation, at various times and in various proportions as seemed most profitable to them. Over the past year or so, however, the

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pressure of the Chinese challenge has been one factor helping to keep the "hard" line in the foreground. The thrust of the XXII Congress in this respect was to reassert the USSR's insistence upon full tactical flexibility. Thus the USSR has not only continued its attacks on Chinese positions but has made some conciliatory moves, such as removal of the Berlin deadline, agreement on a disarmament forum, and publication of Adzhubey's interview with the President.

20. These measures have accompanied, not replaced, the harsher tactics which comprise the militant side of peaceful coexistence. At the same time Finland has been bullied; atomic tests have been resumed; Soviet military strength has been stressed; the Soviet position on Berlin remains highly demanding. The Congress attacks on the opponents of peaceful coexistence were meant only to make room for a full range of maneuver, not to seek a genuine accommodation with the West.

21. Currently, however, Soviet foreign policy is by no means completely freed of the pressures for more militancy which stem from the Chinese challenge. Should an open break occur, Moscow's initial reaction would probably be to emphasize "hard"

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tactics in order to justify tighter controls in Eastern Europe and to demonstrate that it was as vigorously anti-imperialist as its Chinese competitor. Over the long run, the consequences might be quite different; a protracted break might give important support to that tendency in Soviet foreign policy which seeks to put relations with the West on a more stable footing. It is conceivable that, faced with an actively hostile China whose strength was growing, the USSR might in time come to accept, at least tacitly, some mutual delimitation of aims with the West and thus some curb upon its expansionist impulse.

22. For the present, nevertheless, we conclude that the XXII Congress has initiated no marked departures in the foreign policies which have emerged under Khrushchev's leadership of the last five years. On Berlin, the USSR is presently in an interim phase, marking time in order to determine whether its earlier pressures will bring the West to the negotiating table with at least some concessions, or whether another round of threats, and perhaps even unilateral action, is required. Even a Sino-Soviet rupture would not be likely to alter the basic Soviet

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position on Berlin and Germany, since a major element in that position is the desire to stabilize the Soviet-controlled regime in East Germany and, by extension, those of Eastern Europe.

23. In the disarmament field, we perceive in recent Soviet moves no appreciable desire for agreements on terms which the West could regard as acceptable. Instead, the USSR continues to regard this as an arena for political struggle and, via maneuverings over parity and the composition of a forum, for enhancing Soviet stature and cultivating neutralist opinion. In addition to the theme of general and complete disarmament, the Soviets will probably also agitate such limited measures as regional schemes, agreements to limit the spread of nuclear weapons, and other proposals which might inhibit Western defense programs.

24. Sino-Soviet strains raise considerable uncertainties regarding prospective Soviet tactics in Southeast Asia. The USSR will probably continue to press cautiously its advantages in Laos and South Vietnam, seeking simultaneously to advance Communist prospects there, to avoid a major US intervention, and

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to keep Chinese influence from becoming predominant. A further radical worsening of relations between Moscow and Peiping, however, could lead to a breakdown of Bloc cooperation in these ventures. In this event, Moscow would probably try to retain as much control as possible through the North Vietnamese regime, which, at least initially, would seek to preserve the Soviet connection as a counterweight to China.

25. In recent years the USSR has consistently looked upon the underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America as the prime targets for its tactics of peaceful coexistence. Beginning in about 1960, however, Soviet pronouncements have betrayed a sense of disappointment at the failure of some of the "older" neutrals, such as Nehru and Nasser, to move from the achievement of independence into a full association with Soviet policies and thence along the path toward Communist control. Nevertheless, the Soviet appraisal of its prospects in these areas remains highly optimistic. The USSR continues to believe that, by harnessing anti-Western and anticolonial sentiment, extending judicious offers of military and economic assistance, and sponsoring the political ambitions of new governments, it can make important gains in weakening Western positions and

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preparing the ground for further advances. The Soviets will not abandon those states which they have unsuccessfully sought to draw into a client relationship. But they will probably increasingly focus their main energies upon Africa and Latin America and, within these continents, upon the radical nationalist leaders who are most easily set against Western ties. Soviet activity in these areas will continue to conflict with, and normally to take priority over, any desire to adopt a conciliatory line toward the major Western powers.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

Sherman Kent

SHERMAN KENT
Chairman

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BASIC FACTORS AND MAIN TENDENCIES IN CURRENT SOVIET POLICY

NOTE

This paper considers in broad perspective the principal factors which underlie the USSR's external policies at present and its aims and intentions with respect to certain key areas and issues. As such, while it suggests the limits within which Soviet policies are likely to operate, it does not estimate likely Soviet conduct and positions in detail. In view of the intimate interaction between Soviet and American policies, this could not be done in any case without specific assumptions about American policy and actions.

PRINCIPAL OBSERVATIONS

A. Ideology in the Soviet Union is in a certain sense dead, yet it still plays a vital role. This paradox explains much about the nature of Soviet society and the USSR as a world power today. While the regime's doctrines now inhibit rather than promote needed change in the system, the leaders continue to guard them as an essential support to their rule. They also view developments at home and abroad mainly within the conceptual framework of the traditional ideology. This fact will continue to limit the possibilities of Soviet-American dialogue.

B. Changes in the system and the society have probably made collective leadership of the Party Politburo less vulnerable to new attempts to establish a personal dictatorship. This seems particularly true so long as the men who now comprise the leadership remain. Nevertheless, a crisis within the present leadership, accompanied by high domestic tensions and greater unpredictability of external policy, could occur at any time without warning. If stability of the leadership continues, a relatively deliberate, bureaucratically compromised manner of decisionmaking will also continue.

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C. The Soviet leaders face severe problems at home. A decline in the rate of economic growth is tightening the perennial squeeze on resource allocation. Dissidence and alienation in the professional classes is of growing concern to the Soviet leaders. Generally speaking, however, they are not at this time constrained by domestic problems from continuing the general line of foreign policy they have followed in recent years.

D. The leadership believes that the USSR's net power position in the world, as affected by both military and political factors, has improved in the years since the Cuban missile crisis. But this is qualified by instability in its main security sphere in Eastern Europe and by increased strains in the Soviet economy and society. This appraisal by the Soviet leaders probably argues for continuing an external policy of cautious opportunism and limited pressures, perhaps with some increased watchfulness against the development of uncontrolled risks.

E. There is a tendency in Soviet foreign policy to give increased weight to geopolitical considerations as against the traditional conception Moscow has had of itself as the directing center of a world revolutionary movement. This is evident in the concentration of diplomatic and aid efforts in recent years on countries around the southern periphery of particular strategic interest to the USSR. It is seen also in the guidance given to most Communist parties to pursue moderate tactics, which are now more compatible with Soviet foreign policy interests.

