

SOVIET POLICY UNDER ANDROPOV

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The top leadership of the Soviet Union is in a rare state of flux, with major implications for the United States. Yuriy Andropov has rapidly ascended to the chairmanship of the Communist Party and the Presidency, but his age, poor health, and long absences from public view raise questions over how securely and for how long he may hold power.

The United States faces the challenge of trying, despite Moscow's veil of secrecy, to interpret and understand the new people and policies brought by the transition. There is still no clear sense in Washington of whether and how the United States can deal with the new leadership or with whom precisely one should be trying to deal. Is the Soviet military in a position of growing influence? If so, what does this imply for U.S. global interests, the military balance, and arms control? Is the Soviet Union prepared to introduce economic reforms that might redirect efforts away from aggressive competition with the United States? Can the United States influence the direction the Soviets take?

BACKGROUND AND POLICY ANALYSIS

THE NEW SOVIET LEADERSHIP Andropov's rise coincides with the beginnings of a wholesale turnover at the top of the Soviet hierarchy. The new people brought in to fill existing vacancies at the top can set the course of Soviet policy for years to come.

Recent appointments suggest that the group around Andropov is consolidating its political strength. But Yuriy Andropov faces severe constraints, not the least of which are his age and health. But his program could also falter due to resistance from the entrenched bureaucracy, the magnitude of the problems faced by the Soviet Union, and competing pressures for scarce resources. Even his colleagues who acknowledge the need for change in principle may be less supportive if new policies begin to threaten their own positions or special interests.

Changes have been modest thus far, but new policies are promised. Any major changes in the direction of Soviet domestic or foreign policy at a time of heightened U.S.-Soviet tensions will be of major significance to the United States. (For more extensive treatment of issues in U.S.-Soviet relations, including the bilateral arms control negotiations, see IB83066, U.S.-Soviet Relations.)

The new Soviet leadership includes many men who were prominent under Brezhnev though the constellation of power within the leadership has changed.

Yuriy Andropov

Yuriy Andropov has emerged as the most powerful Soviet figure, though his poor health casts some doubt on his position. His selection to the leadership was not wholly unexpected but the absence of visible contention and the speed with which he initially asserted his primacy was a surprise to most Western analysts. Despite his early show of strength, it may take years for him or anyone else to fully consolidate his power. In the meantime, no Soviet

leader likely to have complete freedom to do what he wants.

Who is Yuriy Andropov? He has been described in the West as everything from a Western-oriented closet liberal at one extreme to a ruthless and cunning KGB secret policeman at the other. There is very little evidence for assuming the first, and the latter description does not adequately reflect his complex background. In truth, Westerners have very little firsthand knowledge of the man. Despite his extensive foreign policy experience, Andropov has not travelled outside the Soviet bloc, with the exception of a few trips to Yugoslavia, or held formal positions dealing with non-Communist countries. He met very rarely with Westerners prior to becoming the Party leader.

Some inferences about Andropov can be drawn from his past experiences:

(1) He is first and foremost a loyal Party man. It was through the Communist Party hierarchy that he rose to a position of prominence. What little formal higher education he had was primarily through the Party schools. Virtually everything he has achieved he owes to Party policy. The platform from which he was able to finally ascend to the Soviet leadership was his dual membership in the Politburo (since 1973) and Secretariat (returned in 1982). So Andropov does not come to the Party leadership as an outsider. Nor does he seem to represent a long-standing, anti-Brezhnev faction. He rose to the top as a Brezhnev protege.

(2) Most of Andropov's career has been spent in the Soviet national security sphere, broadly defined. While he has had no high-level military background as such, his Party, Foreign Ministry, and KGB experiences have been concentrated in this area. He gravitated to this sensitive work at an early age. His first major Party positions were in the strategic and inhospitable border regions of the Karelo-Finnish Republic during and after World War II. His subsequent foreign policy experience was focused exclusively on the strategically vital Soviet periphery. His work involved relations with the Socialist countries. He was Ambassador to Hungary from 1954 to 1957. As such, he was the senior Soviet official in Budapest when Soviet forces moved to crush the revolution in 1956. Andropov's role in the events of 1956 and Hungary's subsequent evolution have been subject to different interpretations. But his performance in Hungary must have met with the approval of his superiors as he was selected to direct the Party Central Committee's department in charge of relations with the Socialist countries. He continued those responsibilities until he became the head of the KGB in 1967. With that appointment, Andropov gained control not only of world-wide Soviet intelligence operations but also of the massive "second army" of secret police, internal security forces, and border guards.

