

# Why Secrets? The Uses of Secrecy in Stalin's Command Economy

Mark Harrison

Department of Economics  
University of Warwick

*and*

Centre for Russian & East European Studies  
University of Birmingham

## Abstract

In Stalin's command system secrecy was used to conceal information and decisions. We look at the uses of secrecy in a hierarchical system of the Soviet type in the context of the fundamental problem of command. Secrecy was a conditional choice. Principals gained by making economic information secret when the agent's expected profit opportunities in private trade were tempting, horizontal trust was fragile, and secrecy itself was cheap. It paid them to make decisions in secret when unexploited opportunities, and the wage that the principal could afford to pay the agent, were both low. Secrecy was one element in an equilibrium that enabled principals and agents to participate in the command system and enabled the system itself to persist.

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Address for correspondence: Department of Economics, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, UK. Email: mark.harrison@warwick.ac.uk.

# Why Secrets? The Uses of Secrecy in Stalin's Command Economy

## Introduction

Modern nation states exhibit a spectrum of secretiveness. In modern democracies debate often takes the merits of the “open society” and transparent government for granted. Even where transparency and freedom of information are taken as the norm, there is always a secret core of government where information is considered and decisions taken far from the public gaze. The range of variation is wide, however, and it seems likely that the Soviet command system was one of the most secretive states that have ever existed.

It is equally clear that Soviet leaders were willing to pay a substantial price to maintain the regime of secrecy. Secretiveness was costly. There were enforcement costs and deadweight efficiency costs. *Enforcement* required the establishment of procedural rules of *deloproizvodstvo* or “file management” and the rigorous numbering, distribution, tracking, conservation, and filing or destruction of documents. It also required an apparatus to monitor and investigate of cases of disclosure. The punishment of disclosure also resulted in the loss of human capital already sunk in agents who then turned out to be disloyal. *Efficiency* costs arose because secrecy created barriers to the sharing of information that was required to allocate resources efficiently; for example, principals decided the overall allocation of resources in ignorance of specific facts, while agents made specific allocations although insufficiently informed of the wider context.

The costs of Soviet secrecy raise the issue of its fundamental purposes. Why secrets? Who benefited from the regime of secrecy, and how? Connected with this is the further issue of “excessive” secretiveness. What is the optimal level of secrecy for a government? Did Stalin's regime take secrecy too far? Why was the Soviet system so *extremely* secretive, and did the costs of secrecy contribute to its eventual collapse? These are historical questions of the first order of significance.

The opportunity to study this subject empirically for the first time arises from new access to documentation held in the former Soviet archives in Moscow and at the Hoover Institution. This access means that we have not only learnt a lot of Soviet secrets, but we have also had the first opportunity to learn about secrecy and secretiveness themselves.

In the first section of this paper I will describe some aspects of the official practice of secrecy in the Soviet Union under Stalin. For this purpose I will draw on both recent documentary publications and a selection of documents in archives of the Soviet communist party and government in Moscow and at the Hoover Institution. These documents relate to two core institutions of the secret sphere in the Stalin period: the defence industry, and the chief administration of labour camps (Gulag) of the interior ministry (NKVD, later MVD). I will show that secrecy covered a wide range of economic data and decision processes. The second section proposes the fundamental problem of command as a framework for analysing the uses of secrecy. In the third and fourth sections I will formalise the benefits and costs to a principal of imposing secrecy on both data and decision processes: making data secret inhibited theft, and making processes secret inhibited lobbying. In the fifth section I describe some unintended consequences of the regime of secrecy that imposed further costs on the economy and society. The concluding sixth section draws some implications for the functioning and development of the command system.

## 1. The Practice of Secrecy

The subject of this paper is what was officially called, in Russian, *partiinaia i gosudarstvennaia taina*: the confidential affairs of party and state. Russians distinguish *taina*, the things that are to be kept secret, from the *rezhim zasekrechivaniia* or regime of classification that serves to conceal them, but in practice the English “secrets” and “secrecy” will cover them both.

The existence of secrets was rarely acknowledged in public, and then only in the abstract. The party constitution of 1952, for example, obliged all party members “to observe party and state secrets, to show political vigilance, remembering that the vigilance of communists is necessary in every organisation and every circumstance. Revelation of party and state secrets is a crime before the party and incompatible with membership of its ranks” [reference].