F. Soviet aims to bring about a European settlement which would secure the USSR's hegemony in Eastern Europe, obtain the withdrawal of US forces, and isolate West Germany have suffered a severe setback because of the action taken to suppress Czechoslovakia's attempt to follow an independent course. For the present, the Soviets are unlikely to be responsive to any new Western initiatives to promote a European settlement, unless the West seems willing to contemplate recognition of the Soviet sphere in Eastern Europe and of the division of Germany.

G. The Soviets have a double concern in the Middle East at present: to keep their risks under control and to do this in such a manner as to avoid diminishing the influence they have won with the Arab

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States. Should renewed hostilities occur, the USSR might be drawn into assisting the defense of the Arabs, but it would not want to run the political and military risks of joining in attacks on Israel or actually threatening its survival. At that stage, the Soviets would probably collaborate tacitly with the US to control the situation.

H. Beginning as an attempt to move into the vacuum left by the end of Western colonialism, Soviet policy in Asia in recent years has been geared increasingly to the containment of China. Nevertheless, the Soviets still act in particular situations, including Vietnam, basically on the premise that the Soviet-American relationship in Asia is competitive. The major risks which may eventually arise from the growth of Chinese power, however, may persuade them to move toward some tacit collaboration.

I. Though the inducements to reach a strategic arms limitation agreement with the US are probably stronger at this time than ever before, Moscow's policy-bureaucratic argument over this issue is not resolved. The Soviets probably hope that talks themselves, even if no agreement is reached, will ease the pressures of the arms race by slowing US decisions on new programs.

J. Even though the Soviet system appears ripe for change because it is now poorly suited to managing a complex industrial society, its rulers remain tenacious in defending their monopoly of power and acutely fearful of adaptive change. The wider involvement of the USSR in world affairs and possible shifts in world power relations may eventually generate stronger pressures for change. Short of this, the outlook is for chronic tensions in Soviet-American relations, perhaps caused more frequently by events over which neither side has much control.

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SOVIET FOREIGN POLICIES AND THE OUTLOOK FOR SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY

The USSR's View of Its World Position

A. Developments of recent years have given the USSR increased confidence in its security and strategic posture, in its capacity to engage its adversaries on favorable terms, and in the prospects for the long-term growth of its international influence. The Soviets have thus begun to pursue a more vigorous foreign policy and to accept deeper involvement in many world areas.

B. The attainment of rough parity in strategic weapons with the US has contributed more than anything else to the USSR's self-confidence. The Soviets have also been encouraged to see the US suffering a loss of influence in certain areas, facing economic difficulties at home and abroad, and coming under domestic pressure to curtail its world role. Largely on the basis of these considerations, Moscow believes that the US no longer enjoys a clear international predominance. It does not appear to have concluded, however, that US power has begun a precipitate or permanent decline; US economic, military, and technological capabilities continue to impress the Soviets. Thus, while they may be tempted to conclude that the US will no longer be the competitor it once was and may therefore be inclined as opportunities

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occur to use their greater strength and flexibility more venturesomely, they can still see themselves getting into serious difficulties with the US if they press too hard.

C. The China problem is another factor which limits Soviet confidence. It has become increasingly clear to the Russians that China is capable of seriously undermining their international positions, keeping them off balance ideologically, and in the longer term, constituting a serious strategic threat. It unquestionably concerns the Soviets that China's ability to challenge them in all these ways would be all the greater in circumstances of Sino-American rapprochement.

Domestic Political and Economic Factors

D. The present Soviet leadership has been notable for its stability, and this has resulted in continuity in the decision-making process during most of the seven years since Khrushchev's overthrow. Brezhnev has clearly emerged as the principal figure in the regime and has been taking a vigorous lead in the area of foreign policy; he now has a personal stake in the USSR's current policy of selective détente. Decision-making, however, remains a collective process. Indeed, there are occasional signs of stress over the content and implementation of foreign policy. And maintaining a consensus behind a more active Soviet foreign policy, in circumstances of greater international complexity, may become increasingly difficult over time.

E. The USSR has been able to achieve rates of economic growth which are high by international standards and to maintain a military effort roughly equal to that of the US. But the Soviet economy is still backward in some sectors and it faces serious problems stemming from low productivity, the declining effectiveness of investment, and technological lag. Economic constraints do not *oblige* the Soviets to reduce military spending, however. While an agreement on strategic arms control would relieve somewhat the heavy demands which military programs impose on high quality human and material resources, agreements of the sort now contemplated would not enable the Soviets to increase the rate of economic growth appreciably.

The Strategic Weapons Relationship with the United States

F. We believe that the USSR has concluded that the attainment of clear superiority in strategic weapons—i.e., a superiority so evident

that the Soviets could be assured of success in a confrontation and even "win" should they press the issue to nuclear war, say, by a first strike—is not now feasible. Nevertheless, there are no doubt those in Moscow who believe that it may still be possible to obtain a meaningful margin of advantage in strategic weapons which would give the USSR increased political-psychological leverage. The Soviet leaders must, at the same time, reckon with the possibility that any attempt to gain such an advantage would look to the US much the same as an attempt to move toward clear superiority and would produce the same counteraction. The course they have chosen, at least for the immediate future, is to attempt to stabilize some aspects of the strategic relationship with the US through negotiations, and they appear to believe that a formal antiballistic missile agreement and an interim freeze on some strategic offensive systems, on terms they can accept, are within reach.[1]

G. Assuming such an agreement is reached, the Soviets would continue serious negotiations on more comprehensive limitations. But the Soviet leaders are probably not clear in their own minds as to where these negotiations should lead. They may fear that too comprehensive an agreement might involve disadvantages they could not anticipate or foreclose developments which might eventually improve their relative position. And the more complex the agreement being considered, the greater the difficulties the Soviet leaders would face in working out a bureaucratic consensus. Thus, their approach to further negotiations would almost insure that these would be protracted.

The Sino-Soviet Conflict

H. The Soviets understand that their difficulties with China are in many ways more urgent and more intractable than their difficulties with the US and that, as Chinese military power grows, the conflict may become more dangerous. Moscow no doubt expects that the approach to normalization in US-Chinese relations will strengthen Peking's international position and will make China even more un-

[1] For separate statements of the views of Lt. Gen. Jammie M. Philpott, Acting Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; Vice Adm. Noel Gayler, Director, National Security Agency; Rear Adm. Earl F. Rectanus, Director of Naval Intelligence, Department of the Navy; and Maj. Gen. George J. Keegan, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF, see their footnotes to paragraph 28, page 16.

willing than before to consider concessions to the USSR. It has also occurred to the Soviets that the US may gain some increased freedom of maneuver against them and that Washington and Peking will in some situations follow parallel policies to Moscow's detriment. The new US-Chinese relationship could, in addition, make a military solution to the Sino-Soviet conflict seem to the Soviets an even less attractive alternative than before.

