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KTO KOVO

Appendix:

The Khrushchev Succession Problem
(By Myron Rush
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A succession struggle usually begins long before the ruler dies or otherwise relinquishes his authority. Because this is so, the policies of a government ruled by a man of advancing age are often determined by his own fears and shortness of time and by the uneasily shifting balance of political forces resulting from the intrigues and conflict of those who want to rule. Nikita Khrushchev is 67, and the struggle for succession in the Soviet Party-State is well under way. It has singularly important connotations for current Soviet policies, domestic and foreign.

The Soviet Party's succession struggle is of immediate significance because it is one of the underlying themes determining the conduct of Presidium and Secretariat sub-groups and individual members and because "collective decisions" of the highest bodies of the party and state are influenced by the way in which these groups and individuals have answered for themselves the question: "Who will succeed Khrushchev?"

The men involved in a succession struggle while the ruler still holds the reins of power are in an especially difficult position. They must be eternally prepared for that moment when some courtier or panel of doctors leaves the royal bed chamber to announce: "The King (First Secretary) is dead!" If, for example, Khrushchev should die at noon today, next year, or three years from now, Frol Kozlov's machine must be effective enough to give him immediate possession of power. This means that Kozlov must at any moment know the strength and intention of any others who may prefer themselves as Khrushchev's successors. He must have the predominant influence in the party machinery, maximum support from state and economic institutions, and possibly from the military. Because Kozlov is generally understood to be Khrushchev's successor-designate, he enjoys certain advantages and suffers from certain disadvantages. He may have a preferential "edge" when the moment to succeed arrives, yet today and tomorrow he

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is the principal target for any and all others who dream of possessing the highest power.

Each individual has his specific difficulties. In general, however, what is true of Kozlov's position is true of the other senior Presidium members who cherish the hope to rule. (This list probably includes L. Brezhnev, A. Mikoyan, N. V. Podgorny). Though none may openly attempt now to weaken Khrushchev, each must select his allies, tend to his political fences among party, state, economic, and military institutions, and seek to build a strong bloc within the Presidium-Secretariat. Khrushchev himself, of course, is also involved, while he lives. He plays one individual and group against the other, names a successor to channel hostility toward his most powerful contender or else to limit the extent of the competition, etc.

The struggle is complicated a step further by the probability that there are some senior Presidium and Secretariat members who do not dream of ruling, but who have every intention of preserving or further consolidating their positions and influence. M. A. Suslov or A. N. Kosygin may fit this category, and even A. I. Mikoyan has long played an immensely significant secondary role without evincing any inordinate desire to have the final word for himself. Such men, able and tough, must also consider who will succeed Khrushchev and govern their conduct so that when the time comes their own power will be secure. For them the task cannot be easy. They must serve the First Secretary, please the colleague whose votes may one day make the vital decision, and keep a weather eye out for the younger men whose talents are great and whose ambitions are unlimited.

The younger men undoubtedly increase the strenuousness of the struggle, partly because of their forceful jockeying for position among themselves, partly because of their great energy, partly because of their generational differences with their elders. The most capable of these men appear to be Gennady I. Voronov (50), Dmitri S. Polyansky (44), V. V. Grishin (46), who is a candidate member of the Presidium, and A. N. Shelepin (43) presently a Secretary. At the 22nd Congress, Shelepin's detailed attacks on the anti-party group and Polyansky's personal attack upon K. Voroshilov demonstrated the aggressive capabilities of these men. They have learned, perhaps too well, from their elders. Frol Kozlov must lie awake at nights regrouping these younger men in his mind, looking for the winning combination, and wondering whether he can trust any of them. On the other hand, Polyansky and the others must seek favors from their superiors and must be prepared to pay back such favors received.

How many cliques, factions, groups and individuals have their hats in the ring, no one in the West knows. Yet the struggle is on, and it is of immediate importance because of its possible influence upon current policies.

The most effective climbers in the Soviet Communist hierarchy (Stalin and Khrushchev) seldom if ever hesitated to subordinate national policy to their personal ends, and often used an opponent's policy as an instrument for his downfall. Today the same means are at hand for any who dare to make use of them. Khrushchev's agrarian policies have not yet solved the nation's need; it may well be that his opponents will someday bring him down on this issue. Similarly, those who support Khrushchev's agrarian schemes are open to attack by one or another group. There are differences of opinion in regard to the proper weight to be given heavy industry; there must be differences about the proper way to handle the Berlin problem, the satellite bloc, China and Albania, Vietnam, and disarmament.

As decisions are made in the Presidium and Secretariat, each man who now contends for position must calculate his vote according to what it may mean for his future status, how it affects his present enemy, what it does to increase his own support from the party, the principal economic institutions, Marshal Malinovsky, and so on. The issues of the succession conflict are already reflected in the speeches and voting at every major party meeting, whether it be a congress, a conference on ideology or agriculture, or a plenum of the Central Committee. They may also be reflected in the shifts of position that take place from time to time within the Presidium and Secretariat as well as at lower levels of the party. This is one more of the processes that must be closely watched if the current of events in the Presidium and the Secretariat is to be correctly interpreted.

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NOT TO BE MICROFICED

THE KHRUSHCHEV SUCCESSION PROBLEM

By Myron Rush
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In any personal dictatorship or tyranny, one thing is certain: some day there will be a succession crisis. That dread day casts a long shadow before, influencing the period of dictatorial rule by anticipation. There is inherent in dictatorship a succession cycle: first, a period of stable dictatorial rule; then, a succession crisis; finally, a resolution of the crisis or a dissolution of the political system. Some dictatorial regimes experience a series of personal dictatorships; the Soviet regime, for example, has twice gone through the cycle, and now has its third dictator. This historical experience affects the general character of the entire succession cycle. Serious inquiry into the succession to Khrushchev requires us to consider the general character of the succession cycle in the Soviet system as well as the particular factors that are likely to influence the course and outcome of the Khrushchev succession crisis.¹

The grounds for supposing that a serious succession crisis will follow Khrushchev's demise are not simply that crises occurred when Lenin's and Stalin's rule came to an end; it is principally the nature of the Soviet political system that makes such crises inevitable. There are two reasons for this. First, there is no established, recognized center of decision-making in the Soviet system. Second, for this reason, and for others of comparable weight, no orderly method of succession has been or is likely to be devised.

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- 1 General treatment of the succession problem is uncommon in treatises on the Soviet political system, although the problem is an inherent feature of that system. However, two books published in the months following Stalin's death examined the matter ably and at length on the basis of evidence then available: The Dynamics of Soviet Society, by W. W. Rostow, Mentor, 1954; and Terror and Progress USSR, by Barrington Moore, Jr., Cambridge, Mass., 1954. The problem of succession in any totalitarian regime is considered by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski in Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy, Cambridge, Mass., 1956. Accounts of the two succession crises the Soviet regime has known are numerous. The most detailed study of the Lenin succession crisis is in E. H. Carr's multi-volume A History of Soviet Russia, London, 1950. A comprehensive account of the Stalin succession crisis, however, has yet to be written.

