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Brezhnev's Struggle for Dominance

~~Annex~~ to
(Leonid Brezhnev: The Man and His Power)

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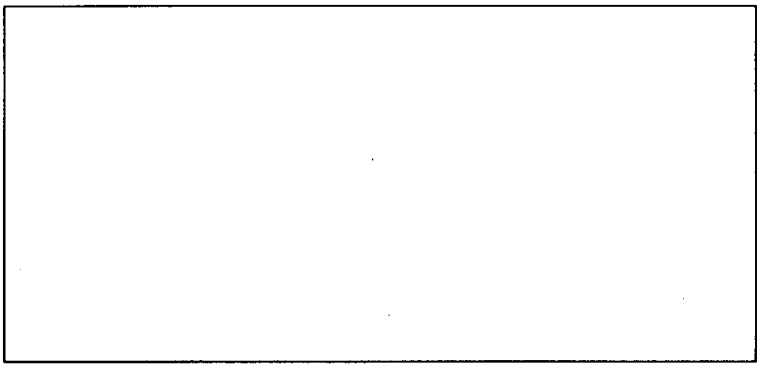

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BREZHNEV'S STRUGGLE FOR DOMINANCE

ANNEX TO CAESAR XXXVII
(Leonid Brezhnev: The Man and His Power)

MEMORANDUM TO RECIPIENTS:

This Annex lays out and analyzes in detail the evidence concerning Brezhnev's modus operandi in achieving and consolidating power in the Soviet hierarchy.

The Annex is published for those who might desire to pursue the subject in some depth. The analysis and conclusions found in this Annex are consistent with the basic study, but, unlike that study, the Annex has not been coordinated or reviewed in detail by other offices.

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BREZHNEV'S STRUGGLE FOR DOMINANCE

ANNEX TO
(Leonid Brezhnev: The Man and His Power)

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INTRODUCTION

Brezhnev has decided advantages over other Soviet leaders by virtue of his supreme party position. As de facto chairman of the Politburo, the General Secretary can and does preside over its operation and exert a deciding influence on the direction of policy. As chief of the party Secretariat, he is in a better position than any other leader to manipulate the executive machinery for personal gain--primarily through appointments of clients to key posts in the party and state apparatus. Finally, as the man in control of the military hierarchy and police forces, the General Secretary can call on the organizations of coercion for self-protection in the name of regime security. Nevertheless, the lesson of Khrushchev's removal was that none of these powers can be taken for granted. To maintain his power, a General Secretary must strive for dominance over his colleagues and, at the same time, not appear to threaten the survival of the oligarchy; otherwise, he falls prey to his political rivals.

This study is concerned with how Brezhnev has perceived his position within the oligarchy and maneuvered to consolidate his personal power. It examines his efforts to this end in three arenas of political action: the party Secretariat, the party-government duumvirate, and the amorphous military-security complex. The most important arena--and Brezhnev has appeared to recognize it as such--as been the Secretariat, where senior secretaries Podgornyy and Shelepin seemed to wield more actual power in the first months after Khrushchev's fall than the General Secretary himself. The paper follows Brezhnev's struggle for dominance over his secretarial rivals, beginning with his first tenuous moves within the Central Committee apparatus in late 1964, continuing with his assertive thrust for recognition during most of 1965, and reaching the breakthrough in December that year with Podgornyy's transfer from the Secretariat. It examines Brezhnev's use of indirect methods to neutralize Shelepin as a threat

in that body. Finally, it traces Brezhnev's fostering of Kirilenko as "second in command," bringing relative stability to the Secretariat after 1967.

Another important area of potential danger to the General Secretary is his shared-power relationship with Premier Kosygin. Because this subject has been treated fairly exhaustively elsewhere, the study focuses on the essentials of this aspect of Brezhnev's struggle--primarily on his effort to gain and hold the preeminent position in the duumvirate.

Finally, this study investigates Brezhnev's method of dealing with the regime's two biggest instruments of power--the military and the security organizations. It covers the highlights of his variable fortunes with a military organization that is divided roughly into two groupings: the advocates of conventional armaments and a flexible-response strategy whom Brezhnev apparently has favored, and the proponents of an overwhelming missile-oriented deterrent force. The paper concludes with a discussion of Brezhnev's conspicuously successful drive to consolidate an already strong influence within the security organizations--the KGB and MVD--and among their party watchdogs.

THE MAIN ARENA: THE PARTY SECRETARIAT

Brezhnev, like Khrushchev before him, was bound to show a healthy respect for the political threat which his senior secretarial colleagues, particularly his "second in command," could pose. At the time of Khrushchev's ouster, the Secretariat included three full members of the Politburo in addition to Brezhnev: Podgornyy ("second in command" by virtue of his responsibility for party organization), Suslov, and Kirilenko. From the outset, Podgornyy must have figured in Brezhnev's thinking as the one to watch. A favored member of Khrushchev's leadership, Podgornyy had had an opportunity to build a strong power base within the party, and his past political views were somewhat at odds with Brezhnev's. Thus, the potential for rivalry between the two leaders was already high. Suslov, despite continuous membership on the Secretariat since 1947 and consequent prestige and influence among party functionaries, had specialized in foreign Communist policy--his views being quite close to Brezhnev's, judging by the public record--and seemed to lack the ambition to bid for the top party post. Kirilenko, the industrial watchdog with whom Brezhnev had worked closely throughout most of their careers, appeared to present the least immediate cause for concern, since much of his political base was also Brezhnev's. The balance within the Secretariat was, therefore, inherently unstable, and maneuvering for political power in that body would occur in its most concentrated form.

Early Adversity for Brezhnev

Podgornyy showed his hand early, just one month after Khrushchev's ouster, in monopolizing the first Central Committee plenum without the deposed leader. The plenum, on 16 November, heard Podgornyy deliver the only report --on reunification of the party as it existed before Khrushchev split it into industrial and agricultural organizations in 1962. Brezhnev did not speak at the plenum at all. Thus, as spokesman for the new regime, Podgornyy

garnered the credit for overturning one of the most unpopular actions of the old regime.

Podgornyy's influence at the plenum also was indicated in the personnel actions which it approved. By far the most important of these was the promotion of Party Secretary Shelepin to full membership in the Politburo, thus increasing the number of senior secretaries under Brezhnev to four. Shelepin's addition to the elite group of party administrators complicated Brezhnev's position considerably. Brezhnev was not extremely popular within the party at the lower levels, and Shelepin had the reputation of a brilliant young "comer."* Moreover Shelepin's responsibility in the Secretariat for supervision of the "administrative organs"--including the security forces, the legal apparatus, and the military--already had made him a figure to reckon with, and his promotion had the effect of seriously impinging on Brezhnev's authority in these areas in the Politburo. Taken together, Podgornyy and Shelepin represented a real threat to Brezhnev's position.**

*Several reports during the first months of the regime took the line that Brezhnev and Kosygin were caretakers and would soon be replaced. One [redacted] even claimed that Brezhnev had agreed to serve as party chief only one year. While unconfirmed, this report would tend to explain the organizational stalemate of Brezhnev until the late summer of 1965.

**A coalition between Podgornyy and Shelepin was more than a theoretical possibility, considering the circumstances of Shelepin's rise. His spectacular leaps up the party ladder in the early 1960s were due, no doubt, to Khrushchev's boosting, but they coincided with similar support from Khrushchev for Podgornyy and with a period of adversity for Brezhnev. Two close associates of Podgornyy--V.M. Churayev and V.N. Titov--had dominated party personnel matters during this period, when Khrushchev was looking for new blood to replace the old in the body politic. Thus, "Young Turks" like Shelepin and Demichev

(footnote continued on page 5)

In fact, the common denominator in the careers of officials whom the November plenum promoted was an apparent association with Podgornyy or Shelepin--more than with any other top leader. Thus Podgornyy's close Ukrainian associate, Petr Shelest, advanced from candidate to fudl member of the Politburo. Party Secretary Demichev received the rank of Politburo candidate member. Eight other officials at a lower level formed something of a mixed bag but included such known or presumed associates of Podgornyy and Shelepin as V. Ye. Semichastnyy, A.A. Yepishev, I.K. Lutak, and P.M. Masherov.* In any case, Brezhnev's influence in the personnel actions of the plenum was slight.

