TITLE: Discipline Campaigns in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, 1970-87

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In the last four years Soviet politics has been in a state of apparent turmoil, with the appearance of unprecedented phenomena such as relative press freedom, tolerated dissent, competitive elections and quasi-parliamentary institutions. Understandably, in the rush to focus on the new and different many commentators have switched attention away from the dull and unchanging.

Our own research has convinced us that despite the exciting changes at the apex of the Soviet political system, the actual institutions through which the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) exercises its control over society have remained substantially intact. This paper seeks to analyse the organizational practices through which the CPSU has been able to maintain its position as a ruling party in both the Brezhnev and post-Brezhnev eras.

We attempt to analyse the CPSU through the prism of modern elite theory, which argues that elite cohesion is the vital precondition for political stability, and that in times of change (for example, the transitions to democracy in Latin America and Southern Europe) the success of the process hinges upon the forging of a consensus within the political elite at an early stage. This analytical approach is in marked contrast to theories which explain stability and transition in terms of, say, a regime's popular legitimacy.

The CPSU seems to have developed a set of procedures (mostly dating back to Lenin) which have proved highly effective in securing elite cohesion. Most of these procedures are well-known: the concept of a vanguard party, party discipline, democratic
centralism, the nomenklatura system.

Despite the central importance of these practices, they have been studied by only a handful of Western scholars over the years. The present project also tapped sources which have not previously been utilised to explore these questions. The author conducted 50 interviews with party officials and academics both in the USSR and in emigration, and studied 25 local newspapers (not available outside the USSR), in addition to more conventional sources such as the party journals (national and republican).

The paper begins with a reiteration of the point that the party itself sees elite unity as the key to its role, and is perhaps more explicitly conscious of the need to preserve elite unity than any other ruling elite around the globe. The question is what are the organizational strategies they have devised to maintain this unity, and are they still functioning effectively?

Elite unity for the CPSU has both ideological and organizational aspects. On the ideological side, the paper surveys the role played by ideology in the selection of cadres for important posts party and non-party institutions (the so-called nomenklatura). We examine the network of ideological training institutions and the efforts to apply ideological criteria in the appointment of officials. By the 1980s the ideological work of the party entered a stage of major crisis and self-doubt. However, rather than representing a radical break with the organizational practices of the past, perestroika has involved a re-doubling of efforts to revive and make more effective the ideological underpinnings of the CPSU.
There do not seem to have been any significant changes in the way the nomenklatura system has been operating over the last two decades. In the following section of the paper we do however report our estimate of the current size of the nomenklatura based on all the passing references in party journals over the past decade. We estimate that there are some 100,000 full-time party officials in the USSR (from primary party organization secretaries up to the Central Committee). There have been cuts in the party apparatus in 1988-89, however: estimates of the size of the reduction under way range from 7,000 to 30,000. In all we estimate that there are some 1.9 million nomenklatura officials in non-party organizations (that is, whose appointment is supervised by a regional party committee). Again, in the last two years there are reports that the number of nomenklatura posts in some regions has been cut by up to one third.

The major innovation in cadre policy has been the introduction of multi-candidate elections on a limited basis. Through a careful examination of the conditions under which these elections are conducted we conclude that the introduction of more electivity has not decisively changed the degree of control exercised by party committees over cadre selection. Our focus is on elections to positions within the CPSU: the humiliating defeats suffered by party officials in the March 1989 elections to the Congress of People's Deputies are another story entirely.

The second half of the paper investigates the extensive discipline campaign in the party which was initiated by Andropov and extended by Gorbachev. This campaign has seen dramatic turnover at all levels of the Soviet elite, the departure of the bulk of
Brezhnev era appointees, and the uncovering of huge corrupt networks in the outlying republics. However, the campaign has been waged using the methods and procedures forged in the pre-Andropov era. The most visible continuities include the fact that the drive is orchestrated from Moscow rather than being initiated from below, and uses the standard devices of the Brezhnev years (self-criticism at party election meetings, exposes in the national press, etc.). Also notable is the regional pattern - the way that attention focusses first on one region, then another, with the party often having to call in the legal organs to help dislodge entrenched corrupt networks. A final continuity is the fact that the discipline drive seems to be an uphill struggle. Merely replacing corrupt and incompetent cadres with new faces (usually drawn from the same regional apparatus) does not seem to lead to a decisive improvement in the work of the party apparatus.

Gorbachev seems to have learnt from the experience of his first three years in office that merely using the established methods to preserve party cohesion is no longer sufficient. More radical measures may be needed to change the workstyle of regional party officials - but this will probably involve going outside the party altogether (hence the creation of the Congress of Peoples' Deputies. Our guess would be that the decisive factor forcing change in the Soviet leadership is the economic crisis. The Brezhnevite system tolerated a high level of corruption and lethargy in the party apparatus, but somehow the economy continued to grow. Now, however, the economy has reached a dead end, and new methods of economic management are needed. It is not clear that the old
methods of securing elite consensus are compatible with a more decentralised, market-oriented economy. But these are matters as yet unresolved.

As for policy implications, the main point which emerges from our analysis is the tremendous organizational inertia of the CPSU. This organizational inertia represents both a strength and a weakness for the Soviet party. It makes for a strongly unified elite, well able to maintain its power over Soviet society for the foreseeable future (barring economic catastrophe). However, the party's organizational inflexibility also means that change, if and when it comes, is more likely to be outside the party than within it. Either way, our analysis forces us to line up with the sceptics on the question of whether perestroika is likely to succeed in effecting a qualitative change in the Soviet political system.
INTRODUCTION

In the last three years Soviet politics has been in a state of apparent turmoil, with the appearance of unprecedented phenomena such as a relatively free press, competitive elections and parliamentary institutions. These developments are usually discussed in terms of their implications for the future, with much speculation as to the likely success or failure of perestroika. Understandably enough, in the rush to focus on the new and different, many commentators have switched their attention away from the dull and unchanging. However, our own research has convinced us that despite the exciting changes at the apex of the Soviet political system, the actual institutions through which the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) exercises its control over society have remained substantially intact. This paper seeks to understand the organizational practices through which the CPSU has been able to maintain its position as a ruling party in both the Brezhnev and post-Brezhnev eras.

We attempt to examine the role of the CPSU through the prism of modern elite theory, which argues that elite cohesion is the vital precondition for political stability, and that in times of
change (for example, the transitions to democracy in southern Europe and Latin America) the success of the process hinges upon the forging of a consensus within the political elite at an early stage. This analytical approach is in marked contrast to theories which explain stability and transition in terms of, say, a regime's popular legitimacy.

The CPSU seems to have developed a set of procedures which have proved highly effective in securing elite cohesion. Most of these procedures are well-known: the concept of a vanguard party, democratic centralism, the nomenklatura system. However, the crisis in power and cohesion which the CPSU is currently experiencing suggests that we should look more closely at these structural features of the CPSU, in order to understand to what extent the party can reform its organizational practices while preserving itself as the dominant political actor.

Our account begins with a reiteration of the point that the party itself recognises elite unity as the key to their role. This is both an ideological and an organizational phenomenon (one category blurs into the other). On the ideological side, we briefly survey the role played by ideology in cadre selection, looking at the network of ideological training institutions within the party, and the efforts to enforce ideological criteria through the nomenklatura system in order to promote the political unity of the various decision-making elites in the USSR. There have as yet been few concrete changes in the way the nomenklatura system itself operates. All we offer in addition to previous
accounts is our own estimate of the total size of the full-time party apparatus (c. 100,000) and of the total number of positions on the nomenklatura (c. 1.9 million).

Finally, on the organizational side we review the party discipline campaigns of the past decade, and suggest that despite a dramatic rise in dismissals the mechanisms used to maintain party discipline have shown surprising continuity from the period of 'stagnation' through to the period of 'perestroika'.

THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

One of the most distinctive features of the Soviet political system has been its stability, in the specific sense that leadership succession has been fairly smooth and the system has not seen extensive political violence since the 1930s and 1940s. Since 1986 of course we have seen indications of a breakdown in this stability (communal violence, strikes, and institutional reforms of a radical nature).

How is one to account for the stability of the 1953-85 period, and what are the chances that the current leadership will be able to re-gain such a degree of stability?

In addressing such issues most commentators have focused on elite-mass relations. Huntington laid down the groundwork back in the 1960s by talking of the Leninist one-party system being a successful formula for the institutionalisation of conflicting
social interests. G.W. Breslauer subsequently advanced a model of 'welfare state authoritarianism' to explain the quiescence of the Brezhnev era. In all of S. Bialer's work the concept of legitimacy seems pivotal to his interpretation of the stability of the Soviet regime. In an influential article P. Hauslohner has tried to carry the analysis forward to post-1985 period, seeing perestroika as an attempt to renegotiate the social contract between the state and the people.

In our view these approaches exaggerate the importance of popular attitudes when it comes to explaining system stability in the USSR. Only in certain fairly extreme circumstances - military defeat, or an economic crisis involving food shortages, price rises, and a sudden fall in living standards - will popular attitudes become a influential factor, and even in those circumstances it is how the elite itself responds to these pressures from below that will be decisive in determining regime survival or regime collapse.

Instead of looking at elite-mass relations, we will be working within the framework of elite theory, as recently re-interpreted by Higley and Field. The assumption is that for any type of political system (democratic, authoritarian or socialist) political processes within the ruling elite itself are the key to understanding regime stability and regime change. The vital precondition for stability is the preservation of elite cohesion. Stability is only threatened when a fragmented elite starts to mobilise sections of the mass public behind their respective
positions. If the political elite acts in unison, deploying the enormous powers of the modern state for the purpose of keeping the existing system intact, success is usually assured (short of foreign intervention or a complete breakdown in public order). The key to regime stability in the USSR would thus lie in an understanding of the unique processes by which the CPSU seeks to preserve its cohesion as a ruling elite.

One answer is to suggest that the Soviet elite is held together by nothing more than simple self interest. According to the 'mafia' models of K. Simis and I. Zemtsov the USSR is nothing more than a kleptocracy, with ruling groups united solely by their mutual enjoyment of privileges. We find these arguments persuasive, for as we shall see below in the past two years in the Soviet press there has emerged extensive evidence of corruption to corroborate the recollections of these former officials. However, as a general theory of the functioning of the Soviet elite the mafia model remains inadequate. Judging by the available evidence, it seems that only in the Caucasus and Central Asia is corruption institutionalised and all-pervasive. The recent Soviet press has also yielded counter-evidence to the mafia thesis, for example claiming that regional party officials do not enjoy access to special clinics and shops, and that in regions where such special facilities did exist they are being converted to public use.

Moreover, in all types of political system leaders enjoy privileges both legal and illegal. Corrupt networks have to
operate within a given politico-economic structure (dynastic, military, democratic or socialist) and are parasitical upon it. A pure kleptocracy, operating without any other organizational or ideological framework, is difficult to imagine, and would be highly unstable. The USSR does not yet seem to have reached this stage, although we do not rule out the possibility that it may be heading in this direction.

ELITE COHESION IN THE CPSU

The greatest threat to elite cohesion in the USSR probably comes at the very highest level: within the Politburo itself. Stalin and Khrushchev as individual agents clearly had a great impact on the institutional structure of the CPSU. There is a paradox here: the Soviet elite is so centralised that a feud among the party's top leaders can endanger the stability of the whole system. One approach to the question of elite cohesion would thus be to analyse faction fighting at Politburo level. We will not pursue this subject here, as it is covered by others better qualified than the present author. We are more interested in the mechanisms used to secure cohesion of the Soviet elite at levels below that of the Kremlin leadership.

Suffice it to suggest that the greatest threat to elite cohesion in the USSR probably lies in the considerable accumulation of power in the hands of M. Gorbachev. Up to a
certain point this was functionally necessary for elite cohesion, in order to create a consensus for reform within the Politburo. However, the old Brezhnevites have by now been removed from the Politburo, yet Gorbachev still continues to accumulate power vis-à-vis his Politburo colleagues (and seems to be trying to institutionalise his power through the office of President).

