

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Reagan, Donald T.: Files
Folder Title: [Reading File for Reagan/Iceland Summit] [5 of 5]
Box: 5

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

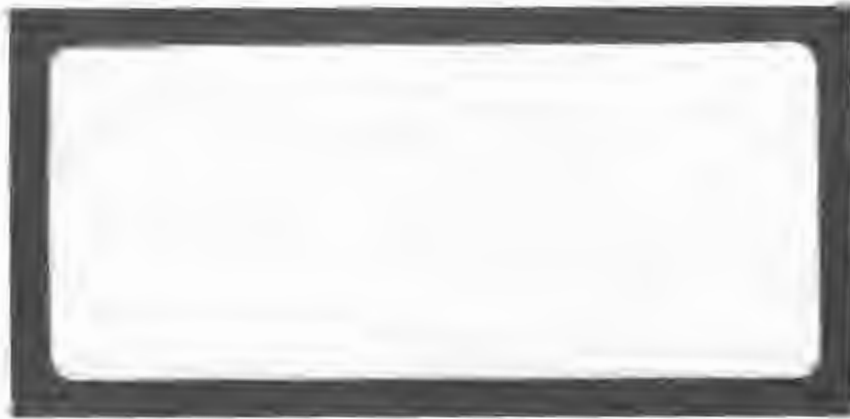
Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

NOTED BY DTR

RESEARCH REPORT



USIA

**Office of Research
United States Information Agency**

SOVIET ELITE VIEWS:
THE GORBACHEV LEADERSHIP

Results of Surrogate Interviews

Prepared by:
Richard B. Dobson and Steven A. Grant
Soviet and East European Branch

Approved by:
Nils H. Wessell
Director of Research

R-20-86

Office of Research
U.S. Information Agency

September 1986

SUMMARY

This report describes how members of Soviet professional and bureaucratic elites view the Gorbachev leadership. It is based on interviews, conducted between April and June 1986, with 54 Americans and West Europeans who have had extensive recent contact with the elites.

Elites Broadly Support Gorbachev

Most Soviet officials, intellectuals, and people in the arts approve of Gorbachev's performance. In part, their support reflects hopefulness about the generational change that his accession epitomizes.

Gorbachev is viewed as more dynamic, flexible, articulate, and outspoken than Brezhnev or Chernenko. Many feel that his extensive cadre changes, calls for "openness," and insistence on the need for economic reform indicate a readiness to tackle the country's problems. Gorbachev's efforts to strengthen work discipline, combat alcohol abuse, and curtail corruption enjoy support, and his ostensibly more permissive cultural policy has been well received by the intelligentsia.

There is Consensus on the Importance of Economic Issues, the Arms Race, and Relations with the U.S.

According to surrogates, officials, intellectuals, and members of the creative professions all stress the need to raise the population's standard of living, improve housing and medical care, stop the arms race, and improve relations with the U.S. As an indication that Afghanistan is not "the Soviet Union's Vietnam," however, ending the war is not seen as a top priority.

But Elites Divide Over Military Needs, Artistic Freedom, Rights

Officials give priority to matching or surpassing U.S. military might. Intellectuals and artists attach little importance to military might, but stress the need to expand artistic freedom, curb party privilege, and strengthen human rights.

Doubt, Uncertainty, and Skepticism Persist

There continue to be doubts about where Gorbachev will lead the USSR -- especially what course economic reform will take and how far liberalization will be allowed to proceed. While many intellectuals and artists have been encouraged by signs of greater freedom in the arts, their expectations have risen, too, so that now there is the possibility of greater disillusionment. Some intellectuals have lapsed into a customary cynicism, having concluded that Gorbachev will turn out to be much like past party leaders. Ironically, though urged by Gorbachev to show initiative, party cadres appear to be waiting for orders from above.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	i
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A Note on Methodology	1
II. THE SOVIET UNION UNDER GORBACHEV.	3
The Gorbachev Image	4
The Political System: A More Effective Machine?	5
The 27th Party Congress	6
III. IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING THE SOVIET UNION	8
Elite Perceptions of Major Issues	8
Points of Consensus and Disagreement.	12
Foreign and Domestic Issues Seen as Interrelated.	13
IV. INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE.	14
"Openness" -- A New Imperative?	14
Creative Stirrings in the Arts.	15
Support for Liberalization.	17
V. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS	21
The Anti-Alcohol Campaign	21
Prospects for Economic Reform	22
Questions of Privilege and Corruption	26
VI. PROSPECTS FOR THE GORBACHEV LEADERSHIP.	28
Sources of Support.	28
Nagging Doubts: Will Deeds Match Words?	29
Concluding Observations	31

APPENDICES

A. METHODOLOGY.	33
B. ESTIMATES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE A	40
C. ESTIMATES FROM THE SIMULATED POLL.	41

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	The Overwhelming Majority Approves of Gorbachev's Performance	3
Figure 2.	Artists and Intellectuals Split With Officials Over Artistic Freedom	18
Figure 3.	Elites Diverge on Questions of Political Expression and Human Rights	19
Figure 4.	Most Agree on Need for Discipline, Yet Favor More Private Economic Initiative.	24
Figure 5.	More Artists and Intellectuals Are Critical of Official Privilege	27
Figure 6.	Most Feel the USSR is the Best Country.	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Importance of Issues for the Political Establishment.	9
Table 2.	Importance of Issues for Artists and Intellectuals.	10
Table 3.	Issues on Which Elite Groups Differ Sharply.	11
Table 4.	Distribution of Credibility Scores	36

I. INTRODUCTION

This report describes how members of Soviet professional and bureaucratic elites view the Gorbachev leadership and Soviet domestic affairs. It is based on interviews, conducted between April and June 1986, with 54 "surrogates" -- Americans and West Europeans who have had extensive recent contact with the elites. While concentrating on the first year of the Gorbachev regime (March 1985 - April 1986), the report seeks to put recent developments in perspective by making comparisons with the 1983-84 USIA surrogate study. Perceptions of U.S. policy and the Reagan Administration will be examined in a separate report.¹

This study focuses on senior and mid-level elite members involved with foreign affairs, education and science, the mass media, and the arts. These individuals are predominantly Russians who live in Moscow. By Soviet standards, a high proportion have traveled abroad and have had professional contact with Westerners for many years. Findings should not be generalized to the entire Soviet population or necessarily equated with the views of the highest-level policymakers.

A Note on Methodology

As in the three prior USIA surrogate studies, the information for this report was derived primarily from interviews with non-Soviet "surrogates."² The interviews followed a protocol in which most questions were open-ended (that is, they invited the

¹The authors wish to express their gratitude to the individuals who participated in this study and to the officers at the USIS posts who helped to arrange the interviews.

²See U.S. International Communication Agency (USICA), "Soviet Perceptions of the U.S.: Results of a Surrogate Interview Project," Research Memorandum (M-16-80), June 17, 1980; Gregory Guroff and Steven Grant, "Soviet Elites: Worldview and Perceptions of the U.S.," USICA Research Report (R-18-81), September 29, 1981; Richard B. Dobson, "Soviet Elite Attitudes and Perceptions: Domestic Affairs," USIA Research Report (R-25-84), November 1984; and Richard B. Dobson, "Soviet Elite Attitudes and Perceptions: Foreign Affairs," USIA Research Report (R-4-85), February 1985.

surrogates to recount what the Soviets they knew had said on specific issues). In addition, several techniques were used to make a quantitative assessment of elite attitudes:

1. One questionnaire asked surrogates to assess how important various tasks facing the Soviet Union are for a particular elite group.
2. Another questionnaire asked respondents to estimate what proportion of the Soviet citizens in a particular elite group would agree with certain statements about major domestic and international issues.
3. In a "simulated poll," surrogates were asked to indicate how particular types of persons in the elites would respond to a series of statements.
4. The interviewees themselves were evaluated on a 15-point scale according to five criteria -- their knowledge of the USSR, range of contacts with Soviet citizens, degree of intimacy, accuracy of recall, and command of the Russian language. This scale was used as a screening and weighting factor for the quantitative analysis.

Use of the questionnaires and the simulated poll made it possible to estimate with greater precision gradations of opinion within elite groups and differences between groups. These techniques also allowed cross-checks to see whether the several approaches yielded consistent results. The fact that they did show much the same results on all major issues increases our confidence in the accuracy and reliability of the study's conclusions.³

In this report, variations within the elite strata are examined along two dimensions. First, a distinction is made between the political establishment and artists and intellectuals. The former consists primarily of government officials responsible for foreign relations, but also includes policy analysts, social scientists, and professionals in the mass media. The latter includes members of the creative professions as well as academics and scientists outside the policy-related fields. Second, a distinction is made according to age and status. Simply stated, the senior elite is composed of persons aged 55 or over who have attained positions of prominence or responsibility. The mid-level elite consists of younger persons who have been successful professionally, but have not yet attained such high status.

³For a fuller explanation of the methodology, see Appendix A.

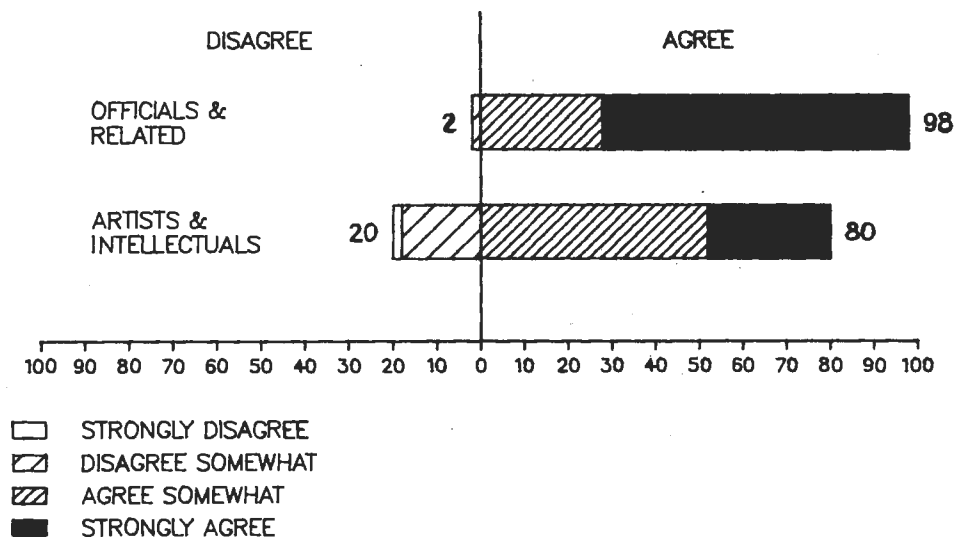
II. THE SOVIET UNION UNDER GORBACHEV

Without doubt, the rise of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev to the leadership of the Communist Party has been the most significant political development in Soviet society in recent years. For the elites, Gorbachev's ascent has increased interest in politics, generated hope for change, and even sparked a degree of enthusiasm. In this respect, the mood in Moscow over the past year differed appreciably from the sense of despondency that prevailed in elite circles in 1983-84.

According to the simulated poll, in which surrogates responded to statements as they believed Soviet elite members would, the overwhelming majority of elite members feel that "General Secretary Gorbachev is doing a good job in dealing with our country's problems" (Figure 1). Half of both the senior and mid-level elites are thought to "strongly agree" with this judgment. It is revealing, however, that the proportion who "strongly agree" is much higher among members of the "political establishment" (officials, social scientists, and journalists) than among artists and intellectuals outside the policy-related fields. Seventy percent of the former strongly endorse Gorbachev's performance, but only 28 percent of the latter do.

Figure 1.
THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY APPROVES OF GORBACHEV'S PERFORMANCE

"General Secretary Gorbachev is doing a good job in dealing with our country's problems."