An important action which the November plenum confirmed, the appointment of A.M. Rumyantsev as editor-in-chief of Pravda, also traced to the influence of Podgornyy. Rumyantsev had been associated with Podgornyy in the Ukrainian party organization, and during his 10-month stint as editor of Pravda the newspaper's editorial line most closely reflected the views of Podgornyy. It should be noted, however, that Rumyantsev also worked for several

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joined Podgornyy in giving Khrushchev his strongest support against political opposition, while more senior, orthodox leaders like Brezhnev and Suslov withheld support or equivocated on a number of controversial issues. (However, during 1965 Shelepin took a more conservative position and, as this study shows, did not hesitate to sacrifice some of Podgornyy's political supporters.)

*Two others, V.F. Zhigalin and V.I. Konotop, have had no known direct ties with Podgornyy or Shelepin, but each has a connection--however small--with Podgornyy's bailiwick of Khar'kov: Zhigalin is a Supreme Soviet deputy with a Khar'kov constituency, and Konotop graduated from an institute there. The political associations of the other two, G.I. Popov and G.F. Sizov, are unclear.

years with Suslov as a party theoretician, specializing in foreign Communist relations during the latter part of Khrushchev's rule.*

The November plenum approved the dismissal of Khrushchev's protege, V.I. Polyakov, as party secretary and chief of the Central Committee Department of Agriculture, thus creating two openings in the apparatus. Brezhnev apparently made use of his prerogative as party boss to appoint Fedor Kulakov to head the Agriculture Department. The circumstances surrounding the posting of Kulakov, who worked closely with Politburo member Polyanskiy during the 1950s,and probably owed his rise to him, are not clear.** Conceivably, Polyanskiy recommended that Brezhnev appoint Kulakov before the November plenum in order to smooth the way for the release of Polyakov from the Secretariat. On the other hand, they could have tried and failed at the plenum to win Kulakov's acceptance in both the departmental and the secretariat posts; the plenum might have approved the first position for Kulakov but reserved judgment on the second. Or Brezhnev may simply have waited until after the plenum had approved the party reunification before making any appointments. In any case, Kulakov failed to win election to the Secretariat at the next opportunity--the March 1965 plenum--and, like his patron, Deputy Premier Polyanskiy, he marked time politically until the following September, when Brezhnev stook on firmer ground.

In another high-level personnel action, Brezhnev's first deputy for agriculture on the RSFSR Bureau, Politburo

*The fact that Rumyantsev was one of Brezhnev's first victims in the fall of 1965, when the latter had consolidated his position, indicated that no love was lost between the two.

**Soviet biographic sources indicate only that it became effective sometime in November.

candidate member Leonid Yefremov, went to Stavropol' in early December to take over as party chief in place of the transferred Kulakov.* It was unclear who among the top leaders had the closest ties to Yefremov and therefore suffered most directly from this manifest demotion. Yefremov's promotion to deputy chairman of the RSFSR Bureau in December 1962, after a particularly zealous defense of Khrushchev's policies in November, may have been due to the influence of V.N. Titov and ultimately to Podgornyy (the Podgornyy-Titov relationship is discussed below). In any case, Brezhnev's attitude toward the ardent Khrushchev supporter could well have been unfavorable. Yefremov had come under attack just after the November 1964 plenum in Sel'skaya Zhizn', a Central Committee newspaper which has usually reflected the views of Polyanskiy. It is conceivable that Brezhnev connived with Polyanskiy to get rid of Yefremov. In any case, Brezhnev did not appoint a replacement for him as deputy chairman of the bureau. Politburo member Voronov, who was also a member of the RSFSR Bureau, may have blocked such an appointment, being denied it himself.**

Responding to the Challengers

In contrast to his inconspicuous role at the November 1964 plenum, Brezhnev was prominent at the agricultural

*This was one of several personnel changes in December which were to figure in later maneuvering as Brezhnev consolidated his position. See ahead, pp

**In one respect, the entire issue of the RSFSR Bureau was tangential to the power equation, since of the top leaders only Kirilenko functioned full-time on it after Yefremov departed. Brezhnev never appeared in public activities of the bureau and was not even identified as chairman until July 1965--again, only after he began vigorously to assert himself against Podgornyy and Shelepin.

plenum in March 1965. He opened the plenum, delivered the report, and gave a closing speech after discussion by Central Committee members. On three occasions he interrupted speakers (as Khrushchev used to do in a display of authority) with his personal judgments, and he was elected to chair the commission for drawing up the plenum's formal decree. At the same time, however, Podgornyy's position of "second in command" was reflected in his presiding at each session of the plenum.* It is also noteworthy that the fact of Brezhnev's dominance at the plenum was only revealed in the stenographic record, which was signed to the press on 7 August and did not appear until September.

Despite his prominent role at the plenum, Brezhnev made few if any organizational gains from its decisions. The transfer of Ustinov and the entire defense-industry complex from the jurisdiction of the Council of Ministers to the Secretariat seemed to have the effect of making him accountable to Brezhnev rather than Kosygin. However, this move did not perceptibly improve Brezhnev's position vis-a-vis the senior secretaries. The plenum's approval of the dismissal of Party Secretary Il'ichev served the interest primarily of Suslov, whom Khrushchev had tried to undercut through Il'ichev. It became apparent soon after the March plenum that Demichev had assumed Il'ichev's secretarial responsibilities for ideological matters, and although Brezhnev probably viewed Demichev as a trustworthy subordinate, the move did not detract from the considerable influence Shelepin had in the propaganda apparatus.**

*In the past, the number two man usually had presided for the first session only, and the honor of presiding over subsequent sessions was shared by other Politburo members.

**Il'ichev's propaganda apparatus had been staffed with a number of Shelepin's former associates, especially from the Komsomol. In early 1965, these included the heads of TASS, Novosti Press Agency, Trud, and the government committees for Radio and Television, the Press, and Cultural

(footnote continued on page 9)

Moreover, the other major personnel action which the March plenum approved, while outside the Secretariat, also appeared to the political advantage of Shelepin: this was the promotion of Kirill Mazurov to full membership on the Politburo and his advancement, over the head of the senior deputy premier Polyanskiy, to first deputy premier.*

It was, nevertheless, clear that by March the balance of power had shifted somehow in Brezhnev's favor. The power relationships which had been taking shape in the Secretariat in early 1965 were manifested in a sharpening of policy lines in open debates on a variety of issues, but notably economic policy and Stalin's place in history. In general terms, the debates revealed a split among policymakers between "moderates" who favored a continuation of Khrushchevian policies and "neo-Stalinists" who advocated a return to more orthodoxy in party policy. In Khrushchev's time and through most of 1965, Podgornyy was a leading spokesman for the moderate line, while Shelepin and Suslov adopted a more orthodox position. Brezhnev apparently determined early that the balance within the leadership, in the reaction against Khrushchev's policies, would tend toward a consolidation of the more

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Relations With Foreign Countries. Within the Central Committee apparatus they dominated the RSFSR Agitprop Department; in addition, one was RSFSR deputy premier for ideological questions, and two others held the positions of Minister and Deputy Minister of Culture RSFSR. Although Demichev replaced the heads of a large percentage of the propaganda positions by late 1965, most of these Shelepin associates remained. Thus, despite some additions of Brezhnev and Suslov proteges to these posts during 1965, Demichev's restaffing did not perceptibly reduce Shelepin's strong influence in the public media.