I. Sino-Soviet relations will not necessarily remain as bad as they are now. At some point, the two sides might arrive at a *modus vivendi* which would permit them to "coexist" more or less normally. But to obtain any deep and lasting accommodation the Russians would have to pay a price they would consider unacceptably high, including a lifting of military pressures, some territorial concessions, disavowal of Moscow's pretensions as the paramount authority among Communists, and acknowledgement of a Chinese sphere of influence in Asia.

J. The Russians are likely to want to establish a wider role in Asia in the next few years. Consolidation of the Soviet position in South Asia, with the focus on India, will be one feature of this effort. The Russians will also continue to work to prevent an increase in Chinese influence in North Korea and North Vietnam. In the case of the latter, this will mean that Moscow will remain staunch in its support of Hanoi's effort to obtain a favorable settlement of the Vietnam war. The Soviets will, as a further objective of their policy in Asia, try to increase their influence in Japan, and an improvement in relations has already begun. Soviet prospects in this regard are, however, probably limited by Tokyo's greater concern for its relations with the US and China.

Soviet Policy in Eastern and Western Europe

K. Although Moscow has made progress in restoring order in Eastern Europe, it has not come to grips with the root causes which have in recent years produced unrest or even defiance of Soviet authority there—in Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Poland. Many East European leaders still hope for greater national autonomy and wider political and economic intercourse with the West. The USSR's task of reconciling its efforts to consolidate its hegemony in Eastern Europe

with an active policy of détente in Western Europe can therefore only be complicated and delicate. If it came to a choice between erosion of their position in Eastern Europe and détente in Europe as a whole, the Soviets would choose to let the latter suffer.

L. The USSR's security concerns in Eastern Europe, its own economic weaknesses, and growing preoccupation with the Chinese have turned it away from a policy of crisis and confrontation in Europe. At the same time, the changing pattern of US-West European relationships and trends within Western Europe itself have evidently convinced Moscow that its long-standing European aims—including a reduction of the US role and influence there—have become more realizable than ever before. A conference on European security represents for Moscow one way of encouraging the favorable trends in Western Europe and slowing the adverse ones. The Soviets also hope that a conference would open the way to a definitive and formal acknowledgement of the status quo in Germany and Eastern Europe. Rejection of the West German-Soviet treaty by the West German Bundestag would deal a setback to Soviet confidence in the viability of its German policy and possibly of its wider European policy. We believe, however, that in these circumstances Moscow's inclination would still be, perhaps after an interval of threatening talk, to try to salvage as much as possible of these policies rather than to reverse course completely.

M. The USSR's position on force reductions in Europe appears to stem mainly from its overall European tactics rather than from economic pressures or from military requirements related to the Sino-Soviet border. Moscow has doubts about the desirability of reducing its forces because of its concerns about Eastern Europe and about its military position vis-à-vis NATO. We believe, nevertheless, that Moscow is coming to accept that, assuming continuation of present trends in East-West relations in Europe, it could safely withdraw some of its forces from Eastern Europe, particularly from the large contingent in East Germany. This does not mean the Soviets have decided on any reduction or soon will. But, if they should decide to move beyond their present position, they will presumably see advantage in thoroughly exploring the possibilities of a negotiated agreement rather than acting unilaterally. On the other hand, if they should

conclude that such negotiations are unpromising, they might make limited withdrawals on their own, mainly because they would judge that this would lead to more significant US withdrawals.

The USSR's Position in the Middle East

N. In order to protect their close political and military ties with Egypt, the Soviets have been willing to increase their direct involvement and to accept larger risks in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict. A full-scale renewal of the Arab-Israeli war would, however, be unwelcome to the Russians and the present situation causes them some anxiety. There is thus some chance that Moscow will come to see the desirability of urging the Arabs to accept a limited, interim agreement which would diminish the dangers of renewed hostilities, while still allowing the Soviets to enjoy the fruits of continued Arab-Israeli animosity. The Soviets are, however, unlikely to be amenable to an explicit understanding with the US limiting the flow of arms to the Middle East, though they might see advantage in some tacit restraints.

O. The Russians are probably generally optimistic about their long-term prospects in the Middle East, believing that radical, anti-Western forces there will assure them a continuing role of influence and eventually an even larger one. But the Soviets are uncomfortable because their present position is tied so closely to the exigencies of the Arab-Israeli conflict. They have also seen that radical nationalism can occasionally take a violently anti-Russian turn and with increasing involvement they will probably encounter greater difficulty in following a coherent and even-handed policy among the diverse and quarrelsome states of the area. In order to put their position in the Middle East on a firmer foundation for the future, they are likely to try both to forge stronger political ties with the "progressive" Arab parties and to develop their diplomatic relations with the moderate Arab states.

The Third World

P. The USSR's policies in the Third World are greatly affected by its urge to claim a wider world role for itself and by the need to protect its revolutionary credentials, especially against the Chinese challenge. In addition to its strong position in the Middle East, the USSR

has over the years won for itself a pivotal role in South Asia. It has also gained wider influence in Latin America. In Africa, the Soviet record is considerably more mixed and Soviet activities there now have a relatively low priority. In the Third World as a whole, partly because of some serious setbacks in the past, the Soviets are now inclined to view their prospects somewhat more soberly than they once did. Their approach is in general characterized by opportunism and a regard for regional differentiation. Nevertheless, by virtue of its acquisition in recent years of a greater capability to use its military forces in distant areas—a capability which is likely to continue to grow—Moscow may now believe its options in the Third World are expanding.

Future Soviet-American Relations

Q. The USSR has compelling reasons for wanting to keep its relations with the US in reasonably good repair, if only in order to control the risks arising from the rivalry and tensions which Moscow assumes will continue. It realizes that the larger world role it seeks is unrealizable except at the expense of the US. Whether the USSR will in particular circumstances lean toward sharper competition or broader cooperation with the US will naturally depend on the interaction of many variables. Crucial among these will be Moscow's appraisal of US intentions and its assessment of developments in the triangular relationship involving the US, China, and itself.

R. Progress in talks on strategic arms limitations might, by buttressing the USSR's sense of security, help to wear away some of its suspicion of US intentions. But problems in other areas where the political interests of the two countries are deeply engaged may prove to be of a more intractable sort. The conflict of interests in the Middle East seems likely to be prolonged. This may be true also in Europe where the Russians have an interest in the kinds of agreements which contribute to the security of the Soviet sphere but not in a genuine European settlement.