I. Inevitability of the Succession Crisis

To the question of where decisive authority or internal sovereignty resides, a formal answer can of course be found in the Party Statute and in the State Constitution. But these documents are not the ultimate authority in the Soviet system, and their provisions have often been disregarded. Does the supreme authority reside in the government's Council of Ministers or in organs of the party? If the party is sovereign, which of its bodies has the power of decision: The Presidium or the Secretariat? Or is it the Central Committee, which meets every few years? Soviet history gives no single answer; it has been different at different times. The question of supreme authority is the fundamental issue of Soviet politics and has been fought over by its chief figures. Uncertainty as to the decisive authority may ultimately imperil the regime, but only in the absence of an established dictator -- that is, during a succession crisis -- is the problem acute.

No rule for establishing the legitimacy of a successor is possible in the Soviet system, since dictatorial authority inheres in no office or title. It is unprovided for in the fundamental laws of party and state, which establish collective organs of leadership without exception. The crucial question, then, is whether the dictator's fiat, or that of some collective, can effect an orderly transfer of power when there is no rule of legitimacy.

To avert a succession crisis, the dictator must make known his choice of successor and give him the powers he will need to make good his claim at the decisive moment when the dictator can no longer impose his will.² Arranging this is an extremely hazardous undertaking. If the dictator delegates wide powers to a lieutenant, he may find it hard to prevent seizure of the remainder. Moreover, once the dictator's choice of a successor is known, his entourage may pay court to the favorite rather than to himself; alternatively, they may concentrate their fire on the presumptive heir, who endangers their present power and threatens to become their next master.

The dictator's dilemma is not without a solution, or at least the promise of one. The power of the presumptive heir can be circumscribed by that of others. Perhaps the chief danger in this arrangement is that the heir may reach an accommodation with some of his rivals. This danger may be reduced, though not eliminated, by concentrating substantial power in the hands of a single rival, thus forming a triad made up of the dictator, his presumptive heir, and the rival, who may be termed the "counterheir."

² As will be discussed below, orderly transfer of the dictator's power to a collective is a possible, but very doubtful, solution.

This is basically the arrangement established by Stalin in his last years. He placed Malenkov in the Secretariat in 1948, making him the only figure besides himself to sit in the three top councils -- Secretariat, Council of Ministers, and Politburo -- a fact that seemed to mark Malenkov as Stalin's presumptive successor. A year later Stalin brought Khrushchev from the Ukraine to be a member of the Secretariat, thus establishing a powerful counterweight to Malenkov's extraordinary powers.³ The triadal arrangement was confirmed at the Nineteenth Congress (1952) when Malenkov gave the Report of the Central Committee and Khrushchev gave the next most important report, one on changes in the Party Statute.

A triad of this type sets the stage for the heir's assumption of power but does not consummate it. It is a convenient transitional arrangement, but it only postpones the ultimate dilemma: either the dictator must finally remove the counterweight and permit the heir to accumulate dangerous powers, or he must continue the triadal arrangement until his death, when the surviving members will confront each other as claimants to the succession. The latter was history's resolution of the dilemma, if not Stalin's for the dictator failed in his last convulsive efforts to alter his succession arrangements (the "doctors' affair").⁴ Within ten days after his death, Malenkov and Khrushchev fought their first battle in a series of encounters that resulted in Khrushchev's establishment as Stalin's successor.

While Stalin evidently failed in his effort to choose a successor, Lenin failed even in his much more limited aim of preventing Stalin from inheriting his power: his call for the removal of Stalin as General Secretary, in the postscript to his "Testament," was disregarded by the Thirteenth Party Congress. Thus the will of neither of the two previous dictators was followed in the situation brought about by his death.

³ An important additional counterweight was Stalin's reinforced personal control of the political police.

⁴ The "doctors' affair," the arrest of a group of "murderer-doctors" accused of "plotting against the health" of leading Soviet military personnel in January 1953, portended a radical change in the leadership that, if it was not designed to implement Stalin's succession arrangement, could only upset them. Contemporary evidence indicates that Malenkov's political position was actually weakened by the affair. Moreover, following Stalin's death, Malenkov was associated with the execution of the security official, Riumin, who had been charged with investigating the so-called plot. On the other hand, in his secret speech to the Twentieth Congress Khrushchev defended Riumin's chief, S. Ignatiev, who was Minister of State Security when the affair was publicized. Khrushchev's most powerful deputy at the present time, Frol Kozlov, was the only important party leader to write an article expounding the political meaning of the alleged doctors' plot (*Kommunist*, February 1953). There is evidence bearing on the political significance of the "doctors' affair" in the author's book: *The Rise of Khrushchev*, Washington, D.C., 1958, pp. 17, 55, 56, 77.

Clearly, designation is not a principle of legitimacy in the Soviet system, and efforts to establish machinery for ensuring the succession of the dictator's chosen heir inevitably encounter serious difficulties. For these reasons it may be questioned whether even a determined and far-seeing dictator could obviate a succession struggle.

Conceivably, election to some special office might be a means of authorizing dictatorial power during a crisis. But which office? Senior Secretary of the Central Committee might seem suitable. But Lenin was never a secretary, and both Stalin and Khrushchev occupied the office of the senior Secretary for several years without being recognized as dictator. Certainly the man who becomes senior Secretary when Khrushchev's rule comes to an end will be favorably placed in the struggle for the succession; his every move will be observed with especial care by all parties. But mere occupancy of the post will not provide him with the authority that is needed to become dictator. Until now, the office of senior Secretary has been far less valuable for the authority it confers than for the opportunity it affords the incumbent to aggrandize power. The next senior Secretary may indeed become dictator; but if he does, the source of his pre-eminent authority will be his successful exercise of the office to win power, not his colleagues' acknowledgment that they must obey him because he occupies the office.

Although no office now exists that confers dictatorial authority, is this lack not remediable? Could the dictator not proclaim, for example, that his present powers inhere jointly in the offices of senior Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and that when these posts fall vacant the Central Committee is to meet to elect a single successor to both posts? To institutionalize personal dictatorship in this way runs counter to party traditions. But the decisive objection is that this scheme requires the members of the Central Committee (or whatever body might be designated) to give themselves up to a new master of their own choosing at the very time when the dictator's death has provided them with a moment of enhanced power and relative freedom. This does not seem an effective device for averting a succession crisis.

In the USSR, then, the dictator evidently comes to his office by seizure of power, not by an orderly transfer of legitimate authority. I do not see how such great powers can be seized against the certain opposition of rivals without producing a political crisis. Its depth and effects, however, are variable, according to (1) the duration of the struggle, (2) its scope and intensity, and (3) the manner of its resolution.

II. Character of the Succession Crisis

How long the succession struggle lasts is important chiefly as it affects the struggle's intensity. While a brief

crisis can produce a great effect, a prolonged crisis is much more likely to bring about the political activation of potentially powerful forces in Soviet society. Of the two succession crises the regime has known, Lenin's lasted roughly eight years, from his incapacitating illness in 1922 until around 1930, and Stalin's only four years, from 1953 to 1957. In both instances prolongation of the crisis produced a temporary increase in the number and variety of those engaged in higher politics; but such tendencies were halted and then reversed each time by the most powerful contender, after he consolidated his power and thereby resolved the crisis.