The Gorbachev Image

Gorbachev is perceived as a very visible and active leader -- a man who is always on the go, continually calling for domestic reforms and advancing new foreign policy "initiatives." Foreign affairs officials and intellectuals commonly express the view that Gorbachev is more energetic, dynamic, flexible, articulate, and outspoken than Brezhnev or Chernenko. He is thought, like Andropov, to have a better grasp of the problems facing the USSR and to be more likely to take steps to solve them. Many believe that his extensive cadre changes, calls for "openness" (glasnost'), and insistence on the need for economic reform indicate that he is prepared to break with hidebound traditions. The fact that the new general secretary appears to be pursuing a more active and flexible foreign policy elicits favorable reactions in elite circles.

Broad segments of the elite see Gorbachev as an educated, witty, and even "charismatic" man. Persons who have encountered him have often been favorably impressed by his manner. After he visited a Moscow institute, for example, a Soviet scholar praised the general secretary for treating the officials around him in a civil manner, instead of bullying them. On another occasion, following a visit to a university, a professor remarked that Gorbachev was (for a Soviet leader) unusually open to the students' questions.

In attempting to discern the outlines of future policy, some citizens have tried to decipher Gorbachev the man. Shortly after he became general secretary, for instance, it was rumored that Gorbachev was incensed when he learned that the birthmark on his head had been airbrushed out of the first collective picture of the Politburo. Later, looking for signs of greater official candor, intellectuals wondered why he had not prevented the airbrushing of the birthmark in subsequent portraits.

Gorbachev's wife Raisa, who is sometimes identified as a philosophy professor at Moscow State University, has also received much favorable comment. Elite members often say that she is intelligent and has a serious interest in the arts. Many have also been pleased by the figure she cuts on the world stage, citing her public appearances in Paris and Geneva. They believe that, in tandem with her husband, she helps to project a "new look" abroad.

Of course, not all comments about Gorbachev have been positive. Some Moscow intellectuals and persons in the arts disparage his abilities. These individuals characterize him as a provincial politician and "apparatchik," rather than as a cultured and sophisticated man. Some members of the cultural elite made sar-

castic remarks about his accent, manner, and choice of words during the November 1985 post-summit press conference in Geneva, saying that they were appalled that their leader could speak so ineptly. Such carping appears to represent a minority point of view that is most evident among the mildly disaffected Moscow intelligentsia.

The Political System: A More Effective Machine?

Will Gorbachev prove to be a tinkerer or a leader who will undertake far-reaching reforms? While there is much uncertainty among the elites about the prospects for economic reform (a subject addressed later in this report), there is less doubt regarding prospects for political reforms: virtually no members of the Soviet bureaucratic and professional elites expect Gorbachev to initiate fundamental changes in the political system that nurtured him.

Judging from their conversations with foreigners, the great majority of elite members appear to accept the system of one-party rule, with power concentrated in the Politburo and Secretariat of the Central Committee, as a given. The system is thought to be stable and largely immutable. Very few, for instance, expect a reform that would permit competitive elections (with rival Communist candidates), even though some claim that competitive elections now take place in certain party cells.

According to surrogates' reports, most elite members believe that there is little pressure for major political changes from the citizenry. Dissent in general and the "democratic movement" in particular are thought to have been greatly weakened since the mid-1970s, owing to the imprisonment and emigration of many activists.

On the other hand, a sizable proportion of the elites believe that significant changes may be made within the existing system. Pointing to Gorbachev's extensive cadre changes, for example, some argue that corrupt officials, opportunists, and parasites are being eliminated, that political careers will now depend more on merit, and that the turnover and generational change will make the bureaucracy more responsive to directives for change from above. Some officials and intellectuals further speculate that the role of local soviets (councils) will be enhanced and that more power will devolve to local institutions and enterprises. Additionally, a few Soviet intellectuals intimate that, in a departure from past practice, referendums might be used for the ratification of major policies. Such changes, it is thought, may make the political system more effective and may increase support for the regime among the citizenry.

Clearly, however, elite members are not of one mind on these matters. Some speak about Gorbachev's personnel changes in glowing terms, implying that advancement within the state and party apparatus will become more meritocratic and be less affected by political considerations, nepotism, or "connections" (blat) than in the past. But the surrogate interviews suggest that among the bureaucrats themselves, there is a tendency to judge the significance of the cadre changes from the viewpoint of one's own job tenure. The officials whose positions are threatened imply that Gorbachev's appointments are just another round of moving out the old appointees and bringing in the new. In contrast, officials in line for promotion are more inclined to believe that ability alone will determine advancement and that the changes may mark a historical watershed, a surge of reform necessary to purge the system of its defects. On the whole, however, elite members are uncertain about how profound an effect the personnel shifts or other possible changes will produce. Many are skeptical about whether the new appointees will have a different frame of mind and code of behavior or whether they will be just as careerist, dogmatic, and inflexible as the bureaucrats they replaced.

The 27th CPSU Congress

The 27th Communist Party Congress was heralded in the Soviet Union as a historic turning point well before it convened on February 25, 1986. In his political report of the CPSU Central Committee at the opening of the congress, Gorbachev emphasized the theme of change, saying that the "boldest steps" are required in economic and social policy, that "ossified schemes and prescriptions" had to be abandoned, and that "new approaches, methods, and forms of relations" are needed in international affairs. His report provided strong signs of the regime's commitment to changing the way in which the Soviet economy functions. For the first time, adopting a phrase from Lenin, he used the term "radical reform" (radikal'naya reforma) to describe his plan.

Largely because it was the first under Gorbachev, elite members followed the congress with more interest than they usually give to party proceedings. They concentrated on Gorbachev's statements and sought indications of future policy, especially in the areas that most directly concern them. People in the theater, for instance, read with special attention the speeches given by cultural figures, whereas economists concentrated on addresses pertaining to the economy.

Elite reactions to the congress were diverse. Some commented on points that suggested a change from standard practice --

notably, Gorbachev's ideas for agricultural reforms, his repeated calls for "openness," and the speech by Moscow first secretary Boris Yel'tsin alluding to inadmissible party privileges. Many (perhaps most) foreign affairs officials said that the congress was more open in its treatment of foreign and domestic issues than past congresses had been.

Others, however, saw mostly continuity in party practice and were disappointed by what they perceived to be a familiar political ritual. Some intellectuals, for example, criticized Gorbachev's speech for containing too much stale rhetoric and dismissed the catchwords "openness" (glasnost'), "acceleration" (uskoreniye), and "intensification" (intensifikatsiya) as hollow slogans. Many were struck by the contrast between words and deeds and by the apparent passivity of the audience: the delegates, like the population at large, appeared to be waiting for orders from above.

On the whole, elite members felt that many issues remained unsettled at the congress, noting that divergent policy directions had been hinted at in different speeches.

III. IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING THE SOVIET UNION

What do the elites consider the most important issues facing the Soviet Union? In an attempt to answer this question, surrogates were asked to estimate the importance of 18 "tasks" for the specific elite group with which they had the closest contact. Though not exhaustive, the list that they were given to consider covered a range of issues pertaining to foreign relations, Soviet economic affairs, and other domestic matters. Most, if not all of the tasks were discussed at the 27th Party Congress.

The figures cited in the following tables are average ratings which have been standardized to a scale ranging from 0 to 100. The higher the issue's score, the more important it is thought to be. Little, if any, significance should be attached to differences of just a few points on this scale.

Elite Perceptions of Major Issues

Table 1 presents ratings for "the political establishment" -- a broad group which consists predominantly of government officials, but which also includes others in policy-related fields (i.e., policy analysts, social scientists, and journalists). A large proportion of the Soviets in this group are involved in managing Soviet-American and East-West relations.

For the political establishment, surrogates judged that stopping the arms race (86), improving relations with the U.S. (81), and raising the population's standard of living (78) are the three most important issues. Next in importance are matching or surpassing U.S. military capabilities (76), combatting alcohol abuse (75), improving housing and medical care (73), producing or importing more food (72), and increasing material incentives (70). At the bottom of the list are the four issues judged by surrogates to be least important: allowing more personal and artistic freedom (47), making the economy more responsive to market forces (46), reducing the privileges of Communist Party officials (40), and increasing assistance to underdeveloped countries that are friendly to the USSR (30).

The ratings for intellectuals and members of the creative professions are shown in Table 2. Surrogates estimate that the most important issues for this group are raising the population's standard of living (90), allowing more personal and artistic freedom (88), stopping the arms race (85), improving housing and medical care (82), producing or importing more food (81), and improving relations with the U.S. (79). For the

Table 1
 Importance of Issues for the Political Establishment^a
 (Based on Surrogates' Estimates)

Issue	Score	Rank
Stop the arms race	86	1
Improve relations with the U.S.	81	2
Raise the population's standard of living	78	3
Match or surpass U.S. military capabilities	76	4
Combat alcohol abuse	75	5
Improve housing and medical care	73	6
Produce or import more food	72	7
Increase material incentives (widen wage differentials)	70	8
Strengthen discipline in society	68	9.5
Introduce computers throughout the economy	68	9.5
Fight against corruption (bribetaking, <u>blat</u> , etc.)	67	11
Protect the natural environment	60	13
Improve relations with China	60	13
End the war in Afghanistan	60	13
Allow more personal and artistic freedom	47	15
Make the economy more responsive to market forces	46	16
Reduce the privileges of Communist Party officials	40	17
Increase assistance to underdeveloped countries that are friendly to the USSR	30	18

^aOfficials, as well as some policy analysts, social scientists, and journalists.

Table 2
 Importance of Issues for Artists and Intellectuals
 (Based on Surrogates' Estimates)

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Score</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Raise the population's standard of living	90	1
Allow more personal and artistic freedom	88	2
Stop the arms race	85	3
Improve housing and medical care	82	4
Produce or import more food	81	5
Improve relations with the U.S.	79	6
Increase material incentives (widen wage differentials)	76	7
Fight against corruption (bribetaking, <u>blat</u> , etc.)	75	8
End the war in Afghanistan	72	9
Protect the natural environment	70	11
Reduce the privileges of Communist Party officials	70	11
Make the economy more responsive to market forces	70	11
Combat alcohol abuse	67	13
Strengthen discipline in society	61	14
Introduce computers throughout the economy	58	15
Improve relations with China	40	16
Match or surpass U.S. military capabilities	32	17
Increase assistance to underdeveloped countries that are friendly to the USSR	14	18

Table 3
Issues on Which Elite Groups Differ Sharply

<u>Issues More Important for Political Establishment</u>	<u>Score and (Rank)</u>		<u>Differ- ence^a</u>
	<u>Officials & Related</u>	<u>Artists & Intellectuals</u>	
Match or surpass U.S. military capabilities	76 (4)	32 (17)	44
Improve relations with China	60 (13)	40 (16)	20
<u>Issues More Important for Artists and Intellectuals</u>			
Allow more personal and artistic freedom	47 (15)	88 (2)	-41
Reduce the privileges of Communist Party officials	40 (17)	70 (11)	-30
Make the economy more re- sponsive to market forces	46 (16)	70 (11)	-24

^aThe score for "officials" minus the score for artists and intellectuals.

artists and intellectuals, the three least important tasks are improving relations with China (40), matching or surpassing U.S. military might (32), and extending greater assistance to underdeveloped countries (14).