S. Whether the future will bring a more meaningful modification of the Soviet international outlook seems likely to depend ultimately on the USSR's internal evolution. And here the crucial question may be how the Soviet leaders deal with the problem of adaptive change in

Soviet society, including the problem of economic modernization: by minimal measures or by serious reform. The entrenched bureaucratic oligarchy now in charge is resistant to change. Among the younger men in the Politburo who now seem most likely to take over from the aging top leadership there may be some who harbor reformist views. But such tendencies, if they exist, are not now in evidence.

T. Thus, for the foreseeable future at any rate, Soviet policy, for reasons deeply rooted in the ideology of the regime and the world power ambitions of its leaders, will remain antagonistic to the West, and especially to the US. The gains the Soviets have made in relative military power, together with the heightened confidence these gains have inspired, will lead them to press their challenge to Western interests with increasing vigor and may in some situations lead them to assume greater risks than they have previously. At the same time, their policies will remain flexible, since they realize that in some areas their aims may be better advanced by policies of détente than by policies of pressure. They will remain conscious of the great and sometimes uncontrollable risks which their global aims could generate unless their policies are modulated by a certain prudence in particular situations.

12.

CHANGING SOVIET PERCEPTIONS

~~SECRET~~

SYNOPSIS

A new note of Soviet self-confidence in international affairs, seen in Moscow as validating the concept of a progressive historical march, is emerging in the 1970s. Other major powers are not viewed as having changed their basically hostile attitudes toward the USSR, but the Soviets feel greater assurance about their capacity to deal with them and less exaggerated concern for their effects on Soviet security. Since insecurity has been a major factor motivating Soviet policies in the past it is not surprising that new directions in Soviet foreign policy have accompanied the new psychological mood. Moscow perceives a new need today for normalized relations with major states, especially the US, and has learned from experience that working within the existing international system is more likely to serve Soviet interests than frontal challenges to other great powers or to the system itself. Largely for this reason the Soviet leaders have developed an increased stake in international stability and have come to accept the prospect of an indefinite period of coexistence with the West.

Moscow still expects and seeks international change. But the USSR cannot, in a period of detente, be the direct agent for much of the change its leaders still hope will occur. And while a residual belief in the eventual attainment of ultimate Soviet aims in the basic world struggle still exists in the USSR, the Soviets have increasingly adjusted their sights, conceptually and operationally, to short-run and intermediate-range goals. Achievement of even these, the Soviets realize, depends on success in working with forces that often act independently of Soviet sway and in overcoming simultaneous countervailing trends.

Sources of Soviet Perceptions

Soviet ideology supplies the basic conceptual framework used by Soviet observers in analyzing international affairs. The interpretation of world events this ideology provides is dynamic: it posits a fundamental struggle on a global scale, presupposes constant change, and gives impetus to an activist foreign policy. Yet while Marxism-Leninism attunes Soviet observers to the key role that events *within* states play in affecting international behavior, it explains little beyond the general and abstract about relations *among* states. And although the Soviet outlook could be called utopian in terms of its stated goals, most Soviet leaders from 1917 onwards have consciously stressed realism and

caution in practical policy matters and warned of the dangers of adventurism in the long-term international competition between the emerging new order and the declining old. In this regard, Brezhnev follows the examples of Lenin and Stalin rather than Khrushchev.

The wider Soviet involvement in recent years in world affairs and a belief that internal progress, especially toward economic goals, is increasingly dependent on international relationships have led Soviet leaders to seek a more accurate picture of the world. They have tried to enhance the capabilities of their channels of information about foreign events and, of particular note, to obtain more and better analysis of that information. A larger role has been assigned to the academic institutes in Moscow, especially the Institute of US and Canadian Studies and the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations, which are involved in providing policy-makers with estimative judgments about international affairs.

How deeply rooted the newer Soviet perceptions have become cannot be told with certainty. The current leaders lived through the Stalin era, with its articulate and heavily propagandized set of ideas stressing the hostility of the international environment, Soviet insecurity, and the necessity of avoiding foreign contact. This era has left deep and widespread Soviet doubts about the wisdom and orthodoxy of enmeshing the USSR in dealings with the capitalist powers and making compromises with the West. Yet despite the persisting influence of ingrained views, perceptions do not remain static. Doctrinally pure positions are possible only when events are viewed at a distance. Involvement with events requires that dogma make room for pragmatism, lest unrealism drive the Soviet state into an isolationist position. The post-Stalin generation of Soviet leaders has already changed its outlook in significant ways because of international experience, the influence of personal and institutional roles and interests, and newly perceived needs. A new generation of post-Brezhnev leaders could also develop new perceptions of international problems and new ideas of what Soviet national interests require in terms of international behavior.

The New International Situation

The measuring standard and key determinant of the USSR's progress in the worldwide political struggle postulated by the Soviets is the international "correlation of forces." In weighing the strengths of the two sides, the Soviets attach great importance to the power of the principal states, especially their economic and military capabilities and potential. But less tangible social and political factors are also

considered to be important, hence the continual Soviet assessing of US domestic cohesion and willpower.

In the Soviet view the world since 1917 has been in gradual transition from a purely capitalist system to a socialist one, the most dramatic single advance being the Sovietization of East Europe after World War II. But the 1970s, the Soviets argue, have brought a further significant, even radical favorable change in the international balance. Some Soviet commentary seems to imply a tipping of the balance past a notional midway point, as though "socialism" now possessed more than half of a world power pie. The factor mainly responsible for the new correlation of forces, in Moscow's view, is Soviet strategic nuclear strength, built up over the last ten years to a level roughly equivalent to that of the US. Also contributing to Soviet optimism is the combination of economic, social, and political problems currently plaguing the West, which Moscow views as unprecedented. In Soviet eyes these problems have made the present phase of capitalism's "general crisis" unusually deep and persistent and have thrown the West into its most serious disarray since World War II.

The Soviets are unsure about what developments will flow from this "crisis," however, and realize that any relative advantages they now enjoy rest on an uncertain foundation. More pronounced leftward trends in West European politics (especially Communist participation in coalition governments in France and Italy) seem likely to them, but they also see in the present-day Western condition the seeds of possible civil wars and the specter of revived fascism. The Soviets apparently believe that capitalism cannot escape suffering permanent disabilities as a conseqence of its problems and that it is already in a qualitatively new stage of its decline. But at the same time they have respect for the capacity of the capitalist system to devise effective methods for coping with even such serious problems as the oil issue and to bounce back because of the overall size and resiliency of the Western economic system.