The cohesion of the CPSU rests on a twin foundation: organizational coherence and ideological unity. The most distinctive feature of the strategy adopted by a Leninist party to secure elite cohesion is the attempt to create a uniform world view for all members and activists. The establishment of a uniform party ideology provides both a rationale for elite cohesion and a set of distinctive organizational practices through which elite cohesion can be operationally secured. Merely following through the routines associated with explaining and applying the official ideology provide a framework of activity which provides coherence for the CPSU as an organization.

Most academics writing on the subject treat Soviet ideology as a body of ideas. Our concern here, however, is with the structure of ideological institutions rather than the content of the ideology itself. Rather than exploring to what extent it is intellectually coherent, or accurately reflects Soviet reality, our approach looks at ideology in terms of its functional utility for the Soviet elite. This is not to imply that the intellectual incoherence of Soviet Marxism does not matter, nor that its divergence from reality is not important: we will simply not be
addressing those issues here.

In terms of Western debates about the role of ideology in society, we are following R. Wuthnow in concentrating on ideology as it is embedded in social institutions, rather than as a subjective reflection of social reality (as in the Durkheimian tradition). Alternatively, in the context of public choice theory, we are treating ideology as a device for overcoming the free rider problem: it may be easier to secure collective action by insisting on adherence to abstract principles rather than building a coalition of self-interested agents.

To stress the role of ideology in Soviet politics is nothing new: it is as old as Leninism, older therefore than the Soviet state itself. The distinctive role of ideology was one of the central tenets of the Totalitarianism paradigm. In their rush to distance themselves from this perceived relic of the Cold War, commentators have tended to avoid discussion of the discredited model's central elements, including the role of ideology and the vanguard party. There is a danger here of throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

In the context of comparative politics, we see the attempt to impose an official party ideology as being the single most important factor governing Soviet elite unity. Very few political elites around the globe have succeeded in developing such an elaborate and comprehensive ideology justifying their rule: most rely upon some inchoate invocation of 'national interest' and the 'uniqueness' of a given people. Mexico's PRI, with the revolution
as its reference point, probably comes closest to the ruling
communist parties. We make no claims as to the degree to which
individual party members internalise communist values: we merely
note that the official ideology provides the concepts and
language for political discourse in the public domain.

However, we should not treat ideology as some sort of secret
formula, a magic key which unlocks the kingdom of power.
Ideology alone cannot guarantee elite unity. Thus, for example,
in Yugoslavia the political elite happily use Marxist language,
but is deeply divided along regional/ethnic lines.

Some might be inclined to suggest that under Gorbachev the
CPSU has started to shed its commitment to a unique world view,
and is moving towards a more pragmatically based approach to
social reality, in which performance matters more than formal
invocation of ideological dogma. This is too broad a subject to
be addressed within the confines of this paper, but the following
two points should be made. First, the internal institutional
structure of the CPSU which we analyse in this paper has not yet
been significantly reformed. Changes have come where the party
interfaces with society (glasnost in the press, more autonomy for
the soviets, looser controls over the economy) but not within the
party itself. 9

Second, Gorbachev's impact has mainly been to bring out
certain new and not-so-new ideas in the CPSU's rhetorical arsenal
('the human factor', 'all-European home', 'leadership by
political methods', etc.), with the intention of reinvigorating -
not abandoning - the party's world view. He is trying to alter
the content of the ideology while preserving its structural role
in the Soviet political system. Thus before the July 1989 plenum
Gorbachev argued that 'there is a crisis - not of the party, but
of its old functions', and that while reforming the party 'we
also want to strengthen it'. However, the 'party always and
everywhere was formed and continues to work as an instrument in
the struggle for power.'

It remains to us to explain the concrete strategies through
which the CPSU seeks to promote and maintain its unity and
capacity to rule.

THE PRINCIPLE OF IDEOLOGICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY

In the USSR study of the ideological and organizational
principles of the CPSU is known as 'scientific communism'. Soviet writings on this subject do not seek to distinguish
between ideological and organizational factors, since the
organizational principles of the CPSU are themselves central
themes in the party's ideology. The ideology is not merely a
statement about the world at large: it is above all a statement
about the role the party sees itself playing in that world. The
most important ideological attribute is partjinost' (party-
mindedness): a recognition of the historic role being carried out
by the party. To display partjinost' thus involves ideological
commitment: it does not simply mean being a good member of the organization.

Thus it is our contention that CPSU ideology is essentially reflexive in nature: the key category is understanding the leading role of the party. This recursive ideology can be traced back to its Hegelian roots (recall Hegel's concern with the central epistemological dilemma: how do we know what we know?). It is also uppermost in Marx's philosophical approach: what matters to Marx is not abstract speculation as to what the real interests of the workers are - what matters is that the workers must achieve self-realisation, and move from a class-in-itself to a class-for-itself. Lenin's concept of the vanguard party is but an extension of this focus on the role of the agent in history.

In order to play this unique role, so central to its own ideology, the CPSU must be able to act as a unified agent. Thus party ideologues lay the heaviest emphasis upon the principle of organizational unity. Kommunist editorials argue that 'the unshakeable ideological and organizational unity of the party is the most important source of its strength and invincibility'; while E. Bugaev tells us that 'the greatest objective capacity of the working class compared to all other classes in history is its capacity for organization.' The central organizational principle expressing party unity is, of course, democratic centralism. Kommunist argues that this principle is subject to 'the fiercest attacks' by the CPSU's international enemies, and that it is one of the 'laws governing the life of the CPSU that
must never be broken, no matter what the circumstances.  

The basic principles of democratic centralism are:

'(a) the electivity of all party organs from bottom to top;
(b) periodic accountability of party organs before their
party organizations, and before higher organs;
(c) strict party discipline and the subordination of the
minority to the majority;
(d) the decisions of higher organs are absolutely obligatory
for lower organs;
(e) collectivity in the work of all party organizations and
leading organs, and the personal responsibility of each
Communist for the fulfilment of his duties and party
tasks.'

The fifth point is new, being added to the Party rules in 1986.
It refers, we may suggest, not just to the need for collective
leadership at Politburo level, but also to the strongly collegial
style of decision making in all party and state bodies.

Collegiality means that all interested parties should be
consulted, and that decisions should be made by a large group of
people rather than a small group, since, in Lenin's words, this
lessens the chances that 'relations between individual members
could affect the political line.'

We are dealing, then, with a highly centralised political
institute, designed to implement what is historically necessary
(as interpreted by the current leadership). The concept of
democratic centralism does not really deserve the near mythic
status which it is occasionally granted. As M. Waller points out,
it was never clearly defined by Lenin, either in the pre-1917
period or at the crucial 10th Party Congress in 1921. The
'subordination of the minority to the majority' is a routine
formula with little meaning when minorities are not allowed to
exist in any meaningful sense within the party's ranks. Thus party textbooks prefer to phrase the operational principles of the party in broader terms - for example, one text listed the following principles as shaping the organizational life of the CPSU: 19

- publicity (glasnost')
- discipline
- democracy
- collegiality
- criticism and self-criticism
- unity of ranks

Note that the term glasnost' was in standard usage before Gorbachev infused it with new meaning. The text explains that 'unity of ranks' refers the ban on factions introduced in 1921. This is described elsewhere as playing 'an exceptionally important role' in the history of the CPSU. 20

While emphasising party unity, the CPSU recognises that excessive stress on unity may deter the introduction of fresh ideas, may prevent genuine feedback on performance, and so on. Thus at least in theory democratic centralism should involve a dynamic tension between opposing elements: democracy and discipline, unity of ranks and criticism. Also the principle of collectivity under democratic centralism specifies the need for personal accountability, since collegial decision making leaves too many opportunities for individuals to shirk responsibility.
IDEOLOGICAL TRAINING WITHIN THE CPSU

It is generally agreed that while certain sections of the Soviet population had an abstract commitment to the ideals of communism in the 1920s, this idealism eroded with the onset of Stalinism. Loyalty, conformity and patriotism were rewarded: independence and idealism discouraged. By the 1960s, it seems, there were few communist 'believers' left in the society, outside the ranks of the very young and the very old. By 1989 Gorbachev himself talked of an ideological 'vacuum' in Soviet society, and argued that 'the key to perestroika is overcoming the crisis in ideology'. An editorial in Kommunist said that 'social apathy' and 'doublethink' were widespread among sections of the nation's youth.

The dominant motive for participation in political life in the USSR is realism, either selfish - to promote one's own career - or more altruistically to try to improve decision making in one's workplace. The decision to join the CPSU became a routine one for many categories of personnel: indeed, the decision was usually made for them, in that people were almost always invited to join rather than volunteering themselves. According to one gorkom secretary some party organs 'can no longer remember the time when workers asked to join the party on their own initiative'. One newspaper letter writer bluntly stated that honest people in the party stand out like 'white crows'; another that 'Of course we have principled communists - those who are
pensioners, who have nothing to lose and are not afraid.25 With the relaxation of pressures to join the party in the last few years, there has appeared a hitherto unknown phenomenon - voluntary resignations, and on a large scale.26

Soviet society of the 1960s and 1970s thus seemed increasingly schizophrenic, with political participation in the ruling party built around an ideology which had lost its motivational power. Western and emigre scholars have advanced various theories to explain the contradictory nature of popular beliefs in the era of 'developed socialism', where the official ideology has ceased to have any popular appeal.27

It is not our concern here, however, to investigate mass beliefs in the USSR. Rather we want to focus our attention on the role of ideology within the party itself, particularly for the nomenklatura officials and full-time party apparatchiki, and to a lesser extent for the 3-4 million activists who work under them. Even though the party was losing the battle for mass beliefs, they continue to devote a massive amount of resources and attention to the construction of an system of ideological training for leading party and managerial officials.

By the early 1980s there was mounting evidence of the atrophy of Soviet ideology even at its very core: within the social science and political schools which train the officials and activists. Teachers complained that students had only an uncertain grasp of even the most basic concepts of scientific communism, and that despite a 1976 decision to increase the time
devoted to Marxism-Leninism in all higher education programs 'virtually no practical steps had been taken' by 1979.28 A Central Committee (CC) CPSU decree of 1981 spoke of 'major shortcomings' in the training of social science teachers; and a participant at a party conference at Moscow State University in 1983 complained in 1983 that social science classes were 'boring and dull.'29

A political party which sees organization as the key to political power, and which cannot find anybody to write textbooks describing its organizational role, is clearly in deep trouble. Yet this is precisely the situation in which the CPSU finds itself. In 1983-85 the journal Partiinaya zhizn' ran a competition for new textbooks for party studies courses.30 They failed to find a winning manuscript in any of the four major categories (Marxism-Leninism, social policy, economic policy and methodology). None of the 5,000 ruble first prizes (equal to two years' average salary) were awarded. In the Marxism-Leninism category the submissions were so poor that they did not even distribute any of the 1,000 ruble consolation prizes. In the meantime, other textbooks produced for party studies courses were described by one authoritative reviewer as lacking in 'fresh ideas' or 'new thoughts.'31 A similar abortive competition for a pen-portrait of 'The contemporary communist' was run by the Uzbek party journal - with no prize awarded.32 The frankest confession of ideological bankruptcy came from the Hungarian party leader K. Grosz, who confessed that 'when I was the head of
the CC propaganda department, I explained a great deal that I failed to understand myself." 33

We cite this evidence not to imply that ideology can be discounted as a factor in Soviet political life. Rather we wish to remark that the party sees this ideological decay as a threat to its organizational cohesion, and has made repeated efforts over the past 20 years to stem the tide. Perestroika can thus be seen as part of an established tradition of trying to reinvigorate the ideological superstructure of the CPSU, to give a new meaning to its leading role in society.