(3) The KGB may have become Andropov's primary institutional base in recent years. He headed the organization from 1967 to 1982. While Andropov did not rise through the KGB ranks but was placed in charge of that organization from outside by the Party, his 15 years in the organization and his influence in reshaping it provided a very strong bond. As its chairman, he molded the KGB into a far more effective and powerful organization than the one he inherited. Its methods became more subtle, sophisticated and varied. Its staff is more highly trained and professional. Yet the KGB acted ruthlessly under Andropov to destroy the Soviet dissident movement at home and vigorously expanded its intelligence operations abroad. Andropov's KGB chairmanship presumably gave him unequalled access to information on both the Soviet and international situations.

His background and personal traits in the end proved to be the right combination to allow him to succeed Brezhnev. His reputation as tough and smart may have seemed the best antidote to the feeling of stagnation and drift pervading the Soviet Union. The Soviet elite may have seen in him a stronger and more decisive leader than Brezhnev was in his later years. The general impression of Western analysts is that Andropov is intelligent and knowledgeable despite his lack of a formal education. Though an ideologically committed Marxist-Leninist, he has been described as less dogmatic, more flexible and pragmatic than many of his rivals. Foreigners who have met with him since he assumed office have found his confident, blunt, and direct style refreshing. Whether he is a reformer, too, remains to be seen. In terms of pre-succession rhetoric, he was not the leading advocate of reform among the contenders for power. That role was played by Chernenko.

Andropov had to overcome several handicaps to win the leadership. Those handicaps included: (1) lack of recent experience in Party administration, (2) virtually no background in economic policy, (3) fears evoked by his association with the KGB, and (4) the fact that he was not apparently Brezhnev's first choice as successor. Andropov may have won because no obvious contender was without weaknesses and because he had the support of the decisive group in the Politburo and Secretariat, including key representatives of the military, foreign policy, and security establishment.

Other Leadership Changes

A number of top level positions in the Party became vacant immediately before or since Andropov assumed power. With Suslov's, Pelshe's, and Brezhnev's deaths, as well as Kirilenko's retirement, four major new vacancies were created in the Politburo, and three in the Secretariat, to go with earlier ones that had not been filled. The first promotions to the top Party bodies were that of Grigoriy Romanov to the Secretariat, Geydar Aliyev from candidate to full member of the Politburo, as well as to the Council of Ministers, and Nikolay Ryzhkov to the Secretariat. Vitaliy Vorontnikov was named a candidate member of the Politburo. Aliyev made his career in the KGB and internal security hierarchy of Azerbaijan before becoming the leader of the Azerbaijan Party. He earned a reputation as a tough cop and strict disciplinarian. At the December 1983 Plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee, Vital Verotnikov (57) and Mikhail Solomentsev (70) were promoted to full membership in the Politburo. Viktor M. Chebrikov (60) was made a candidate member. Yegor Ligachev (63) was elevated to the Secretariat. All were seen as Andropov loyalists, strengthening his position at a time when he was still absent from public view due to ill health.

In other major moves, Andrei Gromyko was made First Deputy Premier along with his other positions of Foreign Minister and in the Party. Vitaly Fedorchuk has moved from KGB Chairman to Minister of Internal Affairs. This move places him in charge of all police and security forces, including the MVD. His replacement as KGB Chairman is former KGB deputy chief Viktor Chebrikov. There have been a number of other important shifts at the Central Committee, ministerial, and subministerial level.

On the surface at least, Andropov has moved more quickly to assert his power than any of his predecessors. He makes few public gestures to the concept of collective leadership. Andropov's most prominent competitors, while still in their positions, are gradually assuming lower visibility. Konstantin Chernenko, who was considered Andropov's primary rival for

succession and in the view of many experts -- Brezhnev's choice -- seems in a weakened position.

The people who assumed greater prominence with the rise of Andropov and who are widely seen as having played crucial roles in his succession are Defense Minister Ustinov, Foreign Minister Gromyko, Gorbachov, Grishin, Aliyev, and now Romanov. In recent months, the military has played a highly visible role as was most dramatically demonstrated in the KAL incident. The very fact that the former KGB Chairman received the backing of the military and foreign policy establishments seems to mark a significant break with Soviet tradition. The KGB and armed forces in particular have always been viewed as rivals.