The Soviets have also had difficulties in determining the meaning of the Western disarray for their own foreign policy. Some Party elements reportedly feel that not enough is being done to take advantage of the new international situation, and West European Communist parties are receiving conflicting signals from Moscow on just how best to improve their individual political positions. So far, however, in line with the Soviet propensity in the 1970s increasingly to dissociate the world revolutionary struggle from the ordinary conduct of interstate relations and place emphasis on the latter, the most authoritative Soviet expositions of the Western "crisis" have been more

in the nature of efforts to steer the detente policy over the shoals of this unanticipated situation than justifications for revising course.

In no case has this been more clearly true than for Soviet relations with the US, which remain the key factor affecting the overall Soviet international role. In the 1970s the US moved toward detente with the USSR and accommodated itself to the growth of Soviet strategic forces and a Soviet role in resolving major world problems. Whether this "realistic" US attitude will be sustained is the chief question for Soviet policy-makers. The Soviets believe that the US altered its foreign outlook in the early 1970s largely for pragmatic reasons: the old policy was simply becoming less effective and too expensive. But the new US policy, the Soviets believe, rests on an unconsolidated domestic base; the consensus supporting earlier US policies has broken down, but no agreement has yet been reached on what should take its place. The Soviet reading of the situation in the US throughout the 1975 "pause" in detente has been that the pro-detente forces are still more powerful than their enemies, but that the latter remain strong, still tapping a reservoir of anti-Soviet feelings not yet completely dissipated from the Cold War.

The newfound Soviet confidence is not free from counterbalancing factors, and Moscow does not see the shifts in the international "correlation of forces" wholly one-sidedly. For one thing, the favorable changes that have occurred in the 1970s are not irrevocable. In this critical regard they differ from postwar Soviet gains in East Europe, which are judged to be "irreversible." Even the lengthy and expensive Soviet nuclear missile buildup does not guarantee future strategic stability or even parity.

Moscow is also clearly aware of the storm clouds on its international horizon. Chief among them is China, whose "loss" greatly damaged the USSR's image as the nucleus of an ever-increasing international political movement and whose deep-seated hostility threatens to outlive Mao. But Europe too, the recent collective security agreement notwithstanding, contains a self-assured West Germany and has shown little susceptibility to increases in Soviet influence despite spells of political turmoil and lessened fears of the Soviet military threat. The emergence of several secondary power centers in the world is welcomed by Moscow as representing a decline in US authority among its chief partners, but the Soviets are uneasy about what direction these newly independent political forces will take. While the Soviet perception of the world as enemy is changing, it has not been replaced by one of the world as oyster, ripe with opportunities to be exploited.

The Soviet International Role

Soviet policy today is informed by a sense of "having arrived" internationally. By successfully weathering critical trials over the years, the Soviets believe that the USSR has demonstrated a capacity to sustain itself and grow in a dangerous and unpredictable international environment. There is also considerable national pride connected with the Soviet international role that is important to a people whose sense of inferiority *vis-à-vis* other great powers and cultures has been great and to a regime in need of evidence of its own competence and legitimacy. The Soviets feel that their international prestige is more solidly based today than was the case under Khrushchev, whose incautious political moves aroused rather than impressed adversaries and bought little influence in other countries. A stronger and more secure USSR does not guarantee success in all foreign undertakings, *but it does mean a more active and influential Soviet international* presence.

Current Soviet perceptions of world affairs, however, imply a degree of instability for Soviet policy. Although political changes such as those in southern Europe, from Turkey to Portugal, tempt Moscow to see and act on opportunities for Soviet advantage, the Soviet leaders are aware that greater militancy would damage their relations with the West without assuring any expansion of Soviet influence. While the Soviets are prepared to intervene abroad in areas and on occasions when they think the political and military risks are justified—as seems to be the case in Angola—they must continuously reassess the costs involved. In the rest of the 1970s and beyond the USSR may find itself even more subject to the strains inherent in its contradictory international roles: how effectively can it continue to represent itself as revolutionary, progressive, and the patron of the have-nots of this world while seeking expanded friendship with the US, recognition as a rich and advanced country, and stability in certain regimes and regions? There will probably continue to be a strong Soviet attitude in favor of keeping relations with the US and other major powers on a reasonably even keel, despite inevitable ups and downs. But mutuality of interest and viewpoint between East and West has long been anathema in the USSR, and reaching genuine compromises with the West will never be an easy or a natural process for Soviet leaders.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Impact of a Polish Pope on the USSR

Key Judgement

The elevation of the Archbishop of Poland's former royal capital and ancient cultural center--Krakow--to the Papacy will undoubtedly prove extremely worrisome to Moscow, if only because of the responsiveness his papacy is likely to evoke in East European communist societies. The selection of a Polish Pope, which reflects the uniquely vital Polish church, will make even more difficult Moscow's traditional attempts to bind culturally Western Poland more closely to the East, to integrate the Poles more closely into a Soviet-dominated bilateral and multilateral system of alliances, and to foster greater social and political discipline in Poland by consolidating the power of the Polish communist party. Because of the impact of John Paul II, particularly his impact on Polish nationalism, the Soviets will now find it even more difficult to check and to counter Poland's instinctive, cultural, and political gravitation to the West.

When the USSR faces its so-called empire in East Europe, it confronts a seriously unstable area where problems of nationalism have caused major rifts with the Soviet Union (Yugoslavia in 1948 and Albania in 1961), significant policy deviations with the Romanians, and differences among Warsaw Pact states over such disputed areas as Macedonia, Bessarabia, and Transylvania. The Soviets have never been able to cope successfully with the legacy of Polish nationalism, particularly Polish opposition to foreign occupiers and alien political systems. The origin of the state itself is linked to the

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papacy when--more than a millenium ago--the king of Poland converted to Roman Catholicism and turned his back on Kievan Rus. The election of Cardinal Wojtyla as Pope will give a tremendous boost to this formidable national pride and thereby make it more difficult for the regime to ignore the church's wishes.

A Polish pope will in particular have a long-term impact on a variety of internal issues between church and state that will ultimately demand Moscow's attention. Polish Catholics have been treated as second-class citizens by the party and have always looked to the church as a political alternative. Now the church can be expected to stiffen its position on such issues as establishing the legal status of the Roman Catholic church, permitting greater access to the media for church officials and religous services, and allowing an uncensored church press. The Pope's support for human rights issues as well as the emphasis by the Polish Catholic church on the country's cultural heritage could increase problems for Edward Gierek as well as the potential for mass discontent. Gierek's reaction to these problems will be watched closely in every Warsaw Pact cpaital, but none so closely as Moscow.