Points of Consensus and Disagreement

From a comparison of these tables, it is evident that there are points of consensus and divergence between the two elite groups. Of the six issues deemed most important in each group, four are identical. Like members of the political establishment, artists and intellectuals are thought to consider that raising the people's standard of living, stopping the arms race, improving housing and medical care, and improving relations with the U.S. are extremely important. Both groups were also judged to assign somewhat less importance to such tasks as fighting against corruption, introducing computers throughout the economy, improving relations with China, and ending the war in Afghanistan. Furthermore, notwithstanding official pronouncements about the need to help Third World nations, both groups are thought to regard providing more assistance to underdeveloped countries as the least important task.⁴

Clearly, there are some striking differences between the elites as well. Table 3 lists the issues on which the two groups differ sharply. Officials and others in the political establishment are thought to accord much greater importance to matching or surpassing U.S. military power than do members of the creative professions and intellectuals. Officials are also judged to assign more importance to improving relations with China. In comparison to the political establishment, on the other hand, artists and intellectuals are thought to give priority to expanding personal and artistic freedom and to attach greater importance to reducing officials' privileges and making the economy more responsive to market forces. In sum, the surrogates' estimates suggest that members of the political establishment accord great importance to building up Soviet power and projecting it abroad and that the intelligentsia places more stress on broadening personal freedom and liberalizing the economy.

⁴Broadly similar findings resulted from interviews with 102 Soviet travelers conducted by RFE/RL researchers in January and February 1986. (The sample is skewed in favor of educated, urban males and party members; thus, results may not be representative of the Soviet population as a whole.) When asked (cont. next page)

Foreign and Domestic Issues Seen as Interrelated

Although there are substantial differences on these points, both surrogates' conversations with Soviets and these ratings suggest that the Soviet elites tend to view peace and prosperity as interrelated. In informal conversations, officials and nonofficials alike commonly make connections between foreign affairs and their own lives, between "guns" and "butter." They believe that when East-West relations worsen, they and their fellow citizens have to tighten their belts, cut back on consumption, and lower their expectations. They also think that if the international situation becomes more tense, political constraints are more likely to be tightened at home, so that they will have fewer opportunities to travel, work with professional associates abroad, entertain foreign visitors, or see innovative works performed on the stage. Conversely, they feel that if Soviet-American relations improve, political controls and economic stringency are more likely to be relaxed, so that they may be able to breathe more freely and enjoy a more abundant life.

(cont.) what is the most serious problem facing the Soviet Union, a quarter of the Soviet citizens cited poor living standards and inferior consumer goods; 14 percent mentioned inadequate food supplies and low agricultural productivity; 12 percent referred to problems of labor discipline; 8 percent spoke of alcohol abuse; and 5 percent mentioned the need for technological innovation. In addition, 19 percent said that security issues (the threat of nuclear war, the need for a strong defense, relations with the U.S.) were the most serious problems, and 5 percent said that the Soviet presence in Afghanistan was. See Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research, "Some Soviet Citizens' Views of USSR's Current Problems," RM 2-86, June 1986.

IV. INTELLECTUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE

"Openness" -- A New Imperative?

Since assuming the mantle of general secretary, Gorbachev has repeatedly called for greater "openness" (glasnost') and "candor" (otkrovennost') in public discussions of policy. He has also set an example. When he was interviewed by French journalists in late September 1985, for instance, the questions and answers were shown on Soviet television. Soviet citizens, who are unaccustomed to seeing their leaders questioned in this manner, were by and large pleased with his performance. Intellectuals, including some who tend to be critical of the leadership, thought that Gorbachev was able to gain a credibility that otherwise he would not have achieved.

Figures in the artistic community, such as the poet Yevgeniy Yevtushenko, have helped set the tone as well. In addressing the Sixth Congress of the Russian Writers' Union in December 1985, Yevtushenko urged that there be greater openness in public discussion and literary work. Later, in an article published in the newspaper Sovetskaya kul'tura (April 15, 1986), he called for more honesty, a relaxation of censorship, and a reevaluation of Stalinism and its pernicious effect on poetry, music, linguistics, and genetics. Yevtushenko's speech and article sparked much debate among intellectuals and artists. Many viewed them as a signal: if Yevtushenko can openly discuss such issues, they thought, then perhaps we, too, will have more freedom to speak out.

According to surrogates' reports, officials and intellectuals generally believe that there has been greater openness since Gorbachev came to power. Newspapers such as Komsomol'skaya pravda and Sovetskaya Rossiya are said to display a new degree of candor, and Soviet TV has also reportedly become more forthright. As examples, Soviets point out that the evening news program Vremya devotes more coverage to shortcomings in economic performance and that a new program, "Problems, Searches, Solutions," forces officials to respond to viewers' questions. (Though well rehearsed, the program not only permits an airing of problems, but also emphasizes that ministries and producers will be held accountable to consumers.)

Soviet TV also aired (twice) the February 1986 "telebridge" that was hosted by Phil Donohue in Seattle and Vladimir Posner in Leningrad. Some Moscow intellectuals who watched the program expressed amazement at the spontaneity and openness that the Americans in the audience displayed in asking and answering questions. On the other hand, they were dismayed by the Soviet

participants, who mouthed hackneyed propaganda phrases when challenged on freedom and individual rights in the USSR.

While some intellectuals have been heartened by signs of greater "openness," others are very skeptical of the glasnost' campaign. The latter argue that the issue is simply being used tactically by the new leader -- it will not, they believe, lead to real freedom of expression for citizens or honesty on the part of the government. Manuscripts, they maintain, will still have to be checked, rechecked, and approved in advance before being broadcast, staged, or printed.

The Soviet government's initial handling of the April 26 explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant intensified the skepticism. For the first week, the Soviet mass media provided little news about the disaster; consequently, most elite members sought information from foreign radio broadcasts, foreign acquaintances, or other nonofficial sources. Some immediately inferred that the accident was much more serious than the government would acknowledge and that it was engaged in a cover-up.

Creative Stirrings in the Arts

Some intellectuals maintain that a limited but meaningful widening of freedom has occurred in the arts since Gorbachev's accession. They say that filmmakers, theater directors, painters, and writers now have somewhat more scope for creative expression. Some attribute the change to the appointments that Gorbachev made, saying that the new officials are giving artists more leeway; others argue that the "limits of the permissible" have been allowed to blur so that it is less clear what is to be disallowed.

Soviets who follow developments in the theater and in film-making mention a number of changes, some of which started before Gorbachev's accession. They point out that there has been a proliferation of small theaters that are less tightly controlled than the larger, more established ones. They also draw attention to "daring" productions that have recently been staged in Moscow. For example, the play "Dictatorship of Conscience" (Diktatura sovesti) assesses the value of socialism against the backdrop of the excesses and contradictions of Soviet history. Another drama, Aleksandr Misharin's "Silver Wedding Anniversary" (Serebryanaya svad'ba), deals with the sensitive subject of corruption and abuse of position. (Rumor has it that both of these plays had been "on hold" for about two years and were finally staged only after Boris Yel'tsin, the new Moscow party chief, intervened.) A third play,

"Brothers and Sisters" (Brat'ya i syestry), which was staged at the Malyy Theater in Leningrad, presents a somber view of life on the farm. It harks back to the time of Stalin and implicitly questions the wisdom of collectivization. Meanwhile, a number of controversial films have been released, suggesting that greater freedom will be permitted in filmmaking. One of them, Elem Klimov's "Agony" (Agoniya), had reportedly been collecting dust on the censors' shelf for years. Taking account of these developments, one film producer exclaimed, "By 1987 no films will be left on the shelf!"

Intellectuals also detected a new openness in literary journals. One pointed out, for instance, that Ogonyek recently carried an article on Nikolai Gumilyev, a poet who had been denied official recognition since he was executed as a counterrevolutionary in 1921. Another called attention to Literaturnaya gazeta's publication of a piece on Pavel Filonov, a nonrepresentational artist whose paintings had not been shown since the 1930s.

Within the cultural bureaucracy, changes are evident, too. Many people in the arts responded gleefully when, early in 1986, the composer Rodion Shchedrin publicly rebuked officials in the Ministry of Culture for showing insufficient energy and a lack of responsibility. Filmmakers who had attended a meeting to choose delegates to the cinematographers' congress said that a breath of freedom was blowing through the union. Not satisfied with the list of delegates selected by the officials, they demanded open nominations. In the ensuing election, voting out the union's leadership, they elected 17 delegates who had been nominated from the floor. Some filmmakers and writers were emboldened by this taste of democracy.

While many intellectuals and artists are hopeful about recent developments, they are far from confident that liberalization will continue and deepen. Some intellectuals reported that Politburo member Yegor Ligachev met with playwrights following the 27th Party Congress. He was asked why prominent representatives of the "old guard" had been allowed to give speeches on culture at the congress. Ligachev reportedly told them that they had to understand the opposition to further liberalization within the party and be patient. In the spring of 1986, many writers and artists were waiting to see what direction cultural policy would take.⁵

⁵In the months since the interviews, several developments in the cultural sphere suggest that the wave of liberalization is not yet over. In May, Elem Klimov, a maverick who has had recurrent problems with the censors, was unexpectedly elected (cont. next page)

Support for Liberalization

Despite some signs of liberalization in the arts, many well-educated Soviets continue to speak critically about opportunities that are denied them -- the right to travel freely, to express political views that differ from the party line, to practice their religion, or to see plays of their own choosing.

Elite members are, of course, aware that information is rationed according to what higher officials perceive as the individual's "need to know." Persons well placed in the establishment have clearance to receive foreign newspapers and other sources not generally available. Restrictions on access are probably most keenly felt by scientists, academics, and persons in the arts, as well as by some officials and foreign policy specialists of lower rank.

Surrogates' reports suggest that most elite members seek alternative sources of information. Many turn to their foreign acquaintances for books, newspapers, and magazines; and despite jamming of the Russian-language broadcasts, large numbers listen to stations such as the Voice of America, the BBC, and Radio Liberty to find out what is happening in their own country and abroad. As the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power station once again demonstrated, Moscow intellectuals often rely on foreign broadcasts for news.⁶

There is a great deal of support for freedom of artistic expression among the intelligentsia. According to the simulated

(cont.) first secretary of the filmmakers' union, replacing Lev Kulidzhanov, who had headed the union since 1965. In June, the Eighth Congress of the Soviet Writers' Union witnessed unusually frank and intense debate over restrictions on literary work as well as a change in leadership. Vladimir Karpov, the editor of Novyy Mir, succeeded Georgiy Markov as first secretary. Novyy Mir's publication of Yevtushenko's controversial prose-poem "Taboo" (Fuku) in September 1985 was one of the first indications of the current cultural thaw. See, for example, the Radio Liberty Research report, "Manifestations of a 'Thaw' in Soviet Cultural Policy," RL 266/86, July 15, 1986.

⁶For independent confirmation of these points, see Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Soviet Area Audience and Opinion Research, "Demographic Ratings of Four Major Broadcasters to the USSR," RM 3-86, June 1986; and "The Chernobyl Disaster and Western Radio Listening: Initial Findings," RM 4-86, June 1986.

poll, 42 percent of the senior elite and 68 percent of the mid-level elite agree that "writers and artists should be free to create what they want to" (Figure 2). For senior and mid-level elites combined, the proportion agreeing with this statement is much higher among artists and intellectuals (88 percent) than among officials and other members of the political establishment (32 percent). These results are consistent with the finding that intellectuals and members of the creative professions accord greater importance to expanding personal and artistic freedom (compare Table 3 above).

Creative freedom lies at the heart of the demands of the more independent-minded artists, who believe that they must develop their own culture, even if it smacks of "elitism" and is contrary to the party's strictures. They organize small gatherings where experimental dramas are staged, innovative art is displayed, or avant-garde music is performed. Though often critical of the regime, many, if not most members of the creative intelligentsia tend to shun politics. They basically want to be left alone to do what they can do best -- to create.

Figure 2.
ARTISTS AND INTELLECTUALS SPLIT WITH OFFICIALS OVER ARTISTIC FREEDOM

"Writers and artists should be free to create what they want to."