Officials rarely defended or rationalised the regime of secrecy in public, but a limited-circulation newspaper of the early 1950s provides an example. The Noril'sk combine was the Soviet Union's major producer of nickel and a number of other nonferrous metals. A forced labour camp of MVD Gulag (Ministry of Internal Affairs chief administration of labour camps), its existence was itself a state secret: Reflecting this, its daily newspaper *Stalinets* described itself as “Organ of the Political Department of the Combine”, but nowhere do its pages print any information that might reveal to the reader *which* combine, *where* it was located, or *what* assortment the combine produced. A leading article entitled “Strictly Observe Party and State Secrets” appeared in the issue for 18 August 1953 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R414/4/193, 296): Stalin was dead nearly six months and his security chief Lavrentii Beria was under arrest, but there was no thaw yet. The anonymous author informed the readers:

The imperialists are assigning hundreds of millions of dollars to disruptive work against the camp of socialism and democracy. The capitalist encirclement is dispatching its agents to our country and looking for persons ready to betray the interests of the Motherland and fulfill the assignments of the intelligence agencies of the bourgeois states to undermine Soviet society. Lacking social support in the Soviet land, despairing at its unforeseen moral and political unity, they try to exploit the dregs of society in the persons of diverse renegades and degenerate elements.

[...] In the party midst there are still to be encountered individual chatterboxes and scatterbrains. They are not averse to bragging of their inside knowledge among friends and acquaintances, in the circle of their families, by telephone and in personal correspondence and so forth. [...] We must] explain to [young communists] that questions considered at closed party meetings cannot be the subject of public scrutiny, that the contents of secret party and ministerial documents are not a subject for conversation even with the most intimate persons.

Such a statement sets out clearly the official context of secrecy: hostile states threaten us from outside, for this reason we must conceal our arrangements and capabilities. In this context, secrecy is a collective, not private good.

The practices of secrecy are shown in official documentation that has only been available since the collapse of the Soviet state. These provide the empirical data for this paper. The data are anecdotal and heterogeneous. To organise them, for reasons that will follow, I distinguish between the secrecy that covered the data required to make decisions, and the secrecy that veiled the decision making process itself.

### Secret Information

What kind of information was made secret? In the appendix I quote from two documents that list secret matters pertaining to the Gulag from 1947 and 1951. The first lists matters that were to be regarded as *gosudarstvennaia taina*, secrets of the

state; the second lists everything that was to be classified at the very highest level as “absolutely secret (special file)”. Several aspects of these lists demand our attention. Most obvious is their comprehensiveness; it appears that the interests of the state might have been served equally by a single word: “everything”. On a humanitarian level it is remarkable that the physical condition, health status, and health support of inmates were singled out as matters not for disclosure (appendix, document 1, paragraphs 4 and 20; document 2, para. 4). For present purposes I note that these documents specifically classified all information pertaining to the resources and economic tasks of the Gulag system (document 1, especially para. 17 but also paras 1, 2, 6 to 10, 12 to 15, and 18 to 20; document 2, paras 1 to 3, 5, 12, and 13). Finally it is characteristic that the scope of secrecy was retrospectively designated a state secret (document 1, para. 21). This secrecy persisted almost until the very end of the Soviet Union.

Anne Applebaum (2003: 109-11) has described the historical process that gave rise to this degree of secrecy. In the early years of Gulag, established in 1930, the reeducation of criminals through corrective labour was seen as a proper object of socialist propaganda. By 1937 this period was at an end, most of those associated with it had been arrested, and their works proscribed. The organisational mechanics of concealment were put in place between 1937 and 1940. In the latter year alone the internal correspondence of the NKVD gave rise to 25 million secret courier items.

The enforcement of rules regarding secret information was frequently of concern to senior officials. For example on 17 October 1947 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1/85, 170-1) Gulag chief Major General Dobrynin issued a decree “On Rectification of the Issuance and Storage of Decrees” within the Gulag system. Dobrynin criticised a number of camp administrations for issuing trivial decrees in excessive numbers, generating paperwork in such volume as to risk the accidental disclosure of secret information; he named specifically the Temnikovskii camp administration in Mordovia, which had issued 400 decrees in the first half of 1947 alone; and he reaffirmed existing rules on “file management”.