The elevation of the Cardinal to the papacy also marks an irreversible setback for Moscow's efforts since the end of WWII to weaken the various connections between the East European branches of the Catholic Church and Rome, and to create in their place docile national churches. A Polish pope not only buttresses the position of the Polish church as an alternate source of power but lends verisimilitude to the Polish view that only the church genuinely represents Polish national interests. Soviet actions in the past have already implicitly acknowledged that the neutrality of the church is essential to rule Poland, and Soviet leaders presumably must realize that the bargaining position of the church on a variety of issues has now been enhanced. The inability of the Poles to collectivize agriculture, for example, is in part a reflection of the power of the church's support for an independent peasantry.

The Soviets have in recent years been well aware of the need for caution imposed on their dealings with Warsaw due to Poland's intractable domestic economic and foreign trade problems and to the fact that Poland has a higher level of social tension than that of any other East European country. In fact, Moscow's careful response to the worker riots in Poland in 1970 and 1976 revealed that its ultimate concern was to ensure that political stability reigned in Poland. As long as Poland's nationalistic feelings do not give vent to overtly anti-Soviet actions, Moscow is likely to continue

to show caution in response to any disruptive effects of Poland's societal and intellectual tensions. If this occurs, Gierek will probably have increased bargaining leverage in getting Soviet cooperation in responding to issues between the party and the church.

Both the Church and the Kremlin, moreover, presumably share the popular Polish view that there is no viable alternative to what have thus far been Gierek's cautious tactics in handling Poland's domestic and social problems. In 1976, for example, the Soviets supported his careful response to the riots against the regime; last year, the church supported his efforts to maintain social peace in the country. In the near term, therefore, there should be no crisis in Soviet-Polish relations as a result of Wojtyla's elevation to the papacy.

Over the long run, however, the election of a Polish pope will contribute to an increase in nationalism in East Europe and will raise the consciousness of Orthodox churches and churchmen in the area. East European perceptions of Moscow's handling of any domestic crisis that results will be significant. Intellectual dissent in Poland and Czechoslovakia is already increasing and dissident groups will press the outer limits of permitted expression if the Soviets are perceived as too conciliatory. Hungary's quiet and careful experimentation in economic reform would also be enhanced by any signs of Soviet willingness to allow additional church freedom in Poland. A revival of the Protestant church in East Germany is already underway.

Indeed, the ripple effect on all of the East European countries as a result of any increase of Polish nationalism will cause the Soviet leadership to pay close attention to each sign of responsiveness to a Polish papacy in communist societies. The selection of a pope from Poland, moreover, adds to the problems of an aged and tired leadership in the Kremlin that is already facing its own pre-succession problems. Finally, the Soviets will be especially alert to any fallout from the Pope's election because the current Chinese leadership is particularly anxious to exploit any signs of a revival in East European nationalism and any signs of Soviet vacillation in responding to the challenge of such a revival.

The potential spillover effect of East European nationalism to the USSR is also considerable, particularly in the Ukraine where the Uniate Church has many adherents, in Byelorussia which contains former Polish territories that were once heavily Catholic, and in the Baltic countries where there are several million Catholics. The Soviets have always

been more hostile toward Catholicism than toward officially recognized and relatively subservient churches, such as the Russian Orthodox, because of the Western orientation of the Catholics and their susceptibility on Soviet borders to outside influence. A Polish pope will reinvigorate the Catholic faith in these areas and may embolden Catholic dissidents to engage in more vigorous protest activities. These issues were presumably discussed in a meeting between Ukrainian First Secretary Shcherbitsky and the Polish Ambassador to the USSR in a meeting in Kiev on 17 October, only one day after the Pope's election.

If nothing else, a Polish papacy provides resonance to the activities of the Lithuanian Catholic dissidents, whose samizdat publication--The Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church--is already one of the most vital underground journals in the USSR. Dissent in Lithuania is largely a product of religious-national sentiment, and the two most important external influences on Lithuania are the Catholic church and Poland. For several centuries Poland and Lithuania were united in a single state and the Lithuanian capital still contains a sizable Polish minority.

The impact of a Polish papacy on the Ukraine will depend largely on the position of the new pope toward the Uniate church. Unlike the Catholic church in Lithuania, which has a precarious legal status, the Uniate church was formally outlawed after the war. As a condition for better Soviet-Vatican relations, Moscow has unsuccessfully insisted on Rome's recognition of the liquidation of the Uniate church. Such recognition would be a particularly difficult decision for a Polish pope.

On balance, it will take a long period of time for these problems to sort themselves out, but the Soviet leadership is probably already anxious about how to cope with the ultimate impact of a Polish papacy on East European nationalism as well as such derivative issues as Eurocommunism and Soviet dissidence. Having successfully coexisted with a Communist regime in Poland, the new Pope will have more than symbolic impact on those communist parties in such heavily Catholic countries as Italy, France, and Spain. The communists in these countries may now feel more free to stress their independence from Moscow. Conversely, it will be more difficult for such parties as the Christian Democrats in Italy to use the influence of the Church against these communist parties. The long-range problems are thus far different from those that have faced previous Soviet regimes and once led Stalin to rhetorically but derisively dismiss the impact of the Vatican by asking "how many divisions has the Pope?"

14.

SOVIET SUPPORT FOR INT'L TERRORISM

KEY JUDGMENTS

- The Soviets are deeply engaged in support of revolutionary violence worldwide. Such involvement is a basic tenet of Soviet policy, pursued in the interests of weakening unfriendly societies, destabilizing hostile regimes, and advancing Soviet interests.
- The USSR pursues different policies toward different types of revolutionary groups that conduct terrorist activities (that is, hijackings, assassinations, kidnapings, bombings, and the victimization of innocent civilians).
- Whether terrorist tactics are used in the course of revolutionary violence is largely a matter of indifference to the Soviets, who have no scruples against them. The Soviet attitude is determined by whether those tactics advance or harm Soviet interests in the particular circumstances. Revolutionary groups that employ terrorist tactics are simply one among the many instruments of Soviet foreign policy.
- There is conclusive evidence that the USSR directly or indirectly supports a large number of national insurgencies [1] and some separatist-irredentist [2] groups. Many of these entities, of both types, carry out terrorist activities as part of their larger programs of revolutionary violence. A notable example of Soviet involvement is the case of El Salvador, where the Soviets have coordinated and directly participated in the delivery of arms to revolutionary groups that use terrorism as a basic tactic.
- Some revolutionary groups that employ terrorism do accept a measure of Soviet control and direction, but many do not.
- The International Department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party has primary responsibility for managing contacts with movements in opposition to established govern-

[1] *National insurgencies* are broad-based movements which seek to transform the fundamental political orientation of a society by armed revolutionary means. Examples of such groups which the USSR supports or has supported are SWAPO (in Namibia) and ZAPU (in the former Rhodesia).