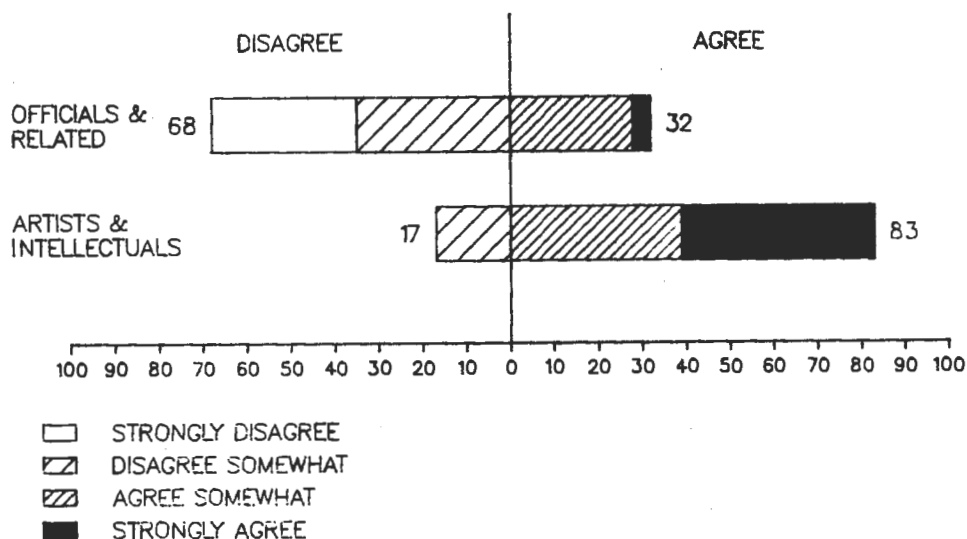
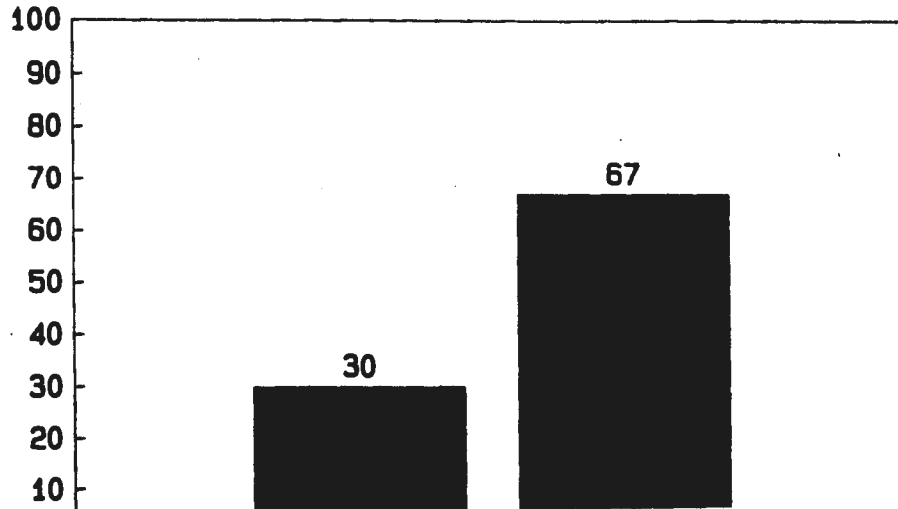


Figure 3.
ELITES DIVERGE ON QUESTIONS OF
POLITICAL EXPRESSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

% Estimated to Agree



ERRATUM

The top of page 18 should read as follows:

poll, 42 percent of the senior elite and 68 percent of the mid-level elite agree that "writers and artists should be free to create what they want to." For senior and mid-level elites combined (as shown in Figure 2), the proportion agreeing with this statement is much higher among artists and intellectuals (83 percent) than among officials and other members of the political establishment (32 percent). These results are consistent with the finding that intellectuals and members of the creative professions accord greater importance to expanding personal and artistic freedom (compare Table 3 above).

On issues relating to freedom of political expression and human rights, there are also sharp differences among elites (Figure 3). Surrogates estimate that about a third of the officials and other members of the political establishment, but two-thirds of the artists and intellectuals agree that "our government should permit movies, plays, and books that present political ideas contrary to government policy." Similarly, the proportion of elite members who take a positive view of human rights advocates is much higher outside the political establishment. Only a sixth of the officials, but nearly half the artists and intellectuals are thought to concur with the view, "Citizens who advocate 'human rights' are helping to improve our society."⁷

Results of the simulated poll further suggest that support for human rights advocates is stronger among the younger, mid-level than the senior elite members. Fifty-seven percent of the mid-level elite, as against 30 percent of the senior elite disagreed with the statement, "Citizens who speak out for 'human rights' only weaken our state." For senior and mid-level elites combined, the proportion disagreeing was twice as high among intellectuals and artists (58 percent) as among officials and other members of the political establishment (30 percent).

⁷The 1983-84 surrogate study found comparable sharp disparities on these two issues. The proportion estimated to agree that the "government should permit movies, plays, and books that present political ideas contrary to government policy" was 29 percent among officials, 47 percent among social scientists, 50 percent among other scholars and scientists, and 62 percent among members of the creative professions. The proportion estimated to agree with the statement, "In speaking out for human rights, Andrey Sakharov has performed a service for society," was 16 percent among officials, 18 percent among social scientists, 35 percent among other academics, and 53 percent among persons in the arts. Dobson, "Soviet Elite Attitudes and Perceptions: Domestic Affairs," p. 19.

V. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The Anti-Alcohol Campaign

No other aspect of Gorbachev's policy has been more often discussed than the campaign against alcohol abuse. The campaign went into high gear in May 1985, two months after Gorbachev became general secretary, with the adoption of a major decree by the CPSU Central Committee and the Council of Ministers. Within a month or two, official rituals were dramatically altered (no longer were alcoholic beverages served as a matter of course at official receptions); and liquor stores were closed or had their operating hours curtailed. Furthermore, ministries were instructed to produce more fruit juice and other soft drinks; restaurants were prohibited from serving alcoholic beverages before 2 p.m.; and workers were informed that severe sanctions would be applied to those who were drunk or who drank on the job.

On the whole, such measures were viewed positively by officials and nonofficials alike. Most elite members believed that drastic steps were necessary if destructive patterns were to be changed. Furthermore, most acknowledged that the campaign was having an impact, at least in Moscow. Drinking in official settings had been sharply curtailed; and fewer drunks were seen on the streets.

Yet, criticism has been voiced as well. Most commonly, officials and intellectuals complain about the long wait (often 1-2 hours) required to buy a bottle of vodka or wine. Some assert that the policy has been seriously enforced only in Moscow and that drinking patterns in provincial towns have changed little. Others allege unfairness, saying that high officials can still get alcohol at special stores and bars.

Some segments of society scoff at the campaign. The message to the general secretary scrawled on the window of a Moscow liquor store -- "Misha, ty ne prav!" ("You're wrong, Mike!") -- clearly expressed a dissenting view. According to persons in the elite strata, however, such opinions are more typical of male blue-collar workers than of better-educated people like themselves.

Elite members nonetheless delight in recounting anecdotes about the general secretary and the anti-alcohol crusade. In 1985, when the campaign was still fresh, many referred jokingly to Gorbachev not as "gensek" (short for general'nyi sekretar', general secretary), but as "gensok" (sok means juice). Others dubbed him "mineral'nyi sekretar'" (the mineral-water secretary). One riddle recounted by Moscow intellectuals asks,

"What is the difference between 1905 and 1985?" The answer: "In 1905, if a stranger paid a call, you put vodka on the table and hid Pravda under it; in 1985, it's just the opposite!" According to another anecdote, a traveler in the desert comes upon a man with a prominent birthmark on his head who is buried up to his neck. "My gracious, what happened to you?" he asks. With parched voice, the buried man explains that drunks had beaten and then buried him. "You know these drunks," the traveler exclaims, "they never finish a job!" He immediately finishes burying the gensok.

While generally supportive of the anti-alcohol campaign, many officials and intellectuals wonder whether it will have made any difference five years from now. Some social scientists at Moscow institutes stress that, however worthwhile the campaign may be, it addresses symptoms of Soviet social and economic problems, not their causes. These intellectuals argue from a Marxist standpoint, which emphasizes the influence of economic relations on people's attitudes and behavior. Only when the irrational and dysfunctional economic system has been revamped, they believe, will there be significant, lasting changes in people's psychology.

Prospects for Economic Reform

As was noted earlier, economic issues -- raising the population's standard of living, improving housing and medical care, and increasing the supply of food -- rank high on the elites' agenda. Today, no less than in 1983-84, there is consensus that something must be done to improve Soviet economic performance, but disagreement over the concrete steps to be taken. Soviet economists and other social scientists are at the forefront in arguing that economic reform is the most important issue facing the country.

There is a widespread perception that excessive bureaucracy, paperwork, and red tape are weighing down the economy, and that people do not work earnestly or efficiently. Yet, most people, including those in positions of prominence or responsibility, address their complaints to specific shortcomings -- a shortage of meat and vegetables, crowded public transportation, and so on. They often grumble that their housing is too old or cramped and that quality consumer goods are in short supply. Most resort to the black market, "connections," and "closed" (restricted) shops to satisfy their needs.

The leadership's call for "restructuring" (perestroyka), "intensification" (intensifikatsiya), and "acceleration" (uskoreniye) of economic growth have strengthened the view that things are

bad and must get better. Elite members believe that in the upper reaches of the official structure, there is recognition that if productivity does not improve, the Soviet Union will fall progressively further behind the developed capitalist countries. High-level officials take competition with the West seriously, believing that if Soviet economic performance lags, not only will Soviet military power be weakened, but the very existence of socialism as a system will be imperiled.

Yet, the obstacles to reform are generally thought to be formidable. Many continue to believe that the overriding obstacle to change is Russians' ingrained work habits, characterized by poor discipline, passivity, and lack of initiative. Russians, many agree, do not know how to work efficiently and the leadership cannot do much to change their work traits. In this regard, Russian workers are often compared unfavorably to Germans and Americans, as well as to the Japanese and Chinese, all of whom are thought to be more sober, conscientious, and industrious than Russians.

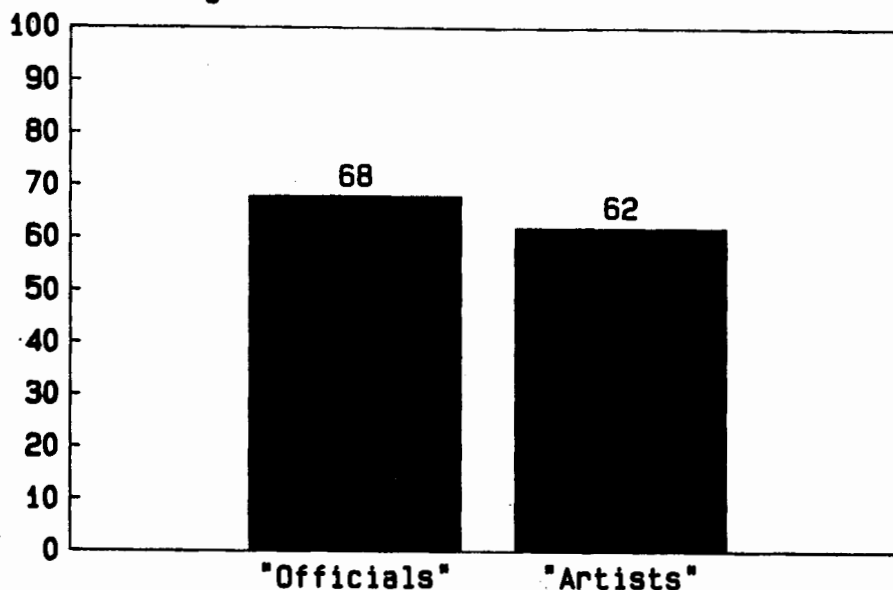
Another perceived impediment to economic reform is the highly bureaucratized economic system, whose managers have a vested interest in preserving the status quo. In addition, many officials and economists are aware that changes in the economy could endanger key social welfare policies that are regarded as important bases of support for the regime -- for example, full employment, "free" health care, and subsidized food and housing. (As a Soviet economist told a foreign scholar, the low, stable price of bread clearly demonstrates the superiority of socialism!)