At the outset, the succession crisis is largely colored by the personal rivalry of the most ambitious of the former dictator's lieutenants. In their efforts to inherit the dictator's former power, they are compelled to maneuver and compromise. Thus factions, or "fractions," as they are called by the Bolsheviks, are formed in the top leadership according to the shifting calculation of personal interest and political principle. Now, such factions also pervade politics under the unchallenged rule of the dictator when their object is to influence the dictator, to share patronage, and to protect their members. In a succession crisis, however, there is no unchallenged authority to arbitrate differences and to limit the scope of factional activity, which becomes greatly intensified and develops according to a new logic.

Factional activity in the USSR is necessarily conducted in a conspiratorial atmosphere, since the Party Statute prohibits "attempts to form factional groupings destructive of Party unity" (Article 27). Yet the dictator ordinarily tolerates factional activity, which is everywhere the stuff of politics, and even fosters it for his own ends. Only if there is special reason will he destroy a faction and punish its chief members.⁵ In a succession struggle, however, the stakes of factional activity are far greater than under a dictator. The victor will be a virtual dictator, yet he will feel threatened by the defeated. To consolidate his newly won power, he is likely to condemn his opponents as factionalists and enemies of the party. Thus the contending factions in a succession crisis face severe statutory sanctions. This illegal, conspiratorial quality gives the succession struggle an intensity that makes it extremely difficult to settle by some simple vote among peers.

A faction's strength consists chiefly in its collective control over some part of the institutions of dictatorship, which now may serve as levers of power in the succession struggle. What are these crucial political bodies in the Soviet system? They are, first, the party apparatus and, next, the other major institutions: the state bureaucracy,

⁵ A terrible instance of this is Stalin's blood purge of the Leningrad faction, 1948-1950.

the army, and the political police. Finally, there are subsidiary bodies, sometimes called the party's "transmission belts," which could play an important role in future crises: the trade union association, intellectuals' organizations (such as the Writers' Union), the Young Communist League, and others. Even in the phase of stable dictatorship, these institutions are in a state of considerable tension; in a succession crisis, tension can readily become conflict. The leaders who manipulate these organizations mean to limit this conflict, to keep them mere agencies of dictatorship and passive objects of factional politics; but in such circumstances these bodies readily acquire a life and movement of their own.

There are several ways in which this can come about. For example, a claimant who has lost a battle but remains a contender for the succession may be tempted to seek support within institutions that his opponents control; or he may support the authority and interests of functionaries in institutions that he already controls in order to improve their capacity to serve as instruments in his bid for the succession. In either case, the result may be to make him dependent on groups that formerly were excluded from higher politics. Having become active supporters of his candidacy, they may acquire a voice in the higher politics of the Soviet regime. In this fashion, major institutions may come to be altered and the balance among them upset. If the succession struggle acquires this new dimension, the regime may be modified in important ways.

Finally, if the crisis cannot be resolved within this enlarged arena, a weakened faction may seek to redress the balance by appealing to the passions and interests of broad groups in Soviet society. This adds a further dimension to the struggle and might under certain circumstances seriously weaken the regime.

The decisive question in the succession crisis is the manner of its resolution. More particularly, the position of the party apparatus in the newly stabilized regime provides a rough test of whether the succession crisis has changed the character of the system: if the apparatus exercises hegemony over the other institutions of dictatorship and over Soviet society, then the regime almost certainly remains totalitarian. The duration, the scope, and the intensity of the succession crisis work their effects on the character of the Soviet regime principally through their influence on this question: if the crisis is brief and easily resolved, the party's hegemony seems assured; if it is long and intense, and if important social groups become engaged in the higher politics of the USSR, then the party machine's hegemony may be endangered and its authority might even be overthrown.

Why is the position of the party machine the overriding question in Soviet politics?⁶ Chiefly because it is the main source of totalitarianism in the Soviet regime. The party is committed to fashioning Soviet institutions and Soviet man in accordance with an ideal, however undelineated, that permanently threatens the habits and customary practices of the people at large. As custodian of the holy writings of Marx and Lenin, it embodies most of what remains of the revolutionary spirit in the Soviet regime. It is responsible for indoctrinating a population acknowledged to be lacking in enthusiasm for the official ideology. The party sets the goals of economic activity and enforces the system of priorities that assures that industrial and military power increases more rapidly than popular consumption.

The Soviet people accept the regime that governs them, for they see no alternative. But they do not share the party's fundamental goals, which involve the continuing revolutionary transformation of Soviet society, or its ultimate objective, a world-wide Communist system. This gives rise to a certain tension, or "contradiction," between the party machine and the populace. It is a contradiction that even the continuing abatement of the terror of Stalin's time and progressive improvement of the material conditions of life are unlikely to remove.

Reservations of various kinds about the party machine's goals are also evident in the institutions controlled by the party. These reservations seem especially strong among the economic managers in the state bureaucracy. Their primary professional concerns include the obvious functions of production, technology, labor discipline, and finance. In addition, they are deeply engaged in the politics of planning. Though they have conflicting interests, members of the bureaucratic elite also share important goals. One is to reduce the ambitious pace of economic development that strains Soviet resources to the limit. Another is to improve the forms and methods of administration and to establish a more rational price system. Perhaps most important, the economic bureaucracy wants to lessen arbitrary interference by the full-time members of the party machine.

⁶ The party's apparatus must be distinguished from its membership as a whole. The apparatus is made up of the party's permanent staff, the paid officials who work in secretariats on all party echelons. Their number has been very roughly estimated as around a quarter-million, no more than 3 or 4 percent of the total party membership. (Leonard Shapiro, The Communist Party of the Soviet Union, New York, 1960, pp. 524-25, 572-73.) Not all members of higher party bodies -- the various party committees and their executive organs, the party bureaus -- are apparatchiks. Many are economic administrators in the state bureaucracy, military officers, or political police officials.

The conflict between the interests and goals of the state bureaucracy and those of the party machine is basic. The state bureaucracy prefers to be governed by fixed rules, to "go through channels"; it opposes intervention from the outside. It favors rationality, efficiency, routine, orderly procedure, a disregard for problems that are not pressing, and a stereotyped solution for problems that cannot be disregarded. Regularity is its watchword. In their personal careers, Soviet bureaucrats, like bureaucrats everywhere, seem to favor stability, security, regular advancement, and greater material rewards.

While the party machine also displays strong bureaucratic tendencies, it has succumbed to them far less. It puts ideology and enthusiasm above rationality and efficiency. Typically, the party apparatus sets new tasks, mobilizes opinion, shifts cadres; it locates difficulties, fixes responsibility for mistakes, and ensures that non-party institutions carry out party orders. Its preferred activity is the "crash" program. By its militant spirit and organization the party made the October Revolution, won the civil war, and carried out Stalin's social revolutions "from above."