*Mazurov had worked closely with Shelepin for a number of years in the Komsomol, and the relationship between them could date even to the 1940s, when they were involved in wartime partisan activities.

orthodox forces, and although he took a cautious position on most issues, his statements reflected a basically neo-Stalinist approach.

The first strong indication that Podgornyy's political position might be or come in question had appeared in an obscure argument in the Central Committee economic weekly, Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta, involving Podgornyy's former bailiwick Khar'kov. The lead editorial of the weekly for 24 February 1965 criticized the party leadership in Khar'kov for poor economic work, and a major article by Brezhnev's political ally, V.V. Shcherbitskiy, in the same issue praised the economic record in Dneprodzerzhinsk, which was Brezhnev's birthplace and political stronghold. The implication of the articles was that priority would be given to the heavy-industrial sector, which the Dneprodzerzhinsk area represented and Brezhnev had favored, at the expense of light industry and consumer goods, which Podgornyy had championed and Khar'kov symbolized.*

*Other signs of Podgornyy's growing political isolation surfaced soon thereafter, notably when Suslov and even Mikoyan in public speeches in May rejected the economic priorities advocated by Podgornyy a few days earlier. Further, a Central Committee decree in July singled out Khar'kov in a criticism of Khrushchev's open door policy in party admissions. The criticism applied especially to V.M. Churayev and V.N. Titov, who used the policy to undermine the older and more orthodox members of the party leadership, including Brezhnev and Suslov. The decree was additionally adverse to Podgornyy since he was the party secretary responsible in 1965 for organizational matters. The decree symbolized Brezhnev's break from his past association with the Khar'kovite Churayev, who in the 1950s had been an apparent supporter of Brezhnev and the then Politburo member Aristov. It also was an implied slap at Shelepin and other newcomers whom Churayev and Titov had promoted in the early 1960s when Khrushchev was looking for more loyal political support.

The most serious political setback for Podgornyy, however, came with the April transfer of his fellow secretary and protege, V.N. Titov, to the post of Kazakh Central Committee second secretary. This was a clear demotion for Titov, who would consequently lose his position on the Secretariat and, equally important, his post as chief of the Party Organs Department. Podgornyy remained nominally "second in command" but lacked Titov's support in the Secretariat and apparatus, which became an arena for maneuvering between Brezhnev and Shelepin. Although one of Titov's deputies, Ivan Ryazanov, soon departed for "the periphery" to a relatively minor state post, Podgornyy maintained a foothold in the department through Titov's first deputy, Petr Pigalev.*

The circumstances surrounding Titov's shift suggest that it was a power play by Brezhnev which, as in the compromise appointment of Kulakov in November, was intended to bypass the normal decisionmaking machinery for such high-level moves--the Central Committee plenum. The groundwork had been laid in December for Titov's eventual replacement, although there was no direct evidence of a design on Brezhnev's part to present a fait accompli to the March plenum. Thus, Ivan Kapitonov was brought to Moscow from the provinces to head the Central Committee's Department for RSFSR Party Organs, one of the first moves,

*Titov's positions remained vacant until Ivan Kapitonov was officially confirmed in them in December 1965 at the same plenum which abolished Shelepin's Party-State Control Committee and transferred Shelepin to full-time work in the Secretariat. Pigalev himself remained in the department until the 23d Party Congress, when he became chief of a department of Podgornyy's Supreme Soviet Presidium --a good example of a Soviet leader looking after his own. The removal of Titov, Pigalev, and Ryazanov from the Party Organs Department signaled an end to the era of its control by Shelepin and Podgornyy.

incidentally, to foreshadowna return to favor of officials who had suffered political setbacks under Khrushchev.* Also in December, V.V. Skryabin was removed as Rostov party chief and placed "at the disposal of the Central Committee," his position being assumed by the second secretary of the Kazakh Central Committee, Mikhail Solomentsev.** Against this background, the belated transfer of Titov to Kazakhstan, less than two weeks after the March plenum, bore the signs of an administrative decision on the part of the Politburo or the General Secretary himself. Nevertheless, Kapitonov was not officially confirmed in Titov's secretariat and departmental positions until Podgornyy's "election" to the presidency in December 1965.

Since Titov's removal did not immediately resolve the deadlock in the Secretariat, uneasy maneuvering continued. Il'ichev's and Titov's secretarial responsibilities for ideological matters and party organization were reassigned, respectively, to Demichev and (probably) Rudakov. This indicated that Brezhnev intended to continue, for

*Former Moscow Oblast First Secretary Kapitonov had been exiled to Ivanovo in 1959, a time when the then "second in command," Aleksey Kirichenko, as well as Brezhnev and others, were losing ground to such rivals as Kozlov and Podgornyy. Kapitonov's return probably was due to the patronage of Brezhnev, Suslov, and possibly Kirilenko.

**Skryabin had been a close associate of both Brezhnev and Kirilenko in the Ukrainian party organization and was well placed for advancement; however, he has not reappeared in any prominent position and failed of Central Committee reelection at the 23d Party Congress in April 1966. Like Kapitonov, Solomentsev appeared to owe his allegiance primarily to Brezhnev and Suslov.

the time being at any rate, to cultivate the support of certain of the younger generation of secretaries most closely associated with the rise of Shelepin.*

In addition, Brezhnev began in the summer of 1965 to make extensive changes in the Central Committee apparatus, especially where Podgornyy or Shelepin had had supervisory responsibilities. Not all the changes resulted in the displacement of their proteges, but several close associates of Brezhnev took command of important departments. Brezhnev's influence in the moves was particularly clear regarding the two departments most directly involved in administering internal Central Committee affairs--the General Department and the Administration of Affairs. Konstantin Chernenko became chief of the General Department officially in July, having served since 1960 as chief of Brezhnev's secretariat on the Supreme Soviet Presidium and (probably) of Brezhnev's personal staff on the Central Committee Secretariat. In the Administration of Affairs, Georgiy Pavlov replaced K.P. Chernyayev as chief, perhaps in July when Chernyayev last appeared in this role. Pavlov had studied and worked with Brezhnev in Dneprodzerzhinsk in the 1930s and probably maintained political ties later; for example, he became party chief in an RSFSR oblast soon after Brezhnev's position on the Secretariat and Politburo improved in the showdown with the "anti-party group" in 1957. Brezhnev apparently was satisfied with the personnel in the Central Committee departments involved in defense-related and security work, since they were virtually untouched. Most

*Rudakov for years had supervised heavy industry, and the evidence that he took on Titov's duties in party organization is tenuous. In April, Rudakov received a Czech delegation which had been in the Soviet Union studying CPSU experience in party organizational matters. In July, he attended a Turkmen Central Committee plenum which discussed the recruitment, assignment, and training of leading party officials.

of their chiefs had been since the late 1950s in the same posts, where they may have been supervised or even nominated by Brezhnev.

During the summer of 1965, Brezhnev and Suslov apparently tried to prevent Shelepin from increasing his influence over the propaganda media. In late June, three of Shelepin's cronies from his Komsomol reign--S.K. Romanovskiy, N.A. Mikhaylov, and A.M. Subbotin--were rumored to be leading candidates to fill the vacancy of Izvestiya chief editor which Stepakov's transfer to the Agitprop Department created. By this account, the final decision was pending Demichev's return from vacation in mid-July, but as it turned out a decision was announced only at the end of September, when Lev Tolkunov was transferred to the Izvestiya post from the Bloc Department (in which he had risen to prominence under Suslov and Andropov). Less than two weeks earlier, Pravda's editor-in-chief Rumyantsev had been replaced in the wake of a controversial article espousing the moderate line. Rumyantsev's replacement, Mikhail Zimyanin, appeared to be a compromise candidate, having career ties with Shelepin, Mazurov, and Suslov among the Politburo members.