The party does not content itself simply with selecting cadres through the nomenklatura system who are thought to have the correct political qualities and outlook: these officials must also be subject to a system of 'ideological hardening' (ideinaya zakalka) through the network of party training institutions created for this purpose. 34 These political schools date back to the 1930s: the system was frequently reorganized, and developed in a rather chaotic fashion. By 1965 there were more than 60 different programs in operation. 35 In that year the structure of schools was rationalised, and was carefully reviewed in Central Committee decrees of 1967, 1972, 1976 and 1978 (twice). 36 At the lowest level, attendance at a short course (two weeks to one month in duration) is obligatory for all leading party and soviet cadres once every two years. 37 Some party organizations, such as Bashkir obkom and Moscow gorkom have tried to make them required for all managers on their nomenklatura too. 38 The curriculum for
these courses should comprise, according to the 1976 CC CPSU decree: the leading role of the party (54 hours); Marxism-Leninism (42 hrs); the economic strategy of the party (34 hrs); and international themes (20 hrs). They will usually be run by Universities of Marxism-Leninism, usually operated out of the House of Political Enlightenment under the local obkom. These obkom schools (each obkom now appears to have one) also run shorter courses for local officials and rank and file party members.

For more senior officials there are longer courses at one of the Higher Party Schools (VPSh). There are two VPSh run directly by the CC CPSU (in Moscow and Leningrad) and 21 other VPSh in various republics and obkomy. These schools are mainly designed for cadres headed for a career in the higher party apparatus. In 1967 the CC CPSU issued an instruction that all leading officials of oblast' soviet executive committees, and the chairmen of all district and city soviets, should go through courses at a VPSh. In 1978 the CC CPSU overhauled the regional VPSh, on the grounds that they were 'insufficiently connected to life.' In addition to 2-4 year full-time courses, they could now offer 3-5 year part time courses, previously only available by correspondence from the Moscow VPSh. In 1978 the CC reorganized the central training schools, unifying their leadership under the Academy of Social Sciences (AON). The AON is a sort of Central Committee 'think tank' that was set up back in 1953. The AON is supposed to be the pride of the party
education system. With a staff of 440 teachers, it has doubled its enrollment since 1986 - but according to a 1989 report 70 percent of the graduates are still inadequately trained in the organizational principles of the party.46

Despite these reforms, the party leadership remained dissatisfied with the party education system. A 1981 CC CPSU decree on the subject declared that the system 'still does not fully answer life's demands.'47 Yet more plans for reorganization were issued in 1984 and 1987, with the Politburo remarking in 1986 on the 'need for serious work to improve the party-political education of leaders.'48 Perestroika has thus seen a redoubling of efforts to use the political training machinery to inculcate the new reform mentality in party cadres - and it has not meant the dismantling of this ideological apparatus.

It is unclear exactly how many officials have passed through the system of party education at either obkom schools or one of the VPSh. Soviet sources give figures ranging from 187,000 to 248,000 graduands for the period 1946-78.49 16,000 people were reported as passing through all the VPSh 1968-78.50 In the Ukraine between 1972 and 1982, for example, according to one report 1,400 cadres were trained in the VPSh and 20,000 in obkom schools.51 Still, the coverage of senior party officials who have been through a VPSh is far from being a majority. One source mentioned that 16 per cent of gorkom industry department chiefs had been through a VPSh.52 Of the 97 obkom first
secretaries in a sample we compiled based on biographies available as of 1989, 40 per cent had been through the CC CPSU VPSh (up from 30 per cent of the 1981 sample). The VPSh seem to have had something of a remedial function, particularly for officials from non-Russian republics and ASSRs: many of them had no prior higher education.

Mention of the remedial aspects of party education brings us to our final point. It might have been assumed that with the dramatic improvement in the educational level of party cadres which has occurred over the last 50 years, the need for party education would evaporate. The following table shows the rise in the percentage of party secretaries at various levels who hold higher education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1983</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>secretaries of: obkom, republic</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>86.0</td>
<td>99.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gorkom, raikom</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>99.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>primary party organization</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Despite this rise in general education, however, the party leadership has continued to struggle to maintain the influence of the political education system.

What conclusions would we draw from this survey of the party education system? On one hand, party officials at all levels continue to devote considerable time and energy to trying to tighten up ideological training: it remains part of the arsenal of strategies adopted by the leadership to promote elite
cohesion. It would presumably be difficult for writers who stress popular legitimacy as the main constraint on the Soviet elite to explain why so much energy is devoted to political indoctrination within the party. Also, there is as yet little evidence that perestroika has led to any slackening of emphasis on the role of ideological reliability within the CPSU. It has merely added a new bank of concepts and slogans to be inculcated and reproduced.

On the other hand, the continuing dissatisfaction with the level of ideological competence voiced in the party press suggests that this strategy alone will not suffice. Thus over the last seven years we have seen a new emphasis on discipline campaigns as a device for policing party unity.

THE MECHANICS OF NOMENKLATURA

The nomenklatura is of course the procedure through which party committees supervise appointments to key positions in economic, governmental and cultural institutions. The basic mechanism is well-known, and seems to have changed little since its inauguration in the 1920s. Our study can however supplement the standard accounts with some information about the size of the nomenklatura culled from the party press of the last decade.

We may begin by looking at the size of the full-time party apparatus itself. Only fragmentary data are published on the number of full-time workers in specific party committees. J.Hough
estimated around 100 workers for the average obkom (regional party). The only specific numbers we could find were 65 staff in Pskov and Khorezm obkomy (serving party memberships of 70,000 and 28,000 respectively), 164 in Donetsk (336,000 members), and an average of 107 in the six Belorussian obkomy (average 103,000 members). The raikom (district) departments are relatively small: 5-6 workers in the organization and agitation departments, 3-5 in the industry and agriculture departments, implying a total of 15-30 staff for the average raikom. This accords with Hough's estimates for a typical gorkom (city party committee) of 25, and M. Voslensky's raikom estimate of 20-40. Again, only a few specific figures turned up in the course of our reading: 34 staff in the Kuntsev raikom in Moscow (serving 23,000 party members); or 14 workers in rural raikomy in Ul'yanovsk and Omsk.

A rough projection of the total size of the party apparatus of the late 1970s is shown in Table One. Apart from the figures for Kaluga and Krasnodar, we have extrapolated from the number of party instructors in the region, as reported in the Soviet source. (Instructors usually make up at least half of the party apparatus under a given committee). The seven non-Moscow regions all have membership/staff ratios of 1/150 to 1/240, while the Moscow apparatus seems to be half the size of that in other regions. There are plausible explanations for this apparent discrepancy: it could be that economies of scale call for a smaller apparatus in Moscow, with its million plus party members;
there may be direct supervision of PPOs in ministries, etc. by CC
CPSU departments; or the strong PPOs in Moscow's institutes and
factories may share more of the work of raikomy than in other
cities.

Table 1  Estimates of size of party apparatus, various regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>size of apparatus</td>
<td>total party membership</td>
<td>ratio of (1) to (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moscow</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,100,000</td>
<td>1/550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vologoda</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>91,000</td>
<td>1/180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pskov</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>1/155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlov</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>63,000</td>
<td>1/158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orenburg</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>134,000</td>
<td>1/205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaluga</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>91,000</td>
<td>1/152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sverdlovsk</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>240,000</td>
<td>1/218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krasnodar</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>315,000</td>
<td>1/240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Column (1) - A.V. Chernyak (ed), Tovarishch instruktor
(Moscow: Politizdat, 1984), p. 7, 8; Partiinaya zhizn',
35; Sovetskaya Kuban' 7/7/89, p. 2. Column (2) -
estimate derived from the number of delegates the
region sent to the 26th Party Congress, where there
seems to have been one delegate per 3,500 party
members. Delegates are listed in 26 s'ezd KPSS,
Stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow: Politizdat, 1981),

If one takes an average of all the ratios in column three of
Table 1, one comes up with an estimate of 82,000 full-time party
workers in the USSR (a ratio of 1/230, taken out of 19 million
party members). If one excludes Moscow from the calculation, the
estimate is 100,000 (a ratio of 1/190). In comparison, the
Komsomol across the whole USSR is reported as having a full-time
staff of 100,000. 59
We can now move on to nomenklatura positions outside the party apparatus. Cadre work remains extremely important for local party organizations. There is strict adherence to Lenin's idea that 'one must not allow the most important state positions to be filled by anyone except the ruling party.'\(^6\) Thus, for example, in accounts of party work the number of detailed references to party influence over managerial decision-making significantly increase when discussion turns to cadres policy. This applies, for example, to a textbook on party work in enterprises; or to the articles published weekly by directors in *Ekonomicheskaya gazeta*.\(^6\) The latter very rarely refer to the party at all: when they do, it is usually with reference to cadres selection.

There is considerable variety in the range of posts covered by the nomenklatura of local party committees in different regions. This is because 'each partkom decides for itself the posts it will supervise.'\(^6\) Within the party, however, raikom and gorkom instructors are not usually on the obkom list, nor are the partkom secretaries of farms.\(^6\) As for non-party positions, we learn for example that social science teachers are on raikom lists, while heads of social science departments are monitored at obkom level (in Sverdlovsk).\(^6\)

There are occasional specific examples of partkomy deciding to add or delete posts from their supervision. Vinnitsa obkom chose to add farm chairmen to their list in 1977; Bryansk obkom moved to include the chiefs of agro mechanisation teams (PMK); Voronezh obkom instructed its raikom to start supervising the appointment
of all farm brigade leaders; Vyselkov raikom dropped brigadiers and put in hospital ward heads. 65

This fluidity makes it rather difficult to arrive at any reliable estimate of the total number of posts covered by the nomenklature of party committees at different levels. Fairly rapid changes can occur e.g. Ul'yanovsk obkom cut 400 positions from its 1,963 post nomenklatura 1976-78. However, combining six separate reports gives us Table 2. 66

Table 2 Reports of size of nomenklatura, various regions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>obkom</th>
<th>obkom. raikom and gorkom nomenkl.</th>
<th>total</th>
<th>ratio of (2) to (3) party membership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Krasnodar</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>40,000*</td>
<td>325,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sverdlovsk</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bashkir</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23,000**</td>
<td>210,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novosibirsk</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>154,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karakalpak</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ul'yanovsk</td>
<td>1,963</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>98,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L'vov</td>
<td>1,719</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>126,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinnitsa</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novosibirsk</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>154,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Columns (1) and (2) - Kommunist 1986/17 p. 32; 1983/11, p. 58; Partiinaya zhizn' 1978/20 p. 42; 1981/7 p. 27; 1978/19 p. 42; 1981/8 p. 46; PZ Uzbekistana 82/6/151; Voprosy istorii KPSS 1979/1 p. 14; Sovetskaya Sibir' 18/8/88, p. 1. Column (3) - see Table One for details.

* - The figures for Krasnodar are for 1986.
** - The figure for Bashkir is for 1978. In 1984 it was reported as having only 17,500 on its total nomenklatura (Voprosy istorii KPSS, 1984/5, p. 37).

The final column shows a fairly consistent ratio (8-12 per cent) between the size of all nomenklature in a given region and the number of party members, with Karakalpakia as an outlyer. A 10
per cent ratio applied to the CPSU as a whole would give us 1.9 million posts on the regional **nomenklatura**, to which one would have to add the lists of republican and the national Central Committees. Moldavia for example is reported as having 1,432 on its CC **nomenklatura** in 1988.67 Thus our estimate is more than double M. Voslensky's 750,000 figure, but is in line with a comment of CC CPSU secretary Kapitonov that there are 'several millions' of persons in the reserve lists of the CPSU.68

Under perestroika the **nomenklatura** system has become partially open public discussion and scrutiny, and has on occasion come under strong attack. See for example the collection of letters under the rubric 'The costs of the "nomenklatura"', where one reader remarks that 'One finds reports in virtually every daily paper that some party organs are defending obvious degenerates, swindlers, bribe-takers and thieves'.69 There is also open reference to the perceived privileges enjoyed by **nomenklatura** members (see note 7 above). However, a radical dismantling of the **nomenklatura** system has not yet been broached.