Secret paperwork was closely regulated in the office and beyond, but as one might expect rules were not always observed. In a memorandum issued on 19 August 1944 (Hoover Archive: GARF, 9414/1/324, 84) Gulag chief and commissar of state security Nasedkin reported the results of a recent audit: widespread careless violations including secret files, a register of secret correspondence, and an official stamp left lying on desks after the working day; secret documents kept in a cupboard accessible to detainees; a detailed topographical chart of a camp building site left in an open cupboard. Nasedkin warned that in future not only those directly responsible but also their superiors would be held to account. In the same vein a decree issued on 13 January 1947 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1-1/84, 6) by acting Gulag chief Major General Dobrynin reports that MVD officials travelling on business sometimes carry secret documents on their persons or in cases or hand luggage, risking their accidental loss; instead, such documents must normally be transmitted by the MVD’s own field communications apparatus, or the special departments of the communications ministry.

Sometimes quite trivial procedures might result in the accidental disclosure of information. This was a natural consequence of the fact that so much was secret in the first place; the scale of concealment was so vast that unintentional failures were inevitable. Such occurrences drew attention at high levels. On 16 January 1939 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1/21, 49) Gulag chief Filaretov noted that the periodical subscriptions that various Gulag departments placed with state publishing houses were being accompanied by address details that disclosed camp locations. He ordered all camps to be supplied with numbered post boxes; until this was done, all subscriptions should be re-routed through the “special departments” that dealt with security matters in every publishing house, as in every establishment in the whole Soviet Union. A similar matter reached the attention of deputy commissar for the

interior Kruglov who wrote to his opposite number Sergeichuk in the communications commissariat on 3 June 1942 (Hoover Archive: GARF, 9414/1/35, 454): the radio transmission of telegrams addressed to detainees of the camp at Noril'sk was in breach of the regulations designed to prevent disclosure of the location of labour camps. He requested that this practice cease forthwith.

Ministerial officials sometimes had to beat off attempts by other departments to lay their hands on secret information. Thus the Mordovian ASSR minister of the interior, police commissar Teniakshev, wrote to Colonel General Ivan Serov, deputy interior minister for the USSR, on 8 June 1950 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1/148, 351-3). He cited an instruction of the USSR MVD dated 27 May: "1. Categorically to prohibit the issue of information concerning the number of detainees, security, cadres of the camp sector, the conditions of the regime of maintenance and isolation of detainees, and the volume and character of productive activity, to any and all [*kakim by to ni stalo*] establishments and organisations of other ministries and departments, including to MVD agencies, to which submission of the specified data has not been stipulated by decrees and instructions of USSR MVD." Teniakshev explained that the local prosecutor responsible for oversight of MVD camps, colonies, and prisons was repeatedly requesting such information, and asked whether such requests were allowed under the May decree. On 14 June, the Bashkir ASSR deputy minister of the interior, Lieutenant Colonel Mamaev, wrote an almost identical letter to Gulag deputy chief Bulanov (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1/148, 354): local prosecution officials, he explained, were demanding "information about the numbers and composition of detainees, the progress of fulfillment of production programme, the conditions of [their] regime and cultural and educational work and other information of a secret or absolutely secret character." Dobrynin confirmed to Teniakshev that such requests were not allowed.

In the same vein, on 16 August 1948 deputy interior minister Serov wrote to his boss Lavrentii Beriia (Moscow: GARF, 5446/50a/4043, 1-2) that in the process of drafting the 1949 budget the ministry of finance was demanding to be informed of numbers in prisons, labour camps, and prisoner of war camps "and their physical condition", numbers of internal security troops, and figures for gold output and the gold content of ores; these figures were required to budget for the required outlays by the MVD on wages and subsistence. Serov warned: "Provision of these figures will lead to familiarisation with especially important information on the part of a wide circle of staff of the USSR Ministry of Finance, the State Bank and the Industrial Bank". An accompanying memorandum advised Beriia that in past years such figures were loaned temporarily to the finance ministry to be processed by no more than two or three highly trusted workers, then returned; it noted that the ministries of the armed forces and state security provided the finance ministry only with financial summaries, not head counts; and it proposed that from now on the MVD do the same. On Serov's memorandum is noted by hand: "Comrades Popov and Serov: consider and resolve. L. Beriia."