By the end of summer, numerous rumors circulating in Moscow suggested that the "talented" Shelepin was about to take over from a passive and incompetent Brezhnev in a major upheaval of the top leadership. The origin of these rumors was usually obscure, although some traced to dubious sources of the KGB or to elements hostile to the Soviet regime. Many may have been purely speculative opinions based on a projection of Shelepin's meteoric career. In any case, the only tangible indicator that he might, in fact, have been bidding for the supreme party post at that time was the publication of several articles in the specialized press favoring an upgrading of Shelepin's Party-State Control Committee. These articles implied a threat to the party control apparatus--already significantly atrophied from Khrushchev's time--by arguing that the party-state control apparatus should coordinate the efforts of all organizations involved in "control" activity, rather than serve in tandem with the party control organization as the regulations stipulated. Whatever the actual

circumstances surrounding the rumored Shelepin takeover --which remain unclear to this day--Brezhnev's placement of proteges in the Central Committee apparatus contradicted the characterization of him as a passive figurehead.

In this highly fluid situation, when Shelepin appeared to be pressing for advantage, Brezhnev became increasingly assertive in establishing the authority of the General Secretary. Early in September, Brezhnev went alone to Poland for his fourth round of talks with Gomulka since Khrushchev's ouster; Kosygin had chaperoned him the first three times. The stenographic account of the March Central Committee plenum, which showed Brezhnev in a very favorable light, appeared at the same time (it had been signed to the press on 7 August, after an apparent delay in passing the censor, since it had been set in type by 3 June). The 1965 Yearbook of the Large Soviet Encyclopedia, which contained the first identification of Brezhnev as chairman of the RSFSR Bureau, was available about two weeks later, on the eve of a Central Committee plenum at which Brezhnev would further consolidate his position.

The outcome of the September Central Committee plenum and the Supreme Soviet session which immediately followed the plenum indicated that Brezhnev was able finally to surmount the earlier observed obstacles to consolidation. The plenum approved the election of Agriculture Department Chief Kulakov to the Secretariat, filling the vacancy that had existed almost one year. It also formally dismissed Titov as party secretary for organizational questions, without, however, designating a replacement. It probably also confirmed the appointments of Zimyanin and Tolkunov as chief editors of Pravda and Izvestiya, although this was not offically announced, and approved the organizational changes which the Supreme Soviet session was to ratify. The most important of the session's appointments was the promotion of Polyanskiy to first deputy premier, presumably reflecting a shift in the leadership in Brezhnev's favor. One of Brezhnev's oldest and closest associates from the Ukraine, Nikolay Tikhonov, was among the three new deputy premiers whom the session appointed. Less important, but still significant as indicators of Brezhnev's

increased stature in the party leadership, were the plenum's confirmation of him as the main rapporteur to the 23d Party Congress six months later, and the session's election of him as a member of the Supreme Soviet Presidium.*

One of the minor personnel changes at the session fit into a larger scheme of maneuvering between Brezhnev and Podgornyy. This was the naming of Ukrainian Premier Kazanets to the post of Minister of Ferrous Metallurgy, which opened the door to the appointment of V.V. Shcherbitskiy to the Ukrainian premiership, the position he had lost to Kazanets in 1963. Although it was Khrushchev who had attacked Shcherbitskiy at that time and probably insisted on his transfer to the lesser position of oblast party boss in Dnepropetrovsk, Podgornyy had seemed to be the main beneficiary of the 1963 move among the members of the Politburo and Secretariat.** It seemed clear, at any rate, that Shcherbitskiy looked to Brezhnev for support. The fact that Shcherbitskiy found refuge in Brezhnev's bailiwick of Dnepropetrovsk may have been more than symbolic

*Brezhnev's position on the state Presidium, as well as the elevation of his adopted ally Polyanskiy to first deputy premier, may have increased Brezhnev's leverage on the government side sufficiently to allow setting up the shifts of Podgornyy and Shelepin, discussed below. The published decision to hold the 23d Congress in early 1966 marked the start of jockeying for Central Committee positions at both high and low levels.

**Kazanets, prior to displacing Shcherbitskiy, had been Podgornyy's second secretary. Another Ukrainian party leader who rose to prominence under Podgornyy and presumably gave him political support, Petr Shelest, became Ukrainian first secretary. Shelest did not achieve the status of full Politburo member that traditionally went with the top Ukrainian party post, perhaps because Ukrainians already held several votes on the body. Thus, the candidate membership slot which Shcherbitskiy had held went to Shelest rather than to Kazanets.

of their past career association. Shcherbitskiy, who has been an outspoken advocate of Brezhnev's policies, regained his candidate membership on the Politburo at the first opportunity after reappointment as Ukrainian premier--at the same December 1965 Central Committee plenum that eased Podgornyy into the relatively toothless presidency. By contrast, Kazanets had failed--presumably due to Brezhnev's opposition--to achieve Politburo status even after Shelest's advance in November 1964 had created a vacancy at the candidate level.

The December 1965 Breakthrough

The December 1965 Central Committee plenum signaled a major breakthrough for Brezhnev in his drive for total control of the Secretariat, It abolished Shelepin's Party-State Control Committee in circumstances suggesting a rubber-stamp approval of a fait accompli. Thus Brezhnev delivered an informational report ("soobshcheniye") rather than the normal report for discussion ("doklad"), and the plenum communique listed no one as having spoken on it. Regarding personnel matters, the plenum approved the appointment of Kapitonov as party secretary (and chief of the Party-Organizational Work Department) and reelected Shcherbitskiy a candidate member of the Politburo.

A Supreme Soviet session subsequently tidied up the organizational picture, of which the plenum's dissolution of the Party-State Control Committee had been only one part. Podgornyy's replacement of the semi-retiring Mikoyan, whose departure from the presidency a number of sources had predicted since late 1964, meant giving up his "second in command" position on the Secretariat.*

*Although not officially relieved of his secretarial duties until the 23d Party Congress the following April, Podgornyy had ceased to function in this capacity after becoming president.

Shelepin, having been deprived of the post of Party-State Control Committee chairman, was released as deputy premier to work full-time in the Secretariat, assuming Podgornyy's number two slot. The session also confirmed the earlier appointment, dating to 13 November, of Mikhail Yefremov as a deputy premier.* However, despite the overall gain for Brezhnev, Shelepin's assumption of the "second in command" secretarial duties placed him in an improved position to build a larger base of political support.

Dominating the 23d Party Congress

Brezhnev went into the 23d Party Congress from a position of relative strength, with Suslov and Shelepin the only senior secretaries serving in a full-time capacity. By the end of the congress, when Podgornyy had been officially released and Kirilenko added to the Secretariat, Brezhnev's position appeared even stronger. The Congress, like the March 1965 Central Committee plenum, was Brezhnev's show. He opened it, delivered the main report, and received the highest protocol honors at every opportunity. He received the title of General Secretary (which only Stalin before him had held) rather than the less prestigious "First Secretary." At the close of the congress, Brezhnev announced his own "unanimous" election as General Secretary and Politburo member by a plenum of the newly chosen Central Committee, as well as the composition of

*Yefremov's appointment, so soon after extensive additions at the deputy premier level in October, had suggested high-level maneuvering. His infrequent public appearances have indicated his involvement in administering certain sensitive areas of industry and transport, security, etc. Thus, he appears to have taken up some or all the government duties that Shelepin had; this would indicate that the December shifts in responsibilities in the Secretariat had been decided in late October or early November.

the rest of the Politburo and the Secretariat in hierarchical order.