The conventional wisdom prior to Andropov's rise had been that no KGB head could become Soviet leader. The reason for the shift is a matter of speculation. Andropov may still be seen primarily as the Party man in control of the KGB. It may be that the shared interests of the "national security community" predominated in this transition over their mutual suspicions. This may reflect, on the one hand, how seriously the Soviet establishment assesses the problems the country faces or, on the other hand, how securely in place the Soviet elite is if it no longer feels threatened by a KGB leader.

Despite his early success in moving to consolidate power, his health and events could still conspire to make Andropov a transitional leader.

He has been out of the public eye for months at a time. Past successions indicate that it usually takes several years for a Soviet leader to firmly establish his legitimacy.

COMPETING PRESSURES ON THE NEW LEADERSHIP

Yuriy Andropov and his colleagues face a number of competing pressures. Their choices range from maintaining the status quo to fundamentally changing the system. Change could be in the direction of a return to tight central controls and repression, and a dangerous albeit conservative foreign policy. Or it could lead to far reaching reforms that could bring a more decentralized, pluralist system increasingly interdependent with and therefore more committed to stability in the world.

Pressures for Change

(1) If Andropov's selection amounted to a decision by the leadership that the status quo would no longer do, then new initiatives will be expected of him. Andropov can best secure his position by registering early policy successes and showing strong leadership in contrast to the stagnation at the end of the Brezhnev era. Andropov's dilemma may be that change is needed to secure and hold power, while the same change may stimulate opposition and erode support. Above all, he needs success to secure power.

(2) If Andropov wants to carve his niche in Soviet history, he may not have the luxury of moving at a very cautious pace. He is not only the oldest man to assume the Soviet leadership (69) but has experienced serious health problems with his heart and kidneys over the past several years.

(3) The most compelling pressure for change will be the urgency of the

tasks that Andropov faces. The old methods did not provide solutions to the Soviet Union's chronic and growing economic, social, and demographic problems. Soviet leaders have acknowledged the seriousness of the problem for a number of years. But Brezhnev put off actions to address these problems.

Change under Andropov could take different directions and it cannot be assumed that new Soviet policies would necessarily be more favorable to U.S. interests. Andropov could give priority to the task of internal modernization and accept a degree of social and economic reform. If the new leaders committed themselves to raising the living standards of their citizens and bridging the economic gap with the West, such a retargeting of goals might mean a necessary shift of resources from the military to the civilian sector. This in turn could require tempering some of the more competitive, ambitious, and costly features of Soviet global policy. It could bring an adjustment of policy to allow for expanded cooperation with the West and might result in a stronger Soviet commitment to international political and economic stability.

The new leaders could also bring changes far less compatible with U.S. interests. As the inheritors of massive military power, they could embark on a more repressive internal course and a more aggressively ambitious global policy. The need to divert attention from domestic problems could tempt them to seek dramatic successes in the international arena. A new ideological or nationalist fervor could create a heightened threat of confrontation with the West.

Constraints Against Change

(1) A sizeable and increasingly powerful elite in the Soviet Union has a stake in the status quo. They have prospered despite the inefficiencies of the Soviet system. Notwithstanding their support for change in principle, they are likely to resist any radical policy shifts which might threaten their status. Thus, major policy changes could jeopardize Andropov's position at a time when he does not yet have a firm grip on power.

(2) Any significant change is likely to entail some major reallocation of resources. It will be very difficult for any Soviet leader to embark on policies that will take away resources and thereby alienate powerful special interest groups such as the military.

(3) Even with the support of the Party hierarchy it will be difficult for Andropov to move the massive and unwieldy Soviet bureaucracy in new directions.

ANDROPOV'S POLICIES

Andropov's succession has already brought marked changes in style. In substance, change is less apparant. Some new policies actually were introduced in 1982 when Brezhnev was formally still in office, but when the balance of power may already have shifted to the group that brought Andropov to the top. During his initial months as Party leader, Andropov seems to have devoted his major energies to consolidating his power. But he has fueled expectations for further change with his calls to replace slogans by action. The Andropov approach to domestic policy thus far has stressed the stick over the carrot. His emphasis has been on discipline.

Domestic Policy

Political Moves

The first thrust of Andropov's policy has been a major campaign against corruption. The war on corruption was declared while Brezhnev was still in power, but at that time the leadership took only token action against high level officials while handing out and publicizing stiff sentences to petty criminals. Andropov in his first months in office has moved with determination against officials accused of bribe-taking and other crimes. The press has been full of accounts of severe punishment, including the death penalty, being meted out for economic crimes. It remains to be seen how far Andropov will go to combat the problem. The campaign could become threatening to much of the elite because so many officials are tainted by the corruption pervading the Soviet system. What's more, Andropov's drive might be seen as an old-fashioned purge of the old guard under the guise of fighting "the rot in society." But his campaign may be popular with the average citizen who feels victimized by all-pervasive corruption.

