THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Playing to Win: A Political History of the Moscow Olympic Games, 1975-1980

Simon Patrick Young

Doctor of Philosophy

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WINCHESTER

ABSTRACT FOR THESIS

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This thesis uses archival evidence to construct the first full-length political history of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games in the English language. It explains how the idea for this event appeared on the Soviet policy agenda in the years 1951-74, before examining some of the main contours of the USSR's preparations for and orchestration of the Olympiad in the years 1975-80. These include economic and security measures, diplomatic and promotional efforts in the international arena, and internal propaganda and sport campaigns carried out by various agencies of the Soviet state. The overarching discussion centres on the political purposes underlying the XXII Games and the ways in which the idiosyncrasies of the communist system impacted on their administration. It thereby considers the importance of 1980 for the first time from the perspective of Soviet political history, in contrast to previous analyses which largely focused on the significance of the Western boycott of the event for historians' understanding of American politics and/or international relations. It is revealed how the Olympics became the single most ambitious operation ever undertaken by the USSR to enhance its soft power in the Cold War international arena, whilst at home they were integrated into various long-standing domestic policies aimed at maintaining the legitimacy and stability of the Soviet system. In addition, the study considers the implications arising from this history of the Olympic project for historians' overarching interpretation of the Brezhnev era (1964-82) in which it unfolded. Departing from the current scholarly focus on the social history of this period, the thesis analyses the various elements of the Games' preparations and orchestration to offer both a challenge to the conventional interpretation of Brezhnev-era foreign policy goals, and an original critique of the dominant 'stagnation' paradigm as it has been applied to explain domestic political developments in the 1970s. The thesis concludes by considering some potential new departures for future research into the political history of the Brezhnev period.

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Declaration and Copyright Statement

No portion of the work referred to in the Thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

I confirm that this Thesis is entirely my own work.

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Introduction

Overview

The aims of this thesis are twofold. On the one hand, this study is intended as a political history of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. It endeavours to reveal how this event became a major political project of the communist one-party state in the Soviet Union which has yet to be adequately accounted for by historians of the late socialist period. Secondly, this thesis seeks to make a contribution to the historiographical debate on the Brezhnev era of Soviet history (1964-1982; also known as the period of 'developed socialism') by using the evidence from this account of the Olympics to critique conventional scholarly interpretations of both the USSR's domestic development and foreign policy conduct during this period. Achieving the first of these two aims will involve examining a number of key issues related to the organisation of the XXII Olympics in Moscow by the various structures of the Soviet state, as revealed by the extensive documentation available on this subject in several Russian government archives. First, the origins of the Soviet Olympic project in the period 1951-74 will be determined. The thesis will then delineate the various key aspects of the Soviet state's preparations and orchestration of the Olympics between 1975 and 1980. These include the scale of economic mobilisation for the project, the character and extent of the Olympics' security programme and the motivations for it, and the role played by the Games in both Soviet foreign policy and domestic politics. Underlying discussion of all these issues is an attempt to answer one overarching question: what precisely did the USSR hope to achieve in organising the Olympics for the first and only time on its own territory? Achieving the second aim of the thesis will involve in-depth analysis of the implications which emerge from this narrative for our understanding of both the nature of the Brezhnev regime and of the goals of Soviet foreign policy in the period of détente, as well as an attempt to determine new lines of enquiry with respect to both these subjects.

Historiography and Context

It is important to establish how the goals of this study and its central themes have been determined by the prevailing scholarly interpretations of both the 1980 Games themselves and the wider period of Soviet history in which they took place. The following literature review will, firstly, outline the limitations of previous studies of the Moscow Olympics, and

thereby provide an explanation for the focus of discussion in the following five chapters. Secondly, it will identify some of most salient issues in the historiographical debate on the Brezhnev period with regards to both domestic and foreign policy. This will provide the essential background for understanding the discussion on these subjects found in the conclusion to the thesis**.**

Scholarly Examination of the 1980 Olympics

First and foremost, the small body of existing literature on the XXII Olympiad provides us with some indication of the importance attached to hosting this event by the Soviet state. A number of studies have remarked upon the impressive scale of the USSR's preparations, noting how this involved marshalling vast amounts of administrative resources from a number of different official agencies.[1] They have also correctly understood some of the basic motivations behind the Games, with several commentators having discerned that the event was closely tied to the Soviet Union's policy of competing for influence with the West in the context of the Cold War.[2] A number of previous observers therefore appear to have grasped the basic fact that Moscow-80 can be conceptualised not simply as a sports festival, but above all as a political event which served some of the political priorities of the Brezhnev regime.

However, many of these studies, with just one exception, did not base this rudimentary if basically correct interpretation on the most reliable or revealing sources – that is, the archival record on the organisation of the Games now available to historians. They were mostly written in a period in the 1980s and 1990s when the veil of secrecy surrounding the activities of Soviet institutions remained in place, or was only just beginning to retreat. They therefore largely relied on public statements found in the Soviet press, together with the overall impressions they received from observing the USSR's preparations and general conduct in organising the Games from their side of the Iron Curtain, as the basis for their ideas. Such early studies were thereby confined to interpreting the politics around the

[1] B. Hazan, *Olympic Sports and Propaganda Games: Moscow 1980* (New Brunswick, 1982), 80, 86-7; B. Knabe, "The Domestic Political Importance of the 1980 Olympic Games", in W. Berner, et al. (eds.), *The Soviet Union, volume 6: 1980-81* (New York, 1983); D. Hulme, *The Political Olympics: Moscow, Afghanistan, and the 1980 U.S. Boycott* (New York, 1990), 75; A. Guttmann, *The Olympics: A History of the Modern Games* (Chicago, 1992), 149; J. Parks, "Red Sport, Red Tape: The Olympic Games, The Soviet Sports Bureaucracy, and the Cold War, 1952-1980" (PhD Thesis, Chapel Hill, 2009), 222, 226, 229-30, 332-33, 273-4.

[2] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 52-4, 78; Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 76; R. Edelman, "Moscow 1980: Stalinism or Good, Clean Fun?" in A. Tomlinson and C. Young (eds.), *National Identity and Global Sports Events: Culture, Politics, and Spectacle in the Olympics and the Football World Cup* (New York, 2006), 150; E. Mertin, "The Soviet Union and the Olympic Games of 1980 and 1984: Explaining the boycotts to their own people", in S. Wagg and D. Andrews, (eds.), *East Plays West: Sport and the Cold War* (New York, 2007), 236-8; Parks, "Red Sport", 262.

Olympiad essentially via recourse to the unreliable practices of 'Sovietology'. Yet even some of the more recent contributions to the discussion on 1980 have failed to overcome these deficiencies by making use of the wealth of new sources now available. As such, the majority of existing studies offer only brief examinations rather than in-depth analysis of the Moscow Games' purposes – and in turn, next to nothing on their significance within the context of Soviet political history.

Beyond this, existing studies have also displayed a circumscribed understanding of the full extent of the XXII Olympiad's various political dimensions. In particular, they have largely failed to consider the ways in which this event served the purposes of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in the domestic sphere as well as in its foreign policy. In 1983, Bernd Knabe asserted that domestic factors were key to the regime's motivations for the Games, perceiving a connection between the popularisation of sport around the time of the Olympiad and the priorities of legitimising the Soviet state and generating popular enthusiasm for the communist project.[3] However, Knabe did not back up his assertions with any *evidence*; he simply assumed this was the purpose of the Games as the one which seemed to be the most logical, in a way which reveals the limitations of the Sovietological guesswork prevalent in the period before the archives were opened to researchers. A different study of 1980 noted in its background discussion to the Games that sport was understood by the authorities in the Soviet Union as an 'effective means of achieving ideological and political goals [including]…propagation of certain ideological values and principles.'[4] Others have noted the evidence showing that the Olympics became the subject of a propaganda campaign within the Soviet Union as well as outside it.[5] In contrast to Knabe, however, these claims suffer from the opposite problem – they ponder the possibility of additional political dimensions to the Games in the domestic sphere, but fail to suggest any implications arising from them for understanding either the nature of the Soviet Olympics project as a whole or late Soviet domestic politics more generally.

An additional issue which no study has ever considered is the way that the Soviet state's approach to orchestrating the XXII Olympics was affected by its attempts to negate various risks, as well as extract benefits, which it perceived to be inherent in hosting them. Jenifer Parks, in her recent PhD thesis, does point out that the international climate changed dramatically in the period between the USSR's first bid for the Games and their eventual orchestration, with the franchise 'becom[ing] less able to avoid political interference' in the form of 'acts of protest, boycott, and even terrorism.'[6] However, she

[3] Knabe, "Political Importance", 35.
[4] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 30.
[5] *Ibid*., 30-1; M. Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport i bol'shaia politika* (Moscow, 2004), 14.
[6] Parks, "Red Sport", 325.

does not follow up this important observation with a detailed interrogation of this question. Yet this is clearly an important issue. It is well known that orchestrating the modern Olympic Games present every host nation with a huge number of organisational and political challenges. It is therefore worthwhile considering how the USSR, in particular, dealt with the problems it faced in the organisation of its own summer Olympics in 1975-80, for this can provide just as much insight into the character of the late Soviet state as an analysis of what it hoped to gain. Such a focus, moreover, can also help explain how the Moscow Games made the transition from a mere policy proposal put forward by mid-level bureaucrats to a major political project of the Brezhnev leadership, and how the impetus for them was sustained in the face of various difficulties.

There are other issues relating to the domestic history of Moscow-80 which can be explored, and which have also not been adequately covered by the existing literature. First of all, it is as equally important for a political history of the XXII Games to trace the roots of this project within the corridors of power – to explain when, how and why hosting the summer Olympics made it on to the CPSU's policy agenda in the first place – as much as it is to recount how it was realised in subsequent years. Existing studies, undoubtedly due once again to the limited source base which they had to work with, do not elaborate on this question. Examining it, moreover, will allow for consideration of the ways in which the Olympics' purposes expanded over time, beyond what its instigators originally conceived of. Secondly, it can also be noted that whilst the presence of the Soviet security services – the Committee for State Security (or KGB), and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) – in the planning and orchestration of the Olympiad has been noted in passing in several studies,[7] these works offer only tantalising glimpses of what precisely made up the security programme for 1980. Perhaps more than any other aspect of the Games' administration, accounts of this element of the Olympiad understandably did not base their remarks here on archival sources, or indeed any reliable primary source at all. In fact, some of these accounts discussed this issue in a style of anti-KGB hysteria typical of the Cold War, which substituted rumour and polemic for hard evidence, and which has no place in academic study. The lack of serious research into the 1980 security programme, as a major facet of the Games' preparations which can shine a light on the activities of some of the most influential structures within the Soviet political system, has meant that once again the opportunity has been missed to explore this event with an eye to considering its implications for understanding the late Soviet polity as a whole, in addition to leaving a conspicuous gap in existing accounts of the Olympiad's history.

[7] Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 79; C. Booker, *The Games War: A Moscow Journal* (London, 1981), 29, 40; Guttmann, *Modern Games*, 154; Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 178.

Finally, the literature only very occasionally acknowledges the existence of a massive building programme carried out by the Soviet state for the Games,[8] and when it does these descriptions have failed to discuss both the full extent of this work as well as the purposes behind it in sufficient depth. What can be termed the Olympics' economic programme, which encompassed both these infrastructure projects and a number of other important measures, in fact constituted the central aspect of the USSR's preparations for 1980, which reveals much about a number of issues which should be central to any political history of the event. These include the extent of the resources which were devoted by the Soviet state to the project, the place of Moscow-80 in the Soviet policy agenda in terms of both its primary and secondary goals, and the interplay of Soviet efforts to both achieve benefits for its cause whilst simultaneously averting various risks. Moreover, existing accounts do not explore the fact that the Soviet Union struggled to cope with the impact of the additional logistical and financial burden the Games placed on its economic system by this programme. Examining how the practical difficulties of organising the Olympic Games played out for the first and only time within the confines of the unreformed socialist command economy that existed in Brezhnev's USSR on the basis of archival documents once again presents an interesting opportunity to shed some light on the character of late Soviet socialism just as much as it must form an essential element of a stand-alone political history of 1980.

Whilst it is clear that these aspects of the Moscow Olympics have not been adequately investigated due to a lack of sources above all, there is an additional factor which has impeded academic study of 1980 from the Soviet perspective. This has been the overriding interest in the high drama of the USA's boycott campaign, launched in the aftermath of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. The orchestration of the 1980 Games at a time of acute international tension and Carter's dramatic intervention has produced a fixation on the boycott among both casual observers and historians since their dénouement, ensuring that they have been seen largely as an event relevant only to historians of domestic American politics and foreign policy, Cold War international relations, and the Olympic movement as a whole rather than for scholars of late socialism and domestic Soviet politics.[9] Even where the boycott has been viewed as relevant to Soviet domestic politics (in particular, in terms of it being an issue requiring an explanation to the Soviet people by its own government in line with traditional ideological tropes) this has

[8] Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 77-8; Parks, "Red Sport", 279-83.

[9] D. Kanin, *A Political History of the Olympic Games* (Boulder, 1981), 123-145; Hulme, *Political Olympics*; N. Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch: Jimmy Carter, the Olympic Boycott, and the Cold War* (New York, 2011); S. Saum, "The Olympic Cold War" (MA Thesis, San Diego State University, 2010), 24-5, 72, 79, 80-1.

been done in such a way that one is left – erroneously – with the impression that this was the *sole* aspect of the Games which needed careful presentation to the domestic audience.[10] All of these works which focus on the boycott overlook the crucial fact that it really became a feature of the politics around the Games only at the end of 1979, four years *after* the start of the preparations in the USSR and a full decade since the Soviet leadership had approved a bid. We might therefore question how much the controversy surrounding the boycott can really tell us about the nature of the Moscow Olympiad as an individual historical event, occurring as it did in the very last stage of its lifespan, compared to the project's less dramatic aspects which unfolded inside the USSR in the preceding period and what they might indicate about late socialism. In addition, the prevalence of this 'boycott-centric' approach, in pushing historians to neglect the importance of 1980 for potentially shining a light on developments taking place within the Soviet Union, has meant the opportunity to consider the implications arising from the Games for interpreting the wider Soviet polity of the Brezhnev years has once again been passed over.

Special mention must be made here of Jenifer Parks' recent thesis charting post-war Soviet involvement in the Olympic movement, which culminates in a discussion of Moscow-80. Focusing primarily on the development and effectiveness of the Soviet sports bureaucracy in both the domestic and international context, it is the first English-language study which touches on the 1980 Games using Russian archival resources. Significantly, Parks has succeeded in using the Games as a prism through which to glimpse issues of wider significance in Soviet history, arguing that they showed what the Soviet system could achieve when it concentrated its titanic resources and synchronised various state and Party agencies to a single task.[11] As such, her conclusions demonstrate that an investigation into the Olympiad can indeed help us to evaluate historians' assessment of the Brezhnev era as one of 'stagnation' (discussed below). Despite this, Parks' study leaves many questions unanswered regarding the Games. Since she examined 1980 only for what it can tell us about the integration of Soviet bureaucracy into international sports administration, her study inevitably mixes a focus on Soviet history with that of 'Olympic history', to the detriment of revealing the full story of the Moscow Olympiad within a fully established framework of Brezhnev-era historiography. Moreover, her focus on the activities of mid-ranking sports administrators means that there is no consideration of what the top politicians might have thought regarding the event; consequently, Parks never really delves into the domestic political calculations underlying 1980. Her work essentially concentrates on the *functioning* of the Soviet sports bureaucracy rather than the actual *motivation for* its

[10] Mertin, "Explaining the boycotts", 235.
[11] Parks, "Red Sport", 323.

work on the project. Furthermore, precisely because Parks was concerned with the evolution of the Soviet sport administration across a wider period of its involvement in the Olympic movement, her account of 1980 itself was only partial. As such, her research does not logically follow on from or build on other secondary accounts, which as we have seen discerned an ambitious political agenda for the Games but made their assertions on the basis of limited primary sources. This first foray into the archival record on 1980 thus did not take the opportunity to evaluate earlier interpretations on the basis of the more reliable evidence this source base provides – and in turn, has not uncovered the wider political history of the Games, even if it has offered some idea as to how they might have implications for our understanding of late socialism.

In sum, scholarly understanding of the Games remains rudimentary as a result of both methodological problems and a lack of a more wide-ranging consideration and deeper analysis of all the event's dimensions. Offering little more than general remarks rarely followed up with substantial research findings, the previous studies collectively do not offer a sufficiently detailed political history of the Soviet Olympiad even as they give grounds to see its orchestration as having some significance to the USSR's policy agenda. Whilst not wishing to suggest that these basic accounts are outright erroneous, it is nevertheless clear that neither the true extent of Soviet ambitions, nor their specific primary and secondary aims, nor the full details of the USSR's preparations for 1980 have been revealed in adequate detail, or indeed can be at all without examining documents from the Russian archives. The focus on the boycott has meant that these works also display a tendency towards a narrow chronological focus in addition to their conceptual limitations. The story of Moscow-80, in its capacity as a major event in the political life of the late Soviet Union, still awaits disclosure by historians of the USSR.

Scholarly Treatment of the Brezhnev Era

Western historians have long conceptualised the eighteen years during which Leonid Brezhnev led the USSR as a time of 'stagnation' (*zastoi*). One can trace the emergence of this theme in historiographical discourse to none other than Mikhail Gorbachev himself, who, upon ascending to the position of CPSU General Secretary in 1985, adopted the time-honoured Soviet practice of lambasting his predecessor's policies. The enormous authority of the last Soviet leader's office and contemporary enthusiasm for his reform programme at home and abroad were the factors which probably helped to establish *zastoi* as the 'overwhelmingly dominant conceptualisation' of the epoch among scholars.[12] Gorbachev

[12] E. Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev", in E. Bacon and M. Sandle (eds.), *Brezhnev Reconsidered* (Basingstoke, 2002), 1-2.

explained the prevalence of stagnation under Brezhnev and his colleagues in terms of the dominance of a conservative political leadership whose increasing aversion to changes in policy impeded technological innovation and stifled social initiative, leading to severe economic decline.[13] Aspects of Gorbachev's thesis have been reaffirmed to greater and lesser degrees in many subsequent accounts up to the present day, with the concept of 'stagnation' expanded to cover different aspects of economic, political, cultural and social life in the 1970s and early 1980s.[14]

For our purposes it is worth emphasising in particular how the term 'stagnation' has been defined with respect to one sphere of the Brezhnevite polity's development in particular – that of politics. The idea that there was political stagnation in the late Soviet Union has been both explicitly and implicitly put forward by scholars in ways which mirror, but also expand on, Gorbachev's original remarks. They present evidence indicating that the Brezhnev period was characterised variously by a lack of innovation in policy in the face of changing national and international circumstances; an unwillingness to countenance bold reforms to the economic and political system; the dominance of a conservative and self-serving bureaucracy and an increasingly enfeebled and unimaginative political leadership, and more generally a sclerotic and inefficient political and administrative process.[15] This idea has also often been expressed in terms of the idea of *complacency* on the part of the Soviet leadership in this period – its apparent 'refusal to acknowledge reality' and address social and economic problems with practical and effective measures. This was symbolised by its frequent recourse to bland public statements and hollow, self-congratulatory propaganda campaigns resulting in a stifling, conservative political atmosphere.[16] Rather than actually pursuing meaningful, innovative policies that would alleviate the deep-seated and worsening situation in the country, the ossified Brezhnev leadership offered only empty words, proclaiming the emergence of an ever more perfect,

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[13] *Ibid*.

[14] See V. Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies in the Period of Glasnost: Responses to Brezhnev's Stagnation* (New York, 1988); R. Service, *The Penguin History of Modern Russia: From Tsarism to the Twenty-first Century* (London, 2009), 397-427.

[15] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 29, 40-41; M. Sandle, "A Triumph of Ideological Hairdressing? Intellectual Life in the Brezhnev Era Reconsidered", 136, 148-9, 153-6 in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*; W. Tompson, *The Soviet Union under Brezhnev* (London, 2003), 17-19, 22-27, 31-2, 111-12; C. Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly: The Building of BAM and Late Soviet Socialism* (Pittsburgh, 2009), 12-42, 42-69, 150, 154-5; S. Merl, "The Soviet Economy in the 1970s – Reflections on the Relationship Between Socialist Modernity, Crisis and the Administrative Command Economy", in M. Calic, D. Neutatz, and J. Obertreis, (eds.), *The Crisis of Socialist Modernity: The Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the 1970s* (Gottingen, 2011), 48-51, 54-5.

[16] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 67, 70-71; D. Volkogonov, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire: Political Leaders from Lenin to Gorbachev* (London, 1998), 274-80; R. Sakwa, *Soviet Politics in Perspective* (New York, 1998), 70; Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 154-5; V. Zubok, *Zhivago's Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, 2009), 298-99; Service, *Modern Russia*, 408-9; 416-18.

'revolutionary' form of modernity which did not exist.[17] The Soviet regime, and indeed the General Secretary himself, are said to have been motivated in their exercise of power to a significant degree only by the short-sighted goal of maintaining the status quo and their privileges, with little thought to the future.[18] In turn, the utopian character of Soviet goals was exhausted by the end of Brezhnev's rule; there was a severe curtailing of the regime's intellectual horizons and ambitions, with ideological vision and the idea of radical transformation of the socio-economic and political system giving way to banal administration and an emphasis on the consolidation of existing structures and policies in what was supposed to be the most ideologically visionary of states.[19]

Unsurprisingly, the stagnation label has been critiqued since it was first applied amid the reformist enthusiasms of the 1980s. Judging by the central focus of recent scholarship, it would appear that historians believe that the *zastoi* concept is most open to challenge in terms of our interpretation of societal development under Brezhnev; much of this revisionist work has appeared in the form of studies of Soviet society and culture in the 1970s and 1980s. The primary objective of such works has been to shine a light on the lived experience of late socialism, and through this offer an alternative view to that of a 'stagnant' social order under Brezhnev by presenting a picture of significant change and upheaval – shifting values and ideals, intergenerational and class tensions, cultural and social diversity, adaptation and autonomy, as well as continued public engagement with the authorities.[20] A large amount of this literature implicitly accepts the idea that with regards to other aspects of the USSR's development in this period (such as the formal political process and the functioning of the economy) the stagnation idea has stood the test of time. Indeed, the juxtaposition of new evidence showing social dynamism against the long-accepted view of a moribund public sphere in the 1970s lies at the root of several recent contributions.[21] Though it has proved highly informative, this focus on Soviet society has clearly come at the expense of providing new perspectives on Brezhnev-era politics. Indeed,

[17] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 9; G. Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy in Soviet Politics* (Cambridge, 2011), 185-88.
[18] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 29, 40-41; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 112; S. Hanson, "The Brezhnev Era", in R. Suny, (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Russia, Volume III: The Twentieth Century* (New York, 2006), 293, 295-6; Service, *Modern Russia*, 418.
[19] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 66, 70, 172, 281; Hanson, "Brezhnev Era", 293, 295-6; Gill, *Symbols and Legitimacy*, 202, 211-12.
[20] See S. F. Starr, "Soviet Union: A Civil Society", *Foreign Policy*, no.70 (spring, 1988), 26-7, 30-5; D. Ruffley, *Children of Victory: Young Specialists and the Evolution of Soviet Society* Westport, 2003), 1, 12, 41-2, 93-4, 177; S. Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dniepropetrovsk, 1960-1985* (Baltimore, 2010); N. Klumbyte, and G. Sharafutdinova, (eds.), *Soviet Society in the Era of Late Socialism, 1964-1985* (Plymouth, 2013); N. Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era* (Abingdon and New York, 2013).
[21] Ruffley, *Children of Victory*; Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*; J. Fürst, "Where Did All the Normal People Go? Another Look at the Soviet 1970s", *Kritika*, volume 14, number 3 (summer 2013), 621-640.

a number of contemporary historians of late socialism have concentrated less on investigating the official priorities and activities of the Soviet state during this period as a goal in itself than on evaluating the significance of these issues only to the extent that they had an impact on the lives of ordinary people and provide the necessary background to explaining the nature of everyday life.[22]

However, historians are to some extent also beginning to re-examine and re-evaluate a wide variety of aspects of Brezhnev-era politics, including in such spheres as centre-regional and patron-client relations, prosopography, ideology and intellectual life, and reassessments of Brezhnev as Soviet leader.[23] Some of this work may yet help to move the scholarly debate beyond the limits of the stagnation theme to a considerable degree, at least in certain areas. The various intriguing lines of enquiry have, however, not yet generated any full-length studies. There thus remains an imbalance between new, archival-based research into everyday life under late socialism and developments in the public sphere of the Soviet polity during the 1970s and 1980s, with works of social history, accordingly, so far providing the greatest impetus for critiquing the stagnation paradigm.

At the same time, various commentators suggest, either explicitly or implicitly and to varying degrees, that the concept of *zastoi* is in many ways still a useful paradigm for conceptualising political life and the functioning of the political system in the Soviet polity during the Brezhnev era.[24] In fact, the idea of 'stagnation' as applied to Soviet political life was not so much comprehensively mapped out immediately after 1985, as elaborated and reinforced at various points over the decades following Gorbachev's accession, even as revisionist theses simultaneously emerged in the same period. Indeed, even some of those contemporary accounts which adopt an explicitly revisionist approach to conceptualising the politics of the 'developed socialist' era give the impression that those developments which do not conform to the stagnation model, whilst important to note, are for the most part not necessarily central to our understanding of the Brezhnev period. Consequently, they imply that *zastoi* can still be considered fundamentally accurate with respect to many of the core features of the Brezhnevite system.[25] The present consensus thus seems to be

[22] Ruffley, *Children of Victory*; Zhuk, *Rocket City*; Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*.
[23] See the articles in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*; the forum 'Late Soviet Regional Leadership' in *Kritika*, volume 14, number 2 (spring 2013); also see the article by N. Mitrokhin in *Russian History*, volume 41, number 3 (2014) and those in *Russian Studies in History*, volume 52, number 4 (spring 2014).
[24] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 66, 70-2, 83, 102, 111, 209; Bacon, "Reconsidering Brezhnev", 19; Sandle, "Intellectual Life", 148-56; Ruffley, *Children of Victory*, 12-13, 177-78; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 17-19, 22-5, 31-2, 75-77, 88-91, 111-12, 117-18; Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 42-98, 125-7, 150-55; Merl, "Soviet Economy", J. Zweynert, "'Developed Socialism' and Soviet Economic Thought in the 1970s and Early '80s", *Russian History*, volume 41, number 3 (2014), 354-72.
[25] Good examples of this approach are Tompson, *Soviet Union* and Sandle, "Intellectual Life".

that it is difficult to discredit the stagnation concept overall, and instead it makes more sense to simply add nuance to it, by focusing on the contradictory processes occurring either within or between the broad spheres of the polity's development (political, social, cultural, economic). In turn, it is clear that no scholar has managed to offer a coherent alternative to the notion of *zastoi* which can convincingly explain the course of events across all spheres of Soviet life under developed socialism in a similar manner to that which this concept was earlier understood to do.

Finally, some consideration must be given to how the course of Soviet foreign policy under Brezhnev, and in particular its activities in the 1970s during the era of détente, has been evaluated by historians. Most accounts tend to create an impression of foreign policy in this period as conventional, pragmatic, and cautious rather than reckless and driven by ideological zealotry, highlighting the USSR's readiness to engage in arms control negotiations, economic and cultural exchanges, and the ratification of post-war borders.[26] Inasmuch as it has been acknowledged that Soviet foreign policy during the Brezhnev years displayed ambitions to conquer new countries for socialism, it has been discussed only in terms of the USSR's conduct in the Third World, with a contrast sometimes explicitly drawn between the aggressive, expansionist nature of Soviet activities in countries on the 'margins' of the global conflict and the desire to maintain static and permanent spheres of influence within Europe and stable relations more generally with many Western countries.[27] Indeed, most historians adhere to the view that during the decade of détente, the USSR's strategy vis-à-vis the West was to accept the parity it had achieved with the capitalist bloc in geo-strategic terms and the inviolability of its rivals' collective sphere of influence in North America and Western Europe. This is seen as the flip side of Brezhnev's aim to get the West to accept the Soviet Union's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and bring greater stability to the international order.[28] Such perspectives on Soviet foreign policy imply a conceptualisation of the Brezhnev-era policy-making elite which emphasises their propensity to set only limited, mundane and low-risk policy goals, shorn of any ideological fervour to confront capitalism and reshape the world through a global socialist revolution in line with the original utopian ambitions of the Bolshevik founders of the Soviet state.

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[26] C. Kennedy-Pipe, *Russia and the World since 1917* (London, 1998), 148-53; M. Bowker, "Brezhnev and Superpower Relations", in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, 90-109; M. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York, 2007), 241-51.
[27] Kennedy-Pipe, *Russia and the World*, 148, 153-62, 167-8; M. Webber, " 'Out of Area' Operations: The Third World", in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, 110-34; C. Andrew, and V. Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB and the World* (London, 2005); O. A. Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2005), 202-4.
[28] Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 35-63, 47-9; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 203; Leffler, *Soul of Mankind*, 241-51.

Another focal point of attention for historians who have studied Soviet foreign relations in this period has been the controversy around human rights issues first raised by the Helsinki process. Such an approach can leave one with the impression that the Brezhnev leadership was engaged primarily in a defensive battle in the 1970s, confounded by the slow-burning development of human-rights ideology both domestically and in its East European empire.[29] The notion one consequently receives is of a bewildered Soviet elite, incapable of comprehending the significance of this important new development in international politics and unable to control its consequences, in a manner which seemingly foretold its ultimate failure to win the Cold War battle for hearts and minds around the world.

Originality and the Approach to Studying the Games

This thesis provides an innovative approach to the study of both the 1980 Games as a self-contained historical event and the wider Brezhnev era, which differs from that found in much of the scholarship mentioned above. In the first instance, it will offer a more fully-fledged, detailed history of the Moscow Olympiad on the basis of Russian archival evidence, expanding on the fragmented and incomplete investigations of previous years and diverging from the excessive focus on the Western boycott. Intrinsic to this approach is the aim to examine the historical importance of Moscow-80 for the first time within its most relevant context – that of the political history of the late Soviet Union. To this end, the thesis will account for the place of the Games project within the domestic and foreign policy agenda of the Brezhnev-era USSR, explaining the ways in which the impetus for it was sustained by the priorities of Soviet politicians and administrators. Apropos of this approach, it will not focus in any great detail on comparing the Moscow Games with previous or subsequent Olympiads which have taken place in other countries, as such comparisons are arguably best suited to the study of the modern Olympic franchise itself, as an international brand which has impacted on multiple countries in various ways, rather than for the study of any one host country's *national* history.[30] In addition, on account of the nature of the sources consulted and various practical constraints, it does not examine the aftermath of 1980 in terms of the event's impact on the Soviet state and society; instead, the thesis is restricted to an account of the origins, preparations and execution of

[29] D.C. Thomas, *The Helsinki Effect: International Norms, Human Rights, and the Demise of Communism* (Princeton, 2001); S. Snyder, *Human Rights Activism and the End of the Cold War: A Transnational History of the Helsinki Network* (New York, 2011).

[30] For a similar approach which locates the orchestration of the Olympics within the context of national history, see K. Schiller and C. Young, *The 1972 Munich Olympics and the Making of Modern Germany* (Los Angeles, 2010).

the XXII Olympiad from the perspective of the host government. Covering both sides of this story would of course constitute a more comprehensive study. However, as will be shown, much can still be learnt about the nature and importance of the Soviet Olympics and the ambiguities of the wider Brezhnev epoch simply by focusing on the extent of the USSR's ambitions for 1980 and its activities aimed at realising those ambitions, rather than on their intended or unintended consequences.

In terms of its contribution to the study of the Brezhnev era, this thesis departs from the previous approaches mentioned above in two important ways. One the one hand, since the Olympiad is examined from the perspective of politicians and bureaucrats working in state and Party structures rather than the experiences of ordinary citizens, the present work represents a study of Soviet politics rather than of society under late socialism. Clearly, this top-down approach stands apart from much of the aforementioned research into the period emerging in the past few years. There are several sound reasons for adopting such an approach. On the one hand, when one considers the central place of the one-party state in the Soviet experiment, investigating the formal workings of the late Soviet state is no less a legitimate task than the study of everyday life during developed socialism. Even if it was constantly in a process of negotiation with its citizens over values and practices, the CPSU and its attendant state structures enjoyed a monopoly of political and economic power and initiative in domestic and foreign affairs right up to the 1990s. The extent to which Soviet citizens had opportunities for an autonomous existence free from political engagement had certainly increased by the 1970s compared to the Stalin period, but the very nature of the way this 'breathing space' was granted involved the citizenry continuing to grant the authorities almost exclusive control over the policy-making process.[31] Thus, for all the apparent sense that the official political sphere during this period was one of stasis compared to the behind-the-scenes dynamism of Soviet society, the state indisputably remained the dominant force in political, social and economic life throughout the Brezhnev years, as it did throughout other periods. As such, understanding how it operated, accounting for what policies it implemented and why it pursued them on the basis of newly available sources is arguably just as fundamental to gaining new insights into the USSR's evolution under late socialism as is studying social and cultural processes. Studying the Moscow Olympiad, as an event on the formal policy agenda (that is, which was conceived, administered by and exploited by the Soviet state), represent first and foremost an opportunity to investigate certain elements of this political history, to an equal or perhaps even greater degree than it offers the chance to shed yet more light on the character of Soviet society in the Brezhnev period.

[31] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 282.

Beyond the imperative of correcting the imbalance in contemporary research into late socialism between political and social history, two other factors have made the adoption of a politics-centred approach a conscious choice in this thesis. On the one hand, an engagement with the archival record on the Games shows that it is far more profitable to focus on the administrative and political aspects of 1980 than on the lived experience of the event. The XXII Olympics may yet provide the framework for an interesting investigation into Soviet society in the later Brezhnev years by focusing on the perspective of individual citizens who witnessed their preparations and orchestration. But it is the character of the event's administration by the Soviet state which the most readily available primary sources on the Soviet Games (discussed in the next section) prompt first and foremost. Irrespective of the state of the source base however, this approach also has a certain inherent logic in its application to the first full-length history of 1980. The fact that the Olympiad was, as noted, an historical event firmly embedded in the official political sphere above all surely necessitates that this side of the story should be told first, as a way to establish the framework for any future examination of it from the perspective of Soviet citizens (in particular, in terms of comparing the official aims of the project and the experience of it on the ground). The institutional parameters of the Olympiad as determined by those who orchestrated it must surely be accounted for as key contextual information before any attempt can be made to investigate its impact on Soviet society.

This study is also differentiated from the historiography outlined above in terms of the specific genre of political history writing which it conforms to. Both older and more recent contributions to the literature on Brezhnev-era politics – including both some of the aforementioned, recently produced articles as well as the multitude of earlier Sovietological studies, which concentrated much of their attention on internecine leadership struggles[32] – have centred on the unofficial political purposes and rival personalities of the members of the country's ruling circle and wider administrative caste, often in a bid to understand *how* the Soviet political system functioned in 1964-85. This study does not seek to address such broad issues, but instead to make a new contribution to a more conventional, narrative form of political history based around the following general question: precisely what political initiatives and concrete policies did the various institutions of the Soviet one-party state undertake in these years at home and abroad, and what purposes underlay them? In accounting for the work carried out by several major state and Party agencies in 1975-80 to formulate and execute the various practical measures which collectively made up the Olympic project, this thesis constitutes a case study of one element of the Brezhnev

[32] See, for example, J. Parker, *Kremlin in Transition, volume 1: From Brezhnev to Chernenko, 1978-1985* (Boston, 1991).

leadership's policy programme from its formulation to implementation, rather than an examination of the mechanisms of power in the late Soviet Union.

This choice of political history genre has again been determined to a considerable extent by the nature of the subject matter; as a major state initiative connected to both domestic and foreign policy, the Olympics provide a snapshot of the USSR's political agenda in the 1970s rather than a detailed explanation of how institutions operated over the longer term. But this approach also has much to recommend it in any case. Focusing on the formal political agenda in essence involves building up a more detailed record of the activities of individual parts of the Soviet state on the basis of new archival evidence. A record of this kind, in highlighting the *exercise* of political power, allows one in turn to make important inferences about not only the governing mentalities, but also the long-term ideological goals which prevailed among the administrative and policy-making elite in the late Soviet Union. Other kinds of political history that analyse only the formal and informal mechanisms by which power was *sustained* (such as the aforementioned emerging focus on centre-regional or patron-client relations) do not necessarily allow for inferences of this kind. Of course, this alternative type of political history would best be served by access to the archival records of the various leadership bodies of the USSR's governmental system for this period (that is, the Politburo and Secretariat of the CPSU Central Committee [referred to hereafter as the CC], and the Council of Ministers [known as 'Sovmin']) and the other most powerful Party and state structures (such as the military, the KGB and MVD, and elements of the military-industrial complex) as well as the personal files of major politicians – all of which currently remains off limits. However, as will be seen, the example of the Games shows that examining the records of even mid-level administrators working in intermediate (but still very important) institutions within the Soviet organisational pyramid can provide new insights in this respect, since the responsibilities of such cadres for implementing policy decreed from above indirectly reveals much about the thinking and overall goals of their superiors ensconced in the upper echelons of the hierarchy.

The Source Base

With the partial exception of the first chapter, the overwhelming majority of evidence used here to construct the history of the Olympic Games comes from various collections of documents found in several federal archives in Moscow. These include the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF), which contains not only all the records of the 1980 Olympic Organising Committee (hereafter, 'Orgcom') but also other state organisations which

played key roles in the project, including the USSR Sports Committee and the government-controlled trade union apparatus, the Central Trade Union Council (VTsSPS). The records of the Organising Committee in particular, as well as its innumerable sub-departments' meetings and the working materials for them, have formed the basis for much of this study. In addition, the holdings of the two storehouses of the former Soviet Communist Party – the Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI) and the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) – have also been of huge importance. The latter provided invaluable evidence of the extensive participation of the Communist Youth League (known as the Komsomol) in certain aspects of the preparations for the Olympics, whilst RGANI contains crucial documentation on the involvement of the central Party bureaucracy (*apparat TsK KPSS*). Access to RGANI's materials in particular has provided a useful counterpoint to the record of the day-to-day issues of the Games' organisation contained in the files of the Orgcom and other state organisations. The combined resources available in all three of these institutions allow one to accurately comprehend for the first time the scope of the mobilisation of state and Party organisations which took place for the sake of Moscow-80, and in turn, construct the kind of detailed political and administrative history of the event which was heretofore impossible.

Another major primary source used in this thesis is the recently published document collection, *Five Rings under the Kremlin's Stars: A Documentary Record of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games* (*Piat' kolets pod kremlevskimi zvezdami: Dokumental'naia khronika Olimpiady-80 v Moskve*, hereafter referred to by its abbreviated Russian title of *Piat' kolets*).[33] Compiled by the staff of RGANI, it contains around three hundred documents of the Politburo, Secretariat and the CC bureaucracy detailing the central Party authorities' involvement in the preparations for the Olympics between 1975 and 1980. With a length of over 900 pages, it is not clear whether this volume contains *all* known documentation relating to the Games emanating from the central Party organs. Indeed, it has some clear gaps; whilst providing valuable details on the CPSU's administration of the economic and foreign policy aspects of the Olympiad, there is surprisingly little in the volume indicating when, from where/whom and why the original proposals for a Moscow Games first appeared within the corridors of power. Nevertheless, the crucial importance of *Piat' kolets* for writing the political history of the Olympiad cannot be understated; it has virtually doubled the size of the available archival source base and expanded the possibilities for learning about the involvement of the most influential departments of the CPSU in the Olympic project far beyond what would otherwise be possible if one were to have access

[33] N.G. Tomilina, T.Iu. Konova and M.Iu. Prozumenshchikov (eds.), *Piat' kolets pod kremlevskimi zvezdami: Dokumental'naia khronika Olimpiady-80 v Moskve* (Moscow, 2011).

only to the meagre number of files held in RGANI that are available for first-hand examination. Whilst it does not contain any records of actual discussions within the Politburo on 1980, the documentation from the CC bureaucracy which *Piat' kolets* does provide has reduced the extent to which it was necessary in this study to investigate the Soviet state's formulation of policy towards the Games *indirectly* – that is, on the basis of files from various subordinate organisations showing how they implemented measures for the event which had already been determined higher up the hierarchy. This collection, moreover, was not available to Parks when she carried out the first archival research into the Soviet Olympics, making it possible to explore more aspects of the Games than was possible in her work.

The third key source of primary materials for this study is the 'Soviet Archives' website set up by the ex-dissident Vladimir Bukovskii.[34] It contains illegally reproduced copies of many important documents recording the domestic and international activities of the CPSU across the entire Soviet era, including Brezhnev's period in office. With a special section on the organisation of the Olympiad, the site has primarily helped to fill in crucial gaps in the narrative regarding the 1980 Games' security programme. Bukovskii's anti-communist agenda may justifiably raise some apprehension that he may have selected these documents in such a way so as to overemphasise the influence of the secret police in the Olympics project. However, the huge amount of alternative sources employed here covering the Games' other, more mundane aspects in an equal (and often greater) level of detail will hopefully assuage the reader of any concerns in this area. A complete list of the titles of every document from all three of these sources used in this study can be found in appendix II. Subsequent references to these primary sources in the chapter footnotes provide only a given document's number (or in the case of archival sources, the code signifying its location within an archive) and page reference rather than its title.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter explores the long-term origins of the Olympics project. It discusses the Soviet state's evolving strategy for expanding communist influence abroad during the Cold War as well as its attempts to exert dominance over the International Olympic Committee (IOC) from the 1950s through to the mid-1970s. The importance of the 1957 Moscow Youth Festival as a precursor to the 1980 Games is also noted. The chapter goes on to explain the role of the country's leadership in first opposing, then supporting proposals to organise a Moscow Olympiad in the context of

[34] See http://www.bukovsky-archives.net/pdfs/olympiada/olym-rus.html.

changing domestic and international circumstances. This is followed by an account of the culmination of this process, in which the Soviet Union vigorously campaigned to win the rights to host the XXI and XXII summer Games. The chapter also addresses the intriguing question of Brezhnev's personal interest in the nascent Moscow Olympiad, showing how the project ultimately came to be launched in 1975 despite the General Secretary's last-minute objections. Overall, this chapter demonstrates that one can account for the genesis of the Soviet Olympics by examining how official perceptions of the risks and benefits involved in hosting them changed over time.

The remaining four chapters consider key areas of the Soviet state's preparations for the Olympics undertaken between 1975 and 1980, following the country's successful bid. The second chapter traces the main economic dimensions of the Games, including the massive construction and infrastructure investment programme, the provision of material supplies and services to the Olympics' guests, and the authorities' strategy for managing the significant financial cost of the event together with the degree of success they achieved in this. The extent to which the deficiencies of the USSR's economic mechanism produced difficulties for the authorities in preparing the country in economic terms for the 1980 Games is also examined. The chapter goes on to consider the degree to which Moscow-80 can be considered an autarchic project, relying on the command economy's resources alone to achieve its various political goals and deal with some of its key practical challenges. Finally, the programme of commercial deals reached with foreign businesses by the Soviet organisers for the Olympiad is discussed. This chapter in the final analysis reveals the extent of resources diverted to the Moscow Olympics for the sake of both avoiding the risk of organisational failure and achieving one of the project's central purposes – constructing a physical façade for the promotion of Soviet socialism.

Chapter three considers a no less important constituent element of the USSR's preparations for 1980: the Olympic security programme implemented by the country's two principal national security agencies, the KGB and MVD. The chapter begins by examining the ways in which Soviet officials perceived the orchestration of 1980 to pose a threat to the physical security of the USSR. This is followed by a detailed examination of the various administrative measures employed by the security services to combat this perceived threat, including the creation of specialist counter-terrorism units, the fortification of the Olympic Village, the deployment of vast amounts of manpower, and attempts to restrict foreigners' as well as the general population's access to Moscow during the Games. The crucial question of the extent to which traditional methods of state repression carried out against Soviet citizens formed part of this security programme, and in turn whether previous

commentators have been justified in claiming that 'an Olympic purge' was a hallmark of this event, is given special consideration. Finally, the additional responsibility of the security services to control the level of interaction between visiting foreign guests and Soviet citizens is examined. Throughout the chapter, it will be shown that the security measures for 1980 played a role in both guaranteeing national security and social stability against threats from real (and imagined) enemies of the communist state on the one hand, and, crucially, in helping to promote the Soviet system on the other.

Chapter four builds on the interpretation of the Games' central political purposes already offered by looking at the role played by them in Soviet foreign policy in greater detail. Rather than adopting the traditional, exclusive focus on the 1980 boycott, it takes a longer view of the foreign policy dimensions of the Games by examining two key areas of the organisers' activity on the world stage during the whole five years of the project. On the one hand, the variety of methods employed by the Orgcom to generate cooperation and build anticipation for the Moscow Games among various key constituencies is explored. These included attempts to ingratiate Soviet organising officials into the circles of international journalists and IOC members, an international recruitment drive among Third World governments and sports agencies, and the provision of financial support to various national Olympic committees (NOCs). On the other hand, the chapter provides the first full account of both the numerous methods used in, and intricate messages of, the Soviet state's international propaganda campaign that was orchestrated around the Games by various agencies. Special attention is given here to revealing the extent to which the USSR's communist satellites were called upon to magnify the scope of this campaign. The effect of substantial Western criticism of, and initiatives carried out against, the Moscow Olympics before the USSR's highly controversial military intervention in Afghanistan on Soviet activities is then examined. The chapter also considers the implications of the Games' international dimension for historians' understanding of the impact and significance of the US-led attempts to boycott the event in 1980, as well as for interpretations of the importance of the Olympic Games themselves to the policy agenda of the Brezhnev-era Soviet state.

Chapter five examines the ways in which the Games project was integrated into the CPSU's domestic political agenda in 1975-80. It initially demonstrates that compared to another ambitious mega-project carried out by the Soviet party-state during the same era – the construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) Railway, which began in 1974 and continued for another four years after the conclusion of the Games – the Olympics did not serve as a heroic utopian scheme designed to mobilise society for the next step towards the

construction of communism. It goes on to chart how 1980 was instead exploited as an opportunity to carry out both an enormous internal propaganda campaign and an additional, equally vigorous drive to expand participation in state-run sports programmes on a massive scale inside the Soviet Union. The primary and secondary purposes of these programmes are examined, including in terms of helping to re-affirm the legitimacy of the regime, 'sell' the Games to the population, and (in the case of the former campaign) inculcate suspicion of outsiders among the population ahead of opening the USSR up to the outside world. The chapter ultimately demonstrates that, in contrast to the BAM Railway, the Olympics stand as a symbol of the increasing immobilism that was taking hold of the Soviet regime towards the close of the Brezhnev era, serving above all as an additional tool to help maintain the existing socio-economic status quo.

The final part of the thesis proceeds along two lines of discussion, in accordance with the aforementioned primary research goals of this study. On the one hand, the chapter offers some general conclusions regarding the history of the Soviet Olympiad as an individual event, in terms of both the continuous official assessment of risks and benefits inherent in the project which provided the impetus driving it forward to completion, and its overall place in the policy agenda of the Soviet state in the 1970s. On the other hand, Moscow-80's importance as a case study which has significant implications for historians' wider conceptualisation of the Brezhnev era is highlighted. It will be shown that the features of the Soviet polity which are revealed by the history of the XXII Olympiad to some extent challenge the current scholarly consensus on two counts: firstly, in relation to the overall validity of the 'stagnation' label as it has been applied to the Soviet political system in the later Brezhnev years, and secondly, with respect to the idea that Soviet foreign policy conduct during the détente period was pragmatic, conventional and devoid of ideological ambitions. This assessment is accompanied by attempts to outline, using evidence from the history of the Olympiad, some broad alternative approaches to studying the political history of the USSR in the 1970s which could be pursued in future research. These include the idea that the Brezhnev leadership was not complacent but instead adhered to the principles of 'pro-active conservatism', and that its years in office can be seen within the context of a wider, 'post-Stalin' epoch of Soviet political history rather than identified as a unique period of stagnation. Finally, the chapter shows through a comparison of Moscow-80 with the 1957 Youth Festival that the wider history of the Soviet Union's efforts to advance its soft power in the Cold War still remains to be investigated.

Where necessary, additional information on the domestic and international context within which the Moscow Olympics took place will be provided within the chapters. With

the exception of chapter one, the structure adopted in this study is thematic rather than chronological. A chronology of events discussed throughout the thesis, together with some additional, basic details of the proceedings of the XXII Games themselves, are provided in appendix I.

1.) The Genesis of the Olympics

This chapter delineates the genesis of the Soviet Olympic project[1] from the 1950s to the early 1970s. It will demonstrate why and when the idea of a bid for the Games developed and how it came to fruition by examining, in turn, the USSR's policy towards the Olympic movement, the Soviet leadership's evolving attitude towards hosting the summer Games, and the tactics employed for the two subsequent bid attempts. This will help to emplot the Olympics within their appropriate historical context, explaining their appearance in terms of changes in Soviet attitudes towards the franchise over time. In particular, it will be shown that the Cold War and the USSR's perception of its superpower status are crucial for understanding the Soviet state's initial interest in hosting its own Games. At the same time, the support of the Politburo for an Olympic bid evolved in accordance with changing domestic and international circumstances. When its crucial backing was eventually secured, Moscow's bid for 1980 was successful thanks to a combination of the substantial time and resources devoted by a now enthusiastic leadership to it as well as a number of circumstantial factors.

Significant use has been made here of the work of two Russian historians, M. Prozumenshchikov and T. Konova, whose account of Soviet involvement in the Olympic movement is based on unprecedented access to Party documents which are still classified for most researchers. Selective use is also made of the findings of Jenifer Parks, who examined both Russian and the IOC's archival materials in her recent thesis. Whilst this produces some overlap in subject matter with these previous works, use of these studies is justified on the grounds that they offer a great deal of crucial information regarding Moscow-80's origins which could not be satisfactorily answered using the primary sources which were available for this study alone. Moreover, in some cases these secondary sources have been used to indirectly discern the *content* of inaccessible but relevant archival inventories which they made use of, and thereby help address different research questions unique to this study, rather than to simply restate these authors' own *interpretations* of those same sources. In those cases where these historians' arguments have been accepted, every effort has been made to develop them further, sometimes supplementing them with new ideas grounded in an independent, direct engagement with additional archival documents. This chapter does not therefore merely recapitulate the perspectives offered in previous studies, despite its partial reliance on them. Instead, it

[1] Hereafter, the term 'Soviet Olympic project' refers only to Soviet efforts to host the summer Olympics in Moscow in 1975-1980. This is distinct from the USSR's wider involvement in the Olympic movement in 1951-91.

offers an independent, more in-depth investigation into the genesis of the 1980 Games, exploring the background to the event in much greater detail than has been done before in line with the primary aims of this thesis.

Olympic Sport, Hosting International Events, and Ideological Struggle

Great-Power Status and Olympic Sport

Prozumenshchikov and Konova claim that the idea of a Moscow Olympiad partly originated in the changes which took place in Soviet international conduct after the war. In particular, they emphasise the USSR's move from isolation to greater engagement in world affairs in the 1950s and the concomitant goal to increase Soviet influence in the world by non-military means through the spheres of culture and ideology that was adopted by the post-Stalin leadership. The Soviet Union's initial entry into the Olympic movement, in May 1951, was premised on its post-war self-perception as a rising global power, with Soviet leaders 'believing that the "most advanced state" in the world ought to be at the forefront [of world affairs] in all spheres of existence, including that of sport'. To be at the 'forefront' in the latter case obviously meant unparalleled success on the playing field, and Stalin's successors took concrete steps to realise this goal by permitting the expansion of participation by Soviet athletes in various international sports competitions – including the Olympics – on the assumption that their achievements 'in the arena...[would] underline the superiority of the socialist system and the Soviet way of life'.[2]

Although they do not elaborate as to the relevance of these developments, the Russian historians' train of thought here is clear. At a fundamental level, the growing participation of their athletes the Olympics, prompted by a desire to assert the USSR's global authority and project its superior ideology, was a necessary long-term precondition for bringing the Games to the Soviet Union, since no country could hope to successfully bid for them without being able to point to a strong record of commitment to the Olympic franchise. Jenifer Parks' research showing the important role played by Soviet sports bureaucrats' painstaking work done to establish constructive professional relationships with Olympics officials in facilitating the USSR's successful organisation of the Moscow Games clearly confirms this.[3] One of the most tangible forms of such a commitment was a willingness to send world-class athletes capable of achieving impressive sporting records on to the Olympic playing field. Soviet officials themselves, as part of their bids to host the Games

[2] M.Iu Prozumenshchikov and T.Iu Konova, "Ternistyi put' Moskovskoi Olimpiady", in Tomilina, Konova and Prozumenshchikov, *Piat' kolets*, 7-8.
[3] Parks, "Red Sport", *passim*.

after 1969, justified the USSR's suitability by pointing to their athletes' outstanding successes in the Olympic arena, framed in terms of the country's 'contribution to the Olympic movement.'[4] Thus the basic assumption, offered by these Russian historians as well as others,[5] that one can pinpoint Soviet athletes' debut, success and rivalry with the West in the first post-war Olympiads as the fundamental historical context facilitating the emergence of the USSR's bid for 1980 surely has something to it.

However, an explanation of the origins of 1980 which emphasise Soviet athletes' growing participation in international sporting events alone only gets one so far. For all the Soviet Union's obsession with gold medals, dominating Olympic sports in order to propagandise socialism in line with its superpower ambitions could be achieved *without* bringing the franchise to Moscow's stadiums. Indeed, the USSR achieved ascendancy in the medal tables well before 1980, and throughout its participation in the franchise. The country took first place in the medal count at six out of the nine summer Olympiads and seven out of the nine winter events in which it participated during 1952-88, taking the lead already in 1956. The Soviet Union, despite having competed in only 18 out of a total of 48 Olympiads which took place between 1896 and 2014, remains the second highest medal winner of all time. It also won on average the most medals per appearance at the Olympics during the years of its participation.[6] As Prozumenshchikov himself argues elsewhere, total domination in Olympic sports was a goal which the USSR pursued in the post-war decades in the knowledge that it brought a certain degree of propaganda success irrespective of *where* the event took place.[7] No indication has emerged from the archival record on the 1980 Games themselves that suggests Soviet sports officials or politicians believed the success of this long-term policy would necessarily only be capped on their home turf.

Hosting the Olympics and the 1957 Youth Festival

A more convincing argument for understanding the Games' origins is made by the same Russian historians, who posit the fundamental political importance for the Soviet Union of the *organisational* aspects of international sports events, and the Olympic franchise in particular, rather than the participatory element alone. Prozumenshchikov and Konova point out that, at the same time as the post-Stalin leadership permitted an expansion of

[4] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 70.
[5] See O. Chepurnaia, "'Olimpiada-80': sovetskoe megasobytie v kontekstakh 'kholodnoi voiny'", *Zhurnal sotsiologii i sotsial'noi antropologii*, volume XVI, number 5/70 (2013), 40-42.
[6] 'Soviet Union at the Olympics', *Wikipedia*, accessed 16.11.2014, www.wikipedia.org; 'All-time Olympic Games medal table', *Wikipedia*, accessed 16.11.2014, www.wikipedia.org; 'All-Time Olympic Games Medal Tally (Summer Olympics)', *Top-End Sports*, accessed 16.11.2014, www.topendsports.com.
[7] Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 65-103.

Soviet athletes' participation in international sport during the 1950s, the possibility of conducting such contests in the USSR itself began to appear within certain quarters of the party-state. They place this development within the context of a nascent plan to use the orchestration of international sporting and youth events for the purpose of promoting socialism (and in turn, ideological competition). Soviet officials were motivated by the assumption that hosting events of this kind would demonstrate 'the impressive nature of the [USSR's] society of the future' to the outside world. But aside from highlighting the positive aspects of socialism at home, some in the Soviet leadership of the 1950s also believed that welcoming the world's athletes and youth to their country by hosting the Olympics would prove the Soviet Union's fidelity to 'peaceful coexistence' with capitalism – that is, the none-threatening nature of its foreign policy.[8] The USSR's perceived superpower obligations to compete with capitalism across all spheres – in particular, in the realm of propaganda and the struggle for hearts and minds – thus produced a new impetus for the orchestration of a Moscow Olympiad on Soviet territory, for expressly political purposes, where none had previously existed (or had struggled to find any high-level support) due to the isolationism, xenophobia and class-based opposition to the franchise which had existed up to the end of the Stalin era.[9] This claim seems entirely plausible when one recalls the fact that the centralised and hierarchical nature of the USSR's political system always ensured that the overarching policy goals and platforms of Soviet leaders permeated the specific agenda of every ancillary organisation within the party-state to a greater or lesser degree. It is highly likely therefore that there was a fundamental causal link between the overall shift in Soviet foreign policy in the 1950s to greater activism in world affairs in order to take on capitalism in every sphere through 'peaceful competition' on the one hand, and a new departure in the sports bureaucracy's attitude towards the importance and desirability of hosting and participating in international sports events on the other.

The Russian historians point to the thinking underlying the USSR's orchestration of the World Youth Festival in Moscow in 1957 (a major part of which involved sport competitions between representatives of many different countries) to reinforce this idea. The Festival, they argue, 'became a major event in the [Soviet state's] plan to mobilise the world's progressive youth' for the cause of promoting the global transition to socialism.[10] Other historians have discerned similar purposes behind 1957 in terms of trumpeting the virtues of the Soviet system to the outside world.[11] A statement regarding the Soviet Olympic

[8] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 7-9.
[9] Parks, "Red Sport", 23, 25-8, 35-6.
[10] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 9.
[11] Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 101, 110; P. Koivunen, "The 1957 Moscow Youth Festival: Propagating a new, peaceful image of the Soviet Union", in J. Smith and M. Ilic (eds.), *Soviet State and Society*

Committee's participation in the preparations for the Youth Festival, made at the organisation's plenum in May 1956, buttresses the view that sports bureaucrats conceptualised hosting the Youth Festival in terms of the political purposes it could serve. The Committee employed a formulation which unmistakeably hinted at the Soviet preoccupation with portraying the USSR as a country of peaceful internationalism: 'The Committee…expresses the certainty that the [Youth Festival's sport] competitions will strengthen friendship between sportsmen of all countries.'[12] This event was thus clearly conducted in the Soviet Union for the purpose of rallying the global public to the socialist cause, by orchestrating it in such a way that it would lead onlookers to associate the country with the benign ideal of peaceful international communion. The nature of the Youth Festival reinforces the notion that by the 1950s the orchestration of international competitions in the USSR specifically, rather than mere participation in them by its representatives abroad, were seen as a key way to increase communist influence in the fields of culture and ideology by presenting the country's policies in a positive light, and thereby compete with capitalism. In turn, it becomes apparent how a Moscow Olympiad, as a very similar but more prestigious event, came to be seen as a viable policy initiative at this particular juncture in Soviet history.

Yet the importance of 1957 to the pre-history of 1980 is not only to be found in its capacity as an example of the trend towards Soviet self-promotion through hosting international events. To some degree, holding the Youth Festival by itself contributed to the official realisation of the feasibility of, as well as the specific political dividends to be accrued from, hosting an Olympiad. Prozumenshchikov and Konova make the case that 'if the Youth Festival became a major event in the [Soviet] plan to [promote socialism internationally], then the highest prize [in this regard] became the Olympics.' The perceived success of 1957, in demonstrating to Soviet policy-makers the propaganda uses to which the Games could be put, ensured that henceforth conducting them in Moscow 'became the primary aim in the Kremlin leaders' policy regarding international sport.'[13] To expand on this point, the official assumption that 1957 had a beneficial effect on the USSR's reputation abroad solidified the conviction among Soviet administrators that hosting international public gatherings in the USSR could genuinely contribute to the goal of increasing communist influence. As noted, the Youth Festival primarily represented the by-product, rather than the origin, of this new approach to promoting socialism. But the fact that the country's first large-scale initiative of this kind did not fail in its aims (or so Soviet officials

Under Nikita Khrushchev (Abingdon, 2009), 47-50.

[12] GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.464, ll.42-43.

[13] Prozumenshchikov, and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 9.

thought) could only have confirmed policy-makers' belief in the viability of hosting international events for propagandising the advantages of state socialism and the merits of its 'peaceful' international agenda, thus consolidating it as a policy. This was, undoubtedly, a necessary precondition for hosting the Games; 1957 as a singular event must therefore be seen as a separate but related long-term influence pushing the Soviet state towards its eventual decision to bid for the Olympics.

As it stands, the research carried out by Prozumenshchikov and Konova offers an adequate explanation for the long-term origins of the Games in Moscow, with the cogency of their basic arguments and reliability of their source base allowing one to confidently infer that the early roots of Moscow-80 lay in the changes taking place in the USSR's foreign policy. However, an examination of additional archival documents which these historians did not consult indicates that this is not the whole story. In order to fully understand the genesis of Moscow-80, one must look beyond the basic Soviet interest in participating in and orchestrating international sports events to the important connections between hosting the Games and controlling the Olympic franchise's administration.

The Ideological Struggle Within the IOC

These connections can be explained by looking to the ideological worldview of Soviet officialdom in the Cold War context. A 1961 report of the USSR Olympic Committee summarised this worldview in the following way: '…as in all spheres of international life, [including] within the Olympic movement, a constant battle is taking place…between that which is advanced and progressive and that which is conservative and reactionary.'[14] A fundamental principle of Soviet ideology – the struggle between competing social systems – was thus the basic interpretative framework for Soviet sports officials in relation to the evolution of the Olympic franchise, and in turn the USSR's involvement in their administration and organisation.

Apropos of this, from the late 1950s onwards Soviet sport administrators perceived seemingly mundane debates about the way the Olympics were administered and the IOC functioned as skirmishes between 'progressive forces' and 'imperialists'. In 1958 for example, proposals to reduce the number of sport events at the Games were interpreted by the USSR Olympic Committee as proof of a 'discriminatory attitude' held amongst members of the IOC 'towards the sports organisations of the peoples' democracies'.[15] A 1961 a proposal to amalgamate international sports organisations, meanwhile, was considered to be an attempt by 'reactionary forces' to 'impose their will on those

[14] GARF, f.9570, op.4, d.104, ll.1-2.
[15] GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.468, l.2.

international [sports] federations through which we have been successfully championing our interests'.[16] These officials may have been justified in suspecting that the world's pre-eminent communist power would face enmity from the IOC, which was largely made up of individuals of a conservative bent from the upper classes of Western societies.[17] However, their perception of ideological conflict was greatly exaggerated; the Soviets read hostile political intent into almost every administrative proposal coming out of the organisation.

Because so many of the administrative changes proposed in the IOC were seen from this ideologically-charged perspective, Soviet sport officials naturally became preoccupied with the level of communist influence within the organisation. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, reports sent to the Soviet leadership frequently complained that 'progressive forces' had yet to achieve a decisive breakthrough in international sports administration; the USSR's influence over the organisation remained limited despite its steadily increasing involvement, and its representatives were frequently on the defensive in the face of the conservatives' attacks.[18] An aggressive struggle to control the IOC and build up communist influence at the expense of ideological enemies (euphemistically described as the 'democratisation' of international sport) correspondingly became the cornerstone of Soviet policy by the mid-1950s.[19] One of the ways this was to be achieved was outlined in a 1956 draft resolution of the Olympic Committee. Soviet sport organisations were instructed to expand the number of their representatives and allies in the IOC, getting them elected to 'leading organs.'[20] N. Romanov, Chairman of the Soviet Sports Committee, later described this practice to his superiors in terms of enacting a 'fundamental change of leadership' in the IOC. By the turn of the 1960s, Soviet officials were trying to mobilise as much support as possible for transforming its political composition in order to give themselves a voting advantage in the process of administering the Olympic movement. Socialist-bloc representatives in the IOC insisted at this time on the removal of (Western-aligned) Taiwan's national Olympic Committee and the re-recognition of communist China's, along with those of other Soviet allies such as the German Democratic Republic (GDR), Albania, North Vietnam and Mongolia.[21] Soviet representatives also supported proposals for the recognition of NOCs from many developing countries, such as Somalia, in the apparent

[16] GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.689, l.77; f.9570, op.4, d.104, ll.9-11.
[17] Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch*, 15-16.
[18] GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.464, l.15; f.9570, op.4, d.104, ll.2-5, l.19; f.9570, op.1, d.445, l.18, l.21; RGANI, f.5, op.66, d.157, l.68.
[19] Parks, "Red Sport", 84.
[20] GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.464, ll.16-18.
[21] *Ibid.*, l.20; GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.445, ll.4-7, ll.23-25.

belief that ex-colonial states would be natural allies of the USSR and would support its interests within the IOC.[22]

A decade later, in 1972, the USSR's supporters in the IOC were still pursuing the same course, mobilising to defeat a motion to reinstate US-ally South Africa as a member of the organisation.[23] Soviet officials also utilised the 1973 Olympic Congress in Varna, Bulgaria to change the composition of the IOC, excising leading 'reactionaries' from its ranks.[24] Once the USSR's allies gained entry to the organisation, they formed an effective voting block championing Soviet interests. From the moment representatives of the socialist countries first gained membership of the IOC following the co-option of the first two Soviet delegates, Olympic Committee Chairman K. Andrianov and Romanov, in 1951-2, 'the Communist bloc took [its] cue from the Soviet members…whenever either [Andrianov or Romanov]...made a proposal, the Communist members dutifully rose, one by one, to parrot their approval.' This phenomenon persisted until the collapse of communism forty years later.[25]

An equally important strategy for advancing influence in the IOC pursued in this period involved establishing personal and professional connections with foreign international sport officials. Parks has written extensively about this policy, showing that, again starting in the 1950s, 'a legion of [Soviet] bureaucrats…spent…twenty years cultivating a network of…important and influential sports figures' through both formal and private meetings. By emphasising their organisational skills, expert knowledge, and commitment to the peaceful goals of international sport, Soviet officials sought to increase their authority in the IOC, develop respectful and cooperative professional relationships as well as warm personal ties, and elicit support for their proposals. In particular, Andrianov, as the key Soviet representative in the IOC, 'successfully established a personal connection with [A.] Brundage [IOC president 1952-72] as a way to overcome the fundamental ideological differences between the two and present himself as a sports authority and keen promoter of Olympism.' The result was that the president's 'attitude toward the Soviet IOC members gradually improved.'[26] By the time of the 1973 Olympic Congress, the extent to which personal and professional contacts with members of the IOC had expanded had become a cause for great satisfaction among Soviet sport officials.[27]

[22] GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.689, ll.4-11.
[23] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.181, ll.4-5, ll.16-18.
[24] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.231, ll.10-12; f.7576, op.35, d.231, ll.5-6; RGANI, f.5, op.66, d.157, l.68.
[25] D. Miller, *The Official History of the Olympic Games and the IOC: Athens to London, 1894-2012 - Part II: The Post-War Years (1948-1980)* (Edinburgh, 2012), 146.
[26] Parks, "Red Sport", 84, 91-99, 105-112, 125-6, 138-43, 202-7, 260.
[27] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.229, ll.5-6, l.38, l.48.

One can make a connection between this ideologically fuelled push for greater control in the IOC and the Soviet state's decision to bid for the Games after 1969. Firstly, greater influence in that organisation would help bring the Games to the USSR, if by definition 'greater influence' means greater control over the IOC's decisions either through formal means (a larger voting bloc) or informal ones (cooperative personal relations) – all of which the Soviets tried to achieve both before and during[28] the period when a bid was being floated by the Sports Committee and CC. Indeed, Parks, who has examined Soviet involvement in the IOC in considerably greater detail, independently came to the same conclusion, surmising that the key to Soviet sport bureaucrats' eventual success in bringing the Olympics to Moscow was precisely this policy of influence building.[29] Likewise, in 1981 Baruch Hazan suggested that attempts to get 'pro-Soviet' individuals into the IOC, at least in the early 1970s, was a constituent part of the USSR's efforts to 'soften up' the organisation before voting took place for the location of the 1980 Games in 1974.[30] Archival research thus appears to confirm the long-suspected link between the Moscow Olympics and the Soviet Union's long-term strategy in the IOC.

Beyond this, in the face of a number of key doubts about the desirability of bringing the Olympiad to the USSR (discussed below), the Moscow Games would likely not have taken place had it not been for the influence of Marxist-Leninist ideology determining officials' perceptions of the political meaning and potential value of the Olympic franchise to the Soviet state. As it turned out, this ideological approach to the IOC meant the Soviets had an interest in capturing the Olympic brand as a global franchise through which to prosecute the Cold War; international sport became a sphere of activity which had to be dominated and harnessed to Soviet interests. This could be done not only in terms of the participation of Soviet athletes in the actual sport competitions and in terms of propagandising socialism through such international spectacles noted above. Soviet ideology clearly gave impetus to the belief that the state's interests could be served in a more general sense, by regulating the tone of the IOC's activities through control of its *administration*. And what could better represent the Soviets' complete victory here than hosting the main (summer) Olympics themselves? In addition to offering the chance for a large-scale propaganda campaign to boost the USSR's image, hosting the Games would have been the logical conclusion to the Soviets' decades-long policy of ingratiating themselves into the IOC in order to dominate it as an organisation. It would have put their officials at the centre of its activities for years on end, both in terms of the sporting aspects themselves and more generally with regards to

[28] See next section.
[29] Parks, "Red Sport", 197, 260.
[30] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 77.

Olympic governance, and thus in a more influential position than their rivals in international sport, albeit for a limited period. Furthermore, if the Soviet Union could orchestrate an Olympiad successfully, it would logically enhance its authority within the IOC, having accorded it a reputation for supreme competence in the administration of international sport as well as proven its loyalty to the IOC's goals. In offering the possibility of organisational domination and increased authority, Soviet officials may well have thought, hosting the Olympics would strike a significant blow against their ideological enemies in this important area of international activity.

Thus, the two goals of orchestrating the Olympics and establishing dominance over the IOC were capable of complementing each other. It is doubtful that building influence in the IOC was undertaken solely with the ultimate purpose of bringing the Games to Moscow; not only is there is no trace of such an intention in the archival record, but one can appreciate how the former activity was likely seen as a worthwhile goal in itself. Nevertheless, the clear overlap between the two policies here suggests one ought to factor in Soviet activities in the IOC as an additional, integral element of the Games' genesis which has been overlooked by Prozumenshchikov and Konova.