Brezhnev's list of the top leaders was out of alphabetical order and presumably represented the pecking order. The stenographic record of the congress, which gave also the officially approved registration of applause (not necessarily accurately reflecting actual applause), showed that Brezhnev ranked Suslov higher than either Shelepin or Kirilenko in both the Secretariat and the Politburo:

> General Secretary of the Central Committee, and member of the Politburo: Brezhnev (stormy, long unabating applause).
>
> Members of the Politburo:
>
> Kosygin (stormy, prolonged applause);
> Podgornyy (stormy, prolonged applause);
> Suslov (stormy, prolonged applause);
> Voronov (applause);
> Kirilenko (applause);
> Shelepin (applause);
> Mazurov (applause);
> Polyanskiy (applause);
> Shelest (applause); and
> Pel'she (applause).
>
> Candidate members of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee:
>
> Demichev (applause);
> Grishin (applause);
> Mzhavanadze (applause);
> Rashidov (applause);
> Ustinov (applause);
> Shcherbitskiy (applause);
> Kunayev (applause);
> Masherov (applause).

Secretaries of the Central Committee:*

Brezhnev	Andropov
Suslov	Ponomarev
Shelepin	Kapitonov
Kirilenko	Kulakov
Demichev	Rudakov
Ustinov	

An early sign of Suslov's high rank in the Secretariat had appeared at the beginning of the congress, in his presiding at the first session--a function traditionally associated with the "second in command." His status thus received a further boost from the fact that in Brezhnev's list, Shelepin ranked higher than Kirilenko in the Secretariat but lower in the Politburo. This treatment of the long-time specialist in international Communist affairs vis-a-vis the two organizational strongmen on the Secretariat served to heighten Brezhnev's prominence by placing the General Secretary an extra step above the senior secretary (or secretaries) in line for control of personnel assignments.

Ferment Among the Senior Secretaries: Shelepin's Isolation

Kirilenko's addition to the Secretariat, which resulted from the abolition of the Bureau for the RSFSR and transfer of its functions and personnel to the central apparatus, required a reshuffling of portfolios within the Secretariat. In the immediate post-congress period, Shelepin devoted more and more time to supervising party work in light industry and consumer goods (duties which Podgornyy had had also but which were secondary to his party organizational assignment). The activities of Suslov and Kirilenko throughout most of 1966 betrayed nothing

*Individual applause for secretaries was not registered in the stenographic record.

very new about their responsibilities but seemed to indicate that the two continued their previous involvement in, respectively, foreign Communist relations and RSFSR industry. Conceivably, Brezhnev had not proposed or achieved Politburo agreement on a "second in command" at this time. Brezhnev apparently did not find a way out of the deadlock among the senior secretaries for some time, during which the rivals for undisputed second place jockeyed inconclusively for position.

Brezhnev and Kirilenko may have joined forces against Shelepin in late July 1966 to forestall the appointment of Vadim Tikunov as chief of the newly centralized militia. Tikunov, most closely associated with Shelepin, Mazurov, and Demichev in the past, had been a shoo-in for the post. As the top militia official before the centralization was announced on 26 July, Tikunov had led a major crime campaign during late 1965 and early 1966 and had won Kosygin's public support for increased anti-crime measures. Nevertheless, the 2-3 August session of the Supreme Soviet, in ratifying the establishment of the new militia ministry, failed to appoint Tikunov its head. After almost two months' delay, the position went to Nikolay Shchelokov, whose career in the Ukraine and Moldavia must have brought him to the attention of Brezhnev and Kirilenko. Tikunov discreetly faded into the woodwork.

The appointment of Mikhail Solomentsev in November 1966 as chief of the Central Committee's Heavy Industry Department in place of the deceased Secretary Rudakov was symbolic of the standstill in the Secretariat. Solomentsev had appeared closer to Suslov than to Brezhnev and Kirilenko. Brezhnev may have had doubts about Solomentsev's loyalties since 1962, when a purge of Brezhnev's protege Kunayev in Kazakhstan resulted in the promotion of Solomentsev in the new Kazakh regime. Also, Solomentsev replaced a close associate of Brezhnev and Kirilenko, V.V. Skryabin, as Rostov party chief in late 1964; Suslov presided over

the move.* Another indication that Brezhnev and Kirilenko may have been at odds with Solomentsev was the September 1965 publicity given to a decree of the RSFSR Bureau--led by Brezhnev and Kirilenko--which criticized the Rostov party leadership, and thus implicitly Solomentsev, for allowing an "overemphasis" on heavy industrial production.** Against this background, Solomentsev's election to the Secretariat in December 1966--one month after his appointment as chief of the Heavy Industry Department--seemed to indicate that Suslov and others had prevailed in the Secretariat, at least on this issue at this time.

Brezhnev gave every indication throughout most of 1966 and early 1967 of being relatively satisfied with his position of preeminence in the Secretariat. However, his success in placing his protege Shchelokov in the top militia post at Shelepin's expense may have encouraged him to strike a second blow at his main rival's power base in the security forces. It is even conceivable that Shchelokov, since taking over the militia, had uncovered damaging evidence against his counterpart in the KGB, Semichastnyy, and saw in it a way to help Brezhnev remove another of Shelepin's clients. Semichastnyy was removed without any forewarning on 18 May 1967.

Brezhnev could not have moved against Semichastnyy, of course, without cause. Several reports on the switch gave inefficiency or incompetence as the main cause of his removal. [redacted], for example, reported that Rumanian Party Secretary Dalea expressed the view to some colleagues that the primary reasons were Semichastnyy's lack of success in foreign intelligence and counterintelligence; he cited the defection of Stalin's daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva, as one failure. [redacted]

*Skryabin was placed "at the disposal of the Central Committee;" however, he dropped out of sight and failed to be reelected to that body at the 23d Party Congress.

**Editorial of Sovetskaya Rossiya for 14 September.

[redacted] reportedly gave a similar explanation of the action, claiming that Semichastnyy bore the responsibility for Svetlana's defection and that he was closely associated with Yuriy Nosenko, a highly placed security official who also defected. These considerations, which Brezhnev could have ignored if his attitude toward Semichastnyy had been favorable, may have provided the excuse for Brezhnev's political move against him. The trend of Andropov's subsequent administration of the KGB, however, tends to support the hypothesis that these faults were viewed seriously by him. Nevertheless, political considerations played an important, perhaps the decisive, role. A [redacted] Soviet [redacted] told a foreign party leader that the move was the result of an investigation into the activities of a clique surrounding Shelepin. Semichastnyy and others, the Soviet had implied, were engaged in factional activity, and the KGB's efficiency "sank greatly" under Semichastnyy because "responsibility to the clique took precedence over other responsibilities."

The choice of Party Secretary Andropov, who had worked a full decade in the Central Committee's Bloc Department, to take over the KGB was a compromise. He had worked closely with Brezhnev in the Secretariat and especially since late 1966 had given his boss strong support in the renewed drive for an international communist conference. However, he had also worked many years with Suslov and may have owed his earlier entrance into the Secretariat in 1962 to him.* Andropov also had been personally close to Shelepin in the past. This past tie may have softened the blow for Shelepin but could not compensate fully for the loss of his own protege, Semichastnyy. The latter became first deputy premier in the Ukraine, not the worst possible fate, since it might permit

*Little is known of Andropov's relationship with Suslov, however, and it is possible that Khrushchev deliberately promoted Andropov in 1962 as a counterweight to Suslov.

retention of his Central Committee membership. A third first deputy premier thus was created in the Ukraine under Shcherbitskiy; at least two of them, Semichastnyy and Nikolay Sobol', have independent political support and the potential for causing trouble for Shcherbitskiy (and thus for his presumed patron, Brezhnev).

The June 1967 Central Committee plenum approved Andropov's release ex post facto from his secretarial position and promoted him to the Politburo as a candidate member. However, it named no successor to take up his duties in supervising relations with the ruling Communist parties. This inaction at first appeared to reflect a normal delay in filling the sudden vacancy rather than serious disagreement on a replacement. Two junior functionaries, however, finally succeeded him in the Central Committee posts after almost one year; this procrastination and the division of his responsibilities suggested political compromise.