The party official and the economic executive are not separate breeds. They are frequently shifted from one bureaucracy to the other, particularly at the lowest and the highest levels. Yet each official in the USSR tends to identify his personal fortunes with the political fortunes of the bureaucracy that largely formed his political ideas, policy preferences, and personal skills. The tendency of Soviet leaders to become specialists in either party work or economic administration has gone sufficiently far for Soviet writers to have thought it necessary on occasion to challenge the notion that party work is a distinct profession. The extent to which the party and government bureaucracies remained separate under Stalin is suggested by the fact that more than half of the leading party officials in his time had never served in a government post.⁷

⁷ This can be inferred from the factual findings of T. H. Rigby in "The Selection of Leading Personnel in the Soviet State and Communist Party," a doctoral thesis submitted at the University of London in 1954; see table on p. 184. Of 36 republican party secretaries whose previous careers were known to Rigby, 20 had not held government posts. This was also true in the following cases: 38 of 82 territorial and regional party secretaries; 29 of 43 city party secretaries; 86 of 138 district party secretaries (p. 184). By the same token, as Rigby emphasizes, these figures also show that interchange of personnel between the two bureaucracies was practiced extensively. Significantly, it was easier to rise in the party apparatus without having served in the administrative bureaucracy (more than half the party leaders studied by Rigby had no experience in government) than to rise in the bureaucracy without having served in the apparatus (only one-third). From this it appears that under Stalin the party apparatus was a surer road to success than the bureaucracy.

Possessing contrasting traits and performing overlapping functions, the economic and the party bureaucracies have naturally tended to oppose each other. Their conflict over who should direct the economic process and what its fundamental goals should be has long marked Soviet politics and played an important role in the two succession crises experienced by the Soviet regime.

After Lenin's death, it figured in the controversy between Stalin, boss of the party apparatus, and Rykov, head of the government.⁸ Stalin's victory in 1930 made the apparatus of full-time party workers the sovereign institution in Soviet society. However, in the great purge of the mid-1930's it was reduced to an instrument of Stalin's absolute rule -- though still the pre-eminent one -- in an intricate system of institutional balances and controls embracing the party apparatus, the political police, the state bureaucracy, and the army. At Stalin's death, the complex system of institutional checks and balances that had maintained his absolute rule began to break up into its elements. The resulting institutional conflict was intensified as the leaders, in accordance with their personal strategies, recruited these forces for the portentous battles to come. Because these personal strategies illuminate the mechanics of power in a Soviet succession crisis, it is useful to consider them at some length.

III. Conflict of Institutions and Policies in the Stalin Succession Crisis

After Stalin died, Malenkov staked his bid for power largely on the state bureaucracy. His strategy evidently was based on the notion that the party apparatus, and particularly its center, the Secretariat, could be weakened, and that the state bureaucracy, freed from its constraint, could be made the dominant institution in Soviet society. He apparently justified his strategy doctrinally by arguing that Lenin intended state organs to have primacy over party organs once the proletarian revolution was victorious.⁹

To succeed, Malenkov's strategy required forceful measures and dangerous maneuvers. He had to strengthen the government apparatus, protecting it against encroachments by the provincial party apparatus. This meant that secretariats on all

⁸ The Lenin succession struggle also involved the Comintern, the trade unions, student organizations, and local political machines.

⁹ "Members of the anti-party group departed from the Leninist understanding of the leading role of the party in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat....Some of them ..., seeking to substantiate the alleged necessity of the primacy of state organs over party, distorted the Leninist doctrine on the role of the party after the victory of the proletarian revolution." (Kommunist, No. 10, 1957, p. 5.)

echelons, particularly their first secretaries, had to be weakened and their power shared more widely with the party bureaus,¹⁰ where the state bureaucracy was well represented. It was partly for this reason, no doubt, that Malenkov resurrected the phrase "collective leadership." Since provincial first secretaries were the strongest element in the Central Committee, Malenkov tried to keep that body without influence, just as in Stalin's day -- at least until many more bureaucrats could be added to it. To preserve the myth of party sovereignty while in fact making the government supreme, Malenkov tried to dominate the party Presidium so as to be able to promulgate policy in its name. To fashion Stalin's inert and diffuse bureaucracy into an effective instrument of rule, a strong government -- that is, Council of Ministers -- was required. In the very first hours after Stalin's death, Malenkov halved the number of ministries and increased the discretionary powers of their heads. By these means, the oversized bureaucracy was reduced and state authority was concentrated in the hands of a few powerful figures.

Despite some conservative features in Malenkov's reform strategy, it promised fundamental change. His decision to oppose the party machine and its system of secretarial rule was crucial. It made him a supporter of the bureau in provincial organizations, where diverse social forces were represented; thus it opened the way to an incipient pluralism in Soviet politics. It made him a strong partisan of "liberalizing" policies that could enlist the support of the economic bureaucracy and perhaps deprive the party of a key function: poli-ing the system of priorities that favors heavy industry and armaments over consumption.

In the struggle that followed, Malenkov's effort to rule through the government, independently of the party apparatus, met defeat, and he resigned as head of the government. There followed a further break-up of the great economic power which Malenkov had initially concentrated in the Council of Ministers after Stalin's death. As a consequence of this weakening of its center, the economic bureaucracy's capacity to resist interference from provincial party machines declined. At the Twentieth Congress, Khrushchev, the head of the opposing faction, ordered provincial functionaries to oversee production. He acknowledged that many apparatchiks were reluctant to accept this change from "political" to "economic" work. But his determined effort to forge the party machine into an instrument that could impose his economic policies on the country was to meet with success in the following years.

In 1957 Khrushchev carried out his reorganization plan, which virtually eliminated the central economic ministries and transferred their authority to provincial "economic councils" that could be controlled by the local party machine.

10. A bureau is the executive body of party committees, corresponding to the Presidium of the Central Committee.

With the bureaucratic elite's political power in jeopardy, Malenkov and other top economic executives rose to their defense. They were joined by several of Stalin's oldest associates, who finally recognized that Khrushchev's aggrandizement of the party machine endangered their own positions. The maneuver failed and its leaders were purged. The bureaucratic elite paid a heavy price for defeat: many were expelled from Moscow and dispersed throughout the land. Thus in 1957, some twenty years after Stalin usurped absolute power, Khrushchev restored to the party machine its hegemony over Soviet society.