The Soviet Leadership's Attitude Towards the Olympics Project

Early Contemplation of an Olympic Bid

The basic connection between the desire to host the Games and the ideological struggle in the IOC is confirmed by the fact that in the same period, plans were put together by the same Soviet officials for launching a bid to host the Olympics in Moscow. In April 1956, Soviet sport administrators sent a proposal to the CPSU's Central Committee recommending a Soviet bid for the 1964 Olympic Games. In order to achieve this goal, the Sports Committee suggested inviting as many foreign guests as possible to the 1956 Spartakiad of the Peoples of the USSR (a quadrennial national sports event held in the Soviet Union) in order to both prove the country's ability to organise mass sporting events and showcase Moscow's stock of available sporting infrastructure, whilst simultaneously distributing propaganda materials abroad about the Soviet capital.[31] Although this idea was first left without a response, and then later explicitly rejected by the CC Secretariat in December 1958 when the Sports Committee requested a second time that it consider a bid for 1964, the idea of hosting the Games 'continued to receive a favourable response among [unidentified] party leaders' in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[32] In addition, the attempts

[31] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 9.
[32] *Ibid.*, 9-11; Parks, "Red Sport", 196.

made by Soviet sport administrators to determine the location of the 1962 and 1963 IOC sessions have been interpreted as evidence that the 1968 Olympics were under consideration by the leadership during this period, again on the initiative of their subordinates in the Sports Committee and the Soviet NOC. Soviet leaders appear to have calculated that hosting the IOC in the USSR would play to their advantage should they decide to opt for an Olympic bid at this time, which was due to be decided at the first of these sessions. The Soviet Union also supported Tokyo's bid for the 1964 Games because it was trying to build support for a future Soviet bid among Asian countries in return.[33] Indeed, it was around this time that USSR NOC official M. Pesliak pointedly made note of the IOC tradition of alternating the choice of Olympic host between Europe and a different continent, suggesting very strongly that Soviet support for Japan's 1964 bid was aimed at aiding a possible bid of their own for 1968.[34]

Pesliak first made these remarks in private to colleagues from the Eastern Bloc countries. But two months after he did so (in May 1959, on the eve of the IOC session which would decide the location of the 1964 Olympiad), the Soviet Olympic Committee proposed publishing an article in the national press which would publicly reveal the USSR's interest in hosting the 1968 Games for the first time, in yet another attempt to get the ball rolling. Central Committee officials refused to allow such an explicit statement to appear, but still opted for a version of the article which tellingly pointed out that 'organising the 1964 Olympics in a European city would exclude…[the possibility of] proposing Moscow as host for the 1968 Olympics.' Because the CC refused for a long time to categorically rule out an application for the 1968 Games in this manner, the Sports Committee was driven to submit, in March 1963, another detailed bid proposal.[35] Ultimately however, Parks notes that 'Moscow never put together a bid for…[1968], presumably because the Central Committee withheld its permission'.[36] Indeed, Prozumenshchikov and Konova describe the tone of the note prepared by the CC Propaganda Department which rejected this attempt – which they argue was 'prepared after consultation with the highest Party leadership' – as 'distinctly negative'. This was despite the signs that the leadership had been giving out that it was apparently seriously contemplating going for the 1968 Olympiad, at a time when the venture appeared to fit perfectly with the optimism and ambition of the early 1960s.[37]

Yet another bid proposal, this time for the 1972 Games, was put together in late 1965, apparently in part as a result of the awareness among Sports Committee officials that

[33] *Ibid.*, 197-99.
[34] GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.445, l.85; Parks, "Red Sport", 197-99.
[35] *Ibid.*, 197-98; Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 12-13.
[36] Parks, "Red Sport", 201.
[37] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 11-12, 14.

awarding the summer Games to non-European hosts twice in a row in 1964 and 1968 almost guaranteed the XX Olympiad would take place once more in a European city. Once more, however, the bid was rejected by the CC, which again 'demonstrated [its] unwillingness to throw its weight behind [sport bureaucrats'] desire to host the Olympic Games.'[38] The Sports Committee was informed by the Deputy Head of the CC Propaganda Department that the Central Committee still believed the question of Moscow's candidature for the Olympics required 'additional and more detailed consideration.'[39] Soviet policy-makers thus vacillated considerably over whether or not to approve the Olympic project throughout the Khrushchev period and into the first years of Brezhnev's administration.

Without access to the records of the higher Party organs, it is impossible to say for certain whether these suggestions for a bid first emerged from among the highest leadership or mid-ranking sport administrators. Parks asserts that the whole impetus for the Games came from below, seeing the fact that the Sports Committee's first proposal for a bid was addressed to Brezhnev (at the time one of the secretaries in the CC Secretariat, who were each responsible for developing proposals in several areas of policy) as a sign that the country's top politicians were only patrons of ideas conceived elsewhere. The Soviet central leadership was only drawn closer to the idea of hosting the Games because of the persistent lobbying by lower-level bureaucrats.[40] Yet Prozumenshchikov and Konova argue equally persuasively that the initiative for the idea could only have come forward from the Sports Committee in the 1950s if figures in the central leadership had already signaled genuine interest, claiming that the drawing up of 'an official document [on a 1964 bid] testifies to the CC…having [implicitly] given the go-ahead to the Sports Committee to work on [such a] project'.[41] More generally, the Russian historians are surely right to recognise that the role of the highest Soviet leadership cannot be discounted when trying to pinpoint the architects of the Olympic project. Even if Soviet sport officials largely conceived of the Moscow Olympics on their own, they were interpreting their responsibilities here within the general tone of policy set by their superiors in the Politburo and CC, which was in part characterised by an emphasis on the global ideological struggle as the essence of international relations (and in turn, by the imperative of seeking opportunities wherever possible for the expansion of Soviet influence vis-à-vis the West).

[38] *Ibid.*, 14-15; Parks, "Red Sport", 207-211.
[39] Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 198.
[40] Parks, "Red Sport", 195-201, 207-8, 260-61.
[41] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 9-11.

What only remains to be elaborated in detail here is why these early Olympic bids were never approved. Once again, Prozumenshchikov and Konova provide much useful information here. Their examination of still-classified Communist Party records suggests overall that figures in the Central Committee acted as a roadblock to the ambitions of sport administrators to bring the Olympics to Moscow.

Obstacles to an Olympic Bid

There were several major obstacles which combined to discourage the Soviet leadership from coming out in favour of a Soviet Olympiad for more than a decade between 1956 and 1969. On the one hand, the presence of conservative Stalinists in the Soviet leadership in the 1950s, who opposed the move towards 'peaceful coexistence' with capitalism, meant that the ruling circle remained divided over the idea of opening up the USSR to the outside world for the Olympics. On the other, the fear that the Soviet economy would be unable to bear the strain of a massive and rapid improvement in infrastructure necessary for the Games was acute in the 1950s and 1960s. The CC Secretariat refused to authorise the aforementioned Olympic bid proposed in 1963 in part because of the conditions of economic crisis which gripped the USSR during Nikita Khrushchev's last years in office, which meant that hosting the Olympics was seen as an inexcusable luxury. Paradoxically, it seems that whilst the 1957 Youth Festival stimulated interest in hosting the Games, it also made Soviet leaders simultaneously alert early on to these two dangers, having highlighted both the backwardness of Soviet infrastructure and the unwelcome consequences of an influx of Westerners to the USSR's capital.[42]

The Olympics project also did not enjoy the crucial support of Khrushchev himself during the decade when he held the reins of power in the Soviet Union. In 1963, the First Secretary reacted impatiently to the Sports Committee's latest proposal, claiming that the country could not afford to expend such a large amount of resources when 'more important and complex tasks stand before the country'.[43] Archival evidence suggests that Khrushchev showed little awareness of the possible benefits which could be accrued from hosting the Games, underlining the fact that he believed a Soviet Olympiad would be nothing but a burden on the country. In particular, an unenthusiastic conversation he had with IOC President Brundage in 1962 indicates that the Soviet leader had not grasped the possibility of expanding the USSR's influence over the franchise by hosting the Games, nor more generally of exploiting such an event for propaganda purposes.[44] This is all the more

[42] *Ibid.*, 10-11, 14; Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 100-110.
[43] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 13-14.
[44] GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.822, ll.1-4. This document was discovered with the help of Parks' thesis.

interesting given his well-documented propensity to bluster about the Soviet Union's future victories over the West/America in other areas where the two rival systems were in competition. Parks argues that the meeting with Brundage was arranged independently by senior sports bureaucrats out of their own desire to advance Soviet influence in the IOC, rather than because of any particular interest in a face-to-face encounter on Khrushchev's part.[45] Judging by all this, the Olympics were low on Khrushchev's priorities as an area of policy. In turn, one can appreciate that there was very little impetus for hosting them coming from the Party leader at this time. Khrushchev was not a key figure in the history of the Soviet Olympic project, despite the fact that the USSR significantly increased its participation in the franchise under his leadership and his general desire to stamp his authority on all areas of policy.[46] In the Soviet political system, where the General Secretary of the Communist Party had a great deal of power in setting the policy agenda, Khrushchev's lack of interest was likely of great significance in delaying the realisation of the Olympic project.

In addition, since it was primarily understood as a foreign policy venture,[47] the willingness to entertain the idea of a Soviet Olympiad was inevitably affected by the general climate of international relations – and for much of the fifties and early sixties, superpower relations were far from stable, despite the talk of 'peaceful coexistence'. Khrushchev's periodical recourse to brinkmanship with the USA and the USSR's intervention in Hungary were hardly conducive to any Soviet attempt to strengthen its image as a peaceful, benevolent global power through the Olympics. Equally, at the end of 1962, unidentified officials within the CC were said to have ruled out trying to organise the Olympics in the USSR as 'inappropriate' in conditions of heightened tensions between both East and West and within the socialist camp (they were probably referring to the Berlin and Cuban Missile Crises and the Sino-Soviet Split). External tensions thus produced a reversal in the CC's growing interest in bidding for the 1968 Games which had developed over the previous few years, reaching its high point with the Soviets' successful attempt to host the IOC's 59th Session in Moscow (noted above).[48] In fact, one can extend this argument and attribute the lack of progress on the Soviet Olympic project for the remainder of the 1960s under Brezhnev, as well, to the ongoing instability of superpower relations, with the crushing of the Prague Spring proving to be another short-term setback to the flowering of détente as late as 1968. Indeed, Parks cites archival documents from the period which suggest that 'Soviet foreign policy in the late 1960s hampered [sport administrators'] efforts to host the

[45] Parks, "Red Sport", 203-5.
[46] On Khrushchev and the Olympics, see Parks, "Red Sport", chapters two and three.
[47] See chapter four.
[48] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 10, 13; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 196.

Games'. In particular, the increase in anti-Soviet feeling among the USSR's allies in the socialist bloc which resulted from the intervention in Czechoslovakia made it all the harder to coordinate actions with those countries' IOC representatives, in addition to undermining goodwill felt towards the USSR in Western Europe among both international sport officials and the general population – all of which would clearly be crucial in any Soviet attempt to win hosting rights. More generally, the 'volatile international situation after 1964' most likely delayed official approval for a Soviet bid in the early years of Brezhnev's rule; 'events both inside and outside the world of sports may have contributed to the hesitancy of the Central Committee to approve a bid [in 1965] to host the Games in 1972'. Among these events was the Six-Day War in 1967, which prompted a Soviet crackdown on Jewish emigration and in turn, Parks seems to imply, Soviet wariness of protests against any future Moscow Olympics from the international Jewish community. The spilling over of the student protest movement of 1968 onto the streets of Mexico City, which hosted the summer Olympics in the same year, also caused consternation.[49]

The Disappearance of Obstacles to an Olympic Bid

One of the most important developments which led to a reconsideration of the Sports Committee's bid proposals was the emergence of Leonid Brezhnev as the leading figure in the Soviet leadership, after he and his colleagues unceremoniously deposed Khrushchev in 1964. Brezhnev appears to have been the long-time principal supporter of the Olympics project within the post-Stalin ruling group. Archival materials seen by Prozumenshchikov and Konova indicate that he responded favourably to the Sports Committee's 1956 proposal when presented with it as a then-member of the CC Secretariat, recommending that it be 'discussed in greater depth' at a meeting of that body. In view of the Russian historian's aforementioned argument that sports bureaucrats would not have produced a formal proposal without first having probed for high-level interest, Brezhnev's recommendation here indicates he was the figure (or perhaps, one of several) who had initially encouraged them. Another sign that Brezhnev was instrumental in encouraging the Sports Committee is the fact that, not long after he favourably reviewed its first proposal, the CC Secretariat decided to send 30 officials to the 1956 Melbourne Games to observe how a host nation went about preparing and conducting such an event[50] – a signal that the venture was being taken seriously by Soviet policy-makers. Considering the relatively narrow membership of the Secretariat (at the time it included just eight senior politicians), there is a high chance that Brezhnev was the primary instigator of this move, which took

[49] Parks, "Red Sport", 211, 213-214, 216.
[50] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 9-10, 15.

place at a time when Khrushchev as First Secretary showed no interest whatsoever in the idea of a Soviet Olympiad. It is therefore likely in turn that Brezhnev was among those senior Party figures recorded as having continued to give their support to Sports Committee proposals into the early 1960s. Indeed, it was Brezhnev, in his capacity as Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium (that is, formal head of state), who addressed members of the IOC at the organisation's 59th Session, held in Moscow in June 1962. He not only used the occasion to pointedly 'assert his personal support' for the Olympic franchise, but his speech also strongly implied that the USSR (or he personally) was interested in hosting a future Olympiad,[51] in what can be interpreted as both a signal to international sports figures and a sign of encouragement to Sports Committee officials at home. Although Parks suggests Brezhnev's involvement here, much like Khrushchev's encounter with Brundage, was engineered by Soviet sports bureaucrats for the sake of forging a path to a Soviet bid,[52] it is clear that he responded willingly. His prominent role at this event, coupled with the claim that there was strong interest in the 1968 Games among the Soviet leadership at this time, and in view of the fact that hosting the IOC session was seen specifically as a possible stepping-stone to a bid (noted above), suggests it was again Brezhnev who stood among those pushing for the venture at this time.

Thus, after October 1964, the Sports Committee's long-time supporter in this matter became the most powerful member of the Politburo. Limited access to the archival record does not allow for an examination of Brezhnev's response to the final aborted proposal to bid for the XX Games prepared in 1965, or whether the pressures of the top job allowed him much time to devote serious attention to the project at all in the early years of his leadership. But Prozumenshchikov and Konova attest that he gave his personal endorsement to the idea of a Soviet Olympics at some point after he was installed as General Secretary, in a way which was completely at odds with his predecessor's dismissal of earlier proposals. They therefore conclude that the palace coup of 1964 was decisive in transforming the Moscow Olympics from a mere policy proposal suggested by mid-level bureaucrats to a real goal of the top Party leadership: 'If [under Khrushchev] the Sports Committee's "Olympic ambitions" were constantly thwarted by excuses emanating from the [Central Committee] bureaucracy, then [under Brezhnev] the Kremlin itself displayed the initiative [in pursuing the Games]'.[53] Parks, on the basis of a detailed examination of documents from the Sports Committee, agrees with this assessment.[54]

[51] Parks, "Red Sport", 205-6; Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 70.
[52] Parks, "Red Sport", 207.
[53] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 15.
[54] Parks, "Red Sport", 195-6.

These historians attribute Brezhnev's endorsement of the Olympics largely to his personal love of sport.[55] At the same time, Parks notes how Brezhnev made statements to the effect that a Soviet Olympiad could be used to the USSR's advantage politically, describing how in his presentation to the 1962 IOC session, 'Brezhnev connected the Olympic ideal of physical and moral development of the individual to the Soviet domestic agenda to improve the standard of living…[and] argued that the Olympic goal of bringing together the peoples of the world in peaceful interaction through sport was…the foundation of Soviet foreign policy.'[56] He thus emphasised the idea of the potential benefits to various important elements of the Soviet state's policy agenda as justification for organising an Olympiad on Soviet soil in the current epoch, in contrast to Khrushchev's attitude that such an event would be nothing but a burden on the country and thus undeserving of government backing.

Parks offers an additional, persuasive argument explaining why Brezhnev's rise was probably crucial here, although in a way which had nothing to do with his personal interest in the Olympics project *per se*. The greater autonomy in formulating policies given to individual parts of the state bureaucracy after 1964 made it possible 'for the idea of a Moscow Olympiad to become a reality', in the sense that that such a technocratic, hands-off approach adopted by the post-Khrushchev leadership gave the Sports Committee 'free [rein] to pursue [its] plans [for a bid].'[57] Thus, if the Olympics project could not receive the green light before Brezhnev due to Khrushchev's belief in closely supervising all major policy initiatives and his disparaging view of this specific venture, the ethos of the Brezhnev era, in giving experts in their respective field some degree of professional autonomy, meant it was much more likely to be sanctioned after 1964, as the responsibility for the perceived administrative burden it would entail could be delegated rather than completely shouldered by the top leaders and the General Secretary in particular.

In other respects, one can plausibly infer that several of the remaining obstacles to a Soviet Olympic bid had disappeared, or at least subsided, by the end of the sixties. In particular, the bonanza in hard currency receipts received from substantially increased energy exports during this period may well have influenced the Brezhnev regime's thinking on the economic feasibility of the Games, in terms of leading to the belief that there now existed a more stable economic foundation for a future Moscow Olympiad. Certainly, it has been variously argued the Brezhnev leadership felt sufficiently awash with oil revenue in the

[55] *Ibid.*, 195, 260; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 198.
[56] Parks, "Red Sport", 205-6.
[57] *Ibid.*, 260-1.

1970s to sanction such enormously expensive policies as a substantial military build-up, increased imports of technology, consumer goods and grain, and improved material perks for the burgeoning bureaucratic class, all at the same time.[58] It thus proved remarkably willing to rely on energy exports to finance some of its core economic and social policies.[59] This in turn invites the idea that the Olympic project (in terms of the key question of the investment it would require in infrastructure) may have seemed more viable to the Politburo as an economic undertaking by this time. Admittedly, the real benefits of the oil export boom were mainly felt after 1973 – that is, *after* the leadership had first authorised an Olympic occurred place well before that point, in the decade after 1959 (when the USSR correspondingly made the transition from a net importer to a net exporter of oil) and even earlier as regards natural gas.[60] There was therefore likely growing anticipation of imminent substantial economic benefits – in particular the possibility of vastly increased export revenues – among Soviet leaders precisely during the decade in which the Party approved an Olympic bid, regardless of the fact the Oil Shock in the West had yet to fall into their laps. This suggests one cannot rule out the importance of the oil revenue factor in serving to improve the prospects of the Games going ahead. Indeed, given that the Soviet leadership continued to face economic difficulties in a whole number of other areas into the 1970s, it seems that if one single development in the economic sphere could have eroded official fears with regards to this dimension of hosting the Olympics, it was this substantial improvement in the balance of trade.

In addition, by the time of the first bid in 1969 (discussed below), it has been argued that a more stable economic administration had come into being under Brezhnev, which had led to a decline in perceptions of economic crisis among the elite.[61] Moreover, at this point the economy was still in a slightly higher cycle of growth compared to what came after 1973, even if growth rates were declining overall, and even saw a brief improvement in growth.[62] The Kosygin reforms of the late sixties appear to have produced a degree of official optimism regarding the country's economic capabilities.[63] Economic stabilisation and moderate growth might have produced a greater sense of economic security among the

[58] P. Hanson, *The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Economy: An Economic History of the USSR from 1945* (Harlow, 2003), 163; A. Brown, *The Rise and Fall of Communism* (London, 2009), 416; Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*, 31-3; S. Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted: The Soviet Collapse, 1970-2000* (New York, 2001), 15-16; V. Zubok, "The Soviet Union and détente of the 1970s", *Cold War History*, volume 8, number 4 (November 2008), 439.
[59] *Ibid.*; Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*, 31.
[60] Kotkin, *Armageddon Averted*, 15; R.G. Jensen, T. Shabad, and A.W. Wright (eds.), *Soviet Natural Resources in the World Economy* (Chicago, 1983), 310-14.
[61] Merl, "Soviet Economy", 28-65.
[62] Hanson, *Rise and Fall*, 108-12.
[63] Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*, 27-9.

Soviet leadership, in turn reducing the degree to which such considerations impeded high-level approval for an Olympics bid. Although concerns about economic cost would subsequently re-emerge in top-level debates on the Games,[64] it is impossible to imagine that a bid could have been approved if the leadership's concerns about finance and infrastructure had not been at least temporarily assuaged – and the issues of oil and slightly improved growth are the most logical factors to point to in this regard. The alternative is to posit that the leadership at some point became convinced that the political benefits of hosting the Olympics would be so great as to justify the unavoidable economic strain. However, there is no evidence to support this idea, and it is difficult to imagine what the source of such a change in opinion could have been.

Finally, the shift away from brinkmanship and confrontation towards more stable relations and even genuine cooperation with key Western states after 1968 also likely facilitated the turn towards support for a bid where international relations had previously been an obstacle. The limited opening up of the USSR to the outside world necessitated by the Games, as well as the international community's willingness to accept a Soviet Olympiad, were clearly much more likely in the era of détente. Indeed, the prerequisites for such a new approach to the Olympiad on both sides of the Cold War divide – a commitment to increased east-west cultural exchange and a softening of the propaganda assault against the other side – were important elements of the détente process.[65] Consequently, hosting the Games was probably seen as having a greater chance of success by this time on the part of the Brezhnev leadership, which could surely have influenced it to approve a bid. In this sense, and if seen in conjunction with the previous factors, the Olympics can be seen specifically as a product of the Brezhnev era. This period saw a combination of leadership change, economic advances and an important foreign policy shift which together facilitated the approval of a bid (and in turn, the eventual arrival of the franchise to Soviet soil in 1980). In addition, the successful orchestration of the Universiad (an international student sport competition) in Moscow in 1973, too, apparently made world public opinion more favourably disposed towards the USSR hosting the Games, giving Soviet officials more confidence that their bid would meet with success even after it had been launched on the strength of these other factors.[66]

[64] Discussed below.
[65] On the softening of propaganda, see V. Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill, 2007), 225.
[66] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 25.

The Olympic Bids

The 1976 Bid

With their concerns having dissipated, the Soviet leadership finally endorsed its first bid for the Olympics, which got under way in November 1969. No effort was spared in mobilising the administrative resources required to make it a success. Soviet officials held innumerable meetings with members of the IOC, NOCs, and international sport federations in an effort to secure widespread support for holding the XXI summer Olympics in Moscow (the location of which would be decided in May 1970).[67] Parks notes the 'sheer enormity of the coordination necessary to bring the Olympics to Moscow' which characterised this first bid, recording that a diverse number of agencies were mobilised, from the Moscow city authorities to the VTsSPS, Komsomol, the Foreign Ministry and various mass media organisations, with coordination being provided by the Central Committee Secretariat – one of the most powerful structures within the central party-state. The campaign was spearheaded by the interlocking bureaucracies of the Sports Committee and the Olympic Committee, who with the help of Soviet IOC members 'work[ed] all [of] their international connections, schmooz[ed] with powerful individuals in the sporting world, and sen[t] battalions of sports officials all over the world to cultivate support for Moscow'.[68]

Indeed, the impressive scale of the 1976 bid is very much apparent from the archival record. The Sports Committee's first decree on putting forward Moscow's candidacy ordered the establishment of various inter-departmental commissions, such as those on promotional propaganda, planning for construction of Olympic facilities, and the organisation of the sporting events. These commissions included representatives of such organisations as the state news agencies TASS and APN Novosti and members of the VTsSPS tourism department. The decree also included a highly detailed, twenty one-point action plan to be carried out by various state and Party agencies throughout 1969 and 1970. The plan stipulated that statements should be made in the domestic and international press, followed by the organisation of exhibitions and the screening of short films about Moscow for IOC members. Once the official announcement of the bid had been made at the scheduled IOC meeting, Soviet officials initiated joint work with the state sport organisations of their socialist-bloc allies to promote Moscow's candidacy. Soviet foreign missions in African, Asian and Latin American states organised receptions for members of these countries' national sport organisations in an attempt to secure their support.

[67] *Ibid.*, 16-19.
[68] Parks, "Red Sport", 221-22, 226, 229-30.

Members of the Soviet Olympic Committee were also put to work lobbying IOC members in Europe and the USA, whilst the latter's members were also invited to Moscow for the same purpose. Finally, during the IOC session in 1970 at which the host city was decided, Soviet sport administrators organised a reception for the delegates, and also provided them with commemorative gifts and souvenirs specially produced to promote Moscow's bid.[69] Prior to this, two months before the host city was chosen, in the face of warnings from their supporters that the Soviet bid still had a long way to go Soviet IOC delegates had 'ramped up their campaign', approving a new, additional plan for propaganda measures involving efforts from the Foreign Ministry, the Komsomol and the Central Committee itself. This plan is not accessible in the archives, but Prozumenshchikov describes it as 'very detailed and complex', with explicit instructions prepared down to the level of individual newspaper editorial offices.[70]

The Soviets' mobilisation of their socialist-bloc allies stands out as a particularly important element of the strategy to win the 1976 Olympics. The first meeting of the heads of the socialist countries' national sport organisations regarding the bid took place in February 1970. The Eastern Bloc's representatives discussed several different areas of the campaign where they felt they could assist the USSR, including in terms of helping to lobby IOC members, making use of 'diplomatic channels', propaganda campaigns in the socialist countries' state-controlled press, and facilitating travel by journalists from the West and the developing world to Moscow to see the facilities on offer. At another meeting held a month later, the bloc's representatives provided their Soviet allies with assessments of Moscow's chances, on the basis of their 'intelligence gathering' among international sport officials. Interestingly, the East German and Bulgarian representatives at this meeting voiced their concern that the Czechoslovakian and Romanian IOC members might vote for Montréal's candidacy.[71] This indicates that wider rifts within the Eastern Bloc (in this case, resulting from the recent crushing of the Prague Spring and Romania's growing independence from Moscow) had an effect on the extent to which the USSR was able to enlist the satellite states for the 1976 bid. Overall however, one receives the impression that the Soviet state was greatly aided by Eastern Bloc officials in its bid for the Games, whose obsequiousness in terms of cooperating with Soviet requests (or more likely, demands) for assistance allowed the USSR to greatly increase the scale of its lobbying and 'intelligence gathering' efforts within the IOC. Indeed, Parks notes that 'the networks of contacts and associates that each socialist IOC member had been cultivating for the past three decades were now

[69] GARF, f.7576, op.31, d.11, ll.110-12, ll.114-17.
[70] Parks, "Red Sport", 226-227; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 201.
[71] RGANI, f.5, op.62, d.48, ll.23-25, l.32.

mobilised in the joint goal of securing enough votes for Moscow'.[72] Mobilisation of the satellite states' administrative resources was thus an important element in the Soviet bidding strategy which supplemented their own extensive efforts.

As indicated, the Soviet officials charged with the task of bringing the 1976 Games to Moscow appear to have been preoccupied with determining the attitude of individual IOC members towards Moscow's candidacy, for they alone would ultimately have the right to decide which city hosted the Games. Soviet IOC member Andrianov actively sought declarations of support from non-European IOC members, and also succeeded in calling in a favour from Mexico, which had benefited from Moscow's support for their successful bid for the 1968 Games.[73] Reporting to the CC on a meeting of European IOC delegates held in February 1970, Sports Committee Chairman S. Pavlov offered detailed information on the current attitude of every member towards the USSR. He also recorded that V. Promyslov, Chairman of the Moscow City Soviet, had met with the IOC president and other high-ranking members to develop their personal relations and 'exchange opinions' on the idea of a Moscow Games. In total, by this time Soviet sport officials had met with 33 members of the IOC regarding Moscow's bid, whilst they had not yet established contact with (and thus did not know the position of) a further 41 members, predominantly from Asia and Latin America.[74]

Hazan notes that during the short campaign, Andrianov made statements to the effect that 'the time had come for the Olympic Games to be hosted by a socialist country, [and] that they should not just be the privilege of the West'[75] – an argument likely intended to chime with the IOC's long-proclaimed goal for the Olympics to become a forum representative of the whole world. In the speeches which they gave at the 1970 Amsterdam IOC session which decided the location of the XXI Olympics, Promyslov, Romanov and Andrianov focused in particular on the Soviet contribution to international sport, and the coincidence of peaceful Olympic ideals and Soviet ideology.[76] By emphasising the appropriateness of the Soviet Union as a host nation purely in terms of its commitment to the politically neutral concepts of sport and international peace, the Soviet delegates were trying to discredit foreign criticisms of a Soviet bid made on political grounds (such as those regarding the lack of democratic freedoms in the USSR made by the Western press, and the claim that Soviet policy on Jewish emigration made it unsuitable for hosting a 'humane' event which was voiced by numerous Western-based Jewish rights organisations

[72] Parks, "Red Sport", 223-224.
[73] *Ibid*., 225.
[74] RGANI, f.5, op.62, d.48, ll.27-30.
[75] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 70.
[76] Parks, "Red Sport", 227, 231-235.

and individuals).[77] For this emphasis shifted the focus of attention to a portrayal of the USSR as having only noble intentions with which even their ideological rivals could agree. In this way, in the final round of the competition to win the rights to host the 1976 Games, Soviet officials deftly addressed those Western criticisms of the USSR's first bid which could potentially undermine its chances with fine-tuned, persuasive arguments.

All this indicates that the USSR developed a well thought-out plan for winning the rights to the 1976 Olympiad. This was a serious proposal which Soviet officials expected to be successful, or at least had very high hopes for. In turn, one can infer that by 1969, the Olympics project had finally secured significant backing at the highest level of the Soviet state, with the CC's support now having assumed tangible form. The emphasis from the very beginning of the first bid was on large-scale coordination of propaganda efforts and substantial administrative resources; it is clear that the Sports Committee could not have carried out such a campaign without the strong support of the central governmental and Party apparatus.

The 1980 Bid

An apparent misplaced confidence about the USSR's prospects for hosting the 1976 Games (borne of overly optimistic predictions which were fed to the Central Committee by officials in the state sport apparatus), and the subsequent shock and indignation when they went to Montréal,[78] help explain why even larger efforts were made to win the rights to 1980. In response to their first unsuccessful foray into the Olympic bidding process, Soviet officials learnt from their previous mistake in launching their attempt at the eleventh hour, and now carried out a more methodical campaign, on an even more impressive scale, to secure the XXII Olympics.[79] The central leadership issued a decree on putting forward a bid for the 1980 Games already in 1971, and formally submitted Moscow's candidacy that same year – three years before the decision on the host was to be taken.[80] In contrast, Soviet officials had organised their first meetings to discuss the 1976 bid mere months before the host city was to be chosen.[81] The second campaign also involved efforts to secure a new president of the IOC who would be more favourable to a Moscow Games, with communist IOC representatives apparently having a hand in pushing Brundage into retirement. The Soviet press, meanwhile, tactfully stopped making criticisms of the organisation as a bourgeois,

[77] *Ibid.*, 228-229; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 201.
[78] RGANI, f.5, op.62, d.48, ll.32-33, 36-37; Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 19; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 200; Parks, "Red Sport", 235-237.
[79] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 19, 21-24, 28-29.
[80] Parks, "Red Sport", 238.
[81] RGANI, f.5, op.62, d.48, l.23; Parks, "Red Sport", 235.

pro-capitalist clique requiring fundamental reform (which had been voiced as part of the acrimonious fallout to the first failed bid).[82] More impressively, Soviet delegates to the IOC also managed to secure approval for strengthening the involvement of the state in a given host country in preparing the Games – a change in the rules which was clearly to the advantage of the USSR. Moreover, another round of propaganda was launched to promote the bid, and scores of foreign journalists were invited to Moscow to see how well suited its facilities were for Olympic events.[83] Finally, a 'preparatory committee' for Moscow's candidacy was established in December 1973, which brought together the leaders of the city authorities, Soviet sport organisations, and union-level ministries. The committee was created in order to ensure 'efficient and purposeful work…[to] promot[e] Moscow's candidacy.'[84] One can take this as evidence that Soviet officials very much had their previous failure in mind, and were now focusing on how to give their next attempt greater chances for success.

The details of many of these key schemes suggest that, in many respects, the campaign for 1980 developed along similar lines to that of 1976, albeit on a larger scale. For instance, greater attention was paid to the use of foreign press outlets for publishing propaganda materials about 'Moscow-80'. The Soviets invited 50 members of the IOC and other sport organisations to Moscow in 1972-74, and took journalists from 15 countries on a tour of major Soviet cities.[85] On such trips, journalists were not only shown new sport facilities, but also met with Soviet journalists, sportsmen, and politicians and were permitted to sit in on meetings of Soviet labour collectives.[86] This suggests that Soviet officials were eager to show foreign journalists the positive aspects of Soviet life as a whole, and not just the USSR's economic ability to host the Games. They likely aimed to overturn foreign arguments that the country was an inappropriate place to host the event due to its repressive social and political system. The scale of this tour programme indicates that it was a key part of the Soviet strategy alongside backroom lobbying of IOC officials. The fact that Soviet administrators invited the 'princes and pashas and CEOs' of the IOC to see the facilities in Moscow – that is, they cultivated members of the rich elite of capitalist countries, whom the country's leadership traditionally saw as enemies of the USSR, shows how far the Soviet state was willing to go to win the rights to the Games at this time. As Guttmann notes, 'the men in the Kremlin would overcome their dislike of capitalism long enough to do

[82] Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport,* 202.
[83] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 20-21, 28.
[84] GARF, f.7576, op. 31, d.1942, l.101.
[85] *Ibid.*, ll.101-103. This information was found with the help of Parks, "Red Sport", 245.
[86] RGANI, f.5, op.67, d.130, l.7; Parks, "Red Sport", 254.

business...In fact, the Russians…behav[ed] as if they had never heard of Marxism-Leninism.'[87]

By January 1974, major plans for propaganda measures to be undertaken by Soviet press organs and other organisations involved had been drawn up. An additional 'permanent commission' had been established to co-ordinate the wide-ranging efforts to win the rights to 1980, and two meetings of the leaders of socialist-bloc sport organisations had been carried out for the same purpose. From April 1974, a regular information bulletin promoting Moscow was sent to members of the IOC, international sport federations and major foreign press agencies. On the eve of the IOC's decision in early October, a Sports Committee decree signed by Pavlov noted that work to establish good personal relations with influential international sport figures for Moscow's bid had thus far been 'systematic', and Soviet efforts to utilise foreign press outlets to promote the bid were 'exhaustive'.[88]

At all major sporting events and Soviet holidays held during the years when the bid was being pursued – including the 1972 Munich Olympics, the fiftieth anniversary of the USSR's founding, and the 1973 Universiad in Moscow – no opportunity was missed to both promote the country's ability to organise the Games and lobby members of the IOC and other international sport organisations.[89] The Universiad in particular was used by Soviet sport administrators 'to impress the IOC with their ability to stage a large-scale international sports festival.' At the event, 'unprecedented deference' was reportedly shown to IOC President Killanin, who had the opportunity to meet with such a senior politician as Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin. Moreover, because the Universiad's organisation prompted criticism of Soviet facilities from visiting foreign guests, it had the effect of increasing Soviet determination to 'win over the international press in support of Moscow's bid'. Hazan also identified the IOC's Varna Congress held in the same year as a moment when the USSR sought 'to improve Moscow's chances of hosting the Olympic games...[by] demonstrat[ing] the extent of [Soviet] influence on a large majority of the Olympic movement['s] members.'[90]

Once again therefore, a large-scale, meticulous undertaking by the Soviet state was conducted in order to win the rights to host the summer Olympic Games in Moscow. Soviet sport officials now evidently enjoyed the coordinated support of a significant number of key state and Party organisations. The documentation available suggests that the central Soviet leadership was now keen to give the Sports Committee all the administrative resources it needed. Prozumenshchikov and Konova's assertion that by the early 1970s, 'the Kremlin

[87] Guttmann, *Modern Games*, 149.
[88] GARF, f.7576, op. 31, d.1942, ll.101-103.
[89] *Ibid*., ll.100-101.
[90] Parks, "Red Sport", 245, 247-248, 254; Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 75-7.

itself…[was] display[ing] the initiative' in pursuing the Games certainly appears to be borne out by the evidence.[91] The result was a well-coordinated campaign, which ultimately proved successful. Hazan, who attempted to account for the course of the 1971-74 bidding campaign using Soviet and Western press reports, considered that at its peak, the combination of lobbying the IOC and distribution of propaganda materials 'amount[ed] to a brilliantly executed strategic operation.'[92]

Explaining Soviet Success and Failure

Simply accounting for the course of these two campaigns alone does not satisfactorily explain why the USSR lost its bid for 1976 but won 1980. In the case of the former, it is clear that it was far from being poorly conceived, at least in terms of the tactics applied; instead, the first bid's main weakness, in the view of both older and more recent accounts, lay in its limited duration. Soviet officials simply weren't given sufficient time to prepare the ground for victory through the various methods discussed above, in contrast to the two years' worth of similar work carried out by Montréal.[93] Indeed, the slowness of the Nixon administration to provide critical support for Los Angeles' rival candidacy has also been identified as a reason for the *Americans'* failure in 1976,[94] underscoring the impression that laying the groundwork for a bid over a number of years was crucial to the success of any would-be host. This crucial factor goes a long way to explaining both the USSR's early failure and their eventual success the second time around (when it spent three years preparing the 1980 bid). 'Moscow-76' was further impaired by the party-state's inefficient bureaucratic machine. The aforementioned elaborate plan for major propaganda measures in aid of the first bid appeared at such a late stage of the campaign (March 1970) partly because of the CC's inability to process it earlier, despite the urgency of the timetable. In fact, the original decree sanctioning the bid had been prepared by the CC Secretariat in September 1969, but wasn't approved by the Politburo until November.[95] In 1969-70, Sports Committee officials were battling not only against the clock, but also against the inertia of the Soviet system.

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated elsewhere that the IOC's concerns about the USSR's hotel capacity, ability to bear the burden of Olympics organisation more generally, 'the [potentially hostile] reception awaiting tourists in the [Soviet] capital' from 'a police

[91] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 15.
[92] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 77.
[93] Parks, "Red Sport", 226, 235; Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 72.
[94] N. Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles: the Nixon White House wages Cold War in the Olympic selection process", *Cold War History*, volume 9, number 1 (February 2009), 145.
[95] Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 199, 201.

state', and the fact that Moscow was seen as 'dull' compared to 'fun' Montréal all contributed to the Soviet Union's failure in 1970.[96] Indeed, these concerns appear to have been the focus of Soviet attention during their subsequent campaign for 1980, judging by the visits arranged for journalists and IOC members and the care with which officials tried to deflect similar criticisms both in the aftermath of the Universiad and during the bid presentation itself.[97] Thus, part of the reason the later bid was a success was precisely because the Soviets were able to learn from their weaknesses which materialised during the first attempt, and in turn identify where the IOC's anxieties were and concentrate on assuaging them. Sarantakes also notes that an important factor explaining both superpowers' failure in 1970 was the fact that the IOC 'wanted to avoid the political issues associated with having to choose between Moscow and Los Angeles', allowing Montréal to come out on top. [98]

In contrast, the longevity, thoroughness and skilful mix of propaganda and lobbying which made up Soviet efforts for the 1980 bid to a significant extent help to explain its success. In particular, the expanded programme of visits by IOC members to the USSR in 1972-4 – which were no doubt carefully stage-managed by the authorities – likely led international sports officials to forget their previous doubts about Moscow's ability to provide the necessary infrastructure. Indeed, both Sarantakes and Parks, who have studied the transcripts of the IOC session at which the XXII Games were awarded, noted the optimism surrounding the USSR's capabilities.[99] In addition, in view of the considerable emphasis Soviet officials placed in their correspondence on lobbying the IOC, Parks is right to suggest 'behind-the-scenes scheming' was another key to the USSR's success. Her conclusion that the sheer longevity of Soviet campaigning across the whole period from 1969 was a foundation for victory[100] also seems entirely logical. In fact, one might see even the Soviets' first failed bid as useful in the long run in helping to build momentum for their second attempt. All the effective strategies for a bid – intensive lobbying of international sports officials; large-scale propaganda; slick presentation skills – had already been devised by 1970, and with time now on their side, the Soviets' chances were much higher. As such, the period 1969-1974 might be seen as one long campaign to secure the rights to host the Games in the Soviet Union. The success of this campaign was not necessarily inevitable, but definitely became increasingly likely.

[96] Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles", 145-6.
[97] *Ibid.*, 150; Parks, "Red Sport", 247-55, 257-58.
[98] Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles", 145-6.
[99] *Ibid.*, 150; Parks, "Red Sport", 258.
[100] *Ibid.*, 242-3, 259, 260.

One can identify a number of additional reasons for Soviet success. There was the simple fact that in 1974 no third, neutral option between the superpowers was available to the IOC.[101] Of course, this by itself did not automatically guarantee 1980 would go to Moscow over Los Angeles. But here the Soviet campaign was aided by the weakness of their opponents. The Americans reportedly offered only 'a very low-key bid', on account of a complete lack of support from the White House.[102] The efforts of the group of private individuals who made up the Los Angeles committee, however wealthy or influential they may have been, clearly couldn't match those of the Soviet state's in terms of scale and intensity. The result was that the USSR was able to carry out a more sustained and assured campaign than the Americans. At the same time, in 1974 the IOC was presented with only one choice for the host of the 1980 *winter* Olympics (Lake Placid, USA). Alongside the fact that it had only Los Angeles or Moscow to choose from for the 1980 *summer* event, it 'faced the disagreeable choice of awarding both gatherings to the same country and taking a clear side in the Cold War, or giving the Olympics to Moscow.' Another factor outside the USSR's control but which nevertheless undoubtedly played in their favour here was that that 'the summer games of 1976 would be held in North America and…the IOC preferred to rotate the gathering among the different continents.'[103] Somewhat differently, Hazan points out that the USSR's chances increased with the retirement of Brundage, a staunch anti-communist, from the organisation's leadership in 1972.[104] This was an all-important personnel change which distinguished the situation from that which the Soviets faced during their first bid campaign.

Moreover, the overall ethos of the IOC is said to have helped the USSR at a more fundamental level. Christopher Hill points out that the 'Olympic movement sees itself as universal...If the IOC had not decided to give the Games to a socialist country it would have been open to the accusation of keeping them as the private plaything of the capitalist world.'[105] Whilst the pressure of having to choose sides in the Cold War had clearly outweighed this issue during the selection process for the 1976 Games, once this option had been removed by 1974, with only the USA (a Western capitalist country which had already hosted the Games in 1932) and the USSR to choose from, it is entirely plausible that the need to symbolically acknowledge the important place of the socialist bloc in the world community (and especially in international sport) became an inescapable issue in the minds of many IOC officials. All this demonstrates the extent to which not only the Soviets' own

[101] Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles", 150-51.
[102] *Ibid.*, 149-51; C. Hill, *Olympic Politics* (Manchester, 1992), 124.
[103] Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles", 150-51.
[104] Hazan, *Propaganda Games.*, 74.
[105] Hill, *Olympic Politics*, 123.

efforts, but their profound luck in terms of external circumstances helped them win the Games.

An additional, circumstantial reason for the Soviet victory in 1974 concerns the shift in international relations. The 1980 bid benefited from the long sought-after improvement in relations between the two Cold War blocs. The success of détente in the early seventies helped 'Soviet sports leaders…forge a close working relationship with their West German colleagues', whose experience in hosting the Olympics in 1972 and influence in the IOC 'help[ed] Moscow with the selection process.' More generally, the second bid came at the 'high point in east-west relations, and this provided the critical backdrop for Moscow's campaign to win support'.[106] The Soviet bid thus benefited from the wider, positive developments in international relations occurring at the exact same time. Whilst the project first appeared during the Khrushchev years, the still-turbulent international relations of that earlier period were not conducive to a Soviet Olympiad. The Moscow Games could only take root in the firmer soil of the détente era, under Brezhnev. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine that there would have been sufficient goodwill among IOC delegates for the Games to be awarded to the USSR if east-west tensions had remained as high, and relations as unstable, as they were in the decades preceding détente. A continuation of the Cold War tensions seen in the 1950s and 1960s could have counteracted Soviet attempts to ingratiate themselves among influential figures in international sport for the sake of a bid, no matter how long these relationships were cultivated, since such tensions could have influenced IOC delegates to envisage that a Moscow Olympiad would be too tarnished by political quarrels to have a chance of becoming a successful (that is, apolitical) sport contest. Thus, the success of the second bid had its roots in the relatively cooperative international climate of the early 1970s, which was partly fostered by the actions of the Brezhnev administration itself. Accordingly, one can once again appreciate the extent to which the Olympics should be seen as a Brezhnev-era project.

Sarantakes ultimately claims that in 1974 IOC members 'were no more eager than they had been in 1970 to award the summer games to Moscow', and attributes the USSR's success to favourable circumstances alone.[107] Yet this interpretation ignores the crucial fact that the USSR campaigned very hard to win the XXII Games. The significant amount of resources which were correspondingly devoted to the task cannot plausibly be ignored as inconsequential. Nevertheless, these circumstantial issues surely had a role to play as well, albeit probably a secondary one. Conversely, these other factors are for the most part passed over by Parks, whose examination of the primary sources led her to emphasise the

[106] Parks, "Red Sport", 241, 260.
[107] Sarantakes, "Moscow versus Los Angeles", 150.

organisational and tactical strengths of the Soviet campaign of 1971-74 alone. It would surely make more sense therefore to posit that a combination of fortuitous circumstantial factors which had not been present during the first bid alongside the USSR's own ardent efforts led the IOC to award the right to host the XXII Olympics to Moscow on 23rd October 1974.

Postscript: Brezhnev's Last-Minute Doubts

In the wake of this success, one last challenge to the nascent Olympic project appeared which could have potentially undone the progress made over the previous decade. This was the emergence of severe doubts about the viability of the Moscow Olympics in the mind of the General Secretary himself. In a remarkably revealing letter written to his close political ally Konstantin Chernenko in December 1975 – fourteen months *after* the Olympics were awarded to the USSR – Brezhnev expressed consternation that 1980 could be used by the USSR's enemies to organise 'scandals of various kinds' which could 'blacken the reputation of the Soviet Union', and that the 'colossal amount of money' which it would entail could become an unacceptable burden on the economy. Brezhnev gave instructions for his concerns to be imparted to Mikhail Suslov, one of the most senior members of the leadership, with the recommendation that a discussion should take place in the Politburo regarding whether it was worth cancelling the Games.

Prozumenshchikov and Konova convincingly argue that the brewing 'crisis in the Soviet economy' was likely foremost in Brezhnev's mind when he wrote this letter. They point out that 'in 1975 Brezhnev…could not but [have] realised that the expenditures on the Olympics would become an additional, heavy burden for the Soviet economic system, which was already under pressure.' They go on: 'It is not a coincidence that this initiative appeared at the moment when [Brezhnev]…was preparing for the XXV CPSU Congress, and therefore had in his possession all the information concerning the dynamics and prospects for the country's development for the next few years.'[108] One can dispute whether the USSR was facing an economic 'crisis' at this point, but it was certainly clear to Soviet leaders by the mid-seventies that Kosygin's reforms had failed and the country was encountering a number of serious economic difficulties. In some cases, these were problems for which the leadership was able to implement concrete measures, although these were often extremely costly. In other cases, the issues were of such an intractable and systemic character that there was clearly no short-term solution. These included declining growth rates, a widening technology gap with the West, production of poor-quality consumer goods (which pushed

[108] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 32.

the leadership to import foreign-produced ones in ever growing quantities), and stuttering agricultural production amid periodic harvest failure, which led to costly agricultural imports.[109] Inasmuch as Brezhnev must have been aware of at least some of these issues as he prepared alongside his colleagues to inaugurate the next five-year plan at the upcoming Congress, the concerns they raised quite possibly made the Moscow Olympics seem both financially extravagant and a superfluous distraction from the real business of managing the economy (particularly given that 1980's potential economic benefits were perceived by the leadership around this time as negligible compared to its political ones, and probably nowhere near equal to the financial outlays and attention they would require from Soviet economic managers).[110] It is thus clear that Brezhnev's hitherto strong and consistent support for the Olympics project declined in 1975 in accordance with his changed priorities and concerns as the paramount Soviet leader, which themselves hinged on the success or failure of the CPSU's domestic and foreign policies. Much like Khrushchev before him, Brezhnev appeared to appreciate now that he had risen to leadership of the Party and was forced to grapple with the exigencies of the top job, that the serious problems the country faced – above all, in the economic sphere – made the Olympics a far less attractive proposition.

The question of how the Soviet state came to be in a position to launch the Olympics project in 1975 therefore requires further consideration. How did it survive and go on to receive substantial quantities of resources over the next five years, when the most powerful politician in the country had deep reservations? If Khrushchev's lack of support had always been a crucial impediment to approving an Olympic bid due to his powers as General Secretary, by the same token opposition from Brezhnev could potentially have dealt a fatal blow to the chances of the project in 1975. As Prozumenshchikov and Konova note, these objections from the project's main supporter were not only highly unexpected, but also represented 'the greatest danger' to the Olympiad.[111] Since the economic and political circumstances which Brezhnev faced in the remaining years of his rule never improved, and in fact *worsened*, one can assume the General Secretary's unqualified enthusiasm for 1980 seen in earlier years never returned. This rules out any explanation which sees the top leader's patronage as crucial to the continued success of the project. Prozumenshchikov and Konova offer one alternative answer, essentially putting the Olympiad's survival down to chance. They claim Brezhnev's note to Chernenko was passed on to Politburo members Suslov and Andrei Kirilenko, but was never officially discussed at a

[109] Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*, 27-35; Hanson, *Rise and Fall*, 132-33, 140-48, 150-53; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 66, 71, 76-77, 84.
[110] See next chapter.
[111] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 31.

formal session of that body, with preparations for the Party Congress understandably garnering more attention. Brezhnev apparently did not attend Politburo meetings in the second half of December 1975, as he was busy preparing for the Congress at his state residence (although his declining health may also have played a role here). This would, they imply, have further delayed a full discussion of the leader's concerns among the ruling circle. Though the historians do not mention it, this period was in fact the moment when two major resolutions were issued by the leadership setting out the preparations for the Games, which would have had to have been approved by the Politburo. Thus according to this version of events, Brezhnev missed the crucial ratification of plans for the Olympiad by his colleagues.[112] The Russian historians claim that after this point neither Brezhnev nor any of his colleagues raised the question of cancelling the Games again, with the pace of Olympics preparations gathering pace unimpeded thereafter.[113] They therefore seem to imply that either absent-mindedness on the part of one or more politicians, alternative priorities on the policy agenda, or possibly bureaucratic gridlock swiftly brought this potentially far-reaching episode to a close.

Yet it seems highly unlikely that the discussion of the subject of cancellation ended in the way Prozumenshchikov and Konova describe it. How could Brezhnev's colleagues simply disregard his understandable concerns about this issue without any discussion, when problems with the economy were perennially a top priority for them? How could they so easily have passed over this debate when previously they had spent the previous decade deliberating on it, on the long-time understanding that it would be a highly complex undertaking? Could the General Secretary himself really have forgotten about 1980 and its inherent risks, when the Party apparatus would go on to devote constant attention to the Games' preparations over the next five years? The Russian historians themselves note that mention was made of the intention to orchestrate the Olympics when the Tenth Five-Year Plan was inaugurated at the end of the XXV Congress.[114] Thus, the leadership's focus on the Congress could hardly have deflected its attention away from the economic cost of the Games, if 1980 found its place in the event's proceedings and its resulting policy document. Moreover, Prozumenshchikov and Konova's apparent belief that the absence of any discussion at the Politburo itself meant the Olympics project was able to reach the stage of implementation without further high-level scrutiny overlooks one key insider's claim that under Brezhnev, 'the full Politburo was rarely the forum for the making of key policy decisions', which were taken instead by an informal 'inner core' of senior politicians. The

[112] See chapter two.
[113] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 32
[114] *Ibid*.

fact that this group included among its ranks two of those whom we know Brezhnev consulted in 1975 (Suslov and Chernenko) strongly suggests the same process was going on with regards to the Olympics. In turn, this veteran of the apparatus goes on, 'serious issues were [often] resolved before reaching the full Politburo', and sometimes simply 'rubber-stamped' at a subsequent formal session.[115] The resolution issued on the Games that was approved by the Central Committee (which was directly subordinate to the Politburo) following Brezhnev's comments suggests, again, that this same process occurred with regards to the Olympiad.

Given that preparations for 1980 proceeded at a steady pace after this point, one can infer that in December 1975 the decision to proceed with the Games did not simply occur as a result of absent-mindedness on the part of key figures who were preoccupied with other issues, but was in fact specifically reaffirmed by them following an unknown amount of further debate on the subject, most likely on an informal basis (a record of which, of course, would not necessarily be preserved in the archives). Furthermore, the rejection of Brezhnev's recommendation on cancellation was in all likelihood a *collective* decision of certain members of the leadership team. This is plausible in view of the long-established 'oligarchic' model of elite decision-making applied to this period, which sees the General Secretary as ruling by consensus with his powerful colleagues rather than by force of will, presiding over a collective leadership rather than a one-man dictatorship.[116] According to this model, Brezhnev would have felt compelled to accept the decision of other Politburo members if consensus had been reached among them on proceeding with the Olympics – even if he was personally opposed. Brezhnev himself admitted to adhering to this course of action on at least one occasion.[117]

It remains only to be explained *why* Brezhnev's colleagues disagreed with the General Secretary and pushed for the continuation of the Olympic project. It is difficult to imagine that they could have easily dismissed their leader's well-founded concerns regarding the Games' economic burden; regardless of differences in personality and political inclination, all members of the Soviet leadership undoubtedly recognised the salience of economic issues to their political survival as well as to the success of their domestic and foreign policy programme. They therefore must have formulated alternative arguments which pushed them to reject the proposed path. Considering Brezhnev's concerns were, in essence, focused on the risks of hosting the Games, any such discussion which flowed from the letter would likely have involved consideration of the dangers of the alternative option – that is,

[115] V. Pechenev, cited in Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 29.
[116] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 94, 153-54, 281; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 17, 20, 28-29.
[117] Volkogonov, *Soviet Empire*, 274-5.

cancelling the Olympiad. Inasmuch as Prozumenshchikov and Konova claim that the Soviet leadership 'weighed up the pluses and minuses' (or the risks and benefits) perceived to lie in hosting the Olympics in the preceding decades before launching its first bid, [118] it makes sense to suggest the same process occurred when Brezhnev raised the subject again in 1975. In turn, it seems highly likely that Brezhnev's colleagues must have understood the stark reality that cancelling the Olympics after they had been awarded to the USSR would be hugely damaging to the country politically on the international stage. Quite apart from the fact that the USSR had already built up a great deal of hype around Moscow-80 during 1971-74 in the IOC and among the international public, with its propaganda machine trying to create an association between the event and the USSR's great-power status, this would also represent the first time in history that the modern Olympics Games had been cancelled for reasons other than a world war. Thus, whatever excuse the Soviet Union provided for this move, Brezhnev's colleagues likely thought, it would have a negative impact on the country's international reputation, with the IOC, the international press and foreign public opinion most likely reaching the conclusion that cancellation was due to Soviet economic weakness and/or the desire to avoid interaction with the outside world, reconfirming negative views of Soviet socialism held among foreign communities. The cancellation of the Games would also have left Soviet policy towards the IOC and the Olympics franchise – which as noted was of no small consequence to Soviet policy-makers – in tatters, since it would have fundamentally undermined previous Soviet claims to being committed to making the Olympics franchise a success.

The nature of the Olympics as a hugely prestigious international event thus meant that once the bid was won, the Soviet state could not avoid hosting them without the risk of incurring huge political cost. Under such circumstances, the very real concerns that Brezhnev felt likely couldn't have had any effect on his colleagues' collective decision-making; the leadership would have felt as a whole that cancellation was the least palatable option. Brezhnev himself indicated that he understood there were risks in his proposal to cancel 1980, yet still believed the benefits of cancellation would be greater in terms of averting the economic cost: 'I know that this [suggestion] will cause a lot of mendacious rumours [about the USSR], but when deciding this question we should probably bear in mind the cost of this event above all else. Some comrades have suggested to me that there is a chance to reject this event by paying [only] some small fine…' [119] It is entirely reasonable to think that his colleagues in turn responded by impressing upon Brezhnev that the negative consequences in fact outweighed the benefits of a cancellation, even if the

[118] Prozumenshchikov and Konova, "Ternistyi put'", 32.
[119] L. Brezhnev, quoted in *ibid.*, 31-32.

economic risks of hosting the Games were clear – or alternatively, if he was still opposed to the venture, they may have simply voted him down, on the basis that they feared the alternative risks more than the General Secretary himself did.

All this shows that unlike the other great prestige project of the era – the BAM Railway – the Olympics appear to have ultimately been realised after 1975 *without* Brezhnev's patronage.[120] Coupled with the fact that it had been middle-ranking sports bureaucrats who largely pioneered the project (noted above), this highlights the fact that the Soviet party-state of the 1970s no longer functioned largely according to the whims of a single, despotic leader unconstrained by any regularised forms of decision-making, as was the case at the close of Joseph Stalin's rule when a major policy initiative could often only be realised at his instigation and with his support.[121] Instead, the system had become to some extent more fragmented, technocratic and rationalised, with various constituencies of specialist administrators now having greater opportunities to develop, and sometimes implement, their pet projects with relative autonomy from the Party leader. The case of the genesis of the Moscow Games thus to some degree reinforces existing interpretations of the changing nature of the Soviet state across the post-war decades of its history, as well as incidentally one of the primary conclusions about the implications of 1980 for our understanding of late socialism reached by Jenifer Parks in her alternative study of Soviet sports bureaucrats' professional dealings with the IOC in this period.[122]

Conclusion

The perception of the USSR's status as a superpower obliged to compete with the West in all spheres of life, which emerged within the Soviet elite at the beginning of the Cold War, was the basic, long-term factor determining the appearance of a Soviet Olympic project in the mid-1950s. This new great power status created a perception of the substantial political dividends to be accrued from the orchestration of the Games themselves on Soviet territory. In particular, hosting the Games was seen to offer the possibility of promoting the success of Soviet foreign and domestic policies, and thereby compete with capitalism by non-military means for global influence. The 1957 World Youth Festival, in demonstrating the viability of exploiting international events for this purpose, gave a short-term boost to this idea. The Soviet state's ideologically driven participation in the IOC also contributed to

[120] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 9-10.
[121] O. Khlevniuk and Y. Gorlizki, *Cold Peace: Stalin and the Soviet Ruling Circle, 1945-1953* (New York, 2004), 58-65, 123-42.
[122] Sandle, "Intellectual Life", 137, 140-41; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 30-32; Parks, "Red Sport", 4, 12-13, 132, 264, 271, 322, 394-5.

the growing official desire to host the summer Games. This is not to say that the USSR sought dominance of the IOC across the early Cold War decades solely for the purpose of bringing the Olympics to Moscow. Clearly, establishing organisational control over such an influential global franchise as the Olympics was a worthwhile goal in its own right, as yet another avenue for the USSR to advance its interests vis-à-vis the Cold War adversary. However, at some point Soviet officials likely realised that hosting the Games, in addition to the other benefits it would bring the USSR, could give a boost to its long-standing attempts to dominate the Olympic franchise, perhaps even marking the culmination of this separate but still major priority of Soviet policy towards international sport.

All of these factors encouraged mid-ranking Soviet sports administrators to produce numerous proposals for an Olympic bid. However, unfavourable domestic and international circumstances during the 1950s and 1960s were such that the risks of hosting the Olympics were seen to outweigh the advantages among the Soviet leadership. Hampered further for much of this period by Khrushchev's opposition, the project was repeatedly rejected. It finally garnered approval when both a leadership shuffle and improvements in domestic and international circumstances made the Central Committee's calculations more optimistic. The sensitivity of the Olympics project to prevailing external conditions and the shifts which these produced in the leadership's priorities is underlined by Brezhnev's last-minute call to consider cancelling the Games in 1975. By this time however, a combination of luck and determined efforts on the part of Soviet sports bureaucrats had already secured the XXII Olympiad for the Soviet Union, and the ruling circle now likely calculated that the costs of cancellation outweighed the benefits of seeing the event through to its conclusion. One can therefore appreciate that an ongoing debate over the risks versus the benefits of orchestrating the Olympics within the party-state was a key feature of the event's genesis in 1956-75. Subsequent chapters will reveal the continued importance of such calculations for explaining the character of many aspects of the project in the years after it was launched. In particular, it is crucial to highlight the ways in which many aspects of the preparations for the Games were shaped by the Soviet leadership's ardent desire to not only avoid the risks inherent in failure, but also to taste the fruits of political success which they believed 1980 offered them.

Indeed, the story of the Games' origins above all else demonstrates how the Soviet leadership hoped that a Moscow Olympiad would complement its political agenda. However, the full extent to which 1980 was integrated into that agenda both at home and abroad, as indicated by the range of the project's primary and secondary goals, is not revealed by studying the details of its origins alone. Wider examination of the archival

record on the preparations for and orchestration of the Moscow Olympiad between 1975 and 1980 is required if one is to fully grasp the Soviet state's ambitions to exploit the event for political purposes, as well as answer the equally important question of how these ambitions were achieved. This examination will begin by focusing on the economic contours of the Olympic project.

2.) Economic Contours of the Olympics

In two separate resolutions issued on 23rd December 1975, the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers outlined their initial plan for Olympics preparations in terms of the achievement of both practical and political tasks.[1] 'Practical tasks' refers here to actions taken to meet the requirements of the IOC for administering the Olympiad on Soviet territory; 'political tasks' are those activities aimed at securing political benefits for the Soviet state from the Games. The combined elements of what can be dubbed the Olympics' economic programme, carried out between 1976 and 1980, represented the single most complex practical task facing the Soviet organisers. This programme encompassed all economic activities and/or commitments of material, financial and labour resources by the Soviet state which aimed to meet the logistical requirements of the Olympiad. Primarily, it sought to ensure that the USSR's municipal infrastructure would not only be able to cope with a large-scale international sports competition, but also satisfy the material needs of the many thousands of Olympics participants and guests. At the same time, the characteristics of this programme reveal much about one of the party-state's fundamental political objectives for the Olympic Games – that of the promotion of the socialist system – as well as several of its secondary goals centred on ensuring 1980 benefited the Soviet economy. As such, the discussion contained in this chapter is integral to the political and administrative history of the Soviet Olympiad, helping to explain how and why the event took place.

The chapter traces the main dimensions of this programme on the basis of information contained in the archival inventories of the Orgcom, VTsSPS, the Moscow municipal authorities and the CC bureaucracy. These collections provide the full details of the Games' organising bureaucracy, the construction and material supply measures carried out for the sake of the Olympics' guests, the event's financing, and the extent to which the organisers reached commercial deals with foreign businesses in aid of some of these tasks. A detailed description of all these major aspects of the economic programme, placed within a framework focusing on the Moscow Olympiad's overall purposes, has thus far been provided in previous studies of 1980. This chapter will also provide insight into another crucial aspect of this story passed over by previous commentators – namely, that a combination of the deficiencies of the Soviet economic mechanism and the unprecedented complexity of the Olympiad produced difficulties for the authorities in meeting their financial and investment targets, whilst a reluctance to turn to the West for help ensured

[1] RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.2; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, l.1.

the Games were a largely autarchic project in economic terms. Ultimately however, the Soviet state did complete its extremely ambitious material preparations in time for 1980.

The Olympics' Bureaucracy

The Games' economic programme, and the organisation of the Olympiad more generally, required the deployment and coordination of a significant amount of state resources. It is important to clarify which organisations within the party-state bureaucracy were involved in this key task before examining the economic programme in detail.

The Organising Committee

The 'Olimpiada-80' Organising Committee was formed in February 1975. Ignatii Novikov, a Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Head of the USSR State Committee for Construction since 1962, was appointed as its chairman. At its early meetings it focused on establishing a coherent internal structure and defining the contours of the Olympics' preparations for presentation to the government.[2] It would go on to assume direct responsibility for maintaining relations with the IOC, developing commercial relations with foreign organisations, and managing all financial matters, whilst simultaneously coordinating and supervising all major aspects of the preparations carried out by other participating agencies of the party-state (primarily, infrastructure development and the dissemination of propaganda materials).[3] Orgcom cadres were provided from across the whole administrative system, including both governmental and Party organisations as well as individual industrial enterprises and state institutions.[4] The highest authority within the Orgcom was the Presidium, followed by an additional leadership body – the Executive Bureau.[5] The former defined the broad direction of the Orgcom's policies whilst the latter supervised their implementation.[6] Both bodies were obliged to submit information and plans regarding 'the most important aspects' of the Orgcom's work for review by Sovmin.[7] Beginning with its first plan in 1975, throughout the preparations period the Orgcom made recommendations to Sovmin regarding the assignment of various responsibilities in the Olympics project to appropriate governmental agencies. The government would then issue a formal resolution, which became 'mandatory for all the Soviet ministries and agencies, …

[2] *Official Report of the Organising Committee of the Games of the XXII Olympiad, volume two* (Moscow, 1981), 15.
[3] *Ibid*., 11-12; RGANI, f.5, op.73, d.301, ll.2-3; f.5, op.69, d.423, l.5; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, ll.5-6.
[4] Document no.111, p.300; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.358, ll.148-49.
[5] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.52, l.7.
[6] *1980 Official Report, volume two*, 15, 18.
[7] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, ll.5-6.

individual enterprises, organisations and institutions regardless of their subordination.'[8] The Orgcom appears to have thus had a unique role within the Soviet administrative hierarchy, able to demand resources and indirectly instruct officials from a wide variety of Party and state agencies which otherwise obeyed the orders exclusively of the CPSU and other higher governmental authorities. Moreover, the extent to which the Orgcom was closely supervised by the CC apparatus (as will become abundantly clear below) leaves little doubt that it enjoyed the backing of the highest Party as well as state authorities. Such high-level support explains the slow but relatively consistent progress it made in 1975-80 in acquiring the expertise and material resources it needed to successfully carry out preparations for the Games within an immensely complex administrative system where different agencies had to compete for scarce resources amid the bureaucratic gridlock and supply bottlenecks.

The day-to-day activity of the Orgcom was managed by nineteen separate commissions. Staffed by state and Party managers specialising in a large number of areas of government work relevant to the Games' preparations, they administered such integral elements of the Olympiad as construction work, the organisation of the sports competitions, medical care, finance, recruitment, communications, public relations and transport.[9] With their aggregate number of personnel rising from 233 in 1975 to 444 by 1980,[10] their creation was clearly aimed at bringing expertise to bear on the many practical issues facing the organisers. During 1975-80 the commissions met regularly, thrashing out proposals for measures that needed to be taken in every area of Games administration and submitting them for approval, together with the necessary background information, to the Orgcom leadership.[11]

The Orgcom's bureaucracy became larger and more intricate as the years progressed. In February 1978, it had 395 full-time employees. A month before the Opening Ceremony in 1980, its expanded structure totalled 9,470 people spread across twenty-six departments (this included the commission members plus lower-level administrative staff), compared to just 802 staff for the 1976 Montréal Games.[12] By now, the Orgcom had also created sixteen 'directorates'.[13] These dealt with specific problems of Olympics administration which might arise during the final stages of preparations and the event itself, in contrast to the

[8] *1980 Official Report, volume two,* 24-5.
[9] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.5, l.6, l.8, l.14; f.9610, op.1, d.36, ll.76-77; *1980 Official Report, volume two,* 22.
[10] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.49.
[11] RGANI, f.5, op.73, d.301, ll.2-3; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.358, ll.3-4, ll.144-45, ll.148-49, ll.156-157, ll.160-2, l.164; f.9610, op.1, d.36, ll.76-77.
[12] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.358, ll.148-49; document no.111, p.300; document no.231, p.677; document no.227, pp.671-2; *Montréal 1976, Games of the XXI Olympiad: Official Report, volume one* (Ottawa, 1978), 612-15.
[13] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.500, 15-17.

commissions which developed and implemented measures at a broad level for the duration of the project.[14] Furthermore, in 1975 the staffing level of the Orgcom's central Administrative Department, which managed its day-to-day affairs, was already as high as other departments at their peak in later years,[15] suggesting a top-heavy approach to administrative oversight within the organisation. With its hierarchical structure, bifurcation of leadership functions, bloated central bureaucracy, and a division of labour among the commissions and directorates according to specific areas of 'policy' (Olympics governance),[16] the Organising Committee was imbued with typically Soviet organisational practices, closely replicating the structure and modes of operation of the CPSU apparatus.

Following the Games' orchestration, the Orgcom rapidly demobilised. By the end of 1980, its overall staff level was down to 200. A skeletal organisation of 60 workers wrapped up its six-year operation in 1981 by publishing the Official Report for the IOC, returning loaned equipment, drawing up a financial report for the Soviet leadership, and archiving its records. With the help of local Party and state authorities, ex-Orgcom workers were returned to their previous places of work or study and at the same rank (with its attendant material privileges) as before.[17] Thus with an uncharacteristic smoothness which suggests little disruption to the functioning of more permanent institutions, the Orgcom formed against the background of, and subsequently dissolved back into, the wider mass of government and Party agencies which made up the Soviet system.

The Involvement of Other Organisations

The Orgcom was assisted in its work by a dense network of other party-state institutions, on either an equal basis or as organisations partly subordinate to its authority. These included the Moscow City Soviet Executive Committee (*Mosgorispolkom*), numerous all-union governmental ministries, state committees and CC departments, the republican-level governments and CPSU branches of the Russian, Belorussian, Ukrainian and Estonian republics, as well as the Moscow City Party Committee (*gorkom*) and the Leningrad Region Party Committee.[18] The plan to orchestrate the Games in five different cities[19] thus ensured that republican-level institutions were brought into the project in addition to all-union structures. To this list one can also add the major resources devoted to the project by the

[14] *1980 Official Report, volume two,* 29.
[15] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, ll.46-8.
[16] *Ibid*.
[17] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.494, ll.218-19, l.248, l.300.
[18] Document no.111, p.300; RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, ll.3-4.
[19] Aside from Moscow, the Olympic Sailing Regatta took place in Tallinn, whilst many of the event's football matches were shared between Leningrad, Kiev and Minsk.

security apparatus,[20] the Komsomol, and the VTsSPS. The latter two organisations in particular were assigned significant responsibilities in all areas of Olympics administration except security. Overall, 141 government ministries and other Party and state organisations were involved in the orchestration of the Moscow Games.[21]

The Economic Programme, 1975-80

The Scope of Infrastructure Investment

The key aspect of the economic preparations for the Olympiad was the extensive plan for the renovation or construction of facilities required for the sporting events and hospitality services, in order to cater for the athletes, tourists and officials coming from abroad and across the Soviet Union. In the middle years of the project this plan encompassed 68 sports facilities (21 new; 47 renovated), 18 media complexes, 45 accommodation facilities, and 155 public catering facilities. Although the four other locations outside Moscow would host a number of different sport contests, the capital was the primary Olympic city, and accordingly the number of construction projects there dwarfed that of all of the others; out of the above figures, 58 sports facilities, 15 media complexes and 11 hotels earmarked for the Games were located in Moscow.[22] Substantial work was also carried out to improve the terminals and runways at all three of Moscow's airports.[23] All Olympics-related construction work was accounted for as part of the Tenth Five-Year Plan running from 1976 to 1980.[24] In terms of the value of capital investment, in July 1977 the projected cost of all this work translated into 920 million roubles, of which 754 million was earmarked for Moscow alone.[25] Tallinn, the site of the second largest number of Olympics events, was initially allocated 270 million roubles in 1975. This represented a comparatively large increase in the city's general budget of 530 million roubles for investment during the Tenth Plan.[26] By August 1978, the overall cost of the Games' infrastructure development for the whole five-year period had been recalculated to 957 million roubles (796 million for Moscow).[27] To put this into perspective, another major public works project of the Brezhnev era, the BAM railway, cost on average between 977.7 million and 1.3 billion roubles *per year* between 1974 and 1984. The USSR's gross national product in 1977 was approximately 768 billion

[20] Discussed in chapter three.
[21] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.50.
[22] Document no.111, p.308; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, ll.53-55.
[23] Document no.109, p.295.
[24] Document no.303, p.829; RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.11; GARF, f.7576, op.31, d.1942, l.103, cited in Parks, "Red Sport", 256.
[25] Document no.11, p.62.
[26] RGANI, f.5, op.67, d.130, ll.17-18.
[27] Document no.111, p.304. The final costs of the Olympiad are given in a subsequent section.

roubles, rising to 907 billion by 1980.[28] In terms of the anticipated impact on the state's budget, therefore, the Olympiad does not appear to have amounted to a particularly colossal blow, even if the sum of money was impressive for a single project.[29]

Yet despite its comparatively low projected cost, additional details of the Olympic construction programme create the impression that 1980 was in some ways one of the most formidable challenges facing the Soviet economy during the Tenth Five-Year Plan. One the one hand, the organisers demanded a vertiginous acceleration of construction work. In 1978, ten Olympic facilities were due to be put into operation, 13 more within the first half of 1979 – and a further 55 by the end of that year. Whilst *Mosgorispolkom* had a target of 110.3 million roubles' worth of capital investment scheduled for 1977, in 1978 this was due to climb to 200 million.[30] Moscow Party boss V. Grishin cited these figures on the basis of the CC and Sovmin's initial December 1975 decrees on the Games, indicating that there was never any intention to have equal rates of investment per year. The Soviet state thus planned to carry out the bulk of the Olympiad's investment programme in the project's later years from the very start, long before delays made this a necessity in any case (discussed below). There was clearly an official expectation that the most complicated tasks of the project would be carried out whilst simultaneously raising productivity – at a time when the Soviet economic mechanism as a whole was increasingly lacking in dynamism in the later 1970s. The fact that those working on the Olympic project would not necessarily have perceived the economy's increasingly troubled direction is irrelevant. The point is that in view of long-term economic trends, the fact that the infrastructure programme for the Games was supposed to rapidly accelerate in 1978-79 meant that the organisers faced an uphill struggle, swimming against the tide of socialist economic decline.