Like the business of Gulag, defence matters were also characterised by intense secrecy that has been described elsewhere (Harrison, 2001). In defence matters, too, the historical secrecy persisted until the end of the 1980s and of course current military affairs remain as secret today in Russia as elsewhere. What was remarkable about Soviet military secrecy was its use to exclude virtually all of the top leadership from decisions affecting the armed forces and defence industry. In his memoirs Mikhail Gorbachev (1996) has written that right up to his period of office as general secretary, which began in 1985, "All statistics concerning the military-industrial complex were top secret, inaccessible even to members of the Politburo"; "only two or three people had access to data on the military-industrial complex. He recalls that the long-serving defence minister Dmitrii Ustinov "essentially had monopoly control" over defence information; it was a serious breach of protocol for outsiders, even other Politburo members, to question him. According to military sources of the same period

(cited by Firth and Noren, 1998: 260n), the true scale of military funding was known to “only four men [...] the General Secretary, the Council of Ministers Chairman, the Minister of Defence, and its Chief of the General Staff”. Iurii Masliukov, a leader of the Council of Ministers military-industrial commission under Gorbachev, has confirmed (Masliukov and Glubokov, 1999: 105) that:

Until 1988 summary figures concerning the defence of the country were considered to be a secret of exceptional state importance; a limited circle of people (the leadership of USSR Gosplan and not even all Politburo members) were familiar with them. It was forbidden to reproduce such figures in typing pools, and in documents they were circulated by authorised individuals from hand to hand.

In defence matters as in the affairs of Gulag, the scope of secrecy made accidental disclosure a continual threat. Barber et al. (2000: 21) recount that in the spring of 1937 the heavy industry commissariat published figures for the gross output of its civilian products alone, while almost simultaneously Gosplan published the overall gross output of heavy industry, permitting anyone to compute the value of defense output as the residual. An alarmed reaction from within Gosplan demanded strict punishment of the responsible officials in industry. A clampdown on statistical publication began from about this time and continued until the post-Stalin thaw.

Extensive secretiveness and the ease of accidental disclosure made for an environment in which it was virtually impossible for everyone to keep the right side of secrecy regulations at all times. Anyone could let slip some trifle at any time and, even if they did not, could readily be accused of having done so. This made a powerful weapon of repression out of the laws such as Article 58(6) of the RSFSR Criminal Code that punished “espionage, ie. the transmission, theft, or collection, with a view to transmission to foreign States, counter-revolutionary organizations, and private individuals, of information accounted by reason of its contents an especially guarded State secret” (Conquest, 1971: 743-4). Cases of espionage under Article 58(6) on its own or in conjunction with other articles accounted for some 15 per cent of the roughly 8,000 executions that were carried out by the NKVD in the Leningrad district in August, September, and October 1937 (Ilic, 2000: 1529). The same proportion applied to the national figure of 681,692 executions by the NKVD in the course of 1937/38 would suggest up to 100,000 cases of espionage that received capital sentences across the country in the years of the Great Terror; this should be considered an upper limit since the proportion of cases in Leningrad may have been raised by the high concentration of military and defence-related installations in that locality. As for less serious instances of espionage, since execution was reserved for cases leading to “especially grievous consequences to the interests of the USSR”, it may be assumed that this was the tip of a somewhat larger iceberg. Taking all cases together, most were probably sentenced on account of some relatively trivial violation or none at all (Solzhenitsyn, 1974: 63-4).

As the anonymous author wrote in the Noril'sk *Stalinets* (Hoover Archive: GARF, R414/4/193, 296): “In questions of the conservation of party and state secrets, in information that is not intended for disclosure there are not and do not exist trifles. Sometimes information that is insignificant at first glance can be of great value to a spy.” The burden of proof in such cases was correspondingly low since it was the kind of thing almost anyone could have done, and therefore in fact probably had done regardless of the evidence available.

### **Secret Decisions**

In the Stalin era tens of thousands of decisions were made secretly. R.W. Davies (2001: 63) has pointed out that between 1930 and 1941 the government and its main economic committee made more than 32,000 decrees but less than 4,000 of these were openly published, and more than 5,000 received the top security classification

which meant that they remained known only to a few top officials. What this means is that decisions were transmitted downward with hardly anyone knowing the legal basis of an instruction or the true source of its authority.

This approach corresponds with the principles of “conspirativeness” (*konspiratsiia*) that were approved by the party politburo in the late 1920s; it limited knowledge of the business of the politburo and central committee to the narrowest possible set of participants and, in the process of transmitting decisions downwards, denied information to lower levels about the sources and context of higher-level decisions. Thus on 5 March 1931 (Khlevniuk et al., 1995: 85 and 73-82) the Politburo resolved “categorically to forbid people with the right of acquaintance with the decisions of the c[entral] c[ommittee], when passing instructions onward in the apparatus, to refer to the fact that these instructions are decisions of the c[entral] c[ommittee].”

