If any consensus can be found among the many Western scholars who have analyzed Soviet elites and the underlying determinants of Soviet cadre policy, it has been the common recognition of diversity in the backgrounds, capabilities, and even likely attitudes of those selected to full-time leadership roles in the Party, state, and mass bureaucracies. For some Western scholars, the extent of non-political specialist careers among Soviet cadres has been singled out as an important formative characteristic in their backgrounds; Soviet cadres with lengthy non-political careers prior to becoming full-time officials have been alternatively termed “dual executives,” “coopted officials,” or “political managers” by Western analysts and assumed to be more pragmatic in policy-making than Soviet cadres whose entire adult lives have been spent in leadership positions in the Party, state, and mass bureaucracies.1 Other Western scholars have isolated allegedly important differences among Soviet cadres in their ages, Party entry periods, gender, ethnic nationality, and geographical origin; and Western analysts have hypothesized that differences in these career-demographic factors affect not only opportunities for advancement among Soviet cadres but the varying attitudes and values they continue to project in their leadership positions throughout their careers. From these differences, Western analysts have argued that the Soviet political bureaucracy is rent with internal subgroup conflict corresponding to the generational gaps, Party entry periods, sex, ethnic nationalities, and geographical locales by which

*For financial support in researching this article, I am indebted to Iowa State University for a foreign-travel grant and computer funding in 1979. I would also express my gratitude to Mr. Keith Bush, Director of the Radio Liberty Research Division in Munich, who allowed me to utilize the Division’s personnel files, and to Mack Shelley, my colleague in political science at Iowa State University, who provided wise counsel in the statistical phase of my analysis.

cadres can be differentiated. A few analysts of Soviet cadres (even including Soviet dissidents like Roy Medvedev) have contended that Soviet officials differ so markedly and consistently in their policy orientations that they should be grouped by their position along a Soviet political spectrum. These policy subgroups, dependent on how the analyst views the Soviet political spectrum, include an array of “centralizers,” “de-centralizers,” “reformers,” “conservatives,” “liberals,” “neo-Leninists,” “dogmatists,” and “Russophiles.” So different are the policy subgroups that Soviet cadres consciously identify themselves by these labels and conflict with those in the other subgroups.

Differing in what they consider the principal lines of cleavage among all Soviet cadres, analysts at least have provided a major challenge to conventional Western scholarship that has long assumed a dull and rigid sameness among all those recruited to leadership positions in the Soviet Union. Jerry Hough, perhaps the most eminent Western analyst of Soviet elites, has gone so far as to refute the merits of using the term “apparatchik” in referring to Soviet cadres. As Hough has argued, not only is the term no longer used in the Soviet Union to describe leaders, but the very term employed by Western analysts connotes a bureaucratic mind-set and homogeneity of backgrounds that our knowledge of internal bureaucratic conflict and the dissimilar origins of Soviet cadres directly contradicts. An appreciation of the differences among Soviet cadres is absolutely essential to understand the political fragmentation and internal policy conflict (what Hough would term “institutional pluralism”) that have become ever more the dominant features of Soviet political life.

Indeed, as Hough and others have pointed out, the most obvious difference can be found even at a superficial level in the widely varying career specializa-

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