Beginning with the 19th party conference in June 1988, there has been a drive to cut down on party intervention in decision making by economic and soviet organs. This manifested itself in the merging of functional departments in regional party committees, and a campaign to cut the number of posts on regional **nomenklatura** by up to a half, and the size of the full-time party apparatus itself by up to one third.70 7,000 jobs were cut in 1988 (ie. 8 per cent by our calculation), including 700 in CC
CPSU, and some obkomy have cut staff by one third. However, the precise impact of these changes on the leading role of the party remains unclear. The staff may have been cut, but the demands being made on party committees as yet remain unaltered. There is some evidence that the moves are aimed at decentralising party activity from the CCs and obkomy to the level of the district parties.

THE ROLE OF IDEOLOGY IN CADRE SELECTION

When party officials exercise their influence over the appointment of leading officials in non-party institutions through the nomenklatura, what are the principles governing their interventions? The party does not simply select the 'best person for the job': there would hardly be a need for a separate political nomenklatura system if that were the case. Rather, the party wants to select appointees who will be both competent and politically reliable. (Personal loyalty ie. nepotism will also of course play a large role.)

Party attitudes towards the recruitment of professionals is riven by several contradictions. On one hand, the party is worried that the lack of popular appeal of the ideology means that people only join for careerist reasons. In the words of author D. Granin, 'The healthy desire to make a good career forces people to join the party not out of lofty sentiments, but
in order to climb up the ladder." Educated professionals are more interested in building a career than are blue-collar workers, so there is a danger that the party will be swamped by white collar recruits and will lose its ties with the shopfloor. There are worries that too many 'technocratic and bureaucratic tendencies' have crept into the party. Brezhnev complained to the 26th Congress in 1981 that 'a number of specialists coming into the party apparatus from industry do not have sufficient political experience, and sometimes bring administrative-economic methods into the party organs.' This theme was repeatedly echoed by other party leaders (including E. Ligachev) over the next few years.

On the other hand, the party wants to recruit members of elite groups in order to harness their expertise and keep control over key decision makers. Over the years there was a widespread feeling that 'the best party worker is an engineer.' They do not however wish to recruit members of these groups purely on the basis of self-interest. This would dilute the cohesion of the party, turning it into a mere vehicle for competing professional interest groups. It would also exacerbate the problems of corruption which already dog the party elite.

The party seems to think that the solution to this problem lies in encouraging workers to join the CPSU and play an active role so as to balance out the influence of professionals. The problem is that workers do not wish to join. Currently 45 per cent of party members are officially workers, although as this
figure is based on employment when joining the party, the actual number is less than one in three. Party committees often resorted to recruitment quotas (only letting in one specialist for each five new worker-members, for example), although this is recognised as counter-productive in the long run by local party officials. There has been a determined effort to draw workers into service on party committees: between 1975 and 1985 the number of workers and peasants on party committees at workshop level doubled, (although in obkomy they only rose by 15 per cent).  

Another way in which the contrary expectations of the party manifest themselves in cadre policy is the dichotomy between 'reds' and 'experts' - the feeling that nomenklatura appointments may favor ideological purity or political loyalty at the expense of administrative or technical competence. It is commonly held that this dichotomy was a transient phenomenon of the 1920s and 1930s, when all the technical specialists were products of Tsarist society. Now that the USSR has trained new generations of specialists of its own, the gulf between red and expert should no longer be of great social significance, so the argument goes. The official Soviet line is to insist that there is no major problem here, that there is 'an organic unity of partiinost' and competence'.

Evidence on how serious is the red/expert dichotomy in the USSR today is fragmentary and not decisive. (The present author has tried to examine this problem in more detail elsewhere.)
Party saturation of leading professions is extensive, but there are also popular prejudices to the effect that the really competent do not need to join the party, and that interventions by party officials interfere with expert decision making.84

One way of exploring how the criteria of competence and political reliability are balanced in practice is to look at the way 'cadre attestations' are run. The basic pattern is for cadres to collect detailed evaluations on their competence and political reliability (kharakhteristiki) from relevant party and state bodies. Some of these reports go into extraordinary detail - in one instance, for example, asking for the employment records of the candidate's dozen nearest relatives.85 Since the 1960s there has been an effort to formalise cadre selection in party and non-party bodies through the introduction of points systems, where a panel reviews the qualities of candidates according to a set list of criteria.86 Attestations are used not only to fill vacant slots but also to review all the staff in an organization.

The introduction of cadre attestations was not solely a result of the party's desire to tighten up the ideological monitoring of the nomenklatura (although this was one of their motives). There was also a desire to emulate Western corporations and put personnel recruitment on a 'scientific basis'. Whatever the motives behind its introduction, attestation has served to more deeply institutionalise the role of party officials in cadre selection.87

It is stressed that party organs should 'actively
participate' in the process, and not just routinely approve
selections. \(^{88}\) The political dimension to the process is clearly
illustrated if one studies the list of qualities being assessed
in the candidates. In one Leningrad handbook for example, 10 of
the 30 plus qualities to be evaluated are explicitly political in
nature. \(^{89}\) The section is entitled Partiinost', and includes such
attributes as 'communist convictions' and 'ability to educate
workers in the spirit of Marxist-Leninist ideas.'

Attestations have been an instrument in the perestroika
campaign, being run for party members as well as nomenklatura
cadres. \(^{90}\) For example, they were used by Gorbachev protege G.
Kolbin in Ul'yanovsk (Kolbin later being given the job of
cleaning up the Kazakh party). \(^{91}\) Fresh instructions on
attestations issued by the CC CPSU in September 1987 inserted new
qualities into the ideal profile, such as 'the ability to break
with stereotyped thinking'. \(^{92}\)

THE ROLE OF ELECTIONS IN CADRE SELECTION

One method of cadre selection which has drawn increasing
attention since Gorbachev's speech to the January 1987 CC plenum
is competitive election of cadres, and the related practice of
discussing cadres in open public meetings. \(^{93}\) Electivity is now
'the norm', but not compulsory, for cadre selection in both party
and non-party bodies.
In the past the party statutes did not specifically exclude multiple candidates (article 24), and before 1961 there were quite often multiple candidate elections for party posts. Then, however, the 50 per cent minimum vote rule was introduced, and one candidate elections became standard practice. As far as party elections are concerned open, public discussion of candidates was introduced in regions such as Krasnodar and Georgia in 1982 and 1980 respectively, with a view to attacking the corruption and favoritism in appointments which seems to have been rife in those regions. In Georgia it was reported that these discussions in some 'relatively rare' cases even led to the selection of internal candidates in place of the nominee of the local raikom. Outside the party, competitive elections began to appear as a device to select industrial directors in the 1960s, and attracted renewed attention from 1982 on.

This democratisation of cadre selection is meant to supplement but not replace party control of the nomenklatura. The move to supplement 'control from above' with 'control from below' represents dissatisfaction and distrust with the way local party organs supervised cadre selection in the past. In the words of one party official, the idea is to move from 'military' to 'democratic' discipline. Thus it is premature to argue that this innovation heralds the break-up of the nomenklatura system. The point of introducing new methods is to reinforce, not displace, the party's leading role in society.

We should beware of importing notions of liberal democracy
to our understanding of Gorbachev's plans for democratising the party. In the Western pluralist tradition, democracy means choice between alternative policies: in the Soviet tradition, it is seen as a device to provide better information to the party leadership. Democracy is not an end in itself, but is a means towards the better realisation of the party's policies. Choice, in as much as it feature in Soviet democracy, is over personal attributes, not policy alternatives. In most cases the electors are offered a choice between Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

Candidates are often carefully selected to be from similar social backgrounds. For example, in their election meeting speeches the two candidates for the post of second secretary of Ryazan' gorkom were at great pains to express their agreement on policy issues.100

There are many complaints in the local press that elections of plant managers are rigged, with comments such as 'Why are they making us play at democracy? Everything was known in advance.'101 In Pavlodar gorkom officials tried to arrange for a local construction plant to elect one of their instructors as PPO secretary, by the unsubtle tactic of making sure the favored internal candidate was left off the ballot102.

The electoral system is carefully structured to facilitate such manipulation from above. The system is built around a multi-stage hierarchy of indirect elections - for example, a raikom bureau will be elected from a conference of delegates from PPOs, rather than by a direct vote of the PPO membership. This leaves ample opportunity for superordinate party committees to engineer
their desired outcome. For example, the Bolog gorkom elected a new secretary in five stages: (1) 18 nominations were solicited from PPOS (2) the gorkom bureau selected four from this list (3) at the gorkom conference each candidate had to pass a separate vote (by scoring at least 50 per cent) to get on the ballot (5) as only one candidate passed stage 4, she was deemed elected. 103

A further example is the procedure governing the election of Primary Party Organization (PPO) secretaries. 104 At PPO level there is a secret ballot (or should be according to the rules). However, if a PPO meeting votes out the nominee for secretary, according to the official instructions there has to be another vote, this time by show of hands, to confirm acceptance of the secret ballot. If the negative voters do not have the courage to vote no in the open, then the first ballot is rejected, and there has to be another secret ballot for the same candidate. Why do they have this bizarre double voting system, first closed, then open? Why not simply have open voting, as in elections to party positions above PPO level? Presumably, the idea is that the party leaders wish to elicit information from party members about their opinions (for example, that they are dissatisfied with a certain PPO secretary) without conceding to them any power to alter the situation.

There is concern that these electoral procedures should not weaken the nomenklatura system – for example, by alienating losing candidates. Party committees are instructed not to allow losers to drop out of party work, but to retain them on the
nomenklatura reserve for placement elsewhere. It is difficult to predict how increased popular influence will affect issues such as competence versus political connections. It could be for example that workers actually prefer well-connected party padrones to reform-minded technocrats who may threaten the status quo in their enterprise. One Uzbek author explained that 'The two secret principles of "You for me and me for you" and "The state will not miss it" (не obedneet) cement the relationship between leaders and subordinates,' meaning that workers and managers collude in defrauding the state.

Despite these qualifications, if election of managers and soviet chairmen takes firm root it could alter the balance of power between party and state cadres, since unelected party secretaries would be facing officials blessed with the legitimacy of having been elected by their workers or constituents. This seems to have been the motivation behind Gorbachev's controversial proposal to the 19th party conference to merge the posts of first secretary of the local party and chairman of the local soviet, since this would mean party bosses being exposed to direct election by the general public. The proposal was confusing because it was combined with an insistence that party organs should desist from detailed supervision of the running of local soviets! As yet no concrete steps have been taken to implement the proposal.

The March 1989 People's Deputy elections showed that attempts to control elections do not always work, and that even
heavily controlled elections can become a channel for popular will. This is probably why even elections of the limited type described above are far from being the 'norm' which Gorbachev called for back in January 1987. For example, the 100 person CPSU slate for the new Congress of People's Deputies was filled from a list of 100 candidates, although negative votes were recorded (Gorbachev got 12 against, and Ligachev 78, out of 641 votes cast at the plenum). 108 The election of delegates to the 19th party conference in 1988 was also tightly controlled, with most obkom bureaus putting up for 'election' at a specially convened plenum the same number of candidates as there were seats available. In some regions there were more candidates than places, and in some exceptional cases there were even successful rebellions against the initial selections. 109

In the 1988 local party election campaign one half of workshop and PPO secretaries were elected from multiple candidates, and in 1987 15 per cent of raikom and gorkom first secretaries. 3,275 PPO secretaries were voted out in these campaigns (less than one per cent of the total number), although there are reports of high negative voting in some regions (25-44 per cent). 110

The standard pattern for most cadre selections inside and outside the party remains non-electoral. It is more common to run cadre competitions (konkursky), where rival candidates are advanced and discussed in open public meetings, but the final decision remains with the party committee rather than through an
The relative lack of faith in open elections as a means of cadre selection is evidenced by Gorbachev's revival of Khrushchev's device of compulsory turnover rules. (Why not leave it up to the electorate?) Lobbying for such a rule change began in the party press in late 1985, but no action was taken at the 27th Congress (either because Gorbachev lacked the power, or because he did not at that stage think it necessary). New instructions issued in August 1988 mandate a minimum 20 per cent turnover of party committees at each election, and a maximum of two terms in office for elected officials (excluding the Politburo). These rules will only come into force after the next party congress, scheduled for 1990.