Andropov has also moved to curtail the abuse of special privileges in Soviet society. The structure of perks and privileges enjoyed by the elite includes special subsidized shops where goods of highest quality can be obtained, separate housing, vacation resorts, chauffeured cars, etc. The media has launched a campaign denouncing the chronic and flagrant abuses of privilege. Andropov is unlikely to eliminate the system of perks which have become the primary rewards and compensation for high level service. At the least his moves are likely to caution Soviet officials against flaunting their special perks in ways which must be very grating to the average citizen, whose most common complaint is the scarcity of quality consumer goods.

Andropov's rise to power has coincided with a tightening of political and ideological controls throughout the Soviet Union. Strong steps have been taken to limit influences from the West, both political and cultural. Direct dial phone service to foreign countries has been ended. Contacts between Soviet citizens and Westerners have been made more difficult. Emigration from the Soviet Union has been brought to a virtual halt. The scope for artistic freedom has been narrowed. The Soviet media has been brought into tighter conformity with official policy. The few Soviet dissidents who still remain free, including Roy Medvedev, have been put on warning to stop their activities or face imprisonment.

On the other side of the ledger, Andropov has attacked blind and rigid adherence to past Communist doctrine. He has urged officials to adopt a more flexible approach that takes changing circumstances into account. There have been steps to make the bureaucracy more responsive to the people. In a real departure from traditional Soviet practice, the media has begun to provide very limited coverage of the proceedings of Politburo and other top level meetings. Also, the government has encouraged and publicized complaints from citizens over government shortcomings. In some instances corrective action has been taken. Steps have also been taken to make the press, radio, and television more interesting and informative. This has not implied a relaxation of censorship or controls over the media. But journalists have been encouraged to provide more sophisticated news and commentary.

The Soviet Union faces other social problems which do not lend themselves

to correction merely through greater discipline and tighter political controls. One such problem is the serious decline in the health of the Soviet population. This decline, which is unprecedented in an industrialized country, is reflected in a number of statistics. Life expectancy has gone down dramatically. Infant mortality has been on the rise. The reasons for this trend are not known, though a steady rise in alcoholism is one of the suspected causes. A decrease in the allocation of resources to health services could be another cause. Finally, lax environmental standards could be another contributing factor.

Andropov faces a serious long-term challenge of a very different nature. As a result of demographic trends, Russians will soon constitute a minority of the Soviet population. Soviet Central Asians meanwhile are growing at the fastest rate. This trend creates political, economic, and security problems. In the economic sphere, dislocations are being caused by the fact that the new Asian labor pool is far from the industrial regions in need of new manpower. Also, the Central Asians are committed to their Islamic and agrarian traditions. Corrective measures that would relocate either the population or the industries are virtually impossible to implement because of ethnic sensitivities. Meanwhile, government policies aimed at assimilating non-Russian ethnic groups have met with stiff resistance at a time of resurgent ethnic nationalism, particularly in the Baltic, Caucasian, and Central Asian republics.

Soviet nationality problems are most sensitive in the military. Non-Russians now make up a majority of enlisted men. Soviet leaders probably are concerned over the more questionable loyalty and effectiveness of these forces, as demonstrated by their experience in Afghanistan.

Economic Policy

Andropov has been candid in acknowledging and outlining the seriousness of the economic problems faced by the Soviet Union. His speech at the June 1983 Central Committee Plenum was a particularly harsh attack on the recent Soviet record of economic performance. In general he has continued policies started by Brezhnev but never fully implemented. These include adjustments in investment priorities from a major emphasis on improving food production to intensified efforts to reduce wasteful use of energy, labor, and other resources. Andropov has also emphasized the need for a better system of rewards and incentives for good work and penalties for poor performance. He has promised greater attention to consumer goods production. The Soviet leadership used the December 1983 party Plenum and supreme Soviet meeting to endorse Andropov's economic policies. Those policies included the introduction of modest economic "experiment" in January 1984, involving a degree of decentralization and financial incentives.