What conclusions can be drawn from this account of the bureaucratic elite's fortunes since Stalin's death? Economic administrators were deeply involved in the Stalin succession crisis. Evidence of their potential political strength is implicit in the actions of both Malenkov, who made the bureaucratic elite his main power base, and Khrushchev, who took drastic action to eradicate its influence in Moscow. Indeed, the bureaucratic elite proved itself an autonomous political force, and not merely an instrument of factional intrigue, by maintaining the struggle with the party machine long after its principal leader had lost his position as head of the government. Yet the completeness of its defeat and the relative ease with which this was accomplished suggest that its potentialities at Stalin's death were less than Malenkov had supposed.¹¹

The bureaucratic elite's role in the massive and intricate Soviet economy is evidently not so crucial as it had appeared to be. In the post-Stalin years the economic bureaucracy was repeatedly reorganized and transformed; the number of economic ministries was halved and doubled within a year, and finally cut severely; economic administration was first concentrated, then diffused; the powers of an economic minister were sharply increased, then abolished. Finally, the agency that was supposed to plan the economic activities of these protean bodies was itself subject to remarkable variation in its powers and internal organization. Despite the disruptive effects of these basic administrative changes, Soviet industry was able to adjust to them and maintain a high rate of growth. The performance of the Soviet economy, then, does not seem highly sensitive to changes in the administrative superstructure. The political bargaining power of the bureaucratic elite, while considerable, thus has significant limits. A diffuse and weakened state bureaucracy, if it is closely directed by a powerful and close-knit party machine, may be adequate to supervise the economy.

¹¹ The outcome, of course, provides no simple measure of the relative strength of the party and state bureaucracies. In the highly fluid situation after Stalin died, other things had their effect: chance, the strategies and personal qualities of the contenders, and the role of the political police are only three among them.

The cleavage between the party and the state bureaucracy, which already existed at Stalin's death, was broadened and deepened by their subsequent conflict. The intensity of this struggle seems incompatible with the West's conception of a Soviet "ruling class" embracing both the party and the state bureaucracy. Both groups, of course, possess power and privilege far beyond the dreams of mere workers or peasants. But in battling for hegemony the two antagonists employed potent weapons against each other. The fate of hundreds of economic administrators who were expelled from Moscow testifies to the seriousness of the contest in which they were engaged. Moreover, the two sides did not scruple in the heat of battle to harm the state. The high cost in money and confusion did not deter them from repeatedly reorganizing the economic bureaucracy for fractional ends. They were even willing to risk grave injury to the Soviet empire in order to gain a victory over the domestic enemy, as when Khrushchev delivered the "secret speech" implicating his political opponents in Stalin's crimes.¹² Although the conflict between the party machine and the state bureaucracy was temporarily resolved without weakening the regime, its severity permits us to speak, in Marxist terms, of an "antagonistic contradiction" between them.

Transcending this conflict of institutions and personalities when Stalin died was the fundamental question: how was Soviet Russia to be ruled? Stalin's system, despite its success in creating a huge and powerful empire, had induced popular lethargy and bureaucratic inertia. The need for reform was unchallenged. But who would be the reformers? Where was reform to begin? How far was it to go? Besides the questions of institutional reform already discussed, which most closely touched the vested interests of the two bureaucracies, there were questions of public welfare and the national interest that proved to be equally serious sources of conflict.

Controversy arose over a number of such policy questions. In agriculture, the economic managers headed by Malenkov favored increased reliance on experts, investment in the central areas, and intensive cultivation. The Khrushchev faction wanted agriculture administered largely by the rural party apparatus and called for a crash program in the virgin and reclaimed lands to achieve a quick increase in grain production. As regards industry, a bitter dispute arose over Malenkov's efforts to improve supplies of consumer goods rapidly, at the cost of some retardation of the remarkable growth of heavy industry. Malenkov also sought to finance his consumer goods

¹² Khrushchev's object in delivering the speech at a secret session of the Twentieth Congress was of course not simply to denigrate his opponents. It was also to dispel suspicion that he was an incipient Stalin, to reassure the party that he would not use terror against it, as Stalin had done, and to destroy Stalin's stifling authority so that he could freely develop his own policies and programs for the USSR. But his hasty pursuit of these objectives undoubtedly injured Soviet interests, particularly in East Europe. (See the author's The Rise of Khrushchev, pp. 1, 40-66, 71.)

program by a moderate reduction in defense spending. This led to a muted public controversy regarding the military threat posed by the cold war. Malenkov seemed to believe that with the advent of thermonuclear weapons war became so dangerous to both sides that it required, and at the same time made possible, a negotiated settlement of the cold war. This view was challenged in 1954 and 1955 by the Khrushchev faction, which stressed instead that the new weapons increased the danger of a surprise attack on the USSR. It called for increased defense spending and vigorous conduct of the cold war.

Defeat of the Malenkov faction in 1955 set back the consumer goods program a number of years. Vigorous development of Soviet missile weapons by the victorious Khrushchev faction enabled the USSR to forge ahead of the United States in these new weapons by 1957, and thus may have led indirectly to intensification of the arms race. As a result, relations between the West and the Communist world developed differently, whether for good or for ill, than they would have if the Malenkov-led administrative bureaucracy had won.

IV. Political Forces in the Next Succession Crisis

This brief review of the two succession crises that the Soviet regime has known shows that they were fairly prolonged, led to intense controversy on question of policy, produced institutional conflict between the party and the other institutions of dictatorship, and in a limited degree involved broad social strata. Nevertheless, these crises did not significantly alter the totalitarian character of the regime. True, many important liberalizing changes followed Stalin's death. The succession crisis contributed significantly to this development by compelling the rival factions to consider popular needs and sentiments. Since 1957, however, the Khrushchev regime has selected among them, suppressing any that have a manifest tendency to weaken the dictatorship, fostering those that are conducive to efficiency and popular welfare without being politically dangerous. Thus, reform in the administration of agriculture has continued and has even been accelerated, while pluralistic tendencies in the party and "revisionism" in the arts have been attacked vigorously. Change since 1957 has been "managed change," designed to preserve, not alter, the regime's totalitarian character, while improving the life of the people.

The Soviet regime preserved its totalitarian character after the deaths of Lenin and Stalin because the institutions and social groups that were drawn into higher Soviet politics by the resulting succession crisis evidently were neither sufficiently powerful nor sufficiently antagonistic to overthrow the party's hegemony. This conclusion gives rise to two questions that may have a decisive bearing on the Khrushchev succession problem. First, is there reason to suppose that these

institutions and groups will be stronger at the onset of the next crisis? Second, are these groups likely to join forces in opposition to the party machine?

There is a theory that holds that amelioration of what is oppressive and fundamentally hostile in the Soviet regime is an inevitable result of material and educational progress in the USSR. Now, it is certainly questionable that social progress necessarily gives rise to political progress; yet it is reasonable to inquire whether social progress in the USSR may not, under specified circumstances, give rise to political effects that could lessen the ability of the Soviet regime to exercise totalitarian rule. What is relevant here is not simply popular attitudes toward the regime and their probable evolution; equally, if not more, important are the political tendencies of the leading personnel in major Soviet institutions, especially insofar as such tendencies may gain expression in the unsettled conditions of a succession crisis.

Large increases in the personal wealth of members of the bureaucracy, for example, provide substantial economic resources that could promote political struggle against the apparat.¹³ But increased political power is not the inevitable result of increased economic power: it depends on the political will of those who have authority and of those who seek it. Improved personal material and cultural standards by themselves might only intensify the bureaucrat's reluctance to risk provoking the jealous apparat that might deprive him of these hard-won privileges.