Still more radical proposals have been surfacing in the party press— for example calls to impose a compulsory retirement age on party officials, to allow the reintroduction of organized factions within the party (banned since 1921), or at least to permit the tabling of alternative platforms. These suggestions have not yet been formally considered by official party bodies, however.

The most dramatic steps forward in political liberalisation—the increased press freedom and the emergence of a quasi-parliament, have thus come outside the party. There is a widespread feeling that, in the words of one Siberian party official, 'the democratisation of the party is lagging behind the democratisation of society'. A public opinion survey in 1989
revealed only 30 per cent felt free to criticise their PPO secretary, 15 per cent their raikom secretary and 8 per cent their obkom secretary. The CPSU remains an elite body with power concentrated in the hierarchy of committees and full-time officials.

Our general conclusion would be that control over cadre selection has not proved to be a foolproof device for ensuring elite cohesion beyond the ranks of party officials - as evidenced by the problems of recruitment, reds versus experts, and the need to resort to competitive elections. However, it has been highly effective in preserving the monolithic unity of the party itself, and preventing overt challenges to its monopoly of political power. Experiments with electivity have not yet caused a decisive change in the way the party runs itself.

PARTY DISCIPLINE CAMPAIGNS AND ELITE COHESION

Party discipline campaigns are not usually analysed from the standpoint of elite cohesion. They are typically seen as a device by which a party leader seeks to remove opponents and advance supporters, within a patron-client model of party life. Party discipline is also seen as a way of trying to improve regime performance: less corruption is thought to mean better decision making and more resolute implementation of party policies.

The perspective adopted here is rather different. We are
looking at discipline campaigns as a device to preserve the organizational integrity of the CPSU, by ensuring that its rules are being followed and that individuals violating party requirements are called to account. This is not that far-fetched an interpretation of the role of discipline drives in party life: after all, it is the primary explanation CPSU officials themselves advance for these campaigns. It may also be the case that the campaigns have important implications for faction-fighting among the elite, or for policy implementation, but these dimensions will not be explored here.

The idea of discipline as a factor integral to our understanding of the modern world is not of course confined to the CPSU: recall the work of M. Foucault. 117 Common sense suggests that the purpose of discipline is to bring about a better society, or administer punishment to guilty individuals. In contrast Foucault argues (in the context of Victorian prisons) that disciplinary procedures serve mainly to sustain an organized structure of power. This applies very neatly to the case of the CPSU.

It was former KGB chairman Yu. Andropov who put the discipline theme center stage in Soviet politics shortly after his accession to the post of General Secretary in November 1982, and the theme has received renewed emphasis under M. Gorbachev. In society at large this meant a crackdown on worker indiscipline and white collar crime under Andropov, under Gorbachev it meant the draconian anti-alcohol campaign. As far as the party is
concerned, since 1982 we have seen determined efforts to use internal party procedures to call corrupt and incompetent leaders to account. The devices used have been the traditional procedures of the CPSU—periodic criticism and self-criticism sessions of party leaders before the committees and conferences which appointed them, and submission to re-election. The most visible sign of this policy has been the massive turnover of elite groups e.g. 108 out of 150 obkom first secretaries leaving office 1982-87. This all seems in marked contrast to the Brezhnev period, when 'trust in cadres' and 'stability in cadres' were the watchwords, and only some 5-8 obkom first secretary positions turned over each year (although in 1978 23 changed hands).

One's initial impression would therefore be that 1982 period represents a radical break with the Brezhnevite strategy for elite cohesion. However, despite the remarkable elite turnover, we do not in fact detect any profound alteration in the techniques the CPSU uses to maintain organizational cohesion. The Andropov and Gorbachev campaigns show considerable continuity with the tactics of party management deployed in the Brezhnev era: perestroika has not yet percolated through to the inner sanctums of the party.

The most striking elements of continuity which we will draw out in the narrative below are as follows.

First, the whole discipline campaign has been planned and orchestrated from above, for the purpose of achieving goals set by the national party leadership.
Second, the procedures used for promoting the discipline campaign have proved remarkably stable over time. The Committee of Party Control (CPC) and the Party Revision Commission, with their local affiliates (partkommissii), have played a leading role in the campaign, and appear to retain the structure laid down by Brezhnev more than 20 years ago. The arsenal of devices is a familiar list: press criticism; critical CC CPSU decrees; and activation of party reporting/election meetings as for a criticism of local leaders.

Third, the campaigns have usually followed a distinct geographical pattern, hitting selected areas hard to serve as examples to the rest of the country, and then moving on to other regions. This approach gives the central party leadership a chance to carefully oversee the process, deploying the scarce personnel of the Organization and Party Work department of the CC CPSU (who are sent out to attend key republican and obkom plena) to ensure that the campaign is not treated in a formalistic fashion. Empty formalism would be the most likely outcome of a broad national campaign — that, or confusion and fragmentation. Power considerations may also be involved: the General Secretary may lack the votes in the Politburo to force a simultaneous campaign in all regions and republics.

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

42
Let us trace through the Andropov and Gorbachev discipline campaigns to illustrate the structural continuities from the Brezhnev era (not that this would be much consolation to the Brezhnevites being eased out by these techniques).

The Andropov campaign really began before Brezhnev's death. Andropov took over the post of secretary for ideology following Suslov's demise in May 1982. Already in July 1982 an article by the deputy head of the Party Control Committee (PCC) set the tone, criticising relatively senior officials such as an obkom secretary in Novosibirsk and a deputy prime minister in the Turkmen SSSR, not to mention a clutch of RSFSR ministers.\textsuperscript{119}

Over the following two years around half-a-dozen areas were singled out for thorough clean-ups: Uzbekistan, Moldavia and obkomy such as Krasnodar, Saratov, Rostov and Kalmykiya.\textsuperscript{120} For example, 80 per cent of all raikom and gorkom secretaries were replaced in Krasnodar krai.\textsuperscript{121} Some of the target areas (e.g. Krasnodar and Tambov\textsuperscript{122}) were continuations of campaigns begun under Brezhnev. Outside these target areas, in 1983 the general discipline campaign within the CPSU was fairly sluggish. For example, the nationwide PPO elections produced only the usual miniscule number of secretaries voted out or warned that their work was unsatisfactory (97 out of 385,000\textsuperscript{123}).

Things got a little more serious towards the end of 1983, with the CC CPSU June plenum passing a milestone decree on the party's ideological work - although this was addressing agitprop among the general public rather than intra-mural discipline.\textsuperscript{124}
New, tighter instructions for the conduct of party business were issued in November 1983, insisting that careful records must be maintained of all party meetings, and that all complaints must be recorded and forwarded to higher bodies as necessary.¹²⁵

On the other hand, Andropov used a meeting with party veterans (with Gorbachev present) to underline the need for party unity; and in a speech in August 1983 he cautioned that one must 'measure seven times, and cut once' (Old Russian Proverb), for 'in an economy of the size and complexity of our own, it is necessary to be extremely careful.'¹²⁶ The unity theme was echoed by E. Ligachev (then head of the CC CPSU Organization and Party Work Department) in his report reviewing the PPO election meetings. He referred obliquely to 'the arguments of the 1950s and 1960s, after the 20th party congress' - i.e. when the party was badly split at national level.¹²⁷

During the Chernenko interregnum (February 1984-March 1985) the discipline drive was not vigorously pursued, although Chernenko did at least keep up the rhetoric of change. In a speech to electors in March he asserted that 'we must decisively overcome all conservatism and inertia'; while the routine review of the party election campaigns in 1984 complained that 'a fundamental improvement in the style of leadership has still not happened.'¹²⁸

The clean-ups in fact continued. A major purge was launched at a plenum of the Uzbek CC in June, 1984, with an address by E. Ligachev on behalf of the CC CPSU.¹²⁹ Three
ministers were fired, and three former obkom first secretaries
criticised by name for 'protectionism for relatives' and other
misdeeds. As for other regions, a meeting of regional CPC heads
saw attacks on a host of regional parties: Uzbekistan, Armenia,
Mari, Krasnodar, Rostov, Altai, Kherson, Alma Ata, Gomel'.
(The list includes obkomy from all five major republics.)

The overall campaign remained rather restrained, despite
some ominous Stalinist rumblings, such as a Kommunist article
which began with a quote from a 1930s Pravda article datelined
Stalino (now renamed Donetsk) and argued that the current
discipline campaign 'is based on the same principles as half a
century ago.' One example of the restraint in the campaign is
that even when the first secretary of the much troubled Rostov
obkom was removed, in July 1984, he was allowed to retire 'on
health grounds' and was spared direct criticism. The fact that
Ligachev personally attended the obkom plenum suggests that more
than health matters were involved.

The 1984/85 party election campaign proceeded in the
standard fashion, with a few fairly critical published reports,
but with no official above the level of raikom first secretary
being criticised in these meetings. Unusually, some raikom
officials in Moscow itself were censured.

There is, of course, a distinct change of pace with the
arrival of Gorbachev in March 1985. From the outset he urged more
open criticism in party meetings and in the press. For example,
in a Leningrad speech he asked: 'Couldn't we live easier? Since
October [1917] we have lived under pressure, one might say, for 70 years. It may seem that we could ease up. No, comrades, history does not give us such an opportunity, particularly not at the present time. However, Gorbachev's emphasis was on changing the personnel rather than contemplating structural change. One of his earliest innovations in political rhetoric was the emphasis on 'the human factor' (used as early as a March 1983 speech). Time was to show that merely changing personnel would not suffice to put the USSR onto a new course.

Attention focused on the forthcoming round of party election meetings, to be held in the run up to the 26th congress which would meet in February 1986. Gorbachev argued that 'there must be no place for eulogies and compliments.' A Kommunist editorial darkly noted that 'life has repeatedly confirmed the simple - but extremely important - truth, that the party strengthens itself by purging its ranks.' This phrase was originally used by Lenin in a frontispiece to What is to be done?, although Soviet printings have omitted the phrase since the 1950s.

The party election meetings in 1985/86 proceeded with a considerable amount of open criticism by delegates from the floor, and frank confession of errors by officials up to obkom level. One raikom secretary remarked that 'in 20 years in the party I do not recall such activism.' In a whole range of obkom plena criticisms were levelled at named officials of the obkom bureau - typically, one or two obkom secretaries and one to three department heads. In Rostov censure reached up to touch
the obkom second secretary, and in Gomel' the first secretary himself was criticised, albeit only for allowing other people's errors to accumulate. 140

The process did not proceed without opposition. In November 1985 Ligachev felt obliged to defend the new course laid out at the April 1985 plenum against (nameless) critics who felt that it showed weakness, and was ill-advised given the state of international tension. 141

The same pattern was to be repeated in the next cycle of obkom report/election campaigns in late 1987. 142 The CC CPSU resolution opening the campaign called for resolute self-criticism, and urged higher officials to attend the meetings of lower committees to see that this was done - a clear indicator as to the top-down nature of the process. 143 Only three obkom first secretaries were replaced in the course of the campaign, and only one of them (from Chardzhou in Turkmen SSR) was explicitly removed for personal failings. 20 obkom secretaries (ie. other than first secretaries) and 20,500 PPO secretaries were removed during the campaign. 144

Regional purges: some cases

In Kazakhstan an entrenched network of corrupt officials built up under the rule of D. Kunaev (first secretary since 1964). The pressure on Kunaev to start cleaning up the republic began even
under Brezhnev. 1981-86 500 officials on the republic nomenklatura were dismissed, including two obkom first secretaries (Chimkent and Alma Ata) and one in three of the gorkom and raikom first secretaries. Two former heads of Kzyl Ordinsk obkom were reproached for 'family protectionism' even though one of them had been promoted to be president of the republic (and subsequently dismissed). Kazakh party first secretary D. Kunaev was criticised by name for complicity in the cover-up. To the surprise of Western observers, he was not ousted at the 27th congress, but clung to power until December 1986.