Discipline has also been at the heart of Andropov's most publicized economic moves. In response to problems of low labor productivity, he is preaching harder work and introducing measures to enforce it. This campaign is no new theme for Soviet leaders either. But Andropov seems to be pushing it more forcefully. He has warned of punitive actions against workers guilty of shoddy work, absenteeism, drunkenness on the job, etc. To dramatize the warnings, the media has publicized police raids on movie theaters, and other public places during working hours to round up absentee workers. But Soviet officials have also moved to eliminate some of the outside causes for absenteeism. They have extended store hours so that workers are not compelled to stand in long lines during work time. They have also promised to correct management shortcomings.

These measures may have a marginal impact but will not get to the root of Soviet economic problems. Therefore many Western experts feel that Andropov, if he is to make a real difference, will have to consider more far-reaching changes.

The most sensitive choices are those between "guns" and "butter." The question of reallocating resources between the military and civilian sectors has not been raised publicly. Andropov may not have either the power or the inclination to tamper with the basic balance, which has favored the military. If he were to undertake any shifts in this area, it would be the strongest possible indication that Soviet policy was taking a new direction.

Andropov has not launched or endorsed any major economic reform either, but there has been a growing debate in the Soviet Union on the question. Both the Hungarian and East German economic models have received serious attention from Soviet economists. Hungarian agricultural successes in particular have stirred Soviet interest. The attraction of the East German model is that it has achieved impressive economic results without retreating from central planning. Ultimately, the Soviet leaders are unlikely to adopt either the Hungarian or the East German models because neither experiences are transferable to the Soviet Union, given the size of its economy and complexity of its problems. But they could adopt elements of either with very different political and social consequences for the Soviet Union. In the economic realm, more than any other, Andropov will be under pressure to register successes. This fact may still push him toward some fundamental changes.

Security and Foreign Policy

Overview

Andropov's foreign policy approach has also offered a new style with only hints of possible changes in substance. Foreign policy is continuing to receive a high priority under Andropov, as suggested by the elevation of Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko to First Deputy Premier. Andropov's foreign policy initiatives have been coupled with an aggressive propaganda campaign aimed at various foreign audiences. Andropov has sought even more aggressively than Brezhnev to use foreign public opinion to influence governments. From gimmicks such as published responses to letters from children abroad to very blatant threats and enticements, he has taken his message directly to the foreign electorates.

Under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union achieved major successes in foreign policy. Nevertheless, it faces mounting international problems. Soviet leaders may wonder if they are overextended given their difficulty in coping with problems on their periphery (Poland and Afghanistan), the increased cost of maintaining an empire and the questionable return on their investments in more distant regions. They have also witnessed a decline in the appeal of the Soviet Union as a developmental or social model.

Andropov is likely to consider the option of selective retrenchment. This is not to suggest that the Soviet Union would retreat from its position as a global power. Moscow might, however, reassess individual commitments in terms of their costs and benefits, e.g., Afghanistan, the PRC, and Southern Africa.

He may also reconsider the balance of emphasis between the different instruments in the Soviet foreign policy arsenal. Like the United States, the Soviet Union has both a military and economic aid program, although the economic component is smaller than that of the United States.

The most successful Soviet aid efforts have been in the military and security fields, often to governments facing a military challenge from home or abroad. In addition to military sales and credits, this assistance has included advisors and technicians, extensive training programs for foreign technicians, and in some cases troops (mostly Cuban). Together with its allies, the Soviet Union has been able to offer fragile foreign governments regime security and the tools for maintaining control. Their aid package has included building up the armed forces, building and running internal security and secret police operations for client states, and establishment of state controlled press and media. Such aid has been provided to Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Libya, and Syria. This area is not without dilemmas for the Soviets and the recipient governments, as resupply of Syria illustrates: advanced weaponry with Soviet technicians and advisors increases the risk of Soviet direct involvement and reduces their flexibility, even as it increases the foreign government's dependence on Moscow.

Andropov is likely to continue and possibly try to expand this aid program when targets of opportunity present themselves, as in Central America. The cost is not necessarily higher than traditional aid programs and it creates a continuing reliance on Moscow and therefore a continuing role for the Soviet Union.

In contrast, Soviet economic aid programs have been less cost-effective. Often their tangible benefits to the recipient country or to the Soviet Union have been modest. They have not necessarily brought any lasting bonds of friendship or loyalty. Even countries which rely heavily on the Soviet Union for security assistance (such as Angola) are looking increasingly to the West for help in developing their economies. If Andropov were to make cutbacks, they would be more likely to come in this type of aid.