The Olympics project also demanded the installation of the most up-to-date equipment and use of high-quality building materials in order to meet the demands of the Olympics' international governing bodies.[31] 'All Olympics facilities', a VTsSPS summary report claimed to the CC in 1980, 'employ outstanding architectural and design solutions, and are full of complex engineering [specifications] and technical equipment…They make use of huge

[28] The BAM statistic is based on a dollar-to-rouble conversion of figures given in Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 7. Soviet GNP is calculated on the basis of the figure of $1,047.9 billion in 1977 given in National Foreign Assessment Centre, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1978* (Washington, 1978), 9; and $1,392.5 billion in National Foreign Assessment Centre, *Handbook of Economic Statistics, 1981* (Washington, 1981), 26. Exchange rates for the Soviet rouble are contained in the archive of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, *Tsentral'nyi bank Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, accessed 08.12.2014, http://cbr.ru/currency_base/OldDataFiles/USD.xls.

[29] As discussed below, the eventual net financial loss the Soviet state was to suffer as a result of the Games was in fact slightly lower than the costs projected in 1978.

[30] Document no.12, p.65.

[31] Document no.12, p.65.

amounts of energy, and employ advanced systems for heat and water supply, sewerage, ventilation, refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment, and modern means of communication.'[32] One might be wary of taking such a claim at face value, given that it could well have been an effective get-out clause for officials to justify slow progress (discussed below). However, one can note that members of the IOC, including those from non-socialist countries (and who would therefore have made painstaking assessments without pro-Soviet bias), had become convinced of the advanced design of Moscow's Olympic facilities already during the bidding process.[33] Foreign journalists were also continuously impressed by what they saw of Olympic facilities during the period of preparations.[34] One would not expect this kind of positive appraisal from foreign constituencies had these facilities not met contemporary standards. Together with the archival evidence showing that the Orgcom really did seek to copy the latest foreign construction designs and placed a major emphasis on 'modernising' Olympic infrastructure,[35] it appears that the Soviet state was genuinely striving to construct only the most technically advanced facilities for its Olympiad which were of at least equal if not more complex design compared to what previous, wealthier countries had built. Their technical complexity is further suggested by the fact that, in 1976-80, construction workers of the VTsSPS installed more than 700,000 pieces of equipment and instruments at 12 separate building sites. This included 1,050 fans, 563 pumps, 169 lifts, 32 compressors, 105 air-conditioners, 117 refrigeration units, 66 power transformers, 5,140 switchboards, and 6,500 pieces of food-processing equipment, along with many tens of thousands of smaller devices. Workers at the Trade Union Council's construction sites also assembled and put in place 7,000 pieces of equipment needed for the sports competitions and for athletes' training requirements.[36]

One can get a further sense of the scale and complexity of the building work the organisers were grappling with in the late 1970s, as well as, crucially, the kind of ultra-modern standard of hospitality and comfort the Soviet state aimed to provide for its guests, from the example of the hotel complex built for 1980 in the Izmailovo district of Moscow. With an area of 1.4 million square metres and costing 315 million roubles, it was the largest and most expensive building constructed for the 1980 Games.[37] It devoured 21,000 tonnes of steel, 280,000 square metres of reinforced concrete, 6,000 pieces of large equipment

[32] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.42-4; f.5451, op.67, d.58, l.12, ll.15-16.
[33] See the discussion of the Soviet bids in chapter one.
[34] See chapter four; Booker, *Games War*, 58, 77.
[35] Parks, "Red Sport", 280-1, 291-3.
[36] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.42-4; f.5451, op.67, d.58, l.12, ll.15-16.
[37] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.77-8.

and 100,000 smaller devices. It would eventually consist of five tower blocks with space for 10,000 guests and two additional blocks for maintenance and entertainment (including a 1,000-seat cinema and conference centre). In all classes of room there was an en-suite bathroom and telephone; there was also a 'rest hall' on every floor, and a library, reading hall, games room, sauna and swimming pool, tourist information office, TV room, restaurant, and cafés and bars in every block. The complex had air-conditioning, video cameras, modern lifts, and restaurant seating space for 9,000 people. Tellingly, during the Games the entire complex only housed foreign tourists.[38] The facilities at the Izmailovo complex demonstrate that foreign visitors to the Games were offered a level of service and a variety of amenities unavailable to many Muscovites at this time, let alone Soviet citizens in other cities.[39]

The design for the Olympic Village was on a no less grandiose scale than that of the Izmailovo Hotel. Sixteen 18-storey tower blocks with 3,500 apartments were built on 107 hectares in southwest Moscow (not far from the main sports complex at Luzhniki) to house 8,310 members of the Olympic sports delegations. Apartments provided either 32 or 46 square metres shared between two people – an area of living space well above the average for Soviet citizens.[40] The Village boasted 450,000 square metres of park space, and its catering facilities had enough space for 5,900 people and served 360 different dishes. The athletes living there were provided with 240 vehicles to ferry them to and from the sports grounds. It was also provided with many other modern amenities, including five saunas, a Russian-style public bathhouse for 200 people, and a beauty salon.[41] Some of the most important guests of the Olympiad were thereby provided with municipal amenities which were not always locally available to Soviet citizens themselves in the 1970s, many of whom moved into new suburban housing districts during this period often before all of the adjoining urban conveniences had been provided.[42]

Such demands for equipment and resources as well as attention to detail necessitated an expansion of the economic programme's reach to cover distant regions of the country in the search for the appropriate amounts and quality of industrial resources. These included Cheliabinsk, over a thousand kilometres east of Moscow, which provided steel for all Olympic facilities under construction, and the republics of Uzbekistan, Lithuania and Latvia,

[38] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.27-9; f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.77-8.
[39] T. Colton, *Moscow: Governing the Socialist Metropolis* (London, 1995), 455, 488-92, 518-53, 565-66; Hanson, *Rise and Fall*, 59, 203.
[40] At the start of the Olympics project in 1975, per capita living space was 11.8 square metres; by 1980 this had risen to 12.8 square metres. See G.D. Andrusz, *Housing and Urban Development in the USSR* (Albany, 1984), 287.
[41] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, ll.67-8; f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.46-51.
[42] Colton, *Moscow*, 532-3.

which provided such things as china, furniture and technical equipment. Individual cities drawn into the programme included Tula, Yaroslavl', Volgograd and Gorkii in European Russia, and Krasnoiarsk and Irkutsk in Siberia, which provided (among other items) supplies of rubber, glass, and electrical equipment. Resources were also drawn from the cities of Sverdlovsk, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Alma-Ata (in Kazakhstan), the Chuvash Autonomous Republic, and Georgia.[43] The scale of the geographical area from which vital resources had to be drawn to meet official requirements for 1980 evidently went far beyond that of the Olympic cities themselves or even their surrounding regions, further adding to the sense that the investment programme for 1980 was a highly complex task – in terms of logistics and coordination as well as the level of technology required.

Public Services

Aside from major infrastructure projects, the authorities also undertook a programme of minor repairs and the resupply of public services. Extensive work was conducted to improve everyday amenities in the Olympic cities which would be required by incoming foreign guests, such as clothes and shoes repair shops, hairdressers, laundrettes, watchmakers and camera shops, all of which were located near to Olympics hotels. In 1977-80, over a thousand such outlets were redeveloped and provided with new equipment. This was on top of the numerous twenty-four hour bars, cafés and buffets set up at sports facilities and media centres.[44] In 1976, the Orgcom's Public Services Commission concluded that the 'existing capacity of individual public service enterprises and the poor state of their equipment [means that] they are not in a condition to meet the demands of Olympic guests', and in turn proposed a plan to build two additional industrial-sized washhouses and a dry-cleaner's, a photo development laboratory, and more repair outlets for clothes and footwear.[45] Across Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Estonia and Moldavia, motorways and street curbs were repaired; new metal safety barriers were fitted to the sides of roads, motorway service stations were refurbished, and highways were expanded in width.[46] More than 600 new kiosks were set up in Moscow, and a further 390 additional stalls selling refreshments were placed along railway routes. Furthermore, the authorities opened eight new *Berezka* shops at the hotels serving important foreign guests and journalists. These were exclusive retail outlets where scarce and better quality consumer goods could be

[43] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, l.12, ll.72-3; f.5451, op.67, d.26, ll.34-5.
[44] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.46-51; f.9610, op.1, d.90, ll.1-3; f.9610, op.1, d.181, ll.30-4; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.
[45] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.90, ll.1-3.
[46] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.93-6; document no.123, pp.353-4.

bought with hard currency.[47] This represented a doubling of the number of such stores in the capital compared to the early 1970s.[48] All of this indicates that the organisers believed they could not rely on the enormous concrete façades of sports stadiums and hotels alone to achieve the appearance of an Olympic city and modern metropolis; the event demanded they pay attention to the smallest details of everyday urban life to ensure their guests were comfortable and well provided for in every possible respect.

The capital's physical appearance was also given a makeover. In January 1980 there was ongoing work to clean up and plant trees in the districts around the refurbished Olympic facilities, as well as repair the façades of apartment blocks located along the transport routes to the venues. Museums, theatres and cinemas were also repaired.[49] In May 1980, a plan was approved to recruit thousands of individual Muscovites as well as whole labour collectives to take part in a month of voluntary community service in the city's Volgogradskii, Dzerzhinskii, Zhdanovskii, Kalininskii and Pervomaiskii districts to clean up parks, city squares and housing estates and make repairs to roads with the help and resources of local factory managers and district administrators.[50] It was probably this last-minute campaign Colton was describing when he referred to 'laundry [being] whipped off of balconies along parade routes [and] buildings [being] spray painted…sometimes in such haste that window panes were coated.'[51] The journalist Christopher Booker described how even 'churches which had been falling down for decades disappeared under thickets of scaffolding' and their 'long-dingy cupolas [were] regilded.' The Soviet metropolis had apparently never been so clean in living memory.[52] In a slightly different case, 'a five-story apartment house breaking the line of Olimpiiskii prospekt in north-central Moscow was torn down.'[53] This was not the only occurrence of destruction and disruption inflicted on citizens for the sake of Olympic regeneration. Archival documentation indicates that the villages of Tatarovo and Krylatskoe on the outskirts of Moscow were demolished and their inhabitants relocated to make way for Olympics facilities; nearby farmland was confiscated and torn up; numerous other buildings were destroyed, and an entire new road was laid.[54]

The authorities also took special care to ensure specialist facilities were ready to meet the demands of one particular group of visitors – journalists. They created a network of 28

[47] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.
[48] H. Smith, *The Russians* (London, 1973), 44.
[49] Document no.137, pp.403-4.
[50] RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.804, ll.229-231; f.17, op.149, d.807, ll.127-133; f.17, op.149, d.800, l.131.
[51] Colton, *Moscow*, 395-6.
[52] Booker, *Games War*, 28; A. Shubin, *Ot zastoia k reformam: SSSR v 1977-1985 gg*. (Moscow, 2001), 12.
[53] Colton, *Moscow*, 395-6.
[54] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.13-14.

press centres at the sports facilities with space for 6,291 journalists, with 2,308 of them equipped with telephones and TV monitors – a number which proved to be in excess of what was required for the 5,615 journalists who eventually came.[55] One additional system put in place for the international media's benefit shows how the material preparations not only encompassed a colossal but essentially straightforward construction programme (of the kind which the Soviet Union's army of engineers and builders were familiar with), but also another area of economic management where the Soviet system was far less adept at achieving results – the inculcation of high technology. The Ministry of Appliance Engineering was charged with the creation of a computer system which would provide immediate data on the results of the sports competitions in all five Olympic cities to journalists spread across the country. In the event, the Ministry managed to successfully develop the system, made up of 14 computers and 202 workstations located at six separate facilities, which was serviced by 3,309 technical personnel and had two megabytes of memory. By the end of the Games, it had been used to issue 192,000 different reports in three different languages.[56] In comparison, for the previous 1976 Games, the Canadian organisers had developed a computer system of similar complexity, with 120 workstations spread across at least five different sites and serviced by 1,200 staff, and with one megabyte of memory. By the end of the XXI Olympiad, it had produced 5,000 sets of results.[57] This represents another case where the Moscow organisers sought to keep pace with their (often more economically advanced) predecessors in terms of providing the most up-to-date facilities and sophisticated equipment for Olympic guests – an objective which likely demanded huge efforts from the powerful, but nevertheless inefficient and technologically backward Soviet command economy.

Given all the improvements to infrastructure as well as public services made for the sake of 1980, it is not surprising to find that the Olympics' preparations became a landmark moment in the ongoing modernisation of Moscow. Timothy Colton notes that an impulse towards the monumental redevelopment of the Soviet capital was a hallmark of the Brezhnev era. It was within this context that he noted that the collection of facilities built or reconstructed for the Olympics was the largest single municipal construction project of late socialism. Colton calculated that investment for the Games amounted to 'four times the funds plowed into Moscow trade, consumer services, roads and bridges, and parks put together.'[58] One receives precisely this impression overall of the Olympics as the apogee of the Soviet state's enthusiasm to remake Moscow from the extensive archival

[55] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.42.
[56] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33, ll.11-16; f.9610, op.1, d.681, ll.56-7
[57] *1976 Official Report, volume one*, 377, 379, 407, 409, 434.
[58] Colton, *Moscow*, 390-5.

documentation on the economic programme. As Grishin noted in a report of September 1977 on the progress of the building work, 'such a multifarious and large-scale programme of construction…has never been undertaken in Moscow before.'[59] In terms of the scale of investment, the geographical sweep of the resources which were mobilised, the comprehensive attention to detail, and the technical sophistication of some of the facilities involved, the renewal of Moscow's infrastructure for the Olympics was a task of immense complexity.

Food Supply

There were other major logistical tasks that the Soviet organisers had to deal with ahead of the Olympiad which add to the impression that it was a major challenge for the command economy in the 1976-80 period. One of these was connected with a perennial concern of state administrators in the Soviet Union – that of the urban food supply. In 1978-79 the Ministries of Meat and Dairy Production and the Ministry of Fisheries drew up plans for the large-scale supply of food products in what they calculated would be sufficient quantities and varieties for the Olympics' foreign guests, as well as a scheme to build up reserves of food from the union republics.[60] Catering establishments taking part in the Games were individually assigned food-producing enterprises as their suppliers, with whom they drew up delivery schedules. As with the supply of building products, the plan involved the provision of required foodstuffs to the capital from distant regions of the USSR.[61] The head of the Orgcom's Commission for Catering and Trade reported to his superiors that the project required an overall 10-15% increase in the food supply for Moscow compared to the plan for the third quarter of 1979, including 7% for meat, 15% for dairy products, 18% for eggs, 30% for fish, 13% for confectionary and 25% for mineral water.[62] These extra supplies had to meet the needs of a rising number of catering establishments set to be used for the Games – by 1979 the list included 400 outlets in Moscow alone (with 120,000 places), with 230 in the other Olympic cities (60,000 places).[63]

Manpower

Unlike the plans for construction drafted by the authorities, which were largely complete by 1975, the process of finding the labour inputs the Olympics project required during the years of preparations came in a series of haphazardly issued decrees in the following years.

[59] Document no.12, p.65.
[60] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1342, l.78.
[61] Document no.126, p.374 ; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.
[62] *Ibid.*; f.9610, op.1, d.185, ll.1-5; document no.142, p.440.
[63] Document no.129, p.381.

In 1976, the authorities approved a plan to commandeer 12,000 members of the Komsomol for Olympic building work in the capital. In March 1977 the Politburo approved another resolution stipulating that a further 17,500 Komsomol members were to be sent to Moscow and 1,500 to Tallinn during the course of the year for manual labour on Olympic projects.[64] Using a practice typical of the era, the selected young recruits each received an official summons (*komsomol'skaia putevka*) from their local Komsomol branches, which obliged them to commit themselves to the Olympics project in a manner similar to military conscription.[65] Many were sent from the various union republics (with the exception of Estonia), with the largest numbers coming from the three Slavic republics as well as Moldavia.[66] In total, between 1976 and mid-1978 the Soviet state successfully sent 34,000 unskilled young labourers, many of whom had been demobilised from the Soviet Army, to Olympic building sites.[67] Reflecting the huge differences in scale between the projects undertaken in the capital and the secondary Olympic cities, only 7,000 labourers were ultimately provided to Tallinn from outside Estonia, though it is not clear exactly how much of the republic's own labour force was commandeered for the purposes of Olympic construction in addition to this.[68] In terms of highly skilled workers, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialised Education was ordered to find 800 young engineers and technicians from the most recent class of vocational graduates to be put at the disposal of *Mosgorispolkom* in 1977-78 for assignment to Olympic construction sites.[69] In July 1979, the government approved an additional plan to provide 7,280 highly trained graduates of technical schools.[70] Both CC functionaries as well as the Moscow *gorkom* also suggested on more than one occasion in 1976-77 that the capital be provided with 15 construction brigades from the Soviet military, though it is unclear whether this idea was ever implemented.[71]

In terms of practical assistance provided to the authorities by the population when the sports competitions themselves got underway, by mid-August 1978, it was estimated that 150,000 Soviet citizens would be needed to provide services during the Olympics at both sport venues and hospitality facilities. Out of the 120,000 positions lasting only for the duration of the event itself, as much as 65% were menial public service jobs (waiters and cooks, hotel workers, shop assistants). The Games also made use of 19,000 transport

[64] Document no.8, pp.54-5.
[65] RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.5.
[66] Document no.20, pp.82-4.
[67] Document no.111, p.305.
[68] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.689, ll.221.
[69] Document no.8, pp.54-5; document no.6, pp.46-9.
[70] Document no.24, p.91.
[71] Document no.6, p.48; document no.12, p.67.

workers, 11,500 sports judges and assistants, and 10,300 translators and tour guides. The Orgcom's 1978 figures also stipulated that 3,900 musicians, performers and other cultural workers would participate in the Olympics Cultural Programme, and that there would be an additional 2,000 radio and television engineers, and 5,000 medical personnel.[72] At the 1976 Games, in contrast, the numbers of support staff provided by the Canadian authorities had been much smaller: there were just 2,127 transport workers, 1,280 medical personnel, 1,042 translators and around 9,000 general service personnel.[73] As many as 100,000 service workers in 1980 were students, giving the Soviet Olympiad a remarkably youthful appearance.[74] Many of these young helpers were organised into 'student brigades', of which the largest numbers were recruited by *Mosgorispolkom* and the tourist departments of the State Administration for Foreign Tourism (*Glavinturist*), the VTsSPS, and the Komsomol[75] (most likely reflecting official awareness that the central challenge faced by these cadres would be the need to effectively assist foreigners). In contrast to the multi-ethnic mix of Olympic construction workers, the Moscow city authorities assured their superiors in August 1978 that they could fully meet their cadre needs for 1980 from the capital's own pool of labour, promising to find 20,800 Muscovites to provide services at the Games. It was subsequently reported however that 5,000 job positions for cooks, waiters and sales assistants had to be filled by citizens from the union republics via a series of competitions to find the best workers in the localities.[76] Two years later, Grishin, reporting to the CC on the proceedings of the first days of the Olympiad, mentioned that the event's guests were in fact being looked after by 300,000 Soviet citizens[77] – a remarkable 100% increase on the earlier target figures for service personnel. Much like the overall dimensions of construction and investment, it appears that labour inputs grew extremely rapidly as the event approached. In contrast, there had been in total approximately 50,000 service personnel present during the 1972 Games, and just 23,000 in 1976.[78] This huge increase in the number of service personnel for 1980 was not matched by comparable growth in the number of attending foreign visitors across the three Olympiads. Whilst there were at least 200,000 guests at Munich and 268,000 at Montréal, the number of foreign visitors in 1980 was around 211,000 (moreover, this was *not* a reduced figure resulting from the boycott – archival documents show that the organisers never planned for more

[72] Document no.111, pp.309-10; pp.313-14; document no.119, pp.342-3; document no.128, p.378.
[73] *1976 Official Report, volume one*, 452, 462, 469, 544.
[74] Document no.111, pp.309-10; pp.313-14; document no.119, pp.342-3.
[75] RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.804, ll.112-13.
[76] Document no.111, p.310; GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.20-21.
[77] Document no.265, p.736; the same figure is also mentioned in document no.282, p.778.
[78] P. Howell, *Montréal Olympics: An Insider's View of Organizing a Self-Financing Games* (Montréal/Kingston, 2008), 145.

than this number).[79] The much larger ratio of service personnel to attendees in 1980 was probably an attempt to ensure the event's guests had unlimited opportunities to receive every kind of assistance one could imagine from the authorities – and in turn, ensure yet again that every convenience was available to them.

In addition, having noted the large-scale use of military personnel and the armed forces' material resources at previous Olympiads, the Politburo decreed in 1979 that 7,010 serving officers and men together with 2,650 reserve military personnel would be used for Olympics-related tasks between May and August 1980.[80] These particular formations, on account of their expertise and equipment, were charged with resolving a variety of logistical tasks aimed at supporting the civilian administration's efforts to provide essential services as well as successfully organise ceremonial events during the Games. These included putting on gymnastics performances, providing orchestral music and organising firework displays during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies (the responsibility of Moscow's elite Tamanskaia infantry division); supervising the Tallinn sailing regatta (involving the use of 49 naval vessels) and the Olympic Torch Relay (for which two military helicopters were deployed); managing communications and power stations, and serving as additional translators.[81]

A Practical, or Political Task?

The Russian historian Aleksandr Shubin notes that, along with other aspects of the Games' preparations, the economic programme described above aimed to create the impression of a 'model socialist city' (*obraztsovyi sotsialisticheskii gorod*).[82] This phrase, or a slight variant of it ('model communist city'), does indeed crop up repeatedly in the internal correspondence of the Games' organisers, often directly in relation to the exacting requirements of the economic programme in particular.[83] The way in which it was used in this context reinforces the overall impression one receives from the archival record regarding the underlying purposes of all the elements of the Olympics' economic programme discussed above. In their evident concern to not only erect state-of-the-art sport facilities but also to provide modern hospitality and recreational services in the Olympic cities (Moscow above all), the Soviet organisers were on the one hand simply

[79] Schiller, and Young, *Munich Olympics*, 231; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.73; f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.4-7; f.9612, op.3, d.1342, l.21.
[80] Document no.124, pp.360-61, pp.369-70.
[81] *Ibid*.; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.552, l.147.
[82] Shubin, *zastoia k reformam*, 12.
[83] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.1-5; f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.1-6; f.17, op.149, d.800, l.26; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.10, l.17; f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.62-63; f.5451, op.67, d.26, ll.21-22; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.

trying to resolve the many practical, logistical problems of hosting the modern Games. But on the other, they were clearly aiming simultaneously to create an elaborate physical and organisational façade which showed the supposedly prosperous, efficient, and rational conditions of Soviet modernity and emphasising its fully functioning system of amenities and public services provided by a benevolent one-party communist state. The Soviet state was not only concerned with successfully organising an impressive sporting spectacle and fulfilling its obligations to the IOC, but also with proving the success of the socialist alternative to capitalism – that is, with achieving a decidedly self-interested, political goal.

Indeed, the organisers explicitly stated that this was their intention. Speaking to the leadership of *Glavinturist* in 1978, Novikov commented on the necessity of creating a good impression of the Soviet Union for the outside world in 1980 specifically through the material conditions which foreign guests would experience: '…we expect that between one third and a half [of foreign journalists present] will be nothing but mudslingers…who will search for any deficiencies [on our part] in order to write about them in their newspapers… We have [therefore] established special material conditions [for them]…We are going to put them in our best hotels.' Regarding the seemingly minor issue of catering for the Olympic guests, the Orgcom Chairman stated that his colleagues were 'obliged to take great care' to provide a varied menu, 'so that there won't be any complaints, but instead so that [Olympic guests] will praise us, and reveal our socialist reality [to others].' Whilst agreeing with other officials' comments that it was important to improve Moscow's external façade, Novikov also impressed upon his colleagues that 'the most important issue is [to provide the kind of] standards [of living] that they know from abroad.'[84] That the economic programme would serve the political goals of the Olympic project overall can be further seen in Soviet officials' concerns about foreign criticism of the logistical problems and hospitality issues experienced at the 1979 Spartakiad. Noting that critical discussions of the material conditions prevalent in the USSR had circulated widely in the Western media, the organisers resolved to 'take measures to eliminate those deficiencies which might justify foreign journalists' criticisms of the 1980 Olympics.' The head of the Propaganda Commission, L. Tolkunov, warned his colleagues that 'if we don't pay serious attention right now to things that at first glance seem like trifles, we'll give the bourgeois press the opportunity to create a distorted, negative image of the Soviet Union and its people.'[85] Such statements confirm beyond any reasonable doubt that a central factor determining the scale and meticulous attention to detail found in the economic programme was thus not

[84] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.69-71.
[85] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.459, ll.30-2.

just practical necessity, but the *political* calculation that this was a chance to impress the outside world with the seemingly perfect nature of 'socialist reality.'

Moreover, the multiple facets of this programme – from the gleaming new stadiums to the high-quality food supply and air-conditioned hotel rooms – show how the Soviet state understood that in order to produce the desired impression among onlookers of a model socialist economic order, it had to take care to produce perfect conditions in both public and private spaces. On the streets and squares of the capital, foreign guests would see an artificially clean, orderly city with model public services and organisation, whilst in their hotels they would be treated to luxurious accommodation, such as that seen in the example of Izmailovo. Indeed, such a uniformly high standard of material conditions *had* to exist precisely everywhere for it to have any chance of being convincing. In this way, the organisers undertook immense efforts to hide the dilapidated, imperfect reality of Soviet urban life, and thereby conceal the fact that most Soviet citizens had living conditions of a comparatively modest kind. Aside from the IOC's requirements for the sporting competitions, the need for such attention to detail in creating comfortable and convenient material conditions in five major conurbations was clearly one of the central factors making the Moscow Olympiad an enormously complex and ambitious venture in economic and administrative terms, requiring huge inputs of resources and effort.

Economic Goals

It ought to be noted however that the phrase 'model communist city' had already entered public discourse in 1971 when Brezhnev first used it at the XXIV Congress of the CPSU, and was soon taken up by Moscow Party Secretary Grishin to signify the authorities' intention to resolve all of the capital's mundane problems of urban development.[86] In view of the roots of this ideological trope, its usage by the Olympics' organisers suggests the event's purposes were in part bound up with the state's long-term plan for Moscow's development. The Olympiad may have been seen as a shortcut for overcoming some of the material problems which confronted the Soviet Union's largest metropolis, in the sense that it presented an opportunity to concentrate additional resources on a number of infrastructure projects in the capital. The same possibility was of course true for the other Soviet Olympic cities as well – all of which were major urban centres in the European USSR.

There is some archival evidence to support this view. In a CC-Sovmin decree issued in December 1974 outlining the Olympic preparations to be undertaken in Tallinn, the Soviet leadership let it be known that it expected these preparations to have a beneficial effect on the republican capital's investment in housing, transport, cultural and commercial facilities,

[86] Colton, *Moscow*, 391-92.

and produce 'a significant expansion of welfare infrastructure'.[87] In January 1976, Novikov informed the Orgcom of the authorities' intention to turn over the Olympic Village (which, as noted above, amounted to a substantial housing project with a whole number of modern conveniences) to ordinary citizens after the Games. In fact, he implied that great attention needed to be paid to the Village's proper construction precisely because it would later be occupied by Soviet citizens.[88] Novikov also spoke of the necessity of preparing for the Olympics 'in such a way that they will fulfil the needs of…future development in Moscow and elsewhere in the Soviet Union,'[89] suggesting the same principle of ordinary citizens' welfare was an underlying motivation for the high quality of *all* facilities and infrastructure provided for the Games.

There was thus an additional, secondary purpose to the Olympic project, related specifically to its economic dimension – that of moderately boosting citizens' living standards in certain parts of the USSR. Although distinct from the aim of creating a façade for socialism, this purpose to the Games was arguably no less 'political'. Successful economic development achieved as a result of 1980, and the additional degree of satisfaction with the system this was supposed to produce, would aid the wider priorities of maintaining social stability in the USSR and the political legitimacy of communist party rule (and was thus directed at extracting benefits for the Soviet state). Such a self-interested motivation again indicates that the organisers were not simply concerned with the purely practical goal of coping with the logistical task of the Olympiad alone.

Problems of the Economic Programme

Somewhat inevitably, the Games' economic programme was beset with significant problems. Above all, Olympic construction experienced a prolonged bout of what was referred to in the Soviet Union as *dolgostroi* – the sluggish completion of investment projects.

Dolgostroi

Countless reports sent to the Orgcom regarding the construction programme show that, across all five Olympic cities, practically every organisation involved – including numerous all-union government ministries, the state executives of five union republics, the municipal Moscow authorities and their subcontractors, and the VTsSPS – almost immediately began

[87] RGANI, f.5, op.67, d.130, l.17.
[88] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33, ll.7-8.
[89] Parks, "Red Sport", 306.

to fall behind schedule in its work and thereafter continuously failed to meet its targets for constructing and refurbishing Olympics facilities by a wide margin. This was especially true in 1976 and 1977, and to a lesser extent in 1978.[90] Reconstruction of the 'Spartak' Stadium in Kiev, for example, was only 7% complete in 1977, and stood at just 30% in August 1978 – two months after it had been due to be brought into service.[91] In Moscow, the VTsSPS managed to complete only 20% of its annual target for construction work at the Troparevo district hotel by July 1977, and as little as 3% at the equestrian facility near Planernaia metro station. Progress on the Sokol'niki Sports Palace (construction of which was due to be completed in the following year) languished, with the contracted organisation, *Glavmospromstroi*, failing to begin construction on time 'without any justifiable reason.'[92] As with their approach to the economy as a whole in these years, the central authorities' response was to mechanically call for improved efficiency through periodic resolutions, without any major attempt to modify their original instructions from 1975.[93] Inevitably however, the leadership's exhortations had little practical effect. A significant number of venues in Moscow still remained in the final stages of construction right up until June 1980, despite the increasingly frequent admonishments of the Central Committee.[94] Putting the finishing touches not only to large-scale sport, hospitality and communication facilities, but also to much more straightforward projects such as the renovation of catering establishments and highway infrastructure, proved painfully slow to resolve.[95]

The consequence of the snail's pace of investment was that the overall speed of Olympic construction efforts became decidedly more frenetic towards the end than it was at the start, in line with the typical Soviet pattern of 'storming' to complete the economic plan in its final stages. With just 14% of construction work completed overall by mid-1977, the Orgcom reported to the CC that 118 million roubles would have to be invested by the end of that year, 390 million in 1978, and 280 million in 1979.[96] Within a year of this report being sent, the projected target for capital investment in 1979 had increased to 449 million roubles.[97] In some cases, the hold-ups were the result of disagreement among architects

[90] Document no.111, p.304, pp.314-17; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.3-5, l.14; f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.1-7, ll.34-6; f.5451, op.67, d.27, ll.14-17.
[91] *Ibid*.
[92] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.1-7.
[93] See document no.6, pp.46-9 ; document no.8, pp.51-5 ; document no.11, p.63; document no.24, pp.90-1; document no.111 pp.314-17; document no.218, p.641; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.11-12, ll.10-13, ll.27-31, l.33; f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.213-16; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.
[94] Document no.111, p.304, pp.314-17; document no.17, p.76; document no.231, p.676, RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.800, l.133, l.135, l.153.
[95] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.93-6; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.1-6; f.9612, op.3, d.1342, ll.9-11, l.16; f.9610, op.1, d.500, ll.55-57; document no.142, pp.440-41; document no.123, p.354.
[96] Document no.11, p.62.
[97] Document no.17, p.75.

and engineers over the proposed designs for Olympic facilities, such as a dispute over whether to build a roof for the Central Lenin Stadium in early 1977.[98] But repeated reference to other issues in the archival record indicates a deeper explanation – that the nature of the Soviet economy itself, with its multiple structural deficiencies, consistently impeded progress.

Caught Out by the Command Economy

At least three key problems related to the long-time structural failings of the Soviet economic mechanism were cited time and again in internal documents. With respect to the sources of *dolgostroi*, the first of these was the continuous shortage of material supplies needed for construction work. In 1976, preparations for the Tallinn sailing regatta were dogged by a lack of supplies of ferroconcrete. Various other Estonian state construction organisations collectively received enough steel to build only half of a fourteen-storey hotel.[99] Grishin complained of 'serious difficulties in the material and technical provision of building sites' in September 1977, declaring that the national construction industry overall had been caught unprepared for the material demands of the Olympics. The project was suffering especially from shortages of machinery, ferroconcrete items, bitumen, iron and steel. There were not enough forklift trucks or truck-mounted cranes. Olympic builders required 40% more aluminium and 50% more stone than what Soviet industry could supply them with.[100] Work at one stadium in Kiev was proceeding at this time with the help of just one construction crane, one bulldozer and two tractors.[101] The RSFSR Ministry of Construction Materials Manufacturing failed to supply 50,000 square metres of glass to Olympic construction sites over the course of several months in mid-1978, which jeopardised effective work during the winter months. At the end of that year, some construction workers were arriving from the union republics without hand tools.[102] There were also significant delays in the development, manufacture and supply of various complex optical and communications devices needed by the broadcasting media. The Communications Ministry failed to supply a whole host of these items, and what it did supply turned out to be faulty.[103]

An equally vexing problem was the deficiencies in both the quantity and variety of basic food supplies being amassed for 1980. Officials from *Glavinturist*, the Komsomol and the

[98] Document no.10, pp.60-1.
[99] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.27-31, l.33.
[100] Document no.12, pp.65-6.
[101] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.27, ll.14-17.
[102] Document no.19, p.81; document no.20, p.83.
[103] Document no.111, p.305.

VTsSPS all complained in 1979 that the demands of designated Olympic enterprises for additional food were not being fully met by union-republic ministries. These included orders for sausage, butter, cheese, biscuits, confectionary, tea, coffee, spices and jam. The CC's Trade and Consumer Services Department complained in September 1978 that the question of finding additional meat and milk supplies was suspended 'in a vacuum.' By 1979 the food ministries were still struggling to meet the demands of the Moscow authorities for stockpiling a wider range of food products. Other everyday items, the availability of which was no less important if the general dysfunction of the Soviet economy was to be concealed to visiting foreigners, were also missing, including toilet paper, soap, furniture, and crockery.[104] Of the 2,200 tonnes of packaging material needed for additional food supplies, moreover, just 40 tonnes had been delivered by July 1979.[105] The organisers thus encountered supply problems in these years which threatened not only the timely construction of hotels and restaurants, but also the eventual level of comfort which they would be able to provide within these facilities once erected.

The second major problem is highlighted by a December 1976 decree of the CC, in which senior officials complained that many Olympic building projects lacked sufficient manpower.[106] Half a year later, the Orgcom reported to the CC that many building sites had neither unskilled nor skilled workers. Even when organisations did possess a workforce, it often wasn't much to speak of. In July 1977, *Glavmospromstroi*, the main Moscow construction organisation responsible for such key projects as the redevelopment of the Central Lenin Stadium and the sports facilities on Peace Avenue, had at its disposal just 2,900 workers out of a required 9,500. Moscow organisations were supposed to have an overall workforce of 15,800 builders committed to Olympic construction at this middle point in the preparations, but instead possessed just 8,500.[107] In 1976-77 the Moscow branch of the VTsSPS managed to recruit and train only 8,000 Olympic cadres out of a required 28,000.[108] Other cities were not much better off. In February 1977, Novikov received complaints of a 'sharp deficit of manpower' at Olympic building sites in Tallinn, including of engineers, computer specialists, communications staff, builders and accountants.[109] The Estonian authorities complained to Moscow a year later that at current employment levels they could not maintain progress at the Olympic facilities they had already begun constructing without commandeering other workers currently building

[104] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1342, ll.9-11, l.95; document no.112, pp.323-4; document no.128, p.380.
[105] Document no.121, p.348, p.349.
[106] Document no.6, pp.46-9.
[107] Document no.11, pp.62-3.
[108] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.58-62.
[109] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, l.34.

schools, apartment blocks and hospitals across the republic. They pleaded for the centre to send them 600 additional workers – a request that the CC Department of Construction refused to meet, forcing them to get by instead with just 200.[110]

Finally, officials repeatedly complained of Olympic cadres' low productivity, poor organisation, and slack work discipline. The failure to make progress in the construction of the Troparevo district hotel in Moscow in 1976 was attributed to sluggishness of several construction trusts, which 'enforced few demands on construction brigades or design organisations.'[111] In July 1977 there were complaints that at a majority of construction sites, work was not being organised into the required two or three shifts, and that there was a lack of sufficient enthusiasm in meeting work targets. Grishin, too, complained of a 'poor sense of responsibility among foremen for the fulfilment of the plan and their socialist obligations.' At this time, a number of work brigades had not yet drawn up weekly or daily production schedules, and there was a general lack of control over labourers which was leading to loss of working hours and standstills.[112] In 1978, there were significant problems with the reconstruction of the 'Locomotive' Stadium in Kiev, because – somewhat inexplicably – the design team had neglected to include any plans for its use as a football field.[113] The VTsSPS complained that its work was hindered by a 'wait and see attitude' among its own lower-level employees, who it was claimed were calculating that their responsibility for some of the new facilities would be removed if they dragged their feet for long enough.[114] Between January 1978 and April 1979, state inspectors issued 296 orders to correct poor-quality construction and imposed financial penalties on work teams at 41 different sites. They found that poor-quality building materials were being used for important, showcase facilities whilst expensive supplies were being squandered on buildings of secondary importance. Stocks of materials and equipment were being negligently stored in open warehouses, which were both exposed to the elements and open to pilfering, and workers had apparently made efforts to hide these infringements from inspectors.[115] Work on the framework of the 'Olympia' Hotel in Tallinn, meanwhile, had to be temporarily suspended in 1979 because of its builders' failure to stick to the agreed work schedule, resulting in the one working lift shaft only reaching as far as the 13th floor when the structure of 18 had already been laid.[116]

[110] Document no.16, p.74.
[111] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.47-9.
[112] Document no.12, p.65.
[113] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.27, ll.14-17.
[114] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.47-9.
[115] Document no.22, ll.87-9.
[116] Document no.21, p.84.

All of these problems which blighted the progress of Olympics construction had bedevilled the Soviet economy for decades, and in some cases were particularly evident in the Brezhnev era. That these structural problems were cited so frequently as the factors slowing Olympic investment targets shows that, to a considerable degree, the project became caught up in the pitfalls of the perennially inadequate Soviet command economy.

An Unprecedented Challenge

At the same time, various comments made by Orgcom officials suggest there was also an external source to their difficulties. In particular, they implied that they had received a task from the IOC which in practical terms they could barely cope with. One VTsSPS summary report written in 1980 remarked that the problems which had been encountered with designing Olympic facilities were primarily the result of the fact that there was no precedent for many of them 'in either the national or even global construction industry.' It also noted that 'numerous additional demands on the part of sports organisations, inspection and security services, and other policy-making bodies have appeared during the course of [the construction programme],' and as such 'the development of design plans and cost estimates has often fallen behind the tempo of construction.'[117] This theme of the need for additional inputs of resources for the sake of reaching 'Olympic standards', which in turn caused a slowdown in construction progress, appears repeatedly in this particular document.[118] There is also evidence that the titanic construction programme put a significant strain on the resources of the organisations responsible in a way which was not necessarily connected with the intrinsic problems of supply and coordination within the Soviet command economy. In mid-1977, Grishin noted the 'overloading' of responsibilities for Olympic construction on the Moscow authorities and the consequent need to free up its manpower and material resources currently devoted to other projects in order to achieve more effective progress with the Games. To do this he suggested redistributing responsibility for some facilities to various government ministries, excluding several others from the Olympics project altogether, and even delaying some capital projects until after the end of the Tenth Five-Year Plan.[119] In making such proposals, Grishin, at least, appeared to believe the construction programme was simply too big to be manageable within the current capacity of the economy.

Soviet planners thus clearly felt they were grappling with an unprecedented challenge in terms of the Olympic venues' combined multivalent complexity and the degree of

[117] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.8-9.
[118] *Ibid*., ll.13-14.
[119] Document no.12, pp.66-8.

exactitude which was demanded of them in their work with regards to design, resource allocation, the coordination of various organisations, and in terms of the need to keep to a strict timetable by a political elite extremely apprehensive about avoiding foreign criticism of its economic system in 1980. Virtually the whole economic and administrative bureaucracy of the Soviet state, from central government bureaucrats to enterprise managers and ordinary labourers, could expect to avoid harsh sanctions during the Brezhnev era for sloppy or slow work. But when it came to meeting the demands of the IOC and the presumed high expectations of the outside world to provide flawless infrastructure for the Olympics, the Orgcom and its supporting organisations apparently understood that they could not get away with half measures. Consequently, they repeatedly reorganized, rescheduled and redesigned their construction operations, leading to an inevitable slow-down. The haphazard progress of the building programme in 1975-80 was not just the result of the fact that it was coming up against the intrinsic failings of the command economy, but also of grappling with an exceptionally complex administrative task, the likes of which would have challenged engineers and municipal planners in any country, regardless of its economic structure. This was fuelled, moreover, by a constant official anxiety about the need to eventually reveal its efforts to the IOC, the world press, and the international public.

In turn, it becomes clear that the pitfalls of the Soviet economic mechanism simply exacerbated an already colossal and unfamiliar task. That Soviet officials were aware of this is demonstrated by the following example. Reporting to the CC on the progress of preparing retail trade and catering establishments for the Games in August 1979, Grishin remarked that: 'The supply of goods [to meet] the needs of the Olympiad has not been kept in step with the city's reserves for 1980 by *Gosplan*…As a result, [we] cannot be entirely certain that some high-demand goods will be supplied [to meet the needs of the Olympics] without detriment to the [general] supply [of goods] to the population.' Grishin was mainly referring to basic commodities such as food; whilst the supply of industrial goods to Moscow was set to increase 2-3% on 1979 levels, the level of these infinitely more vital products was set to *fall*.[120] It does not appear that the eventuality Grishin warned of came to pass. Nevertheless, the mere fact that this was identified by a senior official as a genuine possibility says much about the additional strain the Olympiad placed on Soviet economic managers, who already had to grapple with thousands of other plan indicators. It is difficult to imagine that such a situation whereby the government was potentially forced to choose between who deserved to be fed on the basis of political and economic expediency could have occurred if the host country had been a prosperous capitalist state. Whilst the modern

[120] Document no.128, p.380.

Olympics undoubtedly place a burden on all the countries which host them, in the Soviet case they impacted on a system that in the late 1970s could not guarantee a consistent rise in the standard of living to its own population. If such a basic commodity as food was in danger – when it was the agricultural sector perhaps above all else which saw the most sustained failure under Brezhnev – then one can be sure that the logistical task posed by the Olympiad exacerbated the most acute problems of the command economy.

Eventual Success

The construction programme eventually came to be described by the VTsSPS in 1981 as 'the most complicated, drawn-out and laborious stage of the preparations for the Olympic Games.'[121] Yet, ultimately, it was not a failure. From approximately mid-1978, increasing successes began to balance out the ongoing problems. In that year it was reported that the tempo of work was 'significantly increasing' with regards the construction of all types of Olympic facilities – not just sports stadiums and hotels but communications centres, shops and catering outlets. Confidence had increased enough for officials to promise the completion of several major sites, including the all-important Lenin Stadium, by the end of that year. 1978 also saw the completion of the first blocks of the Olympic Village and the mammoth towers of the Izmailovo Hotel, along with major engineering work at the stadium and swimming pool on Peace Avenue, most of the 'Sevastopol' Hotel, the Central Tourist House, the twenty-seven-storey 'Cosmos' Hotel, and the Olympic Cultural Centre.[122] In 1979, construction brigades successfully completed development of the energy supply, communications and welfare facilities at several Olympic sites.[123] The huge resources of the state now facilitated rather than impeded Olympic construction. In early 1980, all communications equipment, 103 residential facilities and 233 renovated catering establishments were brought into service.[124] The progress of recruiting service personnel for the event, if not cadres for building work, also showed an improvement in the latter years of the preparations period. By January 1980, staffing levels at all Olympics facilities stood at 85% of the required amount.[125] By 4th July, the authorities had the full complement of Olympic cadres trained and sent to their places of work, waiting for the event to begin.[126]

Somewhat ironically, July 1980 also saw the Orgcom's Commission for Major Construction issue 5,885 sets of awards to Olympic workers for exemplary performance on

[121] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.8-9.
[122] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.26, l.2,ll.9-10, ll.21-22, ll.34-5.
[123] RGASPI f.17, op.149, d.801, l.34; f.17, op.149, d.800, ll.131-2; f.17, op.149, d.801, l.34.
[124] Document no.242, pp.698-99.
[125] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.73-5; ll.211-12; ll.213-16, ll.218-22.
[126] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.632, ll.4-5.

construction projects.[127] The majority of Olympic facilities had now been brought into operation.[128] An Orgcom resolution formally recognised the 'huge amount of work' that had been carried out by all organisations under its aegis to prepare the Soviet Union for the Games.[129] The message was clear – the bureaucratic juggernaut had finally knocked the Olympic cities into shape. In the event, all facilities reportedly worked without interruption, communication links performed flawlessly, and there were no problems with electricity, heating, or water supply during the two weeks of the Games. Not a single complaint from the Olympics' guests was apparently received regarding accommodation, catering, or municipal services.[130] Such evidence surely justifies Shubin's assertion that the Olympics once more proved the USSR's 'ability to concentrate resources in critical areas.'[131]

Despite the USSR's eventual success, *dolgostroi* was for many years the single greatest challenge to the realisation of the Olympic project. But it was not the only problem facing the Soviet organisers on the economic front. An examination of the financial and commercial aspects of the economic programme will show that, taken as a whole, the latter did not go according to plan.

Olympic Finances

The finances of the Soviet Olympiad have never been investigated in any particular depth. By examining newly accessible archival documents, this issue can now be studied in considerable detail, allowing for further insights into the Soviets' approach to the Games as an economic project.

<u>The Organisers' Approach to Olympic Finances</u>

There is a substantial amount of evidence showing that the goal of financial solvency guided the organisers' work for the duration of the project. At a meeting of the full Orgcom in January 1976, Novikov emphasised that the organisation 'need[ed] to arrange [its] activity…in such a way that ensures we won't overspend on the funds earmarked for [the Games]. Instead [we need to] find the right solution for saving and reducing our expenditure.'[132] Novikov was undoubtedly taking his cue here from the top leadership, which in its initial 1975 decree had emphasised that existing municipal facilities were to be

[127] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.551, l.156.
[128] Document no.142, p.440; document no.225, p.664.
[129] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.500, ll.46-8.
[130] Document no.282, pp.777-8; RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.807, ll.127-133.
[131] Shubin, *zastoia k reformam.*, 12.
[132] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33, ll.5-6.

utilised during the Olympiad as much as possible, in order to avoid committing additional funds.[133] Also in 1976, the Head of the Orgcom's Propaganda Administration, V. Shevchenko, made frequent references to the need for frugality in the Olympic project in a report for the Executive Bureau. When discussing the plans for producing Olympics propaganda literature, for example, he emphasised that all publications should have a 'commercial basis' for the purpose of 'economising on funds.'[134] Furthermore, in drawing up its plans for the expenses to be paid by the Games' various foreign visitors in early 1978, the Orgcom leadership reported that it was guided 'by the necessity of observing a strict policy of economising [on funds] and…financing Olympics-related expenses.'[135] In October 1979, the Executive Bureau emphasised in instructions to its Financial Administration the need to 'establish the strictest control over the spending of Orgcom funds', and 'guarantee the maximum level of savings where possible.'[136]

However, the organisers were not only concerned about avoiding a financial deficit as a result of the Olympiad, but also hoped to receive a financial boost to the Soviet state. In his 1976 report, Shevchenko outlined various ways in which the Orgcom could capitalise on the 'exceptional interest' among foreigners in buying Olympics merchandise in order to achieve a 'significant financial effect.' He estimated that the Soviet state could earn 2.5 million roubles from one such commercial deal alone (regarding the sale of commemorative postcards). A similarly acquisitive intent can be seen in the proposed plan to organise an international rally of sailing ships in Tallinn simultaneously as the Olympics regatta took place there during the Games. It was calculated that the state might receive up to $1.8 million and 3.95 million roubles in fees from this exercise.[137] Making a profit from the Games remained a factor in the organisers' plans throughout the preparations period. The Propaganda Administration stressed in mid-1978 that earning currency from its activities was 'one of [its] most important tasks' alongside the 'economical use' of its budget. Indeed, the shift towards a commercial basis for publishing the internationally distributed *Olympics-80* propaganda magazine in 1978-80, for instance, was intended to both cover expenses and earn a 20,000-rouble profit by opening up space for advertising.[138]

There was an additional secondary aim to achieve a wider positive knock-on effect on other aspects of the Soviet economy through the Games. In 1978, Novikov reported that the Olympiad's financial programme was partly directed at earning hard currency 'for the

[133] RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.3.
[134] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[135] Document no.151, pp.464-7; document no.154, p.470.
[136] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.65-67.
[137] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73, ll.88-9.
[138] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168.

acquisition of imported equipment, which is needed…for [other purposes besides] orchestrating the Games.' He also noted that new broadcasting, communications and computer technology already imported for the Games by this stage could 'be used subsequently for the needs of the domestic economy.'[139] There was thus the official hope that widely applicable technological innovation could come out of the Olympiad. Indeed, given the Soviet state's ability to reverse engineer more advanced Western technology, even the limited importation of selected items for the Games could have led to their introduction into the command economy without the need for further imports – and judging by Novikov's comments, the areas of the economy covered here were quite diverse. For the USSR, whose economy was falling further and further behind the West in technological terms at the close of the Brezhnev era,[140] any technology transfer would surely have had its uses.

The Financial Programme, 1976-79

The Orgcom's initial financial projections contained meticulous estimates of the Olympiad's costs and revenue. In November 1976, it projected in a report for the Council of Ministers that the total expenditure incurred by the Soviet state from the Games would be 452.23 million roubles (including 23.11 million foreign exchange roubles, used in international financial transactions). The biggest element of these outlays by far was to go on the construction and renovation of Olympic facilities, initially set at 244.7 million roubles. Other expenses, such as those for the upkeep of foreign guests, the organisation of the sports competitions and ceremonial events, the maintenance of the Orgcom's apparatus, the acquisition of equipment, and the printing of propaganda publications, cost between six and 45 million roubles each.[141]

In the same report to Sovmin, Novikov outlined the ways in which the Orgcom hoped to generate 815.48 million roubles from sources both in and outside the USSR. The main domestic sources of income included sales of tickets for a nationwide sports lottery (420 million roubles), as well as souvenirs and published materials (76.6 million) and tickets to the sports competitions and pre-Games training matches (14.5 million). Abroad, sales of memorabilia, licensing agreements, tickets from additional sports lotteries organised in the Eastern Bloc, and finally the tickets sales to Olympic events and payment from foreigners for their stay in Moscow were all intended to earn the maximum possible sums of foreign currency for the Soviet state. Fees for transportation, tourist excursions, access to

[139] Document no.111, p.307.
[140] Brown, *Communism*, 459-60, 486, 590-1.
[141] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.18-20.

communications and so forth, in addition to basic hospitality services, were expected to rake in 90 million foreign exchange roubles. With the revenue from the Olympics project (in theory) exceeding the costs, the USSR initially anticipated a profit of 363.25 million roubles.[142]

The organisers were relatively successful in implementing their plan for financial solvency in 1976-79. By November 1977, thanks to such factors as the sale of television rights and various deals on commercial sponsorship, the Orgcom had earned 14.737 million foreign exchange roubles, or 98.2% of its annual target.[143] In August 1978, Novikov reported to the CC that the Orgcom had recouped 173.2 million roubles, which was 'in keeping with the confirmed plan for income and expenditure for 1976-1980'. Overall, the Orgcom felt confident enough at this point to predict it would receive 630-650 million roubles.[144] However, as noted above, already by 1977 costs for the construction and repair budget alone had been recalculated to a much larger figure – 920 million roubles, and continued to increase.[145] *Gosplan* reported to the CC in November 1978 that the costs of the Olympic building programme in the following year would outpace current projections in the Five-Year Plan by 222.5 million roubles.[146] Nevertheless, a year later, the Executive Bureau still anticipated that its targets for generating revenue would be fulfilled, and in some cases overfulfilled.[147]

The Impact of Afghanistan

The financial plan for the Games experienced a significant shock with the imposition of Carter's economic sanctions on the Olympiad which came in the wake of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, including a ban on the export of goods and equipment due in accordance with deals with foreign firms and the refusal to transfer commercial payments connected with the event,.[148] Novikov assured the CC that the 'USA's ruling clique will not be able to fundamentally impede the preparations for the Olympics through these measures', yet the data he offered did not justify this claim. The restrictions imposed on American companies' commercial activity with the USSR meant the Orgcom could not receive the $12.7 million it was owed by the television broadcaster NBC, whilst 2.6 million roubles' worth of payments due from other business partners were also blocked. All

[142] *Ibid.*, ll.5-8, ll.18-20.
[143] Document no.101, pp.281-2.
[144] Document no.111, p.307, pp.312-3.
[145] Document no.11, p.62.
[146] Document no.17, p.76.
[147] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.65-67.
[148] C.F. Zarnowski, "A Look at Olympic Costs", *International Journal of Olympic History*, volume 1, number 2 (Spring 1993), 24. The sanctions imposed on the Games are noted in document no.195, p.574.

Olympic licensing activity in America was 'essentially ruined', Novikov admitted, whilst in Western Europe and Japan it was 'significantly curtailed.' The Orgcom's direct losses in January-April 1980 amounted to 18.1 million foreign exchange roubles. It now lacked the financial means to finance impending payments for imports of foreign equipment required for the Games[149] and was forced to request an additional transfer from *Gosplan* to cover the shortfall in its revenue.[150] Thus, in addition to the substantial political crisis the Afghan intervention produced for the Games,[151] it also ensured that the USSR's carefully calibrated financial plan for 1980 began to unravel.

Yet if one looks at the figures for the final months before the Games' orchestration (by which time the impact of the post-Afghanistan economic sanctions had been felt), these financial losses were not unbearable when viewed against the large volumes of money flowing in to the organisers' coffers overall. The Orgcom had in fact managed to obtain 83.7% of its convertible currency takings already in 1977-79.[152] Although hundreds of thousands of tickets to the Games went unsold in many Western countries, the shortfall in revenue was anticipated at only 800,000 roubles.[153] Moreover, irrespective of its losses abroad the Soviet state was still able to soak up cash from domestic schemes. A month before the Opening Ceremony, the Orgcom received 14.7 million roubles from commercial and licensing activity within the USSR in the space of one week alone.[154] Pavlov reported to the CC on 15th July that overall, revenue amounting to 551.7 million roubles had been generated by the sale of sports lottery tickets.[155] Thus, even if the international dimension of the Orgcom's commercial programme experienced difficulties after December 1979, there was no impact on its money-generating schemes at home. In view of all this, it seems that the Afghanistan factor was not the primary reason for the ultimate failure of the Olympiad's financial plan, the details of which can now be revealed.

A Profit- or Loss-Making Venture?

It is difficult to determining the precise disparities between the 1976 financial estimates and the eventual costs of the Games' organisation, as indicated in a joint Orgcom-Ministry of Finance report to the CC written in February 1981, since the categories listed in the two documents do not always coincide. Nonetheless, what information is available is still detailed enough to allow the following calculations to be given with a reasonable degree of

[149] This is discussed in greater detail in the next section.
[150] Document no.195, pp.574-76; document no.303, p.831.
[151] Discussed in chapter four. Also see Hulme, *Political Olympics*; Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch.*
[152] Document no.303, p.831; document no.195, p.576.
[153] Document no.233, p.678.
[154] Document no.231, p.676.
[155] Document 250, p.714.

confidence. The total cost of the Olympics eventually stood at 1.9417 billion roubles, including 257.3 million foreign exchange roubles.[156] It appears that this was almost entirely the result of the ballooning construction budget – as noted, here the final costs significantly increased for nearly all investment projects compared to the original estimates set five years previously.[157] By 1980, a total of 1.7154 billion had been spent on construction overall (that is, a staggering 1.4707 billion roubles above the original estimate of 244.7 million for all facilities). This huge overall increase in expenditure was cushioned by an increase in the total revenue received compared to the initial projection – 1.064 billion roubles instead of 815.48 million.[158] Yet this seems to be of little compensation when it is considered that, accordingly, the Soviet state made a loss of 877.7 million roubles when it had hoped for a profit of 363.25 million. At a basic level, it is therefore clear why the USSR suffered the particular level of financial losses that it did: the ultimate cost of the venture – 1.489 billion roubles higher than forecast – could not be covered by the much smaller amount of revenue received from it, even when the latter was itself higher than expected by 248.5 million. At the same time, it is not entirely understandable from the available data why the organisers' total revenue, if not its costs, ended up being above expectations (in the sense that they were so much in excess of the Orgcom's early calculations). Previous Orgcom reports give the overall impression that plans for raising revenue were unfolding on target up to 1979. This should have ensured that there was neither a shortfall *nor a surplus* in the money received compared to the original, much smaller estimate. In turn, one cannot be certain of the precise reasons why the blow to state coffers ultimately inflicted by 1980 was not in fact greater by a wide margin. Whilst the 1981 summary does not provide any explicit details, based on the above account one can infer that the surplus revenue was the result of two factors. On the one hand, the finances of the Orgcom proved capable of weathering the storm of Western sanctions in 1980. On the other, it is conceivable (and there are hints in the sources to suggest it was indeed the case) that many of the Orgcom's revenue-raising schemes were expanded beyond their original scope or otherwise proved more effective than originally anticipated (the nationwide sports lottery and the sale of souvenirs at home, for instance, and the deals reached abroad on licensing and sponsorship rights). The following section, covering the Orgcom's highly successful and often profitable dealings with foreign companies, will further help to explain how the Soviet organisers were able to generate a large amount of revenue from the Games.

[156] Document no.303, p.829.
[157] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, l.12, ll.13-14.
[158] Document no.303, p.829, p.830.

International Comparisons

The Soviet Union thus expressly failed to achieve its goal of both a solvent and profitable Olympiad. It is worth considering this from a comparative perspective. At 1980 exchange rates,[159] the total cost of Moscow-80 was $1.26 billion. The total revenue received was $693.5 million, and the Soviet state made a loss of $572.08 million. Zarnowski, using 1982 values for the US dollar (a point arguably close enough to 1980 to suggest a meaningful if rudimentary comparison), estimated that the Montréal organisers spent roughly the same amount as the USSR ($1.21 billion) but generated little more than half the same revenue ($368.5 million), and thus ended up suffering a greater loss of around $841.5 million. The 1984 Los Angeles Games, meanwhile, made a profit not far short of the Soviets' original 1976 target – $222.7 million, having generated $768 million in revenue. The USA's expenditure was less than half that of its predecessor's, at $546 million.[160] The very fact that Canada lost out more in financial terms than the Soviet Union whilst the USA did significantly better, when both had successful free-market economies, suggests that the arrival of the Olympic franchise to the increasingly sclerotic USSR of the 1970s did not automatically engendered a more inefficient approach to Olympic governance. Rather, the domestic and international situation of each host, along with the state of pre-existing infrastructure, likely determine the financial solvency of one such venture to the next.

The Olympics as a Commercial Venture

The Soviet state attempted to secure business agreements with foreign companies in aid of its financial and material priorities for the Olympics. An examination of this issue reveals the extent to which the Olympic project relied on the Soviet economy's resources alone, or was a forum for east-west cooperation.

Making a Profit

In 1978, the Orgcom signed agreements on the sale of broadcasting rights for the 1980 Games worth $85 million with companies from the USA, as well as Japan ($8.5 million), Australia ($1.7 million), Canada ($1.2 million), and several West European states.[161] The most lucrative deal the Orgcom entered into by far however was the one the Orgcom

[159] In 1980, $1 on average was valued at 0.6518 roubles. Calculated on the basis of the information contained in *Tsentral'nyi bank Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, *op. cit.*

[160] Zarnowski, "Olympic Costs", 24-5. Zarnowski's data for 1976 has been converted from Canadian to US dollars by using a conversion rate of C$1.00 = US$0.8572, as recorded in Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook - 1982* (Washington, 1982), 37.

[161] Document no.111, p.307; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.33-4.

entered into with the Coca-Cola Company in March 1978, which provided the latter with the coveted title of 'Official Soft Drink Supplier' for the 1980 Games. In return for a commercial monopoly and licensing rights, the company agreed to pay the Soviet organisers $4,798,550, of which $4 million was already liable for immediate payment (and thereby ensured the Soviet state received the lion's share of this hard-currency windfall before the boycott spoiled the agreement).[162] Judging by the large sums of money these contracts involved, there can be little doubt that the USSR's commercial activity prioritised bringing in hard currency for the Soviet state to a significant extent.

Material Supply

However, there was an additional goal underlying the Orgcom's pursuit of business agreements: the acquisition of material supplies. The organisers' dual aim with regards to its commercial dealings was explicitly noted by Novikov, who informed Sovmin in November 1976 of the Orgcom's strategy 'to conclude agreements on preferential terms, with products supplied completely free of charge and large fees in foreign currency paid for the right to [the title of]…"Official Supplier" or "Sponsor" of the Games.'[163] Accordingly, agreements signed between 1977 and 1979 with various West European firms supplied the Orgcom with a diverse range of items, including office equipment, computer parts, synthetic materials and medical supplies.[164] During this period Orgcom workers were busy thrashing out dozens of agreements along these lines with foreign firms virtually every month.[165] By September 1979, it had signed contracts with Western companies for the supply of (among other things) large quantities of sport equipment (33 different categories, such as footballs, volleyball nets, and boxing gloves); assorted consumer goods (from Wrigley's chewing gum to crystal chandeliers); catering equipment, building materials, and other technical equipment and machinery (such as video recorders, acoustic equipment, radios).[166] In October and December of that year, the Executive Bureau approved yet more agreements for the free supply of 40,000 cassette tapes from Japan (for use at the Olympic Village's disco events), 12,000 rugs from Belgium, 510 medical refrigeration units from West Germany, and 134 massaging devices, 200 washing machines and 200 dryers from the UK.[167] Western firms also supplied photo processing equipment, 150,000 metres of recording film, 125,000 blank office forms, 300 tonnes of high-quality paper (for the

[162] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.293, ll.24-34.
[163] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.5-8.
[164] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.166, ll.1-22, ll.77-8, ll.126-31, ll.133-40, ll.152-3; f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.4-5; f.9610, op.1, d.192, ll.23-24, ll.27-28, l.58, ll.74-75, ll.78-79, ll.80-81.
[165] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.192, ll.23-24, ll.27-28, l.58, ll.74-75, ll.78-79, ll.80-81.
[166] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.28-35; f.9610, op.1, d.494, ll.23-36.
[167] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.68-70, l.124.

publication of Orgcom's main propaganda magazine), one million plastic cups and 200 cup-dispensers, and 127 million pieces of crockery and dining utensils.[168]

The fact that the Orgcom signed business deals for such a wide variety of items immediately suggests that its commercial programme was aimed primarily at obtaining badly needed supplies of essential goods and services for the Olympiad, which domestic industry was unable to provide. Indeed, Soviet officials explicitly stated that this was the case. As noted, the Orgcom's Public Services Commission proposed that new amenities for the Olympics should be provided using domestic resources. But it also did not hesitate already in 1976 to suggest purchasing some pieces of 'absolutely vital equipment' for Olympics residential facilities from abroad (including industrial washing machines and photo-processing equipment), having noted that much domestic stock was obsolete and that in certain cases Soviet industry did not produce the required items at all. It repeatedly emphasised to the Orgcom leadership that without such equipment from abroad, 'the needs of the Olympiad's guests will simply not be met.' Similarly, in 1977 the Orgcom's Catering and Trade Commission, having examined proposals for importing catering equipment from several European countries, recommended buying a number of items for the Olympic Village's dining hall from the FRG, once again on account of the fact that many such pieces of modern equipment were not available from domestic Soviet industry.[169] Deputy Orgcom Chairman V. Koval', too, noted in a report to the CC that various business agreements (such as those providing the USSR with sports equipment, uniforms for Olympic personnel, polygraph machines, and an advantageous deal on foreign travel insurance) had been signed by the Orgcom in 1977 out of 'the need to obtain various goods and services which are not available in the Soviet Union.'[170] Likewise, the aforementioned supply agreement for 300 tonnes of paper came at a time (in 1978) when the Olympics propaganda operation required print runs of its materials on such a scale that state publishing houses were on the verge of running out of even this basic product.[171]

The Organisers as Business Partners

The Soviets sometimes managed to secure agreements with foreign firms which met both objectives of earning foreign currency and obtaining material supplies for the Games. For example, the Orgcom signed a contract with the Myojyo Rubber Company of Japan to provide it with 3,000 volleyballs, as well as pay the Orgcom $250,000 for the right to the

[168] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.9610, op.1, d.294, ll.9-14; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.7-15.
[169] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.181, ll.1-3, ll.13-16; f.9610, op.1, d.185, ll.1-5.
[170] Document no.108, p.282.
[171] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.6, l.37.

title of 'Official Supplier' of these items.[172] This case highlights the Soviet organisers' perhaps unexpectedly effective business skills. Other aspects of the Orgcom's approach to its commercial dealings with foreign suppliers and sponsors reinforce such an impression. The available evidence suggests that the Orgcom rarely agreed to anything with foreign companies involving financial outlays. It also deliberated for a long time over its options regarding the most profitable deal which could be reached with either Coca-Cola or Pepsi Cola for the supply of their eponymous drinks, whilst also weighing up its options regarding who could provide the best technical expertise for the Olympics computer system – either IBM or Siemens.[173] Moreover, in 1979 the Executive Bureau instructed its economic specialists to make sure payments to the Orgcom from commercial dealings arrived on time, and emphasised that when seeking out foreign firms for new agreements, officials had to make sure 'the obligations of the Organising Committee do not go beyond what it can reasonably fulfil' – that is, that the Soviet state did not become entrapped in unprofitable or overly complex and binding agreements and regulations with foreign companies.[174] To this end, following the conclusion of the Games in August 1980, Orgcom administrators took particular care to check the terms of every business agreement that had been reached over the previous five years, in order to 'avert the occurrence of any legal disputes with foreign business partners'. At the same time, the Orgcom chased up payments from various firms which had failed to meet the full terms of their agreements due to Carter's sanctions, via both judicial proceedings and through the use of more amenable methods of persuasion.[175] The Orgcom was still searching for ways to recover outstanding debts owed by foreign television broadcasters, as well as the Coca-Cola Company, in 1981-2.[176] Thus for the duration of the project, the organisers methodically sought the greatest possible material and financial benefit, revealing themselves in the process to be no less hard-nosed than their capitalist interlocutors in commercial matters.

The Orgcom's single-minded pursuit of commercial and material success is also reflected in the economic agreements which it reached with the 'socialist commonwealth'. In September and November 1977, the Orgcom signed contracts for the free supply of 15,000 sets of cosmetics from Poland, acoustic equipment from an enterprise in Hungary, and equipment for the shooting contests from the GDR.[177] Other items coming from the

[172] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.166, ll.46-57, ll.58-63.
[173] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.5-8; document no.31, pp.115-16.
[174] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, l.24, l.27.
[175] Document no.189, p.551; document no.196, pp.577-78; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.554, ll.98-100; f.9610, op.1, d.293, l.104, ll.110-11, l.113.
[176] Document no.303, p.831; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.689, ll.249-51; f.9610, op.1, d.688, ll.1-2, l.71; f.9610, op.1, d.293, l.104.
[177] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.166, ll.86-9, ll.114-19.

Eastern Bloc included yachting equipment, electronic scoreboards, and furniture.[178] The Soviet Union thus reached highly advantageous agreements not only with Western entrepreneurs, but also with enterprises located in the increasingly moribund state-owned enterprises of the People's Republics, whose debt-riven economies were partially held up only with Soviet support. Given that the currencies of these countries were of no major value to their Soviet counterparts compared to American dollars, it is clear once again that the goal here was not to generate cash, but locate supplies of material goods and technology needed for the successful organisation of the Games wherever they could be found – and on the best possible terms.

A Manifestation of Détente?

However, the importance of the Eastern Bloc in providing material supplies for the Games should not be overstated. Out of the 80 different categories of products supplied to the Orgcom in accordance with all the business agreements reached by September 1979, just nine came from Soviet-bloc allies.[179] A total of 55 out of the 84 official suppliers to the Games who had signed agreements with the Orgcom by April 1980 were from among the group of advanced capitalist states, including West Germany, the USA, Japan, Finland, Switzerland, Italy, France and Britain. In contrast, state-run companies from the socialist countries held a proportion of these contracts which was a quarter the size of the capitalist world's share – just twelve from the GDR, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria combined.

The Soviet Union therefore relied to a considerably greater extent on the economic wealth and capabilities of the West to ensure the material success of the Olympiad than it did on its own satellites, despite the latter's close integration with the Soviet economy. The fact that a significant degree of constructive commercial cooperation between East and West underpinned the Olympics suggests that the project might have been partly shaped by the wider process of détente, according to which the Brezhnev leadership sought improved relations with Western Europe and the United States partly because they could provide advanced technology and consumer goods to the Soviet economy.[180] Did the Olympiad, in functioning as a forum for amicable interaction between the USSR and the capitalist world to some extent, embody the peaceful spirit of the détente ideal? In view of the goal of the Olympiad's economic programme to showcase the supposedly impressive material conditions prevailing under Soviet socialism (which, in the Cold War context,

[178] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.28-35; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.1-6.
[179] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370, ll.28-35.
[180] Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 41.

amounted to an act consciously aimed against the interests of the West),[181] the answer must surely be no. Instead, the Soviet organisers appear to have simply been aware that, in order to portray their country as economically prosperous in 1980, they had in fact to make use of the resources of the West in certain cases and present them as Soviet achievements. Neither the Soviet economy alone nor that of its empire could drum up all the resources required to comprehensively meet the material requirements of the Olympiad. The more successful capitalist economies of the West could, somewhat ironically, cover this gap, and thereby help the Soviet Union achieve its self-interested goal of constructing an elaborate façade revealing the success of socialism.