Major Kazakh officials were convicted of serious crimes. For example, in 1986 a former transport minister was jailed for 13 years, and the head of administrative affairs for the Kazakh CC jailed for 8 years for embezzlement. There were many complaints that party committees in the region were reluctant to punish transgressors. Typical is the case of the Beskaragai raikom first secretary who lost his job but was given a 'last chance' as a kolkhoz chairman. He continued to abuse office for personal gain, however, and was sacked - but even then the raikom did not expel him from the party. Even the USSR Procurator, V. Kalinichenko, later admitted that the net of corruption spread so wide and so deep that it was simply impossible to prosecute all those involved without completely emasculating the republic's industry and administration.

In Uzbekistan outright corruption was an even more severe problem than in Kazakhstan. By 1986 the clean-up which began in
June 1984 saw 40 of 65 obkom secretaries in the republic replaced, and 9 of the 13 obkom first secretaries. The Uzbek republic was run as a virtual private fiefdom by S. Rashidov and his cronies (one of whom, for example, ran a private prison in the Fergana valley). Moscow left the republic alone so long as the cotton harvest reports were favorable. Judging by the Uzbek party press of the period attention focussed upon monitoring economic performance to the exclusion of organizational and disciplinary issues (even by the bland standards of the party press of other republics). There was some opposition to Rashidov within the party, but such people were dismissed or shunted sidewise — into diplomatic positions, for example. The system started to unravel after the death of Rashidov in 1983, revealing nepotism, bribery and the buying and selling of party offices flourished on a massive scale. The clean up was initiated by Moscow, with a special team being sent from the CC CPSU in 1984. National officials such as El'tsin were dispatched to keep up the pressure in 1985. The purge is thoroughly described by M. Musakhanov, first secretary of Tashkent obkom 1970-85, in a 1988 interview from his prison cell. In the first year one in three nomenklatura cadres were dismissed. In 1986-87 6 obkom first secretaries, 4 republic CC secretaries, the republic prime minister, and 80,000 other officials were prosecuted. The former first secretary of Bukhara obkom, A. Karimov, was removed in 1984 and subsequently sentenced to death in 1987 for bribe taking. It was revealed that
he had close links with Brezhnev's son-in-law Y. Churbanov, first
deputy minister of interior since 1980, who was himself tried for
bribe-taking in 1989.\textsuperscript{158}

Even after the purge began, it was hard to discern from the
pages of the Uzbek party journal that anything had changed. It
carried reports on regional plena where officials were dismissed
at Moscow's instigation, but the bulk of articles continued to
stress the critical situation with regard to the grain and
cotton harvests. Testimony to the sluggishness of the Uzbek
apparatus to clean its own stables is the fact that the two top
officials of the Uzbek CC \textit{partkomissiya} were fired together with
a host of top judicial officials for colluding in the
imprisonment of a teacher who reported abuses by his
superiors.\textsuperscript{159} As in Kazakhstan, the purge was so thorough that
there were few reliable cadres left to fill the empty slots. Some
replacements last only a few months before being fired for abuse
of office, and the party is even turning to non-party members to
fill responsible positions.\textsuperscript{160} Another batch of ministers were
fired in early 1988, and in 1989 the new President of the Uzbek
Supreme Soviet was removed after only one year for protecting the
relatives of disgraced leaders.\textsuperscript{161} The Uzbek purge is clearly not
a one-off housecleaning after which order is restored: rather it
has become a continual fact of life, where purged officials are
recycled to lower positions, and both they and their replacements
in higher office continue to transgress party norms.

October 1986 saw the CC CPSU launching a clean-up of
Turkmenistan, whose first secretary (M. Gapunov) had been quietly retired in December 1985. The clean up in Tashauz oblast' saw the fall of the heads of the region's obkom, soviet, trade unions, police and procuracy.\(^{162}\)

Moldavia was, according to one commentator, the private fiefdom of its first secretary I. Bodiuł, where 'grass couldn't grow' without his permission.\(^{163}\) The republic's former second secretary was implicated in the Uzbek corruption and sacked.\(^{164}\)

In a stormy Armenian CC plenum in December 1987 a welter of accusations of corruption were levelled against K. Demirchyan, who had hung on as first secretary since 1974.\(^{165}\) Other delegates tried to shout down the accusations, despite an intervention from the CC CPSU representative attending the meeting.

The first secretary of the Kirghiz CC, T. Usubaliev, was removed in February 1986 for his 'poor work style', with suppressing criticism being his cardinal sin.\(^{166}\)

At the Ukrainian party congress in February 1986 four obkom secretaries were censured, and one was dismissed (in Ternopol') for 'serious errors'.\(^{167}\) In fact, the clean up in the Ukraine proceeded much more slowly than elsewhere.\(^{168}\) At the Ukrainian CC plenum of March 1987 the first secretary of Lvov was toppled, and party chief Shcherbitski was criticised by name by the Zhitomir obkom first secretary, but managed to stay in power until September 1989.\(^{169}\) In Ukraine in the 1987-88 party election campaign, for example, of 887,000 cadres elected to party committees only 18,000 were removed for failings (ie. only 2 per
cent). Gorbachev has established a dominant position in the all-union party apparatus (CC CPSU), but it is our guess that he simply was not able to mobilise enough votes within the Ukrainian CC to remove Shcherbitski and speed up the purge in the Ukraine.

It was not only the outlying regions that came under scrutiny. Moscow itself received a house cleaning at the hands of B. El'tsin (appointed gorkom first secretary in December 1985), with the exposure of housing and metro scandals and a 'meat and milk mafia'. There were later claims that El'tsin would have fired three more raikom secretaries (he managed to replace 22 out of 33), but was prevented from doing so by Ligachev, and that this was the real reason for his dismissal from the Politburo in November 1987. Scandals also befell other RSFSR regions (for example, the Bashkir obkom first secretary was ousted in 1987) but in general the purges were most severe in the non-Russian regions.

The efficacy of disciplinary mechanisms

We have seen in our discussion of the Uzbek and Kazakh cases that the traditional disciplinary measures - criticism and cadre turnover - proved rather inadequate to the tasks set before them. Corrupt practices were so institutionalised in those regions that new replacements adopted the old habits. Disciplinary campaigns
are not therefore a one-off process, but must be periodically repeated. This is true even in regions where an allegedly successful purge has occurred. For example, shortly after the 1985 departure of E. Shevardnadze from Georgia (which he cleaned up after he took over as first secretary in 1972), another wave of scandal was uncovered, including former Shevardnadze associates. Similarly, G. Kolbin was sent to Kazakhstan to clean up after Kunaev largely on the basis of his successful efforts in Ul'yanovsk - yet within two years of his departure Ul'yanovsk obkom was once again being criticised for sluggishness in the pursuit of perestroika.

Most clean-ups seem to be initiated directly out of the Organization and Party Work department of the CC CPSU. The central body nominally in charge of disciplinary matters - the Committee of Party Control (CPC) - seems relatively weak. It runs some reviews of regional party committees, but mainly deals with appeals from individual communists (c. 130 per month). (In roughly half the cases it finds in favor of appellant and against the local leaders who disciplined them.)

The sporadic nature of the clean ups, the quiescence of the republican party journals, and the apparently pivotal role of interventions from Moscow lead us to conclude that the established hierarchy of party disciplinary agencies are woefully ill-equipped for the task of mounting these disciplinary drives. There is little evidence that the partkomissii attached to local party committees and charged with supervising discipline are...
capable of playing a role independent of the local elite - who control their selection and future careers. For example, the second secretary of Perm' obkom described the work of partkomissii as 'extremely inadequate'. In most cases of abuse of office by members of the local elite the partkomissiya only seems to act when pressure is exerted by higher organs. Also, the disciplinary procedures can easily turn into a bureaucratic nightmare eg. in the Minsk district of Ukraine 14 commissions were sent and 350 people questioned on the basis of what turned out to be an unfounded complaint.

Rather ironically, in some cases the partkomissii become a tool in factional in-fighting, and disciplinary procedures are used by corrupt officials to consolidate their power - the precise opposite of their intended function. For example, an ambitious partkomissiya chief of Dagestan obkom persecuted a progressive kolkhoz chairman trying to introduce leaseholds. An obkom colluded with a ministry to annul the election of a controversial new factory director by digging out an old reprimand from his party record. A whistleblower from a Zaporozhe factory was disciplined by his party committee (with the support of the obkom) on the spurious charge of taking out secret documents.

Thus the national leadership have to turn to extra-party measures to force through regional purges. The police organs (Ministry of Internal Affairs) are of little use, as they seem hopelessly compromised and ineffective. A clear example is
the way the racketeers in Brezhnev's home town of Dnepropetrovsk bought off the local police chief and enjoyed protection even from N. Shchelokov, USSR Minister of Internal Affairs. Judges tend to obey phone calls from the regional party secretariat and may collude with corruption in some cases. In 1986, 76 judges were dismissed and 837 punished for abuse of office.

Where serious corruption is involved the drive is often spearheaded by the Procuracy and KGB. Even these bodies may however fall under the influence of local political elites, or at least prove powerless to displace them without strong interventions from Moscow. Examples would include the Malyshev affair in Odessa where the local party blocked a procuracy investigation; or the Berkhin affair, where the Voroshilovgrad KGB chief was denounced for involvement in the unjust imprisonment of a local journalist.

The national press has also played a vital role in these campaigns. Most of the local press is completely supine before their regional power elite. The Uzbek first secretary noted in 1986 that 'All the local press continue to be orchestrated under the instructions of the local bosses.' The typical pattern is that local journalists play a role by alerting authorities in Moscow to scandals in their locality. For example, Partiinaya zhizn' acted on a tip-off from local journalists in the case of a housing allocation scandal in Lvov. A local radio journalist attacked the Sakhalin obkom first secretary for among other things giving priority to his relatives on the housing waiting
The journalist was sacked and only after the intervention of liberal Moscow papers was he reinstated.

The national press themselves are not all-powerful: they may on occasion be politely ignored by regional parties. Pravda criticised the Karelian obkom in an article, then had to return to the attack a month later to criticise their formalistic response. The Kirghiz first secretary actually criticised certain national newspapers for irresponsibly critical reporting in a speech to the 19th party conference. In May 1988 some Kirghiz party officials were finally removed after a scathing Izvestiya article, but even then they were allowed to stay on the Kirghiz CC, while the former disgraced head of the Kirghiz party T. Usubaliev was restored to party membership.

Thus while it is true that party disciplinary organs are barely up to the tasks set before them, it is also the case that alternative channels of challenging corruption and keeping leaders on their toes are not readily available either. The KGB and procuracy already have important social functions of their own to perform, and it is difficult to see how useful it would be to draw them still further into the political and economic decision making performed by party organs.

Discipline and the party rank and file

The discipline campaigns begun by Andropov and continued under
Gorbachev also included attestations of rank and file party members, and the punishment or expulsion of members who have not been sufficiently active in the fulfilment of party tasks allocated to them, or who have been guilty of abuse of office. All told 430,000 were expelled between 1981 and 1986, and a further 327,000 since 1986. Figures for the number of reprimands over the whole period are not available: in 1986 there were 222,000.193 These numbers are not particularly high for a party with 19 million members. They are on the same level as the last exchange of party cards in the Brezhnev period (1974-75) which saw 300,000 purged from the party's ranks.

The single commonest cited reason for expulsion would seem to be alcoholism (about one third of all cases where reasons are mentioned). Abuse of office typically involves nefarious dealings with regard to housing (favoring relatives in the waiting list, or misappropriating state construction materials), and to a lesser extent in the use and acquisition of cars. Misuse of appointment powers - finding jobs for favorites and dismissing enemies - is often invoked when party members in positions of authority are involved.

Elements of continuity in the discipline weapon

The discipline drive under way since 1982 has seen the apparent
blossoming of conflictual, critical politics within the formerly monolithic and moribund ranks of the CPSU. How is one to interpret this phenomenon? Did Gorbachev introduce a radically new strategy for ensuring the unity of the party, based on open criticism by the party rank and file? We would suggest that centralist tendencies still vastly outweigh democratic elements in party life, and that Gorbachev's policies for revitalising the Soviet elite in fact are best seen as a continuation of the discipline strategies pursued by his predecessors - even including Brezhnev.