On the whole, elite members who are not themselves economists have a "utopian" view of economic matters. Although they may see shortcomings in the present system, they poorly understand the interrelationship of economic forces or the means required to reach a certain goal. Many speak about the need for "another NEP" (the New Economic Policy introduced by Lenin in 1921), saying that they favor greater privatization (e.g., private ownership of small shops, restaurants, barber shops, services like plumbing) and greater autonomy for enterprises to respond to demand. They often allude to the importance of "zainteresovannost'" -- to people's having an incentive for working well. On the other hand, few show an understanding of the possible ramifications of economic changes (e.g., the growth of an entrepreneurial class, increased economic inequality, inflation, or unemployment).

Figure 4 sheds light on the elites' opinions on two such issues. The evidence suggests widespread support for greater discipline in the workplace and in society at large. According to surro-

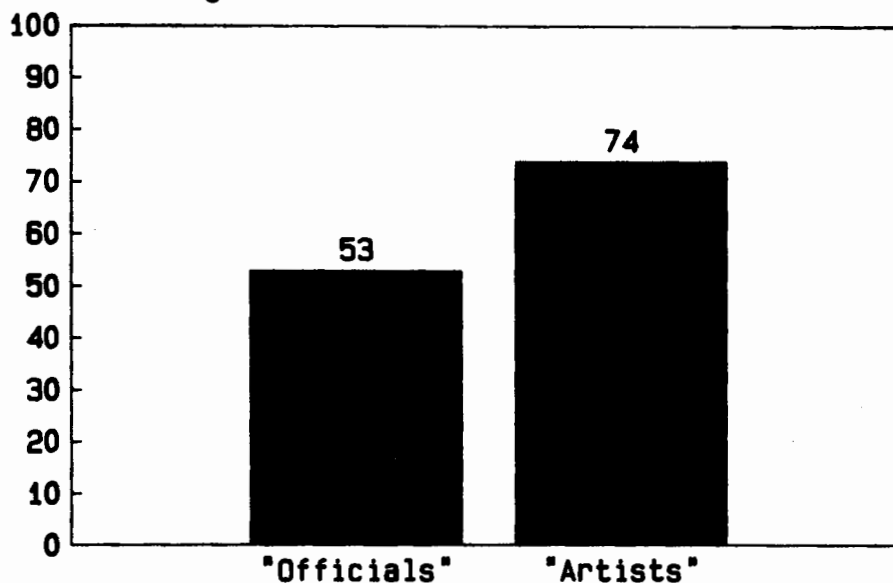
Figure 4.
MOST AGREE ON NEED FOR DISCIPLINE, YET
FAVOR MORE PRIVATE ECONOMIC INITIATIVE

% Estimated to Agree



STATEMENT: "We must have more discipline throughout society."

% Estimated to Agree



STATEMENT: "We need an economic policy which allows more private economic initiative in agriculture and consumer services."

gates' estimates, 68 percent of the officials and 62 percent of the artists and intellectuals believe that "we must have more discipline throughout society."⁸ At the same time, however, there is much support for policies that would permit more private economic activity. Surrogates estimate that half of the officials and three-fifths of the artists and intellectuals favor "an economic policy which allows more private initiative in agriculture and consumer services."⁹

Among Soviet economists, there is no clear consensus on whether to strengthen state control or rely more on the market, on whether to stress discipline or allow more latitude for initiative. Most economists are vague and cautious in proposing measures to improve the economy. Many emphasize the importance of "the human factor" (chelovecheskiy faktor) -- i.e., motivating workers to work more conscientiously and efficiently. Accordingly, some suggest that it is necessary to provide more "material incentives" (with rewards geared to performance) and gradually to reduce massive state subsidies. A few even go so far as to speak guardedly about allowing some minimal unemployment in order to discipline labor. But for the most part, Soviet economists speak of "fine-tuning," not dismantling the planning system, thus leaving only limited room for supply and demand to determine prices or establish priorities.

Some economists say emphatically that the USSR will not follow the Chinese example by radically restructuring agriculture to permit more private initiative or by sanctioning small-scale private manufacturing. Others are less adamant, and suggest that there may be some positive features (e.g., in the services or in small-scale production) that would work in the Soviet urban sector.

⁸It should be noted, however, that citizens may have different ideas about who should be disciplined. Some artists, for example, are inclined to think that construction workers, repairmen, and shopkeepers need more discipline, but deny that the same applies to themselves.

⁹These estimates are consistent with the findings in Tables 1-3, showing that members of the political establishment attach slightly more importance to strengthening discipline than artists and intellectuals do, but that artists and intellectuals assign greater importance than officials to making the economy responsive to market forces.

Questions of Privilege and Corruption

The issue of privileges enjoyed by a few was broached more than once in the months preceding the 27th Party Congress. At the meeting of the Russian Republic's Writers Union in December 1985, for example, Yevtushenko called on writers to stop accusing themselves to special privileges. Even more surprising was Pravda's publication, about two weeks before the party congress opened, of a letter criticizing the privileges enjoyed by party officials.

Many elite members are ambivalent about this issue, for they recognize that the system is built around the careful apportionment of privilege and that they themselves enjoy privileges denied to others. An officially recognized artist, for example, may be able to order food prepared at the Union of Artists and gain access to special sanatoriums for vacations. A more highly placed official in the same union may have added perks, including a chauffeur-driven limousine and a well-appointed dacha.

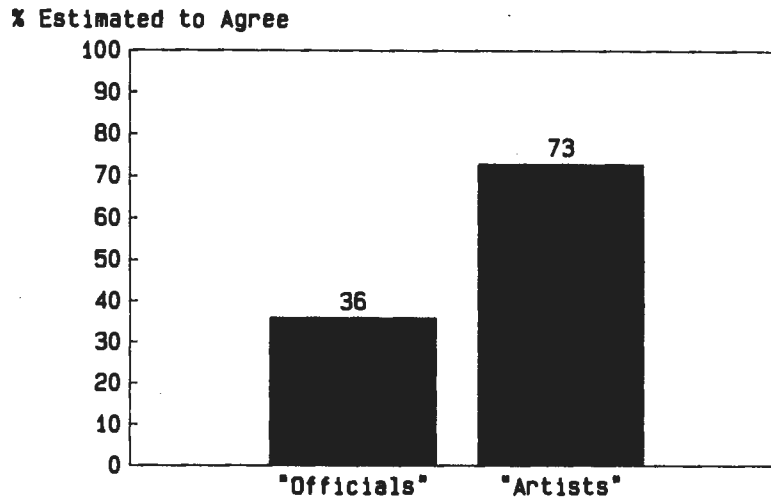
Some Soviets, especially in the upper reaches of officialdom, maintain that privileges are justified or that their extent has been exaggerated. Yet, many others criticize the valyuta stores, where Soviets with hard currency and official sanction can acquire luxury items otherwise unavailable, and other privileges that persons of high official status enjoy. Surrogates' estimates reveal sharp differences among elites on this issue (Figure 5). Seventy-three percent of the artists and intellectuals are thought to agree that "Soviet Communist Party officials have too many privileges." In contrast, it is estimated that only half as many officials subscribe to this view.¹⁰

For many, "privilege" is another way of talking about corruption, since privileges are so often abused. The figure most often mentioned in this regard is Viktor Grishin, who in December 1985 was removed from his post as first secretary of the Moscow City Party Committee and dropped from the Politburo.¹¹ It is rumored that in order to maintain his lavish

¹⁰These findings once again coincide with those presented in Table 3, showing that artists and intellectuals assign greater importance to reducing officials' privileges than do members of the political establishment.

¹¹Judging from Soviets' conversations with surrogates, Grishin and his successor, Boris Yel'tsin, were -- after Gorbachev -- the officials most often discussed in Moscow's elite circles in early 1986.

Figure 5.
MORE ARTISTS AND INTELLECTUALS ARE
CRITICAL OF OFFICIAL PRIVILEGE



STATEMENT: "Soviet Communist Party officials have too many privileges."

lifestyle, Grishin had claimed 27 "food rations" (payki), which allowed him to get great quantities of food and luxury items at special Kremlin stores. Other rumors, which are accorded much credence by the elites, claim that Gorbachev renounced his "food rations" and invited other high officials to follow his example. Yel'tsin, the new Moscow party chief, reportedly gave up many of his rations and also made a point of not eating in the bosses' dining room at work.

Many intellectuals favor steps to curtail corruption, even out privileges, and link rewards more closely to performance. For some of them, the question of privilege and corruption is a major moral issue which dovetails with efforts to revamp the economic system. They believe that a reduction in privilege, together with economic reforms that place greater stress on performance, initiative, and responsibility, would make for a more healthy and productive society.

There is considerable skepticism, however, about whether privileges will be cut back significantly. "Their wives would never let them," one Moscow intellectual remarked sarcastically, voicing a common view. In the spring of 1986, rumors circulated in the Moscow intelligentsia that Gorbachev was having a new dacha built for himself, thus reinforcing doubts about how seriously any attack on privilege would be conducted.

VI. PROSPECTS FOR THE GORBACHEV LEADERSHIP

This study has explored the elites' opinions, attitudes, and perceptions. Though more nebulous than "hard facts" such as the USSR's annual steel production or a leader's death, these psychological phenomena are a vital component of Soviet society's internal dynamics. The elites' attitudes and opinions may have little or no direct bearing on the leadership's policies, but they will surely affect the leadership's ability to gain citizens' support and hence its capacity to implement policies and to carry out reforms.

From the surrogate interviews, it appears that the great majority of elite members felt the need for a new, younger leader who would bring fresh ideas and energy to the leadership. Most officials, intellectuals, and people in the arts -- even many who tend to be critical of their leaders and cynical about prospects for change -- have expressed approval of Gorbachev's performance.

Will Gorbachev be able to maintain or build upon this support in the years ahead, or will support erode as he continues in power?

Sources of Support

The preceding analysis of the elites' attitudes helps to illuminate the sources of Gorbachev's popularity as well as possible pitfalls he may confront. According to surrogates' judgments, elite members tend to agree on the priority of several tasks -- raising the population's standard of living, improving housing and medical care, increasing the food supply, stopping the arms race, and improving relations with the United States. During his first year as general secretary, Gorbachev devoted much effort to these issues. On the domestic front, he made a great many new appointments and proposed measures to raise productivity, improve the economic system, and increase production, especially in agriculture. Gorbachev has also taken an active role in the conduct of relations with the U.S. He met with President Reagan in Geneva, sanctioned the signing of a new Soviet-American exchanges agreement, and advanced a series of arms control "initiatives." In his treatment of foreign policy at the 27th Party Congress, giving principal attention to the United States, Gorbachev both underscored the seriousness of the U.S. challenge and professed a commitment to improve relations with Washington. These actions have generally been applauded by the elites.

Other of Gorbachev's policies have also garnered support. His insistence on work discipline, attack on corruption, and anti-alcohol campaign have enjoyed favor among members of the political establishment as well as with intellectuals and persons in the arts. Finally, his call for glasnost' and his ostensibly more permissive cultural policy have been especially well received by academics, writers, and other members of the creative intelligentsia.

To a certain degree, the elites' support reflects a hopefulness about the generational change that his accession epitomizes. In conversations with foreign friends, some middle-aged members of the cultural elite allude to "our generation of officials," noting that men who are now well placed in the official hierarchy had, in their youth, experienced the post-Stalin cultural thaw of the 1950s and early 1960s.