The material progress of recent years, however, has been accompanied by an abatement of the police terror. The paralyzing fear of police repression that the Soviet people experienced under Stalin persisted after his death. This terrible legacy may have given his heirs a needed period of grace in which to resolve the inevitable crisis produced by his death. As fear abated, there were political stirrings, not only within sub-elites but also among intellectuals and students.¹⁴ Politically

¹³ More important than personal wealth in the Soviet system is control over the national wealth; the economic bureaucracy now has less of such control than it possessed when Stalin died.

¹⁴ This development is described in an interview by David Burg, who experienced it while a student at Moscow University:

Burg: "From 1951 to 1954, practically all of us showed to the world a completely straight Communist face. You confined any critical views of the regime to your closest friends and even then unpleasant things sometimes happened. The danger of arrest and deportation was immediate. I was, frankly, very surprised to learn in 1955 and 1956, after the 'Thaw' began, that there were a great number of other small circles of

significant agitation reached its height in the most critical period of the leadership struggle: the twenty months beginning with Khrushchev's attack on Stalin and ending with the purge of Zhukov. Subsequently, while fear of police repression may have declined further, the stabilization of Khrushchev's personal dictatorship and the restoration of party hegemony effectively discouraged widespread political dissidence or popular disaffection.¹⁵

Thus, in the eight years since Stalin died, an easier and more permissive political atmosphere has evolved in which defeated political opponents, while shorn of effective political power, are not, so far as we know, deprived of their lives. Factional leaders in the next crisis may be protected by a powerful sanction: the initiator of more severe reprisals would be widely feared as an incipient Stalin, and his life might be imperiled along with his growing powers.¹⁶ For this reason, it may be supposed that the political resolution of these groups, like their economic potential, will be substantially greater in the Khrushchev succession crisis than when Stalin died.

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- 14 (Cont'd) friends, thinking in much the same way, who had been cut off from each other."

Interviewer: "How did you become aware of the 'Thaw'? Did it follow close after Stalin's death?"

Burg: "Not immediately -- there was a short period of groping confusion. Then in the winter of '55 all of a sudden people started to talk about things they would never have mentioned previously.... And gradually there was more talk about politics, especially after the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956 when Khrushchev made his famous denunciation of Stalin." ("The Voice of a Dissenter," Harper's Magazine, May 1961, p. 127.)

- 15 There have been occasional localized disturbances, however, such as the strikes and rioting in Kazakhstan in 1959.
- 16 This is not to assert that a reduction in the role of the political police is the product of a secular trend that must continue. On the contrary, under certain circumstances, police repression might be intensified. It is not true, as Hitler proved, that police terror is incompatible with scientific-industrial progress; nor is even a libertarian society immune to its imposition. Moreover, Stalin's blood purge is not only a warning to those who would let themselves be tyrannized; it is also a model for a future tyrant, something Stalin lacked until Hitler showed him the way by his blood purge of the Nazi leadership in 1934.

NOT TO BE MICROFICED

Our second question remains: Are these groups and the institutions associated with them likely to form an effective alliance directed against the party machine's capacity to dominate them? This will depend on two critical factors: (1) the distribution of political power when Khrushchev ceases to exercise dictatorial power; and (2) the respective strategies adopted in the succession crisis by the leaders of institutions that the apparatus has subjected to close party control during the Khrushchev regime.

If Khrushchev's dictatorship ended in the near future, something like the present arrangement of political power would prevail at the onset of the succession crisis. If his dictatorship continued for an extended period of time, of course, there would be greater likelihood that significant changes might occur in the relative power of the economic bureaucracy, the army, and the political police. There would also be greater chance of a redistribution of power among elements of the party machine.¹⁷ It seems reasonable to suppose, however, that Khrushchev will continue to order his dictatorship as before: the centralized party machine can be expected to govern and control the other Soviet institutions, which will remain basically decentralized. Only if Khrushchev's dictatorial power suffered a slow decline before expiring -- thereby enabling non-party institutions to gain increased autonomy and their leaders to acquire greater scope for political maneuver -- would a basic rearrangement of political power in the USSR be likely to occur before the Khrushchev succession crisis.

Most probably, then, the onset of the succession crisis will find non-party institutions subordinate to the sovereign party apparatus. In this respect, their political position may be weaker than in 1953 or 1923. When Lenin was incapacitated, the party machine had yet to establish its hegemony; when Stalin fell mortally ill, it had long since been deprived of hegemony. If, as anticipated, the party machine firmly controls the economic bureaucracy, the army, and the political police when Khrushchev ceases to rule, it will have a transient opportunity to resolve the succession question quickly in its own favor by making one of its leaders dictator. That opportunity lost, a crisis would ensue whose severity might far exceed that of the crisis brought on by Stalin's death. Having ruled by terror, Stalin left behind him a residue of fear that helped stabilize the regime during the years that his succession was being decided. The absence of such terror when Khrushchev ceases to rule may embolden dissident groups to engage in forceful political action, possibly leading to a concerted attack on the party apparatus.

The party machine, having made itself the sole highly centralized institution in the Soviet political system, has necessarily assumed a heavy responsibility for management of the national economy. It would be difficult to discharge this responsibility if the party were weakened by internal divisions

¹⁷ For example, the central apparatus might be further strengthened and the discretionary powers of provincial party bosses somewhat curtailed.

at a time of crisis. In that event, local economic agencies, which are now balanced against each other under party supervision in regional administrative centers, would tend to coalesce; this would probably be accompanied by rapid centralization of the state administration in Moscow. Were this to occur, the state bureaucracy would be greatly strengthened for a struggle against party hegemony.

The depth of this crisis and its outcome will depend on the strategies of the leaders of non-party institutions. Unless these strategies are grounded in opposition to the apparat as the common enemy, these institutions will be at odds with each other and will probably be unable to free themselves from subjection to the apparat. Some variant of the Stalin succession crisis might then be enacted. In the years just after Stalin's death, the army was first the party machine's ally (1953 to mid-1957), later its victim. The economic bureaucracy first fought the army-party alliance; later its own internal divisions transformed a prospective victory over the party machine into an overwhelming defeat at its hand (December 1956-June 1957). Such divisions, if repeated, would probably enable the apparat to resolve the succession crisis without serious impairment of its power. On the other hand, an alliance of the dominant factions in the administrative bureaucracy, the political police (if it has not been reduced to a department of the former), the economic bureaucracy, and the army would be a most formidable opponent of the party machine. Whether such an alliance took form would depend on the political ambitions of the men who found themselves at the head of these institutions, their capacity to overcome mutual suspicion, their determination to win institutional autonomy, their success in drawing their subordinates into the political struggle and, finally, the intensity of their antagonism to the apparat.