Our first argument is to underline the orchestrated nature of the process. Take for example the initial 1985-86 party election campaign. Almost all the reports follow a very similar pattern: humility from the speakers at the rostrum, and criticism for named officials at specific levels in the hierarchy (as described above). It is clear that the latter practice was ordered from above: Partiinaya zhizn' explicitly stated that it would be necessary in many cases to censure obkom bureau members by name. At a meeting of obkom secretaries in the CC CPSU in August 1985 Ligachev turned on the pressure, berating several obkomy for not having reviewed their work for several years, and reminding the audience that the CC CPSU had taken to hearing direct reports from individual obkomy in recent years. In other words democratic centralism continued to be top-down rather than bottom-up, acting out a script passed down from Moscow.

There were some deviations from the standard pattern. In
several cases obkom plena managed to avoid criticising obkom level officials.\textsuperscript{196} In Samarkand obkom there was a more substantial and vivid discussion of problems than in any other obkom election meeting (e.g. including the firing of the gorkom first secretary), but on the other hand they did not bother to single out any individual obkom members for criticism.\textsuperscript{197} These exceptions do not alter the overall picture of a campaign launched and controlled from above.

Our second argument is that the device Gorbachev utilised - censure during party election meetings - has been used on previous occasions by party leaders. The change has been one of degree rather than kind.\textsuperscript{198} Thus for example in the Andropov period we see four kraikom department heads reproached by name at an election meeting of Primorsk kraikom.\textsuperscript{199} Even back in the 1980-81 election campaign (i.e. in the Brezhnev era) one can find direct criticism of an obkom second secretary in Mordovia; of two department heads in Brest; of half a dozen ministers and republic party officials in Tadzhikistan; and of several ministers in Georgia and Latvia.\textsuperscript{200} The campaign had been launched at a CC CPSU gathering of regional secretaries in 1980, which was told that 'it is important that criticism in the meetings be concrete and not faceless' (bezlikoi).\textsuperscript{201} This is language very similar to that used to launch the Gorbachev campaign. Even Chernenko had used such rhetoric, saying that 'no-one can stand above criticism by the masses,' and that there should be 'no tolerance for suppressors of criticism'.\textsuperscript{202}
Thus the rhetoric of successive leaders on the subject of party discipline has remained relatively unchanged: the main difference with Gorbachev has been a keenness to see officials take it more seriously, and a willingness to sack people in large numbers. Given the lack of institutional change, it has been possible for many regional leaders to adapt to the new version of the party rhetoric while leaving their behavior unchanged.

The most striking development in the Gorbachev era has been, as noted above, the rapid increase in turnover of leading cadres and a willingness to tackle the more corrupt regional elites. Gorbachev clearly injected a sense of urgency absent during the Brezhnev era. For example, Gorbachev told the March 1985 CC CPSU plenum that 'certain leaders who occupy positions for a long time stop seeing the new and get used to shortcomings.'\textsuperscript{203} This is rather different from the rhetoric of the Brezhnev era, when the party was praised for 'attentively looking after cadres who worked fruitfully and actively for many years, but now because of age cannot carry out their duties with the necessary energy and activism.'\textsuperscript{204}

However, a close study of Brezhnev's concept of 'stability in cadres' shows more continuity between the two leadership periods than may at first sight appear. The official catechism in the Brezhnev era was to argue for a dialectical 'unity of the principles of systematic renewal of cadres and leadership continuity.'\textsuperscript{205} In practice, of course, the 'solicitous attitude' (berezhnoe otnoshenie) towards cadres won out over the argument
that 'demandingness' (trebovatel'nost') must accompany 'trust' (doverie). 206 But care was taken to ensure that all references to trust were balanced by recognition of cadre responsibilities. Thus for example E.Z. Razumov, deputy head of the Organization and Party Work Department, noted in 1981 that 'trust in cadres by no means suggests an all-forgiving (besproshchenie) attitude to those who carry out their responsibilities in a careless fashion.' 207 The same formula linking trust with accountability shows up in an article by V.V. Mikshin in 1983, in a Partiinaya zhizn' editorial just before Chernenko's death, and in Gorbachev's acceptance speech as General Secretary in March 1985. 208

Thus this dialectical formula calling for trust and criticism was flexible enough to serve both the low turnover of the Brezhnev administration (which did see occasional clean-ups of Azerbaidjan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, etc.) and the combative, rapid turnover administrations of Andropov and Gorbachev. This point also illustrates that Gorbachev's campaign does not necessarily represent a decisive break with the ideology of the past, merely a re-emphasis on some of its forgotten elements. It is therefore quite credible to argue that Gorbachev, despite his apparently radical measures, was a product of the Brezhnevite apparatus and was schooled in its weltanschauung.

Moreover, even under Gorbachev there seemed to be some recognition that the bloodletting had gone far enough. The new first secretary of Krasnodar kraikom - which saw 80 per cent
turnover of party and soviet secretaries at city and district level in three years - published an article in 1986 symbolically titled 'Develop trust and accountability.'209 Once the old leaders have been removed, the national leadership have to come up with ways to persuade the new cadres to function in the desired manner other than merely threatening them with dismissal.

In any case, typically under Gorbachev (as previously) most replacements are promoted up from the very same regional apparatus which previously spawned the corrupt or ineffective leader. Andropov instituted a new policy of bringing cadres from the provinces to work as CC CPSU inspectors before sending them back as obkom first secretaries, so as to enable the Moscow leaders to assess their qualities at first hand. Over 20 new obkom secretaries have rotated through Moscow in this way.210 However, they are usually sent back to their native province, leading one to doubt whether they really represent a break with the entrenched local elites. Of the 97 obkom first secretaries in our biographical sample (in office in 1987), 50 were promoted from a prior position in the same oblast', and only six were transferred between republics.

Gorbachev instead has chosen to move in the direction of greater exposure to criticism from below ie. trying to increase the pressure on party officials whose actual selection has been pre-ordained by the party, rather than doing away with the hierarchical cadre selection procedure altogether. We thus agree with the party author who concluded in the wake of the
humiliating defeats of regional party officials in the March 1989 People's Deputy elections that 'The reorganization and cadre renewal which has taken place in party committees has not produced the expected decisive changes in their style of work. This was clearly shown by the pre-election campaign.'

CONCLUDING ARGUMENT

To what extent, then, has our empirical study produced evidence in support of, or at least compatible with, the assumption of elite theory? On the ideological front, we find that the CPSU attaches enormous importance to party unity (elite cohesion, in the language of Field and Higley). They devote considerable efforts to trying to ensure that persons appointed to positions on nomenklatura have an understanding of the party's ideology and a clear grasp of the need to preserve unity. And even for members and officials within the party, the party leadership devotes time, effort and resources to improving the ideological training of its cadres. The fact that the ideology may not be fully internalised, or the fact that party leaders remain deeply dissatisfied with the state of ideological training, does not detract from our overall argument. Elite theory does not argue that elite cohesion is guaranteed to succeed. Rather, it suggests that the elite must strive to maintain cohesion if they are to stay in place. They may adopt some strategies which work well
(e.g. the nomenklatura system, the ban on rival political groups) and other strategies which are less successful (e.g. the emphasis on ideology).

In the Brezhnev era, the national leadership devoted little attention to preserving the organizational integrity of the CPSU. They grew complacent, and took it for granted that organizational inertia would carry the party forward. The Brezhnev elite were united by a set of powerful shared experiences - industrialization, the purges, war, destalinisation. In the course of their long careers they had all been transferred around the country, had a wide range of experiences and a solid network of friends and clients. Corruption was tolerated and served as additional cement for the elite. In contrast the Gorbachev generation has known none of the upheavals and uncertainties of their predecessors, they have typically had a narrow range of professional experience, and have mostly spent the bulk of their careers in a single province. Consequently they have to look to novel ideas and principles to forge a new elite consensus. Moreover, the corruption and incompetence of the Brezhnev elite brought the Soviet economy to the brink of collapse by the end of the 1970s and obliged the party leadership to seek a change of course.

However, our study of Gorbachev's strategies for restoring elite cohesion suggest that there continues to be deep structural continuities with the way the CPSU operated in the Brezhnev era, despite the fact that there has been an extensive clean-out of
incumbents put in place by the previous leadership.

Elite theory has the disadvantage of tending to underestimate the policy dimension. The post-1982 party discipline campaign has not solely been an exercise in preserving elite unity by removing dissolute or incompetent leaders. There has also been a sense that the style of leadership has to change so as to ensure more effective policy implementation than had been seen in the past. Hard-core elite theorists argue that regime performance in terms of economic growth, living standards, and so forth is not a primary goal of a ruling elite. While we would agree that the Soviet elite would reject any reform which could improve performance yet might threaten their monopoly of political power, we would also recognise that this does not exhaust the total range of policy alternatives available to the CPSU leadership. The Gorbachev discipline campaign is not simply another instrument of elite cohesion: it is also a genuine attempt to bring about a significant improvement in social and economic decision making.

There is little danger of our forgetting the policy aspects of perestroika, however, since speculation as to the likely future success or failure of current reform policies has dominated Western writing on the USSR in the Gorbachev period. Adopting an elite theory approach serves to remind us that Gorbachev's perestroika faces very well-defined limits, and has not been allowed to infringe on the leading role of the party. It may turn out that the pessimism of elite theory will be
validated: that preserving the leading role of the party will leave precious little room for any major structural overhaul of the economic system.

Gorbachev has been slow to extend the demands of perestroika to the structures and procedures of the CPSU itself. It could be that Gorbachev will yet come up with new strategies which may found a new structural basis for elite cohesion in the USSR and at the same time be compatible with radical reform in economic, cultural and foreign policy.

It seems that Gorbachev only started to think in terms of reform of the party in 1987. Before that, he focused his attention on the 'human factor' - that is, removing the old generation of Brezhnev-appointed leaders, using the disciplinary procedures and the rhetoric of the Brezhnev era. Whatever the reasons for the two year delay - whether it be opposition from party conservatives, or naivety as to the scope for reform within the existing system - Gorbachev may have lost his chance. The ideal opportunity was 1986 - with a party congress, a rewriting of the party rules, a new five year plan, a massive turnover in party officials, and a chance to capitalise on the fact that the population had not yet become cynical about their new leader. Such a propitious coincidence of factors is unlikely to recur in the future. Gorbachev would have done well to heed the words of his mentor, Yu. Andropov: 'Anyone who tackles partial problems without having solved general problems will inevitably face those general problems at every step without realising it.'

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ENDNOTES


7. For example, interviews with the first secretaries of: Grodno obkom, Argumenty i fakty (AIF) no. 20, May 1988, p. 1; of Latvia, AIF no. 27, July 1988, p. 2; Ul'yanovsk obkom, Ul'yanovskaya pravda 6/8/88, p. 2; of Kiev gorkom, Vecherniy Kiev, 23/6/88, p. 2. According to Moscow News, no. 37, 11/9/88, p. 2, special shops in Georgia have been eliminated, and hundreds of party/state guest houses in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan handed over for public use.


10. The reader is referred to the six volume collection of speeches M.S. Gorbachev: Izbrannye rechi i stati' (Moscow: Politizdat, 1987-89). The overall impression from these volumes is still overwhelmingly ideological rather than pragmatic. Note also that the volumes include an index/concordance (rare for Soviet monographs) which enables functionaries to locate usable quotes (for example on 'the human factor').