A further indication that east-west cooperation was not a goal in itself is shown by the organisers' attempts to make the Olympics venture as self-sufficient as possible. This can be seen in particular in the case of food supplies. Between June and October 1978, the Ministry of Trade, having calculated the demand for additional food products required for the Olympics, sent its initial orders to the domestic food ministries. When it became clear that these orders could not be met, the Ministry subsequently began a joint exercise with *Gosplan* to uncover additional ways to 'fully satisfy' the demands of Olympic catering establishments exclusively through Soviet enterprises.[182] The organisers thus refused to consider looking to the outside world to solve this key supply problem, and instead leaned harder on the command economy at home – despite their undoubted awareness (as senior administrators working in various sectors of the party-state) that the domestic Soviet economy was perennially overstrained by its myriad other tasks, and especially in its anaemic agricultural sector. When they could not procure a sufficient amount of additional foodstuffs from regions of the Soviet Union, the organisers eventually came to seek out external help. However, the Orgcom was still reluctant to rely on outright rivals in the capitalist camp. In 1978-79, negotiations were conducted by the External Trade Ministry with the socialist bloc, but initially the members of the latter only made 'extremely limited offers' with regards to food supplies, apparently 'due to the absence of established production' of the kinds of provisions the USSR required. In turn, the Ministry opted to buy supplies from Finland.[183] In August 1979, a contract worth 8.75 million foreign exchange roubles was secured with Finnish firms, which supplied the majority of additional food products needed by the Olympics' catering network. This amounted to 4,500 tonnes of provisions, including cheese, butter, ham, sausage, fruit juice, jam and honey.[184] As a nation with an explicitly friendly and cooperative attitude towards the Soviet Union, Finland may

[181] Discussed in chapter four.
[182] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.316, ll.1-2.
[183] Document no.130, p.384.
[184] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1342, l.78; document no.130, p.385.

well have been chosen as a safer source of supplies over other capitalist countries, whose susceptibility to the vagaries of the Cold War ideological confrontation surely made them less reliable in meeting business obligations. This choice reinforces an impression of disinterest on the Soviets' part about engaging in east-west cooperation for its own sake (i.e., in order to strengthen ties with various Western nations through increased bilateral trade). Rather, it suggests that they were worried about depending on the more antagonistic countries of the West for their strategic material needs in relation to the Olympiad. Whilst forced by circumstances to seek external cooperation, the organisers opted for the politically sensible compromise of a neutral (but still much wealthier) Western country.

Admittedly, no explicit statement has been found as to the choice of Finland as the main source of material supply for the Games. It cannot be ruled out that at least part of the reasoning behind it simply related to the country's proximity to the USSR (and in turn, the comparative cheapness of Finnish exports). Such an explanation may cast doubt on the reading that Finland was selected because of the influence of Cold War international relations. However, additional aspects of the Soviet strategy here reinforce the sense of the USSR's reluctance to expand east-west trade for the sake of the Games, suggesting there are grounds to see Finland within this wider strategy. For although Finland played the largest role, the CMEA countries were still not allowed off the hook. The External Trade Ministry struggled to extract the necessary quantities and variety of food from Finland alone, and was therefore charged with arranging further imports from Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, despite their overall inability to satisfy Soviet demand.[185] Throughout 1979, the Ministry continuously searched for ways to purchase the remaining provisions it needed specifically from the Bloc. It eventually manage to extract a commitment from Hungary to supply 2,200 tonnes of fruit and vegetables and 550 tonnes of similar products from Czechoslovakia, although both Poland and Bulgaria continued to deny that they could spare the produce.[186] By May 1980, a total of 105,000 tonnes of fruit, vegetables and nuts and 2,500 tonnes of canned fruit had been imported for the Games from this limited list of countries.[187] In this way, the USSR persistently sought to squeeze its satellites – which were already struggling with severe economic problems of their own – rather than turn to the far wealthier capitalist states when faced with continued supply problems. Autarchy within the socialist bloc was the order of the day when it came to such a crucial question as extra foodstuffs for the Olympiad.

[185] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1342, l.78.
[186] Document no.130, pp.384-5.
[187] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.1-6, ll.7-15.

Conclusion

The material preparations for 1980 were the single most complex and challenging aspect of the whole Olympic project, and a composite part of the Tenth Five-Year Plan. They consumed a significant amount of financial, material and labour resources, played a significant role in prompting the creation of an entire new bureaucratic agency, and contributed to infrastructure development in several areas of the USSR. Through the economic programme, the Soviet state sought to avoid the possibility of a drain on the country's finances whilst maximising the chances of achieving a wider economic boost. Such priorities reflected the Soviet understanding of both the risks and potential benefits of their Olympic venture. Not only did the state in some cases fail to achieve these goals, but during 1976-80 was also unsuccessful in avoiding the risk of inflicting an additional strain on material and labour resources. These difficulties incidentally provide some new evidence that the Soviet economy of late 1970s was in a state of severe ill-health, above all in terms of its uneven ability to provide even the most basic goods in sufficient quantities and of suitable quality and its capacity to avoid colossal amounts of waste.

However, the USSR was ultimately ready in material terms for the 1980 Games when they came, in part thanks to a significant amount of predominantly Western supplies secured through a series of highly advantageous commercial deals. Although the USSR was less integrated into the global market, the Olympiad's organisers proved themselves to be shrewd negotiating partners when dealing with the representatives of capitalism. Yet the Olympics were officially conceptualised as an autarchic project, and the organisers only turned to importing goods after realising that the domestic economy could not meet their demands. Even when they were forced to look for external help, however, they avoided turning to their outright opponents in the West, instead looking to neutral or allied countries. In turn, one can argue that there was no underlying goal in the Olympic project to expand east-west ties for their own sake.

Furthermore, the Soviet state was ultimately successful because it continued with the Olympic project regardless of the fact that the difficulties it earlier envisioned came to pass. There was no repeat of Brezhnev's suggestion to cancel the Games after 1975. This determination to push on and achieve success with the economic programme (and in turn, the whole venture) once again highlights the fact that the Olympic project was shaped by an understanding among Soviet leaders by 1975 that reneging on the commitments they had made to the IOC would be the most disadvantageous option, both politically and

economically. The evidence of official persistence in trying to overcome the difficulties experienced as part of the economic programme confirms that the leadership felt that, once they had committed to the project, they had no choice but to continue.

Yet the ongoing determination in the late 1970s to successfully orchestrate the Olympiad was also the result of an undefeated official hope that the project could still render enough *political* dividends to justify its growing pains. The core tasks of the economic programme – the provision of additional infrastructure and material supplies – were in one sense practical matters, which had to be resolved in any case if the country was to effectively manage the sport contests and look after a sizeable number of foreign tourists. But there can be little doubt that all the resources poured into the material preparations simultaneously played an integral role in achieving the one overriding political goal of 1980: to construct 'the biggest Potemkin Village operation the Soviet government had ever staged.'[188] With its grandiose hotels and sports stadiums, model public services and transport, ubiquitous support personnel, modern conveniences and abundant food supply, Olympic Moscow was meant to be an elaborate façade showing the supposed perfection, in material terms, of the socialist system. The Olympics weren't simply a chore that the Soviet state imposed on itself; instead, it believed it could get something back for its efforts. Precisely what further efforts the Soviet state made in other areas of Olympics administration in order to achieve its goals are discussed in the following chapters.

[188] Booker, *Games War*, 48.

3.) The Soviet Security Services and the Olympics

A political history of the Moscow Olympiad would be incomplete without considering the major role played in it by the USSR's two major national security agencies – the KGB and the MVD. This chapter will reveal, in detail for the first time, the story of the Soviet security apparatus' involvement in 1980, focusing on both the sources of official concerns about the event as a security threat and the state's understanding of it as also a political opportunity, and the measures undertaken in response to both issues. It will thereby further elaborate on the USSR's approach to the Games explored above in terms of the risks and benefits perceived to be inherent in hosting them and its overall aims for the project. It will be shown that the authorities relied on a diverse programme of measures, rather than solely on repression, to achieve their aims in this particular area of Olympics administration. Moreover, the character of the security operation reflected the Soviet state's commitment to promoting socialism in 1980 and safeguarding national security from perceived hostile forces in equal measure. Due to a lack of available evidence, the chapter does not cover the security measures implemented outside Moscow.

The nature of the subject matter here requires exceptionally careful use of sources. Next to no details of the security operation are revealed by declassified Orgcom documents; on those occasions when KGB and MVD officials took part in meetings of the former's executive bodies, items on the agenda were frequently marked as 'secret' in the official record.[1] More generally, the bulk of archival documentation on the activities of the security services during the later periods of Soviet history remains completely off-limits to researchers. Fortunately however, some invaluable sources are available on this particular subject. Declassified archival documents, made available online by Vladimir Bukovskii and released for first-hand examination in RGANI by the Yeltsin administration, have helped to piece together aspects of the Olympics security operation and the context in which it took place. There is a need for caution in the interpretation of these materials, however, since the clear anti-communist motives behind their emergence could lead one to place too strong an emphasis on the coercive aspects of the security services' activity in aid of the Games.[2] The dramatic information contained in some of these files is therefore combined

[1] See GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.127, l.99; f.9610, op.1, d.219, l.70; f.9610, op.1, d.361, l.5; f.9610, op.1, d.369, l.1, 5, 8, 66, 130-132, 172, 177; f.9610, op.1, d.370, l.57, 60. Thanks go to J. Parks for first pointing out this feature of the Orgcom record to me.

[2] The Yeltsin administration, in its attempts to outlaw the Communist Party in the 1990s, selected documents from state archives for declassification which would 'prove that the Communist Party [had] show[n] a complete disregard for human rights and international law'. See L. Soroka, *Guide to the Archives of the Soviet Communist Party and Soviet State Microfilm Collection, 1903-1992: Russian State Archive of Contemporary History* (Stanford, California, 2009), 14. Former dissident Vladimir

with an examination of other, more mundane (but no less integral) elements of the security services' activity. This will correct the excessive focus of these document collections on the role of repression in the security operation.

In terms of secondary sources, the work of the Russian commentator O. Khlobustov is also a useful but potentially problematic resource. Seemingly taking all assertions of former Soviet security officers about Western subversion in the USSR at face value, he is arguably more of a polemicist than a professional historian, seemingly determined to rehabilitate the role of the KGB in Soviet society as a guardian against subversive foreign influences. However, his sympathies have allowed him to extract some valuable details from former security officials about their involvement in 1980. He has also managed to publish (either in whole or in part) the texts of several archival documents contained in KGB files which are unavailable elsewhere, which provide useful background information on the Games' security operation. Khlobustov's work is therefore periodically used here to highlight additional details of the Olympics security operation, whilst every effort has been made to disregard his justifications for the security organ's activities.

Evidence is also available from two documentaries focusing specifically on the Olympics' security operation produced in Russia in recent years. Both of these documentaries have been shown on state television channels during the conservative Putin era, and consequently their overall portrayal of the Soviet security services is at times dubiously sympathetic. However, their producers were given access to off-limits records and even film footage from the archives of the present-day Russian security services, and they interviewed a number of former security officials involved in the Games. As such, to an even greater extent than Khlobustov's writings they provide indirect but invaluable access to primary sources relating to the Olympic security operation, the details of which can again be separated from their occasionally subjective presentation of events. Given that on some crucial issues the claims they make can be checked against archival documents, these documentaries can function as extremely useful sources.

The Games as a Security Threat

An official perception of the Games as a security threat to a large extent determined Soviet plans for the 1980 security operation. The 'Munich Massacre' of 1972, terrorism inside the USSR itself, and the confrontation with the West were all key influences here.

Bukovskii, on the other hand, was as committed as Yeltsin to exposing the abuses of the CPSU, arguably to the detriment of a more dispassionate study of Soviet rule.

In the Shadow of Munich

The security apparatus' involvement in the 1980 Games was partly determined by the notorious act of terrorism which occurred at the summer Olympics only eight years previously, at the XX Games in Munich. This is confirmed by the record of a January 1976 Orgcom meeting, at which Chairman Novikov declared that 'we cannot allow incidents of the kind which occurred at previous Olympic Games [to happen in 1980]…there was an attack on the Israelis at Munich, and…[the possibility of] this [occurring in Moscow] must be eliminated.' Novikov also expressed disquiet at the apparently poor security arrangements put in place at the XXI Games in Montréal, suggesting an expectation that the Olympic franchise (and in turn, the USSR's *own* Olympiad) would in future be under constant threat from terrorism. Indeed, specifically in light of the Canadians' perceived failure to respond to Munich appropriately, the Orgcom Chairman went on to note that 'the [MVD], the KGB and other agencies have developed a whole range of [security] measures, which require further perfection...if these agencies are not able to complete these [security] tasks on their own, we shall participate alongside them, so that the preparations for [the Games] are enough to guard against any surprises.'[3] Novikov's remarks thus suggest that the violence at Munich was foremost in the minds of the organisers when deliberating on questions of Olympic security. Moreover, the Orgcom Chairman once again explicitly touched on the subject of Munich at a meeting of the leadership of *Glavinturist* devoted to discussion of preparations for the Games in December 1978,[4] suggesting that deliberations among the organisers on the need to avert a repeat in Moscow through effective security measures was on the agenda on more than one occasion in this period.

Apart from these entries, however, references to Munich and its implications for the 1980 security operation are lacking from the available archival documents. Fortunately, several references in the Russian-language secondary sources substantiate the idea that the Munich Massacre had some influence on Soviet security planning. As former General F. Bobkov (Head of the Fifth Directorate of the KGB 1969-83), who was directly involved in the security operation, explained in an interview given to Russian TV in 2008, Munich was the most recent Olympiad at the time when the KGB's planning for 1980 got underway at the end of 1974. It was therefore fresh in the organisers' minds at this early stage, before the comparatively calm 1976 Games showed that major security breaches would not become the norm. According to Bobkov, Munich initially led to the suspicion that 'much was being done to bring disorder to the Olympics in Moscow.'[5] Likewise, Igor' Lozhkin, then Deputy

[3] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33, ll.18-19.
[4] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.62-3.
[5] O. Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery', *Zhurnal 'Samizdat'*, accessed 30.12.2014, www.samlib.ru.

Chief of Staff of the MVD and another senior Olympic security official, implied in an interview given for one of the aforementioned documentary films that the MVD personnel responsible for the Games were also very much aware of the fact there had been security breaches at previous Olympiads.[6] It is highly likely that he was referring to the greatest security breach of all, in 1972. There is therefore evidence that Olympic terrorism impacted on the work of both Soviet security agencies with regards to 1980.

The 1977 Moscow Bombing

The limited experience of the Soviet security apparatus with homegrown terrorism in the 1970s also convinced the Olympics' organisers of the need for a rigorous security operation. In particular, the KGB's fears that acts of terrorism might occur in 1980 were raised by the Moscow bombings of 8th January 1977. A bomb exploded during the evening rush hour on the capital's metro system, and was followed in quick succession by two more – one at a district food store, and another right in the heart of the capital between Red Square and KGB headquarters. The attack killed seven people and injured 44, amounting to the largest incident of terrorism in the USSR for 50 years.[7] The makers of one documentary film assert that the scale and proximity of the attack to the Games, along with the fact that another bombing followed barely ten months later at Moscow's Kurskii Railway Station, increased the anxieties of the Games' organisers considerably. Whilst the precise sources which the filmmakers base this argument on are unknown, this claim does seem entirely plausible given that the attack came more or less at the precise moment when the Soviet state began to implement its plan of security measures (around the start of 1977 – discussed below), whilst the trial of those believed to be responsible took place 'at the height of [more general] preparations for the Games'. Moreover, the same source claims that, after the group of Armenian nationalists who had allegedly carried out the bombings were sentenced to death, the KGB uncovered further information indicating that their co-conspirators planned to carry out another attack as revenge against these executions – and the target for this was to be the Olympic Games themselves. The film-makers, citing classified sources from the archives of the Russian security forces, claim that as many as 415 would-be 'terrorists' were ultimately apprehended by the KGB ahead of 1980 in connection with this plot.[8]

[6] Documentary 'Olimpiada-80: Sekrety bezopasnosti', *Rossiia-1* television channel, 9.45am, 26th November 2004.
[7] Documentary series *Lubianka,* episode 'Olimpiada-80: Bitva za Moskvu', *Pervyi kanal* television channel,, 10.40pm, 10th August 2004; M. Harrison, "Counter-Terrorism in a Police State: The KGB and Codename Blaster, 1977", *Warwick Economic Research Papers*, number 918 (2009), 2.
[8] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.

Despite a lack of corroboration by other sources, it seems reasonable to conclude that these incidents reinforced already fears regarding the Olympics' vulnerability in the wake of the Munich Massacre. Terrorism within the Soviet Union, although nowhere near as widespread as it was in Western Europe in the same period, could have only reinforced the organisers' view that there was a significant security risk involved in hosting the Games emanating from enemies of the regime within the USSR, on top of that posed by outside extremists who had no specific quarrels with the country of the kind seen in 1972.

Cold War Confrontation

The above factors were neither the sole nor the most important causes of Soviet concern over security at the Games. The authorities perceived the Games to be a threat to the USSR's national security primarily in terms of the ongoing confrontation with the West.

The Games occurred in the context of deep official suspicions about Western intentions towards the Soviet Union. In particular, it was believed that capitalist governments were increasingly hoping to subvert the Soviet state by various underhand methods (espionage, sabotage, terrorism) directly on its own territory, in what Bobkov referred to as 'a new wave of the Cold War' [*novyi vitok kholodnoi voiny*].[9] Iurii Andropov, upon assuming the chairmanship of the KGB in 1967, sent a memorandum to the Politburo warning that 'reactionary forces of the imperialist camp, led by ruling circles in the USA' were progressively trying to recruit more 'politically immature' Soviet citizens with the help of their foreign intelligence agencies in order to 'create anti-Soviet underground groups, inflame national tensions, [and] revive the activity of reactionary clerical elements'. Their ultimate aim was to precipitate 'the ideological degeneration of Soviet society'.'[10] Andropov's warnings to his colleagues that the West was effectively aiming to bring about the collapse of the socialist system from within remained constant throughout the 1970s.[11] Thus, anxiety over Western interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union was present at the moment when the Games' preparations began, in the middle of that decade. Indeed, describing Soviet officialdom's interpretation of the international situation which prevailed during the lifespan of the Olympics project, Bobkov later claimed the West's ultimate aim was 'the liquidation of a large, serious great power'.[12] Soviet officials perceived the Games to be taking place amidst a new period in the Cold War confrontation with the

[9] F. Bobkov, quoted in Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery'.
[10] Report from Iu. Andropov to the CPSU Central Committee (letter no.1631-A, 3rd July 1967), quoted in O. Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991: Gde byl KGB?* (Moscow, 2011), 48-49.
[11] Address of Iu. Andropov to CC CPSU Plenum, 27th April 1973, quoted in Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991*, 30-33. Also see chapters 2, 3 4 of the same book.
[12] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.

West, which would see the latter significantly increase its use of underhand methods of subversion in an attempt to destroy socialism within the Soviet Union itself.

It is therefore unsurprising to find that by the later 1970s the KGB also harboured the suspicion that the Olympics, as a major political event, had become a primary target for the West in this new insidious war of subversion. In the years preceding 1980, Andropov regularly updated the rest of the Soviet leadership on the developing threats to the Olympics coming from the West in a series of reports to the CC. In July 1978, for instance, he explained that 'the intelligence services of capitalist states, as well as [various] foreign-based nationalist, religious and other anti-Soviet organisations, …are developing plots in connection with the Olympic Games.'[13] Among the principal 'subversive' organisations that threatened the Games, according to his subsequent report of April 1979, were the People's Working Union (NTS) – a far-right, anti-communist organisation originally founded by White émigrés in the 1930s – as well as 'Zionists' and emigrant representatives of national minorities of the Soviet Union.[14] Some of the key countries whose intelligence services were devising 'anti-Olympics schemes' included the USA, Israel, West Germany and Britain.[15] The KGB, relying on either genuine intelligence, creative paranoid fantasy, or a mixture of both, apparently believed that the whole pantheon of traditional Soviet bogeymen were trying to subvert the Games – religious traditionalists, right-wing nationalists, and above all capitalist and imperialist governments.

As if this wasn't worrying enough for the organisers, Andropov's intelligence indicated that this diverse mixture of anti-Soviet enemies were to a large degree coordinating their 'anti-Olympic' activities, as part of one vast conspiracy against the Soviet Union. Some of the émigré nationalist organisations, for example, including Ukrainian, Baltic and Tartar groups, were said to be working closely with Western intelligence services in order to carry out their campaigns to 'discredit the Olympics', and more generally enjoyed 'the protection and patronage of reactionary circles' in 'imperialist' states'.[16] Even when Bobkov recalled, in an interview given nearly three decades later, a specific case of infiltration into the USSR ahead of the Games by a terrorist group from Afghanistan (following the 1979 military intervention), he was adamant that 'at the heart of [this plot] were American intelligence agencies.'[17] Whilst this was at least plausible, Andropov himself was also convinced at the time of the far more doubtful idea that the state's domestic opponents (such as human-rights dissidents), under the influence of foreign enemies, were being galvanised into

[13] Bukovskii document no.1501, 1.
[14] Bukovskii document no.1502, 1.
[15] Bukovskii document no.1501, 2-4.
[16] Bukovskii document no.1502, 1-2.
[17] Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery'.

carrying out subversion during the Games. He reported to the CC in April 1979 that White Russian émigré and nationalist formations, for example, had assigned 'hostile elements from among the Soviet population' the task of recruiting individuals 'with the aim of inspiring them to carry out provocative demonstrations.'[18]

Regarding precisely how these anti-Soviet organisations and states intended to wreck the Olympiad, here Andropov provided a wealth of information for the Soviet leadership. Their enemies were developing a number of creative methods for sowing disorder, spreading anti-government propaganda, and generally embarrassing the regime. Both the NTS and a Tatar nationalist organisation were planning to infiltrate their agents into the USSR by including them in national Olympic delegations, which would allow them to make public protests in support of their causes in front of the world's media during the Games.[19] The KGB also believed that Western intelligence agencies were hoping to exploit the increased amount of international tourism to the Soviet Union during the Olympics as a channel for sending 'terrorists and agents of various hostile organisations to [the USSR], as well as [hostile]…emigrant Soviet citizens'. Such individuals, having successfully penetrated the country's borders, would be free to go about encouraging anti-government demonstrations, committing acts of terrorism, distributing massive amounts of anti-communist literature, helping form nationalist underground groups, and even encouraging a rebirth of religious practices.[20] The KGB received information in 1979 that the NTS, in particular, had 'developed a minimum programme for the recruitment and training of thousands of activists and propagandists who [were] to be smuggled into the USSR among [Olympic] tourists'.[21] The Israeli intelligence service apparently had detailed plans to stir up anti-government feeling among Soviet Jews, distribute 'Zionist propaganda', and transfer money and instructions to Jewish dissidents.[22] Andropov even claimed that 'the top ranks of international Zionism' were planning to deliberately buy up Soviet currency in an attempt to wreak financial chaos on the Soviet economy ahead of 1980.[23] On the whole, one receives the impression from these documents that the security apparatus believed the USSR was facing a full-blown campaign of orchestrated chaos, comparable to the appearance of a fifth column in wartime.

As the Moscow Games approached, the KGB expressed concerns that these groups were becoming ever more frenzied and desperate. In another memorandum to the CC

[18] Bukovskii document no.1502, 1-4.
[19] Bukovskii document no.1501, 1-2.
[20] *Ibid*., 2-3, and Bukovskii document no.1502, 2-3.
[21] *Ibid*., 2, and 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; Bukovskii document no.1504, 5-6.
[22] Bukovskii document no.1502, 3.
[23] Bukovskii document no.1504, 5-6.

written in mid-1979, Andropov claimed that 'if in 1977 and the first half of 1978 calls for a boycott...were at the centre of [the enemy's] activity, more recently the idea of using the Olympics to carry out terrorism, sabotage and other extreme forms of subversion on the USSR's territory has assumed greater importance.'[24] This increasing anxiety piqued in the final stage of preparations following the USSR's military intervention in Afghanistan. The resulting US-led campaign for a boycott triggered even greater Soviet suspicions that the West would resort to extremely violent means to disrupt the Games, and through them threaten Soviet national security as well as damage the country's international prestige. This fear can be seen in the warning Andropov gave to the Soviet leadership in May 1980 that 'hostile activity' had increased as a result of the boycott campaign: 'the USA's refusal to take part in the Olympics might push extremist elements towards committing subversive acts on the territory of the USSR'. The KGB Chairman appeared to suggest that the actions of Western governments in waging political warfare on the Games could create the kind of highly charged atmosphere which would embolden the USSR's most violent enemies.[25] Andropov's deputy, V. Chebrikov, together with MVD chief N. Shchelokov went even further in a report sent to the CC later in the same month, suggesting that the West was now prepared to provide operational support for terrorist actions either directly or indirectly during the Games as a response to Soviet policy in Afghanistan. By this time, against the background of several months of fallout from the intervention, the security services feared that as many as 'several thousand [potential] terrorists' were operating in West Germany, Italy and other capitalist and developing countries, who 'could be used by the intelligence services of capitalist states for extremist actions during the Olympics'.[26] Thus, the organisers believed the West was seeking by 1980 to not only do political damage to the USSR through the boycott,[27] but also undermine its national security.

The Security Operation, 1976-1980

The Structure and Initial Stage of the Security Operation

In the context of these multiple fears, security considerations formed a key part of the Olympics project from its inception. To manage them, the Soviet state created multiple, interconnected administrative centres, dedicated to developing and implementing a full-scale security operation for the Moscow Games. Within the MVD, the Directorate for the Maintenance of Public Order and Security at the XXII Olympic Games (*Upravlenie po*

[24] Bukovskii document no.1502, 1.
[25] Bukovskii document no.1513, 1-2.
[26] Bukovskii document no.1514, 1-2.
[27] See chapter four.

okhrane obshchestvennogo poriadka i bezopasnosti XXII Olimpiiskikh igr MVD SSSR) was established.[28] Beyond its name, no information is available on its institutional history or official duties. Similarly, the KGB created the 11th ('Olympic') Department (*Olimpiiskii otdel*), which was formally charged with the task of 'carrying out active security measures [*operativno-chekistskikh meropriiatii*] aimed at thwarting the ideological actions of the enemy and hostile elements during the preparations and orchestration of the Moscow summer Olympics'.[29] This department became the nexus to which all information regarding Olympics security flowed from a wide variety of Soviet agencies, including undercover agents, the USSR Border Troops, military counter-intelligence, the Foreign Ministry and the MVD.[30] The Olympic Department was a subdivision of the KGB Fifth Directorate, which was created in 1967 and tasked with the 'exposure and eradication' of 'ideological subversion' on the part of 'anti-Soviet elements', i.e. the suppression of internal dissent.[31] It thus formed part of a division which was used more widely for counter-espionage and ensuring internal political and social control, whose foundation and development was intimately connected with the Cold War struggle and the CPSU's obsession with crushing all internal opposition. This is a further sign that the perceived risk associated with hosting the Games was immediately identified in terms of an additional threat to the internal social and political order of the USSR emanating from ideological adversaries. Finally, an additional structure dealing with security was created within the Organising Committee. The Security and Public Order Commission (*Komissiia po bezopasnosti i obshchestvennomu poriadku*) was established on 4th May 1975.[32] Headed by Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs B. Shumilin and Deputy KGB Chairman Chebrikov, many additional senior security officials were drawn into its work in subsequent years, including two directorate chiefs, one department chief, and one unidentified officer from the KGB, and four department heads and one union republic-level minister from the MVD.[33]

In 1975-76, representatives of these departments cooperated with West German and Canadian officials in analysing the security arrangements of the Olympics held in both Munich and Montréal. Overall, this convinced them that 1980 would require a very large

[28] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[29] 'Bitva za Moskvu'; Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991*, 55. The work of a KGB directorate encompassed a major sphere of the agency's activity connected to national security. See C. Andrew, and V. Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive, volume one: The KGB in Europe and the West* (London, 1999), 741.
[30] O. Khlobustov, 'Olimpiada-80: neizvestnaia istoriia', *Zhurnal 'Samizdat'*, accessed 31.12.2014, www.samlib.ru.
[31] Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991*, 48-52.
[32] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.5, l.14; f.9610, op.1, d.36, l.79.
[33] *Ibid*., l.28; f.9610, op.1, d.122, l.15, l.65; f.9610, op.1, d.219, l.45, l.68, l.89; f.9610, op.1, d.502, l.16, l.24; f.9610, op.1, d.221, l.17; f.9610, op.1, d.503, l.92; f.9610, op.1, d.361, l.22, l.41, l.73; f.9610, op.1, d.358, l.180.

investment of time, energy, personnel and technological expertise.[34] More intriguingly, it shows that the Soviet organisers were willing to consult on such a sensitive matter with some of their counterparts in the West. Despite Andropov's warnings about the nefarious intentions of capitalist governments, officials charged with the task of organising security arrangements on the ground appear to have realised that their Western counterparts were genuinely willing to cooperate, resulting in a certain level of professional respect between the countries' security officials.[35] Studying the Montréal Games, moreover, provided the basic framework for successfully mobilising the security apparatus for a large-scale sports event, in the context of its significant lack of experience in this area.[36]

Following this consultation exercise, the organisers drew up concrete plans for the 1980 operation. The Security Commission prepared a detailed report for the Orgcom on the lessons learned at Montréal in the final quarter of 1976, and completed a draft resolution on Olympic security measures for approval by the Soviet government. It also prepared, again by the end of 1976, a 'handbook' for internal use by the security service personnel involved in the Olympics project which 'provided general conclusions regarding the experiences of…[security work] at the Olympic Games in Munich…[and] Montréal'.[37] At the start of 1977, security issues were discussed at an expanded meeting of the Commission.[38] This set the stage for the implementation of various measures by the KGB and MVD in 1977-80 which were – as in all other areas of the Games project – characteristically exhaustive, wide-ranging, and meticulous.

Security Measures for the 1980 Games

One of the most striking steps taken as part of the security programme was the creation of the USSR's first specialist counter-terrorism units. Already in July 1974, in response to confirmation that the Soviet Union would soon receive the rights to host the 1980 Games, Andropov ordered the creation of the top-secret 'detachment A', commonly referred to as the 'Alpha Group'.[39] With its purpose being to 'fulfil special assignments aimed at the neutralisation of acts of terrorism, sabotage, the seizure of armed groups and combat support for real-time [security] operations', Alpha was the original Soviet 'special forces' detachment. Its members would deal with only the most extreme confrontations with

[34] See GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.25, ll.3-4, ll.17-18; f.9610, op.1, d.81, l.14; f.9610, op.1, d.36, ll.193-194, l.201; f.9610, op.1, d.34, l.58, ll.62-63, ll.161-163; f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.22-26, l.145; RGANI, f.5, op.73, d.301, l.6; Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery'.
[35] 'Bitva za Moskvu'; Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery'.
[36] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.22-6, l.145; f.9610, op.1, d.34, ll.62-3.
[37] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.38, ll.141-143; f.9610, op.1, d.34, l.102.
[38] *Ibid*.
[39] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.

terrorists of the kind seen during the Munich Games.[40] One of its members, M. Golovatov, claimed that this highly trained and heavily armed detachment's sole *raison d'être* was to guarantee security at the Olympics.[41] As the Games approached, increasing emphasis was placed on the central importance of Alpha in maintaining security at the event. During the later 1970s the unit expanded in size by a factor of three, was provided with additional equipment and received more training on how to conduct counter-terrorist operations in urban conditions and at specific Olympic sites.[42] Viewed in conjunction with other security measures implemented for the Olympics discussed below, the Alpha Group's involvement showed the extent to which the Soviet state perceived a real possibility that violence might occur in 1980 directed at either visiting foreign nationals or their own citizens.

One can reach the same conclusion in view of the fact that the MVD also created a counter-terrorism unit in preparation for the Olympics – the Special Purpose Police Detachment (*Otriad militsii osobogo naznacheniia*, or OMON). Established in early 1978, the unit appears to have been provided with the same degree of rigorous urban combat training and material resources as the Alpha Group, all geared towards the same purpose of countering terrorism at the Games with armed force. The commander of the OMON, V. Iur'ev, claimed that by 1980it was trained at a rapid pace for the upcoming Games. Indeed, an inspection of the unit's counter-terrorism tactics by members of the Security Commission took place barely a year and a half after its creation in July 1979, which included a test of its ability to cope with a simulated hostage crisis at the Central Lenin Stadium. Following this exercise, the MVD's Olympics Directorate concluded that the organisation was ready to fulfil its security tasks at the Games.[43] The OMON, like the Alpha Group, was essentially a paramilitary formation established within a national security agency, expressly designed to deal with the eventuality of political violence in 1980. It would thus be reasonable to see the creation of the OMON and Alpha as the Soviet response to the events at Munich, as well as Andropov's predictions of extremist plots being developed in the West.

The emphasis on post-Munich counter-terrorism in the security operation can also be seen in the preparations made at one of the key facilities built for the Games – the Olympic Village, which would eventually house more than 8,000 guests.[44] The organisers made extensive preparations for dealing with a Munich-style security breach at the Village.

[40] Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991*, 43-44.
[41] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[42] *Ibid*; Khlobustov, *Avgust 1991*, 44.
[43] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[44] *1980 Official Report, volume two*, 2.

Archival footage from MVD records shows that it resembled an impregnable fortress, with three-metre high metal fences on all sides, regular foot patrols around the perimeter, security cameras and soldiers on guard every 75 metres.[45] The Orgcom managed to convince the IOC to approve a series of strict rules in 1977 regulating access to the Village for foreign press representatives, including the provision that no more than 300 journalists could be allowed on to the site at any one time.[46] More than 4,000 security service personnel were assigned to protect various parts of the Village during the Games' proceedings, whilst only professional MVD and KGB operatives, rather than civilian employees, would be used for its everyday maintenance.[47] For ten days in June 1980, all service personnel and construction brigades preparing the facility for operation were ordered to leave, and the Village was given over entirely to security officials. Final plans for dealing with all possible emergency situations were then developed by the MVD and KGB on site, including the possibility of a hostage crisis. As a result, an additional detachment of the MVD's Internal Troops were stationed next to the Olympic Village for the whole duration of the Games; in an emergency they would be numerically strong enough to surround the entire Village in a huge security cordon, through which only the aforementioned counter-terrorism units, who were also permanently located nearby, would be allowed to pass. In addition, the buildings housing the residents (typical Soviet high-rise tower blocks) were specially designed to allow the units to physically scale them from the outside, again in case of a hostage crisis. The authorities were in turn convinced on the eve of the event that penetration of the Village by extremists would be 'virtually impossible'.[48]

The security plan for the Moscow Olympic Village was thus clearly designed to deal ruthlessly and efficiently with any possible repeat of the Munich hostage crisis on Soviet soil. The meticulous precautions made at the site are hardly surprising in view of the experience of 1972. Soviet officials were aware that the weak point in the XX Games' security system had been the relatively relaxed precautions taken at the Munich Olympic Village, which had made it possible for members of Black September to take the Israeli team hostage – an event which proved impossible for the West German authorities to resolve without tragic loss of life.[49] At the same time however, both the creation of dedicated counter-terrorism units and the arrangements for the Olympic Village can be

[45] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[46] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.145, ll.5-6.
[47] Bukovskii document no.1514, 3, 5.
[48] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[49] S. Blizniuk, "Whom Does Order Place at a Disadvantage? Lax Security at Munich was a Mistake", *Sovetskii sport*, 30.07.1980, available in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, number 30, volume 32, (27.08.1980), 4; Guttmann, *Modern Games*, 138-140.

seen as part of the overarching attempt to promote the socialist system in 1980. In virtually guaranteeing that political violence – from either domestic opponents or foreign extremists – would be kept to an absolute minimum, such measures would guarantee a strife-free Olympiad. In theory, this would in turn help create a favourable impression of socialism among foreigners– in the sense that an absence of homegrown terrorism, on the one hand, would prove the stable and harmonious nature of the USSR's political system and society, whilst a lack of any violence perpetrated by *foreigners*, on the other, would demonstrate the competence of the communist state in protecting the country from outside hostility and guaranteeing public order.

Any would-be extremist coming from abroad to the USSR would have found it immensely difficult to even cross the country's borders in 1980, much less manage to disrupt the event in the Soviet capital. In 1979, before the military intervention in Afghanistan and the onset of the boycott campaign which so dramatically affected the extent of foreign participation, the organisers planned for 150,000 foreign visitors to the country in the summer of 1980.[50] Such an unprecedented influx of outsiders into the USSR ensured that several measures were implemented by the security services to make the country's already strict migration regime even harsher. In 1975, the Security Commission in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry began developing special procedures governing migration through Soviet borders for all categories of foreigners coming to the USSR for the Games (including sportsmen, officials, tourists and journalists).[51] One of the main planks of this policy was the outright ban on entry into the USSR altogether for a large number of people. Undoubtedly as a result of the security services' aforementioned perception that terrorists and other subversives would try to slip across the border unnoticed among this deluge of people arriving for the Games, the KGB drew up a document for use by the border authorities containing the details of 3,000 well-known 'participants in international terrorist organisations' to stop them from entering the country in 1980. It also provided its colleagues in the security services of the Moscow-aligned socialist states with these details, so that they could assist them in the task of ensuring the USSR's borders became completely impervious to penetration by extremists – effectively turning the entire Eastern Bloc into one vast security cordon for the Games. In April 1980, the deputy security ministers of Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland and Czechoslovakia, as well as Vietnam, Mongolia, and Cuba met with their Soviet counterparts to further perfect cross-border security measures. The security services also denied entry into the Soviet Union during the

[50] Bukovskii document no.1503, 2.
[51] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.16, ll.4-5.

Olympiad to an additional 6,000 people who were considered likely to 'commit hostile acts'.[52]

For the thousands of foreigners who wished to attend the spectacle and had not been barred by the KGB, a special visa policy subjected them to additional background checks two months prior to entry into the country. Foreigners also had to provide identification documents in addition to their passports upon reaching the Soviet border. Customs checks were increased, and border checkpoints were provided with new, modern equipment in order to counteract attempts to bring weapons, explosives and 'anti-Soviet materials' (propagandistic or otherwise subversive literature) into the country.[53] Finally, the number of Soviet Border Troops (administered by the KGB) on the frontiers was increased, and they were provided with additional training.[54] These particular aspects of the security operation were clearly designed to ensure that the various categories of opponents whom Andropov claimed wished to take advantage of the Games to attack and subvert the Soviet system never came close to their target. In filtering out such people, the authorities sought to create an additional barrier to terrorism and other forms of disruption at the Games – and in turn, maximise their chances of creating a positive impression of the USSR, as a country where political stability reigned, safe from the malevolent designs of socialism's various foreign opponents and all extremist groups.

For those foreigners who eventually managed to enter the Soviet Union for the Games, and for the millions of inhabitants of the capital and the Moscow region, the KGB and MVD had prepared a further raft of measures which placed restrictions on movement in and around the environs of the Olympic city, in what amounted to a degree of intervention by the state to more closely regulate access to, and life within, the capital on a huge scale. The background to these measures, as the minutes of the CC Secretariat meeting from July 1979 indicate, was not primarily to be found in the aforementioned goal to combat terrorism or subversion, but the official expectation that there would be a huge number of additional people present in the capital for the duration of the Games, which would place a significant strain on municipal infrastructure. In addition to the aforementioned 150,000 foreigners, the authorities estimated that 100,000 Soviet spectators would come to the Games from outside Moscow and a further 26,000 non-Muscovites would fill-up the ranks of service personnel for the event. Soviet leaders expected that this would place 'serious difficulties' on housing, the city's food supply, and other services, as 'all hotels and public catering

[52] Bukovskii document no.1513, 2-5
[53] *Ibid*., 2-3; V. Lepeshkin, 'Kak my okhraniali Olimpiadu-80', *Khranitel': Mediaportal o bezopasnosti*, accessed 31.12.2014, www.psj.ru.
[54] Bukovskii document no.1513, 2-3.

facilities will be serving the participants of the Games and foreign tourists'. Consequently, the central authorities, at the suggestion of the KGB and MVD, took the decision to restrict entry into the city for all those non-Muscovites who were either not working at or invited to attend the Games as spectators. To achieve this, no conferences or meetings (both all-union and regional) by Party, soviet, Komsomol, trade union, or any other social and political organisations were held in Moscow for a period of two months during the summer of 1980 until well after the end of the Olympiad. All regularly scheduled trips by officials from other regions of the Soviet Union to the capital were also suspended during this time, as were all invitations for specialist workers in industry who frequently came to Moscow on business. Finally, all weekend tourist excursions to the capital were cancelled.[55]

In the event, Moscow was placed under a special regime as regards the movement of individuals – akin to a city under martial law. Despite the fact that it was the USSR's main transport hub, for the duration of the Games trains were placed on alternative routes round city, and even planes had to use alternative flight paths.[56] Within the huge chunk of territory making up the Moscow region, no infringements of 'Olympic calm' were permitted. Every car and train allowed into Moscow was searched; every suburban passenger train was guarded by police officers. In the case of road traffic, a system of crossings where policemen examined drivers' documents and automobiles ('filtration points') was established in a ring around the city's outskirts to enforce this policy.[57] Within the capital itself, a list was drawn-up of Olympic facilities where an entry-pass system would be introduced, along with the installation of turn-style barriers and x-ray scanners. Moscow's main highways were inspected in mid-1977, and subsequently updated with new equipment and a modern communications system to allow for better traffic regulation by the authorities.[58] Access through central Moscow for private cars along the major highways was limited; the number of temporary stop-offs by passenger trains and planes at municipal airports and railway stations was also restricted.[59] 'Safety corridors' were established on the city's roads for exclusive use by vehicles transporting Olympic participants.[60]

At the same time as placing severe restrictions on entry into and movement within the capital, many people already living there were also prodded into or forced to leave. Even ordinary law-abiding Soviet citizens were requested to leave the capital for the duration of the Games. The dates of entrance exams for universities were reorganised, which

[55] Bukovskii document no.1503, 2-4; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.551, ll.35-7.
[56] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.
[57] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[58] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.38, ll.141-143.
[59] Bukovskii document no.1503, 3-4; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.551, ll.35-7.
[60] *Ibid.*, Bukovskii document no.1514, 4.

facilitated a general plan to organise agricultural, construction, and sports activities for university students as well as school children for three months at locations outside the city.[61] The numerous public buildings they vacated were accordingly given over to housing additional police detachments brought in to the capital for security work. What the authorities termed 'unreliable elements' were simply ejected beyond a 100km exclusion zone (discussed in greater detail below). In total, the authorities ensured that more than a million Muscovites were sent out of the city during 1980 for involuntary summer holidays.[62]

Taken together, these particular measures amounted to the temporary suspension of the routine political, cultural and economic life of the capital, with its rolling timetable of meetings, conferences and anniversary celebrations, as well as a massive short-term disruption to the established working and daily life of citizens of all ages, statuses and professions living in both the capital and surrounding regions (many non-Muscovites, for instance, regularly visited the capital in this period driven in search of scarce food items).[63] Whilst the explicitly stated purpose of these measures was to reduce the strain on the Soviet metropolis' infrastructure, it is highly likely that in ringing Moscow with police checkpoints and blocking the huge population flows in and out of the city, the authorities also aimed to further guarantee security, in the sense that such measures could either root out or otherwise disrupt the plans of terrorists, dissidents and criminals intending to enter the capital. Irrespective of whether this was true or not, however, it is at least clear that in turn these measures represented the point where the activities and the goals of the security agencies in the Olympic project effectively merged with those of the administrators responsible for carrying out the economic programme. Like the latter's efforts to renew the city's infrastructure, in this case the KGB and MVD were essentially helping to ensure the Games were successful in logistical terms, thereby contributing (in theory) to the creation of an image of Soviet socialism which highlighted how it functioned effectively and rationally to outsiders.

In mid-summer 1980, Moscow was occupied by a huge number of regular police, KGB secret service operatives, and military conscripts. It is unlikely that the capital had seen such a huge number of policeman and soldiers on its streets since the death of Stalin.[64] It had taken the authorities a year and a half, following the end of their study of the security procedures at the 1976 Games, to develop a plan for the recruitment, training, and

[61] Bukovskii document no.1503, 3-4.
[62] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; 'Bitva za Moskvu'.
[63] D. Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (New York, 2012), 224-28.
[64] Booker, *Games War*, 82-3.

equipping of those cadres who would safeguard Olympic and government officials and maintain order at Olympic facilities.[65] Regarding the exact numbers deployed, table one gives a breakdown of the aggregate security personnel figures for Moscow in 1980, as claimed by various sources including archival documents (the most important of which is a highly detailed MVD-KGB report on security deployments for the Olympics sent to the CC in May 1980). The large gap between minimum and maximum estimates given is the result of ambiguous language in archival documents, the lack of any single, comprehensive primary source on the subject, and the fact that claims made by certain eyewitnesses decades later have not been confirmed by archival investigation. (For example, Iu. Churbanov, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs 1977-83, made the claim to documentary filmmakers in 2004 that 147,000 MVD personnel from outside the Moscow region were brought in to police the Games, but the aforementioned MVD-KGB report only confirms a figure of 37,116).[66] This huge army of men was used at numerous locations throughout the capital during the Olympiad (summarised in table two). This latter table to some extent helps one to understand, along with various other sources, precisely what the security services' task of 'guaranteeing security and maintaining public order' involved in practice. In particular, it primarily meant standing guard at a wide range of municipal facilities and outdoor sports events in case of outbreaks of violence, public disorder (such as public protests), or subversion (distributing anti-Soviet literature, for instance); carrying out patrols and document checks at locations throughout the capital; and serving as bodyguards for sports teams and important guests.[67] This was in addition to executing the aforementioned administrative checks at Soviet borders and along transport routes into the capital.

At least 7,800 regular policemen and members of the MVD Internal Troops on assignment to Moscow were in plainclothes, along with all KGB operatives, whilst 10,000 policemen were in uniform.[68] The presence of uniformed officers, on the one hand, suggests the authorities sought to produce a display of the Soviet state's overwhelming power as an effective deterrent to foreign or domestic troublemakers.[69] On the other hand, the use of plainclothes personnel was surely meant to ensure that the security services simultaneously maintained an unobtrusive presence, possibly in order to minimise the intimidatory atmosphere for the Olympiad's guests and thereby avoid a negative

[65] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.38, ll.141-143.
[66] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; Bukovskii document no.1514, 5.
[67] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; 'Bitva za Moskvu'; Booker, *Games War*, 52-3, 81-3, 85, 95-6, 99, 190; N. Fox, 'Russians eject journalists from Red Square', *The Times*, 22.07.1980; J. Railton, 'Have the Games lost their human touch?', *The Times*, 02.08.1980; M. Binyon, 'Moscow Diary', *The Times*, 25.07.1980.
[68] Bukovskii document no.1514, 7.
[69] Certainly, the journalist Christopher Booker was convinced that this was the security forces' purpose by what he saw of them in 1980 – Booker, *Games War*, 81-3, 112-13, 196, 210-11.

Table One. Aggregate Security Personnel Figures by Organisation, Moscow 1980

Organisation:	**Total personnel figures:**
Moscow City Police Department (MVD)	97,901 (est.)[70]
Regular MVD personnel from regions	37,116 – 147,000
MVD Internal Troops	17,700
Ministry of Defence	4,000 – 23,000
KGB	Unknown ('several thousand')
People's Voluntary Militia (*druzhinniki*)	30,000 – 51,500
TOTAL:	**186,717 – 337,101**

Sources: Bukovskii document no.1514, 1-7; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10; f.17, op.149, d.803, l.4, ll.21-22; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.628, l.4; 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; Tomilina, Konova and Prozumenshchikov, *Piat' kolets*, 444, note 21; document no.124, p.361.

impression of the Soviet system developing among foreign guests. Such a goal may have combined with the belief that plainclothes officers would be better placed to neutralise security threats if the perpetrators were unaware they were being watched. All this once again indicates the dual priorities of the security programme to both combat threats to national security and ensure a positive impression of Soviet socialism.

In addition to the imposing numbers of professional security personnel, a significant number of civilians were recruited to assist the KGB and MVD in maintaining public order during the Games by serving as *druzhinniki* (members of the People's Voluntary Militia). The minutes of several meetings of the Moscow Party Committee indicate that a significant number of Muscovites were mobilised for this task. In accordance with a resolution of the CC and Sovmin, managers of industrial enterprises, educational institutions and other organisations in the capital were instructed to temporarily release workers for a 30,000-strong detachment of *druzhinniki*, operating between 15th July and 5th August. Municipal soviets and the MVD were charged with the task of providing these 'volunteers' with office space, a telephone network, transport, appropriate training and 'equipment necessary for safeguarding public order'. The Moscow *gorkom* decreed that these auxiliary militiamen were to 'concentrate…on maintaining model public order at Olympic facilities, [and on] the resolute neutralisation of infringements of the law and anti-social behaviour.'[71] The *druzhinniki* detachments were deployed alongside professional security officers at 900 separate buildings in the capital, including sport facilities, foreigners' places of residence, and transport hubs.[72] Recruited via special meetings of, and even competitions between, district Komsomol organisations, which selected the best candidates for work in the militia

[70] Estimate based on available data presented in table two.
[71] RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.803, ll.21-22.
[72] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.628, l.1.

detachments, members of the *druzhinniki* were given a fifty-hour training programme between December 1979 and April 1980. They were 'employed in the safeguarding of public order at practically all Olympic events', working twenty-four hours a day in three daily shifts at facilities in all five Olympic cities.[73]

As table one shows, the total number of people mobilised for security work on the ground during the Games was, even according to the smallest estimate, in excess of 100,000, and was likely to have been significantly higher given that there were probably significant contingents from the republic-level, regional or municipal branches of the security forces deployed in the remaining four Olympic cities. But the numbers for Moscow alone clearly dwarf that of the 16,000 security personnel present at Montréal four years previously, and represent double the amount of soldiers and policemen deployed for the 2012 London Olympics (which of course took place in a context of equal if not greater fears of terrorism). The Soviet state in this respect appears to have been outdone, in the entire history of the modern Olympiad, only by the equally authoritarian rulers of the PRC at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, where 10,000 police, 1.4 million 'security volunteers' and 300,000 informers were reportedly deployed along with 34,000 troops in other cities.[74] Somewhat differently, at the Sochi Winter Olympics, the Russian Federation deployed only 50,000 men for security purposes.[75] However, it did make use of an impressive amount of advanced military hardware and modern surveillance technology.[76] This perhaps highlights the fact that in 1980 the best guarantee of safety, in the absence of sophisticated computer technology, was simply an enormous number of men on the ground.

'Olympic Terror'?

Evidence from various sources shows that the security agencies' involvement in the Olympics project brought with it a degree of callous and arbitrary treatment of law-abiding citizens by the Soviet authorities in their mission to bring Moscow under tight control in 1980. This issue somewhat inevitably attracted attention from both journalists and academics before and after the event. Derek Hulme claimed the security services developed 'purification measures' designed to 'cleanse' Moscow of 'undesirables', which were 'pursue[d] with added vigour' in the wake of the US boycott, though it is not clear

[73] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10.
[74] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.34, ll.62-63; S. Graham, 'Olympics 2012 security: Welcome to London in Lockdown', *The Guardian,* 12.03.2012; 'Concerns and controversies at the 2008 Summer Olympics', *Wikipedia*, accessed 18.12.2014, www.wikipedia.org.
[75] M. Schepp, 'Securing Sochi: Russia's Elite Counter-Terrorism Fighters', *Spiegel Online*, accessed 19.12.2014, www.spiegel.de.
[76] J. Bender, '22 Photos Of Sochi Security That Look Right Out Of A War Zone', *Business Insider*, accessed 19.12.2014, www.businessinsider.com.

what his source was for this interpretation.[77] However, almost the exact opposite claim was suggested by the West German political scientist Knabe a decade before Hulme. Apparently relying on dissident sources within the USSR, he asserted that 'no mass exodus [of social pariahs from Moscow] was reported in the first half of 1980, [so] it would be reasonable to doubt that [the security services'] purification campaign was waged in a very determined fashion.'[78] More reliably, the historian Timothy Colton, who had access to the archival records of the Moscow authorities for this period, notes in passing that the head of the city's Party organisation, Grishin, 'instructed judges to slap minimum two-year sentences on all [residents] convicted of street crimes' in the years before the Olympiad.[79] Christopher Booker, apparently relying on the Moscow rumour mill, alleged that in November and December 1979, there was both a tightening of the screws against known opponents of the regime as well as the expansion of coercion against 'thousands of people who could not by any usual standards be described as "dissidents"' in connection with the Games. Booker also claimed that, in the same period, 'all over Moscow…ordinary citizens standing in food queues…overheard making even the mildest compliant [about daily life] were…taken off to the nearest police station for "spreading rumours and falsehoods about Soviet life,"' and threatened with loss of their coveted Moscow residence permit.[80] Many other Western newspaper reporters talked of a large-scale repressive campaign against various sections of Soviet society.[81] A report by *The Times* even claimed that an alleged assassination was carried out in 1980 by the KGB, in connection with a dissident campaign for a Western boycott of the Olympics. Quoting one of the surviving members, it claimed that the murder 'carried to its zenith the Olympic terror exercised by the Soviet authorities.'[82] Given the KGB's brutal tactics deployed against dissidents, such an extreme step was not implausible, although more importantly it also indicates the kind of lurid Western reporting of the Soviet security services' involvement in the Games.

Perhaps the most substantial claims on this subject come from Peter Reddaway, an academic and then-foremost expert on the Soviet dissident movement and its struggle with the authorities. He offered a dramatic account of a full-scale programme of persecution conducted by the KGB specifically for the Olympics, which aimed to ensure the event

[77] Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 79.
[78] Knabe, "Political Importance", 32-3.
[79] Colton, *Moscow,* 428.
[80] Booker, *Games War*, 28-29.
[81] Editorial, 'Far from the Olympic Spirit'. *The Times*, 19.07.1980. See also C. Whitney, 'Moscow Dissidents Flee Olympic Games', *New York Times*, 11.05.1980; K. Klose, 'Kremlin begins Olympics purge', *The Guardian*, 27.12.1979.
[82] Unknown author, 'KGB accused of engineering car crash "murders" '. *The Times*, 25.07.1980.

Table Two. Security Personnel by Location, Moscow 1980

Location/Security Assignment:	**Number of Facilities:**	**Personnel figure:**[83]
Sports facilities:		
Central Lenin Sports Complex, Luzhniki	1	6,808
Other sports facilities	22	21,758
Sports training facilities	60	1,474
Residential facilities:		
Moscow hotels	9	6,813
Olympic Village	1	4,100
Other residential facilities	120	3,482
Miscellaneous facilities:		
Drugs-Testing Centre; Main Press Centre; Olympic Communication Centre; ASU Computer Complex	4	972
Meeting places of IOC and the International Sports Federations	--	206
International Post Offices	5	164
Medical facilities	--	129
Night-time transport hubs	40	536
Automobile manufacturing enterprises	14	253
Cultural facilities	--	627
Security and document check-points	40	2,700
Visa registration points	--	333
Moscow airports	3	1,299
Moscow railway stations and arterial roads	--	4,036
'Olympic highways' in Moscow	--	3,438
Airports, train stations, and other Olympic facilities, Moscow region	--	4,409
No fixed location, events supervision etc.:		
Security detachments accompanying Olympic teams, drugs-detection teams and Olympic postal workers	--	1,425
Security detachments accompanying contraband-detection teams (drugs, weapons, explosives)	--	227
Security detachments accompanying communications teams	--	555
Patrol and guard duties in the capital, reinforcements for the Moscow Criminal Investigative Department	---	8,525
Support staff (drivers, cooks, doctors, mechanics)	--	6,632
Opening Ceremony (Luzhniki Stadium, 19th July)	--	12,000 (including KGB men)
Outdoor sports events (marathons, horse racing, bicycle races etc.)	--	2,000 – 5,000
TOTAL:		**97,901**

Sources: GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.628, l.18; Bukovskii document no.1514, 1-7; 'Sekrety bezopasnosti' and 'Bitva za Moskvu'.

[83] All figures are for MVD personnel unless otherwise stated.

'pass[ed] off without placards, demonstrations, dissonant interviews and unlicensed leaflets.'[84] Although not present in Moscow, Reddaway examined thousands of pages of dissidents' appeals for help sent to the United Nations, as well as cultural, religious, scientific and labour organisations in the West, in 1978-80. On this basis he calculated that 252 long-term arrests, psychiatric internments and equivalent measures were meted out to various individuals and groups ahead of the Olympiad. Moreover, much like Booker, Reddaway asserted that not only was a surgical, small-scale cleansing of the minority of as-yet uncowed dissidents carried out in the Soviet Union before 1980, but that there was also a wider repressive campaign which engulfed far larger swathes of the law-abiding population. Select individuals were threatened with exile or prison sentences, at the same time as entire 'dissenting groups and communities around the country...amounting in all to several million citizens' also became victims of 'systematic intimidation' in the form of 'interrogations, house searches...dismissals from jobs, physical attacks by official thugs...and vilification in the local media.' Reddaway argued that this 'purge' ahead of the Olympics was 'roughly three times as drastic in terms of arrests as previous ones', with 'the volume of human suffering...greater than that resulting from previous purges'.[85]

The impression one therefore receives regarding the nature and scale of repression in the run-up to the Games, if judged by contemporary Western journalists' and even some academic accounts, is of a Stalin-esque campaign involving mass arrests, thuggish intimidatory tactics, demands for total civil obedience, and even outright murders of Soviet citizens. However, given the context in which the Games took place – the slow decline in US-Soviet relations in the later 1970s, culminating in the ignominious collapse of détente in the wake of the USSR's military intervention in Afghanistan – one might be forgiven for taking such dramatic accounts with a pinch of salt. Human rights scandals were a political football of the period, and Western opponents of the Soviet Union were likely all to happy to kick it on the occasion of the triumphalist and provocative Soviet Olympics.[86] In particular, one should be wary of taking many of these sources' reports of high numbers of arrests and cases of individual repression at face value. They were quite possibly influenced by a popular tendency to exaggerate the level of Soviet coercion, at a time when the USSR was still understood by many to be 'totalitarian'. In turn, it is clear that one cannot rely on such sources to accurately reveal the extent and nature of pre-Olympics repression.

Moreover, despite being substantially more trustworthy than the Western press, in one important respect one has reason to be cautious of Reddaway's account as well, along with

[84] P. Reddaway, 'A good excuse for another purge: Peter Reddaway on the KGB clampdown for the Moscow Olympics'. *The Times*, 29.07.1980.
[85] *Ibid*.
[86] See the next chapter on the character of Soviet Olympics propaganda.

the limited amount of information provided by Hulme and Knabe. At the time when these Western academics were making various claims about Olympics repression, the USSR was still to a significant degree a closed polity: outside observers had at best incomplete access to accurate sources of information detailing the internal political and social realities of life in the country, and at worst relied on the Moscow rumour mill. Questions relating to high-level politics in the Soviet Union in particular from the perspective of the West was opaque. This context arguably made it difficult for foreign Soviet-watchers to ascertain what motivated the activities of the security apparatus, and the extent and nature of its work. It is therefore necessary to examine additional sources in order to judge the reliability of the various claims of a full-scale Olympic purge.

Some contemporary, non-archival Russian sources do appear to corroborate the idea that there was an element of coercive action carried out against certain elements of Soviet society ahead of 1980. Khlobustov, without citing any source, alleges that 'on the eve of the Olympics, around 50,000 "anti-social elements" were caught up in the "clean-up" of Moscow – beggars, alcoholics, [and] trouble-makers were expelled [from the city]…by administrative order'.[87] Although simple administrative exile was arguably one of the milder forms of punishment used by the authorities in this period (compared to the harassment, trial and imprisonment of dissidents), if Khlobustov's figure is to be believed, this would represent something of a high point in terms of the scale of state coercion in the post-Stalin period. Moreover, in view of Khlobustov's aforementioned interest in defending the Soviet security organs, he would surely have an incentive to downplay the number of victims in any repressive campaign carried out ahead of the Olympics, suggesting the number of such expellees might possibly have been in excess of this figure. Certainly, a former MVD colonel, A. Laushkin – a source with perhaps an equally strong incentive as Khlobustov to understate the scale of repression – claimed that barely more than 50 'beggars, vagrants, alcoholics, and social parasites' were forcibly ejected from Moscow and the other Olympic cities by June 1980.[88] However, one far more reliable source offers a significantly *lower* figure than that claimed by Khlobustov on this subject. Parks cites an internal report from the MVD to the CC showing that 900 'chronic alcoholics and drug addicts' were removed from the capital in August 1979.[89] This is still a relatively large figure, but it is hardly staggering, when one considers how many millions lived in Moscow at the time.[90] Moreover, unless there were significant fluctuations in the numbers repressed during this period, a figure of 900 was nowhere near a sufficient monthly rate of expulsions to corroborate Khlobustov's tally

[87] Khlobustov, 'Neizvestnaia istoriia'.
[88] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[89] Parks, "Red Sport", 295.
[90] Moscow had a population of 8.5 million by the mid-1980s – Colton, *Moscow*, 396.

of 50,000 victims, if one considers that by all accounts the 'Olympic purge' appears to have begun no earlier than the start of 1979 and could therefore only have lasted a maximum of twenty months. Thus, without additional, reliable evidence, coercive action against 'social parasites,' at least, hardly appears to have been on a scale akin to the mass repressions of the Soviet past, or even the levels of state coercion seen in the Khrushchev era.[91]

Russian documentary filmmakers also offer some information regarding the number of political non-conformists as well as social outcasts who were persecuted ahead of the Games. They claim that in the middle of January 1980, the number of dissidents being imprisoned or ejected from Moscow increased to 'several dozen', and that by April, just 73 people had been arrested.[92] One quotes a former department chief of the Moscow KGB branch as acknowledging that the agency either imprisoned or cautioned 42 local black-market traders who operated in areas of the capital frequented by foreigners over a period of several months.[93] Again, these are modest numbers by Soviet standards – well below the annual average of those convicted for 'anti-Soviet activity' in the Khrushchev era[94] – but here one must apply the same caveats regarding the unreliability of former members of the Soviet security structures to reveal the full scale of their activities. Regardless of the true scale, however, the producers of these documentaries unambiguously conclude that the increase in coercion and judicial persecution of political and social pariahs was a direct consequence of the upcoming Games. They imply that the uptick in repression against Soviet dissidents, in particular, was connected to their outrage over Afghanistan and corresponding support for a Western boycott; they were therefore arrested in order to avoid public denunciations of Soviet foreign policy when all eyes would be focused on Moscow.[95]

There is also some evidence from contemporary non-archival sources indicating that the MVD sought to neutralise organised criminal groups. On the eve of the Olympics, the Moscow police department apparently apprehended twenty of the capital's leading organised crime bosses and took them to a meeting with the Minister of Internal Affairs, Shchelokov. The minister impressed upon these criminal bosses that the capital needed to be 'rid of undesirable excesses during the Olympics'. Moscow's underworld leaders are said to have heeded this advice, apparently reducing their own criminal activities and

[91] R. Hornsby, "The Outer Reaches of Liberalization: Combating Political Dissent in the Khrushchev Era," in J. Smith, and M. Ilic, (eds.). *Khrushchev in the Kremlin: Policy and Government in the Soviet Union, 1953-1964* (Abingdon, 2011), 66, 75.
[92] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[93] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.
[94] Hornsby, "Political Dissent", 66.
[95] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'; 'Bitva za Moskvu'

suppressing more junior criminal groups in the city during the Games.[96] Churbanov confirmed this story in a recent interview given to documentary filmmakers.[97] Such a shady 'truce' with Moscow's criminal underworld, very much in line with the corrupt reputation of the MVD under Shchelokov, strictly speaking does not amount to 'repression' akin to other measures discussed here. But it nevertheless stands as additional evidence that his ministry appears to have made full use of its authoritarian aura (as well as its deeply suspect connections) to coerce various groups into obedience for 1980.

At the same time, the authorities did mount a major punitive action against Moscow crime rings as part of the security operation. In the autumn of 1979, the KGB conducted 'Operation Moscow Night' in the capital and surrounding region, which had 'the aim of exposing and liquidating all known criminal groups'. During the operation, the authorities 'managed to neutralise the activity of two large [criminal] organisations...consisting of 60 people.'[98] In total, this round up 'led to the arrest of 1,262 persons…[and] the seizure of approximately a tonne of explosives and 155 illegally owned weapons'.[99] The fact that Andropov later mentioned, in his May 1980 reported to the CC on Olympic security preparations, that the KGB had been making efforts over the previous three years to gather up all illegal and stolen firearms from among the populace strongly suggests that this particular operation was part of the 1980 security operation specifically.[100] Both the KGB and the MVD were thus involved – using their own idiosyncratic methods – in a crackdown on organised crime as part of their preparations for the Games.

The most convincing evidence that Soviet citizens were targets for repressive action by the security services comes not from secondary sources, however, but instead from a small number of declassified reports sent to the CC by the MVD and KGB. In one such document dating from May 1980, Andropov recorded that the KGB had 'strengthened control over individuals suspected of committing especially dangerous crimes against the state' explicitly as part of the security preparations for the Games.[101] This formulation contained a clear reference to Soviet dissidents, who were regularly portrayed during the Brezhnev period as dangerous criminals in order to make possible their persecution under criminal law.[102] 'Strengthened control' was most likely a euphemism for arrest, harassment or increased surveillance of such persons, resulting directly from the perceived need to prevent them

[96] Khlobustov, 'Varvary i prem'ery'.
[97] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[98] O. Khlobustov, 'Tainy Olimpiady-80', *Khronos*, accessed 31.12.2014, www.hrono.ru.
[99] Shubin, *zastoia k reformam*, 12.
[100] Bukovskii document no.1513, 3-4.
[101] Bukovskii document no.1513, 3.
[102] R. Sharlet, "Dissent and Repression in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: Changing Patterns since Khrushchev", *International Journal*, volume 33, number 4 (Autumn, 1978), 770.

from undermining the Olympics. Andropov also described how the MVD, in cooperation with the USSR Ministry of Health, had been undertaking measures at this time to establish, for the duration of the Games, 'preventative isolation' of 'mentally ill individuals who harbour[ed] aggressive intentions' and who might engage in 'anti-social' behaviour during the event.[103] In view of the fact that the KGB's political abuse of psychiatry became widespread during Andropov's tenure as chairman, this can be seen as a strong indication that the same methods were deployed ahead of 1980. Andropov signed off this report with the assurance that the 'perfecting of security measures' would continue as part of the ongoing preparations for the Olympiad[104] – a likely sign that arrests and other coercive actions as part of the preparations for Moscow-80 carried out by the KGB were ongoing.

Indeed, a second report sent to the CC later in the same month suggests (albeit once again in euphemistic terms) that the KGB and MVD continued to carry out repressive actions in support of the project, in particular against various sections of the population deemed to represent a security threat to, or at least an unwelcome nuisance during, the Olympics. Its authors, Chebrikov and Shchelokov, argued that 'the presence of people with terrorist inclinations, criminal recidivists and psychologically ill, delusional individuals present in various regions of the country are a cause for concern' specifically with respect to security at the Moscow Games. There were apparently 4,000 out of a total of 280,000 such mentally ill individuals in Moscow who had 'aggressive intentions', some of whom had even acquired weapons and explosives 'for use in crimes against the state'. 'In connection with [this]', the report went on, 'the main efforts of MVD and KGB organs [are currently] aimed at the prevention of possible terroristic and other especially dangerous crimes'.[105] It is unclear whether these 'terroristically-inclined' people in fact harboured genuinely violent intentions with respect to the organisation of the Games. As noted above, homegrown terrorism in the Soviet Union was not unheard of. It is entirely possible, however, that this was official terminology for ordinary non-violent dissenters (at least one Soviet dissident, Vladimir Bukovskii, was referred to as a 'terrorist' by Andropov in internal correspondence).[106] Likewise, the reference to 'delusional' individuals can quite possibly be taken as evidence of a round-up of certain dissidents ahead of the Olympiad, in view of the aforementioned tactic, used throughout the 1970s, of declaring certain religious and nationalist dissenters insane and incarcerating them in mental institutions. Although it is far from certain whether all 4,000 of these individuals were targeted, the terms in which they were described suggests at least some of them were persecuted at this time.

[103] Bukovskii document no.1513, 3.
[104] *Ibid*., 6.
[105] Bukovskii document no.1514, 2.
[106] Bukovskii document no.1528, 2

Aside from these passages regarding the persecution of political opponents in the run-up to the Games, the same document provides more concrete evidence that ordinary criminals and social pariahs were also subject to coercion. Due to 'a tendency on the part of various antisocial elements to enter Moscow [without authorisation]…during…political and mass events', Shchelokov and Chebrikov reported, the KGB and MVD had been undertaking 'preventative measures aimed at strengthening public order in Moscow…and [carrying out] an intensification of the struggle against antisocial elements'.[107] It is possible that the latter were people engaged in economic and petty crime and other socially deviant behaviour, considering how widespread this appears to have been – and the regime's particular keenness to tackle it – during this period. This might therefore be taken as further confirmation that coercive actions were carried out against those non-political but nevertheless non-conformist elements of Moscow's population deemed to be a social nuisance ahead of the Olympics.

Finally, Andropov also sent a memorandum to the CC around this time recording the KGB's suppression of all those who had committed crimes against the state in the first half of 1980. 'Crimes against the state' was an official term which referred to actions which violated the rules of Soviet political orthodoxy. Those accused of such infringements were essentially the victims of political persecution. Andropov stated clearly here that with respect to the prosecution of individuals for such crimes in the period January-June 1980, 'preparations for the XXII Olympic Games, to which imperialist circles have connected their plans for carrying out various hostile actions against our country, [were]…a major influence on [KGB] operations'.[108] Crucially, he also provided a set of figures for the KGB's activities: in this six-month period, 243 people were convicted for crimes against the state, along with 40 individuals for 'anti-Soviet activity'. A further six were arrested for 'dissemination of slanderous lies which defame the Soviet state and social system'.[109] It is clear from Andropov's statement that at least some of this repressive activity was the result of security fears surrounding 1980. Indeed, one might note that Reddaway's estimate of those arrested as part of the 'pre-Games purge' is not too far from Andropov's figure for the total number of arrests for a significant portion of the same period. If it was indeed the case that a large number of those mentioned in this report were those caught up in pre-Olympics repression, one is again struck by the relatively small scale of KGB persecution compared to the impression one receives from Western reporting on the subject. A figure of less than a thousand does not fit with the more dramatic narrative of a full-scale 'purge' seen in

[107] Bukovskii document no.1514, 2-4.
[108] RGANI, f.89, op.51, d.4, l.2
[109] *Ibid*.

contemporary Western newspaper reports. Yet Andropov's report only covers the final six months of Olympic preparations, and the bulk of repressive activities may well have taken place in the preceding years. Moreover, Reddaway's claims of 'systematic intimidation' of 'several million citizens' may have captured an important aspect of the repressive activity carried out for the sake of 1980 in addition to the arrests and formal prosecutions, but it cannot be either confirmed or refuted on the basis of such a document. This single set of figures thus covers too short a period of the Olympics security operation, and only deals with it in the most euphemistic language, to allow for a definitive answer as to the scale and nature of the repression the latter entailed. Ultimately therefore, for all their greater reliability, the evidence provided by archival sources on this subject is simply too fragmentary to fully resolve this issue.