At the same time, elite members differ in their appraisals of what Gorbachev represents and what he will achieve. In this sense, he appears to be an accomplished politician who is able to present himself differently to various groups. Thus, some "liberals" regard him as one of their own, stressing the theme of "openness," while "conservatives" say approvingly that he is cautious and pragmatic.

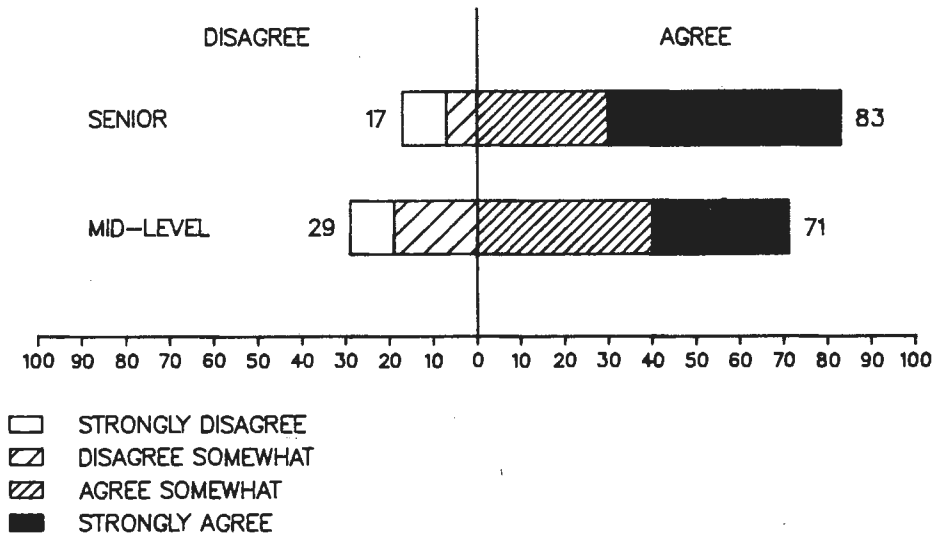
Through symbolic appeals to the Russian past, the achievements of socialism, and the Soviet Union's role as a superpower, Gorbachev has also been able to draw on the deep reservoir of patriotism that resides in the people. According to the simulated poll in which surrogates responded as they believed elite members would, the great majority of elite members feel that "despite its problems, the USSR is the best country in the world" (Figure 6). Half of the senior elite are thought to "strongly agree" with this view, as compared with a third of the mid-level elite. Most members of the political establishment, as well as artists and intellectuals, are thought to concur with this statement. Yet, by a 52-to-29 percent margin, officials surpass intellectuals and members of the creative professions in strongly endorsing this view.

Nagging Doubts: Will Deeds Match Words?

Although Gorbachev enjoys much popularity, the elites are uncertain about where he will lead the USSR and how successful he will be in meeting their demands. What course economic reform will take, how earnestly it will be pushed, and how far liberalization will be allowed to proceed all remain in doubt.

Figure 6.
MOST FEEL THE USSR IS THE BEST COUNTRY

'Despite its problems, the USSR is the best country in the world.'



Many intellectuals and artists are encouraged by signs of greater freedom in the arts. Yet, their expectations have risen, so that now there is the potential for greater disappointment. Many social scientists and other intellectuals maintain that economic reform and cultural liberalization should proceed together, arguing that only through greater openness and democracy will it be possible to analyze the economy's problems and mobilize support for changes.

It cannot be said that trust comes easily, especially to the intellectuals who more than once have heard their leaders promise change and been disappointed. Speaking for his generation, one Moscow intellectual said, "You know, this is my fourth 'liberalization' [an allusion to 1956, 1961, 1965, and 1985-86], and I can't bear to be disappointed again." Many intellectuals have therefore adopted a wait-and-see attitude.

If Gorbachev is unable to improve society, they say, then any hope for meaningful change will be lost for the next two decades.

Meanwhile, many express skepticism about whether Gorbachev will be able to carry out significant reforms. Some fear that he will be obstructed by entrenched bureaucratic elements, competing priorities, and conventional ways of thinking. At least a fraction of the intellectuals have already lapsed into a customary cynicism, having concluded that Gorbachev will turn out to be much like past party leaders.

Concluding Observations

In speaking of the need to reform the Soviet system, Gorbachev recalls the well-known dilemma of the "reforming despot." The history of past despots suggests that attempts at basic social and political reform present great political danger: the more reforms succeed, the less likely is the despot to remain all-powerful. The leaders of the Soviet Communist Party have faced this dilemma since the 1920s, as did the tsars under the imperial autocracy. As a close friend of Alexander I once remarked (when the tsar was contemplating freeing the serfs), "He would gladly have agreed that everyone should be free, if everyone had freely done only what he wished." Soviet Communist leaders have been unwilling to undertake basic social and political reforms that might jeopardize their power. Gorbachev gives every indication of resembling his predecessors in this respect, evidently believing that the system's mechanics may need adjustment, but that the system itself is sound.

In the spring of 1986, an air of expectation and uncertainty nonetheless surrounded the Gorbachev leadership. A segment of the elites expressed the hope that party members, bureaucrats, and others with some say in running the country would respond to signals from the top and change the way they work. Ironically, however, those who were supposed to show the most initiative continued to wait for their marching orders from above.

As was noted earlier, the elites appear to diverge on a number of issues. Judging by surrogates' estimates, younger, mid-level elite members tend to be more supportive of artistic freedom and human rights than senior elite members. However, such differences are often more pronounced when members of the political establishment are compared with artists and intellectuals. In comparison to officials, intellectuals and members of the creative professions are seen by surrogates to be more supportive of freedom of expression, human rights, and economic liberalization. They also are thought to be more

critical of officials' privileges and to downplay the importance of matching or surpassing U.S. military might.

In the future, it is likely that Gorbachev's policies on these issues will meet with different responses from these two groups. A more restrictive cultural policy would elicit widespread disapproval among the intellectual and cultural elites. By the same token, a perceived increase in military expenditures which draws resources from housing, agriculture, health care, light industry, and the service sector might undercut Gorbachev's popularity in these circles. Conversely, a far-reaching liberalization of intellectual life and the arts, a reduction in central control of the economy, and a curtailment of Soviet military power vis-a-vis the U.S. might engender disaffection within the political establishment.

The fact that Gorbachev has succeeded in raising the elites' hopes and expectations may be one of the most significant achievements of his first year in power. But this accomplishment is double-edged: while it may be a harbinger of change and a motivating force, a "revolution of rising expectations" can be destabilizing as well. If hopes are dashed, disappointment may reinforce cynicism or even give rise to opposition. Both may be unsettling for the Soviet political order and undercut the regime's ability to respond to foreign and domestic challenges.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Interview Procedures

Between April and June 1986, Soviet specialists from the USIA Office of Research interviewed 54 "surrogates." Interviewees were assured that they would not be identified or asked the names of any Soviet citizens whom they knew. All willingly participated without compensation.

The interviews covered a range of domestic and international issues and consisted primarily of open-ended questions that asked what Soviet citizens had said in private conversations on these topics. They also included three techniques, discussed more fully below, that provided quantitative estimates of elite opinion: (a) estimates of the proportion of Soviet citizens in a particular bureaucratic or professional group who would agree with a series of statements, (b) estimates of the importance of "tasks facing the Soviet Union" for a particular elite group, and (c) a simulated poll in which surrogates responded to statements as they believed certain types of elite members would. The average interview lasted an hour and a half.

Types of Persons Interviewed

Interviewees were selected because they were known, or reputed, to be knowledgeable about the USSR and to have had recent, sustained contact with Soviet citizens. The great majority had lived in the USSR for several months or more and could speak Russian; and two-thirds were living in Moscow at the time of the interview. Most were American citizens; the remainder were West Europeans. Surrogates were drawn from various professions, including government service (48 percent), journalism (25 percent), education and science (20 percent), and other fields (7 percent). Thirty percent of the interviewees had participated in a prior USIA surrogate study.

Problems in the Study of Soviet Elite Opinion

Even under the most favorable circumstances, Westerners may have difficulty in gaining an accurate picture of what Soviet citizens actually think. The leaders of the Soviet Communist Party, of course, make a concerted effort to limit, manipulate, and direct public expressions of opinion. This objective is achieved through various means, including party control over the mass media, censorship, restricted and basically predetermined "elections," political limits on the legal system, and attempts to thwart the creation of autonomous organizations.

In assessing elite opinion in the USSR, one must bear in mind that there is an official position on major policy issues and that deviations from the official line are likely to elicit sanctions -- a fact that obviously limits free, open expressions of opinion. Such constraints are perhaps strongest when Soviet citizens encounter foreigners, especially those from countries viewed as unfriendly to the USSR.

Although it is not easy for a foreigner to become privy to a Soviet citizen's personal views, some foreigners succeed in breaking through the invisible barriers. Many of the surrogates interviewed -- especially those with a good command of Russian who had lived in the USSR for an extended time -- could claim close Soviet friends with whom they frankly exchanged views. On the other hand, some others had only superficial relationships with their Soviet acquaintances.

Members of the Soviet elites also vary in the extent to which they speak openly. As a rule, the closer the person is to the center of the official policymaking establishment, the more guarded he tends to be. Foreign affairs specialists at various research institutes, economists and other social scientists, and journalists are usually somewhat freer in their expressions than party and government officials. Creative artists and academics in fields not closely tied to policy -- for example, writers, actors, and natural scientists -- are commonly the most open in expressing their views to foreigners.

Furthermore, the Soviet citizens who identify most closely with official policy often attempt to influence their Westerner interlocutors by repeating the official line. At some times, they may sincerely believe what they say; at others, they may be disingenuous. Attempts to mold Western opinion clearly pose a special problem for anyone who seeks to gauge Soviet elite opinion.

Thus, in order to ensure that the information from surrogate interviews is valid and reliable, a number of problems must be addressed:

1. Inasmuch as the information comes from non-Soviet intermediaries, it is only as good as the interviewees' ability to provide accurate reflections of Soviet views, rather than their own opinions. An effort was made to keep this distinction clear in the minds of interviewees and to separate the two in analyzing the interview transcripts. In addition, the three techniques that yielded the quantitative estimates provided cross-checks for the responses to the open-ended questions.

2. Many factors can cause distortions in the opinions that Soviet citizens express; for instance, they may be afraid to express to a foreigner views at variance with the party line or may seek to ingratiate themselves. In the interviews and the subsequent analysis, there was a conscious attempt to correct for such possible distortions by ascertaining the rapport existing between the interviewees and their Soviet acquaintances and the context in which the conversations took place. For instance, was the Soviet citizen's opinion expressed in confidence, with the suggestion of intimacy, conviction, or soul-searching? Was it stated in a setting that would allow the expression of personal views, such as a private walk, as contrasted with a public forum? In this way, it was possible to separate the more authentic expressions of personal opinion from those likely to have been distorted or disguised.

3. Some observers are better than others. The researchers found, as they had anticipated, that surrogates differed considerably in the degree to which they had established close ties with Soviets, had discussed issues in depth, and could faithfully recall details of conversations. Greater confidence was placed in the reports from interviewees who had a wide range of contacts, had maintained contacts over a long period of time, and had established close rapport with their Soviet acquaintances. These persons had "sampled" a wider range of expressions of opinion and were in a better position to evaluate them than the ones whose contacts were few, short-term, or superficial. Furthermore, interviewees who possessed a good command of the Russian language generally had been more successful in communicating with their Soviet acquaintances and in detecting nuances of expression, constraints the Soviets felt, and so on.