The apparat is itself subject to divisions: between the center and the provinces; between agricultural and industrial party cadres; between the party machine of one city, or republic, and that of another; and so forth. These divisions could contribute importantly to the apparat's vulnerability to attack by powerful opponents. The effectiveness of any alliance against the party will also depend on its ability to capitalize on divisions among Khrushchev's closest heirs in the top party organs. Dissident individuals or factions that lack power over the apparat will seek support among the non-party institutions and could become their leaders. Thus, the chief supporters of political pluralism as against party monolithism are likely to be found among the former dictator's closest associates, as they were after the death of Stalin. Moreover, factional opponents purged by Khrushchev as well as erstwhile supporters demoted by him, if they are still alive and politically ambitious, could play an important role in leadership of the alliance, a factor which Stalin eliminated by executing his purged rivals and lieutenants.

Controversy over questions of policy will doubtless be intense. Its effect will be to exacerbate factional conflict, though it may bring particular institutions into temporary alignment with the party apparatus. Only if factional conflict and controversy over policy are transformed into a fundamentally institutional conflict, a struggle for autonomy, will an effective alliance against the party machine be likely to form and persist long enough to break its power.

Such an alliance of non-party institutions seeking to free themselves from party domination could probably deprive the party of its hegemony. Whether it could also rule Russia, however, or defend itself against the party machine's counter-attack, involves the question whether the USSR can experience a non-violent political revolution. It is a question that can hardly be answered from our present vantage point.

V. Khrushchev and the Question of His Succession

Khrushchev's rise to dictatorship has been motivated by a passion for power and renown and by devotion to communism. The same two elements are inextricably involved in his effort to arrange an orderly succession. If he fails in this, his person and policies will surely be a central issue in the resulting struggle over the succession, just as Stalin's person and policies became a central issue in the Stalin succession crisis. Soviet historiography being what it is, the account of Khrushchev's reign that will appear in future party histories will in large measure depend on the course and outcome of the Khrushchev succession crisis. As for Khrushchev's concern for the future of communism in Russia, an orderly succession may be required to preserve Moscow's hegemony in the world Communist movement and the party's hegemony in Soviet society.

The problem of succession, as it presents itself to Khrushchev, seems basically that of assuring that his dictatorial powers are smoothly transferred, at the critical moment, to a designated heir.

True, an alternative solution is available: Khrushchev could leave a testament that disqualified all his lieutenants from exercising dictatorship. This was the course chosen by Lenin when he dictated his famous "Testament" pointing out the deficiencies, along with the merits, of his principal lieutenants. But Khrushchev's solution to the succession problem is not likely to be Lenin's, just as Khrushchev's understanding of his personal dictatorship is not Lenin's. For Lenin, the prerogatives of dictatorial rule derived from his possession of the transcendent political wisdom that enabled him to create the Communist Party and establish the Soviet state. Khrushchev by contrast seems to believe that a boss is needed to preserve its hegemony over Soviet society. In any case, the failure of oligarchical rule after Lenin's death, and again

after Stalin's, makes oligarchy an unpromising solution to the Khrushchev succession problem.¹⁸

It seems likely, then, that Khrushchev will try to arrange an orderly transfer of his power by designating his successor. If so, he will have to face the difficulties inherent in this solution of the succession problem.

Khrushchev encountered the succession problem almost at the moment of his accession to dictatorial power, since he was already aged 63 in 1957. At the same time, he had to consolidate his rule, which was threatened by new challenges. Faced with this double difficulty, Khrushchev naturally slighted the succession problem in his initial dispositions. To supervise the party machine, the most powerful agency of his rule, he chose Kirichenko, whose Ukrainian origins and political experience made him a doubtful candidate for the succession. In this early period, the chief counterweights to Kirichenko's power were apparently Aristov and Kozlov. Aristov had special responsibility for the part of the party machine that lay in the Russian Republic, and Kozlov was Khrushchev's chief deputy in the government. While the circumstances surrounding Kirichenko's fall from grace in 1959 are clouded, there is reason to believe that he may have overreached himself in the exercise of his great powers.¹⁹

Khrushchev's new arrangements, which took form in the early months of 1960, evinced somewhat greater concern for the succession problem. In Kirichenko's place now appeared a highly eligible candidate for the succession, Frol Kozlov, who was transferred from the government to the party Secretariat. Did this signify that Kozlov was Khrushchev's presumptive successor? Evidently.²⁰ Kozlov subsequently reported in Khrushchev's stead to the Central Committee on the Bucharest meeting of Communist leaders in June 1960, a crucial event in the developing Sino-Soviet polemic. Moreover, in presenting "Amendments to the Statute" at the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU in October 1961, Kozlov followed in the footsteps of Khrushchev, who performed that same role at the Nineteenth Congress (1952).

Lacking Stalin's vast powers, however, Khrushchev has not permitted Kozlov to exercise as much authority as Malenkov

¹⁸ Of course, it could serve as a temporary device for rule during a struggle for the succession, but then it would not be the means to an orderly transfer of power.

¹⁹ After his fall, some former members of the Ukrainian Party machine who had risen with Kirichenko were demoted with him.

²⁰ Kozlov was not elected to Stalin's forty-man Presidium in 1952, and he was demoted to provincial third secretary in the weeks following Stalin's death; his remarkable rise since then seems due to Khrushchev.

did under Stalin. On entering the party Secretariat, Kozlov gave up his government post, unlike Malenkov, who did not cease to be Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers when he became Secretary of the Central Committee in 1948. Moreover, the power of strong rivals was set against Kozlov's, to balance and circumscribe it: Aristov in the Bureau for the Russian Republic (subsequently Aristov was replaced by G. I. Voronov); Brezhnev and possibly Kosygin, head of Gosplan, in the state-government bureaucracy. Even in the Secretariat, Suslov's authority became a counter to Kozlov's. Khrushchev may sometime choose to concentrate in a single individual a large part of the power that Kozlov's rivals now enjoy, thereby establishing a new triad; as yet he has not done so.

When he enhanced Kozlov's position, Khrushchev took care to strengthen his own. Under the new dispensation, he alone is a member of all the top organs of dictatorship: the Presidium, the Secretariat of the Central Committee, the Central Committee's Bureau for the Russian Republic, and the USSR Council of Ministers; the other leaders now sit on no more than two of these four bodies. The cult of Khrushchev, a potent instrument of dictatorship and one that has grown appreciably since 1957, has received fresh impetus.²¹ At the January 1961 plenum of the Central Committee, Khrushchev forcefully asserted his authority over the speakers, not excepting Presidium members.

While Khrushchev has strengthened his position, this does not mean that he meets no opposition. In the past year he has alluded to views opposed to his own on important questions of defense policy, investment policy, and diplomacy. There is even evidence of efforts to ensure observance of the forms of collegial rule. But his will is decisive, and others must influence him if they are to affect high policy; which is to say that he continues to rule as dictator.