It is also impossible to tell from the available archival documents whether a majority of repressive activity taking place around the time of the Soviet Olympics can be entirely attributed to the influence of the Games alone. The available reports hinting at repression in the run-up to the Games were written as late as May 1980 – five months after the intervention in Afghanistan and the subsequent precipitous rise in Cold War tensions, which is known to have deeply disturbed the USSR's leaders and resulted in greater anti-Soviet feeling abroad, as well as significant disgruntlement within and outside the party-state at home.[110] It is possible that any spike in arrests or other forms of repression against Soviet citizens in this period was the result of the state seeking to head off possible domestic protest over its controversial foreign policy in the context of greater international pressure, rather than in preparation for the Games. Indeed, Andropov stated that the KGB had carried out its political persecutions in 1980 not only with a view to the upcoming Olympics, but also 'under conditions of strained international relations'[111] – an unmistakeable reference to the post-Afghanistan crisis in international relations. Moreover, Robert Sharlet, an expert on legal developments in the Soviet Union, argued persuasively at the time that the level of state repression in the USSR in the post-Stalin period was determined overall by the complicated interaction of domestic politics and foreign relations. Notably, he at no point attributed the increasing severity of the KGB's crackdown around the end of the 1970s to the Games.[112]

It is in fact likely that a mixture of all these factors produced repression in the run-up to the Games. The authorities likely planned a round-up of dissidents before the Olympics in any case, for the latter would surely have taken the opportunity to criticise the Soviet state

[110] Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 331-32.
[111] RGANI, f.89, op.51, d.4, ll.1-2.
[112] Sharlet, "Dissent and Repression", 775-95.

over human rights abuses during such a triumphalist event irrespective of other developments. Moreover, the likelihood is that arrests directly related to the Olympics increased as the event approached in 1979-80, for it was a traditional reflex of the Soviet state to 'conduct a purge of potential opposition prior to a major international gathering.'[113] The Games therefore probably functioned as a short-term factor aggravating the state's ongoing struggle with the dissidents. However, the controversy around the Olympics caused by intervention in Afghanistan, and the concomitant greater likelihood of protest during the proceedings, quite possibly made the Soviet leadership deeply nervous, and therefore inclined to a larger crackdown on domestic opponents at this time. By the same token, a crackdown in criminal elements in 1979-80 could have been the result of both a short-term desire to conceal this aspect of Soviet life from Olympic guests, and a consequence of the complex shifts and divisions developing in Soviet high politics at this particular historical juncture (when the KGB under Andropov was increasingly pushing a 'law and order' agenda in public life as part of the agency's attempt to reform the Soviet system and its leader's bid for power).[114] More generally, repressive state activity fluctuated for a whole number of reasons in the mid- to late-1970s, with the Olympics being only one of many political developments impacting on domestic Soviet politics. Indeed, although Richard Sakwa, an expert on Soviet politics, argues that 'the decision to step up the pressure on non-conformity and ultimately to eliminate dissent [at the close of the Brezhnev era] was precipitated by the...Olympic Games', he attributes the new tough line of the security apparatus overall to wider developments, including the all-important succession struggle.[115]

Thus, there can be little doubt in view of the combined evidence that the Olympics contributed to a ratcheting up of state repression at the end of the 1970s. However, the extent to which it was a factor in the KGB's final attempt to crush dissent vis-à-vis the short-term influence of other developments, in terms of the precise number of people persecuted directly as a result of the upcoming Olympiad, remains unclear. In any case, inasmuch as one can be certain that the Soviet state deployed coercive measures against dissidents, genuine criminals, and 'social parasites' for the sake of the Games on any scale, it was undoubtedly on the assumption that the presence of such groups in the Olympic cities could tarnish the image of the perfect socialist society it wished to project in 1980, rather than out of any fear they could pose to national security during the event. Human rights protests, economic and violent crime, begging, alcoholism or prostitution – none of

[113] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 72.
[114] L. Duhamel, *The KGB Campaign Against Corruption in Moscow, 1982-1987* (Pittsburgh, 2010), 48-99.
[115] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 72, 204.

these could be tolerated if the USSR was to prove to outsiders that it was the land of 'victorious socialism', where political and social problems officially either did not exist or were far less acute than under capitalism.

Managing Visiting Foreigners

The final aspect of the security operation undertaken for the Olympiad involved efforts to ensure control over the interaction of foreigners with Soviet citizens. The Games' organisers were aware that 1980 would involve the largest influx of outsiders to the USSR in its history.[116] In the event, the final tally of 'Olympic guests' stood at 211,300 people. Although just 74,140 of these visitors were from capitalist countries, this was still significantly higher than the 31,000 foreigners who had attended the 1957 Youth Festival.[117] In view of this, it is likely that the Soviet policy-making elite both before and during the event was no less unnerved by what could happen in 1980 than it had been in 1957, when state and Party authorities had effectively lost control over interaction between their own citizens and the emissaries of capitalist society.[118] Indeed, Orgcom officials asserted unequivocally in 1978 that during the Games the USSR's enemies were 'counting on being able to shake some Soviet people's faith in…socialist democracy and make them doubt the advantages of the Soviet system by means of direct contact [between them] and the tens of thousands of participants, journalists and tourists – that is, the bearers [*nositeli*] of bourgeois ideology.'[119] Thus, the focus here was less on guaranteeing national security, and thereby creating favourable conditions for the promotion of socialism, than on simply averting another threat posed by the Games – that of the 'unhealthy' influence of foreign ideas and cultures on popular belief in the communist system. As a result, several strategies were devised to prevent uncontrolled interaction across the Cold War divide.

The political scientist Derick Hulme claimed in his early study of 1980 that the KGB spent a considerable amount of time devising measures 'by which [foreign] visitors would be separated from Soviet citizens'.[120] Other sources corroborate this claim, indicating that these measures involved intimidatory tactics designed to discourage curious citizens from seeking contact with outsiders – a variant of what the post-Stalin security organs referred to as *profilaktika*, or pre-emptory administrative measures designed to nip non-conformist behaviour in the bud.[121] IOC President Killanin gave an example of this when he recounted

[116] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[117] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.73. On 1957, see Koivunen, "Youth Festival", 50.
[118] Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 103-7; Koivunen, "Youth Festival", 56-57.
[119] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168.
[120] Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 79.
[121] J. Elkner, "The Changing Face of Repression under Khrushchev", in Smith and Ilic, *State and Society*, 153-56.

how any citizen who attempted to meet a foreign guest at their place of residence during the Games had to provide their name and address, ensuring that 'there was a record of any…link between a Soviet citizen and someone from overseas.'[122] Given that such links were a source of perennial suspicion in the USSR, it is likely this was conceived as an effective method of discouraging Soviet citizens from seeking out contact with Olympic guests. Indeed, there is evidence suggesting some people were too intimidated to arrange private meetings with foreigners in 1980. The British journalist Christopher Booker recalls arranging dinner with a Russian couple at their home soon after his arrival in Olympic Moscow, only subsequently to be met with 'panicky tones' over the telephone and an abrupt end to all communication.[123] Knabe, citing hints in Soviet newspapers, noted similarly that 'if negative aspects of the social conditions in the USSR became the subject of conversation between a foreigner and a Soviet citizen, this was to be considered interference in internal affairs and meeting with such persons illicit. If such rules were not adhered to, a Soviet citizen could quickly become a "deserter"' – that is, a recipient of the authorities' baleful attention as a potential troublemaker, with possible repercussions for their social standing and professional life. Somewhat differently, Knabe also saw the pretext for arresting certain dissidents around the time of the Games as motivated in part by the desire to impose limitations on their contact with foreigners. Outspoken critics of the Soviet system where deprived of the opportunity to voice their heretical views to foreigners during the Games by simple incarceration.[124]

In addition, the KGB physically distanced foreign guests from Soviet citizens behind security cordons, under the pretext of ensuring their personal safety. Andropov reported to the CC in May 1980 that heightened security details had been established at the places of residence of Olympic participants and guests, along with special regimes of inspection and patrol at such facilities, in order to 'avert the possibility of terrorist attacks' directed at foreigners. All buses ferrying athletes to and from the Olympic Village along the 'safety corridors' used exclusively for the participants' use were also accompanied by police cars. Members of the security services accompanied all foreign visitors travelling around the country by train as part of the sports events and tourist programmes.[125] As noted, huge numbers of regular policemen and special forces were posted to Olympic facilities throughout the capital because of official fears of public disorder or a terrorist attack. But it is not hard to see how their presence would also have made it difficult for foreigners to come and go as they pleased, with whomever they pleased. Given the extent of the Soviet

[122] M. Killanin, *My Olympic Years* (London, 1983), 218.
[123] Booker, *Games War*, 74-76, 83, 174.
[124] Knabe, "Political Importance", 34.
[125] Bukovskii document no.1513, 4; Bukovskii document no.1514, 2-4.

state's fear of the outside world and the intentions of foreign governments, it seems legitimate to suspect that these measures were therefore not simply for the protection of foreigners alone. Important as it was to the Soviet state for propaganda purposes to provide a perfect stay in the Soviet Union for every guest, these measures were also a way to separate Soviet citizens from the former's potentially dangerous influence (Westerners in particular) by keeping close tabs on and control over their movements. As Hazan noted at the time, having studied Western and Soviet press reports, '[the] Olympic [facilities] was made into a fortress. The sportsmen lived in isolation behind a control apparatus the world had rarely seen before.'[126] The KGB and MVD thus attached some importance to quarantining the many thousands of foreign guests in the USSR for the Olympics, as part of their general plan to safeguard not only national security, but also social stability.

Furthermore, foreigners were further separated from ordinary Soviet people when a sizeable chunk of Moscow's population was sent out of the capital during the Games – including, according to one account, almost all of the young adult population of the city.[127] The archival record shows that this measure primarily served the supremely practical purpose of avoiding overstraining the capital's infrastructure whilst an additional huge number of foreigners were in the city. A note from the Ministry of Education from April 1979 stated that Soviet students not performing any jobs as part of the Games would be sent out of the city to summer camps and to work in factories and collective farms 'out of the necessity of freeing up student dormitories' for the accommodation needs of Olympic guests.[128] The Komsomol tourist agency 'Sputnik' in turn planned to house 56,282 foreign guests in the empty buildings.[129] But then again, it is also highly likely that this was as effective a method as any other for further quarantining the Soviet population from dangerous foreign influences. In sending 'the bulk of [Soviet] youth' out of Moscow during the Games, one recent account has plausibly suggested, this would effectively 'put them beyond the reach of foreign propaganda.'[130] Such an idea could not have been lost on the organisers. Indeed, throughout the Brezhnev period, the authorities were well aware of the fact that the younger generation was the group of the population most susceptible to being influenced by alien ideas from abroad, and accordingly took steps to combat this.[131] This exodus of young people from the Olympic capital, imposed by administrative decree, may

[126] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 186, 200.
[127] Booker, *Games War*, 40.
[128] Document no.119, p.342.
[129] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.220, l.19.
[130] S. Semeraro, 'KGB, shpiony i korruptsiia: pravda o moskovskikh Olimpiiskikh igrakh 1980 goda,' *InoSMI*, accessed 31.12.2014, www.inosmi.ru.
[131] See Zhuk, *Rocket City*.

therefore be seen as not simply a practical measure but as a part of the Olympics security operation.

There is also evidence that the Soviet state secured changes in IOC rules in order to legitimise some of their obstructive administrative measures aimed at exerting as much control over visiting foreigners as possible in 1980. A 1978 report from the Orgcom to the CC explained how a new regulation adopted by the IOC meant that foreign visitors to Olympics events were now authorised to visit only those facilities and cities where the Games were being conducted, and accordingly lost their right to free movement around the host country.[132] Such a rule would have allowed the authorities to prevent foreigners from freely interacting with Soviet citizens living in any number of population centres. In a clear sign of their suspicions of the malevolent influence outsiders could have on both the Soviet people and the social order in general, the Orgcom made clear that these changes were 'aimed at averting undesired incidents, provocations, political demonstrations and terrorist acts, which all occurred at previous Games.'[133] This last line also suggests that the Orgcom, in its ongoing negotiations and consultations with the IOC during the period of preparations, deftly sought to exploit previous moments where politics had intruded on the Olympics in order to convince the latter to adopt rules in line with Soviet preferences for maximum control over the event. The Orgcom consequently made an important contribution to security work by securing the backing of the IOC for measures ensuring that the KGB and MVD could closely regulate the movements of foreign visitors within the USSR. Whilst this was a long-standing Soviet practice, up to the point when the IOC gave its consent such heavy-handedness would likely have been seen as detrimental to the image of itself the country was trying to project through the Games, and thus a non-viable policy option for managing visiting foreigners in the specific case of the Olympiad. It was perhaps as a result of this policy that the MVD in the event established a special department for registering all foreign Olympic guests, which was kept well informed of their movements throughout the five Olympic cities.[134]

Finally, the security services further sought to control interaction with foreigners by means of a strict recruitment policy for work on the Games project. Andropov noted in a report to the CC that Soviet citizens who would come into contact with foreigners in 1980 were to be subject to special checks (*spetsproverka*).[135] In fact, the KGB was given responsibility for vetting every one of the thousands upon thousands of service personnel working on the Olympics project. Citizens employed in even the most menial positions for

[132] Document no.111, p.301.
[133] *Ibid*.
[134] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[135] Bukovskii document no.1513, 4.

the Games were interviewed for their 'political reliability.'[136] The archival record indicates that the political qualities of those who would have direct contact with foreigners in 1980 were indeed an important consideration during their recruitment. Novikov recommended to the CC in August 1978, for example, that local Party organisations recruit only those citizens who were 'ideologically mature and morally steadfast' to provide services to foreigners.[137] A November 1979 decree of the CC Secretariat, as well as a number of other pieces of internal Party and Komsomol correspondence, also indicates that the training programme for Olympic cadres placed just as much emphasis on their 'political' qualities as it did on their professional competence.[138] Moreover, Knabe cites a 1979 Soviet Education Ministry bulletin which explained that student interpreters in particular, as well as 'those employed in the dormitories, hotels, kitchens, and transportation facilities…were to participate in special "education arrangements" as well as in reinforcement of their "political tools."'[139] As to how these qualities were meant to manifest themselves in practice during the Games, archival documents describe how the 'ideological training' given to the selected Olympic cadres was supposed to ensure they 'decisively put a stop to attempts to give voice to bourgeois propaganda' during any interaction they had with foreigners.[140] Beyond this, the 'prophylactic' measures carried out ahead of the 1957 Youth Festival, when the Soviet authorities faced a very similar situation, also suggest that Olympic employees in 1980 were drilled in expressing views which strictly conformed to official rhetoric when confronted with provocative or critical foreign ideas.[141] There is indeed anecdotal evidence that service personnel responded to challenging questions from Olympic guests with impeccably orthodox responses regarding the Soviet state's policies.[142]

It is claimed that a mere thousand people did not pass the KGB's vetting process and were excluded from the ranks of Olympic cadres.[143] Given the hundreds of thousands of citizens employed for the Games, this extremely low number of unsuccessful applications suggests it was not a particularly rigorous aspect of the authorities' security measures. This may, however, simply have been the result of the fact that the authorities were desperate to recruit the necessary number of personnel for 1980, rather than any lapse in the KGB's tough approach to controlling the population's interaction with foreigners.

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[136] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.
[137] Document no.111, p.310, p.317; document no.115, p.337.
[138] Document no.136, p.401; document no.135, p.393; GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1341, ll.33-4; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.1-6; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.217, ll.179-180; RGASPI, f.M-1 op.66, d.487, ll.8-9.
[139] Knabe, "Political Importance", 31.
[140] GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1341, ll.37-42; f.9612, op.3, d.1346, ll.75-6.
[141] Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 103; Koivunen, "Youth Festival", 56-57.
[142] Booker, *Games War*, 108-9.
[143] 'Bitva za Moskvu'.

Aftermath

Judging by some of the Moscow *gorkom*'s daily reports to the CC from July 1980, it appears that the various measures implemented by the security services beforehand and their presence during the event itself ensured that a near-faultless degree of order in public life was maintained throughout the Olympiad.[144] Accordingly, in August the central Party apparatus decreed that 2,650 employees of the Ministry of Defence, the KGB and the MVD were to be awarded commendations for their 'active participation in the preparations and orchestration of the Olympic Games'.[145] Even before the Closing Ceremony, Orgcom Security Commission Chief Shumilin had requested Novikov's permission to issue 40 sets of commemorative medals to MVD officers who had assisted in 'guaranteeing security and preserving public order' at the Games in Moscow.[146] A report from Komsomol officials to the CC concluded proudly: 'The absolute majority of young soldiers and members of the People's Militia displayed vigilance and efficiency during the course of their Olympic guard duties, and a high readiness to fulfil the tasks assigned to them'.[147]

The authorities had good reason to congratulate themselves. According to Churbanov, thanks to Shchelokov's successful intimidation of Moscow's criminal leaders, 'criminal activity was reduced to zero' during the Olympics.[148] The available statistics do not quite support this claim, but they certainly show a significant drop in crime, with the majority of infringements of an extremely minor character indeed. Detachments of the People's Militia detained 270 people for attempted unauthorised entry at sports facilities, 389 for displays of antisocial behaviour towards foreigners, and 11,179 for 'being in a state of intoxication in public places'.[149] As for more serious crime, the picture was rosier still. One Russian historian, citing different statistics from the Central Committee archives, notes that the amount of muggings during the Olympics fell by 43%, cases of assault dropped by 34%, and theft by 30%.[150]

The limited evidence available suggests the security services had to deal with only a small number of other incidents during the Games. In interviews given to documentary filmmakers, former KGB officers recalled that the authorities at one point received a tip-off from their foreign intelligence agents that militants of the Muslim Brotherhood (which as in

[144] Document no.260, pp.729-30; document no.265, p.736; document no.275, p.758; document no.290, p.799; RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.807, ll.127-133.
[145] Bukovskii document no.1525, 1-2.
[146] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.628, l.27.
[147] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10.
[148] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[149] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10.
[150] Shubin, *zastoia k reformam*, 12.

other countries was considered an international terrorist organisation by the USSR) had developed a plot to carry out an indiscriminate massacre of innocent bystanders in the customs hall of Sheremet'evo Airport. According to General Bobkov, the suspects were arrested before they had a chance to act, one before he even made it to the USSR (in neighbouring socialist Hungary).[151] Members of the anti-Soviet émigré organisation the NTS, meanwhile, failed in an attempt to smuggle anti-government literature into the USSR just before the Games, owing to the heavy security presence at Sheremet'evo.[152] Moreover, what little public protest occurred during the Olympiad was quickly snuffed out. On 21st July, a single Italian gay rights activist 'unfurled a banner and began handcuffing himself to some railings' on Red Square, apparently in support of two Russians imprisoned for their homosexuality. In addition to his swift removal, several Western journalists at the scene were immediately arrested by plainclothes policemen before they had a chance to record the protest.[153] In a separate incident, another lone individual tried to set himself on fire, again on Red Square, for unknown reasons. But 'instantly the KGB moved in, swept the man away and removed all trace of the incident except a small dark patch on the cobbles.'[154] The tiny scale of these protests, and the fact that they were essentially over before they began, confirms – if ever there was any doubt – that that the security services were omnipresent during 1980. Guarded by the world's most powerful security apparatus, the Moscow Olympics were not to be remembered for any significant acts of defiance against the communist system.

This evidence also sheds some additional light on what the second of the Olympic security operation's two principal goals meant in practice – and in turn, precisely what tasks the KGB, MVD and *druzhinniki* carried out during the Games, in addition to those described above. Whilst 'guaranteeing security' clearly meant combating terrorism above all, 'maintaining public order' to some extent involved vigorous attempts to stamp out all forms of criminality perpetrated by 'unhealthy elements' in Soviet society during the two weeks of the event's proceedings, along with guarding against politically motivated protests carried out by suspect foreigners which could cause disruption to the smooth running of public life. The majority of the policemen and soldiers deployed as part of the security operation would thus have spent most of their time, at dozens of locations throughout the capital, waiting not only for signs of violence, political agitation or serious public disorder among the foreign crowds, but simultaneously keeping an eye on their own countrymen for activity deemed unacceptable. The above-cited statistics from the People's Militia suggest

[151] 'Bitva za Moskvu.'
[152] 'Sekrety bezopasnosti'.
[153] Booker, *Games War*, 95.
[154] *Ibid.*, 190.

examples of the latter kind were not unknown. Yet overall, the evidence of the smooth running of the Games indicates that these men had little to do in the event besides checking identification documents and patrolling the streets. The rigorous security restrictions effectively rendered the state's forces on the ground an inert army.

Nevertheless, one should not to downplay the security services' role in the event itself too much. Their presence in large numbers in Olympic Moscow rounded off a programme of measures carried out over the previous three years which contributed to the near-flawless functioning of the capital during the Games in logistical terms, whilst simultaneously creating a façade of model public order. If the Olympiad's economic programme supposedly showed the USSR to be characterised by prosperity and rationality, then the security operation accentuated the system's high degree of political stability.

Conclusion

The security operation of 1977-80 was a key plank of the Olympic project alongside the state's economic preparations and propaganda activities. It was borne of the official belief that the Olympics represented a major threat to national security. The Munich Massacre produced the fear that in taking on the Games, the USSR could become the unwitting host for various extremists, who had no particular quarrel with the Soviet Union but nevertheless intended to exploit 1980 for their own purposes. More importantly, the organisers were suspicious of the intentions of their traditional ideological opponents. In keeping with its long history of paranoid delusion, the KGB believed that 1980 presented opportunities to all the Soviet Union's principal external foes (foremost among them hostile capitalist governments) as well as its internal opponents to work in tandem in order to undermine the socialist order from within.

In 1977-80, the security apparatus acted decisively to neutralise this perceived threat. The huge deployment of personnel, innovative counter-terrorism measures, and rigid control over the movement of the population all indicate that officials felt that the only way to host the Olympics without the event jeopardising either national security or their control over society was to impose a stricter regime of supervision over the country's daily life (or at least, the life of the capital) than was the norm for the period. Alongside these measures, there was at least small-scale use of repression against a number of suspect elements of society carried out as a direct consequence of the security operation. However, many questions remain unanswered regarding this latter issue. The degree to which arrests of dissidents within this operation were supplemented with a wider programme of

intimidation of ordinary citizens and the coercion of 'social parasites' is still unclear. Moreover, the extent to which repressive operations in 1979-80 were a result of the Olympics alone, or of wider developments in Soviet politics more generally, remains to be resolved. As such, it is difficult to wholeheartedly agree with earlier claims of a full-blown 'Olympics purge'.

Additional measures carried out by the security services in 1980 aimed to minimise the influence of foreigners on Soviet citizens. This demonstrates that, much like with the World Youth Festival in 1957, the Soviet authorities feared the Olympics as a moment when East met West, and in turn understood that an additional risk of hosting the Games was in terms of how they represented a threat to the social stability of the socialist system. Somewhat ironically in view of the fact that the Soviet propaganda machine repeatedly claimed in 1975-80 that the Moscow Games proved that the USSR was a champion of 'mutual understanding' between nations,[155] the Soviet state approached Moscow-80 through a worldview clouded by control-mania, paranoia and xenophobia in relation to east-west cultural exchange.

Many of these measures not only reflected the aim to ensure national security and social stability, however, but also once again highlight the fact that, in essence, the Moscow Olympics were a propaganda event aimed primarily at foreigners. Besides preventing a Munich-style disaster, the KGB and MVD also helped avert a collapse of creaking municipal infrastructure and prevented the occurrence of any embarrassing displays of dissent, dissatisfaction, or manifestations of criminality. All of these problems could potentially undermine the attempt to showcase the supposed economic, social, cultural and political achievements of USSR's 'developed socialist' society being carried out by other Party and state agencies. The Soviet leadership thus relied primarily on a massive mobilisation of its security services to anaesthetise many of the perceived risks involved in hosting the Games, whilst at the same time using other arms of the party-state bureaucracy (coordinated by the Orgcom) to capitalise on the potential political dividends. In this sense, the thousands of security men on the streets of the capital became the shadow behind the glittering façade of Moscow 1980. At the same time, neutralising these risks would help contribute to formation of a positive impression of Soviet socialism among outsiders in terms of the effective functioning of the USSR's municipal services and its model political and social stability, as well as its ability to safeguard that stability against external hostile forces. The security operation thereby contributed in its own right, alongside the economic programme implemented in the same period, to the creation of a Potemkin Village for late Soviet socialism. However, these two elements of the project do not represent the limits of the

[155] Discussed below.

Soviet state's ambitions to exploit the Moscow Olympiad in order to promote its political and economic system among outsiders. In terms of its duration, scope and the complexity of its ideological message, there was one other sub-programme within the Olympic project which was even more impressive. This programme will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.) The Olympics and Soviet Foreign Policy

It has been posited that the Soviet state's original interest in hosting the Olympics resulted from the recognition that such a move could benefit its foreign policy. This chapter reveals the principal ways in which Moscow-80 was used to promote socialism to foreign audiences for the duration of the project, beyond the creation of a short-lived physical façade during the two weeks of the Games themselves. In particular, it focuses on the two elements which together constituted the Orgcom's international programme. The first element encompassed a series of measures designed to both maximise foreign attendance at, and build worldwide anticipation ahead of, the Olympics, in ways which would be to the general advantage of the USSR in terms of promoting it as competent, cooperative and peaceful, and as the pre-eminent global power in the world. The second, more crucial component consisted of a huge, multifaceted propaganda campaign directed at non-communist populations, which used the theme of the Olympics to propagate the wider virtues of the host country. An examination of the latter reveals how the Olympiad was closely integrated into the Soviet Union's foreign policy agenda, in turn indicating how the original, central motivation for the Games discussed in chapter one continued to provide the chief impetus to the project throughout 1975-80.

Using archival documents and various other primary sources, it will be shown how the Orgcom worked assiduously to ensure Moscow-80 was the most-well attended international sporting event ever held, as well as guarantee exclusively positive publicity for it in the outside world. More importantly, the Moscow Olympiad represented a high point in the Soviet Union's decades-long international propaganda campaign designed to prove the superiority of state socialism over capitalism. Soviet determination to succeed with the Olympics' international programme remained constant despite the West's mounting opposition both before and after 1979. Examination of all these issues will also help to show that the Western boycott of 1980 was not, in fact, as crucial to the story of the XXII Games as might be assumed from that episode's highly climactic nature. This chapter discusses the Soviet organisers' activities in the international sphere during the whole five-year duration of the project, thereby departing from the narrow geographical and temporal focus of the established scholarly narrative regarding the 1980 Games noted above. Since the USSR's core political aims for the Olympiad were contained in this international programme, moreover, the evidence presented here will subsequently be of crucial importance in reaching wider conclusions about both the Olympic project as a whole, and the Brezhnev period in which it took place.

Olympic Diplomacy, 1975-79

Orgcom officials devoted considerable efforts to what can be termed 'Olympic diplomacy', understood here to mean the maintenance of international contacts by the Orgcom with the aim of ensuring the popularity of, participation in, or simply promoting general goodwill towards, the XXII Games on the part of foreign governments, the international sport and media community, and the wider global public.

Work with the Foreign Press

A key part of the Orgcom's work here involved maintaining good relations with foreign journalists. In August 1976, Novikov noted in a report to the CC that 'errors in work with journalists' had produced a 'negative tone' in the international media's reporting on the Montréal Games.[1] Around the same time, Shevchenko, Head of the Orgcom's Propaganda Administration, drew up a detailed plan for inviting 'leading [foreign] journalists, editors, publishers, [and] newspaper owners' to the USSR 'to acquaint them…with our country [and] the course of preparations for the Olympics.' From such statements, and as will be further confirmed below, one can deduce that the organisers were concerned to showcase both life in the USSR in general and the progress made in preparing the country for the Games in particular to this important constituency. In addition to regular meetings in Moscow, the plan simultaneously stipulated that Soviet officials based abroad should more or less constantly disseminate information on Olympics preparations (primarily, the pace of construction efforts in Moscow and Tallinn) to foreign journalists in the latter's own countries via press briefings. Providing regular and accurate information on the Games to individual members of the press and news outlets which 'actively determine[d] public opinion' among foreign populations would, Soviet officials believed, create possibilities to regulate the tone of foreign reporting on the event, even when the commentators in question weren't under their political control. Shevchenko stressed that the focus should be on cooperating with major Western news agencies above all, such as the Associated Press and Reuters, but justified this on the basis that American and European organisations were the main source of information in both their own *and* a number of developing countries. Along with other indications given in this document suggesting that Orgcom press officials sought cooperation with major newspapers and major television companies from the Third World, it is clear that the Soviet approach did not prioritise influencing

[1] Document no.31, p.114.

journalists in any one region of the world – rather it sought to manipulate international public opinion through foreign press organs everywhere. [2]

The Orgcom's engagement with foreign journalists in 1976-79 fully conformed to this recommended strategy. By 1978, press conferences and meetings with both correspondents based in Moscow and those specially invited from abroad were regularly held under the auspices of the Orgcom's Information and Propaganda Commission. [3] The state news agencies Novosti and TASS, the VTsSPS, and the Foreign Ministry's Press Department also organised press conferences and one-to-one meetings dedicated exclusively to promoting the Games. [4] These encounters became important forums for generating and sustaining international public interest in and awareness of the upcoming Olympics. Journalists were presented with copious amounts of basic information about the preparations in Moscow. These included the pace and details of construction work, the drafting of the programme for the sports competitions and the Olympics' Cultural Programme; the facilities which would be on offer to journalists, transport arrangements, and financial outlays – that is, uncontroversial, technical details. [5] In their memoranda and internal correspondence on engagement with the international press, Orgcom officials regularly took note of objections they encountered to the choice of the Soviet Union as host of the Games, which often resulted from either the USSR's conduct in relation to individual questions of Olympics administration (banning anti-communist radio stations, for instance) or from more general antipathy to communism. However, in their public pronouncements Soviet officials largely refrained from responding to such attacks, and instead sought to counter them indirectly by stressing the USSR's good working relationship with the IOC, its fidelity to the cause of détente as expressed through its hosting of the Games, and/or the international public's full support for the Soviet Union in this particular endeavour. [6] Such public lines, with their underlying message of the constructiveness and popularity of Soviet foreign policy, were in fact connected to one of the key tropes of Soviet propaganda about the Olympics (discussed below). Indeed, the fact that the 43rd Congress of the International Sports Press Association (ISPA) was among the events targeted by the Orgcom for disseminating propaganda messages, as part of a 1978 plan for 'strengthening [Olympics] propaganda measures', confirms the intention to partially exploit engagement with the press for propaganda purposes. [7] The Soviet approach to PR around the Games was

[2] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[3] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.8.
[4] *Ibid.*, ll.49-50; f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168.
[5] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.640, ll.24-6, l.33, l.43; f.9610, op.1, d.26, ll.2-5; document no.113, pp.325-26; document no.143, pp.449-52.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp.446-47, pp.452-53; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.640, l.24, ll.25-6; f.9610, op.1, d.26, ll.5-6.
[7] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.9610, op.1, d.285, ll.1-3.

thus quite shrewd. In giving journalists all the information they required, it tried to ensure goodwill from these important arbiters of public opinion, and in turn, positive publicity for the Olympics and the USSR around the world. At the same time, in using encounters with the media as an additional avenue for introducing their propaganda narrative, the organisers overlaid the public awareness they were generating about the Games with pro-Soviet rhetoric which would, it was likely hoped, support the other key aspect of the Olympiad's international programme.

This double-pronged strategy remained at the core of engagement with foreign correspondents as contact with the world's press was sustained and intensified throughout the later 1970s. In November 1978, for instance, Orgcom representatives staged a press conference for more than a 100 foreign journalists from 18 different countries, at which they fielded questions about the course of construction work and plans for receiving foreign visitors, whilst also discussing at length 'the support of the global sporting community…for the Moscow Games'. In a similar vein, they took care to stress that the IOC 'fully approved' of the work of the Orgcom, thereby once again surreptitiously disseminating an element of the propagandistic narrative they were trying to construct around 1980.[8] Similarly, the ISPA Congress held in Moscow in 1979 was organised 'under the…motto of "For Peace and Friendship."'[9] Considering the similarity of this slogan to one of the Olympics' key propaganda themes (the USSR's fidelity to détente), this is another indication of ongoing Soviet attempts to inject a propagandistic narrative into their work with the foreign press.

Soviet officials felt this strategy was proceeding according to plan throughout the period in question. At the ISPA congress held in Mexico in 1976 (attended by 48 national sports journalism organisations), the report delivered by an Orgcom representative on the Games' preparations 'was heard with great interest, was interrupted several times by applause, and received the full approval of the delegates.' It was noted with satisfaction that 'practically all delegates to the congress underlined their interest in the 1980 Olympics,' with many 'requesting they be sent materials for publication in their own countries.'[10] It should be noted that this meeting was attended by press officials not only from the socialist bloc, but also Western Europe and Latin America.[11] Coupled with the evidence of Soviet officials' real ability to charm figures in the international sports world,[12] this suggests the positive outcome of the meeting was not simply the result of the USSR's

[8] Document no.113, pp.325-26.
[9] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 90.
[10] Document no.143, pp.446-49.
[11] *Ibid.*, p.446.
[12] Guttmann, *Modern Games*, 149; Parks, "Red Sport", 91-99, 105-112, 125-6, 138-43, 202-7.

subservient communist satellites paying lip-service to the dominant power, or Orgcom officials ignoring any unpleasant comments in their report to their superiors; it is entirely possible that non-communist journalists and officials expressed genuine enthusiasm for the Games during this period, or at the very least developed a non-antagonistic relationship with the Soviet organisers. Indeed, a 1978 memorandum produced by the Propaganda Administration assured the Orgcom Executive Bureau that 'normal working relations' had been established with both the IOC's Press Commission and the ISPA, thanks to the successful session of the former (which the USSR had recently hosted) and Soviet participation in the annual congresses of the latter in both 1976 and 1977. The Propaganda Administration also noted that various press conferences during this period had produced 'many advantageous articles [in the Western press] about the preparations for the Games, on the life of our country and on the development of sport and culture in the Soviet Union.'[13]

In total, between 1976 and 1978 around 800 individual and group meetings with foreign journalists were organised by the Orgcom's Propaganda Administration. The incomplete statistics available reveal that among these were 118 journalists from the GDR, 64 from Japan, 31 from the USA, 25 from West Germany, 33 from Sweden and 13 from Poland.[14] During the same period 45 press conferences were arranged in foreign countries dedicated to discussion of various aspects of the Games' preparations. Hazan, citing contemporary newspapers, recorded that 'in 1978 alone the [Orgcom]...held twenty press conferences for foreign journalists in Moscow, New York, Paris, Athens, Prague, Algiers, and other cities, at which information on the progress of preparations was imparted.' The Foreign Ministry informed the Orgcom that at the 12 press conferences on the Games it had conducted that year, 30-60 foreign journalists had been present at each one.[15] By July 1979, fifty large international conferences had been carried out.[16]

The Orgcom also regularly invited representatives of the press to observe Olympics preparations (such as the construction of sports and communications facilities) firsthand,[17] with the aim of providing them with more tangible material with which to publicise Soviet efforts. Such visits were carefully stage-managed to ensure that these journalists saw only the successful aspects of Olympics construction work. This again served the purpose of both creating a positive impression of the Games' organisation and the general nature of

[13] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68.
[14] *Ibid*.
[15] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, 20-22.
[16] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, pp.89-90.
[17] Document no.149, pp.462-3.

life in the USSR in line with Olympics propaganda,[18] and simply providing the correspondents with basic information in order to generate their goodwill and in turn, positive coverage. In one such instance, the editor of the British magazine *Yachting World* visited Tallinn and Leningrad at the invitation of the Orgcom in June 1977, during which he was shown the facilities being developed for the Olympic sailing events and met with local organising officials. The editor was apparently satisfied that the Olympic facilities 'fully [met] the requirements of the Olympic sailing regatta.' No doubt gratifying his hosts, he promised to publish the impressions of his visit to the Soviet Union and his positive evaluation of the Olympics preparations.[19] Twenty journalists from West Germany who visited Moscow in the autumn of 1979 offered similar platitudes, whilst the delegates to the 43rd ISPA Congress 'expressed admiration for the progress of Olympics preparations...[and] Soviet life [in general]' following their own tour.[20] In total, 'over 1,500 correspondents… from almost 100 countries were invited [to the USSR] by the Organising Committee' during the five-year period of preparations.[21]

Soliciting Foreign Support

Orgcom officials made sustained efforts to solicit declarations of support for the 1980 Games by the sports organisations of various countries. This invariably involved a visiting Soviet delegation symbolically signing a joint communiqué pledging cooperation with respect to the Games in a given foreign country, with the Soviet side trying to ensure the episode made it into that country's national newspapers. As with the Orgcom's engagement with journalists, such events primarily served the purpose of generating publicity around the Olympiad and fostering goodwill towards it among foreign populations. But these activities were also aimed, as a 1978 Orgcom memorandum made clear, at 'guaranteeing the wide and representative participation of countries from various regions of the world in the Olympic Games.'[22] Thus, they served to expand the ranks of participating teams in 1980 by securing guarantees on this issue from a large number of NOCs, particularly those of the developing world.

This programme got underway in 1977, when delegations of the Orgcom made visits to France, West Germany, Mexico, Columbia, Venezuela, Panama, Costa Rica and Cuba.[23] In September 1977, the CC Secretariat instructed the Soviet Foreign Ministry to provide

[18] On this point see Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 90-1.
[19] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.193, ll.57-9.
[20] Hazan, *Propaganda Games.*, 90.
[21] *1980 Report, volume two*, 367.
[22] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.9-11.
[23] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.127, l.67, l.95, l.108.

assistance to the Orgcom and the Sports Committee in developing contacts with the NOCs of Asian, Latin American and African countries. The same decree made vague reference to the 'political significance' of these three continents' participation, and in particular that of their 'non-aligned' states, in the Games.[24] If viewed against the background of the USSR's deepening conviction in the 1960s and particularly the 1970s that the Third World could be won for socialism,[25] the priority given to recruiting developing states was likely determined by an understanding that their participation was symbolically important in demonstrating the USSR's status as an ally (and in turn, potential leader) of the Third World. Consequently, the following year the Orgcom set in motion a truly globetrotting diplomatic offensive in support of the Games. In one highly representative case, Deputy Orgcom Chairman I. Denisov led a delegation to Brazil in July 1978, during which he discussed the preparations for the Olympiad with the head of the country's NOC. Typically, the communiqué subsequently authored by Denisov stressed the expected positive impact of the Games for international relations, using lofty rhetoric of a kind which was probably intended to solicit the verbal support of Brazilian officials: 'the 1980 Olympics will become not only a global showcase of sporting achievement, but also help unite a wide swathe of the international sporting community in the battle for peace and human progress, and for strengthening mutual understanding between people.' By using reasonable, universally accepted themes and with the aim of getting this message widely publicised, it was doubtless hoped that this communiqué would guarantee Brazil's participation in the Games, perhaps by creating public enthusiasm (and in turn, pressure) for such a move, as well as produce positive publicity around 1980 in this important South American country. Indeed, the Brazilian side duly reassured the Soviets of their intention to send their athletes to Moscow and of their support for the USSR's efforts. Denisov secured an agreement that the Brazilian NOC would also continue to cooperate with the Orgcom on publicising the upcoming Games through to 1980.[26]

Denisov also took his delegation to other countries in South America in 1978, including Peru, Argentina and Guyana, with each visit largely following the same pattern as that of the Brazil mission. In all, the Orgcom evaluated its operation in South America positively, concluding that its delegations had 'fully carried out their tasks' in Olympic diplomacy. Hoping to build on this success, the Orgcom leadership issued instructions to its International Department 'to continue work in establishing contacts with Latin American

[24] Document no.44, p.157.
[25] See Westad, *Global Cold War*, chapters five and seven.
[26] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.301, ll.12-13.

NOCs with the aim of [ensuring] wide and representative participation of their sportsmen in the XXII Games' throughout 1979 and early 1980.[27]

A particularly interesting case of Soviet priorities with respect to this programme as well as of the persuasion tactics used to recruit Third World countries for the Games can be found in the Orgcom's dealings with the newly united Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV), to which Deputy Orgcom Chairman G. Rogul'skii led a delegation in 1978. The discussions Rogul'skii had with the Vietnamese sport minister involved typically pompous pleasantries, whereby the two sides declared that the Soviet Olympics would be significant in giving an impetus to 'the struggle for peace, the strengthening of friendship and cooperation between peoples', and to 'the democratisation of the international Olympic movement.'[28] Yet, as the official account of this trip shows, these words hid real Soviet concern that the difficulties experienced by the SRV in the first years after its unification, including economic ruin and continued military conflict, jeopardised its much-desired participation in the Games.[29] During its visit the delegation accordingly impressed upon the Vietnamese 'the absolute necessity' of their involvement. Rogul'skii sought to tap into a mixture of ideological and nationalistic motivations in order to enlist the SRV, tying the Orgcom's demand both to the idea that the country was obligated to offer its support as a member of the socialist camp, and to the promise of Soviet aid in establishing a 'worthy' Vietnamese national Olympics team. In a similar vein, he 'emphasised that the appearance of the SRV's flag over the Olympic arenas will have great political significance, [and] would be interpreted as one of the symbols of the victory of worldwide progressive forces.' Rogul'skii was probably attempting to ensure Vietnamese participation by giving them hope that this would help them win international recognition, and in turn escape the isolation they had descended into following the end of the Vietnam War. Rogul'skii thus applied a powerful psychological argument on the Vietnamese – and did so in a somewhat cynical way, for it is clear that on the whole the Soviet side sought to use the Games to their own political advantage. As a result of this pressure, the Orgcom ultimately achieved its goal of a commitment from socialist Vietnam to 'give all [of its] strength to preparing for a dignified performance at the 1980 Olympics.' To make such a prospect feasible, the USSR promised to send sport instructors and equipment to the country, and pledged the material support of other socialist states such as the GDR.[30]

The ardent desire to see Vietnam involved in the Olympics was probably motivated by an understanding that its participation would be of huge symbolic importance beyond that

[27] *Ibid.*, ll.48-50, ll.58-9.
[28] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.685, ll.36-37.
[29] *Ibid.*, ll.25-29; ll.42-45.
[30] *Ibid*., ll.25-29, ll.34-35, ll.42-45.

of other Third World states. Soviet officials were likely aware that the country had taken on a mythical image among swathes of the international left in the developing world, Europe and the USA as an ex-colonial nation bravely struggling for independence and socialism against Western hegemony.[31] The SRV's participation was therefore seen, in all likelihood, as a way to garner favour among progressive foreign opinion, by portraying the USSR as the ally and benefactor of this heroic Third World people. Such calculations were logical politically, even as they betray a degree of opportunism on the USSR's part. The USSR was willing to disregard the new socialist republic's acute military, economic and political problems for the sake of seeing it give an additional boost to its own propaganda event. Such a motivation also underlines the intensely political nature of 1980 as it was conceived and planned by the Soviet state.

The same Orgcom delegation was also successful in soliciting the verbal support of the far more obscure Lao People's Democratic Republic. Such progress came after Rogul'skii once again piled the pressure on the government in Vientiane by portraying its involvement in the Olympics as a question of buttressing the communist bloc and showing the vigour of ex-colonial countries.[32] The mission to such a backwater as Laos suggests the organisers wanted a show of socialist unity and loyalty to Moscow in 1980 from across the fractured and disparate communist world of the 1970s – that is, not only among its original Eastern European satellite states but also from the newly established (and extremely impoverished and embattled) Asian regimes. This perhaps reflects the great-power mindset and increasingly ambitious foreign policy prevalent in the Brezhnev period.

Underlining the global scale of the USSR's efforts, and that the organisers sought cooperation not only among countries with avowed pro-Soviet socialist regimes, is the fact that yet more Orgcom delegations subsequently visited or otherwise liaised with countries from many other regions of the world in addition to Indochina and South America. In 1978, trips were undertaken to both Burma and Syria, which again achieved favourable responses from these countries' NOCs.[33] During the VIII Asian Games held in Bangkok in the same year, members of the Orgcom conducted negotiations with sport officials from Thailand, India, Iraq and Pakistan, thanks to which they successfully solicited promises of participation in 1980 by these countries in return for help with training their sport teams.[34] Orgcom representatives turned their attention to Africa in 1979, when they visited Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Ivory Coast and Senegal to conduct similar negotiations as those in the aforementioned states, all with the aim of ensuring these countries' athletes

[31] Westad, *Global Cold War*, 106, 190-3.
[32] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1053, ll.16-20, l.21; l.24.
[33] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.301, ll.18-19, ll.20-21; f.7576, op.35, d.1053, ll.16-20, ll.30-31, l.35.
[34] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.301, ll.24-27, ll.27-32.

participated in the Games. It appears that these efforts initially failed to meet the required level of success, however, since officials from the Orgcom's International Relations Commission later urged greater efforts 'in our work in Africa…in order to guarantee representative participation of the continent's sportsmen in 1980.'[35] Soviet delegations also visited Nigeria, Ethiopia, Zambia, Algeria, Congo, Indonesia, and Kuwait, as well as other Western countries such as Australia, Japan, the United States, Canada, and Sweden at various points in 1975-79. In total, members of the Orgcom visited 77 countries in this period for the sake of eliciting participation.[36]

It is difficult to gauge from the archival record whether or not these global negotiations were primarily determined by anxiety about a low turnout at the Olympics. On the one hand, no explicit statement of this kind has been uncovered in the archives. However, given that the long-term reluctance of the Soviet leadership to approve a bid in 1956-69 was partly determined by fear that the Cold War conflict could lead to a humiliatingly unrepresentative Olympiad, this explanation remains entirely plausible. There is indeed some evidence that the attendance problems experienced at the previous Olympiad due to precisely this factor[37] reinforced lingering Soviet anxiety on this count. In an August 1976 report to the CC, Novikov noted the 'considerable damage to the prestige of the [Montréal] Olympic Games' wrought by the partial boycott carried out by several African nations, pointing out that their absence had been the result of a concerted campaign of 'subversion' against the Olympic movement undertaken by the PRC. He also warned that Maoist China hoped to lead another boycott of African, Asian and Latin American countries in 1980 – that is, those parts of the world which were heavily targeted by Orgcom negotiating teams. Novikov and his colleagues' interpretation of the reasons behind the international disputes which rocked the 1976 Games was in fact shaped by confidential questions they themselves had actively put to Canadian officials.[38] This suggests the USSR was anxious to avoid a repeat of its predecessor's difficulties with regards to the level of attendance in Moscow. Moreover, the fact that the Soviets were worried about Chinese attempts to reduce participation in 1980 prompts one to suspect they were equally suspicious of their other geo-political adversaries in the capitalist West doing the same.

However, it is evident that achieving maximum levels of participation, in large part via this global negotiating programme, was a major priority of the organisers in any case. During discussions with the president of the Thai NOC in 1978, Rogul'skii declared that the Orgcom aimed to 'attract the largest possible number of young talented sportsmen from all

[35] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.439, l.11.
[36] *1980 Official Report, volume two*, 344.
[37] See Guttmann, *Modern Games*, 144-46.
[38] Document no.31, pp.109-10. Also see GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.3-4.

countries' to the Games, because 'the tasks of uniting the world's sporting youth and… strengthening friendly ties through sport are in accordance with Soviet foreign policy.'[39] The implied link between a high level of participation and the credibility of the USSR's foreign policy perhaps suggests that the former was seen as a priority because it would, in the Soviet estimation, allow the state to achieve maximum propagandistic effect from the Games, in terms of enhancing the country's image as a truly pre-eminent global power, capable of uniting the world's nations under the peaceful banner of 'Olympism'. More generally, given both the overall propagandistic nature of the Games, one might infer that such a motivation underlay the strenuous efforts to bring as many teams as possible to Moscow in any case, regardless of what Rogul'skii's words may or may not indicate. Thus, the Soviet Union sought widespread participation possibly out of a desire to avoid the risk of political humiliation which a low turnout would represent for the communist superpower, but almost certainly because it sought to reap substantial political rewards from organising a world-class spectacle. The USSR's conduct here was not solely a case of modest damage limitation, but represented an ambitious move to maximise political advantage.

Financial Help to Developing Countries

Another crucial way in which the Third World in particular was recruited for the Games was through the provision of financial subsidies to cover their athletes' expenses. By mid-1978 the Orgcom had drawn up plans to 'provide…preferential agreements on transport and accommodation' to and from Moscow for the sportsmen and women of Africa, Asia and Latin America.[40] A December 1979 Sovmin decree sanctioned subsidising the transportation costs of 2,500 athletes from developing countries, whilst permitting the Orgcom to pay the costs of their accommodation in the Olympic Village in full.[41] This figure encompassed participants from a substantial number of developing states, thus ensuring an impressive geographical span to Olympics participation. Those who benefited from Soviet largesse included the athletes of 11 Asian, 32 African, and 26 Latin American and Caribbean countries.[42] In a clear sign that there was a political calculation behind this munificence, Sovmin openly stated that these subsidises were meant to ensure 'the widest possible participation and representation of sportsmen from developing countries…[in 1980] compared to previous Olympiads.'[43]

[39] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.301, ll.24-27.
[40] Document no.111, p.302.
[41] Document no.171, p.504.
[42] *Ibid.*, pp.504-508.
[43] *Ibid.*, p.510.

Maintaining Relations with International Sports Organisations

The Orgcom placed great importance on its work with international sporting organisations and individual sport administrators, understanding it to be a way to build a web of personal and organisational ties which could help promote the Games and encourage widespread participation. One of the Orgcom's first delegations to travel abroad visited Canada in 1976, primarily in order to study the practicalities of orchestrating the Games. However, it also sought to 'strengthen ties' with influential figures in the international sports world, not only with the Montréal organisers themselves (who were currently in the international spotlight and could thus help create publicity for 1980 on the Soviets' behalf) but also 'with the IOC President…the presidents of several international sporting federations, and other figures in the Olympic movement.'[44] In the following year, the Orgcom established working contacts with the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, participating in its VII and VIII General Assemblies and conducting one-to-one negotiations with the organisation's top officials. This was done with the aim of 'guaranteeing wide participation in the Moscow Games by countries of the African continent', many of which had boycotted in 1976.[45] In addition, the Orgcom reported in mid-1978 that it was 'increasing business contacts with…national Olympic committees and also with many [other] sports organisations of developing countries'.[46]

Of paramount importance here for the Soviets were continued good relations with the IOC. The confident and methodical lobbying of individual IOC members seen during the 1969-74 bid campaign gave way to a sustained period of amicable engagement and negotiations with the same community in 1975-79. Opportunities to engage with members of the IOC came through its annual meetings, at which the Orgcom was both obliged to give reports on the progress of its preparations and sought out more intimate meetings with key international sports figures of its own volition, in order to 'expand and develop professional ties.'[47] A detailed chronological account of this work has been offered by Parks, who demonstrates that maintaining and strengthening the working relationship with the IOC was a major area of the Orgcom's international activity in 1975-80 to which it devoted a huge amount of time and care.[48] Rather than restate her findings, the discussion here will instead focus on two principal elements of the Orgcom's strategy to charm the IOC in the period before the boycott, as revealed by additional examination of the archival record.

[44] Document no.31, pp.112-13, p.116.
[45] Document no.111, p.301.
[46] *Ibid.*, p.301.
[47] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.56, ll.1-2, l.4, l.8, ll.23-4.
[48] Parks, "Red Sport", chapters 5 and 6.

On the one hand, the Orgcom sought to create an impression of competence by promptly and efficiently meeting the IOC's requirements for reporting on the progress of its preparations according to timetable. In their internal correspondence Orgcom officials repeatedly stressed ahead of IOC gatherings that deadlines had to be met. It was emphasised that the report to an IOC meeting held in Spain in October 1976, for example, would have to be presented in strict accordance with the Olympic charter and the IOC's demands.[49] The Orgcom's report to the 77th IOC Session held in Innsbruck, Austria, also in 1976 contained a huge amount of information on all aspects of the Moscow Games' organisation as they currently stood, leaving little conceivable grounds for accusations that the host was failing to cooperate or cope with its organisational tasks.[50] Orgcom employees noted in their report on this session that IOC members had received 'detailed and exhaustive answers' from the Soviet delegation to all their questions.[51] A subsequent written report on Olympics preparations was sent to IOC members well in advance of their 78th Session, allowing them to become thoroughly acquainted with its details ahead of time.[52] Following another successful report to the IOC at its 80th Session in Athens, Novikov informed the CC that the Orgcom was providing Olympic officials with information on Moscow's preparations on a 'systematic basis.'[53] The organisers evidently prioritised administrative efficiency as the key to maintaining the confidence and support of the Olympics' governing body.

The Soviets also used the occasions presented by the regular sessions of the IOC to emphasise that they were preparing for Moscow-80 with the Olympic franchise's long-term success in mind. In the report to the IOC given before the Montréal Games, for example, 'it was indicated that the Organising Committee considers it its duty…to make use of the period of preparations for conducting measures which will give an impetus to the further development of the Olympic movement.'[54] Presenting the Orgcom's report to the same 78th IOC Session, Novikov declared his organisation's profound hope that 'the Moscow Olympics will become the latest demonstration of the glory of the ideals of Olympism.' He went on to assert that the Orgcom's activities were 'realised in full accordance with IOC rules and the traditions of the Olympic movement.'[55] In addition, during a conversation with members of the Italian NOC in October 1978, Deputy Chairman V. Smirnov framed the Orgcom's activities, including its efforts to bring as many teams as possible to Moscow, in terms of a

[49] Document no.3, p.41.
[50] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.52.
[51] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.56, ll.1-2.
[52] Document no.31, p.111.
[53] Document no.111, p.301.
[54] Document no.31, pp.111-12.
[55] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.52, l.2.

sincere Soviet commitment to preserving a united Olympic movement and avoiding 'a schism' caused by extraneous political disputes.[56]

Soviet officials therefore made use of their obligatory dealings with the IOC in 1975-79 to essentially continue the charm offensive which they had initiated during the bidding campaign. In trying to push two key concepts – that Moscow-80 would be both a perfectly executed event, and imbued with the most authentic Olympic spirit – the organisers tried to assure their all-important patrons that the XXII Games were in competent and deserving hands. The desired effect was clearly to ensure Olympic officials awaited the Soviet Games with enthusiasm rather than trepidation, which in turn facilitated the creation of overall goodwill towards 1980 as it approached.

The Scale of Olympics Propaganda, 1975-79

Much greater in scale and significance than diplomacy in the Orgcom's external affairs was its international propaganda campaign. In one of its first decrees on the Olympics project, the Soviet leadership showed that it understood that the Games would lead to an unprecedented level of global attention for the USSR, describing them as 'a large-scale global event attracting the attention of wide circles of the international community'.[57] This produced a preoccupation, as stated in two subsequent Orgcom resolutions from 1975, with 'mak[ing] use of the preparations and orchestration of the Olympics for [the purposes of carrying out] large-scale and effective propaganda abroad [on the subject of] the advantages of socialism and the Soviet way of life, [for the sake of promoting] the domestic and foreign policies of the CPSU', and more generally in order to reveal to the world 'the achievements of the Soviet people in the construction of a communist society.'[58] In fact, a 1978 report from the Propaganda Administration made clear that the Orgcom leadership (and in turn, one can infer, their superiors in the Politburo) saw this as the 'principal task' (*glavnaia zadacha*) of the venture overall.[59] Such was the centrality of disseminating 'the truth about our Motherland [and] our achievements and conquests [among] wider circles of the foreign public' to the Olympics project that, as Shevchenko noted in a 1976 report to the Orgcom's leaders, it had been officially designated one of the Soviet state's 'largest political and ideological operations' of the latter half of the 1970s.[60] Accordingly, in 1975-80

[56] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.268, ll.16-17.
[57] RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.2.
[58] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.1, l.26; f.9610, op.1, d.36, l.39.See also similar statements in GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.1, l.80; f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.29; f.9610, op.1, d.33, l.5.
[59] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, l.143.
[60] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.

the Orgcom and its supporting organisations implemented plans for a large-scale international propaganda campaign which sought to promote a number of specific political messages about the USSR as host country through a wide variety of media formats.

The Efforts of Soviet Media Organisations

The task of supervising the production of international and domestic propaganda around the theme of the Games fell to the Orgcom's Propaganda Commission.[61] Its records reveal that a steadily rising volume of all types of promotional Olympics-themed materials were distributed abroad in the four years up to 1980. The commission's plan for publishing Olympics-themed books in 1977-80, for instance, included 260 different titles, which was later expanded to 439.[62] In 1977, the Novosti press agency alone distributed newspaper articles promoting the Games in 48 foreign publications and in 42 different languages.[63] As for the Orgcom's own print publications, an initial 1975 plan stipulated that issues of the information bulletin, *Olympics-80*, would be produced in 800 copies for limited distribution in the various allied socialist countries and 4,850 copies for developing and capitalist countries.[64] Between August 1976 and July 1978, seventeen issues of *Olympics-80* were produced, and 25 were issued by the start of 1979. Print runs of the magazine rose from 10,000 to 60,000, and then to 100,000 starting in 1979.[65] Production of propaganda films depicting Moscow's preparations for the Games rose from seven in 1976 to a rate of around 30 a year by 1978, bearing such titles as *Olympic Moscow*, *The Olympians Amongst Us*, and *The Rise of Sporting Youth*. Copies were distributed for broadcasting by national television channels in more than 100 countries in total, including ones located all over Western Europe, North America, Australia, and Japan, as well as among developing countries such as India, Iran, and in Latin America.[66] The State Film Committee put out a further 14 films in the final six months of 1979.[67]

Soviet efforts to spread the propaganda messages of the Games were not restricted to the printed word and television, however. In the first ten months of 1977, the Orgcom conducted 600 political lectures on various subjects relating to the XXII Games for 44,000 foreign tourists visiting the USSR. More than 50% of all foreign tourists who travelled to the Soviet capital in 1978 attended such lectures.[68] International exhibitions promoting the

[61] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.49.
[62] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.180, ll.9-10; f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.29, l.37.
[63] *Ibid*., ll.9-10.
[64] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.10, l.24.
[65] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168, ll.169-172.
[66] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.35-37; f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.9610, op.1, d.310, ll.49-50.
[67] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.459, l.10.
[68] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.180, ll.9-10; f.9610, op.1, d.310, ll.49-50.

Olympics were also employed as a 'highly effective channel' of the Orgcom's propaganda work. One such huge exhibition, held during the Montréal Olympics, was reportedly attended by more than 300,000 Canadian and American citizens. The Games were a theme of Soviet national exhibitions in nine cities across the Eastern Bloc in 1977, and also in the US, Austria, and Italy, and in three cities in France and four cities in West Germany. In total, 1.2 million foreign citizens had visited Olympics-themed exhibitions around the world by 1978. Orgcom functionaries recommended to their superiors the following year that exhibitions 'should continue, on account of their effectiveness, clarity, and the cogency of the materials they employ', and made plans to conduct them in a number of additional West European and central American countries. The Soviets' main exhibition, 'Olympic Moscow', was ultimately held in 30 countries outside the Eastern Bloc in the year after December 1979.[69] In addition, the members of a number of organisations representing a large swathe of the officially approved creative output of the country (including the Unions of Writers, Journalists, Film Directors, Artists, Architects and Composers) became involved in organising press conferences, round tables, symposiums, and seminars dedicated to the Olympiad.[70]

Senior Orgcom officials noted a number of shortcomings with the international campaign during these years. Already in 1976, they issued instructions to diversify the content, increase the quality, and expand the publication of propaganda materials for foreign audiences.[71] Similar concerns about quality and quantity in international propaganda work were discussed periodically throughout 1977-79.[72] In 1978 the Executive Bureau also complained that not enough was being done to encourage a 'creative search for new forms and methods of [propaganda] work', or to 'discover the [untapped] potential of other [state] organisations' which could help with the campaign.[73] In response, plans were implemented to dramatically increase the scale of the international propaganda campaign in 1978-79. A new, fifty three-point plan of propaganda measures was drawn up. The way it was divided up into different operations around the world, each containing a set of measures designed to be especially effective in promoting Moscow-80 in a given geographical area, indicates how the Orgcom allocated resources to certain regions and countries in accordance with their varying degrees of importance to the USSR. In particular, the USA was singled out individually, whilst most other nations were dealt with collectively

[69] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168 ; f.9610, op.1, d.657, ll.14-190; f.7576, op.35, d.537, l.50.
[70] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310, ll.39-41; f.9610, op.1, d.301, ll.32-35; ll.38-40.
[71] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.89, l.5, ll.6-7.
[72] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.180, ll.11-12; f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.133-136; f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.3, l.5, ll.6-7, l.9, l.51, ll.39-41; f.9610, op.1, d.459, l.13, ll.39-43.
[73] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168.

on a continental basis. There were more instructions for carrying out propaganda in Western Europe, meanwhile, than for any other region or country. Double the amount of propaganda materials were sent to the countries of Africa than to those of Asia.[74] Judging by this evidence overall, it appears that there were very few areas of the world which weren't subject to at least some kind of propaganda connected with Moscow-80. Above all, the advanced capitalist democracies were targeted, in particular Soviet arch-rivals the United States and the countries of Western Europe. Those states which the USSR prioritised developing stable relations with during the Cold War were thus the principal targets of Olympics propaganda.

The Involvement of the Socialist Bloc

The impressive scale of the international propaganda campaign in support of the Soviet Games is further revealed by the extensive involvement of various Moscow-aligned communist regimes. At a meeting convened in Moscow in 1976, representatives from the state-run trade union organisations of Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Mongolia, Vietnam and Hungary joined their Soviet partners to discuss organising a campaign of joint propaganda measures around Moscow-80.[75] VTsSPS Secretary V. Bogatikov outlined several areas of propaganda activity to be coordinated with the bloc similar to those which the USSR was pursuing independently, including large-scale publication in trade union newspapers of Games-related articles, the use of TV, radio, lectures among foreign tourists, and international exhibitions.[76] All the representatives of the socialist countries present at the meeting predictably agreed with these suggestions and pledged to make promoting the Olympics a key concern of their domestic propaganda activities for the following four years (with the notable exception of Romania, whose delegate to the meeting gave only a modest, short speech congratulating the USSR on winning the Games).[77]

Within a year, the joint propaganda measures of the communist bloc had taken on an impressive scale and complexity. The socialist countries had developed an exhaustively detailed plan for 'systematic' measures to be implemented throughout 1977-80.[78] The individual campaigns carried out by the East European regimes in aid of the Olympics were largely identical to each other in terms of the methods they employed. For instance, in accordance with this plan the GDR's trade union apparatus successfully linked the Olympics

[74] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.180, ll.4-11.
[75] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, ll.1-3.
[76] *Ibid*., ll.13-16.
[77] *Ibid*., ll.17-19.ll.23-24, ll.28-29, ll.29-30, ll.32-35, ll.36-39, ll.39-41.
[78] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.46-47.

theme to a nationwide sports festival in 1977, in which some 2.5 million people participated, and had made Soviet preparations for the Games a feature of a number of national television programmes.[79] A total of five different newspapers and magazines produced by the German trade unions also regularly published materials on Moscow's preparations.[80] Socialist Hungary churned out newspaper articles about the Olympics preparations in a similar fashion, and organised Olympics-themed sports competitions among and between industrial enterprises and in schools.[81] Czechoslovakia was another country within the Bloc which went to great lengths to promote 1980 among its own people. Like the East Germans and the Hungarians, a key method of the campaign in Czechoslovakia involved organising nationwide sport competitions which were formally linked to the upcoming Games in Moscow, and thus generated mass awareness of the event and its accompanying political messages ahead of 1980. The authorities also instigated lower-level Olympics-themed sports competitions at enterprises in every region of the country in 1977-78.[82] As the years progressed, the Czechs seemed to go further than any other country in finding innovative ways to propagandise the Games among their population. Aside from the fairly standard use of the state-controlled press and broadcast media, Czechoslovak school children participated in a national quiz testing their knowledge of Olympics history, whilst a 'national conversation' was also conducted on the history of the modern Olympic Games (these two events undoubtedly bore a suitably pro-Soviet tone).[83] In addition, even communist Romania under the recalcitrant Ceaușescu began cooperating to some extent with the Soviet Union, with its delegate to the 1977 joint meeting on propaganda measures reporting that the country's domestic television, radio and trade union newspapers were now publicising the details of Soviet Olympic preparations.[84]

By the later stages of the campaign, all the main Eastern Bloc states were able to boast of large-scale efforts to publicise the Olympiad in their own countries. The number of Olympics-related articles which appeared in Bulgarian newspapers during 1979, for instance, reached 3,000. The Bulgarian state also produced nine films dedicated to the Olympics; its domestic television channels broadcast 73 news pieces along with 12 interviews with members of the Soviet Organising Committee, and continued to provide an update for viewers once a month. There were plans to publish 29 books and 17 other

[79] *Ibid.*, ll.30-32.
[80] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.16, ll.7-16.
[81] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.27-29.
[82] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.32-37; f.5451, op.67, d.16, ll.74-77.
[83] *Ibid.*, ll.7-16.
[84] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.19-22.

written publications on the event during 1980. A large exhibition on the Games opened at the Soviet House of Science and Culture in Sofia. The employees of as much as 70% of industrial enterprises, state institutions and schools in the Bulgarian capital (the latter encompassing 60% of the city's school children) were mobilised for participation in a large-scale sports contest partly dedicated to the Games, the events of which were held across the whole country. Virtually all of the Bulgarian state's ongoing initiatives in sport and tourism by this time, which involved more than a million people, 'took place under the slogan of the Moscow Olympiad'. In Hungary, the trade union apparatus held press conferences once or twice a week for journalists in 1979, informing them about news from the Orgcom in Moscow. In Czechoslovakia in 1979-80, the Games were taught as a subject in schools as part of students' 'political education' classes. Across the border in the GDR, officials strived to encourage every member of the adult population into participating in sport in time for the start of the Olympics, thereby tying a nationwide health campaign to the Games. At the same time Polish trade union officials orchestrated the 'Moscow-80' mass sport action, which included 300,000 different events and involved 11 million citizens, and broadcast special programmes on the Games' preparations taking place in all five Olympic cities every week, on both national television and radio.[85]

As a consequence of Soviet hegemony in the region, communist bureaucrats from Berlin to Bucharest thus made significant efforts to propagandise the Olympics among their own populations in 1975-79, to the point where the state-run media in these countries likely became saturated with Olympics propaganda. As in wider military, economic and political matters, the USSR expected all of its allies to unanimously follow Moscow's line regarding the promotion of the Games. At the same time, the People's Republics did not merely target their own populations for Olympics propaganda. The archival record shows that these regimes simultaneously became instruments through which the organisers in Moscow were able to expand the scope of their propaganda efforts in the *non*-socialist world, in developing countries and the West. Virtually all of the Eastern Bloc states set aside some of their own propaganda materials on the Games for distribution outside of the 'socialist commonwealth', targeting the same countries and regions which the USSR already had, in an apparent bid to completely inundate populations beyond the control of pro-Moscow governments with tendentious information about the event. The Orgcom had in fact signaled its intention to adopt such an approach in the earliest stages of the campaign, and it became one of the VTsSPS's key instructions to the socialist bloc's trade unions at their annual coordinating meetings in both 1978 and 1979.[86] The result was that certain

[85] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.42, ll.22-26, ll.26-30, ll.37-41, ll.41-47, ll.58-64.
[86] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73; f.9610, op.1, d.310, ll.49-50.

countries, such as East Germany, undertook impressive initiatives in propaganda outside their own borders, including in this case producing posters and magazines in four different foreign languages.[87] The GDR later produced an Olympics-themed film for foreign distribution, which was translated into 22 languages and distributed in 60 countries.[88] The Czechoslovak authorities similarly translated a full-length promotional book and film into various different languages for distribution in both developed and developing nations in 1979. They also retransmitted television and radio broadcasts to foreign listeners and provided their trade union and tourist delegations traveling beyond the Iron Curtain with propaganda material for distribution.[89] In addition, they conducted propaganda work among young trade union workers visiting Czechoslovakia from the West.[90] Furthermore, whilst East Germany targeted Western Europe, distant Cuba became the base for launching an Olympics-themed propaganda campaign in Latin America, and Bulgaria focused on the Balkans.[91] Even North Korea (never a particularly close ally of the Soviet Union) agreed to give verbal support to the USSR's venture at the VIII Asian Games. Mongolia also took up the challenge of distributing Olympics propaganda in the surrounding countries of Asia.[92] The various socialist states carried out these measures beyond their borders with such dedication that their overseers in Moscow expressed 'deep satisfaction' with their work.[93]

In co-opting the resources of its satellites, the Soviet Union significantly increased the volume of Olympics propaganda across all the mediums it employed and substantially enlarged the geographical scope of the campaign. Whilst no figures on the total amount of money spent on the international propaganda campaign have been found, it must have been considerable; the above demonstrates that the Orgcom's efforts to exploit the Games for propaganda purposes abroad in 1975-79 were on a huge scale in terms of geography, timescale and material resources invested.

The Content of Olympics Propaganda

Innumerable pieces of internal Orgcom correspondence make clear that all the propaganda materials distributed as part of this campaign were meant to provide foreign audiences with an upbeat portrayal of a wide range of aspects Soviet life which went far beyond the narrow subjects of sport or the Olympics, thereby allowing the USSR to proclaim its

[87] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.16, ll.7-16.
[88] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.42, ll.41-47.
[89] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.16, ll.7-16, ll.74-77.
[90] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.32-37.
[91] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73; f.9610, op.1, d.459, ll.39-43; RGANI, f.5, op.73, d.301, ll.40-41.
[92] *Ibid*.; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.39-41; f.5451, op.67, d.42, ll.51-58.
[93] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.50-51.

achievements in all spheres of its existence.[94] Examining the various promotional pamphlets about the Olympics distributed abroad in 1975-79 reveals some of the campaign's most common themes, and offers fascinating insight into how the Olympics were utilised by the Soviet state to promote its socialist alternative among foreign onlookers. Given the highly standardised nature of Soviet propaganda, the messages found in these pamphlets can be considered representative of the content offered in a majority of materials and across all the media formats described above.

A 'Peace-Loving Foreign Policy'

A positive depiction of the USSR's constructive approach to foreign relations was repeatedly emphasised in Olympics propaganda. The Soviets aimed to depict Moscow-80, in the words of Orgcom propaganda chief Shevchenko, 'as a solid example of…[the USSR's] intention to implement the Peace Programme and the Helsinki Final Act, and above all, of our contribution to the development of…cooperation between the USSR and foreign countries.'[95] Shevchenko's prescription indicates that détente, as the centrepiece of Soviet foreign policy in the 1970s, had been adopted as a key theme in Olympics propaganda, as a way to prove the well-meaning intentions of the socialist superpower in the outside world. Indeed, in one 1975 decree, the Orgcom instructed its propagandists to take advantage of the USSR's organisation of the Olympics to propagate 'the peace-loving foreign policy of the Soviet state'. This could be done by 'pay[ing] special attention to propagandising the principles and ideals of the Olympic movement, which aid the development of international ties, and support…the long-term strengthening of [international] peace.'[96] As this line suggests, Olympics propaganda offered an opportunity to prove the benign nature of Soviet foreign policy via reference to the USSR's overall approach to involvement in the Olympics franchise. Accordingly, propaganda texts often took pains to emphasise how the Soviet Union saw such international sport contests as a means of positive cultural exchange. This can be seen in an article written by Sports Committee Chairman Pavlov, which was included in one promotional pamphlet: '…when we talk today about the social responsibility of sport, [the Soviet Union]…feel[s] that its chief function…is to further the strengthening of mutual understanding, peace and friendship among peoples.' Pavlov's underlying message was that the USSR's approach to international sport and cooperation with the IOC was an example of its fidelity to the cause of détente and peaceful coexistence in a nuclear world.[97]

[94] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.10, l.8; f.9610, op.1, d.4, l.7; f.9610, op.1, d.37, l.70; f.9610, op.1, d.34, l.139; f.5451, op.67, d.15, ll.50-51; RGANI, f.5, op.67, d.130, ll.16-17.
[95] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[96] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.10, l.8.
[97] V. Shteinbakh, *The Soviet Contribution to the Olympics* (Moscow, 1980), 5-6.