[2] *Separatist-irredentist movements* believe that they constitute nations without states and seek to assert their national autonomy or independence. Examples of such movements which the USSR supports or has supported are several of the Palestinian groups

14. (continued)

ments. The KGB, the GRU, and the 10th Directorate of the Soviet General Staff provide a broad range of military and paramilitary training to members of revolutionary groups, in various camps in the USSR and elsewhere, and provide arms and other assistance to a wide spectrum of revolutionary groups in the world, particularly Palestinians, Africans, and Latin Americans.[3] Much of this support is readily utilizable in terrorist activities.

- The Soviets support certain allied or friendly governments and entities—notably Libya, certain Palestinian groups, East European states, South Yemen, and Cuba—which in turn directly or indirectly support the terrorist activities of a broad spectrum of violent revolutionaries, including certain of the world's nihilistic terrorist groups.[4]

- The USSR accepts these support actions of its allies and friends. It does so on occasion because these actions also serve Soviet interests and on other occasions because they are part of the price to be paid for maintaining and increasing its influence with allies and friends. The USSR has not made its backing for them contingent on their desisting from aiding nihilistic terrorists or other violent revolutionaries. In this sense, Moscow is wittingly providing support, albeit indirectly, to international terrorism.

- With respect to Soviet policy toward nihilistic, purely terrorist groups, available evidence remains thin and in some respects contradictory, even though the human intelligence collection programs of the United States and its friends have been giving this problem close scrutiny for some years.

- The activities of some of the nihilistic terrorist groups are carried out by individuals trained by Soviet friends and allies that provide them with weapons; such terrorists have sometimes transited Soviet Bloc nations. Yet the terrorist activities of these groups are not coordinated by the Soviets.[5]

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[3] See annexes A and B for details.

[4] *Nihilists* are small groups, with little public support, which rely almost exclusively on terrorist acts to destroy existing institutions to make way for new ones. Leading examples are the Baader-Meinhof group in Germany, the Japanese Red Army, and the Red Brigades in Italy, which profess the view that Western institutions are their major antagonists.

[5] *Following is an alternative view of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps; and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force. They believe that the Soviets do provide some coordination to nihilistic terrorists either directly through the contacts of Soviet advisers with these terrorists in training camps in Middle Eastern countries, or elsewhere, or indirectly through East European countries, Cubans, Palestinians, or other entities through which the Soviets work.*

- The Soviets have on occasion privately characterized certain nihilistic terrorism as "criminal," and have urged other revolutionary groups to cease and desist from terrorist acts the Soviets considered "self-defeating."*
- Public protestations by the Soviets that they do not back terrorism are compromised by the indirect Soviet support received by certain nihilistic terrorists, as well as by the direct support the Soviets afford to national insurrections and separatist-irredentist movements which conduct terrorist acts.
- The Soviet policy of differentiated support of various kinds of revolutionary violence benefits Soviet overall interests at low risk or cost, and without significant damage to Soviet prestige. It is therefore likely to continue.
- There is no basis for supposing that the Soviets could be persuaded to join the West in genuine opposition to international terrorism as a whole.
- The broader phenomenon of revolutionary violence is a more significant and complex issue for the United States than is its terrorist component per se. The severe instabilities that exist in many settings in the Third World are chronic, will not soon be overcome, and in many instances would continue to exist regardless of the USSR.
- There is no simple or single solution to these problems because of the variety and complexity of circumstances leading to revolutionary violence and terrorism. In every case, the indicated measures include a mixture of three approaches: reduction or elimination of external support, police and/or military action to combat violence, and the opening of channels for peaceful change.

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* *Following is an alternative view of the Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Director of Intelligence, Headquarters, Marine Corps; and the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, Department of the Air Force. They believe that this judgment is misleading. Moscow has not supported terroristic activities which it considers counterproductive. The holders of this view note, however, that, as stated in the fourth Key Judgment (page 1), on other occasions "the Soviets have coordinated and directly participated in the delivery of arms to revolutionary groups that use terrorism as a basic tactic."*

[redacted]

Soviet Society in the 1980s:
Problems and Prospects

Key Judgments

Information available as of 30 November 1982 was used in this report.

Both Western observers and Soviet officials recognize that the Soviet Union now faces a wide array of social, economic, and political ills including a general social malaise, ethnic tensions, consumer frustrations, and political dissent. Precisely how these internal problems will ultimately challenge and affect the regime, however, is open to debate and considerable uncertainty. Some observers believe that the regime will have little trouble coping with the negative mood among the populace. Others believe that economic mismanagement will aggravate internal problems and ultimately erode the regime's credibility, increasing the long-term prospects for fundamental political change

Whatever the ultimate prognosis, these problems will pose a challenge for the new Soviet leadership. The Politburo's approach probably will be based on its assessment of the threat posed and the degree to which these issues can be addressed by policy shifts. Three broad categories of problems—the quality of life, ethnic tensions, and dissent—are surveyed in this paper. Of these, popular discontent over a perceived decline in the quality of life represents, in our judgment, the most serious and immediate challenge for the Politburo. According to [redacted] sources, the Soviet people are no longer confident that their standard of living will continue to improve. Popular dissatisfaction and cynicism seem to be growing. This popular mood has a negative impact on economic productivity and could gradually undermine the regime's credibility. Such discontent has already led to some isolated strikes and demonstrations, developments that immediately get the leadership's attention. Other manifestations of discontent—crime, corruption, and alcoholism—are evident as well but pose no direct challenge to the regime. Such ills, nonetheless, have a detrimental effect on Soviet economic goals, are harmful to the social climate in general, and in turn are made worse by the slow rate of economic growth.

Ethnic discontent—rooted in cultural, demographic, and economic problems as well as political suppression—remains primarily a latent but potentially serious vulnerability. Currently, there is no widespread, politically disruptive protest or dissent among the Soviet nationalities. The regime's policies—granting to national minorities some linguistic, territorial, cultural, and administrative autonomy; raising the standard of living; expanding the educational base; and using overwhelming police power when needed—have been largely successful so far. Although the potential for political unrest and sporadic violence in the Baltic republics remains

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high because of economic, demographic, and cultural grievances, Baltic concerns have little impact elsewhere in the USSR and can be suppressed if necessary. With more time (perhaps decades), however, similar problems could become much more consequential in Muslim Central Asia, requiring the regime to manage this problem more adroitly.

Finally, the range of political, religious, and cultural discontent that is expressed in the Soviet dissident movement does not, at present, seriously challenge the regime's political control, but the regime deals with it as if it does. Soviet dissidents cause concern because they have an international audience and their activities embarrass the regime. Moreover, the leadership remains psychologically insecure and is unwilling to allow any hint of challenge to its authority, apparently because it fears such dissidents could appeal to a wider audience by articulating more widely held discontent over food shortages and the like. For these reasons, the regime, particularly of late, has used widespread arrests and imprisonment of dissident leaders, confinement in psychiatric hospitals, and exile to crush the movement. The movement, however, is not likely to die and in the long run could grow if it can capitalize on increasing discontent, cynicism, and alienation among the populace.