Evaluation of Interviewees

To take account of these variations, the researchers systematically evaluated all surrogates on five dimensions: their knowledge of the USSR, number of contacts, degree of intimacy, accuracy of recall, and command of the Russian language. For each dimension, interviewees were given a rating on a four-point scale that ranged from poor (0) to excellent (3). The sum of these ratings constituted the interviewee's "credibility score." Thus, a person who was judged to be excellent on all five dimensions would receive the maximum score of 15, whereas a person judged poor on all would receive the minimum, 0. The distribution of the surrogates' credibility scores is shown in Table 4.

Table 4
Distribution of Credibility Scores

<u>Score</u>	<u>Number of Interviewees</u>
6 or less	2
7-9	18
10-12	22
13-15	<u>12</u>
Total	54

Weighting of Responses. The credibility scale was then used as a screening and weighting factor for the quantitative analyses discussed below. Interviewees whose score was less than 7 were excluded from the quantitative analysis; and those with scores of 7 or more were given a weight proportionate to the score on this scale. The weight consisted of the credibility score divided by 7. In other words, a person with a score of 7 was given a weight of 1, whereas a person with a score of 13 was given a weight of 1.86.

Quantitative Measures

A. Estimates for Items on Questionnaire A. About two-thirds of the way through the interview, the interviewer said: "Earlier, you mentioned that you have had close contact with individuals in [name of group]. Now, when I give you this short questionnaire, I would like you to estimate approximately what proportion of the individuals in that group would agree with the statement. In answering, try to judge how the individuals...really feel -- that is, how they would respond if each were writing in a private journal, strictly for himself, or talking to a close and trusted friend." After receiving the one-page questionnaire, the interviewee checked the appropriate box opposite the statement. There were five possible responses, ranging from "Few (0-20%)" to "The overwhelming majority (80-100%)," in addition to "Don't know."

In order to tabulate the data, a number of steps were taken. First, estimates were coded according to the specific professional group referred to by the interviewee (e.g., mid-level officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, journalists, performing artists, or historians). Second, the groups were consolidated into larger aggregates that consisted of persons

engaged in similar types of activities: (1) party and government officials; (2) journalists and other professionals in the mass media; (3) scholars in policy-related fields (foreign affairs analysts and social scientists); (4) scholars and scientists in the less-political fields (the humanities and the natural sciences); and (5) the creative professions (writers, actors, musicians, painters, dancers, etc.). (Groups that did not fit into one of these categories were dropped from the analysis.) Third, in view of the small number of cases in each category, these five groups were consolidated into the two basic groups used in this report: (1) the political establishment, which includes all officials, journalists and other professionals in the mass media, and scholars in policy-related fields; and (2) artists and intellectuals, which includes members of the creative professions as well as scholars and scientists in the less-political fields.

For the computation of percentages, each response category was assigned its median value -- 10 percent for "Few (0-20%)," 30 percent for "Some (20-40%)," etc. "Don't know" responses were dropped from the analysis. Using these values (weighted according to the credibility scores discussed above), averages for the two basic groupings were calculated.

It should be noted that surrogates were not asked to fill out a questionnaire unless they had demonstrated in the course of the interview that they had had close contact with at least one group. Questionnaires were completed by 40 respondents. Since a few surrogates filled out two questionnaires (for different groups), 49 questionnaires were used for the calculations.

B. Estimates of the Importance of Tasks (Questionnaire B).

After surrogates had completed the first questionnaire, they were handed "Questionnaire B" which also referred to the group with which they had had the closest contact. The instructions read: "For persons in this group, what are the most important tasks facing the Soviet Union?" They were then asked to rate, with this specific group in mind, a series of tasks in terms of their importance on a scale going from 0 to 5. Scores of 5 were used to designate the most important (or necessary) tasks; scores of 0 indicated the least important (or least necessary) ones. The respondent was instructed to leave the space blank if he did not know.

Though not exhaustive, the list of 18 "tasks" on Questionnaire B includes a range of issues which have been considered important by Soviet officials and ordinary citizens. Six of the tasks pertain to foreign affairs (e.g., "Improve relations with China"); six refer to Soviet economic matters (e.g., "Produce or import more food"); and six concern other domestic problems

(e.g., "Allow more personal and artistic freedom"). The 18 issues are shown in Tables 1 and 2 (above).

Thirty-two surrogates filled out a single questionnaire; and eight completed questionnaires for two different groups. Thus, 48 questionnaires were available for analysis. Reference groups were coded and aggregated following the procedure described for Questionnaire A. Surrogates' responses on the scale going from 0 to 5 were converted to a scale running from 0 to 100 by multiplying scores by 20; and they were weighted according to the credibility score as described above.

C. Simulated Poll. The simulated poll entailed a more complicated procedure. If surrogates demonstrated that they had had close contact with one or more of the groups of interest, they were assigned two "profiles" that described Soviet citizens resembling those whom they knew. They were then asked to put themselves in the position of these Soviets and to answer as they believed they would. They did this by placing each card containing a statement on a board that had three rows and four columns. The columns showed the Soviet citizen's opinion -- that is, whether the person would strongly disagree, disagree somewhat, agree somewhat, or strongly agree with the statement. The rows, on the other hand, showed how confident the surrogate was that the Soviet citizen would respond in that fashion (that is, whether he was very sure, somewhat sure, or unsure). As with the questionnaire, the interviewee was asked to judge "how that person would respond if he were writing in a private journal, strictly for himself, or talking to a close and trusted friend."

The profiles, which had been prepared in advance, described fictional Soviet citizens who had achieved professional success in one of the elite groups studied. All of the persons described in the profiles were urban residents with Russian family names who had traveled to the West (and who were therefore presumably trusted by the authorities). They differed according to two sets of traits: age/status and affiliation/specialty. One set of profiles described senior persons (55-65 years of age) who occupied positions of prominence or responsibility; the second set described "up-and-coming" middle-level persons (35-45 years old). The individuals described belonged to various professional and bureaucratic groups. One was an official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; a second was a correspondent for a major newspaper; a third was a specialist on Western economics employed at a research institute, and so on. There were 21 different occupational types; and since each type included both a senior and a mid-level person in the same line of work, there were 42 profiles in all.

Before being tabulated, data were coded according to the characteristics of the persons described in the profiles and the responses attributed to them, so that the data could be broken down according to the elite members' affiliation/specialty and age/status. The age/status breakdown allowed a comparison of senior and mid-level elite groups; the affiliation/specialty breakdown made it possible to compare members of the political establishment with artists and intellectuals (a distinction comparable to the ones used for Questionnaires A and B). In the tabulations, cases were weighted in the manner described above.

In all, 30 surrogates participated in the simulated poll. When weights were applied, the number of cases came to 45 for both senior and mid-level elite members (hence, to 90 when the two sets were combined).

APPENDIX B: ESTIMATES FROM QUESTIONNAIRE A

The following statements from Questionnaire A are ranked according to the overall percentage of Soviet elite members estimated to agree with them. Brackets have been placed around percentages if there was a high degree of variance in the surrogates' estimates.

	Percentage in Group Estimated to Agree ^a		
	<u>All</u>	<u>Political Establish- ment</u>	<u>Artists & Intel- lectuals</u>
1. We must have more discipline throughout society.	[65]	68	[62]
2. We need an economic policy which allows more private initiative in agriculture and consumer services.	64	53	74
3. Soviet Communist Party officials have too many privileges.	[57]	[36]	73
4. Our government should permit movies, plays, and books that present political ideas contrary to government policy.	[50]	30	[67]
5. Citizens who advocate "human rights" are helping to improve our society.	[34]	17	[48]
Number of weighted responses used to calculate estimates	(75)	(34)	(41)

^aBased on estimates by non-Soviet surrogates. Brackets indicate responses with a high degree of variance (the standard deviation is greater than or equal to 25 percent). Parentheses indicate the number of responses used to calculate the estimates, weighted as described in Appendix A.

APPENDIX C: ESTIMATES FROM THE SIMULATED POLL

1. Responses to the statement, "General Secretary Gorbachev is doing a good job in dealing with our country's problems."

	Distribution in Percent				
	All	By Age & Status		Officials	Artists
		Senior	Mid-Level	& Related	& Intel.
Strongly agree	51	51	52	70	28
Agree somewhat	39	42	35	28	52
Disagree somewhat	9	4	13	2	18
Strongly disagree	1	3	0	0	2
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100
Number of cases (weighted)	(90)	(45)	(45)	(50)	(40)

2. Responses to the statement, "Citizens who speak out for 'human rights' only weaken our state."

	Distribution in Percent				
	All	By Age & Status		Officials	Artists
		Senior	Mid-Level	& Related	& Intel.
Strongly agree	26	41	8	37	10
Agree somewhat	31	29	35	33	32
Disagree somewhat	33	21	46	24	44
Strongly disagree	10	9	11	6	14
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100
Number of cases (weighted)	(90)	(45)	(45)	(50)	(40)

3. Responses to the statement, "Writers and artists should be free to create what they want to."

	Distribution in Percent				
	All	By Age & Status		Officials	Artists
		Senior	Mid-Level	& Related	& Intel.
Strongly agree	22	14	28	4	44
Agree somewhat	34	28	40	28	39
Disagree somewhat	26	31	23	35	17
Strongly disagree	18	27	9	33	0
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100
Number of cases (weighted)	(90)	(45)	(45)	(50)	(40)

4. Responses to the statement, "Despite its problems, the USSR is the best country in the world."

	Distribution in Percent				
	<u>All</u>	<u>By Age & Status</u>		<u>Officials & Related</u>	<u>Artists & Intel.</u>
		<u>Senior</u>	<u>Mid-Level</u>		
Strongly agree	42	53	31	52	29
Agree somewhat	35	30	40	30	39
Disagree somewhat	13	7	19	8	20
Strongly disagree	10	10	10	10	12
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100
Number of cases (weighted)	(90)	(45)	(45)	(50)	(40)

ERRATUM

The top of page 18 should read as follows:

poll, 42 percent of the senior elite and 68 percent of the mid-level elite agree that "writers and artists should be free to create what they want to." For senior and mid-level elites combined (as shown in Figure 2), the proportion agreeing with this statement is much higher among artists and intellectuals (83 percent) than among officials and other members of the political establishment (32 percent). These results are consistent with the finding that intellectuals and members of the creative professions accord greater importance to expanding personal and artistic freedom (compare Table 3 above).