The Semichastnyy affair apparently did not sit well with an important echelon of the party--the young supporters of Shelepin. A leading representative of this group, Moscow party chief Yegorychev, attacked Brezhnev's leadership at the June plenum, which had been called to put a stamp of approval on the regime's military and diplomatic effort during the Arab-Israeli conflict. The events and issues surrounding the plenum are relevant to Brezhnev's overall position and are treated elsewhere. The important point regarding power relations among the senior secretaries is that the disciplinary action taken against Brezhnev's critic, Yegorychev, began a chain of events ending in Shelepin's ouster from the Secretariat. Brezhnev began his power play with typical indirection, transferring Yegorychev to a ministerial post and engineering the "election" of Politburo candidate member Grishin as Moscow party boss in late June, a few days after the Central Committee plenum had ended. In July, Shelepin was installed in Grishin's place as chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions, virtually the lowest post carrying Politburo membership. (In fact, Grishin was only a Politburo candidate, and Shelepin could conceivably be downgraded at the next party congress if he

stays in the post.) Shelepin's official dismissal from the Secretariat at the September 1967 Central Committee plenum was a foregone conclusion.

Kirilenko's Emergence as "Second" Secretary

After sidetracking Shelepin, Brezhnev had only two senior secretaries to contend with--Suslov and Kirilenko. Signs that Kirilenko supervised the Department of Party-Organizational Work suggested that, despite the fact that Suslov supervised Shelepin's installation as trade union chief,* Kirilenko may have become Brezhnev's "second in command" by that time. In fact, he may have had party-organizational responsibilities since just after the 23d Party Congress. At that time, his long-time subordinate from the Central Committee apparatus (responsible for appointments to RSFSR industrial posts), Voronovskiy, became deputy and then first deputy to Kapitonov.

The official who finally, in April 1968, picked up Andropov's secretariat portfolio for supervising the Bloc Department was Konstantin Katushev, a young auto designer turned party administrator from Gor'kiy. Katushev rose rapidly in the Gor'kiy party organization apparently due to Kirilenko's influence in the RSFSR Bureau. He probably also owed something of his career to the promoted M.T. Yefremov, whom he replaced as Gor'kiy party chief in late 1965. Brezhnev has registered approval of Katushev in several ways, notably in his unusual appearance at the provincial party plenum which ratified the Yefremov-Katushev shift. Despite Katushev's youthfulness, there is nothing in his background to suggest past political

*On that occasion, Suslov revealed how low Shelepin had fallen in the consensus of his Politburo colleagues, expressing their hope that he would prove to be a "worthy" leader of the trade unions.

association with Shelepin; much less did he have discernable ties with Suslov or Andropov, since he had virtually no experience in foreign affairs prior to becoming a member of the Brezhnev team. His assignment to this area bore all the signs of an attempt by Brezhnev and Kirilenko to place a trusted party administrator in a position to ensure the implementation of the General Secretary's daily decisions in Bloc affairs.*

Brezhnev's apparent success in easing Podgornyy and Shelepin from the Secretariat and placing Kirilenko in charge of cadres was reflected in the promotion of five Central Committee candidates with a military or RSFSR background to full membership at the April 1968 plenum. They replaced deceased leaders whose background, incidentally, suggested ties mainly with Shelepin, Podgornyy, and Mazurov. There have been few changes in leading positions with Central Committee status since Kirilenko has taken charge, but in most cases they have reinforced this trend.

*Andropov's other position as chief of the Bloc Department went to Konstantin Rusakov, one of Andropov's departmental deputies He first appeared in public as chief almost two weeks before the April plenum that elected Katushev a secretary. This would suggest that Rusakov was in line for both posts but lost out to Katushev in a last minute move at the plenum.

THE COMPETITION WITH PREMIER KOSYGIN

One of Brezhnev's main concerns, secondary to establishing organizational supremacy in the Secretariat, has been to achieve and maintain his preeminence over Kosygin. The October 1964 Central Committee plenum decreed it "inexpedient" that the top party and government posts be held by one person in the future, and this separation of party and government functions has figured prominently in proofs of the regime's "collegiality."* The dual arrangement, granting ostensibly equal authority to the General Secretary and the government premier, was never very workable, however, and soon gave way to the traditional hierarchy with the party chief in the topmost place.

Staking a Claim to "Number One"

The first signs that Brezhnev might have serious thoughts about establishing preeminence over his government counterpart appeared in March 1965. In contrast to the full play the Soviet press gave to Brezhnev's plenum report on agricultural questions, Kosygin's speech to planning officials six days earlier was reported only after a delay of several weeks, receiving limited distribution in the specialized publications Planovoye Khozyaystvo and Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta. Such treatment, needless to

*Soviet propaganda never mentions the other, more significant aspect of high-level arrangements--the interlocking of the two ruling bureaucracies through the mechanism of the Politburo, where Brezhnev is de facto chairman. Moreover, the precariousness of the duumvirate, which derives from a reluctance to define the position of the General Secretary, is suggested in the word "inexpedient," which in Soviet usage connotes a temporary or tactical measure rather than an immutable or imperative law.

say, did not support the image of collectivity which the regime had been attempting to foster. Another cut at Kosygin's "equal" status occurred in protocol arrangements when the two leaders went to Poland in early April to renew a friendship pact. Despite reports from Warsaw as early as 18 March that Kosygin was accompanying Brezhnev to the signing ceremony, the first TASS announcement on 27 March did not mention Kosygin; it did reveal, however, that Brezhnev would head the delegation. This prominence contrasted with earlier protocol, since the two leaders had gone to Poland in October 1964 and January 1965 as members of a team, with neither singled out as a delegation head.

The September 1965 Central Committee plenum, which met to discuss a reform of the system of planning and industrial management, should have been Kosygin's show. Instead, it was a "balanced" affair. It heard Kosygin describe his compromise version of economic reform in the main report and Brezhnev present the party's tasks in a separate speech. In the abridged official version of his speech, Brezhnev proposed several institutional checks on the government within the framework of generally intensified party control. He delivered a second speech on scheduling the 23d Party Congress for six months later. The plenum decree confirmed Brezhnev as the main rapporteur to the congress for the Central Committee, while Kosygin was named to deliver a report on the 1966-1970 economic plan.

Despite a number of ups and downs, relations between Brezhnev and Kosygin remained on a fairly even keel for about a year after the September 1965 plenum, during which time the press gave each roughly equal treatment. However, this changed in early November 1966 to the detriment of Kosygin. Especially noticeable was the prominent coverage given to a speech Brezhnev made at an award ceremony in Georgia on 1 November; by contrast, a few column inches were devoted to Kosygin's activities the same day in Donetsk, where he addressed a party-economic aktiv. Other speeches by Kosygin at that time--at a 2 November conference in Krivoy Rog and a 26 November all-union seminar of trade union leaders in Moscow, for example--have never

been published. Kosygin continued to stay in the background in December, failing even to speak at the Supreme Soviet session which approved the 1967 plan and budget. Brezhnev, on the other hand, received the country's highest military order on his 60th birthday at a special ceremony at the end of the session (which according to one report was delayed to provide a fitting occasion for the award). Earlier in the month, Kirilenko had broken a taboo of collectivity by praising Brezhnev's personal qualities as a wartime political leader.* Whatever the reasons for Kosygin's eclipse in late 1966, Brezhnev took advantage of his own ascendancy in their relationship to exert more vigorous leadership of the collective.

Keeping a Rein on Kosygin

Since 1967, Brezhnev has combined a watchful attitude toward Kosygin with a willingness to accommodate him on some policy issues. While he has remained the dominant of the two, Brezhnev has been careful to keep a rather taut rein on Kosygin in order to prevent a runaway in his prestige and authority. It was probably Brezhnev, for example, who in February 1967 was responsible for the contretemps in Pravda's handling of a statement Kosygin had made while in London on Moscow's willingness to consider negotiations on limiting strategic arms, including defensive weapons. The journalist whose article reiterated the sensitive statement (not previously aired in the domestic media) reportedly received a reprimand, and Pravda took the unusual step of denying the validity of the article. Such an action could only have reflected the interference of the Secretariat, and presumably of the General Secretary himself.