Reordering Priorities

Under Brezhnev, the Soviet Union was generally cautious in its foreign policy, even though Moscow made significant advances in some Third World countries after 1976. Moscow was quick to take advantage of low-risk opportunities for expanding Soviet influence. Where Soviet security interests were directly at stake, as in Poland and Afghanistan, they were willing to take higher risks to protect their interests. Andropov is likely to continue this policy of seeking out targets of opportunity. So far he has shown no signs of being less cautious than Brezhnev or more willing to gamble outside areas of vital interest to the Soviets.

Andropov may be forced to rethink Soviet priorities. Relations with the United States, which have reached a new low in the aftermath of the Soviet shooting down of a Korean airliner, remain at the center of Soviet foreign policy. Ultimately, Andropov's success or failure in dealing with the United States will be the most important yardstick by which his overall performance is measured. Therefore, these relations will continue to occupy the highest priority.

From a strategic viewpoint, Eastern European and other countries in the security zone along the Soviet border have been and will remain the most important region for Soviet foreign policy. Because of mounting social and

economic problems in Poland, Afghanistan, and other countries of the region, and the continuing rivalry with China, Andropov may have to devote considerable attention there. He initially made a strong push to improve relations with China, but the impact on relations has been modest.

Western Europe has traditionally been a region of great significance for the Soviet Union. But it has not been particularly fertile grounds for Soviet gains. Now, because of U.S.-West European differences and growing disarmament sentiment, Soviet calculations may be changing. Andropov's most vigorous campaign has been aimed at Western Europe on the intermediate nuclear weapons (INF) issue. He has escalated Brezhnev's peace offensive into an all-out push to halt the deployment of U.S. intermediate range nuclear weapons.

East-West Relations and INF

Andropov's foreign policy has focused heavily on Western Europe in his first year. Following in Brezhnev's footsteps, but with even greater energy, Andropov has pursued four apparent objectives:

(1) To block the NATO deployment of INF. The Soviets kept up an intensive public campaign to get a unilateral reversal of NATO's 1979 decision taken (in response to Soviet SS-20 deployments) to deploy Pershings and cruise missiles. Since they have not been able to block INF deployments, their objective might be to make it as costly as possible in terms of future Western unity.

(2) They have sought to portray themselves as genuinely interested in negotiating arms control agreements. A series of proposals, though unacceptable to the West, were designed to show flexibility by Moscow at START, INF, MBFR, and CSCE talks. With the U.S. missile deployments in December 1983, the Soviets have walked out of all but the Stockholm negotiations.

(3) To drive a wedge between the U.S. and its allies. As a result of Western policy differences, the Soviets have seen a real opportunity for gains in Western Europe at the expense of the United States. They have tried to turn Western differences over arms control, East-West relations, and trade to their own advantage. They were probably encouraged by the fact that events such as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the crackdown in Poland, while carrying some price in strengthening Western unity to a degree, also had the counterbalancing effect of exarabating NATO differences as Western governments could not agree on the proper response. At the same time, Andropov sought to preserve the benefits of the Soviet detente relationship with Western Europe, despite the erosion of Moscow-Washington relations.

(4) To bring West European pressure to bear for the purpose of restoring U.S.-Soviet detente and redirecting U.S. policies in ways more advantageous for Moscow. The Soviets have hoped that West European governments would use their leverage with Washington to get the U.S. administration to be more conciliatory toward the Soviet Union.

The Andropov leadership has pursued its "peace offensive" in Europe with great intensity. Some observers now feel that the Soviets have overplayed their hand, and may have actually contributed to Western unity and resolve on the INF issue and beyond.

Problems on the Soviet Periphery

Poland and Eastern Europe

Andropov's most serious challenge is presented by the continuing crisis in Poland and growing strains elsewhere in Eastern Europe. These countries all face serious economic difficulties, necessitating tight austerity measures and creating prospects of stagnating or even declining living standards. These trends combined with existing social and political tensions could translate into growing popular unrest in a number of countries. In the face of these trends, the Soviets can move in one or more of the following directions:

(1) They could sharply increase their subsidy of East European economies by providing more energy and raw materials at cheap prices. This could take some of the political pressure off East European governments. But economic subsidies are becoming a less realistic option as the Soviet demand for resources grows, while resources become scarcer, and can be sold elsewhere for much needed hard currency.

(2) They could loosen their grip on Eastern Europe and allow greater autonomy for internal reform and diversified trade patterns. Such a move might help improve conditions in individual countries. At the least, it would reduce Soviet responsibility for conditions in those countries but at the expense of reduced Soviet influence.

