

# Professors expect little change in Soviet-American relations

By Jim Berryman

Soviet-American relations will not undergo any major changes under incoming Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko, two UNL political science professor said Monday.

Chernenko, 72, succeeds former President Yuri Andropov, who died Thursday at age 69.

Despite the change of leaders in the Kremlin, relations between the two super powers will remain

unchanged, as long as President Reagan is in office, said David Forsythe, UNL professor of political science.

"Everything Reagan has done, such as the astronomical arms buildup, has been considered an act of hostility to the Soviets," Forsythe said. "The last three years have frightened the Soviet Union."

As a result, the Soviets will wait until the November presidential elec-

tion to begin any negotiations with the United States, said Ivan Volgyes, UNL political science professor specializing in Soviet relations. If the Kremlin would negotiate with the United States, it would help Reagan's bid for reelection, which the Soviets want to avoid, Volgyes said.

"The Soviets are not going to do anything to help Reagan get re-elected," he said.

With a new American

president in office, Volgyes said, the chances of going back to the bargaining table with the Soviets are better than if Reagan is re-elected.

Born in Siberia, Chernenko is the oldest man ever appointed to the supreme office of the Kremlin, Volgyes said. As former President Leonid Brezhnev's right-hand-man, Chernenko gained power in the Kremlin during Brezhnev's 18 years in office. When Brezhnev died, however, Chernenko's rival Andropov was named the leader, and Chernenko's status in the Soviet Union began to slip, he said.

But upon Andropov's serious illness, Chernenko once again began making public appearances in order to prove himself a leader, Volgyes said. On Monday, Chernenko stepped into one of the most powerful positions in the world, an occurrence not without controversy, he said.

"It took four days to name the successor to Andropov," Volgyes said. "They had a hard time naming the successor."

Andropov had been dead for almost 24 hours before Soviet officials announced his death, he said. This indicated a great amount of in-fighting among party members concerning who would replace the fallen leader, Volgyes said.

When the announcement came, Volgyes said he was not impressed.

"Chernenko's record is mediocre, although he has been faithful to his party," the Soviet expert said. "He dislikes Western ways and considers them decadent."

Both Forsythe and Volgyes said Andropov's 15 months in office were equally unimpressive.

"He continued the policies he inherited, but wasn't in office long enough to make a mark," Forsythe said. "He was an ineffective leader and was unable to create any real changes."

Reagan's decision not to attend Andropov's funeral Tuesday was a wise one, Volgyes said.

"I would be appalled if an American president would honor a person of Andropov's stature," he said, referring to Andropov's 15 years as head of the KGB. "People tend to forget about these things."

Future Soviet-American relations may depend on the November election, Forsythe said.

"It's a question on how much of what Reagan is saying is just campaign rhetoric or true action," he said.

Volgyes said he sees no immediate change in relations between the super-powers.

"American-Soviet relations will not be changed by individuals, but by changing interests," Volgyes said.

# Off The Wire

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## Reagan says Chernenko has more flexibility

WASHINGTON — President Reagan is optimistic that new Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko will have the flexibility to improve ties with the United States, observing in an interview published Tuesday that Chernenko is not locked into any policy by a long record of public statements.

Chernenko "has not been on record with any position that might cause him problems," Reagan said in an interview with correspondents for the Knight-Ridder newspaper chain.

Vice President George Bush, who met Chernenko Tuesday following the funeral of late Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, said the new leader agreed U.S.-Soviet relations should be conducted "upon a more constructive path."

Administration officials were pleased that Chernenko's maiden speech Monday was devoid of personal attacks on Reagan that often laced Andropov's public statements.

Chernenko stressed the need for "peaceful coexistence" among states with different social systems.

But Reagan said in the interview that he would not seek an early "get acquainted" session with the new Soviet leader.

## Navy's role in Lebanon disputed

WASHINGTON — Navy secretary John Lehman clashed with the White House Tuesday over whether it is U.S. policy in Beirut to use air naval power to support the Lebanese armed forces. Lehman told a news conference it was U.S. policy to fire into Syrian-held territory to support the Lebanese armed forces.

Shortly afterward, White House spokesman Larry Speakes told reporters that Lehman was in error, saying "Whatever we do... is in support of Americans and the multinational force."

Asked why Lehman would not know the reason for gunfire from U.S. ships, Speakes told reporters to "ask the Navy secretary."

President Reagan announced on Feb. 9 the 1,600-man Marine force will withdraw from its ground positions in Beirut to U.S. Navy ships offshore.

## Lebanese forced to 'redeploy'

BEIRUT — The Lebanese Army said Tuesday it had been forced to "redeploy" after day-long attacks by opposition militias in the mountains outside Beirut. It said units defending a strategic mountain ridge just south of Beirut had been forced to take up new positions after nearly 18 hours of fighting that began at midnight. Four times during the day, pairs of aging government Hawker Hunter jets strafed and rocketed the attacking forces of the mainly Druze Progressive Socialist Party as troops battled to hold their positions. Opposition sources said 3,000 militiamen had been thrown into what could be a "decisive battle" to seize the ridge and link up with their forces in the mountains with Shi'ite Moslem "Amal" (Hope) militiamen who seized West Beirut last week.

## El Salvador guardsmen to be tried

WASHINGTON — El Salvador's supreme court has cleared the way for the trial of five Salvadoran national guardsmen accused of murdering four U.S. churchwomen, a U.S. congressman said Tuesday. Guy Molinari, a New York Republican, said the State Department had told him the last legal obstacle to the trial was removed when the supreme court affirmed a lower court ruling to take the case to trial.

The women, Maura Clarke, Jean Donovan, Ita Ford and Dorothy Kazel, were abducted at Salvador's international airport on Dec. 2, 1980, and killed later that evening.


## Amish go back to old ways

MIDDLEFIELD, Ohio — Amish farmers in Northeast Ohio have gone back to harvesting ice from frozen ponds this winter for the first time in a half-century. Rising prices for commercial ice prompted the move, said the farmers who eschew electricity and depend on ice boxes for refrigeration in the summer. Last summer the price of commercial ice jumped by 20 percent because of production cost increases, to \$57 per 1,000 pounds.

The Amish in this area switched to commercial ice in the 1930s, when truck-deliveries began in rural areas. In rolling back the clock, however, the farmers have made one compromise with their usually plain way of doing things — gasoline powered chain saws are being used to cut the ice.

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