*This violation of the unwritten rule against individual glorification, at least in Brezhnev's case, has not been repeated in any significant way since then.

Despite numerous indications and reports of Brezhnev's attempts to restrain Kosygin, the two leaders can find common cause much of the time. Brezhnev probably has recognized the value of working with Kosygin as much as possible, taking advantage of the premier's prestige and intellectual abilities. In general, Brezhnev has seemed to want to build on his own authority without appearing to pose a threat to Kosygin's position--which would be a threat also to the other leaders of the oligarchy.

THE DRIVE FOR MILITARY AND POLICE SUPPORT

An important factor in Brezhnev's assumption of power and a necessary condition of his continued rule has been the support of two main instruments of power in the Soviet Union--the security police (KGB) and militia (MVD, formerly MOOP), and the military (Ministry of Defense). Through their benign influence, Brezhnev achieved Khrushchev's ouster with a maximum of efficiency and a minimum of danger to the plotters. For a while after the coup, however, his hold over them was tenuous due to the strong influence Shelepin exerted.

Uneven Relations With a Divided Military

Brezhnev courted the military from the very beginning, redressing the abuses which the armed forces had suffered at Khrushchev's hands. He consistently advocated a high priority for defense in budgetary policy. Moreover, he stopped dictating doctrine to the military and encouraged military professionalism. As a result, Khrushchev's one-sided emphasis on strategic rocket forces gave way to a more balanced policy, with greater attention than before to conventional forces and a flexible response strategy. Such a policy probably had the support of a majority of the military and civilian leadership.

Relations between Brezhnev and the military took a turn for the worse, however, after the death of Defense Minister Malinovskiy in late March 1967. Malinovskiy's first deputy, Marshal Grechko, was associated with the Ukrainian "clique" which Khrushchev had brought into the Politburo--primarily Podgornyy, Polyanskiy, and Kirilenko--and was therefore on an inside track for the vacancy. Nevertheless, [redacted] indicated that at least some Politburo members backed the Secretariat's armaments administrator Dmitriy Ustinov for the post, presumably in order to bring a cost-conscious approach to questions of force structure. It is conceivable that Kosygin, who in February had revealed an interest in opening negotiations

[redacted]

with the U.S. on strategic arms limitations, persuaded Brezhnev to nominate Ustinov. In fact, a majority of the Politburo could have seen an advantage in appointing a civilian who could find "hidden reserves" in the military budget and thus free capital for other sectors of the economy. [redacted] reported that Brezhnev had proposed Ustinov on behalf of the entire Politburo, but the military high command ("the Soviet marshals") had insisted on a professional military man, and the Politburo ultimately had given in and appointed Grechko. [redacted] reported that Grechko's relations with Brezhnev were not good; the attempt to install Ustinov may have been permanently damaging in this regard.

Brezhnev appeared to be under strong pressure from the military at the June 1967 plenum, where Moscow party boss Yegorychev attacked Brezhnev's diplomatic approach to the Middle East crisis. Apparently, the actions Brezhnev undertook in April and May against the interest of the military (the attempt to install a civilian Minister of Defense) and the younger party militants (the removal of Semichastnyy as KGB chairman) caused the two groups to join forces in challenging the ruling group or a majority within it on the issue of slackness in its defense posture. Although Brezhnev's report at the June plenum was not published in the press, a secret Soviet document revealed that it contained a defense of the regime's diplomatic effort to settle the crisis by peaceful means. Thus, Brezhnev was quoted as saying that the regime avoided loud threats and sabre-rattling because "the aggressors and their allies well understood that the Soviet Union consistently comes out for a stable peace in the Near East and...if necessary will resolutely come to the defense of the victims of aggression." The quotation, which appeared several months after the fact, probably was selected to indicate the nature of Yegorychev's criticism and Brezhnev's answer.

All reports on the subject were in agreement that Yegorychev had demanded a tougher Soviet military posture. According to [redacted] Soviet officials who dealt with Middle East problems cited a CPSU report in asserting that Yegorychev had complained at the plenum of military unpreparedness and had claimed that the regime failed to react decisively because the Soviet Army was ill prepared. This line of argument would have appealed to at least some of the high command, since it suggested the inadequacy of measures taken by the civilian-dominated Defense Council. It may also have reflected some stock-taking occasioned by the efficiently planned and executed Israeli military operations.

An elaborate but garbled version of the Yegorychev incident that made the rounds in Moscow tended to confirm the essential points of the alleged CPSU report. According to this account, Yegorychev's speech contained statistics backing up his charge that Moscow was inadequately defended against a missile attack. Brezhnev reportedly interrupted Yegorychev to ask when he had last attended a session of the Military Council of the Moscow Military District, to which Yegorychev replied "never." Brezhnev then requested an intermission and convened the Politburo; Shelepin is said to have defended Yegorychev there. Back at the general party meeting, Brezhnev accused Yegorychev of revealing state secrets.

Brezhnev's reaction to the criticism was to deny the charge while undertaking to correct the criticized situation. Several measures were taken in addition to Yegorychev's demotion on 27 June, including military exercises and changes in alert procedures. The Soviet military press reported that Grishin, who was identified as a member of the Military Council of the Moscow PVO (Air Defense) Military District, had spoken at a meeting of the PVO council on 21 November 1967, commending the fine work of the district's "rocket gunners, airmen, and personnel of signals units" but warning against complacency. It would appear, therefore, that Brezhnev decided to preempt the position which the young militants and, presumably, the missile-force advocates in the military had adopted.

An additional factor which may have raised the military's back and, for a time, complicated Brezhnev's position was the party's (that is, the Politburo majority's) attempt to relax the strong defense-oriented posture of the Soviet Union through cancellation of the traditional parade of military might on May Day. The decision to change this posture, although implemented only in May 1969, reportedly had been under discussion for several years, and may have been the subject of intensified debate in the spring of 1967, when the regime was hinting at its interest in arms limitations talks and in a civilian Minister of Defense. Final resolution of the debate suggests that there has been some improvement in army-party relations after the two-year period of strain, with perhaps a strengthening of Brezhnev's position.

Brezhnev still does not have the support of the entire military, however. The high command is divided according to the self-interest of the various arms components, with its backing of Brezhnev similarly split. Grechko, a long-time proponent of conventional warfare and weapons, represents those elements of the high command which the post-Khrushchev regime (that is, Brezhnev) has favored. On the other hand, two Soviet [redacted] whose access to factual information is unknown, reportedly told Czechoslovak counterparts in February 1969 that the "missile generals"--who tended to side with Brezhnev's political opposition in the belief that any change in the top leadership could only result in an improvement in their own position--were coming to the fore again.*

*The same report asserted that the high command (apparently united) has been pushing for greater independence from party leadership and has proposed the formation of a "Council of Marshals" which would have the power to make military decisions in an emergency without prior consent from the Politburo. All Politburo members were said to oppose such a council, which presumably would supplant Brezhnev's Defense Council.

Dominating the Security Forces

In contrast to his fluctuating fortunes in dealing with the military, Brezhnev has succeeded in establishing a relatively firm grip on the KGB and MVD. Just as Brezhnev's tenuous control over the military has reflected the continued strength of his opponents within the Politburo, his steady consolidation of influence with the security establishment has reflected the gradual reduction in Shelepin's real power since 1965. Another reason for Brezhnev's success in making organizational inroads in the KGB and MVD probably has been his good footing in the Central Committee Department of Administrative Organs, which supervises their activities. In addition, Brezhnev apparently has avoided taking any actions that would antagonize the professional corps of these organizations. On the contrary, under Brezhnev's aegis they have enjoyed greater prestige and material support. In any case, the key to the use of these organizations as instruments of power lies in the political administrators who supervise their work, and in this respect Brezhnev has ensured that the men in charge are as trustworthy as can be expected in the Soviet scheme of things.