This claim that the USSR was concerned with sport for the sake of détente above all can be seen in the remarks prefacing a different booklet from 1978, which asserted that Moscow had opted for the Games because they were 'a triumph of the ideas of peace': 'Putting the Leninist principles of peaceful coexistence into practice, the Soviet state has always supported…movements which seek better understanding and peace among nations.' The author continued: 'The Soviet Union always assesses its involvement in the world Olympic movement from the point of view of world peace and international cooperation.'[98] In another example, when discussing the country's entry into the Olympic movement two decades earlier, propagandists declared: 'the Soviet Union…participat[ed] [in the Helsinki Games in 1952] with a call that they should promote peace. There was a very good reason for this: almost half the 294-strong Soviet national team had fought in the war against fascism.'[99] Soviet propaganda thus found an emotionally powerful way to promote the idea that the USSR was sincerely devoted to the singular aim of bolstering international peace through its involvement in the franchise. Such a theme clearly implied that Soviet intentions in the global arena *overall* were altruistic and non-threatening (indeed, this was a constant refrain of the USSR's wider post-war international propaganda offensive, discussed in greater detail below).[100] In holding up 1980 as a symbol of the country's commitment to an admirable, constructive foreign policy, Olympics propaganda aimed to create an image of the USSR as morally superior. This theme was brought up frequently in the propaganda literature, indicating that it formed one of the core messages of the campaign.

The Party-State's Benevolence

However, the Games were used as an opportunity to spread the idea of Soviet superiority in much broader terms than simply in relation to the ethical dimensions of its foreign policy. This can be seen in the fact that themes relating to the Soviet socio-economic system and its advantages held pride of place in propaganda for the Olympiad. The most important of these centred on the benevolence of the party-state's rule. In one early pamphlet, it was stressed that the massive development of Olympic infrastructure would 'fit in with [the] master plan for the reconstruction of the Soviet capital.' The same account added: 'As for the funds that will be needed for…the Olympic Games, one should not forget that the Soviet government earmarks generous sums for the development of physical culture and sports every year.'[101] The propagandists were emphasising that Soviet socialism

[98] S. Popov and A. Srebnitskii, *Olympics-80 Come to Moscow* (Moscow, 1978), 7-8.
[99] Shteinbakh, *Soviet Contribution*, 40.
[100] F. Barghoorn, *Soviet Foreign Propaganda* (Princeton, 1964), 80-121.
[101] A. Dobrov, *Moscow is Ready to Host the 1980 Olympics* (Moscow, 1974), 6-7.

was an intrinsically benevolent system, which was constantly implementing plans to provide its citizens with a plethora of new recreational and welfare facilities even without the Games. Indeed, numerous lengthy descriptions of the construction programme for 1980 were offered in other propaganda pamphlets to highlight the fact that investment in recreational facilities was constantly ongoing in the Soviet Union. The authors of one of these stated emphatically: '…the construction [work] is not determined by the coming Olympics, but by Moscow's general plan of development. The Games have simply… expand[ed] construction and speed[ed] it up.' They boasted of local administrators' plans to ultimately build '19 new stadiums, 200 gyms and 36 swimming pools by the end of 1980', which were 'not for Olympics use, [but were] being built [for] schools, institutes, enterprises, and in residential areas.' Thanks to this work, '[one in two] inhabitant[s]…will have the [opportunity to] take up physical culture and sports regularly.'[102] In other cases, the line was taken that facilities designated for the Olympics were being built or refurbished with the long-term welfare of the Soviet people in mind: '…everything built for the Olympic Games will later be put at the disposal of city authorities…and will serve the general public.'[103] Novikov was quoted as saying: 'Olympic construction is being conducted [*sic*]…for the use of the new facilities after the Games'.[104] It is clear that this particular argument was intended to reinforce the understanding among foreign readers that the infrastructure programme for 1980 coincided with the more general long-term goals of Soviet social and economic planning. In turn, this was meant to strengthen the Olympic campaign's overarching, fundamental message for outsiders that the socialist system had an inbuilt commitment to raising the living standards of ordinary people. The development of recreational facilities required by the Games afforded opportunities to claim the USSR's people were reaping immense benefits from a system which championed state paternalism.

At the same time, an emphasis on the supremely rational nature of Soviet urban planning and the advanced character of the USSR's welfare state was reinforced in a number of publications through more general, optimistic descriptions for foreign readers of life in the Olympic host city. Expanding their focus beyond sports stadiums, Olympics propagandists provided exhaustive descriptions of Moscow's welfare infrastructure, its cultural and retail facilities, clean air, modern sanitation, and electricity and transport networks.[105] The extent to which Soviet citizens now had access to modern apartments thanks to an astounding pace of housing construction under the most recent five-year plans

[102] Popov and Srebnitskii, *Olympics-80 Come to Moscow*, 37-8.
[103] Shteinbakh, *Soviet Contribution*, 119.
[104] Popov and Srebnitskii, *Olympics-80 Come to Moscow*, 37-8; B. Bazunov and S. Popov, *Olympic Moscow* (Moscow, 1979), 105.

was noted with numbing regularity.[106] The underlying message for the outsider was clear: under Soviet power, Moscow and other cities had become modern metropolises provided with all the amenities required for both work and leisure. Such claims were supplemented with descriptions of a city where public amenities were purposefully located in close proximity to residential areas, in order to provide citizens with everything they needed.[107] The Olympic Village – which, as noted, boasted all manner of modern conveniences – was held up as a prime example in this respect; it was described (somewhat disingenuously) as 'basically little different from most new neighbourhoods in the Soviet capital.'[108] The impression one receives from these propaganda materials is of a population which lived a happy, prosperous and well-ordered life under the rule of the CPSU.

The overall centrality of this particular subject to the international propaganda campaign is revealed by the archival record. In 1976, Shevchenko advised the Orgcom leadership that 'special attention' should be paid in all forms of propaganda to highlighting the idea that the Olympics were proof of the Party and government's 'concern for raising the people's welfare.'[109] Similarly, in 1979, a VTsSPS official made clear to his socialist-bloc colleagues that the international campaign had to be 'closely tied to [the idea of]…the [Communist] Party's concern for raising the welfare of the Soviet people.'[110] The economic preparations were singled out by Orgcom functionaries on several occasions in their internal correspondence in 1978 as the principal theme of Olympics propaganda.[111] This special emphasis on the Soviet state's paternalistic features was explained by Shevchenko in terms of an overarching priority to publicise 'the achievements of socialism' to the world. One might infer from this that it was chosen by the organisers because they perceived the communist welfare state as one of the Soviet system's most attractive elements to outside observers living in capitalist or developing countries (that is, those states which Soviet ideology declared were characterised by vastly more unequal and/or impoverished societies). In other words, it may have been seen as the most potent propaganda theme available which (in the official Soviet view) graphically distinguished socialism from capitalism, to the benefit of the former. Moreover, Shevchenko remarked in the same document that propagandising socialism along these lines would have to be undertaken

[105] Bazunov and Popov, *Olympic Moscow*, 40-41; Popov and Srebnitskii, *Olympics-80 Come to Moscow*, 18.
[106] Popov and Srebnitskii, *Olympics-80 Come to Moscow*, 18; Unknown author, *1980 Olympics: What? Why? When? Where? How?* (Moscow, 1980), 40-41; Bazunov and Popov, *Olympic Moscow*, unpaginated.
[107] Bazunov and Popov, *Olympic Moscow*, 104.
[108] Shteinbakh, *Soviet Contribution*, 116-18.
[109] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[110] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.42, ll.11-13.
[111] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.8.

whilst 'taking into account the specific character of the Olympiad'.[112] He did not elaborate on this comment, but this might be taken as an indication that the welfare theme had been selected simply because it was the propaganda trope in the Soviets' arsenal which could most logically be deployed in the context of their preparations for the Moscow Games – for as noted, the development of welfare infrastructure and urban amenities in the Soviet capital was at the absolute core of the USSR's preparations.

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It is worth putting this campaign in context, as a way to explain its (and indeed, the entire Olympic project's) significance. International propaganda (*vneshnepoliticheskaia propaganda*) was a sphere of policy which, following the USSR's emergence as a superpower after 1945, was an integral element of its long-term strategy in its Cold War confrontation with the West.[113] Hazan described the purposes of Soviet propaganda as the use of both general and specific messages aimed at 'the formation, change or preservation and reinforcement of certain attitudes, beliefs and values, with the purpose of inducing a specific preconceived behaviour...congruent with the specific interests and ends of the [the Soviet state].'[114] To judge by its content, the campaign around 1980 sought to inculcate a belief in socialism's superiority among foreign populations, with the ultimate goal of changing popular behaviour in Western and Third World countries in ways which would benefit the Soviet Union. Shevchenko alluded to this idea in his April 1976 report to the Orgcom leadership, when he explained that the underlying purpose behind the attempt to show an idealised depiction of Soviet socialism through Olympics propaganda was 'to attract new circles of foreign public opinion to our side,' and 'aid the strengthening of the authority of the first socialist state all over the world.'[115] He did not elaborate as to what this was expected to achieve in turn, but it is possible that Soviet goals with respect to its wider international propaganda campaign were ultimately conceived in terms of influencing voting patterns in favour of pro-Soviet political parties, or even organising domestic revolutions in these states which would align them with the socialist bloc and neutralise them as the USSR's political and military opponents. The Olympics might in turn

[112] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[113] See studies by Barghoorn, *Foreign Propaganda*; B. Hazan, *Soviet Propaganda: A Case Study of the Middle East Conflict* (New York, 1976); B. Hazan, *Soviet Impregnational Propaganda* (Ann Arbor, 1982); R. Kanet, "Soviet Propaganda and the Process of National Liberation", in R. Kanet (ed.), *The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the Third World* (Cambridge, 1987), 84-114; L.V. Silina, *Vneshnepoliticheskaia propaganda v SSSR V 1945-1985 gg.: po materialm otdela propagandy i agitatsii TSK VKP(b)-KPSS* (Moscow, 2011).
[114] Hazan, *Impregnational Propaganda*, 9-10; Hazan, *Middle East Conflict*, 29.
[115] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.

be seen as a component of this process.[116] Moreover, the huge scale and complexity of the Olympics' international propaganda campaign suggests the Moscow Games in fact represented the high point of this aspect of the USSR's foreign policy. With few outstanding anniversaries or extraordinary political events available for a comparable degree of propagandistic exploitation on the international stage in 1981-85, the Olympics way well have represented the final crescendo of Soviet international propaganda efforts during the Cold War, and the last gasp of Brezhnevite triumphalism projected onto the world stage, before the quickening pace of change pushed the Soviet polity into oblivion under Gorbachev. Moreover, the fact that this campaign blended seamlessly with (and thus gave a boost to) this long-term policy underlines the extent to which Moscow-80 was closely integrated into the top leadership's policy agenda during this period.

It is highly likely that the Soviet organisers failed in their attempts to inculcate the core propaganda message of 1980 among a majority of its foreign recipients. By the 1970s, Soviet socialism was considered by millions of people living in non-communist societies – especially those of the West – to be decidedly less desirable in political and economic terms than the capitalist and democratic alternative. Soviet socialism was seen not as an efficient, benevolent and virtuous system but instead as impoverished, bureaucratic and 'totalitarian', whilst the USSR's foreign policy was perceived as aggressive and expansionist rather than 'peace-loving'. If such opinions had already become widespread decades before, they only became more entrenched during Brezhnev's rule of the USSR, as economic decline intensified and the Soviet regime repeatedly employed armed force abroad.[117] In light of this, it is possible to take issue with the general interpretation of the impact and significance of the 1980 boycott, in terms of its supposedly crucial role in scuppering the Soviet state's principal aims for the Olympiad. For even without the West's intervention, it is clear that trends in international public opinion in the long- and short-term were already severely reducing the USSR's chances of winning precisely that battle for hearts and minds in the outside world which the Olympiad was supposed to facilitate. In turn one can, with a significant degree of confidence, suggest that the project was likely doomed to failure from the start. The boycott may have ultimately diminished the spectacle of 1980 by reducing the number of attending sports teams, but in terms of the more important task of the Olympics to enact a shift in Western public opinion in the Soviets' favour through propaganda, one has every reason to suspect it could only have exacerbated a failure which was already manifest. The boycott created hostility towards the

[116] This idea will be further discussed in the conclusion to the thesis.
[117] J. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004), 9, 73-5; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 18-19, 25; 334-36, 358-63, 387-8; Zubok, "Soviet Union and détente", 440.

USSR in 1980, but in the preceding years there was already widespread popular mistrust, fear and indifference in non-communist countries. Thus, though certainly dramatic, the boycott has arguably been accorded too much importance in previous accounts of the Soviet Games in terms of the impact it supposedly had in bringing the project to ruin at the last minute.[118] The Soviet state's ambitious hopes for the Olympics were not dealt their fatal blow by its decision to send 40,000 men into the mountains of Afghanistan, and the Western crusade against the Games which this prompted, but by Soviet socialism's already negligible credibility in the outside world during the historical juncture in which the event took place.

Western Criticism and Soviet 'Counter-Propaganda'

By the late 1970s, increasingly vociferous criticism of the approaching Moscow Olympiad was voiced among Western commentators. Concerns partly centred on the idea that the inefficient and backward Soviet command economy threatened the host's chances of providing Western standards of comfort, customer service and efficiency. In 1978-79, Soviet officials monitoring foreign discussion of the Olympiad in the West found numerous examples from American and West German newspapers of commentators casting severe doubt on the hosts' ability to provide a sufficient quantity and quality of hotels, catering and recreational facilities, and an adequate supply of food.[119]

Political objections to the Moscow Olympics also circulated in the West at this time. The Orgcom meticulously recorded the assertions that increasingly appeared in various Western publications and which were aired in legislative chambers in Europe and America to the effect that 1980 would be an exercise in 'red propaganda', depicting communism in a favourable light. In turn, the view was often put forward that the cooperation of the 'free world' in the Games advanced only the interests of its Cold War antagonist.[120] The fact that, on more than once occasion, Western commentators drew a comparison with the 'Nazi Olympics' of 1936 leaves little doubt as to the degree to which Moscow-80 was seen and portrayed in some quarters as a deeply dubious enterprise, organised solely to promote a morally repugnant regime.[121]

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[118] See, for instance, Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 80.

[119] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.1-2; document no.69, p.210; document no.86, p.242; document no.135, p.399; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.17-25. See also Jonathan Steele, 'Moscow Substitutes Red Tape for Red Carpets', *The Guardian*, 01.07.1980.

[120] Vladimir Bukovskii, 'The Moscow Olympics', letter to *The Times*, 14.08.1978; Jonathan Steele, 'The Bear Prepares for the Olympics Invasion', *The Guardian*, 13.11.1979; document no.86, p.242; document no.69, pp.210-211; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.175-178.

[121] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.175-178.

Long-term Cold War antagonism thus had a crucial impact on the Western reception of the prospect of a Soviet Olympiad long before Afghanistan. This is also true of the second major political objection to 1980, which saw Western opinion on the subject become linked to a major stumbling block in Cold War relations during Carter's presidency – namely, the Soviet state's record on human rights. As the Soviet dissident movement was suppressed with particular ferocity in the later 1970s, many Western commentators complained that major violations of human rights made the USSR morally unsuitable to host the Games.[122] Unfortunately for the Soviets, the concurrence of the run-up to the Moscow Olympiad and their adversaries' increasing focus on the issue of continuing political repression in the USSR meant that the event essentially came to be seen as a test for the West's resolve in standing up to communist authoritarianism.

Numerous calls for action against Moscow resulted from these objections. In 1978, several US politicians sponsored an initiative calling upon the American NOC to demand a change of location for the XXII Games as punishment for the Soviet crackdown on dissidents.[123] A report circulated within the Orgcom observed that 'analogous campaigns' opposed to the Moscow Olympics had appeared in Australia and a number of other unspecified countries.[124] Parliamentarians in Holland from four major political parties, meanwhile, along with academics, lawyers and religious figures created a special committee in 1979 in order to 'put pressure on [the] Soviet authorities to abide by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights…during the build-up to the Games and…during the event'. The committee had plans to begin working for its aims through the European Parliament.[125] Similar initiatives were also launched in France, Switzerland, West Germany and Belgium.[126] In addition, proposals were advanced by members of both the US Congress and the British parliament for a fully-fledged boycott in 1978.[127]

The Games therefore became a thoroughly politicised subject in Western public life in the late 1970s, in a way which fundamentally conflicted with and undermined Soviet aims for the event. Whilst Soviet propagandists sought to use 1980 to advance the USSR's

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[122] Letters, *The Guardian*, 13.07.1978; Editorial, 'The Shaming of Brezhnev', *The Observer*, 16.07.1978; Editorial, 'Shcharansky, disgust, and Olympics', *The Guardian*, 15.07.1978; Vladimir Bukovskii, 'The Moscow Olympics', letter to *The Times*, 14.08.1978; Letters, *The Observer*, 03.09.1978; Unknown author, 'Dissident Plea to IOC', *The Guardian*, 18.04.1979; document no.69, p.211.

[123] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.175-178.

[124] Document no.58, p.188.

[125] Document no.86, p.243; B. Boyle, 'Dutch Olympic Pressure', *The Guardian*, 05.05.1979; Bukovskii document no.1504, 3-4.

[126] Document no.86, p.243; Bukovskii document no.1504, 1-4.

[127] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.1-3, ll.9-11; M. Wainwright, 'Liberals want Olympic Games moved', *The Guardian*, 02.08.1978; Unknown author, 'Dr Owen raises query on Moscow Olympics', *The Times*, 25.08.1978; Bukovskii document no.1504, 2-3.

reputation as the superior alternative to capitalism, the various objections and calls for action coming from public figures in the West could probably only have reinforced long-standing impressions of socialism among their own populations as a system which was fundamentally *inferior* – economically, politically, and above all morally.

The Counter-Propaganda Campaign

As indicated, the Soviet authorities closely monitored all critical foreign pronouncements on the Games and followed every sign that these criticisms could be transformed into (what they termed) 'anti-Olympic' actions. In particular, all instances where the idea of a boycott, was discussed by a member of the Western press or political establishment were noted, along with the precise attitude of each and every commentator to such a move and their estimation of how likely it was to occur.[128] Statements made by members of the Orgcom and the staff of both the VTsSPS and the KGB in 1976-79 to the effect that Western criticisms and calls for a boycott where being coordinated across the capitalist world suggest that perpetual Soviet paranoia to some extent magnified the seriousness of the threats believed to be arrayed against the event, and created a significant degree of concern.[129] However, the overall character of this ongoing threat-assessment exercise was one of methodical, calm observation and vigilance rather than panic. This was likely due to the fact that the organisers had long expected such developments. Already in 1976, Shevchenko warned the Orgcom leadership that 'measures will be taken on the part of world reaction to discredit the USSR in connection with the Games under any pretext.'[130] He typically explained this with reference to the official Marxist-Leninist precept regarding the contemporary 'intensification of the general crisis of capitalism and…the class struggle.'[131] The internal correspondence of the Orgcom, Komsomol and VTsSPS indicates that this ideological conceptualisation of the Games' vulnerability was the foundation for the USSR's active opposition to the Western challenge throughout 1977-79.[132] A 1978 Orgcom memorandum on Olympics propaganda stated bluntly: 'The Moscow Olympiad…is located at the centre of the most acute ideological struggle between two opposing systems… Orgcom workers ought to understand that they are at the forefront of this struggle; they are working in an ideological organisation.'[133] As with the security programme, Cold War-era paranoia ensured that Soviet officials anticipated from the outset that the West would

[128] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.175-178; f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.18-20.
[129] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.1-2; f.5451, op.67, d.7, ll.12-13; Bukovskii document no.1504, 1-2.
[130] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[131] *Ibid*.
[132] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, l.4; f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.1-2; f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.94-5; f.5451, op.67, d.15, l.11; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.17-25.
[133] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168.

attempt to undermine both the achievement of their short-term goals for the project and the popularity/credibility of Soviet socialism more generally.

Imbued with this sense of Cold War confrontation, the Orgcom and its affiliated agencies responded to these criticisms and initiatives with a robust and confident counter-propaganda campaign designed to stop the West's detrimental moves in their tracks. During 1977-78, several organisations together with the various branches of the state media machine 'regularly produce[d]…counter-propaganda materials', prepared on the basis of the Orgcom's monitoring of Western pronouncements. State officials and Orgcom workers made many 'counter-propagandistic' public pronouncements, whilst additional press conferences and one-to-one meetings with foreign journalists were also organised specifically for this purpose alongside those which were used exclusively for more upbeat promotional efforts. 'Progressive' foreign journalists and publishers were sought out to help in preparing counter-propaganda materials.[134] Incomplete statistics show that Novosti Press Agency distributed an increasing number of articles abroad rebutting Western lines of attack, which had been produced by central and regional Soviet propaganda organs. In 1977, 40 articles from such sources were classified as 'counter-propaganda'; in the first nine months of 1978, 100 were produced, which amounted to 15% of these outlets' total published material on the Olympics.[135] Between October 1978 and July 1979 more than 2,000 press releases with 'a counter-propagandistic content' were distributed to the foreign press.[136] In March and April 1979 alone, Novosti produced 203 articles for distribution abroad which were designated as 'counter-propaganda.'[137] Somewhat differently, in the space of a two-month period in 1978-79, a number of counter-propaganda pieces were published in major Soviet newspapers, including articles and interviews with senior Orgcom figures in the pages of *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, and *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, on the assumption that they would be discussed in the foreign press.[138] The CC was still issuing instructions to the Orgcom for carrying out counter-propaganda work in November 1979, barely two months before the much fiercer war of words over the Olympics erupted in the wake of the intervention in Afghanistan.[139]

A particularly large amount of energy was devoted to counteracting the embryonic boycott initiative of 1978. This seriously concerned the Soviet organisers, who considered it a 'definite threat to…the achievement of [the Olympics'] main aims.'[140] A number of

[134] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310, l.8.
[135] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.28-30.
[136] Document no.81, p.232.
[137] Document no.69, p.214.
[138] Document no.58, p.186.
[139] Document no.136, p.402.
[140] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-168; f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.9-11.

measures were prepared in response. The Foreign Ministry produced a series of statements 'expos[ing]…the provocative and subversive actions of the Americans in relation to the Olympic movement, [showing that] the US is openly seeking to…use the movement to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries'. Such denunciatory statements became the standard line used by Orgcom officials, Soviet journalists, athletes and public figures. The staff of Soviet foreign missions, as well as those of Soviet cultural organisations located abroad, became a key link in this campaign to counter the first boycott threat, helping to prepare speeches and statements condemning the West's actions for local television, radio and press outlets in their respective countries. These materials emphasised that the boycott was motivated by the aim of discrediting socialism as a whole – that is, that the West was letting its political prejudices interfere with the orchestration of a sporting franchise where there was no place for political battles. The USSR thereby responded to this first boycott campaign by painting Western governments as harbouring wholly spiteful and bellicose, rather than principled, intentions. The Orgcom simultaneously set out to remind the global public that 'calls for a boycott do not have support in authoritative circles of international sport' by repeatedly citing President Killanin's words to the effect that the IOC's choice of Moscow was final and irreversible. In this way the Soviet side drew upon the authoritative voices of international sport figures to show that there was support for the USSR's Olympics venture from legitimate and non-biased quarters. They also supplemented this idea of Western isolation with far more dubious claims that world public opinion was on the USSR's side with regards to this issue. Materials condemning a boycott also became part of the Olympic propaganda work carried out by the socialist-bloc countries at this time.[141]

In the Soviets' methodical counter-propaganda campaign of 1977-79, as with their general monitoring and conceptualisation of foreign 'anti-Olympics' actions, one does not detect any profound fear that Western criticisms alone fundamentally jeopardised their aim to shape the global media's narrative around Moscow-80 in their favour. In contrast, as noted above it is likely that there was some degree of official anxiety at this time regarding the other key goal of the project's international programme – high attendance levels. Therefore, early calls for a boycott probably increased the resources devoted to counter-propaganda at least to some degree, in addition to influencing the intensity of Olympic diplomacy during these years, in view of the obvious threat they posed to participation. Yet the anti-boycott measures of 1978-79 where nowhere near the scale of those deployed to combat Carter's fully-fledged crusade in 1980, again suggesting Soviet actions were not shaped by any sense of outright panic. Instead, as with the strenuous efforts made in

[141] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.4-7, ll.9-11.

Olympic diplomacy to achieve maximum attendance, with respect to all of these counter-propaganda measures one gets the sense of the organisers' determination – seen in various aspects of the Olympic project – to achieve a significant political victory. This meant that even minor criticisms emanating from figures in the West about the Olympiad and its host country could not be left unopposed if they had the potential to undermine the Soviet propaganda narrative, and that none of the countries participating in the Olympic movement could be allowed to stage a boycott.

Furthermore, the above indicates that any goodwill Western countries may have felt towards the Olympiad evaporated well before the first Soviet troops entered Kabul in December 1979. Archival documents show that the Soviet organisers had long expected this turn of events; the logic of the Cold War ensured that whilst they were always keen to use the Games to their own political advantage, they were wary of their enemies attempting to do the opposite. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that measures for countering a possible boycott of the Soviet Olympiad were devised well before 1980. Another key claim made about the 1980 boycott – that it caught the organisers off-guard and profoundly knocked their preparations off course in the final months of the project, with emergency measures being hastily hammered out at the last minute[142] – can in turn be dispelled. The boycott campaign did not come as a shock to the already suspicious and agitated Soviet host. The Organising Committee in fact had a ready-made model to apply to counter Carter's initiative, and was therefore able to react efficiently to that more substantial challenge when it came. This interpretation will be confirmed in the following section.

Diplomacy and Propaganda After Afghanistan

Following Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and the beginning of a much more determined boycott campaign in January 1980, the Olympics became the focus of renewed diplomatic and propagandistic measures to ensure that the immense efforts of preceding years to guarantee the event was well-attended and prove the superiority of socialism had not be undertaken in vain. The similarity of this campaign to that which came before December 1979 confirms that by this time the organisers had already developed a number of tactics to defend the project, which they then simply continued to employ more aggressively.

[142] Hazan, *Olympic Sports*, 80.

Post-Afghanistan Diplomacy

The Orgcom and its affiliated organisations had already gained some experience of anti-boycott diplomacy when the first such initiative appeared in the West in 1978. Their efforts here included trying to solicit public statements of support from influential international sports figures as well as increasing the number of promotional visits made to foreign countries by organising officials. The Orgcom also tried to convince President Killanin that the boycott was a challenge to the independence of the IOC, and coordinated its more general lobbying actions with the Soviet diplomatic corpus. On occasion, one-to-one conversations with NOC officials were also used to lobby against this early boycott attempt.[143] Most likely because the West's 1978 campaign failed to gather much momentum, this anti-boycott drive was not a particularly significant aspect of the Orgcom's pre-Afghanistan diplomacy, beyond these sporadic efforts. In contrast, Soviet efforts to avert a collapse in attendance became the overriding, singular goal of Olympic diplomacy in January-July 1980. The various methods utilised here to kill off Carter's challenge had to varying degrees already been applied in 1975-79, in order to achieve the original goals of high attendance and positive publicity as well as combat the first abortive boycott attempt.

Initially, the 82nd session of the IOC in February 1980 – as the first major forum at which the Carter administration hoped to win support for its boycott initiative – was the scene of intense behind-the-scenes lobbying on the part of Orgcom officials. Novikov's delegation held one-to-one meetings before the session with IOC members from 18 countries, including many from the West and several each from Africa, South America and the Middle East, in which it explained the Soviet position regarding the boycott (which was the same as it had been with regards to earlier Western criticism and opposition – that it represented undue political interference in sport). The delegation also passed on a letter from Brezhnev himself on the issue to Killanin. This was all done, according to the subsequent Orgcom report to the CC, in order to ensure the boycott proposal was discussed 'fairly' at the session (i.e., in a way which would result in the idea being rejected). The same report made clear that these actions were prompted by acute concern that recent American actions had 'seriously complicated the situation in the Olympic movement' – that is, they had disrupted crucial Soviet plans for creating a congenial climate in the IOC ahead of the Games, and instead pushed some of the organisation's officials towards considering the merits of giving up on Moscow. At the session itself, US Secretary of State C. Vance's speech calling for a boycott was condemned by the Soviet delegation as 'contrary to the rules and principles of Olympism [and] expressed in a crude anti-Soviet tone', in a further sign of the Soviet side's

[143] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.9-11; f.9610, op.1, d.268, ll.16-17.

intention to revive their previous tactic of trying to persuade IOC officials that American actions were inappropriately politicising the franchise.[144]

The Orgcom's participation in narrower meetings of the IOC Executive Committee during these months gives further insights into its vigorous diplomatic efforts to combat the boycott within international sports organisations. In a private discussion with Killanin before the Executive Committee's April meeting, Novikov piled on the pressure, alleging that Carter was trying to subjugate the IOC to his will, and had to be resisted firmly. He warned that the boycott was an attempt to align the IOC with the 'militaristic political aspirations of the USA', and as such posed a threat not only to the Moscow Games, but also to the survival of the IOC as a whole. Novikov also reaffirmed the USSR's loyalty to the rules laid out in the Olympic Charter, and asked that the president inform the Soviet side beforehand of any IOC initiatives relating to the boycott, so as to avoid 'unnecessary confrontation.'[145] Participation in another meeting of the Executive Committee in June 1980 was intended to 'further neutralise the US administration's anti-Olympic campaign' by persuading the IOC president to adopt 'a more consistent, firm and principled line in support of the Games in Moscow.'[146] Novikov and the Soviet delegation again pressed Killanin before the start of formal proceedings to agree to a number of demands whilst relentlessly pushing the Soviet version of events. They explained that 'refusal [to take part in the Moscow Games]…was politically motivated and contradicted the founding statutes of the Olympic Charter' and that the position of certain NOCs, in calling for a boycott, ran counter to the unanimous decision of the 82nd IOC Session.[147] In the end, the Soviet delegation secured an additional public declaration of support for Moscow from Killanin in another backroom discussion following the conclusion of the session.[148] They were, however, still issuing instructions to consular officials to persuade him to publicly endorse renewed Soviet calls for participation among undecided and boycotting countries as late as July, mere days before the Opening Ceremony.[149]

The involvement of professional diplomats now became a more substantial aspect of Olympic diplomacy compared to their earlier small-scale mobilisation to counteract the 1978 boycott attempt. On 5th February the CC Secretariat issued a circular to 99 Soviet embassies located in countries due to participate in the Games which explained the

[144] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.62-66.
[145] Document no.198, pp.588-89.
[146] Document no.202, pp.608-609.
[147] *Ibid*., pp.607-608.
[148] Document no.203, p.611.
[149] Document no.207, p.618.

situation around the controversy. The actions of 'reactionary circles' in the USA were to be considered 'political interference in the…Olympic movement, directed not only against the Olympics, but also aimed at undermining the movement's principles of cooperation, friendship and peace'. Whilst the 'overwhelming majority' of international sports figures shared the Soviets' negative view of the boycott, a number of governments either supported the US or were hesitating as to what to do. In view of the precariousness of the situation, Soviet representatives around the world were expected to tow a Party line which emphasised the legitimacy of the USSR's actions in hosting the XXII Games and portrayed the boycott as at once both futile and mean-spirited.

Soviet diplomats were consequently ordered to conduct 'purposeful and calm work' with 'the representatives of government circles, the [foreign] public and leaders of NOCs' to bring them on side.[150] Much of this work took place in Western Europe. Soviet embassy staff in the region were instructed to undertake special efforts to lobby business circles and members of public organisations in Italy, Spain and the UK.[151] Lobbying West Germany was also seen as pivotal to determining the success or failure of the boycott in Western Europe, with the FRG's refusal to take part expected to cause other NATO allies to cave in.[152] The USSR's ambassador therefore told government officials in Bonn what Orgcom officials expressed to a delegation of the West German NOC visiting Moscow around the same time in April – that potentially far-reaching consequences could arise for bilateral relations from German support for the boycott.[153] Even after the FRG's decision to join the USA's initiative, the country's public officials were singled out by the CC Secretariat for especially intense lobbying work, to be carried out by the Soviet ambassador as late as June 1980.[154] Diplomatic measures through foreign missions were thus at their most vigorous in some of the largest European countries west of the Iron Curtain. Moreover, in response to Carter's planned meeting with the continent's NOCs, yet more instructions were sent in June to Soviet embassies in 17 West European countries, calling for renewed efforts to pressure governmental and sport officials to ensure participation.[155]

Efforts in the West took place alongside intense and sustained diplomatic activity in various regions of the developing world on the part of Soviet foreign missions. From February onwards, a significant amount of correspondence detailing the work done to combat the boycott passed between Moscow and Soviet diplomats in 24 developing

[150] Document no.186, pp.543-6.
[151] Bukovskii document no.1507, 3.
[152] Document no.197, p.579.
[153] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.53, ll.12-26; f.9610, op.1, d.608, ll.4-7.
[154] Document no.205, p.613.
[155] Document no.205, pp.613-614.

countries, including Singapore, Thailand, Nepal, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Gambia, Kuwait, the Seychelles, Nigeria, Malaysia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, South Yemen, Tanzania, Indonesia, Sudan, Cuba, Uganda, Angola, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Kenya and Libya.[156] Such a list implies that Soviet embassies were making efforts to fight American pressure even in the smallest and most uninfluential countries of the southern hemisphere. Much of this correspondence consisted of reports on the tone of the local media and remarks made by politicians and sports officials regarding the boycott.[157] These observations in turn became the basis upon which propaganda and diplomatic measures to subvert the initiative in each individual country in the Third World were formulated. The Soviet embassy in Ecuador, for example, conducted 'continuous work' with the country's NOC, including efforts to 'explain the Soviet point of view on the principles of the Olympic movement' – in all likelihood the Ecuadorians were informed that commitment to those principles entailed defying President Carter. Embassy officials met with government ministers in Quito and informed them of the Soviet preparations, in an apparent belief that the continuation of an upbeat promotional campaign could assist in reducing foreign support for a boycott.[158] With less subtlety, between May and July staff at embassies in Sierra Leone, the Philippines and Sri Lanka repeatedly pressed both government officials and the heads of NOC to confirm their respective teams' participation.[159] The practice of straightforward diplomatic pressure had been ratcheted up in response to the US NOC's decision to boycott in April, after which Soviet foreign missions across the Third World as well as the West were instructed to press for a 'final decision' by the national teams of their countries of residence.[160] Adding to this picture is the fact that, on occasion, Soviet officials supplemented persuasion tactics in their dealings with developing countries with vague warnings of negative consequences if the latter agreed to the boycott. The Burmese were told, for example, that countries which joined it 'might be deprived of the right to participate in future Games'.[161]

Some of the arguments Soviet ambassadors were instructed to deploy in their lobbying efforts illustrate how anti-boycott messages were carefully adapted to use in the Third World. To persuade those countries which were vacillating over whether to reject the boycott, the line was to be adopted (in accordance with a May 1980 communiqué issued by the CC Secretariat) that Carter's initiative had already failed, having been rejected by international public opinion, and was only supported by 'fascist and anti-popular regimes'.

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[156] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1066, ll.2-4.
[157] *Ibid.*, ll.2-4, ll.28-31.
[158] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1059, ll.9-13.
[159] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1066, ll.58-59, l.67; f.7576, op.35, d.1055, l.13, ll.28-29.
[160] Document no.197, p.581.
[161] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1055, ll.1-3.

This argument was probably carefully selected to convince these particular Third World governments, many of which were left-leaning, that they would be betraying their fidelity to the international progressive cause if they fell in with right-wing boycotters. Regarding those NOCs which had given no indication either way as to their participation in the Games, local Soviet representatives were to highlight the fact that they would be joining 'minor states and colonies dependent on the US and Great Britain' if they joined the Western campaign.[162] Olympic diplomacy in relation to these particular countries (again, many of which belonged to the developing world, including numerous states in Africa and several in southeast Asia) thus rested on cleverly appealing to their collective memory of colonial enslavement and their national pride as newly independent states.

The fact that the USSR's anti-boycott lobbying work in 1980 stretched across large parts of the globe made it very similar to the worldwide campaign to maximise participation carried out in 1977-79 by travelling teams of Orgcom negotiators. In both cases, Soviet officials available on the ground in the foreign countries concerned were put to work conducting face-to-face meetings, as a way to apply pressure on those responsible for bringing their Olympic teams to Moscow. Embassy staff and diplomats' engagement with highly-placed politicians as well as national sports officials in 1980 was not so much a fundamentally different tactic as what came before, but merely the adaptation and expansion of this earlier method to new circumstances which were not under Soviet control, whereby the boycott controversy made the role of politicians increasingly decisive in determining the fate of their Olympic athletes. Similarly, embassy staff likely took over the function of visiting Orgcom officials because, owing to the changed political situation around the Games and their impending orchestration, the latter both had less time to engage in such activities for practical reasons and their particular connections and skills were increasingly needed to apply pressure on the IOC of the kind noted above. Likewise, the greater focus here on securing the attendance of European teams in addition to those from the Third World represented an adaptation of an existing channel of Olympic diplomacy to the changed circumstances of heightened doubts about the former group's cooperation. Orgcom officials probably understood that there was much greater risk that the West, as a more closely-knit geo-political entity, could agree to the boycott en masse compared to the more heterogeneous group of states making up the developing world, where military-political alliances and cultural and economic ties were fewer across its three separate continents, and it thus required more – but not qualitatively different – attention than before.

[162] Document no.201, pp.602-4.

As before 1979, the tactic of offering to subsidise the transportation and accommodation of foreign athletes was also maintained during the boycott period. It can be taken as a sign of the changed character of Olympic diplomacy from self-assurance in 1975-79 to acute concern in 1980 that the Orgcom now expanded both the scope and generosity of its offers among the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. For instance, the Orgcom agreed to increase the number of Olympic athletes from Sierra Leone whose transport and accommodation it would subsidise from 15 to 25, and extended promises of financial assistance for the first time to Burma and the Philippines.[163] Even more telling in this respect was the fact that financial incentives were even made to the NOCs of the much richer nations of the industrialised capitalist world who had joined the boycott and which clearly did not require Soviet funding to attend, such as Canada and Japan.[164] The CC Secretariat explicitly stated that this was to be done in order to find a way around the tactic being applied by some Western governments to guarantee the success of the boycott whereby they refused to fund their own teams' trips to the USSR.[165]

With regards to another important aspect of Olympic diplomacy, Orgcom officials appeared to conduct a much-reduced number of meetings with foreign journalists in 1980 compared to previous years.[166] The organisers may have believed that under the changed circumstances securing adequate attendance now depended far more on courting politicians and national and international sports officials than the press (for whilst the latter could and did shape public opinion regarding the Olympics, it was ultimately the former who made the decisions and applied the crucial political pressure which determined whether any one team attended).[167] Admittedly, no explicit or implicit indication of this hypothesis has so far been found in any archival documents. But there is evidence that Orgcom officials saw engagement with at least some parts of the foreign media as already a lost cause amid the Afghanistan controversy and the increasingly vociferous anti-Soviet feeling which stemmed from it. For instance, the Orgcom delegation to the 82nd IOC Session in Lake Placid decided not to hold a press conference after this event because of the fact that, in Novikov's euphemistic phrase, 'local journalists [had] displayed little interest in questions of sport' – a sure sign that they expected an unforgiving reception from the American press and understood that it would be near impossible to keep the media's attention away from the unpleasant business of the boycott. Indeed, Novikov admitted to

[163] GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1055, ll.1-3, l.13; f.7576, op.35, d.1066, ll.58-59.
[164] Document no.197, p.581; document no.201, p.605.
[165] Document no.178, pp.522-523.
[166] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.640, l.14, l.18, l.22, l.24, ll.25-26.
[167] See Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch*.

his superiors that Carter had already '[successfully] managed to shape public opinion [on the boycott issue] in the US with the help of the mass media' by the time of the Session, describing the mood among the American press as one of 'hysteria'.[168]

However, on the other hand, during the two weeks of the Games themselves as opposed to the final months of 1980 immediately preceding them, organising officials did again seek to craft a positive narrative of the event as it was being depicted in the reports of foreign journalists accredited in Moscow, in particular by assembling the latter for daily press conferences. Propaganda chiefs in the CC made it clear that these events 'provide[d] an evaluation of the [overall] course of the Olympiad, [and] a carefully-argued explanation of various and sometimes urgent issues in a way that is necessary for us.' Moreover, Western journalists were warned at these press conferences that they could be subject to expulsion from the USSR for publishing 'anti-Soviet falsehoods about the Games' – that is, anything which departed from the positive Soviet depiction of proceedings.[169] The Soviet state therefore used all methods available to it to shut out anything apart from the approved narrative about Moscow-80 as it unfolded. It was clearly still concerned with manipulating the international media's depiction of the Olympiad as best it could, even under more difficult circumstances, in order to continue generating positive publicity. The programme of engaging with the world's press, which had first begun in 1975-76, continued during the Games themselves via similar means. This again shows that the boycott, as in all of the above cases, did not have the effect of profoundly altering the long-standing tactics used by the Orgcom in its international programme, and instead simply reinforced them as the external media narrative around the Games became more acrimonious.

Post-Afghanistan Propaganda

Proceeding alongside these extensive diplomatic measures in January-August 1980 was a renewed international propaganda campaign. In some respects, the boycott did in fact have an impact on this final propaganda barrage, namely in terms of its scale. A February 1980 Politburo decree ordered the Orgcom, Sports Committee, VTsSPS, Komsomol, and other organisations to expand the scope of their international propaganda activities in response to the latest 'hostile attacks' on the Olympiad.[170] Accordingly, the Orgcom reported carrying out its 'largest number of [propaganda] measures' thus far seen during March, April and May.[171] Yet overall, it is clear that in terms of the equally important questions of content,

[168] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.62-66.
[169] Document no.272, p.751. See also M. Binyon, 'Expulsion warning to Olympics journalists', *The Times*, 24.07.1980.
[170] Document no.190, pp.559-566.
[171] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.53, ll.36-38; f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.62-66.

tactics and methods, the post-Afghanistan propaganda campaign was identical to what came before. A report from the CC's propaganda chiefs to the Soviet leadership indicates that during this period the use of all the propaganda methods employed since 1975 reached its apogee. The combined efforts of the various state and Party agencies involved produced a total of 140 exhibitions promoting the Games in 60 countries and the release of 20 documentary films.[172] By April, more than 500 books, promotional photo albums, and other print media had been published.[173] During the 14 days of the Games themselves, Novosti sent out 10,629 articles for publication to 929 foreign news agencies and newspapers in 70 countries (in contrast, in the months immediately preceding the Olympics, they had distributed only 6,561 articles).[174] That such items were classified by the authorities as being distinct from 'counter-propaganda' indicates that this mountain of material was not aimed directly at responding to the boycott challenge, further confirming that the latter had little effect on the Olympics' international programme.

The content of these materials also reproduced the wholly optimistic themes designed to sell the superiority of socialism seen in the pre-boycott campaign. For example, Soviet foreign missions were instructed by the Politburo at the start of 1980 to employ long-standing themes about the USSR's 'technical capability' to host the Olympiad in economic terms in their speeches, as well as its appropriateness as host owing to its loyalty to peaceful Olympic ideals.[175] A January decree of the CC Secretariat offered the following line for use in propaganda: '…the Soviet people…will do everything to make the Moscow Olympiad a celebration of sport for the sake of strengthening mutual understanding and friendship of the world's youth, and creating a peaceful world.'[176] This of course represented little more than a reiteration of long-standing Soviet claims to be fulfilling a noble mission on the global stage, which had always been at the heart of the Olympiad's international propaganda campaign before 1980. The USSR thereby continued to promote itself through the Games as both a responsible, cooperative power and an economically advanced modern state.

Conclusion

The USSR implemented a huge international programme for the XXII Olympiad in 1975-80. Carried out using the resources of both Soviet and socialist-bloc organisations on a global

[172] Document no.142, p.440.
[173] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.53, l.33.
[174] Document no.279, pp.765-6.
[175] Document no.190, p.563; document no.207, pp.616-617.
[176] Document no.183, pp.538-539.

scale, this programme formed the core of the Olympics project. On the one hand, building worldwide enthusiasm for Moscow-80 was intended to foster a basic positive attitude towards the host country. Whilst economic and security measures would highlight the Soviet system's rationality, prosperity and political stability during the event itself, the Orgcom's efforts to publicise the various aspects of its preparations and make promises of a spectacular sports festival via press conferences and IOC sessions over the preceding years helped emphasise the USSR's openness, peaceful intentions and managerial competence in more general terms. Beyond turning the Olympiad into a symbol of the country's positive qualities, diplomatic activities were also meant to ensure broad attendance in 1980. It is highly likely that the resulting spectacle was meant to be exploited in order to garner additional political capital, as a symbol of the global acceptance of and admiration for the USSR.

Secondly, Olympics propaganda sought to disseminate a more specific understanding of Soviet socialism's positive qualities among various foreign populations living under alternative political systems. Incorporating the Olympics into the USSR's wider international propaganda campaign had distinct advantages over the construction of a short-lived physical façade in Moscow. Whilst the 1980 Potemkin Village could only highlight the positive aspects of the communist system for the two weeks of the event itself, distributing propaganda materials on the Olympiad could be done throughout the full five years of the project's duration. More importantly, the nature of the various propaganda mediums used was such that the campaign was capable of drawing foreign audiences' attention to a larger number of aspects of the Soviet system, and more explicitly and forcefully make the case that these proved the superiority of socialism over capitalism. Complex messages of this kind were something that the largely symbolic edifice of Olympic Moscow could not necessarily guarantee, working as it did at the level of general impressions of the system's functioning.

This propaganda campaign reveals the full extent of the Soviet state's ambitions to ensure the Games buttressed its agenda in international affairs. It is conceivable that the overarching message of the 1980 international propaganda campaign, which was meant to reach all parts of the world, was intended to play a major role in achieving the ostensible purpose of the wider global propaganda offensive carried out by the USSR since 1945 – to produce a significant popular shift in favour of the Soviet cause around the world, and in turn have a significant effect on Cold War spheres of influence to the detriment of Western capitalist governments. Alternatively, it may have represented a defensive attempt to prevent the further erosion of socialism's credibility.[177] In either case, however, it is clear

[177] Discussed further in the thesis conclusion.

that the utilisation of the Olympiad for international propaganda purposes was shaped by official perceptions of the ongoing, irreconcilable struggle with Western capitalism for global supremacy in all spheres of existence. It is also evident that the USSR hoped to reap political dividends from 1980 in the sphere of foreign policy above all else. As a ready-made vehicle for communist propaganda, the Games were seen as a very useful tool specifically for advancing Soviet interests in the struggle for influence vis-à-vis the USSR's Cold War adversary.

As with other areas of their work, the organisers sought to combat the risks to the success of the Olympiad's international programme just as much as they actively strived to achieve its perceived benefits. Accordingly, they responded to outside attempts to undermine the project both before and after the USSR's military intervention in Afghanistan, notably by using tried and tested tools – diplomacy and propaganda. The international conflict over the Games was the result of the Soviet state's ambition to extract maximum political advantage from them. Its determination in this respect persisted throughout the life of the project; the organisers began to purposefully counteract disruptive moves already in 1977-79, and subsequently expanded and intensified their efforts post-Afghanistan. Carter's boycott was thus not such an important turning point in the project's development as one might first assume. There was one dimension of orchestrating Moscow-80, however, where the Soviet state was free to exploit the event to its political advantage to an even greater degree, but in a different sphere of policy. This final aspect of the Olympics is dealt with below.

5.) The Olympics and Domestic Soviet Politics

This chapter reveals the role played by the Olympics in the domestic political agenda of the Soviet party-state in 1975-80. It will show how the Olympiad primarily functioned as an important element of the state's ongoing propaganda activities at home which, along with a major programme of sport events carried out in anticipation of 1980, aimed to buttress the political status quo. In order to show the full significance of the Games' domestic dimension, the Olympiad will be compared to another monumental scheme of the Brezhnev era – the construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline Railway (1974-84). At the same time, the chapter will demonstrate how the organisers also deployed propaganda in order to both justify the organisation of the Games in Moscow before the Soviet people and ideologically steel them against subversive foreign influences. These discussions will round off this study's analysis of the Olympics project's place in the political history of late socialism and of the risks and benefits the state saw in hosting Moscow-80. The character and specific purposes of the domestic propaganda campaign also have important implications for our understanding of the state's approach to governance of the Soviet polity in the late-Brezhnev years which are discussed in the conclusion to the thesis.

As with previous chapters, the following interpretation here is grounded in an in-depth examination of primary sources, including various propaganda pamphlets which were used as scripts for political lectures about the Games given to the general Soviet population, newspaper articles, and the internal correspondence of the Orgcom, VTsSPS and the Komsomol found in the archives. Despite their verbose style, the propaganda materials in particular are highly revealing of senior officials' intentions for the Olympiad at home (and in turn, the intersection of the XXII Games and the underlying domestic priorities of the Brezhnev leadership), with archival documents confirming that the specific themes of such materials were determined directly by the central Party authorities.[1] Such sources, moreover, represent some of the best available for shining a light on this subject, in view of the still limited accessibility of the archival inventories of the Politburo and CC Secretariat for this period.

The Olympics versus BAM

A fruitful way to evaluate the importance of the Olympic project to domestic Soviet politics is to consider whether it was intended to help mobilise the population for the pursuit of the

[1] See for example, GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.4-7.

ideological goals of the communist regime, in the manner of other large-scale projects carried out in the Soviet Union throughout its history. In chapter two, it was revealed that members of the younger Soviet generation overwhelmingly made up the workforce which both constructed Olympic facilities during 1975-80 and provided services during the two weeks of the event itself: almost all Olympic construction workers were Komsomol members, whilst roughly 66% of the target for service personnel were drawn from among the country's student population.[2] The youthful character of Olympic cadres suggests an ostensible similarity with that of the BAM Railway project being carried out in the same era, which recruited two thirds of its 500,000 personnel from among the Communist Youth.[3] One can note in turn that the major role the Komsomol played in BAM had distinctly ideological motivations connected with the overarching, long-term goals of the Soviet project. The construction of the railway has been characterised as an attempt at mass mobilisation of the younger generation by the Brezhnev-era party-state for the sake of 'building communism': the enthusiastic Komsomol members would, in the process of their heroic struggle to complete a major economic project and tame the wilds of Siberia, establish a new, perfect system of social relations among their work brigades and thereby lay the foundations for the utopian society of the future. BAM was thus the signature mobilisational campaign of the 1970s and early 1980s, the purposes of which suggest that a degree of ambition to breathe new life and direction into the decelerating communist project still circulated in the leadership at this time.[4] Given that the Olympics was perhaps the only other state initiative of the Brezhnev era which marshalled the labour of a similar number of young people as that of BAM, one might presume that they were also assigned some kind of significant role in realising the wider, long-term utopian ambitions of the Soviet state in 1975-80. Such an idea is certainly intriguing; it would indicate that the communist authorities had found a way to politicise the Olympic franchise to a whole new degree, exploiting it for the highly idiosyncratic goals of state socialism.

However, for a number of reasons, the character of Olympic cadres should not be seen as evidence that the Games represented a second instance of mass political mobilisation of the younger generation during the Brezhnev era along the lines of BAM. On the one hand, it is highly likely that the deliberate employment of young people as service personnel during the Games themselves, if not during the preceding period of construction work, was done simply for the sake of creating an attractive image of the Soviet authorities and socialist society among the thousands of foreign guests. This was certainly the opinion of at least

[2] Document no.8, pp.54-5 ; document no.111, p.305, pp.309-10; pp.313-14; document no.119, pp.342-3.
[3] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 8.
[4] *Ibid*., 1-11, 16-17, 42-44, 46, 68, 152-54.

one astute eyewitness who encountered numerous fresh-faced and enthusiastic young Olympic employees in 1980,[5] and it would make a great deal of sense in view of the fact that creating a favourable impression of the communist system among foreigners was the paramount objective of the Olympics. Moreover, the major emphasis on recruiting mainly those young people who knew foreign languages, as revealed by numerous documents of the Orgcom, VTsSPS, and *Glavinturist*,[6] strongly implies that this particular demographic became the main labour pool for the project at least in part because of their relevant practical abilities rather than out of any wider official aim to mobilise youth through the Olympiad for its own sake. To the extent that the project witnessed the large-scale recruitment of Komsomol members during the Games themselves, then, it appears that this was done in order to facilitate the practical orchestration of Moscow-80 alone, and the achievement of its short-term political objective to create a façade for socialism, rather than as part of an attempt to advance the longer-term ideological objective of remoulding society along communist lines, as was the case with BAM.

Furthermore, even more convincing in this respect is the fact that, in administrative terms, Moscow-80 was far from primarily the responsibility of the Komsomol. The archival record gives no indication that it played any significant role in actually recruiting cadres for 1980 – this was done overwhelmingly instead by the Orgcom's Labour Resources Commission and the VTsSPS.[7] Komsomol administrators were also made responsible for carrying out one of the smallest amounts of construction work within the Olympic building programme – just seven million roubles' worth of capital investment, compared to 54 million roubles each for the VTsSPS and the Sports Committee, 83 million for the Ministry of Communications, and 152 million for *Mosgorispolkom*.[8] This means that the large number of Komsomol members who worked on the construction programme were doing so largely under the aegis of other organisations rather than their own. In turn, it becomes clear that the Youth League was simply providing a large pool of labour which other state and Party agencies drew from rather than leading the way with Olympic construction work. The manpower resources of the Communist Youth were brought to bear on the Games, but it was not the primary organisation with responsibility for supervising and coordinating

[5] Booker, *Games War*, 107-9.
[6] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.18, ll.12-14; f.5451, op.67, d.29, ll.20-24; f.9610, op.1, d.119, l.2, 46-51; f.9610, op.1, d.320, ll.1-4; f.9610, op.1, d.462, ll.1-15; f.9610, op.1, d.469, ll.1-7, ll.9-10; f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.213-16, ll.218-22; f.9612, op.3, d.1225, ll.36-7, ll.71-2, ll.81-3, ll.109-10; f.9612, op.3, d.1341, l.41; f.9612, op.3, d.1342, l.58; f.9612, op.3, d.1346, ll.75-6; f.9612, op.3, d.1449, l.114.
[7] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.1, ll.20-1; f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.42-4, l.100; f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.58-62; f.9610, op.1, d.119, ll.10-13; f.9610, op.1, d.320, ll.1-4; f.9610, op.1, d.469, ll.1-10; f.9610, op.1, d.503, ll.70-75, ll.211-22, ll.225-28; f.9610, op.1, d.632, ll.1-5.
[8] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33, ll.11-16.

efforts across all areas of the project, as with the BAM Railway[9] – instead, this role was clearly fulfilled by the Orgcom. This absence of major administrative responsibilities for the Communist Youth can be seen as further evidence that the Olympics were never conceived as a major campaign of political mobilisation. For in other campaigns of this kind (such as the Virgin Lands Campaign of 1954-64, BAM, and several projects during the Stalin era), the allocation of resources and responsibilities to the Komsomol signalled the project's major ideological importance for the CPSU, as one which would harness the youthful enthusiasm of the rising generation for taking the next major step on the path of communist construction in economic and social terms.[10] In contrast, from the above evidence, one reaches the conclusion that the regime brought the Komsomol into the Olympic project simply because it required that organisation's extensive manpower reserves to cope with the logistical demands of Moscow-80, rather than out of any intention to organise a 'second front' (in addition to BAM) through which the Soviet project could be driven forward in the later 1970s.

It is hardly surprising that this was the case when one considers that there was essentially very little scope within the Olympic project for communist-style transformative mobilisation. The rousing image of the younger generation opening up the material wealth of Siberia and forging a new society in the process which the CPSU's propagandists were able to generate around BAM was clearly well-suited to incorporation into the overarching official narrative of a heroic Soviet people actively forging a path to communism (and hence, one which could be exploited to the maximum for mobilising the younger generation for the real achievement of the state's ideological goals). In contrast, there was no obvious way to tie the Olympiad's fundamental aim to showcase socialism to the outside world to the utopian narrative of the USSR's *domestic* development. Komsomol members' employment as tour guides and hotel attendants could hardly be conceived as the kind of 'heroic labour' capable of remoulding the economy and society. One could argue that there was some scope for the authorities to declare a connection between 1980's colossal infrastructure programme and the notion of 'laying the material basis for communism' – that is, raising the people's living standards ostensibly in preparation for the establishment of a future utopian society of material abundance, which to some extent lay at the heart of official thinking on the contemporary direction of the Soviet project throughout the Brezhnev period.[11] But Soviet officials were likely aware that they could not credibly present

[9] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 6-8.
[10] *Ibid.*, 3-6, 8, 16-17, 42-44; A. Rassweiler, *The Generation of Power: The History of Dneprostroi* (New York, 1988), 80-81, 170, 172.
[11] M. Sandle, "Brezhnev and Developed Socialism: The Ideology of *Zastoi*?" in Bacon and Sandle, *Brezhnev Reconsidered*, 178-79.

even this aspect of the project as part of the march to the future in the USSR, and therefore exploit it for mobilisational purposes, since it would have been relatively clear to most people (despite official claims to the contrary) that the new infrastructure was being developed in this case largely for the sake of impressing foreign onlookers with Soviet material prosperity – and thus again pointed to an idea which was incongruous with the inspirational narrative of 'building communism' at home.

Thus, for all its perceived use in Soviet foreign policy in selling the virtues of the superior socialist system, at home the orchestration of the Olympiad could not be portrayed as (and therefore, could not in reality mobilise citizens *for*) that system's achievement of further progress towards its stated utopian goals. In turn, it becomes clear that the principal function of the Olympics in the domestic arena lay elsewhere. Despite its lack of compatibility with the mobilisational ethos of communism, there is substantial evidence showing that the Soviet state adapted the XXII Games to its advantage in the domestic political arena throughout 1975-80. This was achieved above all else through the generation of a huge state propaganda campaign around the event.

The Scale of the Domestic Propaganda Campaign

Before discussing its content it is worth accounting for the scale of this campaign in order to comprehend the scope of the Soviet state's ambitions to make discussion of the Olympics an integral part of the official media's responsibilities in the mid- to late-1970s. In accordance with a set of directives issued by the CC in December 1975,[12] a number of organisations were obligated to begin comprehensively publicising the sports festival throughout the USSR by all means at their disposal. As with other aspects of the project, the Central Trade Union Council took the lead here, initiating a programme of public events to publicise the Games at 27 of its houses of culture in all five Olympic cities. This programme included 'sports evenings,' where Soviet Olympic champions gave public addresses about the significance of 1980 (discussed below), and also involved screenings of sport-related propaganda films, the organisation of Olympics-themed competitions, exhibitions and quizzes, and performances by artistic collectives. Typically, attendance at such events increased year on year, most likely as a result of official pressure. By 1977 such events took place regularly under the aegis of the VTsSPS, with at least 7,000 people attending them that year.[13] More than 4,000 people attended meetings organised in honour of the Games at VTsSPS institutions in Moscow during only a few months in mid-

[12] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.1, l.26.
[13] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.17, ll.2-3, l.7, ll.9-10, l.16, ll.19-20; f.5451, op.67, d.11, l.30.

1978.[14] The house of culture of the Leninist Komsomol Automobile Plant, on the other hand, organised as many as 80 separate meetings between construction workers and Orgcom officials in the first few months of 1980.[15]

The propaganda campaign was also channelled through the local trade-union branch organisations of various industries, to a point where it enveloped the whole Soviet Union. In accordance with a decree issued by the VTsSPS leadership in October 1975, individual trade unions organised numerous Olympic-themed public events of the kind described above at factories, within individual housing estates, and at other municipal premises under their jurisdiction. The automobile and highway workers' union, for example, organised 2,000 talks on the Games in its social clubs nationwide in 1977. In the same year, the automobile, tractor and agricultural machine construction workers' trade union arranged permanent exhibitions on the Olympics at its network of sports halls, stadiums and houses of culture, and ran competitions for the best-designed posters promoting the Games. A vast amount of propaganda work was carried out by the republic-level, regional and provincial committees of the Professional Union of Metallurgy Industry Workers at its numerous enterprises, including those of the Magnitogorsk, Nizhnii Tagil, Kommunarsk, Taganrog, Beloretsk, Norilsk and Leningrad metallurgical combines. Similarly, the trade union of oil and gas industry workers also organised a significant number of propaganda activities in an area stretching from L'vov on the western Soviet border to Azerbaijan in the Caucasus. The VTsSPS's campaign also reached several major mining enterprises, such as those in Gorlovka (eastern Ukraine) and Vorkuta (north of the Arctic Circle).[16] In addition, public events were organised by the trade unions for forestry, paper- and wood-processing workers, machine-building and appliance engineering specialists, and power plant and electrical industry workers.[17] The fact that the majority of the Soviet workforce was concentrated in such traditional industries immediately suggests that the trade union network was exploited by the Games' organisers in its capacity as an enormous 'conveyer belt' capable of disseminating Olympics-related propaganda among the general population and across the length and breadth of the country. Aside from the traditional industrial proletariat, the all-encompassing reach of the national trade union network also ensured that employees in other areas of the state-run economy and administration, including (among others) teachers, scientists, medical personnel, academics, housing administrators, office workers, civil aviation employees and merchant seamen, were also obliged to take

[14] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.28, ll.9-10.
[15] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.55-8.
[16] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.18, ll.1-2, l.6, ll.8-9, ll.36-7, ll.38-9, ll.51-2.
[17] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.29, ll.6-8, ll.9-10, ll.11-14, ll.33-6, ll.40-41.

part in Olympics propaganda events through their places of work.[18] Since the vast majority of working-age Soviet citizens regardless of profession belonged to official, state-controlled trade unions, the VTsSPS's involvement appears to have ensured that propaganda about 1980 reached the broad mass of the USSR's workforce employed in nearly all sectors of the economy and living in even the most far-flung industrial backwaters.

Similarly, participation in the campaign by the Komsomol – an organisation which had a huge degree of formal influence over the organisation of young people's lives – guaranteed that the millions of young people yet to enter the factory or office were simultaneously subjected to Olympics propaganda and drawn into spreading it themselves. The Komsomol reported accomplishing a 'significant amount of organisational and political work' during the preparations period for the Games. Some of its more innovative methods involved putting up more than 5,000 letters from enthusiastic citizens about the upcoming Olympiad for wall displays in Komsomol clubs and playing tape recordings to its members made by the patriotic parents and family members of Olympic athletes (no further information on this measure has been found, but presumably, they expressed their pride in Soviet sporting achievements or otherwise praised the Olympiad and the CPSU). The Youth League also regularly organised public meetings in honour of Soviet Olympians themselves, the propagandistic significance of which is explained below.[19] In the later stages of the campaign the Komsomol continued to expand the scale of its work across all media, including via radio, television, central and regional newspapers, pamphlets and books, exhibitions and competitions. Over a period of twelve days in August 1979, the Kaliningradskii district of Tallinn hosted a special conference organised by the Estonian Komsomol committee under the slogan 'The Olympics are for Everyone.' It was attended by members from the district's 65 local Komsomol organisations totaling 3,845 people, of whom 376 gave speeches about the forthcoming Games.[20] In November 1979, Komsomol activists traveling on a special propaganda train organised 30 public meetings with sportsmen at various stops along their route between the non-Black Earth Region of Russia and Western Siberia. There were plans to carry out similar measures on a monthly basis in 1980.[21] Komsomol cadres thus played an important role in the internal propaganda campaign, in addition to their large-scale recruitment for the project as builders and service workers. However, as with their participation in these other areas, Komsomol members' involvement in propaganda efforts only reinforces the sense that the Olympics did not

[18] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.18, ll.10-11, ll.34-5, ll.42-45; f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.32-33; f.5451, op.67, d.29, ll.20-24.
[19] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10, ll.11-14.
[20] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.481, ll.28-32.
[21] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.11-14.

become a vehicle for the political mobilisation of the younger Soviet generation. Instead, the Komsomol functioned merely as an additional mouthpiece – in a role no different from that played by the trade union network – for disseminating propaganda to the wider Soviet population. It once again fulfilled a practical role in achieving the short-term objectives of the Games alone, this time in the domestic sphere, rather than contributed to realising the state's more far-reaching ideological goals.

The domestic press was also utilized by these and other organisations in order to make the Olympics a near ubiquitous subject in public life. Aside from regular features in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, beginning in 1976 the trade unions and Komsomol began reporting on the Games through their own in-house publications.[22] The VTsSPS reported to Sovmin at the start of 1978 that it was publishing information on preparations for Games in all of its newspapers, with a weekly update in its main publication, *Trud*, and monthly articles in newspapers and magazines such as *Sovetskie profsoiuzy*, *Stroitel'naia gazeta*, *Sovetskaia torgovlia,* and *Lesnaia promyshlennost'* (the publications for trade union members and workers in the construction, retail, and timber industry sectors, respectively) as well as several others.[23] Overall, in 1976-80 around 600 articles were published about the Games in the trade union press.[24] The Komsomol also published hundreds of articles every month in its own press organs. Its principal organ, *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, was singled out for praise along with *Moskovskaia pravda*, *Moskovskie novosti*, and *Vecherniaia Moskva* for having provided 'systematic' coverage of the Olympics' preparations throughout 1978.[25] Beyond this, Ie. Tiazhel'nikov, the head of the CC Propaganda Department, noted in a report to his superiors in June 1980 that several central Party and state newspapers were by then dedicating between two and four columns of newsprint to coverage of the preparations on a daily basis, whilst republic-level and regional newspapers published half-columns every day.[26] That there was an across-the-board proliferation of propaganda pieces about 1980 in all kinds of print publications illustrates once again how the central authorities were seeking to make sure the messages about the Games reached all sections of Soviet society.

The print media's efforts were supported by measures to exponentially increase the amount of coverage on domestic TV and radio. A regular radio bulletin about the Olympics was established in the schedules of all-union radio channels, whilst feature segments on the subject appeared during separate programmes catering for young people, war veterans, farm workers, builders, and other sections of society. Radio stations also invited

[22] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.12, l.40.
[23] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.28, ll.1-2; f.5451, op.67, d.29, ll.20-24; f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.42-3.
[24] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45, l.52.
[25] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68 ; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.488.
[26] Document no.229, pp.673-4.

Soviet Olympic athletes, sports coaches, and Orgcom officials to discuss 1980 on air. By 1978, the radio station *Iunost'* was broadcasting Olympics updates three to four times a week.[27] National television channels showed an increasing amount of both longer and shorter pieces of Olympics-related material throughout the later 1970s, including a two-hour feature documentary on the life of young builders working at Olympic sites.[28] Several full-length television series on the Olympiad and Soviet sporting history were also commissioned. TV coverage of various aspects of the Olympics project grew from one broadcast a month in 1976 to once a week in 1979 and once a day by June 1980.[29] Between 1976 and 1978, *Goskino* produced eight films about the Olympics which were shown on the state television network. A plan was even devised, which was subsequently taken up by the USSR Centre for Space Research, for the cosmonauts onboard the *Soiuz-29* manned mission and the *Saliut-6* orbital station to stage scripted discussions about the Olympiad during their live interviews from space, which were shown regularly in 1978 on Soviet central television. The same was done with subsequent manned space missions in 1979-80.[30] The organisers likely calculated that the population's enthusiasm for the space programme would lead them to associate the Games with the greatest achievements of Soviet socialism.

Perhaps the most distinctive element of the domestic propaganda campaign were the cycles of political lectures ('agit-prop', or agitation and propaganda activities, in Soviet parlance) devoted specifically to discussion of the Olympiad among large swathes of the population. In April 1976, the Orgcom issued a decree creating an 'Olympics-80' Central Lecture Group. It set about devising lectures on the subject of the Games 'dedicated to [explaining] various aspects of the [event's] preparations and orchestration' among 'wide circles of the population', which were to be given by propagandists from various state agencies.[31] By April 1980, the group had trained 15,500 dedicated propagandists for agitational work.[32] Incomplete statistics indicate that a very large number of lectures were eventually given to the population as a result. The inhabitants of Moscow appear to have borne the brunt of this agit-prop work. In 1976-78, propagandists from the district branch of the Komsomol in the capital organised around 10,000 lectures on the Olympics at nine different universities. Lecture programmes were also carried out at the Institute of Physical Culture, the Likhachev Truck Factory, the Leninist Komsomol Automobile Plant, and the

[27] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[28] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68.
[29] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[30] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68, ll.169-172.
[31] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.38, ll.5-6.
[32] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.53, ll.35-6.

Hammer and Sickle Metallurgical Plant. The Physical Culture Institute alone organised 800 speeches about the Olympiad for young people and builders working at Olympics sites in Moscow. In the city's Krasnopresnenskii district, the Komsomol's Youth History Museum read 1,000 lectures a year on Olympic topics.[33] Far from the capital, in Donetsk, eastern Ukraine, the all-union Voluntary Sports Society (DSO) *Avangard* organised 1,000 lectures, whilst the DSO *Spartak* arranged 945, in 1977.[34] VTsSPS propagandists meanwhile carried out lectures among trade union activists in such cities as Minsk, Leningrad, Briansk, Omsk and Saransk in 1979.[35] Lecture programmes continued in Moscow, the union-republic capitals, and regional and provincial centres into the final stages of the preparations period.[36]

The strategy of both channelling propaganda through social and political organisations with obligatory membership and simultaneously utilising methods, such as political meetings, which were a mandatory part of life for Soviet citizens likely ensured that exposure to the Olympics campaign was all but inescapable for millions of Soviet people in the latter half of the 1970s. Despite all this, as with the international campaign Orgcom officials frequently expressed concern about the course of efforts to propagandise the Olympics at home. Complaints about the lack of thoroughness, originality and variety of reports on the Games being offered by the Soviet press and central television emanated from the Orgcom leadership regularly throughout the later 1970s.[37] This appears to have been the result of a degree of inertia which had penetrated both the Organising Committee itself and other agencies it depended on. A 1978 report for the Executive Bureau noted that both the officials running the propaganda operation within the Orgcom and professional propagandists working in the mass media organs had thus far shown a mutual lack of interest in establishing closer cooperation to better publicise the Games. Orgcom propagandists were being given only limited access to Olympic building sites which they needed to get information for their work. Various other, unidentified Orgcom departments had also 'proved highly reluctant to impart information about the state of their… preparations for the Games [to propagandists], even though [this]…would be very useful with regards to propaganda.' The same document recorded that political lecturers were not making sufficient efforts to provide 'exhaustive' answers to Soviet citizens' questions about

[33] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.24-8.
[34] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.13, ll.7-9.
[35] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.34, ll.48-9.
[36] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.169-172.
[37] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.39, l.45; f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68; f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.18-20; f.9610, op.1, d.310, ll.6-7, l.47.

the Olympiad in their public talks – this turned out to be a euphemism for failing to deflect questions of a character evidently deemed unsatisfactory by the orthodox authorities (these queries were 'influenced by philistine chatter and absurd rumours about the Moscow Games.')[38]

The VTsSPS had its own list of concerns. Its officials found that, out of 19 of the largest trade union clubs and palaces of culture in Moscow and the surrounding region, only three carried out propaganda relating to the Olympics in 1975-77.[39] Its houses of culture and social clubs in a number of other cities (Tallinn, Minsk, Donetsk, L'vov) were said to be carrying out agitational events during this period only 'periodically and superficially.' The VTsSPS's promotional pavilion for 1980 at Moscow's premier exhibition centre suffered from a lack of exhibits, whilst the amount of promotional material available at airports and railway stations for the local population was deemed insufficient. Public events in support of the Olympiad were not being carried out with sufficient frequency in a number of republics, including those of Central Asia and the Caucasus, as well as in many regions of the RSFSR.[40] Many trade union organisations in fact displayed a complete disinterest in taking the initiative in organising propaganda measures, poorly supervised propaganda work, and failed to draft and execute appropriate decrees at the local level in accordance with the schedules provided to them by the centre.[41] Several were even said to be 'completely inactive.'[42] The sense of urgency to prosecute the campaign felt by senior trade union officials in Moscow dissipated before it reached administrators in the localities.[43] Throughout the period, VTsSPS officials reported problems of this kind with the organisation of propaganda work in all of the secondary Olympic cities as well as in Odessa, Riga, Donetsk, Omsk, Kostroma, Briansk, Saransk, Zaporozh'e, Dnepropetrovsk, Murmansk, L'vov and Zhdanov.[44]

All these complaints reinforce the sense that the Games' organisers sought to achieve a flawless, comprehensive domestic campaign. They also highlight the fact that the bureaucracy created for the Olympiad was poorly coordinated and slow, in another indication of the unwieldy nature of Soviet state and Party structures. Of greater interest however is what they perhaps reveal about the over-ambitious character of the Games' internal propaganda campaign. The fact that the Orgcom's propagandists under-performed

[38] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234, ll.143-68.
[39] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.70-5.
[40] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.28, ll.9-10, ll.19-20.
[41] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.70-2, ll.73-5.
[42] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.28, ll.19-20.
[43] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.73-5.
[44] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.64-6, ll.73-5; f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.55-8; f.5451, op.67, d.27, l.20, ll.69-71; f.5451, op.67, d.13, ll.7-9, l.19.

in the eyes of the leadership suggests that this particular aspect of the preparations represented the same kind of challenge to the Soviet propaganda machine that the Olympic construction programme, and to an even greater degree other colossal infrastructure projects such as the BAM Railway, did to the country's economic mechanism: a significant additional strain on the resources of administrative structures which were already weighed down by the immensely complex task of micro-managing nearly all aspects of life in one of the most populous countries in the world.[45] The state's ambition for the 1980 campaign to envelop the whole country, alongside all the other, more long-term elements of the propaganda narrative of Soviet life painstakingly elaborated by the agit-prop machine throughout the period, appear to have at times virtually outstripped its capabilities. This was not only the result of the Soviet system's plodding, bureaucratic nature, but also because the propaganda apparatus simply didn't have the resources or manpower, nor the ability to inculcate the necessary creativity and initiative, to meet the Orgcom and the leadership's demands.