The sharp slowdown in economic growth since the mid-1970s is the underlying problem that ties all these issues together and makes them potentially more troublesome for the regime. Unless this trend is reversed, increasing alienation and cynicism, especially among young people, are likely; and other social ills—crime, corruption, alcoholism—could get worse. The regime, to be sure, has impressive resources for trying to deal with particular economic problems—especially in its centralized control over priorities and resources, but a return to the more favorable economic conditions of the 1960s and early 1970s, when there were substantial improvements in the standard of living, is highly unlikely. The pervasive police powers at the Politburo's disposal, when coupled with the Soviet populace's traditional passivity toward deprivation and respect for authority, should, however, continue to provide the regime with the necessary strength to contain and suppress open dissent.

15. (continued)

Difficult decisions regarding resource allocation and new management approaches, nevertheless, will probably be needed to deal with the Politburo's economic problems and to reverse the malaise that has set in. How the new leadership will handle these issues over the long run is uncertain. Its policy options range from undertaking major "reforms" and reallocating resources away from defense to greater reliance on administrative controls and repression. Some mix of policies involving both directions might be attempted. No solutions it is likely to attempt, however, offer any certain cure for its growth problem and the malaise related to it. This situation will likely require the leadership to fall back even more on traditional orthodox methods to control dissent and suppress challenges to its authority while continuing efforts to avoid an overall decline in a "quality of life" that has become the regime's real basis for legitimacy.

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Gorbachev's Domestic Challenge: The Looming Problems (U)

Key Judgments

Information available as of 2 February 1987 was used in this report.

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev is off to a strong start. He has consolidated power with unprecedented speed, put in place an ambitious program for economic revitalization that has already achieved some results, set higher standards of accountability for the bureaucracy, and improved the image of the Soviet leadership at home and abroad.

But Gorbachev's greatest challenge lies ahead. He has staked his leadership on radically improving the functioning of the Soviet system while keeping up with the United States abroad. The cautious changes he has sanctioned so far are, in our view, insufficient to achieve these goals. Over the next few years, he is likely to face tough choices between accepting results that will fall well short of his goals--and a resultant erosion of his power--or pushing the Soviet leadership toward far more difficult--and politically controversial--policy measures.

Revitalizing the Economy. Gorbachev has made economic revitalization his priority issue, arguing that Soviet national security and influence abroad are dependent on a sharp economic improvement. So far, despite the urgency of his rhetoric, he has relied on traditional methods--discipline, organizational streamlining, new people, refocusing investment to machine building--and some modest reforms to achieve his goals. While these steps are improving things somewhat--and from the Soviet perspective are impressive and significant--they appear likely to fall well short of achieving both the growth and technological progress Gorbachev is seeking over the next five years.

To achieve his goals for improved economic performance, he will have to consider more politically risky and economically disruptive reforms. Moreover, progress on the economy is inextricably linked to developments on a host of other controversial political and social issues. Gorbachev is already facing strong opposition from those who see their jobs, status, and sinecures threatened by his efforts to turn the Soviet economy and society around. His cadre policy--to replace government and party bureaucrats to increase efficiency, imagination, and commitment--is at the focal point of the struggle.

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16. (continued)

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Mastering the Bureaucracy. To implement successfully even the changes he has announced so far, Gorbachev will have to transform a bureaucracy renowned for its ability to resist leadership direction into a more responsive and efficient instrument of change. Despite his political success to date, he has only begun to accomplish this task. His words and deeds clearly show determination to tame the party and state bureaucracies, but resistance to his initiatives is fierce

unrelenting pressure to get his agenda implemented is already creating a large pool of disgruntled apparatchiki intent on blocking his program, and he may well have to consider even more forceful measures.

Managing the Politburo. From Gorbachev's perspective, the need to address these interrelated problems will seriously complicate his greatest challenge--maintaining a consensus within the Politburo. The independent-minded officials who make up Gorbachev's Politburo appear to agree that there is a need for new policy directions and personnel to carry them out, but they appear to differ over specific approaches. The convergence of the institutional, economic, social, and defense issues Gorbachev must face will make consensus decisionmaking even tougher to accomplish than it has been so far.

Limiting the Defense Burden. Without restricting the defense burden, Gorbachev will find it increasingly difficult to generate the significant increase in resources he needs to devote to civilian industrial investment, particularly machine building. Unless there is a sharp upturn in economic performance--which we think is unlikely--or major reductions in defense spending--which would be very controversial without a significant reduction in the perceived threat--by the end of the decade, demands for investment in the civilian sector will come increasingly into conflict with demands for more investment in the defense industries. The prospect of such a choice has already led Gorbachev to pursue a bold strategy for managing the US relationship that probably is controversial within the Soviet elite and could, in conjunction with economic considerations, eventually lead him to confront fundamental obstacles inhibiting economic progress.

Managing Societal Pressures. Gorbachev may find that the Soviet populace, long accustomed to a paternalistic state that provides job security and basic necessities at low prices, is a major obstacle to achieving the social-economic transformation he wants. The regime has already pressed workers to be more productive while refusing to devote a greater share of resources

16. (continued)

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to consumption in order to provide incentives. Many Soviet reformers believe further changes in social policy--reduced subsidies for necessities, a less egalitarian wage structure, and a more tolerant attitude toward unemployment--will be required to produce sustained improvements in economic performance. Although societal problems are unlikely to reach crisis proportions over the next five years, Gorbachev will need to manage popular concerns effectively to improve morale and productivity as well as to prevent increased discontent.

The Soviet leader has considerable advantages and assets for pushing his agenda. Nevertheless, as these problems converge over the next five years, we believe he will face an increasingly clear choice between settling for half measures that fall well short of his demands and perhaps his needs, or forcing the Politburo to make some difficult and divisive decisions. Failure to take on this challenge probably would not cost him his job but would open his administration to charges of Brezhnev-style immobilism that he seems determined to prevent. The leadership style Gorbachev has demonstrated so far, as well as his rhetoric, suggests that he will turn to more radical policy alternatives rather than accept that fate. He will find some advisers eager to push for a harsher neo-Stalinist path as well as those arguing for more radical policy or systemic reforms. We do not know what mix of these options he might choose or even how hard he will push. But the complexities of the issues and absence of easy alternatives guarantee that the struggle will be protracted and the outcome uncertain both for him and the Soviet Union.