The frontal attack on Shelepin's entrenched positions in the security forces and militia followed several minor skirmishes and rear guard actions. Prior to removing Tikunov from the top MVD post in late 1966 and Semichastnyy from the KGB in May 1967, Brezhnev had taken important steps to strengthen his hold on the party and government apparatus which supervised their work. However, he was forced at first to share influence in this apparatus with Shelepin, since the two of them together had controlled the security forces prior to Khrushchev's ouster. When N.R. Mironov, chief of the Central Committee Department of Administrative Organs, died in an air crash a few days after the ouster, Brezhnev and Shelepin both lost the services of a long-time associate. Mironov had risen from within the KGB after (or about simultaneously with) Shelepin's appointment as its chief, to the Central Committee department position, where he became Shelepin's nominal supervisor. His rise might have been due to the

influence of Brezhnev, with whom he had worked in the 1930s. Mironov continued in his Central Committee post when Shelepin became a party secretary in charge of the department; he is presumed to have played an important role in supporting Brezhnev, and Shelepin, during preparations of the coup against Khrushchev. As a measure of the standoff in this area after Khrushchev's removal, no successor to the deceased Mironov appeared during the period when Shelepin probably supervised it--that is, prior to the 23d Party Congress--or for two years afterward when Brezhnev apparently had direct responsibility for it.

Brezhnev nevertheless began to undercut Shelepin's influence in the "administrative" organs as early as September 1965. He probably was influential in bringing about Kosygin's choice of Polyanskiy over Shelepin to fill the vacancy of first deputy premier which had resulted from Ustinov's transfer to the Secretariat in March. Polyanskiy, who had concentrated almost exclusively on agricultural matters, may have assumed the additional responsibility for overseeing the administration of security affairs on the government side. This was suggested by the circumstances surrounding the subsequent promotion of Polyanskiy's client, M.T. Yefremov, to deputy premier and the transfer of Shelepin from his deputy premier post in the government to full time work in the Secretariat.

Brezhnev worked with Kirilenko in the Secretariat and with Polyanskiy in the government to strengthen his hold on the security forces after the 23d Party Congress in 1966. By that time, Shelepin already had lost his secretarial responsibility for security affairs and apparently was counting on Kosygin and Demichev to support Tikunov's candidacy for the head post in the reorganized militia. The appointment of Brezhnev's client, Nikolay Shchelokov, to the post in September 1966 revealed that Shelepin's forces had dwindled to a decided minority.

The assignment of Andropov as KGB chief in May 1967, was, of course, an essential move to strengthen Brezhnev's position. Prior to late 1966, when Brezhnev began the renewed drive to hold the international communist conference,

Andropov had appeared close to Shelepin. Whatever his political ties (including some to Suslov), Andropov apparently had supported the General Secretary from the start. Moreover, Shelepin's gradual political decline through Brezhnev's maneuverings presumably did little to enhance the Andropov-Shelepin relationship. At the time of Andropov's appointment to the KGB. [redacted] reported the opinion of Rumanian Party Secretary Da] (whose primary responsibility was for relations with foreign Communist parties) that Andropov was loyal to and trusted by Brezhnev. A [redacted] Soviet [redacted], when queried about relations between Andropov and Shelepin shortly after Semichastnyy's removal, confirmed that the two men once had been close but no longer were. In any case, Brezhnev's substitution of Andropov for Semichastnyy appeared calculated to guarantee a heightened rivalry between the former associates.

Andropov probably had Brezhnev's full backing for the organizational changes he introduced in the KGB soon after taking over. The main emphasis of the reorganization was an expansion of the counterintelligence effort. The changes began at the very top, with the addition of S.K. Tsvigun, an experienced CI professional with tenuous career ties to Brezhnev, as a second first deputy to Andropov. The other first deputy chairman, N.S. Zakharov, remains active despite the fact that he served as chief of the 9th (Guards) Directorate when Shelepin headed the KGB, and moved up to KGB deputy chairman under Semichastnyy.

Brezhnev's influence in the KGB personnel changes were especially clear in the case of G.K. Tsinev, who by at least March 1968 had taken on major responsibilities, almost certainly as chief, in the Second Chief Directorate (counterintelligence and counterespionage).* Brezhnev's

*Tsinev probably had been directorate chief for some time. His press article in December 1967 on broad aspects of counterintelligence, together with his identification as a colonel general, suggested that he had such responsibilities then. It is even possible that he assumed the vacancy of KGB deputy chairman that was created when S.G. Bannikov became a deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Court in October.

association with Tsinev dates back as early as the 1950s, when Tsinev served in military counterintelligence in Berlin, as a subordinate to N.R. Mironov, the then chief of the KGB 3d (Military Counterintelligence) Directorate who later served Brezhnev well in the coup against Khrushchev. According to [redacted] Brezhnev, who in February 1956 was leaving Kazakhstan to become a member of Khrushchev's Secretariat at the 20th Party Congress, planned to get together in Moscow with former associates from the Ukraine, including specifically Tsinev and Mironov. In March 1956, Tsinev learned that Brezhnev was "making every effort" to secure Tsinev's transfer back to Moscow. Other Brezhnev associates with whom Tsinev had personal contacts at the time included N.A. Shchelokov (now MVD chief), S.G. Lapin (now TASS chief), and a Tikhonov (presumed to be Nikolay Tikhonov, now USSR deputy premier). The careers of these officials are a good example of the importance of personal ties and political patronage in the Soviet system and of the kind of support Brezhnev has in high party and government places.*

Control over the security forces through the Central Committee apparatus apparently remains in Brezhnev's hands, despite conflicting indications since Andropov became KGB chief that Kirilenko, Suslov, or Ustinov might have some supervisory responsibilities. The occasional public appearances of Kirilenko and Suslov in this area would seem

*The recent identification of Viktor Chebrikov as KGB deputy chairman indicates the continuing influence which the Ukrainian "clique" around Brezhnev has in the security organizations. Chebrikov had been second secretary of the Dnepropetrovsk party organization until mid-1967, when the Ukrainian press announced his departure for a new post "outside the Ukraine." The absence of publicity for him until his identification as deputy chairman of the KGB in October 1969 suggests that he has been serving in a lesser capacity within that organization in the interim.

to be examples of their deputizing for Brezhnev. The frequent involvement of Ustinov in security affairs probably is due to the nature of his work, which is in the administration of the highly-sensitive defense and space industry. It is unlikely that as a candidate member of the Politburo he would oversee an area of activity, one part of which is headed by his peer on that body (that is, KGB Chairman Andropov). However, his known activities indicate he may have a special responsibility for supervising various aspects--perhaps technical--of military affairs.

Brezhnev's influence in the Administrative Organs Department of the Central Committee apparently remains as strong as when his Ukrainian associate, N.R. Mironov, ran it. The promotion of Mironov's long-time deputy, Nikolay Savinkin, to head the department in early 1968 apparently indicated he was being compensated for services rendered to Brezhnev in 1966-67. Furthermore, Savinkin's replacement as first deputy head of the department, Nikolay Petrovich Mal'shakov, could be an associate of Brezhnev; however, the evidence to this effect is tenuous, in part due to an almost complete lack of information of Mal'shakov.*

*Mal'shakov had been chairman of the Penza Oblast Executive Committee from late 1965 until his appointment as Savinkin's first deputy in mid-1968. Several high officials with known ties to Brezhnev--Secretary Kulakov and Central Committee department chiefs K.U. Chernenko and S.P. Trapeznikov--had served several years in Penza, although their careers did not overlap with Mal'shakov's. Also, a Nikolay Petrovich Mal'shakov was identified in a December 1945 list of military awards as a senior technical lieutenant of the naval forces; if this is the same Mal'shakov, then conceivably he had attained a leading position in that service by 1953, when Brezhnev became chief of the Political Directorate of the Ministry of the Navy.

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