NOTED BY [REDACTED]

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

MEETINGS BETWEEN
PRESIDENT REAGAN AND GENERAL SECRETARY GORBACHEV
REYKJAVIK, ICELAND

Sunday, October 12, 1986
to
Wednesday, October 15, 1986

October 12, 1986
12:00 midnight

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Meetings Between
President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev
Reykjavik, Iceland

Sunday, October 12, 1986

- o Event: Daily White House Briefing,
Hotel Loftleidir Press Filing Center.
11:00 a.m. (L) 7:00 a.m. EDT

ACTION: Larry Speakes

- o Event: The President concludes third meeting at Hofdi
House and bids farewell to General Secretary
Gorbachev.
12:00 p.m. (L) 8:00 a.m. EDT
(Pool Coverage Outside)

ACTION: Larry Speakes

- o Event: Secretary Shultz Briefing.
Hotel Loftleidir Press Filing Center.
1:30 p.m. (L) 9:30 a.m. EDT
(On-the-Record, for Camera)

ACTION: Dan Howard/Judy O'Neill

- o Event: Sunday News Shows:

CBS "Face the Nation": Donald T. Regan
1:00 p.m. (L) 9:00 a.m. EDT

NBC "Meet the Press": Secretary Shultz
3:00 p.m. (L) 11:00 a.m. EDT

ABC "This Week with David Brinkley": Max
Kampelman
2:30 p.m. (L) 10:30 a.m. EDT

CNN "Newsmaker": Assistant Secretary Ridgway
2:30 p.m. (L) 10:30 a.m. EDT

ACTION: Dale Petroskey

Sunday, October 12, 1986 (continued)

- o Event: Background Briefing for Magazines: Time,
Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report by Donald T.
Regan.
British Ambassador's Residence
1:45 p.m. (L) 9:45 a.m. EDT

ACTION: Peter Roussel

- o Event: Background briefings scheduled
with key officials.
2:15 p.m. (L) 10:15 a.m. EDT

Linhard/Parris (Loftleidir Hotel, Press Office)

New York Times	Weinraub
Washington Post	Hoffman
Los Angeles Times	Toth
Wall St. Journal	Wolcott
Baltimore Sun	Timberg
Mutual Broadcasting	Maer
UPI Radio	Small
Knight-Ridder	Ullman
Hearst	Wallach
VOA	Jurey

ACTION: Dan Howard

Hartman/Nitze (Loftleider Hotel, Room 470)

UPI	Thomas
Chicago Sun Times	Watson
Chicago Tribune	DeLama
Christian Science Monitor	Saikowski
Dallas Morning News	Leubsdorf
Boston Globe	Robinson
ABC Radio	Ratner
AP Radio	Moon
INN	Aubuchon

ACTION: Roman Popadiuk

Sunday, October 12, 1986 (continued)

Perle/Simons (Loftleidir Hotel, Room 330)

Newsweek	DeFrank
Time	Seaman
U.S. News	Mullin
AP	Putzel
Reuters	Gibbons
Washington Times	O'Leary
New York Daily News	Drake
McClatchey	Rennert
United Stations	Taylor

ACTION: Dale Petroskey

Rodman/Adelman (Loftleidir Hotel, Room 337)

ABC	Walker
NBC	Wallace
CBS	Adams
CNN	Sesno
Detroit News	Ryan
Houston Post	Lewis
Houston Chronicle	Hines
Newsday	Friedman
Gannett	Neuman
Copley	Condon

ACTION: Peter Roussel

- o Event: The President makes remarks to American personnel and families in Iceland. Keflavik Airport.
3:30 p.m. (L) 11:30 a.m. EDT
(Open White House Press Coverage; Live U.S. Coverage)

ACTION: Larry Speakes

- o Event: Departure. President bids farewell to Icelandic Officials and Ambassador and Mrs. Ruwe and departs.
Keflavik Airport.
3:40 p.m. (L) 11:40 a.m. EDT
(Open White House Press Coverage)

ACTION: Larry Speakes

Sunday, October 12, 1986 (continued)

- o Event: Background Briefings on Press Plane en route Washington, D. C. by Bob Linhard and Ken Adelman.
4:45 p.m (L) 12:45 p.m. EDT

ACTION: Dan Howard

- o Event: The President arrives at Andrews AFB.
5:50 p.m. EDT
(Open Press Coverage)

ACTION: Larry Speakes

- o Event: The President arrives on South Grounds.
6:05 p.m. EDT
(Open Press Coverage)

ACTION: Larry Speakes

Post-Meeting Events

Monday, October 13, 1986

- o Event: News Shows:

NBC "Today": Paul Nitze interviewed.

ABC "Good Morning America": Donald T. Regan interviewed.

PBS "McNeil/Lehrer": Max Kampelman interviewed.

ACTION: Dale Petroskey

- o Event: Evening Presidential Address to the Nation Oval Office.
8:00 p.m.

ACTION: Pat Buchanan/Larry Speakes

Tuesday, October 14, 1986

o Event: Morning News Shows:

CBS "Morning News": Secretary Shultz interviewed.

ACTION: Dale Petroskey

Wednesday, October 15, 1986

o Event: 10:00-11:00 a.m. WORLDNET interview - Secretary Shultz.

ACTION: Judy O'Neill

NOTE BY DTR

Tic Points

- Enthusiasm
- Take offensive
- Explain implications of SDI
- Won't kill a single Soviet (threatens no one)
- Europe
- Asia

10/14/86

will
Helsinki?

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 1986

Notice where Tip seems to going.
RR could have achieved modest
but satisfactory gains in Iceland
i.e. INF nuclear testing. But he
nevertheless, went for broke, and
failed.

DGR

Point to make: Soviets throw in
the SDI condition at the end
raising question of their motives
and their genuine intentions at
this point.

DONALD T. REGAN
CHIEF OF STAFF

NOTED BY DTR

Attachment B

TALKING POINTS

- I know how busy you all are trying to wrap up the business of the Congress this week, but I thought that it was very important to get together with you so that you could hear first hand, so to speak, what happened and how events unfolded in Iceland. Believe me, I've been reading the papers and listening to some of the commentators and frankly I'm not altogether certain that they are reporting on the same events and proceedings we participated in this weekend.

- In the beginning, we made extraordinary progress as we moved toward agreement on dramatically reduced numbers of both strategic and intermediate range forces and on nuclear testing. However, despite our previous agreements in Geneva to accelerate progress in areas where there is common ground, in Reykjavik the General Secretary decided to hold progress in every other area hostage to his demand that we abandon development plans for SDI, and relegate research to the laboratory. Among other things, the Soviets back-tracked on INF.

- So after extensive discussions that lasted nearly 10 hours, there was a deadlock because the General Secretary was still insisting that we remove for a

(Cont'd)

ten-year period our right to develop, test, and deploy strategic defense systems. To try to break this deadlock, I made the decision to put on the table a comprehensive and, I believe, historic offer to General Secretary Gorbachev. I offered the Soviets a ten-year delay in American deployment of SDI along with a ten-year program for the complete elimination from the face of the earth of all nuclear ballistic missiles, Soviet and American.

-- We made that proposal and it was rejected. In fact, the General Secretary insisted instead that our agreements in all areas be held hostage to the non-negotiable demand that the United States forswear once and for all our right to develop a strategic defense and that we cut our program back to only laboratory research. I could not and will not make such a commitment.

-- SDI is America's insurance policy that the Soviet Union would keep the commitments. SDI is America's security guarantee -- if the Soviets should -- as they have done too often in the past -- fail to comply with their solemn commitments. SDI is what brought the Soviets back to arms control talks at Geneva and Iceland. SDI is the key to a world without nuclear weapons.

(Con't)

-- Regardless, there is much to be encouraged about, given the scope and depth of our far-reaching negotiations in Iceland. Frankly, I am encouraged that we have now advanced our discussions into areas that have never before been put on the table; and that we finally have the Soviets talking seriously about real reductions. I think that this means that as long as we are both persistent and patient, future negotiations can and will bear fruit. The Soviets know we are serious and that we are negotiating from a position of strength -- and for that reason we have it within our grasp to move the Soviets toward even more breakthroughs.

-- Now, let me ask George (Shultz) to expand on the events of the weekend in Iceland.

(Secretary Shultz makes remarks for 10 minutes)

(At 11:15 the President opens the floor for general discussion)

(At 11:55 the President closes with the following):

(Con't)

-- Well, thank you for coming down, but before I let you go I would be remiss if I didn't press you to finish work promptly on the Continuing Resolution. I know we've had this discussion before, but this is no way to run the government. We're on our third short-term extension now that expires tomorrow night -- don't ask me to sign another.

NOTED BY DTR
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 13, 1986

NOTE TO MR. REGAN

FROM: TOM DAWSON

It seems that 4 out of 5 of the major
surrogates are out of town (Kampelman,
Nitze, Rowney, Adelman). No one seems
to know where Pearle is.

Europe?

in Siberia?

We can still do a briefing for the
White House staff and junior surrogates.
NSC doesn't think this is worthwhile.
They plan to mail a copy of the Admiral's
briefing text to all of them.

Also, Secretary Shultz will be at the
10:45 a.m. NSC briefing.

(Handwritten bracket on the left side of the text)

*lets have one
I think it worth while
if I have to do brief!*

DONALD T. REGAN
CHIEF OF STAFF

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Tom - first two reasons
for Soviet fear of SDI
under cuts us. We should
use Soviet preoccupation
w/ SDI to confirm it works.
Ppl believe that anyway.
Brzezinski (sp?) says SDI
focus is "ominous." In other
words they want to be sure
they ~~are able to~~ retain
first strike capability.

#3 reason - technology also
works - already believed

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

10/13/86
DTZ comment

TALKING POINTS

-- The Iceland summit saw the first serious discussion ever of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons. More dramatic progress was made in arms reduction than at any previous meeting, and the two nations today are closer than ever before to agreements to end the threat of nuclear war.

-- This breakthrough was made possible by President Reagan's restoration of America's defenses, including research into defenses against ballistic missiles (SDI.) The Soviets were brought to the table by the new strength and resoluteness displayed by America in the 80's.

-- It is exciting to see the Soviets at least discussing our agenda of reducing nuclear arms. It is only natural for them to try to persuade us into a one-sided bargain in these first serious discussions.

-- Though Sec. Gorbachev rejected our proposals, they remain on the table, and we are optimistic that they will be pursued at followup meetings.

-- President Reagan's policies are paying off in dealing with a tough, dangerous, and patient adversary. If we are as resolute and patient as we know the Soviets to be, we will see the culmination of the President's dream of a world safe from nuclear weapons. A bad agreement is worse than none; a good agreement is worth waiting for, and Iceland proves that we may not have to wait long.

Q: What is SDI, and why did the President refuse to give it up?

A: The Strategic Defense Initiative would be a non-nuclear, totally defensive system for destroying nuclear missiles.

- ① good set of talks -
reg. like
than
in cabinet meeting or hq.
- ② set of work during about
- 50% off wrap
- ③ This m. "agreement" on I & F
no closure or on testing by all
countries done
- ④ Spang left ABM good deal of work
from Pres SD/propose
10-year elim of I & S
until 10 yr - withdraw ABM
- ⑤ "laboratory" research dept of York
was Langmuir
primary reason for 1-3 GSD/
admire Pres for hanging in

GPS thought opening statement
2 full, intense days
seen him engage, work contacts
with varying agree with
conclude in I & S
never been pro or con
wouldn't throw away for

for equaling promise

be very + re effort + principle stand
& will say for US allies security
& fund ourselves to see S O will
destroy

* "lagging", = standing up for n. n.

P5B
explain, legal + promise
 cuz no give up n. n.

stat of arms + all to us

what next?

- ① protect SDI
- ② continue struggle for better relationship
- ③ continue to neg 1-3
- ④ no prospect for summit

got this far, ^{largely} cuz of SDI

& keep on track w/ "three"

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

TALKING POINTS

-- The Iceland summit saw the first serious discussion ever of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons. More dramatic progress was made in arms reduction than at any previous meeting, and the two nations today are closer than ever before to agreements to end the threat of nuclear war.

-- This breakthrough was made possible by President Reagan's restoration of America's defenses, including research into defenses against ballistic missiles (SDI.) The Soviets were brought to the table by the new strength and resoluteness displayed by America in the 80's.

-- It is exciting to see the Soviets at least discussing our agenda of reducing nuclear arms. It is only natural for them to try to persuade us into a one-sided bargain in these first serious discussions.

-- Though Sec. Gorbachev rejected our proposals, they remain on the table, and we are optimistic that they will be pursued at followup meetings.

-- President Reagan's policies are paying off in dealing with a tough, dangerous, and patient adversary. If we are as resolute and patient as we know the Soviets to be, we will see the culmination of the President's dream of a world safe from nuclear weapons. A bad agreement is worse than none; a good agreement is worth waiting for, and Iceland proves that we may not have to wait long.

Q: What is SDI, and why did the President refuse to give it up?

A: The Strategic Defense Initiative would be a non-nuclear, totally defensive system for destroying nuclear missiles. Designed to destroy weapons rather than people, it offers the hope of an insurance policy against either purposeful or accidental nuclear attacks from the USSR or some other country that might develop nuclear weapons. The Soviets, who have a much more extensive missile defense program than we do, are not opposed to strategic defense in concept, only to an American SDI.

Out 10/16/86