The Content of Domestic Olympics Propaganda

To understand the full significance of the domestic propaganda campaign and what precisely it was supposed to achieve, it is important to analyse some of the overarching political themes it presented to the Soviet population. These themes had three main purposes: helping to legitimise the Soviet system, 'selling' the XXII Games as an individual policy venture, and immunising citizens against the subversive ideas they might encounter during interaction with the Olympiad's foreign guests.

Emphasising Legitimacy

The extensive utilisation of the Games to augment the regime's legitimacy among the population had its basis in the status accorded to them in the official narrative of domestic political life by the Soviet state in the late 1970s. In his aforementioned 1976 memorandum to the Orgcom leadership, Propaganda Administration chief Shevchenko warned against seeing 1980 as a 'purely a sporting event, which [only] sports organisations should deal with,' and instead pushed for a forceful inculcation of its 'political and ideological significance' among both state officials and the general population. In this connection, Shevchenko asserted that the Olympics should be considered one of 'the five most significant [political] events in the life of our country during the [period of] the newly-inaugurated Five-Year Plan.' The others included the XXV CPSU Congress and its 'historic

[45] On the scale of BAM, see Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 6-8.

decisions'; the Tenth Five-Year Plan itself, 'with its magnificent programme for the Soviet Union's social and economic development'; the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution, and the 110th anniversary of Lenin's birth.[46] By placing it alongside other grandiose contemporary events and anniversaries, all of which were used to set a bombastic, self-congratulatory tone to public life during these years, the authorities neatly embedded the Olympiad from the very start in their favoured, overblown narrative which defined the Soviet present as a golden age of relentless economic and social progress.

This approach paved the way for a strong emphasis in Olympics propaganda on the idea of the comprehensive advantages of the Soviet system, which served as an implicit confirmation of its legitimacy. In June 1976, VTsSPS Secretary Bogatikov informed his socialist-bloc colleagues that media coverage of Olympic preparations would provide 'the opportunity to…demonstrate to [Soviet] workers...the benefits which [they] receive thanks to the care of the Party and state.'[47] One of the ways the authorities sought to achieve this was to focus the discussion on the growing popular participation in state sport programmes ahead of 1980. In the pamphlet *The Mass Character of Soviet Sport*, produced in 1980 by the Komsomol as part of a series of lecturing aids which were issued to its propaganda workers,[48] it was explained that Soviet sporting achievements at home and in international competitions were a testament to the 'tireless concern of the Communist Party' for improving the people's physical and material well-being in the USSR. The manifestations of this policy in the form of widespread participation in sport and the huge number of state-provided sport facilities were in turn said to 'reflect…the [high] degree of [Soviet] society's social development' under communist tutelage. The Soviet state had harnessed physical culture to task of developing 'socialist social relations', with state sport programmes helping to bring about 'the comprehensive and harmonious development of [the individual's] personality' in line with Marxist-Leninist theory.[49] Through the prism of the Soviet state's sports programmes (discussion of which naturally arose in the context of the upcoming Games), the authorities thereby emphasised the benevolence and competence of the CPSU's rule in domestic propaganda, as a governing entity which was committed to, and had succeeded in, fostering social progress. This idea was stated even more explicitly in another pamphlet, *Sportsmen of the USSR at the Olympic Games* (published 1980), which claimed that the determination of the USSR's athletes to win at the Moscow Olympiad was 'fostered by the whole socialist system…[and the environment of] the friendly and morally sound [socialist] collective; it is inculcated in the athlete's consciousness by the assiduous

[46] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.
[47] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, l.13.
[48] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479a, ll.1-9; ll.37-38.
[49] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, ll.142-45.

and purposeful efforts of Party and Komsomol organisations.'[50] The corollary to such official claims regarding the success of the socialist social order was that the CPSU, as source of that success, had a legitimate right to rule.

Another key emphasis in the domestic campaign centred on giving a boost to the long-established, heroicised depiction of Soviet athletes. After WWII, the Soviet leadership increasingly sought to promulgate an image of the country's most successful athletes which conformed to the official ideological trope of the New Soviet Man, whose 'harmoniously developed personality', nurtured with the Party's help, would make him a citizen of the future communist society. As such, sportsmen were expected to display ideological conviction, modesty, a keen sense of 'communist morality' and a 'correct understanding of the Party's ideas,' in turn becoming role models for the rest of society.[51] As one guide for Komsomol propagandists explained, Soviet sportsmen 'serve as outstanding examples for young people. They assist the Party in resolving vital issues relating to the communist upbringing of the rising generation.'[52] Represented by such role models, state sports programmes served as an 'effective means of achieving…[the] propagation of certain [orthodox] ideological values and principles.'[53]

The Moscow Games, probably because they would see the Soviet host field its largest ever Olympic team (489 athletes),[54] were clearly seen as an excellent opportunity to further promote this image among large swathes of the population. In propaganda materials produced for Komsomol lecturers, Soviet Olympians were lionised as men and women of the future, who 'demonstrate[d] the highest moral qualities inculcated by the new society', such as honesty, courage, sincerity, willpower, and persistence in the pursuit of their goals. It was to them 'whom the future belong[ed] and who will…construct a new basis for human society with their own hands.'[55] Their feats in the arena were held up explicitly as proof of socialism's superiority: 'The outstanding achievements of Soviet sportsmen…at the Olympics demonstrate before the whole world the successes in all spheres of social and cultural development achieved by the Soviet country…[Their sporting victories]…are testament to the advantages of the socialist social structure, the communist worldview, Marxist-Leninist ideology, [and] the socialist way of life.' The author of this particular article, which was read out to thousands of Soviet citizens, concluded: 'Soviet Olympians

[50] *Ibid.*, ll.38-9.
[51] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 38; Prozumenshchikov, *Bol'shoi sport*, 14.
[52] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, ll.156-57.
[53] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 30.
[54] 'Soviet Union at the Olympics', *Wikipedia*, accessed 17.01.2015, www.wikipedia.org.
[55] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, ll.3-4, ll.9-12; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.552, ll.66-8.

demonstrate the superiority of our society to the whole world.'[56] Such statements demonstrate that to a considerable extent, the image of the Soviet Olympic athlete was used not so much as a role model for citizens' transformation along communist lines in the context of the domestic propaganda campaign around 1980, but simply as another way into proclaiming (in this case, explicitly) the orthodox ideological principle of the inherent advantages of the Soviet system, in much the same way as did discussions of sporting successes. In so doing, the focus on the athlete as the 'New Soviet Man' carried the same implication as this aforementioned theme regarding the inherent legitimacy of this system.

However, at other moments in the propaganda narrative around Moscow-80, the idea of Soviet Olympians' unstinting patriotism and devotion to the CPSU was also given a special emphasis. This resulted from instructions such as those contained in a decree of the central Party apparatus issued in December 1978, which declared the general goal to use propaganda around the Olympiad to 'raise youth and all Soviet people in the spirit of… Soviet patriotism, ideological conviction and devotion to the cause of communism.'[57] Propagandists accordingly heaped praise on the USSR's Olympic athletes in their public lectures as 'true patriots' who 'accomplish[ed] sporting feats in the name of their beloved fatherland [*otchizna*].'[58] The orchestration of the Olympiad thus did in fact offer an additional chance for the propaganda machine to bring the USSR's best athletes into greater focus as role models to a certain extent, allowing them to act as a symbol of the ideal, nationalistic Soviet citizen which all others should emulate. Outside of political lectures, it was at the various meetings organised between sportsmen themselves and ordinary citizens noted above that this theme of the patriotic model citizen really came to the fore. In September 1979, the candidates for the USSR's Olympic team visited the city of Volgograd (formerly Stalingrad, where the Red Army turned the tide of the Second World War against Germany in 1942-3). The culmination of this widely publicised trip involved the athletes taking part in a ceremony at the dramatic, monolithic war memorial complex overlooking the city. In a moment rich with patriotic symbolism, the sportsmen and women publicly declared their loyalty to the Soviet state and promised to defend its 'athletic honour' in the shadow of a colossal statue of 'Mother Russia'.[59] With its symbolic location, the event clearly sought to further embellish the image of Soviet Olympians as irreproachable patriots. This characterisation of Soviet athletes was emphasised once again at a ceremonial meeting of the USSR's team in Moscow's Bol'shoi Theatre, held just days before the start of the Games on 15th July 1980. The assembled athletes offered a salutary

[56] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, l.23.
[57] Document no.114, p.331.
[58] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, l.23.
[59] Hazan, *Propaganda Games*, 31, 39; Knabe, "Political Importance", 28.

address to Brezhnev and expressed their 'gratitude to the Communist Party and Soviet government' for their concern for the common people's well-being. This was followed by a declaration of their readiness to succeed at the Olympiad which was unparalleled in its gushing rhetoric of devotion to the Soviet cause. Describing the 'deep pride' they felt at the idea of the Olympics taking place in 'the homeland of the Great Lenin,' the athletes declared: 'The most important goal and the greatest happiness for the Soviet athlete is to hear the majestic anthem of his beloved fatherland [played] in honour of his victory. For each and every one of us bears the sacred title of *citizen of the Soviet Union*!'[60] The fact that Soviet athletes were held up as role models for the population solely in terms of their patriotism in the run up to 1980 again indicates that the state's fundamental concern was for the domestic campaign to serve the purpose of legitimising the existing Soviet order. By definition a patriotic Soviet citizen would see the CPSU and the system over which it presided as legitimate; a loyal, orthodox, benign attitude towards the status quo was the precondition for accepting and maintaining it. The kind of devotion Olympic athletes publicly displayed in the events in Moscow and Volgograd, indeed, clearly contained a strong element of unquestioning obedience, as well as admiration, before the Party leadership. If Soviet citizens could be induced to internalise such behaviour through such displays and rhetoric, the Olympics would contribute to belief in the system.

Another of the Komsomol's aids for propagandists, titled *Sports Facilities for the Olympic Games* (published 1979), articulated perhaps the most important theme found in Soviet domestic propaganda about the Olympiad, which had the idea of the flawless overall functioning of the Soviet system at its core. Written by A. Romashko, the Chief Engineer of the Orgcom's Main Construction Administration, the text presented a number of interlinked ideas concerning the principles underlying the Games' economic programme and the resources expended on its practical organisation. Firstly, the construction programme for 1980 was portrayed as an example of Soviet planners' ability to efficiently create an 'outstanding' material base for the sports competitions on the basis of the 'latest achievements in science [and] technology.' It stressed that the majority of the sports competitions would take place at pre-existing facilities, and that 'in the interests of economising [on funds], only what is absolutely necessary is being constructed anew.' The booklet's author was also at pains to emphasise the huge scale and the degree of technical complexity and innovation which characterised the work on the sports facilities, providing a relentless list of impressive statistics and specifications for propagandists to use, and moreover stressed that these challenges had been accepted in order to allow for the

[60] RGANI, f.5, op.77, d.129, ll.3-4.

attendance of the maximum number of participants and spectators as well as their convenience and comfort. The construction of every facility fitted into the state's long-term plan for the development of municipal welfare infrastructure, and correspondingly the material base of the Olympiad would be put at the service of Soviet citizens after the event. In addition, whilst acknowledging vaguely that difficulties had been experienced during the building programme, the text typically never revealed the true extent of this, offering instead an image of steady and rapid progress realised through the hard work, enthusiasm and expertise of Soviet workers, engineers and planners. In fact, the author emphasised that the programme would go down in Soviet history as 'a time of shock construction' – that is, as another, epic period of lightning-fast progress in fulfilling the Five-Year Plan, when Soviet industrial workers 'completed the kind of volume of work which normally takes many years.'[61]

As a feature of the domestic propaganda narrative, therefore, the construction programme for 1980 was presented as yet another heroic national campaign, showing the enthusiasm of the Soviet people for fulfilling the Party's socio-economic tasks. More generally, all of the aforementioned ideas contained in this widely used propagandist's script show how Olympic infrastructure development was held up to the Soviet people as proof that the socialist economy was rational, functional, and efficient; it was planned with precision by experts, buoyed by the heroism and energies of the proletariat, and benevolently geared towards the needs of the widest number of people. Inasmuch as domestic Olympics propaganda focused on the construction programme (and Orgcom records indicate that it did to a significant extent),[62] it fitted neatly into the traditionally upbeat narrative of Soviet life, in terms of being both one more campaign in the continuous stream of successful initiatives realised by a united party and people, and as a window on the long-standing triumph of the socialist economic model. Notably, all these key messages emerging from the discussion of the economic preparations for 1980, moreover, were not only aired on a regular basis during propaganda lectures but also reproduced countless times on the pages of major Soviet newspapers from the first months of the project in 1975 until the Opening Ceremony,[63] after which they largely gave way to other themes (discussed below).

[61] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, l.168-72, l.174, l.177.
[62] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.7, l.6; f.9610, op.1, d.37, ll.23-4; f.9610, op.1, d.36, ll.190-1.
[63] See the following examples: Unknown author, 'The 1980 Olympics: Problems and Prospects', *Pravda*, 02.09.75, p.1; V. Belikov, 'Plans and Achievements', 19.05.77, *Izvestiia*, p.6; B. Belenkii and B. Fedosov, 'Stadium of the Future', 09.08.77, *Izvestiia*, p.6; V. Volodin, 'Unique, All-Purpose, Wonderful', *Sovetskii sport*, 07.11.77, p.3; V. Shvorina, 'We Are Preparing to Greet Our Guests', *Pravda*, 28.07.79, p.6; Unknown author, '1,777 New Rooms', *Sovetskaia kul'tura*, 06.07.79, p.8; A. Pakhomova, 'Above Wondrous Moscow: Reporting from a Helicopter', *Pravda*, 18.07.1980, p.6.

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These are just some of the many ways in which the Brezhnevite state sought within the context of its domestic propaganda campaign around the Moscow Games to push the familiar message that the Soviet people lived in the most politically, economically and socially advanced state on Earth. The conclusion which logically flowed from this, and which the organisers undoubtedly intended Soviet citizens to comprehend, was that the CPSU's rule was wholly legitimate. A popular sense of the system's inherent legitimacy was clearly the underlying motivation for the attempts to reinforce patriotic feeling through the Games' campaign as well. Thus, whilst the international propaganda operation sought to sell the basic idea of the communist alternative to unenlightened foreign populations, domestic Olympics propaganda was aimed fundamentally at buttressing the popularity of the Soviet system among those who already lived under state socialism. For the sake of balance, one should note that the BAM project was also partially imbued with the same goal: its grandiose nature was utilised in the accompanying propaganda campaign to 'herald the accomplishments of state socialism' and 'bolster collective faith in the command-administrative system.'[64] However, the legitimisation of the system was to be achieved in this case via a narrative which depicted the CPSU as competently rallying the populace for realising an epochal infrastructure programme and, upon its completion, successfully inaugurating further economic and social progress as part of the triumphant and inexorable march towards utopia. In the Olympics' case, a somewhat soporific propaganda campaign replaced the spectacle of purposeful, practical action and the achievement of tangible objectives within an overarching, teleological framework as the main generator of legitimacy.

This central purpose to and character of Olympics propaganda within the Soviet Union compared to BAM, moreover, adds definitive weight to the argument that Moscow-80 never functioned as a mobilisational project in the domestic political sphere. For in striving so hard to inculcate a belief in the system's legitimacy by accentuating its successes at every turn, the Orgcom's propagandists essentially glorified the social, economic and political status quo of Brezhnev's 'developed socialist' society as inviolable and eternal. The campaign became, in turn, a five-year-long justification of political *immobilism*, which could in no way have ideologically underpinned an additional programme of mobilisation of the country's youth in order to achieve the next stage of socialist development. If 'socialist modernity' had already been built in all its glory, the campaign implied, there was no need

[64] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 7.

to make a hasty lunge towards the communist future. It thus becomes clear why the Olympiad was accorded equal political status in public life as events like the XXV CPSU Congress and the anniversary of Lenin's birth – 1980 was a perfect addition to this series of grandiose but ultimately hollow political festivals, in which the Soviet people themselves were expected to be passive recipients of reassuring messages rather than active agents of social and economic change.

Again, one should stress that it is difficult to conceive of how the authorities could have fashioned the Games project into anything else, given the nature of the event. Nevertheless, this should not distract from the important fact that the domestic campaign were decidedly not utopian, in the sense that it could not act as a stimulus to utopian thinking or practical, radical action in pursuit of utopian goals. The ethos of the Games project was distinct in this respect from that which underlay the BAM Railway, as the other great undertaking of the era, with its ambitious goal to not only build up the economic might of the USSR but also create – this time with the help of inspirational propaganda – a 'laboratory of socialist development', in which the participating Komsomol members would transform themselves into the communist 'new men' of the future (and thereby take 'the first step toward realizing a utopian society in the early twenty-first century').[65] The BAM propaganda campaign was itself ultimately ineffective in achieving these goals, disillusioning its audience with its 'ideological staidness' and 'utter lack of sensitivity to a growing number of latent social and cultural tensions.'[66] But the point here is not the degree to which the political messages of the BAM campaign succeeded, but what *intention* the authorities had in disseminating them. The Soviet state appears to have genuinely aimed to realise a revolutionary transformation among the railway's Komsomol builders and thereby speed up the march towards the future. The official messages of the Olympic campaign had no such intention in terms of bringing about fundamental change in the behaviour or mentality of Soviet citizens – instead, it sought to simply inculcate a kind of indolent contentment with the mundanity of the present.

Moreover, the aim of BAM to refashion its young constructors' personalities along utopian lines in the process of their heroic labour was extremely similar to the spirit of certain projects of the Stalin-era, such as the construction of the first section of the Moscow Metro in 1931-35. The Metro was also officially characterised in the propaganda of the time as an object heralding the USSR's revolutionary 'break' with the past and transition to a new, higher stage of human existence based on the exploitation of new technology (and in turn, served to inspire its builders and the wider population alike to

[65] *Ibid*., 7, 46.
[66] *Ibid.*, 154-5.

commit themselves to the construction of socialism).[67] With their lack of mobilisational force and utopian rhetoric, the Olympics did not by any stretch of the imagination embody the revolutionary impulse inherent in many of the USSR's other mega-projects, and therefore must be seen to a considerable degree as separate from this long-running trend of Soviet history.

Justifying Moscow-80 to the People

Some of the ideas and arguments offered to the Soviet people discussed above regarding the Olympics economic programme hint at an additional calculation underlying some elements of the domestic propaganda campaign. In emphasising in these discussions that new Olympic infrastructure would be built ultimately for ordinary citizens themselves to use, for example, the state's propagandists drew attention to the idea that 1980 would bring long-lasting material benefits to the Soviet people themselves. Viewed from this perspective, the lengthy technical descriptions of the new Olympic facilities were likely not only intended to impress upon the populace the idea of the economic sophistication of socialism, but also to further persuade it that it would soon be provided with access to new, state-of-the-art infrastructure thanks to the Games. Likewise, downplaying to a minimum the problems of the economic programme may not have been done solely in order to avoid undermining the key public narrative of the system's general economic success, but also to allay any public concern that the material demands of the Olympiad would place an unacceptable, additional strain on the allocation of resources within the Soviet economy (which could ultimately have led to disapproval that it was being held in Moscow). One can likely ascribe a similar purpose to the other official claims to the effect that existing facilities would be used for 1980 where possible, and that the Olympic infrastructure that would have to be built from scratch would coincide with the state's long-term plans. These latter arguments may have been partly designed to dispel fears that the Olympics could divert resources away from more vital public services (to the detriment of ordinary people's living standards), in addition to their function in reiterating the economic rationality of state socialism for the sake of its continued legitimisation.

This all suggests that the domestic propaganda campaign served the purpose of justifying the Games before its own population, in terms of proving that it was a policy venture which carried no drawbacks, and instead significant benefits, for the common people. That there was such a purpose behind the propaganda lines on the economic aspects of the event in particular is confirmed by the pamphlet *Moscow: Capital of the*

[67] *Ibid*., 5-6; D. Neutatz, *Moskovskoe metro: ot pervykh planov do velikoi stroiki stalinizma (1897-1935)* (Moscow, 2013), 393-4, 592-8, 653-55.

1980 Olympics (1977). All of the same points regarding the Games economic programme noted above are discussed in this text, but on this occasion, they were offered as part of a discussion which explicitly set out to prove to the Soviet people why it was entirely right for the state to host the Olympiad. Perhaps most telling of all in this respect are the reassurances the authors offered regarding the command economy's ability to bear the burden of the Olympics without any detrimental effects on priority sectors of the economy: '…preparations for [1980]…will not affect the tempo of housing construction or provision of cultural and consumer services in Moscow or other cities.'[68] Such a statement, and others like it found in this and other texts, clearly sought to dispel fears that 1980 could produce a slowdown in the rise in living standards which the Soviet people had come to expect during the Brezhnev years.

Another argument offered in this pamphlet which sought to justify the Olympiad revolved around the idea that it would allow the USSR to demonstrate its positive qualities, including its 'peace-loving foreign policy', the 'democratic attributes of the socialist socio-economic system' and 'the humanism of Soviet society', to the whole world. 'Orchestrating the Olympics in Moscow', it was claimed, 'offers favourable opportunities to demonstrate [to outsiders]…the achievements of socialism in the economic, scientific [and] cultural… spheres.' Moreover, having seen the 'lack of exploitation and unemployment' in the USSR and 'the certainty of the Soviet people in [a bright] future' through the prism of the Games, foreign citizens would inevitably compare this, the propagandists suggested, with the 'exploitation and profiteering [and] the destitution for the majority' which characterised their own life under capitalism.[69] Shevchenko confirmed in the early stages of the propaganda campaign that this task, which he characterised as one of explaining to the Soviet population how 1980 would 'bring the truth about our Motherland' to the outside world, was a priority for the Orgcom.[70] In contrast to its economic justifications, which applied a mixture of falsehoods and half-truths, in this case the propaganda machine in effect revealed something of the authorities' true purposes to the population, in terms of the potential benefits the former expected the state to accrue from the Games, as an additional way to justify them. However, by claiming that 1980 would be a good opportunity for the country to promote itself and demonstrate the outstanding achievements of socialism, they were careful to portray these anticipated benefits as political victories for the Soviet people as a whole rather than solely to the advantage of their political leaders. The state thereby sought approval for the Olympic venture by partly

[68] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.12, ll.48-50, l.53.
[69] *Ibid.*, ll.48-50.
[70] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41, ll.50-73.

framing it within a discourse which appealed to people's sense of patriotism and national pride in their country's status as a superpower.

A further method of selling the Games involved responding to negative feeling towards the preparations that had apparently spread among certain parts of the population to an unknown extent. In one report to the Communist Youth's headquarters, a district-level Komsomol committee in Tallinn claimed to be devoting some of its public lectures on the Games to 'counter-propaganda work [refuting] rumours about the implementation of various economic and administrative measures by the [Soviet] state in connection with the 1980 Olympics.'[71] This suggests that there was at least some degree of official concern – if only by the closing stages of the preparations when this report was filed – to publicly repudiate the use of unpopular or controversial measures implemented for the sake of the Games (increased repression, for instance, or the practice of squeezing material resources out of other areas of the country noted in chapter two). Combating what the authorities saw as 'rumours' about 1980 among the population was in fact described on one occasion as one of the 'main areas of [Olympics] counter-propaganda work' on the domestic front,[72] although beyond the above evidence there is no indication of what the scale of this work really was in 1975-80.

There is evidence that the use of at least some severe measures which made up part of the draconian security operation was however addressed publicly rather than simply denied outright. In a newspaper article written at the end of July 1980, the journalist S. Blizniuk sought to justify the security precautions undertaken for the event in terms of the need to counter the machinations of the USSR's ideological enemies, who wished to tarnish Moscow's Olympic triumph through various forms of subversion. He warned that the Munich Massacre in 1972 had been the result of the West German authorities scaling down their security measures. Blizniuk also explained that the security measures would help 'create conditions for the efficient and uninterrupted functioning of all services at the Games.'[73] The authorities thus once again revealed their true thinking on this subject to the population without distortions in order to explain their approach and justify the event. The substance of the arguments the author presented was not particularly surprising, however. More interesting is the fact that the authorities felt the need to not only publicly acknowledge some of the restrictive measures that had been imposed on the population for 1980, but also offer justifications for them to citizens from whom they could hardly have anticipated any tangible protest. One can see this as an apparent attempt to head off

[71] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.481, ll.28-32.
[72] *Ibid*.
[73] Blizniuk, 'Whom Does Order…?'

negative reactions and manage public opinion among citizens whose attitudes the state could not completely control.

More generally, the fact that the authorities felt the need to devote a substantial amount of attention to 'selling' Moscow-80 in their propaganda perhaps reflected a wider understanding in the corridors of power of the need to convince an increasingly autonomous populace of the correctness of official policies. Despite subjecting citizens to the various disruptive measures in preparation for the Olympics by its customary diktat, officials nevertheless simultaneously engaged in a public relations campaign because they most likely understood that the broad mass of the population would not necessarily be so unquestioningly supportive of its leaders' decisions as to accept these measures automatically. Indeed, the urgency of justifying the Games may have seemed particularly acute given that the preparations could be expected to negatively impact on people's daily lives in a whole number of ways – from being drafted into the construction programme involuntarily, to experiencing additional shortages or limited access to local amenities as resources were hoarded and the latter were refurbished ahead of 1980. Moreover, ensuring popular satisfaction with respect to issues relating to the material standard of living was a perennial concern of the Brezhnev leadership. The suspicion that the organisers' focus was on winning over a partially independent public opinion to this particular venture is seemingly confirmed by the fact that several sociological studies and opinion polls were carried out in 1978-79 specifically 'to determine the attitude of [Soviet] citizens…to the Olympic Games', and the effectiveness of the propaganda campaign, in both Moscow and several other regions.[74]

Prophylactic Propaganda

There was one other significant message of the domestic propaganda campaign which served a somewhat different purpose. Formulated in response to the risks hosting the Olympiad was seen to pose to the socio-political order, it was supposed to inculcate a heightened sense of vigilance and ideological fervour among the Soviet population, thereby helping the latter to withstand the harmful influences and resist the potentially subversive activities of foreigners visiting the USSR in 1980. The organisers were probably influenced here by several official surveys indicating that the population had realised Moscow-80 would present opportunities for interaction with outsiders. One such survey, conducted in 1979, found that as much as 80% of the 1,000 Muscovites polled hoped 'to learn more about life abroad' from face-to-face contact with foreigners during the Games.[75]

[74] Knabe, "Political Importance", 25; GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.24-8.
[75] Knabe, "Political Importance", 25-6.

In a memorandum written in September 1978, the Deputy Head of the Komsomol's Agitation and Propaganda Department, V. Groshev, informed his superiors that the 'ideological resilience' of the capital's youth constituted an extremely important part of the organisation's propaganda work ahead of 1980, on account of the fact that Moscow was where 'the bulk of foreign tourists and sportsmen will gather.' The department was therefore implementing a number of measures designed to instil a decidedly defensive, even combative spirit among ordinary citizens. These included a series of lectures titled 'Youth and the Ideological Struggle', question and answer sessions focused on 'the problems of conflict between social systems,' and the publication of articles in the Komsomol's central and local press outlets aimed at effectively 'unmasking bourgeois ideological subversion' threatening country during the Games. An additional course of 114 cycles of lectures for young Muscovites was given by 8,000 Komsomol propagandists throughout the country, which paid special attention to not only highlighting the dangers of 'bourgeois ideology,' but also to elucidating the characteristics of the 'Soviet way of life' and the principles of the Soviet Constitution.[76] Such lectures were clearly meant to prepare Soviet citizens to be ready to express their patriotism in the face of potential criticisms of the socialist system and their government emanating from Western visitors. This view is confirmed by the evidence found in numerous Orgcom and Party documents, including a December 1978 decree of the CC Secretariat, which explicitly called for attention to be paid to ensuring Soviet citizens possessed the 'ability to give an appropriate rebuff to those individuals travelling to the Olympiad with provocative aims.' Similarly, the Moscow branch of the Komsomol instructed its subordinate organisations to instruct young people to 'conduct an uncompromising struggle against displays of bourgeois ideology and morality' in 1980 and propagate 'the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, the Soviet way of life, [and] the economic and political achievements of our Motherland' during encounters with foreigners.[77]

Accordingly, by April 1980 attempts to increase 'political vigilance' among Muscovites ahead of the Games were taking place on a broad scale at meetings held in industrial enterprises, educational institutions, and at neighbourhood gatherings under the auspices of Party, Komsomol and trade union organisations.[78] The capital's municipal authorities were also finalising plans to create special departments in every district of the city made up of 'special groups of ideological activists' who would conduct anti-Western propaganda among Soviet citizens during the Games.[79] Apparently never fully satisfied that the looming

[76] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.24-8.
[77] Document no.115, p.337; RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.1-6.
[78] Document no.137, p.404.
[79] *Ibid.*, p.405; document no.142, pp.440-41.

threat posed by foreign visitors had been adequately addressed by all this agitational work, on the eve of the event in early July yet another resolution, this time issued by the Moscow *gorkom*, gave instructions to ensure propaganda and agitation work 'rais[ed] the political vigilance of…the [general] population during the orchestration of the Olympics.'[80] One might note, incidentally, that aside from these final measures, this kind of defensive propaganda was taking place well in advance of Carter's boycott and the severe worsening of east-west relations precipitated by the intervention in Afghanistan. This suggests that the boycott did not fundamentally alter the character of the Olympic project as a domestic political event, just as it failed to do so with respect to its international goals; the tone of the propaganda at home was partly defensive in nature from its inception, with the authorities apparently having always understood that the Games posed an inherent risk of confrontation with and 'contamination' by the West.

However, anti-Western agitation was not confined to the capital. Propaganda measures along similar lines took place in other parts of the USSR, including in the western regions of Ukraine and the Baltic republics – that is, in some of the areas where additional Olympic events would be held with their attendant foreign guests, and which constituted those parts of the country where Soviet citizens were most susceptible to ideas coming from the West. The central authorities, in fact, expended a huge amount of energy in targeting these more vulnerable regions for prophylactic propaganda measures. More than fifty 'dedicated agitational groups' travelled to these areas for this purpose in 1978-80, whilst on the eve of the Games the propagandists of the local Komsomol committees were provided with additional training materials and political literature about 'the ideological struggle'. Moreover, in a sign that the Soviet state was also worried about the hostile Maoist regime of the PRC taking the opportunity to carry out its own subversive propaganda ahead of the patriotic fervour of 1980, counter-propaganda work in the form of political lectures on Olympics-related topics was also expanded among young people living in towns and cities on the Soviet-Chinese border.[81] It is noteworthy that this programme of ideological 'immunisation' was thus carried out among citizens residing not only in Moscow, which the majority of foreigners would visit, but also in those areas closest in proximity to state borders, which in most cases would not have any first-hand contact with Olympic guests. This reinforces the impression that the authorities were seriously concerned about the possibility of the social order being subverted across the whole country during the Games. Moreover, they clearly expected the enemy to apply a number of different methods of subversion, not only in the form of foreign visitors simply expressing alternative views

[80] RGASPI, f.17, op.149, d.806, l.89.
[81] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286, ll.24-8.

among Muscovites. For the fact that the state perceived the populations of border regions to be vulnerable despite not hosting any Olympic events implies that it expected that increased anti-communist propaganda would penetrate the Iron Curtain over the airwaves or in the form of subversive literature.

Thus, the authorities' genuine fear of Western plots against the Games filtered out to the general population, as a means to sow suspicion and fear of all foreigners ahead of 1980. In addition to the 'political conditioning' of Olympic cadres noted above, a paranoid discourse was disseminated among the Soviet people as a method of steeling them against provocative foreign ideas and preventing unauthorised fraternisation of the kind which had occurred in 1957. The goals of the domestic propaganda campaign therefore partially merged with the wider efforts of the security services to 'quarantine' the population from seditious outside influences. Incidentally, this prophylactic element of the campaign indicates once more that it was geared towards assisting in the resolution of challenges intrinsic to the Games project alone, to a significant extent (in this case, defending the social order against the risk posed by the Olympic 'invasion' of foreign guests) rather than serving the far-reaching ideological goals of the Soviet state. More intriguingly, this purpose to the campaign shows that there was no attempt to sell the Moscow Games to the population as a chance to forge closer ties with the outside world and enrich national life by interacting with people from other cultures. This is understandable – the chauvinistic ideology of developed socialism which dominated during the Brezhnev years excluded the possibility that the Olympiad could be used for genuine cultural exchange; instead, it could only countenance justifying 1980 among the people in terms of the opportunity it presented to spread awareness of the value of *Soviet* culture and achievements alone, rather than the other way around. Under such circumstances, the assertions that the Games would improve 'mutual understanding' and 'coexistence between social systems', which were also to be found in domestic propaganda,[82] did not amount to official encouragement for the Soviet people to welcome outsiders in 1980 with open arms; rather, they served as reminders of the USSR's moral superiority.

Propaganda During the Olympiad

A small-scale examination of articles published in *Pravda* between June and August 1980 offers additional, intriguing details of the national propaganda narrative during the Olympiad itself. Rather than cover the explanation of the Western boycott provided to the Soviet people, which has been accounted for elsewhere,[83] the discussion will focus on the

[82] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.12, ll.48-50.
[83] Mertin, "Explaining the boycotts".

way the state's messages offered to the population evolved during the final stage of the campaign.

By far the most conspicuous feature of this late coverage was the virtual absence of nationalistic boasting about the Soviet medal count. On 28th July, *Pravda* briefly noted in its 'Olympic diary' series (published daily on page one for the duration of the Olympiad) that the Soviet Union had won its 300th gold medal since first participating in the Games. Though this achievement was attributed to the effectiveness of the state sports system (and thus, gave the article a patriotic flavour), there was no comparison, disparaging or otherwise, with other countries' athletic achievements.[84] The account thus missed the readily available opportunity to accentuate Soviet superiority, in a way which appears to have been representative of *Pravda*'s overall sports coverage during the event. More significantly, in the full-page review of the Games' events published the day after the Closing Ceremony, pride of place was given to Soviet Olympians' achievements, with only the USSR's tally of gold, silver and bronze medals provided. Yet once again, by avoiding any comparison with *other* countries' medal counts, *Pravda* failed to capitalise on the USSR's superior sporting performance as a way to return to the theme of the Soviet system's superiority (and thereby stoke a nationalistic mood). Moreover, in this particular case the authors also paid a respectable amount of attention to recounting foreign athletes' feats at the XXII Games, in a way which portrayed them as no less impressive than those of the USSR. Reinforcing the sense that *Pravda*'s journalists were not focused here on belittling their rivals and emphasising Soviet sporting prowess in particular is the fact that they acknowledged that the geographical spread of Olympic gold-winners in Moscow had been 'unusually wide', with mention even given of some Western athletes who had performed particularly well. Throughout this lengthy article (probably the longest to appear in *Pravda* during July-August which was devoted entirely to coverage of the sports competitions), no direct comparisons between the performances of individual Soviet athletes and those of their Western rivals from any of the contests were given.[85] With respect to its overview of the sporting contests this crucial summary article was arguably little different from the kind of sports journalism produced in other countries during the Olympics, focusing on the 'highs and lows' of 1980 rather than offering a typically propagandistic text stressing the USSR's unconquerable sporting prowess. Moreover, beyond these two examples there is very little evidence that the USSR's enormous medal count was ever the focus of a propaganda trope in *Pravda* during the Olympics' proceedings, whether it was for further instilling in the

[84] Unknown author, 'Olympic Diary', *Pravda*, 28.07.80, p.1
[85] L. Lebedev, V. Otkalenko, V. Smirnov, A. Iusin, 'In the Name of Peace, for the Glory of Sport', *Pravda*, 04.08.80, p.1, p.8.

population a sense of the superiority of the Soviet system, feelings of overwhelming national pride, or anything else. This was despite the fact that 1980 was the USSR's most successful performance in the summer Olympics up to that point.[86]

Adding to this picture of the propagandists' distinct lack of interest in exploiting the USSR's own sporting victories is the fact that many of the daily commentaries on the sporting events themselves written during the 1980 Games' proceedings were fairly generic and mundane. Again barely distinguishable from sports journalism in other countries, these articles – which were always relegated to the final pages of *Pravda* alongside coverage of other sports events, despite the exceptional nature of the Olympics – provided essentially balanced coverage of each day's competitions and never emphasised Soviet athletes' successes over others'.[87] It was in this context that some of *Pravda*'s regular sports journalists, already by the third day of the proceedings, noted approvingly that 'with every passing day, the "geography" of the XXII Olympics' medal-holders is expanding. Medals are "spreading" amongst all continents.'[88] Moreover, throughout the Games, despite the USSR's general domination of the Olympic competitions, mentions of the actual medal-winners in *Pravda* did not favour Soviet athletes over others.[89]

The same non-chauvinistic approach to *Pravda*'s sports coverage can be seen in one of the newspaper's relatively rare articles interviewing Olympic medal-winners. In this piece, only one of those interviewed was a Soviet champion. The other was a Hungarian, who in his answers notably emphasised the idea that it was the Soviet Union's fidelity to internationalism and love of outsiders which had facilitated his victory and those of other foreign athletes at the Games.[90] This idea in fact constituted the main thrust of the obligatory political gloss given to coverage of the Olympic sports competitions in *Pravda* during July and August. Several full-length articles focused on the idea that the XXII Olympiad was rapidly becoming an outstanding sporting event because the authorities, Soviet athletes, and the country's ordinary people themselves were doing their utmost to foster a truly peaceful, 'internationalist' atmosphere free from political quarrels, which

[86] The USSR won 195 medals in 1980 – up from 125 in 1976, and nearly a 100% increase on its 1972 performance – 'Soviet Union at the Olympics', *Wikipedia*, accessed 22.01.2015, www.wikipedia.org.
[87] See the following articles in *Pravda*: V. Otkalenko, 'A Time for Beating Records', 22.06.1980, p.6; V. Sysoev, 'Who Will Go Straight to the Finish Line?', 15.07.1980, p.6; L. Lebedev, N. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, A. Iusin, 'The Spirit of Olympism Triumphs', 25.07.80, p.6; L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, V. Stefanovich, A. Iusin, 'Higher, Faster, Stronger!', 26.07.80, p.6; D. Klenskii, V. Chertkov, 'A Chronicle of the Regatta', 29.07.80, p.6; L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, A. Iusin, 'Sport Glowing with New Records', 30.07.80, p.6.
[88] V. Lebedev, V. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, V. Shirokov, A. Iusin, 'Without Records There Can Be No Victory!', *Pravda*, 23.07.80, p.6.
[89] See the following in *Pravda*: Unknown author, 'Olympic Diary', 23.07.80, p.1, 25.07.80, p.1, 26.07.80, p.1; Unknown author, 'Diary of the Olympiad', 30.70.80, p.1; L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, V. Shirokov, A. Iusin, 'Medals for Every Continent', 31.07.80, p.6.
[90] Unknown author, 'Interview with the Medal-Holders: Conquering Yourself', *Pravda*, 22.07.80, p.6.

inspired all the attending foreign sportsmen and women to achieve their best purely for the sake of sporting endeavour alone rather than for scoring political points.[91] Such a benign theme obviously wasn't conducive to a nationalistic account of the sporting competitions centred on emphasising the USSR's superiority over its rivals. However, this emphasis in propaganda does not necessarily indicate that the organisers were spurning the opportunity to manipulate their coverage of the sporting competitions for patriotic purposes. In portraying Moscow-80 as being like no other event in terms of embodying the peaceful, apolitical ideals of the Olympic movement, they offered the Soviet population further evidence of their country's peaceful, benevolent role in world affairs, as a global power capable of fostering cooperation between diverse nations. This surely had the intention of inspiring national pride and belief in the moral rectitude of the communist system, just as earlier propaganda themes had.

One in turn reaches the conclusion that, during the Games themselves, coverage of the actual sporting events appears to have been toned down, with the most nationalistic option for portraying them spurned in favour of a more subtle approach which merely promoted patriotic feelings among the population, and which was occasionally even submerged in an almost impartial account of proceedings. Admittedly, other Soviet press outlets, such as *Soviet Sport*, may well have focused more on the USSR's medal tally in a more chauvinistic key. Yet *Pravda* was the USSR's leading newspaper, with a circulation far in excess of most other publications. For a number of reasons, it would be logical to assume that the relative even-handedness of Soviet sports journalism during 1980, as well as the alternative narrative of a 'pure Olympics', was prompted by the Western boycott. On the one hand, the lack of attention to the Soviet medal count could have resulted from the simple fact that the USSR's principal rival in this area was not present for the Games. If the US team had come to Moscow, Soviet propagandists may well have been motivated to concentrate to a much greater extent on how much gold their athletes won; with the comparison with the Americans unavailable, Soviet sporting pre-eminence had less political resonance. Secondly, the Soviets were not only deprived of a worthy opponent by the boycott, but the very occurrence of the latter made a more detailed discussion of the medal table more risky from the propagandist's point of view. It could have drawn the Soviet reader's attention to the fact that a number of highly successful sporting nations (the USA; West Germany; Japan) were absent; this could in turn work against the state's goals in hinting that the

[91] See the following in *Pravda*: L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, A. Iusin, 'World Sport Wins', 22.07.80, p.6; L. Lebedev, N. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, A. Iusin, 'Olympic Universities', 24.07.80, p.6; Unknown author, 'Olympic Diary', 24.07.80, 25.07.80, p.1, 26.07.80, p.1; Lebedev, Mel'nikov, Otkalenko, Iusin, 'Spirit'; L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, V. Stefanovich, V. Chebakov, A. Iusin, 'Sport is the Arena of Cooperation', 27.07.80, p.6.

imperialist enemy had managed to tarnish the USSR's great spectacle. Focusing instead on the idea that the Games had become a celebration of non-antagonistic, joyful sporting endeavour, free from all political controversy, carried the implication that the boycott had been a complete *failure*, entirely irrelevant to 1980's denouement, in addition to allowing for the further inculcation of national pride around the idea of Soviet socialism's morally upright, 'internationalist' approach to foreign relations. Finally, emphasising the multinational character of the athletes present for the Games and the prevailing internationalist spirit among them may have been seen as a way to drive away any inconvenient thoughts among the Soviet populace that the boycott signified foreign hostility towards their country and/or the global isolation of the USSR more generally.

However, *Pravda* did not just focus the Soviet people's attention on the successes of the Olympiad's sporting dimension alone. Typically, its journalists made an effort to show how the Games' proceedings amounted to a political victory for the Soviet Union in a wider sense as well. In particular, a follow-up to the earlier focus on selling the Games as an opportunity to promote the USSR's reputation can be seen in several articles in *Pravda* from June 1980, which highlighted both the impressive degree of foreign athletes' preparations and public anticipation of the Olympiad.[92] These pieces were written in a tone which emphasised that the USSR as host country was increasingly at the centre of the world's attention, with the implication that the authorities' promise to promote Soviet pre-eminence and inculcate goodwill towards the Soviet Union through the Games was coming true. The image of the communist superpower basking in positive global attention was later made more explicit in *Pravda* during and immediately after the event, with the widespread coverage in the foreign media said to have ensured that 'millions of people on all continents are at present looking to the capital of the XXII Games' to witness the sporting spectacular.[93] Such a narrative was reassuringly distant from the reality of global concern over Soviet 'aggression' in Afghanistan and the fierce opposition of numerous Western commentators to the Moscow Games.[94]

This theme merged with a constant focus in *Pravda* throughout July and August on the high praise for both the material conditions in the USSR and the organisation of the Soviet Games themselves which was supposedly being expressed by all manner of foreign guests present in Moscow, as well as by commentators in foreign newspapers. Soviet people were

[92] See the 'On Course for Moscow' series of articles in *Pravda*, 09.06.80, p.8; 19.06.1980, p.6; 30.06.1980, p.8; 07.07.1980, p.8.

[93] See the following articles in *Pravda:* L. Lebedev, I. Mel'nikov, V. Otkalenko, A. Iusin, 'For the Whole World, For the Sake of Peace', 28.07.80, p.8; Unknown author, 'Olympic Diary', 27.07.80, p.1; Unknown author, 'Unforgettable meetings', 02.08.80, p.5; Iu. Kuznetsov, 'The Victory of Olympic Ideals', 13.08.80, p.6.

[94] Hulme, *Political Olympics*, 43-75; Sarantakes, *Dropping the Torch*, *passim*.

repeatedly informed that foreign athletes, international sports officials, tourists and journalists were immensely impressed by the state-of-the-art facilities in the Olympic cities and the USSR's innate hospitality.[95] As with the earlier motifs of domestic propaganda in 1975-79, this focus was likely intended to both justify the Olympiad before the population, as a prime opportunity to prove the Soviet Union's superiority before the world, and further instill patriotism and pride in the achievements of socialist society.

Finally, one can note that immediately preceding and during the Games themselves, a much more prosaic depiction of Soviet Olympians was given in *Pravda* compared to that which had come before, with the emphasis on their nature as the 'new men' of the communist future and as ardent patriots stripped away and replaced with more understated praise of their impressive sporting abilities, determination and physical endurance.[96] Although such a depiction did not exclude Soviet athletes from the ranks of role models for the population, it was certainly a less potent image. The deeply ideological portrayal of Soviet athletes was thus replaced in 1980 with a more conventional approach which one might expect to find in the sports journalism of virtually any country. This may have been the result of the more general turn towards an 'internationalist' theme in Olympics coverage noted above; declaring the country's sportsmen to simply be outstanding athletes rather than communist supermen was arguably more congruent with the idea of the equality and brotherhood of all athletes at the Games being fostered by the Soviet state.

The Olympic Sports Programme

The second crucial element of the domestic programme for the Olympics, carried out on a scale almost equal to that of the propaganda campaign, focused on encouraging sporting activities in Soviet society. This stemmed from the Soviet leadership's instruction (issued as part of its initial December 1975 decree) that the Olympics ought to 'facilitate the further development of the mass physical culture movement in the USSR.'[97] A year after these

[95] See the following in *Pravda:* the series 'Our guests' Opinions' 21.07.1980, p.8; 23.07.80, p.6; 25.07.80, p.6; V. Otkalenko, V. Chebakov, 'First Days in Moscow: Olympians' Stories', 02.07.1980, p.6; Unknown author, 'An Outstanding Event in World Sport', 22.07.80, p.5; Unknown author, 'In the Mirror of the World's Press: Outstanding Results Have Been Achieved', 31.07.80, p.6; V. Chebakov, '"Thank you, Olympiad!" The Games' Participants and Guests Speak Out', 04.08.80, p.8; Unknown author, 'Everything Was Flawless', 11.08.80, p.8.

[96] See the following in *Pravda:* V. Chebakov; 'The Difficult Path to the Pedestal', 09.06.80, p.8; T. Sergeevna, 'The Summit is Always in Front: Preparing for the Olympics, 16.06.1980, p.6; S. Pavlov, 'Waiting for Sporting Records', 19.06.1980, p.6; S. Belits-Geiman, 'Reforging Labour into Gold', 23.06.1980, p.6; Unknown author, 'Interview with Medal-Holders'; Unknown author, 'Interview with a Champion: "I'm searching for the wind…"', 01.08.80, p.6.

[97] RGANI, f.5, op.69, d.423, l.2.

instructions were issued, VTsSPS Secretary Bogatikov made clear to his socialist-bloc counterparts that the Soviet authorities saw the orchestration of the Olympics as 'an opportunity…to turn physical culture from a mass into a nationwide phenomenon.'[98] This priority was constantly reiterated in documents issued by participating organisations in subsequent years.[99] Consequently, the authorities made huge efforts in 1977-80 to roll out Olympics-themed sports campaigns all across the country and in every part of society.

Once again, the VTsSPS and its various branches played a key role in this endeavour. The Professional Union of Metallurgy Industry Workers, for example, claimed to be making strenuous efforts in 1977 to encourage its workers together with their families to take up regular participation in sport as part of the long-standing national sports programme, 'Ready for Labour and Defence' (known by its Russian acronym of GTO).[100] Similarly, in the same year the trade union for oil and gas industry workers issued directives to all of its republic-level, regional, provincial, municipal and even factory-level branches which encouraged all of its workers to join existing state sport programmes.[101] Sporting events dedicated to the Olympics were also organised among such professions as water transport workers, railwaymen, and employees of the food-processing, heavy machine-building, chemical and petrochemical industries, again through the trade union network. Branches of the VTsSPS in the Estonian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Georgian, Armenian, and Latvian SSRs as well as the RSFSR were also mobilised for this task.[102] Among the events they organised in the late 1970s were summer and winter decathlons; boxing, wrestling, football, volleyball and basketball tournaments, and skiing, weightlifting, cycling and track and field events.[103]

The VTsSPS appears to have been outdone here by the Komsomol, which undertook a particularly large amount of work to ensure that the Olympics sports campaign was carried out meticulously at the local level, among large numbers of young people in individual urban neighbourhoods. The Komsomol organisations of Moscow's Voroshilovskii district, for example, reported in 1978 that neighbourhood Olympics-themed sports tournaments were organised during both summer and winter among amateur teams drawn from local industrial enterprises, offices, educational institutions, and housing committees. In the preceding year, 13,392 inhabitants had achieved a grade in the GTO programme thanks to the Olympics campaign, bringing the total number of people in the district engaged in sport to 26,494. A further 10,000 school pupils in the district had taken part in 16 different

[98] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7, l.10.
[99] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.220, ll.15-16; f.17, op.149, d.798, l.35; f.17, op.149, d.807, ll.127-133; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.17, l.11; f.5451, op.67, d.28, ll.5-6; document no.136, p.400.
[100] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.18, ll.36-7.
[101] *Ibid.*, ll.38-9.
[102] *Ibid.*, ll.25-29, ll.40-1, ll.42-5, ll.48-50, ll.53-8, ll.66-7, ll,73-7, ll.92-5, ll.129-30.
[103] *Ibid.*, l.6, ll.51-52; f.5451, op.67, d.29, ll.2-3.

competitions in various sports throughout 1977-78.[104] This case is fairly representative of the scale and activities of the Olympic sports programme carried out in many other areas of Moscow by local Komsomol committees in the late 1970s, including those of the Gagarinskii, Dzerzhinskii, Kalininskii, Krasnopresnenskii and Oktiabr'skii districts. The authorities in all of these areas sent copious amounts of data to the Komsomol leadership on numerous local sports initiatives which they had launched among Muscovites from various walks of life and of all ages.[105] Several thousand Komsomol members also took part in the Olympic Torch Relay in June-July 1980, which was conceptualised by the authorities as an important part of both the propaganda and sport campaigns.[106]

Adding to the impression of the Komsomol's attention to detail in this sphere is the fact that another promotional sports campaign, 'The Olympics are for Everyone,' was specially introduced by the XVIII Congress of the Komsomol in 1978 as part of the organisation's contribution to the Olympics project.[107] It called for every single child and young person in the country to take up sport, thereby effectively making measures to develop the Olympics sports programme a task for all branches of the youth league in the USSR.[108] This campaign produced numerous individual sport tournaments among the labour collectives of factories, building sites, state and collective farms, and educational institutions.[109] In 1976-78 the Komsomol organisation of Moscow State University organised numerous large-scale sporting competitions and one-day events, including in athletics, water polo, swimming, football, volleyball, cross-country racing, ski-racing, and gymnastics. Its success was such that it could boast that the entire student body of the institution was to some extent involved in physical culture ahead of the Olympics. The university's sports collective numbered 18,542 by the end of 1977, and during that year and the next it awarded around 5,000 basic-category sports qualifications.[110] Furthermore, a plenum of the Komsomol leadership decreed at the end of 1979 that 38,000 Komsomol workers be sent to Soviet schools and into individual city neighbourhoods to give a boost to the organisation of Olympics-themed sports competitions among children.[111] A report to the organisation's headquarters from the Gagarinskii district committee in Moscow lamented that it had still not managed by 1978 to get every single local enterprise in its jurisdiction to contribute

[104] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.15-22.
[105] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.74-77, ll.88-93, ll.121-133, ll.165-90; f.M-1, op.66, d.217, ll.1-14; f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.1-2.
[106] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10; f.M-1, op.66, d.480, ll.5-6, ll.117-18; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.35, l.11.
[107] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.220, ll.25.
[108] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.487, ll.9-12.
[109] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.12, l.13.
[110] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.217, ll.143-147.
[111] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.11-14.

participants to the Olympics sports campaign.[112] As with other aspects of life in the Soviet Union, the authorities were clearly working according to targets in their attempts to enforce participation in the pre-Games campaign – and it seems they wouldn't be satisfied until they had reached almost the entire young and working-age population of the USSR.

Unsurprisingly given the resources of the organisations involved, the Olympics sports campaign eventually spread across much of the Soviet Union. The Komsomol mobilised its members for yet another programme in the late 1970s, entitled 'From a GTO Badge to an Olympic Medal', which reached as far as the remote Russian cities of Kamchatka, Chita, Krasnoiarsk, Cheliabinsk, and Omsk, in addition to the non-Russian republics of Ukraine, Belorussia and Lithuania. In the tiny Moldavian SSR, events connected with the Olympics-sponsored GTO programme in 1979 took place in eight different cities, including in the capital Kishinev, and involved 1.16 million people (out of a total population of 4 million). The same campaign mobilised 350,000 people in Estonia, increased the number of amateur athletes by 43,600 in Latvia to ensure that 32.9% of the republic's population was regularly engaging in sport, and involved large swathes of the rural populations of the Altai, Primorskii, Stavropol', Kuibyshev and Orel regions of the RSFSR, as well as those of the Chuvash and Mordovian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics.[113] The reports sent by regional Komsomol secretaries, such as those of the Kamchatka and Krasnoiarsk regions, show that by the final months before the Games, the level of officially sanctioned sporting activity engaged in by Soviet citizens in accordance with the joint Olympics-GTO campaign had become all-encompassing among the general population in even the most remote areas. In the case of the latter region, by the start of 1980 a total of 329,863 people had joined the GTO programme and 24,586 had achieved their first rank within it in accordance with this joint campaign.[114]

By 1980 the VTsSPS claimed that 'tens of millions' of people had participated in the Olympic sports programme.[115] In a concluding report to the CC written in 1981, the Orgcom noted that more than 9,000 new physical culture collectives had been created during the 'Olympic cycle' of 1975-80. The ranks of dedicated amateur athletes (*fizkul'turniki*) had grown by 6.5 million overall, and current figures stood at 37.5 million GTO programme badge-holders, 36 million basic-category sportsmen, 800,000 first-category sportsmen and 'Master of Sport' candidates, and around 22,000 people who had been awarded the title of 'Master of Sport of the USSR.'[116] However, one should be cautious in accepting that this

[112] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.74-77.
[113] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.482, ll.2-3.
[114] *Ibid*., ll.8-9, ll.15-16.
[115] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45, ll.55-8.
[116] GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58, ll.51-3.

precipitous rise in the number of people participating in sport was *entirely* the result of the pre-Games campaigns alone. Middle-ranking administrators may well have simply slapped the Olympics label on a number of state sports initiatives and competitions which had already been planned for implementation during these years in any case, in order to exaggerate the significance of this aspect of the Games' domestic programme for their superiors in line with the pompous discourse on national political and social life which emerged during the Brezhnev period. (One can certainly see this in the case of the joint GTO-Olympics initiative.) Nevertheless, it does seem that a significant portion of the sporting campaigns, and therefore a large amount of state-sanctioned sporting activity in a whole number of fields and across Soviet society, were indeed carried out in these years solely on account of the upcoming Olympiad. It therefore cannot be doubted that the Games gave at least some kind of extra stimulus to the state's attempts to aggressively expand its 'physical culture' programme which was ongoing in the 1970s.

One can make sense of this additional campaign by looking to the long-term goals of state sport programmes in the USSR. One of the most important functions of Soviet sport was to inculcate a sense of affinity with the ideological goals of the state and mobilise citizens to participate enthusiastically in public affairs.[117] By the 1970s, this had led to a particular emphasis on the correct socialisation of the younger generation through state-controlled sport programmes, in an attempt to ensure youthful enthusiasm was channelled into activities which helped realise the state's goals. In particular, in the post-war period, physical culture was seen in official circles as an 'antidote to deviance' among youth.[118] State administrators in the Brezhnev era were aware of the increasing inclination towards non-conformist activities on the part of Soviet youth and the rising amount of crime they perpetrated, with official concern about this issue appearing to increase particularly in the early 1980s.[119] It therefore seems highly likely that the Olympics sports campaign, which was taking place in the same period, came to be seen among officials as a constituent element in this contemporary strategy to use sport to counteract lifestyles and mentalities which undermined the social and ideological order. Indeed, in 1978, a decree of the Moscow Komsomol which set out plans for the next phase of the Olympics sports programme referred to the idea of inculcating physical culture among the younger

[117] S. Grant, *Physical Culture and Sport in Soviet Society: Propaganda, Acculturation, and Transformation in the 1920s and 1930s* (New York and London, 2013), 31-2.
[118] J. Riordan, *Sport in Soviet Society: Development of Sport and Physical Education in Russia and the USSR*. (Cambridge, 1977), 197-98.
[119] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 44-53.

generation as 'one of the main ways to provide [youth] with a communist upbringing.'[120] Occasionally, Komsomol officials also mentioned that the Olympics sports programme was meant to contribute to the rehabilitation of youths currently on the police's list of convicted juvenile delinquents.[121]

Several other key considerations determined the development of state-controlled sport in the USSR during this period, including the need to improve physical health for the sake of raising productivity and to prepare large segments of the population for military service.[122] Given the Soviet state's ongoing obsession in the 1970s with enhancing the USSR's defence capabilities (including in terms of creating a trained military reserve), together with Brezhnev-era officials' awareness of increasing problems with national health and low productivity, one can reasonably infer that these purposes underlay the Olympics sports programme as well.[123] In fact, on at least one occasion – in a report complaining of deficiencies in the development of the Olympic sports programme – Komsomol officials referred to the importance of physical culture explicitly in terms of 'managing [people's] ability to work' and as 'one of the methods of preparing youth to defend the Motherland.'[124]

Overall, what all of these goals of Soviet sport, and thus of the Olympics sports programme, had in common was their aim to maintain the stability and legitimacy of the existing system. One can therefore appreciate how this particular programme was no less bound up with the CPSU's long-term policy agenda than the domestic propaganda campaign. Once again however, whilst it drew in a significant portion of Soviet youth, this aspect of the Olympics campaign cannot really be compared to the kind of mass political mobilisation seen in the BAM project, or any other mega-project of the Soviet era. Certainly, one could argue that there was a basic similarity between the two in that young people were encouraged to participate in the sports programme for the sake of their own orthodox socialisation into the political system, and this was almost certainly an anticipated by-product of the same constituency's involvement in mega-projects like BAM (for their attempts to forge the society of the future as part of such schemes logically entailed a commitment to official goals and values). But on the whole, the large-scale competitions which the programme entailed, in repeatedly bringing thousands of people into the

[120] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.1-6.
[121] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.1-5; f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.15-22; f.M-1, op.66, d.217, ll.1-14; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11, ll.62-3.
[122] J. Riordan, "The Impact of Communism on Sport", *Historical Social Research*, volume 32, number 1 (119), 2007, 111-13.
[123] Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 35-6, 78, 91-2; S. Lovell, *The Shadow of War: Russia and the USSR, 1941 to the Present* (Oxford, 2010), 123-4; Ruffley, *Children of Victory*, 73-5; Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 226-7.
[124] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215, ll.17-25; f.M-1, op.66, d.216, ll.74-77.

country's public spaces 'in honour of' the upcoming Games, amounted simply to displays of enthusiasm for public affairs carried out by all kinds of citizens – spectators as well as participants. They therefore bore a strong resemblance to the 'ritualistic acts of public dissimulation', such as May Day rallies and rubber-stamp elections, which defined formal political life in the Soviet Union.[125] (The Olympic Torch Relay is a case in point. The arrival of the relay procession in Soviet towns and cities along the route to Moscow often became the occasion for organising mass rallies involving speeches by local public figures, performances by artistic collectives, and memorial ceremonies at monuments to Lenin and the Soviet war dead.)[126] Political socialisation and displays of public support for the CPSU were clearly important to the regime. Yet much like the propaganda campaign, the underlying objective of these efforts was simply to reinforce more long-standing policies which aimed to maintain the stability of the political status quo. This was clearly the opposite outcome of mobilising the Komsomol for achieving key social and economic objectives of the communist project – for by definition the latter implied the transformation rather than maintenance of current circumstances. The impressive scale of the 1980 sports campaign, much like the mountains of propaganda produced and disseminated for the same occasion, belied its complete lack of any far-reaching ideological goals for the Soviet state.

Conclusion

In addition to having a fundamental purpose in Soviet foreign policy, the Olympics project was closely integrated into the Soviet state's domestic policy agenda in 1975-80. Both the internal propaganda and sport campaigns amounted to major political and organisational tasks for key parts of the party-state apparatus in the later 1970s, above all for the Trade Union Council and the Komsomol. However, the substantial administrative responsibilities for these campaigns given to the latter organisation did not, in fact, signify any overwhelming domestic importance to the Olympiad in ideological terms. The CPSU never found a viable way to convert its orchestration of the Olympic Games into a mobilisational project which could in some way contribute to the construction of a new communist society. In turn, there was no scope within the project for the Komsomol to once again fulfil the role of a vanguard political force which would help transform the country in line with the Party's utopian schemes. Instead, the grandiose, inherently political sports festival was

[125] See M.K. Dimitrov, "Tracking Public Opinion Under Authoritarianism: The Case of the Soviet Union During the Brezhnev Era", *Russian History*, volume 41, number 3 (2014), 330.
[126] RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.479, ll.1-10; f.M-1, op.66, d.477, l.10; GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.35, ll.11-15; f.9610, op.1, d.127, l.45.

understood to be more readily compatible with some of the state's long-established strategies for maintaining its legitimacy among the Soviet population – it was to this end that both the propaganda and sports programmes were unmistakeably directed. The domestic purposes of Moscow-80 in turn became enmeshed in the Brezhnev leadership's priority to maintain its power and sustain the political status quo, rather than act as a stimulus for its ideological ambitions.

The USSR therefore adjusted its ambitions for the Olympiad at home to fit the fundamental nature of the task at hand, as one which had been predetermined by an external actor in a way which understandably gave no scope to pursuing the bolder elements of its domestic political agenda (that is, a short-lived, essentially mundane infrastructure programme and sporting and media event, the parameters of which were set by the IOC, rather than a developmental project designed to mobilise sections of the population for the achievement of more long-term goals). This was despite the fact that the project was characterised in official pronouncements as one of the major events in the country's internal political development during the 1975-80 period. In view of all the evidence, one can appreciate that this was essentially empty rhetoric, a product of the triumphalist discourse which prevailed inside the party-state during these years, rather than a reliable indication of the state's genuine conceptualisation of 1980's domestic political significance.

The Soviet approach to exploiting the Olympics at home is indicative of a mentality prevailing within the party-state during the Brezhnev period defined by its tendency towards inertia and to the maintenance of political stability rather than to far-sighted, ideologically-driven reform or modernisation efforts. Whilst the contemporaneous BAM project was hardly a success story,[127] it did have at its core a crude conception of how to carry the USSR into the future, towards the achievement of the regime's ultimate ideological goals, on the basis of a heroic, mass mobilisation of youth and utopian propaganda which drew on the heritage of transformational campaigns carried out under Stalin and Khrushchev. In contrast, the banal, reassuring images of the national propaganda campaign conducted around the Olympics aimed to keep Soviet society standing still rather than rouse it to meaningful political action – to lull it into accepting that the glorious Soviet present was immutable and sacrosanct, and thus required no major alteration carried out by the people's collective efforts. Similarly, the sports campaign was clearly designed to inculcate orthodox patterns of socialisation and produce additional public displays of simulated enthusiasm for official public life, in a way which could only reinforce passivity. All this indicates that, during the 1970s, the ambition and far-sightedness inherent in BAM

[127] Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 151-56.

to some extent coexisted in the thinking of the policy-making elite alongside and seemingly in tension with a more cautious mentality symbolised by the Olympics.

This attempt to bolster the legitimacy of the Soviet system through the Olympiad represented the official attempt to extract benefits from the project in the domestic political sphere. However, as with all other areas of the organisers' activities, the character of the domestic campaign was also partly shaped by an understanding of the possible short-term risks inherent in the project, which needed to be dealt with regardless of the degree to which the Games could be integrated into the state's policy agenda. The state diversified the themes of its internal propaganda campaign in order to both sell the Olympiad as a policy venture to the population (and thereby avert the risk of its colossal disruption and expense causing popular discontent) and strengthen the population's wariness of foreigners (to fend off any external influences perceived as harmful to social and political stability).

With all these issues accounted for, the implications of the domestic campaign for understanding the Olympics as a whole and the wider era in which they took place, together with those arising from the discussion in previous chapters, can now be addressed.

Conclusion

The first part of this chapter reviews the reasons for the occurrence of the XXII Olympic Games in the USSR and summarises their overall significance to the Soviet policy agenda. The second part considers in depth the implications emerging from this account for historians' conceptualisation of the political history of the Brezhnev era before moving on to suggest some alternative approaches to studying it.

Understanding 1980 as an Individual Event

Why a Moscow Olympiad?

It has been suggested throughout this thesis that the origins of and subsequent impetus for the Soviet Olympic project can be attributed to a model of decision-making which prioritised avoiding certain risks and attaining various benefits for the host country. Right from the start, the drawn-out deliberations over whether or not to bid for the Games in 1956-69 were shaped by differing views among Soviet officials and top politicians regarding the ratio of potential advantages to disadvantages that would result from such a venture. Initially, most of them apparently believed the possibility of non-attendance by the USSR's enemies (and consequent political humiliation), as well as the likely economic strain of the Games, would outweigh or annul any increases in the USSR's global influence and improvement in its international reputation that could be achieved and which had attracted them to the idea in the first place. As the prevailing international and domestic circumstances shifted, however, a majority of Soviet policy-makers clearly came round to the opposite view, and threw their weight behind bids to host the XXI and XXII Olympics in 1969-74. Brezhnev's last-minute proposal to cancel the event, moreover, was clearly based on renewed fears of the aforementioned risks – and was rejected, in all likelihood, because his colleagues in the leadership came to believe the problems of *not* proceeding with the Games now outweighed the advantages following the successful bid.

Equally, the various elements of the Olympiad's economic, security, international and domestic programmes implemented after the project's launch were determined by Soviet policy-makers' desire to reap the political benefits and avoid all possible risks which had either been perceived as inherent in the project in preceding years or which became apparent during the course of 1975-80. The Orgcom's material preparations together with its international propaganda efforts constituted the principal methods by which the USSR sought to enhance its global influence through the Olympics. Aspects of the economic and

security programmes, meanwhile, combined to avert the possibility of an excessive strain on municipal infrastructure, breaches in national security, and disruptions to public order, whilst simultaneously concealing the unattractive aspects of late Soviet economic and social life – all of which had the potential to embarrass the authorities. The threat of unhealthy influences on the social order posed by an influx of foreign guests to the USSR in 1980 was counteracted by a combination of security measures and domestic propaganda. The domestic campaign's goal to boost the legitimacy of the regime at home and improve the effectiveness of the CPSU's sport programmes in terms of the achievement of their various goals, together with attempts to acquire new technology and hard currency reserves through the economic programme, can be seen as advantages of secondary importance which the state hoped to achieve. Likewise, the possibility of a financial blow to the state's coffers and of public disapproval of the Games also appear to have been less serious hazards which various measures carried out by the Orgcom were designed to bypass.

The fact that policy-makers not only undertook great efforts to reduce the possibility of negative consequences emerging from 1980 to a minimum, but also displayed a great deal of determination to extract significant political advantages for themselves shows how the Soviet state was playing to win with its Olympic Games. The impetus underlying Moscow-80 was not simply the hosts' desire to reach the finish line without any detrimental effects on the polity, but to ensure that they actually gained something which they had previously lacked, or otherwise augmented previous policy successes. This sense of the Soviet state's ambitions is reinforced when one considers that 1980 ultimately served purposes that went far beyond the USSR's original interest in exploiting the sporting elements of the Olympic franchise alone. Soviet politicians were not attracted to hosting the summer Games simply by the possibility of increasing their sportsmen's gold medal count, integral as this was to this sphere of Cold War competition. Conceived in a political system in which all initiatives had to serve the interests of the CPSU, the Olympic project was designed to have a positive impact on wider spheres of both domestic and foreign policy. The extent to which these specific areas of policy were central to the Soviet state's agenda is discussed in the next section.

The Olympics and the Soviet Policy Agenda

An early, overt indication that the state's goal was to harmonise the Olympics with its wider priorities in domestic and foreign policy came in 1975, when Brezhnev came out in opposition to the project on account of the negative effects he believed it could have on

both the USSR's economic progress and its international prestige. But even earlier, the genesis of the Moscow Olympiad indicates that it was originally supposed to serve an important purpose in the USSR's ongoing attempts to expand its influence over the administration of the International Olympic Committee, which was a not insignificant element of the country's foreign policy agenda in its own right. However, the weight of evidence suggests that this particular goal was superseded in 1975-80 by a more wide-ranging agenda for the project, as the imperative to simultaneously avoid the risks and obtain the perceived benefits led to an official focus on four major areas of Olympics administration, within which relations with the IOC only formed one part. The result was that significant material, financial, administrative and manpower resources were brought to bear on the project by the leadership in order to carry out the various economic preparations, security measures, operations relating to international propaganda and diplomacy, and the organisation of the internal propaganda and sport programmes. Each of these elements clearly had its counterpart in a particular area of the Soviet state's more permanent activities, including its tight control over nearly all aspects of the country's economic life, the maintenance of a powerful and often repressive security apparatus to oversee state-society relations and counter external threats, the promotion of socialism abroad, and a diverse mixture of policies geared towards maintaining the legitimacy of state socialism among the Soviet population. The Olympiad thus intertwined with some of the most fundamental directions of government policy, becoming an important element on the agenda of the Soviet state in the middle- to late-Brezhnev years. Despite being more short-lived than the BAM Railway project of the same epoch and costing substantially less, Moscow-80's multifaceted nature nevertheless ensured that it drew on the resources of a larger array of Party and state agencies.