(3) They could try to tighten controls (political and military) over the East European countries in order to contain potential unrest that might result from deteriorating economic conditions. This would involve pressure on East European governments to conform more rigidly to Soviet policies and the threat or ultimately the use of Soviet power to ensure stability.

Until now, there is no clear indication as to which of these options Andropov will favor. In the Polish case, there has been no hint of new assistance or increased subsidies and there have been pressures on the Jaruzelski regime to impose greater discipline. Recent articles in the Soviet media have been sharply critical of "liberals" in the Polish leadership, as well as alleged government leniency. Other press commentaries have criticized Romania's independent foreign policy. Both countries were unusually quick to reject Soviet criticism. It is not known whether these articles represent prevailing Soviet leadership views or whether they indicate a policy debate in Moscow.

On the other side of the ledger, there has been evidence that under Andropov economic reforms in Hungary, East Germany, and Bulgaria have been legitimized. Andropov's speech at the June 1983 Central Committee Plenum admitted to disagreements in the Socialist bloc. These differences have been dramatized by the difficulties in convening or reaching agreement at the COMECON summit meeting. But he also acknowledged the fact that there were historical and cultural reasons for differences between the Soviet Union and its allies which had to be accepted by Moscow.

Afghanistan

Andropov's initial moves on Afghanistan suggested that he might be seeking a negotiated settlement. Following the Brezhnev funeral, he met with the

leaders of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India to discuss the crisis. High level Soviet statements raised Western hopes that the Soviets might indeed be looking for a way out of their military involvement there. Several reports in the Western press even claimed that Andropov had been one of the dissenting voices when the Soviets made the decision to invade that country.

Further clarifications of Andropov's position on Afghanistan showed that his formal terms for getting out were the same as Brezhnev's. In Moscow's view, any solution essentially would have to preserve the status quo imposed on the country by the Soviet intervention in 1979. Despite this impasse, efforts continue to find a diplomatic solution. A United Nations initiative to end the war has been viewed positively by Soviet spokesmen. Chances for progress in these negotiations were seen as heightened by Pakistan's growing interest.

Meanwhile, the fighting in Afghanistan continues to be costly for the Soviets. Besides the direct costs of sustaining the war, they have had to face the consequences of increased isolation in the Third World. But to date, the evidence suggests that Andropov, as his predecessor, views the Afghanistan venture as being worth the cost, given Soviet security interests.

China

Before his death, Brezhnev made a serious bid to improve Sino-Soviet relations. This effort has been continued by Andropov. He met with the Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua on the occasion of Brezhnev's funeral. The Chinese foreign minister stayed on in Moscow for extensive talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko.

The Sino-Soviet dialogue continues. There have also been modest improvements in trade and cultural relations. Apparently neither country sees its interests as being served by continued bilateral tensions. This more businesslike relationship is already affecting U.S. interests. China can no longer automatically be counted as an ally in disputes with Moscow.

Yet Andropov is unlikely to achieve a major rapprochement with China in the foreseeable future. Too many Soviet and PRC interests and goals are in conflict. Differences on Vietnam and Southeast Asia, Afghanistan, and in the boundary dispute seem almost irreconcilable. He may be playing his "China card" in relations with the United States and Japan.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES

So far, Andropov's rise to power has coincided with a deterioration in the state of U.S.-Soviet relations. Frictions between the two countries once high, particularly since the KAL incident and the rupture of START, INF, and MBFR negotiations. Moscow continues to express deep concern over the U.S. defense build-up and has warned of Soviet countermeasures. The United States in turn has been angered by perceived Soviet intransigence on issues dividing the two countries. Thus far, Soviet leader Andropov has offered little on the main points of friction to ease tensions. If anything, he has raised the volume of anti-American rhetoric in response to harsh words from the Reagan Administration. The superpower dialogue continues on only at the Stockholm Conference on Confidence Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe (CDE) which opened in January 1984.

Yet Andropov may want and need improved relations with the United States

under the right conditions. The Soviet Union might see great benefits in a return to the U.S.-Soviet detente of the early 1970s, particularly if it included a lessened U.S. commitment to the defense buildup, resumption of extensive trade and economic cooperation, and a greater U.S. tolerance for an active Soviet role in dealing with various global and regional issues. Andropov's image and position in the Soviet Union would be strengthened if he could bring about a return to detente and get more positive treatment from the United States. Before the recent downturn in relations there have been numerous private comments and public signals of a desire to negotiate.