11. PZ 89/15/3-24, pp. 5, 16.
12. M. Gorbachev, 'Perestroika raboty partii', PZ 89/15/3-24, p. 5.


14. Kommunist no. 17, 1985, pp. 3-16 (herafer, Kom 85/17/16); Kom 84/6/53.

15. Kom 81/18/7, 13.


17. Quoted in Kom 84/6/58.


21. In PZ 89/15/16.


26. Leninskaya pravda, 6/7/89, p. 2; Sovetskaya Sibir' 18/8/89, p. 2.


28. For a teacher's complaint, see the letter from V. Fetisov in Kom 83/4/110-14. Kommunist later complained that no reply to this criticism had been received from the Ministry of Higher Education (Kom 83/11/127). On the 1976 decree, see letter from academic D. Episkopov in Kom 79/8/119.

29. Kom 82/14/3-6; 83/13/28.

31. Review by F. Petrenko in *Vop ist KPSS* 85/12/126-34.

32. *PZ Uzbekistana* 86/12/86.


35. *Vop ist KPSS* 77/4/68.

36. *KPSS v rezolyutgyiakh i resheniyakh...* (Moscow: Politizdat, eighth edition, 1973-84), vol. 9, pp. 215-21; vol. 11, pp. 160-63; *PZ* 76/18/12-19; 78/13/3-5; 78/7/3.

37. *Vop ist KPSS* 83/9/20.

38. *PZ* 80/11/29; 81/19/60.


40. For the history of these schools, see Krotov, *op. cit.*, and *Vop ist KPSS* 82/1298-106.

41. *PZ* 78/13/3-5. Apart from the republic capitals, these schools are located in Gor'kii, Novosibirsk, Rostov, Saratov, Khabarovsk, Odessa and Sverdlovsk.


43. *PZ* 78/13/3-5.

44. *Ibid.* The 2 year (full) and 3 year (part-time) courses are for cadres who are under 40 years old and already have a degree. The longer courses are for cadres with only secondary education, and the age limit for them is 35.

45. *PZ* 78/7/3; *Vop ist KPSS* 82/12/98-106; *PZ* 78/18/5-11; *PZ* 79/8/27-32.

46. *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* 89/4/10-14, text of a CC CPSU decree on AON.

47. *PZ* 81/12/9-11.

48. *EG* 84/44/2; *Pravda* 4/15/87, p. 1; *EG* 86/27/3. The schools are also very unpopular with the population at large (see report on reader survey in *Krasovarskii rabochii* 29/5/89, p. 1).

49. *Vop ist KPSS* 81/1/71; 82/12/100.

50. *PZ* 78/13/3.
51. Kom 82/1/47.
52. Vop ist KPSS 81/8/14.
53. PZ 83/15/30-1.
56. Rajonnyi, op. cit., p. 129; p. 152, pp. 199-234. See also PZ 77/2/25-32; 79/2/45; 77/6/37-45; 83/27/42.
58. PZ 81/14/52; 79/5/49; 78/3/67.
59. Moskovski komsomolets, cited in RL no. 392, 2/9/88, p. 12. Another comparison would be with the Hungarian party, which has 4,042 staff for 830,000 members - a ratio of 1 to 207. (AIF, no. 36, September 1988, p. 4.)
60. Quoted by V. Shcherbitskii, in Kom 82/1/34.
61. P.A. Rodinov (ed), Partiinaya rabota v usloviyakh proizvodstvennykh ob'edinenii (Moscow: Politizdat, 1984), ch. 15. For examples of directors mentioning the party in connection with cadres policy, see EG 80/44/8 and 81/1/9.
62. PZ 79/6/41.
64. V.G. Chufarov (ed), Deyatel'nost' partiinykh organizatsii Urala... (Sverdlovsk, Ural'skii G.U., 1976), p. 91.
65. Vop ist KPSS 79/1/14; PZ 86/4/38; 79/7/45; EG 85/38/5; Sovetskaya Kuban' 5/7/89, p. 2.
66. PZ 78/19/42.
68. Voslensky, *op. cit.*, p. 94; PZ 80/4/19. Kapitonov's comment is confirmed loosely by a report that the reserve in Novomoskovsk gorkom stands at 800, compared to a nomenklatura of 670 (PZ 80/12/54).


70. Eg. Krasnodar kraikom cut its nomenklatura from 3,600 to 1,300 - Sovetskaya Kuban' 7/7/89, p. 2.

71. Izvestiya TsK, 89/4/24; Sovetskaya Kuban', 12/7/89, p. 2.

72. These observations based partly on interviews with editors at Partiinaya zhizn', November 1988. For a discussion of the party's role in the economy, see P. Rutland, 'Party control of economic management in the USSR', forthcoming in P. Hauslochner and D. Cameron (eds), *The Politics of Economic Reform in the USSR*.


74. V. Shcherbitskii, first secretary of the CP Ukraine, in Kom 82/1/34.

75. Kom 81/4/58.

76. Ligachev - Partiinaya zhizn' (PZ) 83/18/15; other examples include PZ 81/6/11, 26; Kom 85/768; Kom 86/14/44.

77. PZ 89/11/35.

78. PZ 89/12/25.

79. Survey of 1,140 Moscow activists reported in Kom 88/9/31-35, p. 35; also readers' letters on the subject reviewed in PZ 89/11/47-52.


82. The first secretary of Murmansk obkom, in Voprosy istorii KPSS, 77/1/27.

83. P. Rutland, 'Party control ..', *op. cit.*

85. PZ 89/13/47.

86. On their introduction, see Ekonomicheskaya gazeta, 80/51/11. (EG).

87. For an example of criticism of the 'repressive' nature of attestations, see AIF no. 19, June 1988, p. 3.

88. EG 80/51/11.


91. Kom, 85/2/49.


93. On these developments, see E. Teague, 'Is a party purge in the offing?' Radio Liberty Research 96/85, 22/3/85; and 'Changes in party rules under consideration', RL 442/84, 19/11/84; and 'The Soviet Union experiments with electoral reform' RL 69/87, 12/2/87.


95. Kom 85/4/33; PZ 80/21/31-6. Gorbachev later reported that 200 out of 8,500 cadres in Krasnodar krai had been rejected after open meetings discussing their candidacies (Pravda, 28/1/87, p. 3).

96. PZ 80/21/33.


98. I. Polozkov, first secretary of Krasnodar kraikom, in Sovetskaya Kuban' 12/7/89, p. 2.


102. PZ 89/3/37. Due to protests from the floor during the PPO conference the internal candidate was included, and won.


104. PZ 76/2/43.


109. Based on a survey of 25 regional newspapers, to be reported in a forthcoming article P. Rutland, 'Perestroika on the periphery'.


111. E.g. in Kom 85/17/79-81; 85/18/62.


113. A Moscow party members' poll found 80 per cent in favor of an age limit of 60 for local and 65 for national leaders - E. Teague, 'The party conference: Reform of CPSU on the horizon?'RL no. 276, 23/6/88.


115. Member of Rubtsov gorkom, in Altaiskaya pravda, 28/7/89, p. 1.


118. J.F. Hough, 'Gorbachev consolidating power,' Problems of Communism, July 1987, vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 21-43, p. 34. See also T. Gustafson and D. Mann, 'Gorbachev's first year: Building power and authority' in Problems of Communism May 1986, vol. 35, no. 3, 00. 1-19; and their article 'Gorbachev's


120. Sovetskaya Rossiya 9/4/83, p. 4; PZ 83/15/9-13; 84/1/21-5; Vop ist KPSS 84/12/14-27.


123. PZ 83/4/12-17.

124. PZ 83/13/35-41.

125. PZ 83/21/16-21.

126. PZ 83/17/16; Kom 83/13/5.

127. PZ 83/18/9-17, p. 13.

128. PZ 84/6/6; 84/7/6.

129. PZ 84/14/17-22.

130. PZ 84/21/11-14; 84/24/10-16.

131. V. Kozlov, 'Chelovecheskii faktor v razvitii ekonomikii: uroki 30kh godov,' Kom 85/2/55-64.


133. PZ 85/2/26, p. 30; 85/1/49.

134. PZ 85/11/6.


137. Kom 85/13/7.


139. E.g. this was the pattern in Amur, Zaporozhe, Mordovia, Tselinograd, and Dagestan - PZ 86/1/56-69, 63-7; 86/3/36-9, 40-3; 86/2/23-6.
140. PZ 86/2/19-22; 86/4/55.

141. Kom 85/16/79.


144. PZ 88/22/8.


146. RL no. 63, 1988, p. 11; also Ogonek, no. 16, 1987, p. 6, RL no. 414, 16/10/87, p. 2.

147. B. Brown, 'Cleanup in Kazakhstan encounters resistance', RL, no. 313, 30/7/87.

148. PZ Kazakhstana 86/9/93.


150. PZ 86/1/28-33.

151. See interview with new first secretary of the Uzbek CC, R. Nishanov, in AIF, no. 38, September 1988, p. 5; and Literaturnaya gazeta 20/1/88, p. 7.

152. A. Sheehy, 'Cultivation of cotton to remain "international duty" of Uzbekistan', RL no. 209, 18/5/88.

153. See for example Rashidov's report to the 20th Congress of the Uzbek party in 1981 - PZ Uzbekistana, 81/2/8-53.

154. PZ Uzbekistana, 86/1/9-13. At the 21 Uzbek party congress first secretary Usmankhodzhaev stated that the purge 'was only possible thanks to the intervention and help from the CC CPSU' - PZ Uzbekistana 86/2/9.

155. AIF, no. 28, July 1988, p. 6. For reports of the clean up as it unfolded, see for example PZ Uzbekistana 84/7/25-32; 84/9/15-20, 29-34 on Kashkadarya; 84/10/46-50 on Bukhara.

156. PZ Uzbekistana 85/11/76.


159. PZ Uzbekistana, 86/1/15.


162. B. Brown, 'Anti-corruption campaign in Turkmenistan', RL no. 49, 30/1/87; and the article by A. Loiko, the new first secretary in Tashauz, 'Izzhivat' protektsionizm i mestnichestvo', PZ 89/9/36-9.

163. I. Drutse, in Kom 88/7/11.

164. V. Smirnov - RL vol. 1, no. 9, 3/3/89, p. 49.

165. E. Fuller, 'For whom the bell tolls', RL no. 24, 19/1/88; also Pravda, 16/9/88, p. 2.

166. PZ 84/4/47.

167. PZ 86/5/13-16.

168. The Ukrainian party journal devoted minimal attention to disciplinary issues - see for example V. Shcherbitski's report to the Ukrainian CC plenum in March 1984 - Kom Ukrainy 84/3/15; also 84/3/74.


170. Kommunist Ukrainy 88/6/35.


172. See the interview of M. Poltoranin, editor of Moskovskaya pravda with an Italian paper, reported in K. Devlin, 'Soviet journalist describes El'tsin's struggle against party "mafia"', RL, no. 206, 20/5/88.


179. Pravda, 1/9/88, p. 6. The article lists other examples, eg. a whistle-blowing teacher who ends up spending seven months in prison although the local prosecutor thought there was no case against her. Altogether 53 people were unjustly expelled from the party in Dagestan in the last two years.


182. S. Belitsky, ‘Changes in leadership of MVD Political Administration’, RL no. 169, 14/4/88, reports that 1983-85 161,000 officers were dismissed, with 70 officials on the highest level nomenklatura fired.


187. PZ Uzbekistana, 86/11/16.

188. PZ 89/9/26.


190. Pravda, 10/5/88, p. 3.


194. PZ 85/12/39.
195. *PZ* 85/16/5-18.

196. E.g. Penza, Novosibirsk and Voronezh - *PZ* 86/1/42-6, 60-7; 86/2/15-18.


198. A point made, for example, by the secretary of Sevastopol' gorkom, A. Smolyannikov, in *Kommunist Ukrainy* 87/2/29-35, p. 34.


202. Quoted in *PZ* 84/6/6.

203. *Kom* 85/7/13.

204. I. Proshin in *PZ* 80/23/23.


206. Phrases in for example *PZ* 77/19/36.

207. *Vop ist KPSS* 81/8/16.

208. *Vop ist KPSS* 83/1/111; *PZ* 85/2/21; *Pravda*, 3/12/85, p. 1.

209. *Kom* 86/17/30-41, p. 32.


211. V. Churilov, *PZ* 89/11/32.