In turn, one might ponder whether the Olympiad was understood by Soviet policy-makers as crucial to the actual short- or long-term *success* of the various aspects of foreign and domestic policy upon which it impacted, as opposed to simply being seen as an additional obligation which taxed the resources of those parts of the party-state charged with realising it. As chapter five demonstrated, in domestic policy the Games had no significant role to play in mobilising the population for the long-term goals of the communist project. Whilst the Olympiad was seen as a useful cause around which to base additional domestic propaganda and state sport campaigns, there is no indication that state officials believed efforts to secure the legitimacy and stability of the regime at home, to which these two long-term aspects of domestic policy were directed, hinged on the boost they would receive from Moscow-80. Likewise, there is nothing in the archival record to

suggest that 1980's economic or security aspects were meant to have a major beneficial effect on the functioning of the command economy or the work of the security agencies. Instead, the overall purpose of these latter two sub-programmes was to facilitate the achievement, in the short-term, of the Games' primary goal – which was to be found in *foreign* policy. It was in international affairs that 1980 was supposed to have its most significant positive impact on wider state policies, in particular in terms of substantially increasing the volumes of international propaganda the country produced. As noted, by the mid-seventies propaganda proselytising the virtues of Soviet socialism had been continuously churned out by the USSR for distribution among the populations of both capitalist and developing states already for several decades. The deluge of similar materials produced around the Olympics throughout 1975-80 was almost certainly intended to provide a significant boost to this policy, judging by various explicit statements made by Soviet officials and the overall thrust of the Orgcom's work as revealed by the archival record. The organisers' economic and security preparations, moreover, were designed to reinforce the effectiveness of the Games' contribution to the USSR's long-running international propaganda operation by creating a short-lived but spectacular Potemkin Village, which would showcase socialism to the outside world more vividly than any ordinary promotional film, article or exhibition could be expected to achieve. Taken as a whole, the combined use of both conventional media formats and the one-time exploitation of Moscow as a vast, physical propaganda canvas as part of the Olympics project probably amounted to the single most ambitious attempt to wage ideological warfare on the outside world ever undertaken by the Soviet state.

An effective way to conceptualise this long-running, multifaceted international campaign to promote socialism of which Moscow-80 formed a part, and in turn to comprehend the overall significance of the project itself, is in terms of the concept of *soft power*. Joseph Nye defines soft power as distinct from 'hard power' – the use by a given state of its economic and/or military might to coerce other states in to adopting political positions in line with its interests. Soft power instead constitutes 'the ability to establish [the political] preferences' of governments or individuals through the use of 'intangible assets such as an attractive...culture, political values and institutions, and policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority.' If used effectively, a given population can be induced into 'admiring [a given nation's] values…[and] emulating [its] examples.'[1] Nye acknowledged the relevance of this concept to the USSR's international behaviour, characterising its post-war propaganda campaign as an explicit attempt to exercise soft

[1] Nye, *Soft Power*, 5-6.

power in the Cold War context.[2] One can in turn conclude that, for Soviet officials, the Games represented an extremely important – perhaps, the *pivotal* – tool for enhancing the USSR's soft power in the period 1975-80, and certainly stand as a more sustained attempt in this respect than was the case with the 1957 Youth Festival. In fact, seen from this comparative perspective, 1980 may have represented the culmination of the USSR's efforts to augment its soft power throughout the entire Cold War period.

At least one other historian has also concluded that the Olympic project represented an important attempt to improve the attractiveness of Soviet socialism beyond the borders of the Iron Curtain. However, Robert Edelman interprets the Soviet state's ultimate goal here somewhat differently, claiming that: '[Since 1980 was] the first Olympics to take place in a socialist country…the USSR, while communist, could now…claim to be just as good as the rest of the world...[It] was not to be seen as a better place than any other but rather as…a "normal and civilised" nation. Foreign guests were supposed to come to Moscow to see...a place that was really not so different than the rest of the world.'[3] Edelman's stress on establishing the *equal* status of the Soviet way of life and standard of living in the minds of the international public through 1980 fundamentally challenges the interpretation that the Soviets sought to prove the *superiority* of their system in all its dimensions. Yet this view is arguably unconvincing. A close examination of Soviet propaganda materials and internal correspondence (which Edelman apparently did not consult) clearly shows the organisers' desire to prove the overall political, economic and social advantages of the Soviet system compared to capitalism. The Soviet Union thereby sought to achieve the ultimate degree of soft power, capable of inducing other countries to emulate it to the detriment of all of its rivals. Incidentally, that Edelman's analysis is incorrect in this respect underlines once again the degree of the USSR's *ambitions* for the Games. In his view, the objective was not so much to put the socialist superpower on a pedestal among the global community, but simply raise its reputation to the same level as that of other nations, following a period of demonisation as a barbaric Stalinist dictatorship. That the Soviet Union indeed had such a negative reputation to varying degrees in various countries around the world is in little doubt. Therefore, the fact that Edelman's claim of the Soviet desire to merely reach parity in its reputation with other nations can be refuted, in favour of the view that the organisers were attempting to show their superiority, indicates in turn that the mountain which the organisers aimed to climb in terms of improving their country's public image was in fact a great deal higher – and, in all likelihood, even further beyond their reach.

[2] *Ibid*., 73-4.
[3] Edelman, "Stalinism", 149-150.

In view of all this, it becomes clear that Moscow-80 was unlike any previous grandiose scheme undertaken by the Soviet state. The various large-scale projects under Stalin, Khrushchev's Virgin Lands Campaign, the BAM Railway of the 1970s, and many other such schemes were all aimed primarily at furthering the Soviet Union's *domestic* socio-economic and political development. The Olympiad occupies a unique place in the country's political history as the only mega-project aimed primarily at advancing Soviet goals outside the USSR's borders. Indeed, the organisation of an international propaganda campaign for 1980 and the construction of the Olympics' Potemkin Village effectively shifted the focus for one of the central goals of previous mega-projects – inspiring Soviet citizens about the inevitability and desirability of the communist future – onto *foreign* populations still living beyond the control of the Kremlin. As demonstrated in chapter five, the Olympiad was devoid of any revolutionary impulse directed towards the 'construction of communism' – the thread that ran through all other, domestically-orientated mega-projects from the 1930s to the 1970s. Instead, it was geared towards the antithesis of revolutionary transformation: preserving the political status quo within the USSR. Yet this should not lead one to downplay the Moscow Games' important place in Soviet history, for it nevertheless represented a highly significant moment in the USSR's attempts to realise one of its equivalent, overarching ideological goals in international relations – the augmentation of the Soviet Union's influence around the world, to the detriment of capitalism.

The Olympics and the Historiography of the Brezhnev Era

Reconsidering Soviet Foreign Policy

The evidence presented above challenges some of the conventional perceptions of the goals and general character of Soviet foreign policy during the Brezhnev years – in particular, that it combined a priority to maintain stable relations with the West with the aim to expand Soviet influence in the Third World, and at the same time was increasingly pushed onto the defensive by growing international criticism of communist human rights abuses. The interpretation offered here instead points to a different view of Soviet intentions in the international arena, which coincides more with that put forward by a number of earlier studies written at various points during the Cold War which focused on the USSR's post-1945 propaganda offensive. These works often perceived Soviet foreign policy behaviour in this period to have been more ideologically-charged and ambitious than pragmatic and cautious and more aggressive than defensive; they saw in Soviet international propaganda activities a genuine ambition to provoke instability and radical transformation in the West as well as the Third World, thereby advancing global socialism's

sphere of influence.[4] The fact that the USSR made use of the Olympics to orchestrate a massive international propaganda campaign adds credibility to this view, in that it demonstrates the remarkable degree of energy that was being expended by various parts of the Soviet state during the 1970s on proclaiming the virtues of contemporary socialism in regions located all around the world which were still beyond the Politburo's control, and which constituted both the margins and the epicentre of the Cold War conflict. Judging by the wider goals of Soviet international propaganda as defined by Baruch Hazan, the singular purpose of this drive to push the idea of the superiority of the socialist system through Moscow-80 was to help foster a decisive shift in foreign public opinion in favour of the Soviet Union. (The statements of the Orgcom's propaganda chief, which surely reflected the tone of policy coming down from on high if not the Politburo's specific instructions, said as much.) Such changes in foreign attitudes were in turn, according to Hazan, meant to produce shifts in behaviour among the target populations which were 'congruent with the specific interests and ends of the [the Soviet state].'[5] It is difficult to imagine what change in behaviour in the West, in particular, which Soviet officials could ultimately have wished for in conducting such a policy other than increased popular support for pro-USSR political parties and a reorientation of hostile capitalist governments' policies along the same philo-Soviet lines. In the final analysis, the end result the Soviet side must have desired from its international propaganda campaign (and therefore which the Games were meant to contribute towards) was the transformation of key Western states and NATO members from enemies into either additional satellites, or at least countries which were no longer militarily and ideologically arrayed against the Soviet Union. Indeed, if one accepts that the goals Hazan ascribed to Soviet international propaganda essentially fit Nye's definition of soft power (inducing a population into 'admiring [a given nation's] values…[and] emulating [its] examples'),[6] then it is logical to infer that the USSR sought to produce foreign popular support for its socialist system and in turn, public pressure for reproduction of its policies.

One might conclude therefore that there was a channel of Brezhnev-era Soviet foreign policy which genuinely aimed to undermine the political systems of its capitalist rivals from within, neutralising the anti-Soviet orientation of their governments through propaganda in a manner which departs from the image of stability and conventional diplomacy said to have dominated Soviet policy towards the West in the era of détente. Whilst this notion might require something of a leap in one's thought process, it is to be remembered that during the same period the USSR took a keen interest in supporting various communist and

[4] See, for instance, F. Barghoorn, *The Soviet Cultural Offensive* (Princeton, 1960); Barghoorn, *Foreign Propaganda*; Hazan, *Impregnational Propaganda*.
[5] *Ibid*., 9-10
[6] Nye, *Soft Power*, 5-6.

left-wing political parties in the West with this exact purpose in mind.[7] Moreover, whilst the Olympics project was only one instance in the post-war international propaganda campaign, there is no reason to believe its purposes were any different from the wider, apparently deeply subversive policy which it formed a part of. Furthermore, it has been argued by numerous scholars that a degree of confidence about socialism's prospects in the Third World prevailed among Soviet policy-makers in the 1970s, brought on by such factors as the achievement of military parity with the Unite States and the victories of Soviet proxies in places like Vietnam and Angola. It is further argued that this confidence, on some occasions, spurred the USSR on to engage in a heightened degree of interventionism in order to spread socialist revolution in the southern hemisphere.[8] Under such circumstances, one might justifiably suspect that Soviet policy-makers entertained hopes of achieving an eventual but perhaps decisive shift in the USSR's geo-strategic fortunes with respect to Western countries as well, and in turn see the strenuous propaganda efforts in cases like the Olympics as part of an attempt to achieve this.

An alternative view would be to ascribe the Olympic propaganda offensive not to any sense of genuine ambition on the Soviet leadership's part to fundamentally upset the Cold War balance, but instead as a reactive and defensive campaign shaped by these leaders' perception of the situation they found themselves in internationally during the 1970s. In particular, an aggressive effort to increase the international popularity of Soviet-style socialism through the Olympics may have represented the USSR's attempt to regain ground in international opinion and/or shore up its credibility in the face of the increasingly vociferous criticisms of its human rights record emanating from the West during this period. These attacks were experienced above all in the aftermath of the signing of the Helsinki Agreement in 1975 as well as during Jimmy Carter's presidency, and obviously undermined Soviet claims to offer a desirable alternative to capitalism. Certainly, evidence from chapter three shows that the Olympics project came to fruition at a time when the leadership in some respects felt it was on the defensive internationally, with its perception that the West was launching a 'new wave of the Cold War' in the form of subversion and terrorism designed to undermine the Soviet system from within. Indeed, there are indications that this 'new wave' was also considered to have assumed the guise of a *Western*, *anti*-communist propaganda campaign of increasing ferocity.[9] This again suggests the Olympics operation could have represented merely a response in kind to the Cold War

[7] Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive*, 360-99.
[8] Andrew and Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive II*, 8-24; Westad, *Global Cold War*, 165-67, 202-4, 206, 241-2; Webber, "'Out of Area' Operations".
[9] See, for instance, Bukovskii documents no.1118 and no.0511.

enemy's increased attempts to erode socialism's position rather than an expression of long-term Soviet geo-strategic ambitions.

This impression that there was a mixture of caution and confidence in Soviet policy-makers' global outlook makes it difficult to ascertain precisely which impulse fed into the Olympics campaign and the wider international propaganda programme which it buttressed. Yet ultimately, it must be remembered that orchestrating the Games, as a policy venture, had been linked to the promotion of the USSR and its ideology since the mid-1950s, and continued to be in subsequent proposals up to the middle of the next decade. This was notably a time when one of the primary messages being fed to the Soviet population – including middle-ranking government officials who developed policy proposals – by the then-Soviet leader, Khrushchev, was also that of the inevitable global triumph of socialism.[10] The project was, moreover, formally launched (in the form of Moscow's first Olympic bids) at the high point of détente in the early 1970s. This represented a moment when at least some in the Soviet leadership (Brezhnev first among them) believed that the USSR was making real gains in foreign affairs which benefited its national interests (if not yet militarily/geo-strategically in the Third World, then at least in terms of developing a more constructive and fruitful relationship with its counterparts in the West from a position of strength).[11] In addition, the period during which the USSR was engaged in bidding for the Games up to 1974, during which the fundamental purposes of the project in terms of boosting global propaganda efforts would have been clear, came several years before the international discourse on human rights began to disconcert Soviet leaders. In turn, whilst the international disputes of the later seventies may have influenced official perceptions of the need to shore up the USSR's international standing in world public opinion in the short-term, one surely cannot justifiably discount the possibility that the Olympic project represented an indication of hitherto undetected ambition in Soviet foreign policy.

However, it is much more difficult to refute another alternative view – that the promotion of socialism through propaganda in the 1970s and in the Games' campaign in particular could have been merely a case of official structures working 'on autopilot', rather than a reflection of the leadership's ambitions to chip away at the existing Cold War balance. Without further investigation, one cannot be certain that the ongoing use of international propaganda had genuine high-level enthusiasm behind it by this stage. Instead, it could have been the case that it simply continued out of bureaucratic and political inertia, as a 'hollow' policy which had failed to be wound up as the party-state proved increasingly unable to shift ideological gear. This seems plausible in light of the

[10] Westad, *Global Cold War*, 71-2; Leffler, *Soul of Mankind*, 168-71.
[11] Zubok, *Failed Empire*, 221-25, 229-30; 237-8.

evidence suggesting that, by this stage of the communist experiment, Soviet officials increasingly lacked any sincere belief in Marxist-Leninist ideology or the possibility that its utopian goals could be achieved. Moreover, it has been argued that by the 1970s the party-state machine was increasingly entrapped in policy deadlock by middle-ranking bureaucrats with a vested interested in persuading the leadership to avoid reformulation of obsolete policies.[12]

The perspective provided by the history of the Moscow Olympiad alone is therefore not enough to convincingly refute existing interpretations of Soviet foreign policy. There is a large degree of uncertainty as to what the Olympics propaganda campaign really indicates about Soviet intentions in the international arena in the 1970s. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to view the idea that the USSR harboured ambitions to shift the geo-strategic balance, at the very least, as an equally plausible explanation for the continuation of its propaganda offensive under Brezhnev vis-à-vis the idea of bureaucratic inertia, for there is at present no conclusive evidence for either argument which undermines the other. Therefore, the evidence from this study indicates that further, more wide-ranging investigation may yet provide a compelling new perspective on the USSR's foreign policy and Soviet attitudes towards the West during the détente period, around which there is currently considerable scholarly consensus. Moreover, such research, in seeking to determine the precise mix of ambition, defensiveness, ideological belief or simple inertia in Soviet foreign policy among the different agencies which dealt with international affairs during these years, could contribute to the development of that alternative kind of political history of the Brezhnev era, focusing on the detailed examination of the formulation and purposes behind various specific policies and their implementation by different party-state institutions, which was put forward in the introduction to this thesis.

It should be stressed that this analysis does not contradict the above refutation of Robert Edelman's conclusion with respect to the purposes of the Olympic project in Soviet foreign policy. In rejecting his idea that the USSR sought equal standing in the global community through the Games, one can still be uncertain as to what the alternative interpretation of Moscow-80's purposes posited above indicates about the broader goals of the Soviet Union on the world stage. Whilst the weight of evidence clearly demonstrates that the aim of the Olympics *as an individual event* was to inculcate a belief in the superiority of the socialist system in the outside world, and thus does not conform to Edelman's analysis, whether this purpose in turn stands as proof of a general, hitherto

[12] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, chapter 1; A. Titov, "The 1961 Party Programme and the Fate of Khrushchev's Reforms," in Smith and Ilic, *State and Society*, 20-2. On bureaucratic inertia see Sandle, "Intellectual Life", 148-9, 151-56.

unknown *trend* in Soviet foreign policy in terms of the country's wider geo-political ambitions remains to be conclusively confirmed.

The Olympics and the 'Stagnation' Paradigm

The history of the Olympiad also has implications for historians' understanding of the domestic development of the USSR under Brezhnev. In particular, considering some aspects of the Olympic project discussed in chapters two, three and five within the traditional conceptual framework of 'stagnation' ultimately demonstrates that this long-standing paradigm is only partially valid for explaining the political character of the Soviet regime in the 1970s. At the same time, evidence from this account also suggests a number of ways in which one might reframe the terms of the debate on the political history of the Brezhnev era and transcend this paradigm altogether.

On the one hand, the character of the domestic propaganda campaign orchestrated around the Olympiad and the purposes behind it in one important sense reinforce the orthodox interpretation of political stagnation under Brezhnev. Previous research has suggested that during the Brezhnev period the application of another long-standing Soviet method of control over the public sphere (the state's heavy use of censorship) was used increasingly to circumvent growing calls for change which were emerging from certain sections of society at this time.[13] If one accepts the interpretation of the Brezhnev-era Soviet state's priorities which this argument implies, one might in turn see the relentlessly optimistic rhetoric of the Olympics campaign – and the wider, ongoing domestic propaganda campaign in the Soviet media which it formed a part of and epitomised – as another method which the state employed during the 1970s to stifle significant criticism of the existing socio-economic and political system. For in exalting all aspects of reality under 'developed socialism', such a public narrative ensured that any widespread discussion of what problems contemporary society faced (of the kind seen in the late 1980s, for instance) was avoided, and replaced instead by endless assertions of the immutable nature of the status quo. The fact that the Brezhnev leadership appeared determined to maintain such a disingenuous public discourse in the later 1970s reinforces the impression that it had, at least by the end of its tenure, every intention of avoiding major reforms. For it was only by acknowledging in its own public rhetoric the fact that contemporary socialism suffered from serious social and economic deficiencies that the Soviet state could have mobilised domestic public opinion in favour of a major change of course – as it was to do subsequently under Gorbachev. Such an impression of the Brezhnev period as one that ultimately came to be dominated by a highly conservative leadership which had set itself

[13] Ruffley, *Children of Victory*, 4-5.

against fundamental change, and instead increasingly diverted its energies to generating hollow propaganda, is in keeping with the basic definition of the stagnation of the political system found in previous accounts.

The dissemination of propaganda messages about the all-round superiority of contemporary 'developed socialism' among the USSR's population within the context of the Olympics project also hints at another idea central to the political stagnation thesis: that the Brezhnev years witnessed the disappearance of the ambitious goal of the Soviet project to genuinely construct communism. Such propaganda – as with the Games' economic programme, which had the secondary goal of moderately boosting urban development – was clearly an example of a long-running policy maintained by the party-state which was designed to sustain popular belief in and satisfaction with the Soviet system, and in turn guarantee the legitimacy and stability of state socialism. The maintenance of the kind of legitimisation strategies seen in the Olympic project can be conceptualised not only as a long-term trend in Soviet history which continued up to its final decades, but also as a reflection of the long-time focus of the Brezhnev regime, in particular, on trying to effectively manage its relations with an increasingly autonomous society. That this was key characteristic of these years has been convincingly demonstrated by older as well as more recent studies which have charted how a sustained attempt was made to both make life more tolerable for the ordinary population through various modifications to economic and social policy and shift the basis of the regime's legitimacy from Marxism to a form of Soviet-Russian nationalism during the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s.[14] When one considers that such moves were taking place against the backdrop of a reformulation of official ideology, according to which the timetable for achieving the transition to communism was extended to an unknown date far into the future,[15] the impression is created that the CPSU's agenda during this period centred above all on simply sustaining the mundane political and socio-economic status quo in the USSR in the short- to medium-term, rather than trying to achieve any far-reaching transformation of the socialist system in line with its utopian ideology. In turn, the story of the Olympic Games, in highlighting something of the scope and diversity of the regime's efforts to maintain itself in power in such an ideological context, recalls the common depiction of the Brezhnev regime as one which presided over the spiritual death of the communist project, having shed the revolutionary goals of previous Soviet administrations as the priority of political survival alone took precedence. Regardless of the context of Marxism-Leninism's ossification, however, it was also the case that the Soviet state had always attached great importance to the use of forward-facing,

[14] See Ruffley, *Children of Victory*; Zhuk, *Rocket City*; Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*.
[15] Sandle, "Ideology of *Zastoi*", 166-69.

inspirational propaganda about the bright communist future for mobilising the population to realise social and economic transformation.[16] The fact that the Brezhnev regime focused so intently instead on glorifying the *present* in much of its public rhetoric, as shown by the example of Moscow-80, accordingly leads one to the same, conventional view that pursuing core, utopian Marxist-Leninist goals had largely fallen away by the 1970s. Indeed, as noted in chapter five, the hollow triumphalism of domestic Olympics propaganda in 1975-80 perfectly symbolised the Brezhnev regime's lack of a real long-term strategy for the construction of a communist society.[17] Ultimately, as Stephen Hanson persuasively argues, it is only appropriate to judge the Soviet administration of 1964-82 – like all others – against the ideological goals which had been first proclaimed in 1917 by those to whom it traced its legitimacy.[18] Viewed from this perspective, 'stagnation' seems to be a highly apposite term to describe the Brezhnev regime's attempts to preserve rather than transform a system which fell far short of the communist ideal.

The character of the Soviet state's approach to administering the Olympiad, as distinct from its primary and secondary goals, gives further indications of the partial validity of the stagnation idea. The execution of the construction programme for 1980, for instance, was clearly in line with the bureaucratic, profligate, centrally-driven route to growth and investment which existed in the economic sphere before 1985, with its use of rigid targets for plan fulfilment set by central government ministries. In keeping with this top-down, mechanistic approach, when the programme's targets failed to be met the state's response throughout 1975-80 was simply to reiterate its original plans and exhort subordinate organisations to up their game, whilst pouring in more resources in a way which was as wasteful as it was inadequate. Despite the urgency of the task, no devolution of responsibilities or initiative was permitted to solve the well-known problems of supply bottlenecks and labour discipline which the Olympic building work encountered. The Games' economic programme thus did not witness any innovations in policy – instead, it was the perfect example of unreformed, inflexible, wasteful central planning. This again evokes an image of *zastoi* as it has been defined in relation to Soviet politics in the 1970s in terms of the domination of a highly conservative approach to policy-making. The Soviet state's management of the 1980 construction programme via thoroughly conventional methods – at a time when those methods were far from efficient in achieving their goals –

[16] See Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly*, 7, 12, 16-17, 46.
[17] This was in fact something that Soviet citizens appear to have recognised themselves. A joke which appeared at the time noted that instead of fulfilling Khrushchev's promise to 'construct a communist society by 1980', the CPSU had decided to 'conduct the Olympic Games instead' – see Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 332.
[18] Hanson, "Brezhnev Era", 295-6.

indicates an unwillingness on the part of Brezhnev-era policy-makers to adopt new approaches in a crucial sphere of governance even in the face of profound problems, suggesting that under Brezhnev the USSR suffered from a lack of decisive, flexible political leadership which was open to change.

A similar conclusion could be reached regarding the Games' security operation. Regardless of the extent to which it was shaped by a one-time fear of terrorism of a kind rarely visible on the CPSU's policy agenda, the strenuous attempts it involved to shield the USSR's population from contact with foreigners and enmesh both within a system of draconian administrative measures demonstrates once again that the Olympics were managed in line with long-standing policies and practices of the Soviet state, whereby the authorities maintained tight overall control over individual activity for the sake of social and political stability. The opportunity presented by Moscow-80 to open the USSR up to the outside world and shift the public mindset away from paranoia, xenophobia and mass conformity was passed over. Of course, the actual degree of authoritarianism and xenophobia in daily life and administration during the Brezhnev period as revealed by 1980 is not in itself proof of the stagnation of the political system. However, the severity of the security operation suggests that there was no desire to *modify* the extent to which these long-standing principles of Soviet governance influenced policy, at least during the lifespan of the Olympic project. If the Olympiad can plausibly be seen as a window which sheds some light on the Soviet state's general mode of operation during these years, then one can interpret the level of control the security organs asserted over its preparations and orchestration as evidence that at this time policy-makers had absolutely no inclination to reform the oppressive, unaccountable and paranoid aspects of the system which had remained unchanged for decades. Such a prolonged lack of innovation in policies once again brings to mind the idea of political stagnation, as it has been defined in terms of the leadership's inability to see the need for reform of the increasingly anachronistic elements of the system. Indeed, the character of the security operation reminds one that in some ways the Soviet state remained wedded to a mindset which had similarities with the paranoia and totalitarian urges of Stalinism, almost thirty years after the despot's death. It is this connection between the Brezhnev leadership's political outlook with that of the Stalinist period which has sometimes been cited as evidence of stagnation of the political system, in terms of the idea that by the early 1980s the USSR was run by men whose outmoded experiences made them poorly suited to problem-solving in a rapidly changing world.[19]

[19] Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 23-5; Hanson, "Brezhnev Era", 293, 295.

However, when one considers the secondary goals of Moscow-80 in the context of the later 1970s in which they were formulated one reaches a conclusion which in fact challenges one of the core elements of the traditional paradigm. Aside from creating a Potemkin Village, the Games' economic programme was supposed to achieve a number of small-scale but concrete aims for the Soviet state which would be to its advantage both economically and politically – improving living conditions and speeding up infrastructure development in a number of key urban centres, increasing hard currency reserves, and acquiring new technology. Equally, both the nationwide state sport programme and the domestic propaganda campaign around 1980, although hollow and a distraction from reform, were designed to assist with shoring up the regime's legitimacy and popularity among the Soviet population. It is highly unlikely to have been a coincidence that all of these schemes were incorporated into the Games at a time when the speed at which living standards improved was declining, technological innovation was slowing, huge amounts of hard currency were needed to pay for imports of consumer goods and food, and the CPSU was confronted with an increasingly critically-minded and autonomous society which had disturbing implications for the socialist system's viability in its present guise. In other words, the secondary goals of the Olympic project appear to have been purposefully designed to counteract various economic and political problems faced by the Soviet state at this time. Whilst the Olympics were not pursued originally or even primarily with these purposes in mind, and were very unlikely in most cases to have actually solved these complex problems to any significant extent, it is nevertheless telling that the leadership purposefully tried to adapt the project to help resolve some of the key challenges confronting it at that particular moment. In turn, one is left with the impression that the Soviet leadership was capable of discerning at least some of the serious problems it faced on the domestic front and acting to resolve them when the opportunity arose – if not via recourse to structural reform, then certainly by more cautious and tried-and-tested means. Although the amount of evidence arising from this study to support this wider conclusion is limited, it does suggest a conclusion which coincides with the revisionist view put forward either explicitly or implicitly in several recent works on the Soviet 1970s – all of which carried out a much broader examination of the period than was possible here – that the Brezhnev regime was one which pro-actively adjusted its policies in order to deal with changes taking place in society which could threaten social and political stability.[20] This is in sharp contrast to the earlier image of a political elite which has been variously characterised as either increasingly bewildered and hesitant about what policies to pursue at home and abroad, or so indolent and self-serving that it scarcely paid attention to

[20] Ruffley, *Children of Victory*; Zhuk, *Rocket City*; Chernyshova, *Consumer Culture*.

steering the ship of state at all.[21] On the most basic level, the Soviet leaders' aim to legitimise their rule among ordinary people through campaigns like those incorporated into the Olympics suggests very strongly that the men in the Kremlin were not so enfeebled as to be unaware of the fundamental dynamic of state-society relations in the authoritarian system over which they presided – that policies which proved their benevolence and/or competence were of crucial importance to maintaining their hold on power, in the absence of a popular mandate. Indeed, as was shown in chapter five, the emphasis in the domestic Olympics propaganda campaign on justifying the event before the Soviet people in terms of it bringing economic benefits to them above all, as well as political advantages to the USSR's international reputation, can be understood as a supplementary attempt to ensure the reputation of the CPSU (as supposed champion of both popular welfare and the national interest) was not tarnished, but in fact enhanced, by what was in reality a very expensive and disruptive event. If the Soviet leaders were indeed as alert to the need to constantly take steps to keep public acceptance of their system and policies ticking over as this case study suggests, then this situation contradicts the notion, central to that version of the stagnation thesis advanced in some of the more crude accounts on the period, that by the close of the 1970s the Soviet Union was headed by men (above all the General Secretary himself) who were so senile, unimaginative or corrupt that they could hardly comprehend their own political purposes.[22]

Alternatives to the 'Stagnation' Paradigm

The character of the Olympics thus presents a contradictory picture of official Soviet goals and mentalities which has important implications for our understanding of the stagnation idea. As noted in the introduction, contemporary scholarship has challenged the notion of *zastoi* above all in relation to the social and cultural history of the Brezhnev period, whereas some of the most recent interpretations of *political* developments in 1964-82 have generally posited the basic validity of the traditional paradigm whilst seeking to add greater nuance to it in a number of areas. In contrast, the history of the Games casts some doubt on one of the core arguments underlying claims about political stagnation – essentially, that the Brezhnev leadership was complacent with regards to the social and economic challenges it faced – whilst at the same time reinforces a number of other elements of the same long-standing thesis. This study thus rejects other contemporary assessments of Soviet politics in the later 1970s and instead offers a stronger critique of the *zastoi*

[21] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 29, 40-41, 67-8, 70-76; Tompson, *Soviet Union*, 22-5; 112; Merl, "Soviet Economy", 52-65.
[22] Shlapentokh, *Soviet Ideologies*, 29, 40-41, 67-68, 70-71, 75-76; Volkogonov, *Soviet Empire*, 273-4, 278; Service, *Modern Russia*, 408-9, 425.

paradigm, by showing that the latter is not only incapable of explaining developments in this period across multiple spheres of the polity's existence (as revealed in other studies by social historians), but also offers a deeply flawed conceptualisation of certain aspects of the political history of the late Soviet period. 'Stagnation' certainly appears at times to effectively describe individual issues in Soviet politics, but it is clear that as an umbrella term it encompasses both valid and erroneous ideas; as such, it is a fundamentally incoherent concept.

One might therefore suggest that it is time to search for ways to move beyond the concept of *zastoi* altogether with respect to the study of Brezhnev-era politics, rather than continue with attempts to merely qualify it on issues of secondary importance. However, this should be done in a way which refrains from attempting to construct an alternative, overarching paradigm which would represent the antipode of stagnation – for it is clear from the above discussion that such concepts often do more to impede than facilitate our understanding of the past. Instead, it might be appropriate to simply develop new, looser terminology to the 'stagnation' label, which more effectively conceptualises the various facets of the political system and official political life during late socialism on an individual basis. This applies to both those older concepts whose validity has been reconfirmed by contemporary research, and any new interpretations which emerge to replace discredited aspects of the stagnation paradigm. It is only by transcending the use of comprehensive explanatory models in this way that historians can hope to better comprehend the ambiguous state of affairs which was manifest in Brezhnev's USSR. The following ideas should therefore be seen simply as a set of unconnected alternative themes, which have emerged on the basis of evidence contained in this study and which that evidence suggests may help to make sense of at least some aspects of the political history of the late Brezhnev-era Soviet Union at a general level. They are not intended to function as an alternative paradigm to the stagnation idea. Apart from the fact that such a model could never be credibly constructed on the basis of this single case study of 1980 alone, these ideas in no way constitute explanations for the evolution of the Soviet economy or changes taking place in the social and cultural spheres in the 1970s. The fact that their contribution comes in the form of an attempt to re-conceptualise our view of late Soviet politics alone (and even in this case, they are not intended to explain *all* facets of this broad subject) means that they lack the all-encompassing character which the *zastoi* idea assumed after 1985, in terms of its supposed ability to explain developments across all spheres of the Brezhnevite polity. These ideas, moreover, are being highlighted by virtue of the fact they could be readily evaluated subsequently on the basis of more wide-ranging research and

therefore do not solely depend on the evidence from this case study in order to prove their worth. Finally, the specific approach to future research that would be required to investigate these new themes (involving the detailed study of Soviet institutions and their role in formulating and implementing policies) can also be understood as an attempt to offer some ideas for the alternative political history of late socialism which was suggested in the introduction to the thesis.

Among these themes is first and foremost the idea of the Soviet state's activism in policy-making in the 1970s. It might be better to characterise the Brezhnev regime, at least in its later years, as adhering to a spirit of what one might call 'pro-active conservatism' in its domestic policies rather than one which was gripped by wholesale stagnation, in its meaning of complacency. Such a label draws attention to the fact that the Soviet state was constantly searching for ways to resolve the economic and social problems it faced in this period. This counters the erroneous image conjured up by the stagnation thesis of a somnolent and complacent gerontocracy presiding over complete sclerosis in policy-making, and instead helps to recast Brezhnev and his colleagues as a ruling group which was purposefully and continuously pulling the levers of the administrative system in attempts to achieve well-defined results. One certainly sees at least some evidence of this in the many ways in which various governmental agencies were obliged by the leadership throughout the later 1970s to put the Olympic project to good use as a vehicle for propaganda, as a stimulus for state-run sport programmes, and as an additional opportunity to implement various economic polices in order to help deal with the domestic priorities described above. This suggests that the 'pro-active' label might be applied more widely to help explain the impulse underlying other, more long-lasting policies of the Brezhnev regime, such as its initiatives with respect to both material and cultural consumption aimed at facilitating harmonious state-society relations. At the same time, such a term more or less adequately expresses that interpretation – for which one finds significant evidence in the history of the Games as well as in other aspects of policy, as noted above – that the Brezhnev regime's energy was to a significant degree channelled towards the thoroughly unimaginative goal of simply keeping the system functioning effectively in its current guise, thereby preserving the political and socio-economic status quo of 'developed socialism' rather than transforming it.

The relative usefulness of such a label for adequately conceptualising the ethos underlying late Soviet politics could be plausibly tested during the course of future research. Archival materials, as they become increasingly available, may provide opportunities to eventually get a better sense of the full range of domestic policy initiatives

carried out by the Brezhnev leadership (and in turn, the degree to which one can legitimately describe it as 'activist'). An assessment of the balance of intentions underlying these policies (that is, whether they revolved around producing only incremental and modest improvements in the existing system or instigating more bold, far-reaching ideas) on the basis of such new evidence might on the other hand help determine the depth of the leadership's conservative instincts. Moreover, this would demonstrably move the discussion away from the unhelpful focus on 'stagnation'. For evidence of *either* kind of initiative undermines the idea at the heart of the traditional paradigm that the Soviet leadership was inert and complacent, and instead draws attention to the more intriguing idea that Brezhnev and his colleagues had well-defined political goals whose character was obscured at the time, and has yet been fully grasped by historians. Applying this framework to an examination of policies across the whole period from 1964 to 1982, moreover, may offer the opportunity to refine the notion of 'pro-active conservatism' in terms of periodisation – that is, whether the goals underlying the regime's activities graduated from the relatively bold (of reforming the system) at the start of Brezhnev's tenure to the severely limited (keeping the Soviet system ticking over) towards the end.

Another effective way to conceptualise the various aspects of the Soviet political system highlighted by the Games is not through the lense of stagnation but in terms of the extent to which they indicate that the Brezhnev era formed part of the 'mature', consolidated stage of the communist project's development. Richard Sakwa proposed a useful model for the periodisation of Soviet history which distinguishes between three main phases of the USSR's development: 'system building' (1917-1953), 'system consolidation' (1953-1985), and 'system dissolution' (1985-1991). In defining the second phase, Sakwa notes that for the whole duration of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev decades, in their efforts to find a viable economic and political model for the USSR after 1953 Soviet leaders combined a ban on mass terror with a commitment to improving living standards and continued restrictions on political liberalisation.[23] Sakwa's model draws attention to the idea that official conceptions of what constituted the 'correct' political and economic system remained relatively constant across the period stretching from Stalin's death to the ascension of Gorbachev. The Soviet system was dominated throughout this period by successive leadership teams that all adhered to a broadly similar pattern of rule, centred on a highly authoritarian state which exercised domination over the economy and society, but which all maintained a ban on the use of terror and instead opted for a greater degree of benevolence in seeking to better provide for their citizens.

[23] Sakwa, *Soviet Politics*, 282.

In the simplest analysis, the very occurrence of the Soviet Olympiad, which was inconceivable during the Stalinist period owing to that regime's particular brand of extreme xenophobia, isolationism and anti-capitalist ideological fervour,[24] confirms one of the basic assumptions contained in this model that 1953 marked a significant watershed in the evolution of the Soviet policy agenda. More to the point, the evidence showing that a Moscow Olympiad was first mooted in the Khrushchev years, and steadily gained momentum thereafter in a process which stretched across both his and Brezhnev's period in office and on the basis of a singular motivation to augment Soviet soft power, essentially supports Sakwa's idea that these two post-Stalin administrations had certain core priorities in common – in foreign as much as domestic policy. Beyond this, the overall character of the Olympic Games' economic and security programmes (carried out, it should be remembered, in the second half of the 1970s) in a rudimentary way also confirms the periodisation of this model, in the sense that it indicates the extent to which some of the specific components of that mode of rule first instituted following Stalin's death predominated right up to the later stage of the Brezhnev era. These programmes, on the one hand, bear witness to the authorities' continued preference during the pre-Gorbachev years for unreformed central planning of the kind only temporarily and partially abandoned during the Khrushchev period, and their reservation of the right to exert extremely pervasive control over daily life without consideration for the Soviet people's ostensible civil rights. On the other, one sees in the preparations for 1980 evidence of the state's ongoing priority to boost living standards (and more generally, ensure the stable development of the economy in part via economic ties with the outside world, as glimpsed in its use of the Games to bring in foreign currency and new technology). Finally, one can detect here fresh proof of the party-state's use of only limited, selective repression and 'prophylactic' measures rather than terror (the latter being in line with the new, post-Stalin approach to policing society gradually worked out during the Khrushchev years).[25] To an extent therefore, it is equally if not more illuminating to conceive of the Olympics project as an indication of the extent to which the Soviet system had experienced a partial liberalisation as well as continuation of various Stalinist-era governing priorities and attitudes up to the start of the 1980s (with the obvious exception of the use of terror) than it is to see it as an emblem of the political system's decay in the same epoch.

In turn, one gets a sense from this study of the form that future research might take. In focusing on the alternative concept of 'system consolidation' rather than 'stagnation', historians might be able to better reveal the continuities as well as the changes which the

[24] Parks, "Red Sport", 23, 25-8, 35-42.
[25] Elkner, "Face of Repression"; Hornsby, "Political Dissent".

Soviet polity experienced in the political sphere (and perhaps, across all spheres of its existence) during the wider period from 1953 up to the point when Gorbachev's reforms began to precipitate the system's dissolution. This would contribute to developing a different, potentially illuminating periodisation for the political history of the Soviet Union not based around each individual leader's time in office.

Moscow-80 versus Moscow-57

An indication that subsuming the Brezhnev years into the wider study of the post-Stalin period may be a viable substitute for the stagnation paradigm in conceptual terms is further suggested by examining the 1980 Olympics themselves in comparative perspective. Here one can look to the Soviet state's management of the 1957 World Youth Festival as a useful reference point for tracing some rarely considered continuities and changes in state policy which occurred between the mid-point of the Khrushchev years and the last stage of the Brezhnev era. Perhaps most revealing in this regard is the degree to which there are strong parallels between the aims of the two events and the methods used to achieve them. With the Youth Festival, as in 1980, the Soviet state spared no financial, administrative or manpower resources in trying to craft the most well-attended, extravagant, 'joyful' international gathering ever seen. All this was done in order to reap 'big propaganda gains' – in particular, 1957 was intended to successfully showcase the achievements of the post-Stalin USSR and create the impression of its benevolent, peaceful foreign policy, thereby 'shap[ing] the image of the [country] abroad.' Like the Games, moreover, the festival organisers' primary targets for these propaganda messages were ordinary citizens from Western countries.[26] The essential similarity of the two events suggests that, despite changes in leadership as well as international circumstances, the Soviet state recognised the importance of augmenting its soft power throughout the period stretching from the 1950s until at least the start of the 1980s. This is something that has yet to be reflected in existing studies of Soviet foreign policy; discussion of the USSR's attempts to wage 'cultural Cold War' have generally focused more on the Khrushchev years,[27] whilst the emphasis given in accounts of the USSR's international relations under Brezhnev continues to be placed on the Soviet regime's use diplomacy in the context of its achievement of military parity with the USA, on the one hand, and on the other the USSR's use of its military strength in the Third World (that is, the country's reliance on its *hard* power). Future research may be able to elaborate on the degree of continuity between

[26] Zubok, *Zhivago's Children*, 101-3, Koivunen, "Youth Festival", 46, 49-52.
[27] See K. Roth-Ey, *Moscow Prime Time: How the Soviet Union Built the Media Empire that Lost the Cultural Cold War* (Ithaca, 2011).

post-Stalin administrations in their ongoing attempts to convince foreigners of Soviet superiority via the various tools available to them, and in turn possibly show that successive leaderships cannot be so easily distinguished into a soft power-orientated team under Khrushchev and a more crude, militaristic group of leaders who held power during Brezhnev's tenure as Soviet leader.

However, further comparison of 1980 and 1957 suggests there is also room for additional investigation of the *changes* which occurred across the post-Stalin era with regards to this important component of Soviet foreign policy. That much has still to be accounted for in terms of the elaboration of the USSR's strategy for increasing its soft power during these decades can be inferred from noting some of the key differences between the Youth Festival and the Olympics. On the one hand, Koivunen explains that the strategy behind the communist-run youth festivals in the 1940s and early 1950s revolved around the idea of sending Soviet representatives to events and contests taking place outside the USSR, as cultural 'ambassadors' who could effectively promote the achievements of socialism in sport or the arts.[28] Viewed alongside the evidence from chapter one showing that the Khrushchev leadership permitted an expansion of Soviet sportsmen's participation in the Olympics whilst repeatedly rejecting proposals to *orchestrate* them in Moscow, one can discern a clear contrast with the more complex and ambitious strategy for soft power expansion seen in 1975-80, when the regime placed great hopes in inviting thousands of foreigners to the USSR to see its Olympics Potemkin Village and utilised multiple forms of international propaganda to promote all aspects of socialism. In turn, it is clear that on the basis of the evidence available regarding the Youth Festival and the Games alone, one cannot determine what the circumstances were which prompted the Soviet state to increase the scope of its activities in this sphere. Part of this story has of course already been revealed in the above discussion of the disappearance of obstacles to an Olympics bid, but the history of 1980 – for all its apparent importance as a key element of the policy to promote socialism abroad – does not in itself fully account for the expansion of the USSR's soft power offensive across the whole post-Stalin period. Instead, any future investigation into the development of the Soviet state's activities in this sphere will have to focus on the domestic and international context in which it took place. For it is likely that such factors as the USSR's transformation into a superpower with diplomatic and military clout comparable to that of the United States, the stabilisation of its economy and its prolonged success in boosting consumption and infrastructure development in the period 1953-85 had a significant effect on Soviet leaders' ambitions and confidence in their

[28] Koivunen, "Youth Festival", 48.

ability to effectively promote the USSR – and in turn, their readiness to invest increasing amounts of resources into this channel of their foreign policy.

The idea that the USSR's struggle for hearts and minds during the Cold War was an evolving policy that has not been fully accounted for is suggested by another crucial difference between 1980 and 1957. The youth festivals, in their capacity as propaganda 'weapons' used by the USSR in to promote its ideals and values, were created by the CPSU and organised mostly in the Eastern Bloc, with extensive supervision provided by Soviet-funded organisations.[29] This contrasts with the 1980 Olympics, as an event which formed part of a franchise 'imported' to the USSR from outside, and which was hosted only with the permission and supervision of an international organisation not fully under communist control – the IOC. This implies that at some point in the post-Stalin period the Soviet authorities began to combine the political exploitation of large-scale events organised both by their own front organisations, and independent international bodies, as part of their attempts to fight the West on the ideological plane. The contrast between 1957 and 1980 therefore raises the questions of when, in what context and on what scale the Soviet Union managed to penetrate various international organisations for self-promotional purposes during the Cold War period. Together with new research showing the full extent of the USSR's use of its own front organisations for the same purpose, it may prove possible to construct a history of the Soviet Union's slowly emerging but ultimately comprehensive attempt to achieve greater soft power in the post-Stalin period via a number of different avenues and in the context of the USSR's rise to superpower status, within which both the Olympiad and the Youth Festival formed only two knots in a much longer thread of Soviet policy.

Such a history could reveal many new intriguing details about the Brezhnev era, and the post-Stalin period more generally, in a way which moves the historiography on the period beyond the framework of stagnation altogether. More generally, it is clear that all of the above suggestions for future research might again give impetus to the development of the alternative kind of political history of late socialism described above, and which this study can be considered a part of. Where this thesis has shone a light on such institutions as the 1980 Organising Committee, the Trade Union Council and the Komsomol, the above ideas presuppose an examination of a much larger number of organisations, including various departments of the Central Committee and the USSR's network of international propaganda agencies and front organisations. Such subjects might allow for the kind of significant re-evaluation and overturning of old ideas in relation to political developments

[29] *Ibid*., 47.

in the Soviet 'long 1970s' that historians have already begun to achieve with considerable success with regards to the social and cultural history of the Brezhnev era.

One other difference between 1957 and 1980 suggests a further way in which both the ideas of change and continuity in policy together with the character of Soviet institutions across the post-Stalin period could be explored. Existing accounts of the Youth Festival give no indication that the security apparatus took any significant precautions to prevent acts of terrorism in 1957, in contrast to the elaborate measures carried out ahead of the Olympiad. This suggests that at some point between the two events an important new departure occurred in the work of the security organs, whereby the KGB and MVD began to focus on developing modern counter-terrorism strategies which paralleled the institutional development seen in some Western states. As noted in chapter three, this element of the 1980 security operation reflected the short-term impact of the Munich Massacre and the Moscow Bombing. However, one cannot be certain that the occurrence of the Olympics, specifically, in the USSR in such a context was the starting point for the regime's anxiety about modern terrorism in the post-Stalin decades and the resulting institutional innovations, or whether 1980 represented the high point of its counter-terrorism activities. Greater investigation may determine whether the Soviet leadership was influenced in this respect by the upsurge of terrorism in Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s (which was often carried out by groups adhering to various strains of Marxism, but whose radicalism and nihilism potentially unnerved the more staid men in the Kremlin) and the fear that it could spill over into the USSR, or whether it was only concerned by home-grown acts of political violence carried out by nationalists like that seen in 1977. Such new research might also indicate how the scope of the state's counter-terrorism activities fluctuated as the USSR passed from a period of relative internal stability under Khrushchev and Brezhnev to increasing inter-ethnic and social tensions and even violence by the late 1980s (and conversely, from the height of Cold War suspicions to an increasingly benign view of the West in the same period). Should the sources for it ever become available, such research might cast some much-needed light on an area of the security apparatus' activities in the late Soviet era which has not been covered in existing accounts.

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As the first full-length political history of the Moscow Olympics based on newly available archival sources, this study has in the first instance improved our understanding of the nature and significance of this event from the perspective of Soviet history. It has demonstrated, with a degree of certainty and in much greater detail than was possible

before 1991, how the preparations and orchestration of an ostensibly mundane international sports contest were adapted to serve the political purposes of the mature Soviet state, and consequently drew on the resources of a significant number of Party and state structures throughout the second half of the 1970s. The methodology applied here, moreover, highlights the opportunities that are available for scholars to write a new kind of political history of the Brezhnev era compared to what has so far been seen in English-language scholarship, centred on examining the exercise of power by the various institutions of the Soviet state and its ideological goals. More importantly, this story has implications for historians' understanding of the wider course of developments in this under-researched period of Soviet history. The history of the XXII Games highlights some of the most important elements of the Soviet leadership's political agenda, as well as some of the ways in which the regime functioned, during the 'developed socialist' era. Consideration of these elements within the framework of the traditional 'stagnation' paradigm demonstrates its overall inadequacy as an explanation for the course of Soviet political history during the Brezhnev years. At the same time, the character of the Olympic project suggests a number of different approaches to conceptualising this history and in turn points towards new ideas for future research. Such ideas might help to shift the historiographical debate on late socialism in a new direction at a time when it is fast becoming a major focus of scholarly investigation. For all these reasons, the 1980 Moscow Games are deserving of a place in the scholarly literature on the Soviet Union, and on the political history of late socialism in particular, to an equal or greater degree than they have already figured in accounts of international relations or studies of the modern Olympic movement.

Appendix I: Chronology of Events, 1951-81

23rd April 1951: The National Olympic Committee of the USSR is formed by joint decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Council of Ministers of the USSR.

7th May 1951: The International Olympic Committee recognises the National Olympic Committee of the USSR and elects the latter's chairman, Konstantin A. Andrianov, as a member of the IOC (the first from a communist country).

5th March 1953: Joseph Stalin dies. Nikita Khrushchev gradually becomes the leading figure in the CPSU and the Soviet government.

April 1956: Soviet sports administrators suggest bidding for the 1964 summer Olympics. The proposal is rejected by the Central Committee in 1958.

December 1958: The USSR Sports Committee again recommends a bid for the 1964 Olympics to the Central Committee.

June 1962: The Soviet Union hosts the 59th Session of the International Olympic Committee in Moscow. Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium Leonid I. Brezhnev delivers a speech to the delegates strongly hinting at the USSR's interest in hosting the Olympic Games.

March 1963: The Sports Committee submits a proposal to the CC for a bid for the 1968 Olympic Games. The proposal is rejected.

14th October 1964: Nikita Khrushchev is ousted by his colleagues; Leonid Brezhnev replaces him as First (later General) Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

8th December 1965: A proposal is sent to the Central Committee regarding Moscow's candidacy to host the 1972 summer Olympics. The proposal is once again rejected.

September 1969: The Central Committee approves a bid for the 1976 Olympics.

19th November 1969–12th May 1970: The Soviet Union carries out a campaign to win the rights to host the 1976 summer Olympics.

12th May 1970: Montréal is awarded the right to host the 1976 (XXI) summer Olympic Games, after receiving 41 votes to Moscow's 28 in the second round of voting by the IOC at its 69th Session in Amsterdam, Netherlands. In the first round, Moscow had secured more votes (28 to Montréal's 25).[1]

19th November 1971–23rd October 1974: The Soviet Union campaigns to win the rights to host the 1980 Olympics.

[1] 'Past Olympic Host City Election Results', *WebCite*, accessed 23.11.2014, www.webcitation.org.

23rd October 1974: Moscow is awarded the rights to host the XXII summer Olympic Games, scheduled for 1980, with 39 votes to Los Angeles' 20 in the first round of voting at the IOC's 75th Session in Vienna, Austria.[2]

20th February 1975: The Organising Committee for the Preparations and Orchestration of the Twenty-Second 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow ('Olimpiada-80') is formed by decree of the Council of Ministers.

August 1975: The Organising Committee approves a draft plan on the preparations required to successfully orchestrate the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow and submits it to the Council of Ministers for approval.

23rd December 1975: The Central Committee and Council of Ministers issue two initial resolutions outlining the practical tasks to be completed for the orchestration of the Olympics over the next five years together with an indication of the project's political objectives.

January 1976–July 1980: Implementation of the Soviet state's plans for economic preparations, domestic and international propaganda campaigns, diplomatic and lobbying work with foreign governments and sports organisations, and security measures for the Moscow Olympic Games.

25th December 1979: The first units of an 80,000-strong contingent of the Soviet Armed Forces' 40th Army cross the border of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in an effort to prop up the country's embattled communist government.

20th January 1980: President Jimmy Carter announces the US government's intention to lead a boycott of the Moscow Olympic Games.

February–July 1980: Various state and Party organisations of the Soviet state conduct diplomatic and propaganda work to counteract the Western boycott.

19th June–18th July 1980: The Olympic Torch Relay takes place over a 5,000km-route through Greece, Bulgaria, Romania and the USSR.

19th July 1980: The Opening Ceremony of the XXII summer Olympiad takes place in the Central Lenin Stadium, Moscow, USSR, with the participation of CPSU General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev and involving 15,637 people.[3]

20th July–2nd August 1980: The sports competitions of the XXII Olympics are orchestrated in Moscow, Tallinn, Leningrad, Kiev and Minsk, USSR, involving the participation of 5,748 athletes from 81 National Olympic Committees (13 from socialist countries, 20 from West European countries, 10 from Asia; 22 from Africa; 14 from Latin America and 2 from Oceania). A total of 203 events take place across 21 different sports, with 455 gold, 452

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681, l.40.

silver, and 467 bronze medals awarded. Soviet athletes take the largest haul of medals (80 gold, 69 silver, 46 bronze), whilst 36 new world records and 84 Olympic records are achieved. The number of Soviet and foreign participants (athletes, judges, trainers, sports officials, and journalists) stands at 17,504, including 5,615 members of the press. The event is attended by 340,000 tourists (211,300 of whom come from abroad, from 72 different countries).[4]

3rd August 1980: The Olympic Closing Ceremony takes place in Moscow with the participation of 9,645 people.[5]

25th December 1981: The Soviet Olympic Organising Committee is dissolved by decree of the Council of Ministers.

[4] *Ibid*., ll.7-8, l.40, l.73, ll.82-3.
[5] *Ibid*., l.40.

Appendix II: List of Archival Documents and Other Primary Sources

The following is a list of the detailed references for the main primary source materials used in this study. References for archival documents are given according to the system used in Russian state archives, according to the pattern:

Archive name: this will be either GARF, RGANI, or RGASPI, which are the Russian acronyms for *Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (State Archive of the Russian Federation), *Rossiiskii gosudartsvennyi arkhiv noveishei istorii* (Russian State Archive of Contemporary History), or *Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv sotsial'no-politicheskoi istorii* (Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History), respectively.
***Fond*:** abbreviated as 'f.', a collection within an archive containing all documents from an institution or person.
***Opis'*:** abbreviated as 'op.', an inventory within an archival collection.
***Delo*:** abbreviated as 'd.', an individual file within an inventory.
***List*:** abbreviated as 'l.', the page within the individual file.

These references match those contained in the footnotes of the thesis' main text and are given here by ascending order of *fond*/*opis'*/*delo*. References to the materials from the published collection *Piat' kolets pod kremlevskimi zvezdami* (*Five rings under the Kremlin's Stars*) give the title and number of the document as it is provided in this work rather than the original archival reference. References for the materials found on Vladimir Bukovskii's *Soviet Archives* website provide the number, title and URL for the document as it appears online, together with the section of the website in which it is located.

I. Archival Documents

State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF)
***Fond* 5451 – All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (VTsSPS), 1917-1990**
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.1: Consolidated plan of the 'Olimpiada-80' Preparatory Committee's measures for the years 1976-1980 and work plans of the Committee's Working Group for the second half of 1976 (1976).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.7: Shorthand record of the discussion regarding the joint propaganda measures carried out by the socialist countries' trade union organisations in connection with the 1980 Olympic Games (01.06.1976).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.11: Reports from the Committee for the USSR Council of Ministers, 'Olimpiada-80' Organising Committee and the VTsSPS regarding the participation of trade union and VTsSPS organisations in the preparatory work for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games (1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.12: Reports from the Committee regarding the progress of preparations for the orchestration of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.13: Reports from instructors of the Committee's Working Group regarding the inspection of trade union organisations' work in fulfilment of the VTsSPS's decrees concerning the preparations for the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.15: Materials from the conference on joint explanatory and propaganda measures carried out by the socialist countries' trade union organisations in connection with the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (08.06.1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.16: Plan, recommendations and programmes of activities of the socialist countries' trade union organisations concerning explanatory and propaganda measures carried out in connection with the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.17: Programme and proposals from the report on the conference of directors of trade union Houses of Culture concerning the preparations for the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (15.12.1977 – 16.12.1977).

GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.18: Information from trade unions' central committees and all-union voluntary sport societies regarding the state of explanatory and propaganda work connected with the preparations for the 1980 Olympic Games (1977).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.26: Reports from the Committee regarding the progress of preparations for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games (1978).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.27: Reports from the instructors of the Committee's Working Group regarding the inspection of trade union organisations' work on the preparations for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games (1978).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.28: Reports of the Committee's Working Group regarding the explanatory and propaganda measures of trade union organisations carried out in connection with the preparations and orchestration of the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (1978).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.29: Information from trade unions' central committees and all-union voluntary sport societies regarding the explanatory and propaganda measures carried out in connection with the preparations for the Olympic Games (1978).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.34: Plans and reports regarding the work of the Committee's Working Group for the year 1979 (1979).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.35: Plan of the main propaganda measures of trade unions and other organisations under the VTsSPS's jurisdiction to be carried out for the 1980 Olympics at home and abroad in the year 1979 (1979).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.42: Shorthand record from the conference of representatives of the socialist countries' trade union organisations on explanatory and propaganda work carried out in connection with the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (19.07.1979 – 20.07.1979).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.45: Plans and reports regarding the work of the Committee and the Working Group for the year 1980 (1980).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.53: Shorthand record from the conference of representatives of the socialist countries' trade union organisations on explanatory and propaganda work carried out in connection with the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow (24.04.1978 – 25.04.1978).
GARF, f.5451, op.67, d.58: Report of the 'Olimpiada-80' Organising Committee regarding the work carried out by trade unions and other organisations under their jurisdiction in fulfilment of the VTsSPS Presidium's resolution of 11.02.1976, 'Regarding the participation of the trade unions in the preparations for and orchestration of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games during the period 1976-1980' (1981).

***Fond* 7576 – Physical Culture and Sports Committee of the USSR ('Gossport SSSR'), 1920-1959, 1968-1991**
GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.464: Minutes of the plenums and meetings of the USSR Olympic Committee Presidium (April 1955 – December 1956).
GARF, f.7576, op.30, d.468: Minutes of the sessions of the USSR Olympic Committee Presidium for the year 1958 (1958).
GARF, f.7576, op.31, d.11: Decrees of the USSR Sports Committee Collegium for 1969 (Minutes number 9-11).
GARF, f.7576, op.31, d.1942: Decrees of the USSR Sports Committee Collegium, volume IV, minutes number 8-12 (31.07.1974 – 25.12.1974).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.181: Report on the participation of Soviet representatives at the sessions of the IOC Executive Committee in Tokyo and Sapporo, and at the 72nd IOC Session in Sapporo (January – February 1972).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.229: Documents from the Olympic Congress of 30th September – 4th October 1973, Varna, Bulgaria (21.11.1969 – 23.06.1973).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.231: Shorthand record of the USSR Olympic Committee Plenum (photocopies) (19.12.1973).

GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.232: Report on the participation of Soviet representatives at the sessions of the IOC Subcommittee on the Olympic Programme and negotiations with the IOC leadership in Laussanne, Switzerland (November – December 1973).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.537: Correspondence with the IOC and the 'Olympics 76' Montréal Organising Committee on questions relating to the preparations for and orchestration of the Olympiad (15.09.1973 – 15.07.1977).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.685: Documents on cooperation in sport with the SRV (reports on cooperation, meetings, memoranda on discussions, information on the preparations in the SRV for the 1980 Olympic Games in Moscow) (1978).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1053: Documents on cooperation in sport with Laos (draft protocol on cooperation, reports on cooperation, report of the 'Olimpiada-80' Organising Committee delegation to Laos, record of the discussion, text of the speech and the address given at a meeting in support of the Moscow Olympiad) (1980).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1055: Memoranda on discussions with the leaders of the Olympic committees, government sports ministries, and sports associations of Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Sri-Lanka (1980).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1059: Documents on cooperation in sport with Ecuador (reports on the trips of Soviet trainers; report on the work of the USSR Embassy in Ecuador regarding propaganda for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, memoranda on discussions) (1980).
GARF, f.7576, op.35, d.1066: Correspondence with embassies of the USSR regarding the issue of the boycott of the 1980 Olympics, participation in the Games, and financial matters (12.02.1980 – 09.10.1980).

***Fond* 9570 – Central Council of the USSR Union of Sports Societies and Organisations, 1959-1968**
GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.445: Materials from the meeting of representatives of sport federations of the socialist countries in Moscow (minutes, shorthand records, information), (10.03.1959 – 11.03.1959).
GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.689: Materials from the work of the 58th IOC session in Athens (agenda, reports, information, lists) (19.06.1961 – 21.06.1961).
GARF, f.9570, op.1, d.822: Record of conversation between N.S. Khrushchev and IOC President Avery Brundage (12.06.1962).
GARF, f.9570, op.4, d.104: Information on several questions relating to the international Olympic movement and suggestions for strengthening the work of the USSR Olympic Committee within the IOC (18.02.1961).

***Fond* 9610 – Organising Committee for the Preparations and Orchestration of the Twenty-Second 1980 Summer Olympic Games in Moscow ('Olimpiada-80'), 1975-1981**
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.1: Letters to the CC CPSU regarding the preparations for and orchestration of the Games of the XXII Olympiad (27.03.1975 – 02.06.1975).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.5: Minutes number P-2 to P-5 of the meetings of the Organising Committee Presidium (21.03.1975 – 07.08.1975).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.7: Minutes number I-1 to I-4 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Executive Bureau (18.08.1975 – 30.12.1975).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.10: Directives number 1-15 of the Organising Committee regarding principal activities (02.06.1975 – 26.12.1975).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.16: Minutes number 3 of the meeting of the Organising Committee's Commission for External Ties with their working notes (21.11.1975)
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.25: Reports on foreign delegations' visits organised by the Organising Committee (1975).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.26: Memoranda on discussions with representatives of the IOC, NOCs, the International Sports Federations, and prominent public figures (26.08.1975 – 19.09.1975).

GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.33: Minutes number OL-3, OL-4 and shorthand record of the meeting of the Organising Committee (04.01.1976 – 17.09.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.34: Materials for minutes number OL-3 and OL-4 of the meetings of the Organising Committee (04.01.1976 – 17.09.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.36: Working notes for minutes number P-6 to P-9 of the meetings of the Organising Committee Presidium (04.01.1976 – 27.05.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.37: Working notes for minutes number P-10 to P-11 (24.06.1976 – 13.12.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.38: Decrees of the Organising Committee's Executive Bureau (06.04.1976 – 27.12.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.39: Minutes number I-5 to I-14 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Executive Bureau (19.02.1976 – 10.11.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.41: Working notes for minutes number I-6 to I-7 (16.04.1976 – 13.05.1976)
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.52: Report of the Organising Committee on the 78th IOC Session (Innsbruck, 15.07.1976) (1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.56: Reports from employees of the Organising Committee regarding participation in the work of the IOC Session and the meeting of the IOC Commission (07.02.1976 – 12.10.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.81: Minutes number 4 of the meeting of the Organising Committee's Commission for External Ties with their working notes (26.01.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.89: Minutes number 3 of the meeting of the Organising Committee's Information and Propaganda Commission with their working notes (29.06.1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.90: Report on the work of the Commission for Municipal and Public Services for the year 1976 (1976).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.119: Working notes on the drafting of resolutions and instructions of the USSR Council of Ministers regarding the orchestration of the Olympic Games (conclusions, suggestions, additions, correspondence with ministries and departments) (09.02.1977 – 28.04.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.122: Minutes number P-1 to P-8 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Presidium (10.03.1977 – 27.10.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.127: Minutes number I-1 to I-18 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Executive Bureau (03.02.1977 – 29.12.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.145: Report of the Soviet delegation's participation in the work of the IOC Commission (Moscow) (14.04.1977 – 15.04.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.166: Contracts with foreign firms relating to the commercial and licensing programme for the year 1977 (June – December 1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.180: Minutes of the meeting of the Organising Committee's Information and Propaganda Commission with their working notes (08.09.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.181: Minutes of the meeting of the Commission for Municipal and Public Services with their working notes (28.03.1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.185: Report on the work of the Commission for Catering and Trade for the year 1977 (1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.192: Programme of foreign delegations' visits organised by the Organising Committee (1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.193: Reports on foreign delegations' visits organised by the Organising Committee (1977).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.219: Minutes number P-1 to P-9 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Presidium (12.01.1978 – 25.12.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.221: Working notes for minutes number P-3 and P-4 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Presidium (04.04.1978 – 01.06.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.234: Working notes for minutes number I-9 to I-13 of the meetings of the Executive Bureau (27.06.1978 – 11.08.1978).

GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.268: Memoranda on the discussions of the Chairman of the Organising Committee with representatives of the IOC, NOCs, and foreign firms (part II) (05.10.1978 – 27.12.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.285: Plan of measures from the Administration regarding the intensification of propaganda work in support of the Games of the XXII Olympiad for the years 1978-1979 (30.10.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.286: Materials concerning hostile propaganda and the boycotting of the Olympic Games and recommendations for strengthening counter-propaganda work (reports, information) (1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.293: Contracts with foreign firms and companies relating to the commercial and licensing programme (09.06.1978 – 30.10.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.294: Contracts with foreign firms relating to the commercial and licensing programme (21.08.1978 – 20.12.1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.301: Reports on the foreign visits made by delegations of Soviet sport organisations (1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.310: Minutes number 10-11 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Information and Propaganda Commission with their working notes (1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.320: Report regarding the work of the Commission for Labour Resources for the year 1978 (1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.316: Working notes of the Commission for Catering and Trade for the year 1978 (1978).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.358: Working notes for minutes number OL-I, OL-2 and OL-3 of the meetings of the Organising Committee (20.02.1979 – 29.12.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.361: Minutes number P-2 to P-11 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Presidium (02.02.1979 – 29.12.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.369: Minutes number I-1 to I-13 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Executive Bureau (11.01.1979 – 31.07.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.370: Minutes number I-14 to I-21 of the meetings of the Organising Committee Executive Bureau (21.08.1979 – 28.12.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.439: Minutes of the meetings of the Organising Committee's International Relations Commission with their working notes (22.01.1979 – 15.11.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.459: Minutes number 15 to 17 of the meetings of the Information and Propaganda Commission with their working notes (1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.462: Report on the work of the Commission for Catering and Trade for the year 1979 (1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.469: Minutes number 4 and 5 of the Commission for Labour Resources with their working notes (06.06.1979 – 27.06.1979).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.494: Letters to the CC CPSU on questions relating to the preparations for, orchestration of, and conclusion of the Games (17.10.1980 – 01.07.1981).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.500: Working notes for minutes number OL-1 and OL-2 of the meetings of the Organising Committee (13.03.1980 – 07.07.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.502: Minutes number P-1 to P-5 of the meetings of the Organising Committee's Presidium (17.01.1980 – 27.05.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.503: Working notes for minutes number P-1 to P-3 of the meetings of the Organising Commitee Presidium (17.01.1980 – 17.04.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.551: Memoranda, reports and information presented by Organising Committee departments to the Organising Committee leadership regarding principal activities, volume IX (30.06.1980 – 10.07.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.552: Memoranda, reports and information presented by Organising Committee departments to the Organising Committee leadership regarding principal activities, volume X (10.08.1980 – 22.10.1980).

GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.554: Memoranda, reports and information presented by Organising Committee departments to the Organising Committee leadership regarding principal activities, volume XII (27.10.1980 – 08.12.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.608: Reports on the foreign visits made to the USSR by delegations from the NOCs and International Sports Federations (1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.628: Working notes from the Security and Public Order Commission for the year 1980 (reports, information, letters) (1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.632: Minutes of the meetings of the Commission for Labour Resources (27.06.1980 – 04.07.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.640: Memoranda on discussions with foreign journalists (23.11.1979 – 18.07.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.657: Minutes of the meetings of the budgetary committee regarding the organisation and orchestration of exhibitions abroad with their working notes (28.12.1979 – 08.12.1980).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.681: Minutes number I-1 to I-2 of the meetings of the Organising Committee Executive Bureau (02.02.1981 – 01.06.1981).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.688: Correspondence with the IOC on issues relating to the conclusion of the Games (08.01.1981 – 10.09.1981).
GARF, f.9610, op.1, d.689: Working notes for minutes number I-1 to I-2 of the meetings of the Organising Committee Executive Bureau (02.02.1981 – 01.06.1981).

***Fond* 9612 – Leadership Organs of Foreign Tourism Administration in the USSR ('Glavinturist SSSR'), 1929-1991**
GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1225: Document from the meeting of the Council on 07.12.1978, 'Regarding the progress of the implementation of the decrees of the CC CPSU and USSR Council of Ministers of 23rd December 1975 ("Regarding the measures for the preparations for and orchestration of the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games") with regard to the reception and provision of services to foreign tourists' (minutes number 21, recommendations, shorthand record, reports, correspondence) (07.12.1978 – 20.12.1978).
GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1341: Reports from the directorates, departments and branches of USSR Glavinturist regarding fulfilment of instruction number 3 of 1st December 1978 and the Council's recommendations of 7th December 1978 on the preparations for the 1980 Olympics (01.02.1979 – 05.03.1980).
GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1342: Document from the meeting of the Council on 20.11.1979, 'Regarding the organisation of catering and the provision of high-quality service to foreign tourists at public catering establishments during the period of the orchestration of the 1980 Olympic Games' (minutes number 22, recommendations, shorthand record, reports, correspondence) (23.03.1979 – 10.12.1979).
GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1346: Minutes number 1 to 3 of the meetings of the leadership of USSR Glavinturist regarding the preparations for and orchestration of the 1980 Olympics, with documents attached (30.11.1979 – 24.12.1979).
GARF, f.9612, op.3, d.1449: Minutes number 4 to 24 of the meetings of the staff of USSR Glavinturist regarding the preparations for and orchestration of the 1980 Olympics with documentation attached (04.01.1980 – 16.06.1980).

Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI)
***Fond* 5 – Apparatus of the CPSU Central Committee, 1949-1991**
RGANI, f.5, op.62, d.48: Notes, information, letters from departments, local party organisations, and the USSR Committee for Physical Culture and Sport…about the meeting of representatives of the CC departments of fraternal socialist countries in connection with the orchestration of the XX Munich Olympic Games (January 1970 – January 1971).
RGANI, f.5, op.66, d.157: Notes and information from the USSR Committee for Physical Culture and Sport on questions of expanding the USSR's sport ties with foreign countries,

on work for the X Olympic Congress in Varna, on exchanging sport delegations to participate in international competitions (January – December 1974).
RGANI, f.5, op.67, d.130: Notes and information from the USSR Committee for Physical Culture and Sport on questions relating to the preparations for the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games; notes and information on the propaganda measures to promote Moscow's candidacy for the 1980 summer Olympic Games. (January 1974 – September 1975).
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RGASPI, f.M-1, op.66, d.215: Working notes for the resolution of the Bureau of the CC VLKSM of 27th December 1978, 'Regarding the participation of Moscow Komsomol organisations in the preparations for the XXII summer Olympic Games' (department memoranda, plans, investigative documents, list of primary and district Komsomol organisations inspected during investigative period, some data on the condition of mass

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