The question to which there is not yet an answer is what price Andropov would be willing to pay for improved U.S.-Soviet relations. Many Western analysts believe that the Soviets understand that they would have to make concessions to normalize relations. Because relations with the U.S. are so central to Moscow's interests, they believe that Andropov might be willing to pay a fairly high price. Some would go so far to say that the incentive of improved U.S.-Soviet relations could move the Soviets to reverse their policy on issues of concern to the United States, such as Afghanistan and Poland. In fact there is an argument sometimes voiced by Soviets that if U.S.-Soviet relations had been on a normal track there would not have been a Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the evolution in Poland might have been different or that the Soviets would have been less likely to shoot down the Korean airliner. As it was, according to this claim, the Soviets had nothing to lose in terms of the already ruptured U.S.-Soviet relationship, according to this view.

There may, however, be serious limits to the concessions Andropov would make for the sake of improved U.S. ties. The success of his policy toward the United States will not be measured by his colleagues only in terms of the warmth of relations. It is equally important that he not show weakness in his dealings with Washington. Therefore he is likely to drive a hard bargain in any negotiation. This need to look strong on Andropov's part will be a definite constraint against rapid improvement in U.S.-Soviet ties.

Those who hold out little hope for improved U.S.-Soviet relations under Andropov feel that these constraints will predominate. They argue that he will earn more points by standing up to the United States than by making concessions to restore closer ties.

Many observers, nevertheless, see this as a moment of opportunity in U.S.-Soviet relations. They believe that Soviet policies are more susceptible to change during this fluid period than once a new direction is set.

CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE
Politburo and Secretariat

POLITBURO

Name	Other Key Positions	Year of	
		Birth	Appointed
<u>MEMBERS</u>			
*Yuriy V. Andropov	General Secretary, CPSU Central Committee,	1914	1973
*Konstantin U. Chernenko	Secretary, CPSU Central Committee	1911	1978
*Mikhail S. Gorbachev	Secretary, CPSU Central Committee	1931	1980
*Grigoriy V. Romanov	First Secretary, Leningrad Oblast Party Committee	1923	1976
Viktor V. Grishin	First Secretary, Moscow City Party Committee	1914	1971
Andrey A. Gromyko	USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs	1909	1973
Geydar A. Aliyev	Secretary, CPSU Central Committee	1923	1983
Dinnukhamed A. Kunayev	First Secretary, Central Committee, CP of Kazakhstan	1912	1971
Vladimir V. Shcherbitskiy	First Secretary, Central Committee, CP of the Ukraine	1918	1971
Nikolay A. Tikhonov	Chmn, USSR Council of Ministers	1905	1979
Dmitriy F. Ustinov	USSR Minister of Defense	1908	1976

CANDIDATE MEMBERS

Petr N. Demichev	USSR Minister of Culture	1918	1964
Vladimir I. Dolgikh	Secretary, CPSU Central Committee	1924	1982
Tikhon Y. Kiselev	First Secretary, Central Committee, CP of Belorussia	1917	1980
Vasiliy V. Kuznetsov	First Deputy, Chmn, Presidium, USSR Supreme Soviet	1901	1977
Boris N. Ponomarev	Secretary, CPSU Central Committee	1905	1972
Sharaf R. Rashidov	First Secretary, Central Committee, CP of Uzbekistan	1917	1961
Eduard A. Shevardnadze	First Secretary, Central Committee, CP of Georgia	1928	1978
Mikhail S. Solomentsev	Chmn, RSFSR Council of Ministers	1913	1971
Vitaliy I. Vorontnikov		1926	1983

*Member of both the Politburo and Secretariat

SECRETARIAT

GENERAL SECRETARY: Yuriy Andropov

OTHER MEMBERS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Other Key Positions</u>	<u>Year of Birth</u>	<u>Year Appointed</u>
Yuriy V. Andropov	Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1914	1982
Konstantin U. Chernenko	Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1911	1976
Vladimir I. Dolgikh	Candidate Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1924	1972
Mikhail S. Gorbachev	Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1931	1978
Ivan V. Kapitanov	Chief, Organizational Party Work Dept, CPSU Central Committee	1915	1965
Grigoriy V. Romanov	Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1923	1983
Boris N. Ponomarev	Candidate Member, Politburo, CPSU Central Committee	1905	1961
Konstantin V. Rusakov	Chief, Liaison with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries	1909	1977
Nikolay I. Ryzhkov		1929	1983
Mikhail V. Zimyanin	Chief, Propaganda and Ideology	1914	1976