Though Khrushchev's apparent choice as successor is an able man, Kozlov's talents have not been given large scope, at least in public activities. There is some question -- as indeed there once was respecting Khrushchev -- whether he has the capacity to exercise dictatorial power. Fearful of their present power and future glory, dictators are inclined to choose successors who are unlikely, by reason of manifest or hidden weaknesses, to threaten either. According to Khrushchev, Stalin's chosen political heir, Malenkov, was a contempt-

²¹ According to the Central Committee (Resolution of June 30, 1956), "any action against" Stalin was ruled out during his lifetime because of his personality cult, which guaranteed him public support. Khrushchev, too, has used the cult of his person to deter political opposition.

ible pretender to the throne.²² Kozlov's suitability for this role is also uncertain.

Khrushchev seems unlikely at this time to strengthen substantially Kozlov's claim to the succession. To do so might enable Kozlov to develop an independent base of power that could at some point threaten Khrushchev's rule;²³ alternatively, it might encourage Kozlov's rivals to unite against him, thereby endangering his capacity to make good his claim to the succession at the moment of decision. Even if Khrushchev resolved to transfer dictatorial power to Kozlov during his own lifetime -- a selfless act for which history has few precedents -- he would find it difficult to persist in his intention if Kozlov disregarded his advice on large questions of policy or proved unable to cope with contentious rivals.²⁴

In any case, the durability of the present arrangement may be questioned. As noted above, Stalin evidently felt compelled to modify his arrangements for the succession just a few weeks after the Nineteenth Party Congress had enacted them. Since Khrushchev's own authority is not above question and the problems that face him are great, his succession arrangements may not prove much more lasting.

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- ²² The credibility of Khrushchev's remark on the subject of Averill Harriman is uncertain, yet there may have been some hidden weakness in Malenkov's political personality that at once made him a suitable choice as Stalin's heir and weakened his capacity to wage the struggle to succeed Stalin. At the same time, it does not appear that Stalin recognized Khrushchev's full potentialities as a dictator. In the years before he died, Stalin gave Khrushchev control of some key levers of the party machine as a means of assuring that Malenkov did not challenge his own authority while he lived. But after placing Khrushchev in this powerful position, Stalin denied him an important voice in deciding policy. Evidently he saw in Khrushchev a shrewd manipulator of the levers of power and a loyal supporter of his own authority, but not a possible candidate for the succession if Malenkov proved deficient in qualities of leadership or personal loyalty. If Stalin underestimated the man who finally succeeded him, it was apparently not in doubting his capacity to seize dictatorial power, but in failing to recognize in Khrushchev the qualities needed to formulate and execute strategies that would advance the cause of Bolshevism.
- ²³ Kozlov has had an incipient base of this kind in the Leningrad organization, which he headed until 1957, and whose members have been favored for important positions in the central government in recent years.
- ²⁴ In the party Secretariat elected after the Twenty-Second Congress, Kozlov's name follows Khrushchev's with the other Secretaries listed alphabetically. This implies that Kozlov is Khrushchev's deputy for party affairs, although he has not received an appropriate title.

VI. The Succession Problem and Mankind

When Stalin died, many Western observers believed that his successors were unlikely to fall out among themselves on questions of policy. While recognizing that the Lenin succession crisis had precipitated conflict between Trotsky and Stalin on the future course of the revolution, they argued that the regime's course was set, that questions still unresolved, not being fundamental, were not likely to be a radical source of controversy. Actually, as we have seen, basic and pervasive policy disagreements sundered the leadership in the Stalin succession crisis. Fundamental alternatives surpassing even those of the 1920's now confront the Soviet Union in the 1960's and will doubtless play their part in the Khrushchev succession crisis. What are the epochal problems that bear on Khrushchev's efforts to effect an orderly transition from his regime to the next and that his successors will inherit? They have to do with internal affairs, the world Communist movement, and relations with the West.

The chief internal question is one we have already discussed at length: can party hegemony be maintained, without undue loss of efficiency and popular support, against the impulse toward greater autonomy of institutions and social groups that the party machine controls?

As for the world Communist movement, disturbances in East Europe may occur during the Khrushchev succession crisis, just as after Stalin's death. When Stalin died, the little Stalins in the satellites continued to look to Moscow, on which they were wholly dependent, for final determination of the policies. Yet within months the order that Stalin had achieved by close direction, police methods, and terror was threatened. Urban riots occurred in Czechoslovakia, where there was a domestic succession crisis; in East Germany intense popular hatred of the Ulbricht regime and a passionate wish to end partition caused a rebellion. There followed relative stability, which lasted until the most acute stage of the Soviet succession crisis was initiated by Khrushchev's secret attack on Stalin. This led to new disturbances in Poland and Hungary, both torn by local succession crisis, that endangered Soviet hegemony in East Europe. Resolution of the succession crisis in Moscow with the establishment of Khrushchev's personal dictatorship in 1957 led to stabilization of the satellite regimes in East Europe.

Will history repeat itself in the Khrushchev succession crisis, producing disturbances followed by stabilization? Or can serious disturbances be prevented? Alternatively, is it possible that the disturbances will be too powerful for Moscow, wracked by a succession crisis, to control? Important elements of the problem of maintaining Soviet hegemony in East Europe will have changed. Some elements, like the improved economic situation and more rational integration of the satellite economies with the Soviet economy, may make it easier. On the

other hand, Communist China's challenge to Soviet supremacy in the Communist world will certainly complicate the problem. A faction favorable to Peking already rules in Albania, and the seeds of such factions are present in the Bulgarian and other satellite regimes. Whether the new, less harsh methods of controlling these regimes will make Moscow's task easier or harder still remains to be seen.

Great as the problem of Soviet hegemony in East Europe is, it may be overshadowed by the question of Sino-Soviet relations. The issue between the two states is far more than a matter of personalities, yet it is centered on the controversy between Khrushchev and Mao. It early led to direct efforts in each country to influence party opinion in the other. If persisted in, this trend may not only intensify hostility between the two parties, but also exacerbate factional conflict within each. While there are no signs of a pro-China faction in the USSR, the general question of relations with the CPR may already be a key issue in Soviet politics. Since a succession crisis also impends in China, a critical question of world politics is which leader, Khrushchev or Mao, will first leave the political scene. The country that is first plunged into a succession crisis will be at a considerable disadvantage in the contest for control over the world Communist movement. If Khrushchev dies first, the CPR will be strongly tempted to intervene in the new succession crisis, as it did in the previous one, to secure an outcome favorable to its own interests. Such intervention, if successful, might hasten resolution of the crisis, but at the cost of great bitterness in the defeated faction. If it fails, the crisis might be further exacerbated. In any case, the character of the Khrushchev succession crisis will greatly depend on whether the leadership in Communist China is stable or disunited.

The major problem of Soviet foreign policy outside the Communist world is relations with the West in a missile and thermonuclear arms race. The fundamental question is whether to cope with this dangerous opponent by accommodation or by intensified political, and even military, pressure. The great policy issue of the coming years in the USSR, in grossly simplified terms, may be whether to seek accommodation with the West at the cost of increased hostility from the CPR and a probable schism in the Communist movement; or whether to press the conflict with the West, in conjunction with a friendly CPR, thereby risking thermonuclear war. If so, the course and outcome of the Khrushchev succession struggle may decisively affect the fate of mankind.