“Conspirativeness” was not only a principle of political or party organisation. It also became the ruling principle of the entire state. Thus the secrecy rules that prevailed within the NKVD-MVD were also intended to provide “the conspirativeness necessary to exclude the disclosure of state secrets and methods of work of agencies of the NKVD” (Hoover Archive: GARF, 9414/1/85, 170).

## Summary

In the command system of the Stalin era, secrecy was pervasive. Both economic data and the political process became secret. The effect of secrecy was to build elaborate firewalls not only between the Soviet state and other states, and not only between the state and society, but also within the state itself. These firewalls inhibited the transfer of information within the command system both horizontally and downwards. Even within the government information was shared on the basis of need, not right to know, and the need to know was defined within limits that appear sometimes extraordinarily narrow.

## 2. Secrecy and Command

Western social and historical science has given rise to two views of secrecy. In the tradition of Max Weber (1922/1968) secrecy is seen as a natural feature of bureaucracy. The underlying explanation is that bureaucrats incline to secrecy because it gives them freedom to act without having to account for their decisions and also protects them from criticism. This understanding, which is perfectly plausible and consistent with a very wide range of known facts, is implicit or taken for granted in much historical writing that describes the secrecy practices of the Soviet state (e.g. Tarschys, 1985; Fitzpatrick, 1990). Those who adhere to this tradition recognise that secrecy may have consequences that are costly but the costs are borne by society, not the bureaucrat. The costs may be both political and economic. In politics secrecy tends to undermine democratic values by stifling debate and weakening accountability (e.g. Colby, 1976; Moynihan, 1997). In the economy secrecy may reduce the efficiency of resource allocation; for example, technological secrecy may give rise to a high level of duplicated inventions (Medvedev, 1977) and military secrecy may contribute to the incidence of scientific fraud (Park, 2000).

An alternative approach to secrecy stems from the rational-actor tradition in the theory of international relations (e.g. Schelling, 1963; Gibbs, 1995, is a recent case study). In this approach the rational actor is the state rather than the individual official. Secrecy is seen to benefit the state but is also costly. This is not a question of the external cost to society, rather, the state bears internal opportunity costs of implementing secrecy. Therefore, secrecy is a choice, not a natural condition. For example, a strategy of aggression against an adversary may be assisted by surprise, which depends on making preparations in secret, but a strategy of deterrence depends

on the ability to signal the broad consequences of aggression to the adversary, and the credibility of such a signal may be reduced by secret preparation.

Economists might be expected to show a natural interest in the study of official secrecy as a rational choice. In practice, however, economists do not seem to have given the subject much thought.<sup>1</sup> This raises the difficulty that an attempt at the historical economics of secrecy in the Soviet Union lacks a ready-made theoretical framework.

We cannot explain the development of secrecy within a state by looking just at collective motivations. Secrecy is effective only when it also corresponds with the private interests of individual decision makers; otherwise, they will have incentives to break rules and reveal information or permit others to reveal it. Thus, any regime that persists must be understood as an equilibrium (Greif, 2000): each person participates in it because it is in their interest to do, conditional upon their expectation that others have made the same calculation.

Therefore, in this and the following sections I develop private motivations for a principal to restrict information that would otherwise be available to an agent and I show the conditions under which the result can be an equilibrium. I start from the fundamental problem of command (Harrison, 2003). A principal gives an order to an agent and advances the means to implement it. The agent may obey unconditionally or conditionally, or shirk, or steal the advance and invest it in an exchange with an external private network.

Figure 1 shows the problem of command: to be willing to comply, the agent must ignore the available opportunities for private gain. The obedient agent receives the wage advanced,  $w$ , and returns the planned output  $x$  to the principal who thus receives a surplus  $x - w$ . The disobedient agent may shirk. In this case she takes the wage and ignores the command. Her payoff is the wage plus the gain in reduced effort,  $w + e$ , which is always preferable to the wage alone, while the principal records a loss,  $-w$ . Alternatively, the agent may steal the wage advanced and invest it in an unauthorised transaction with a private network of persons that are known to her and so gain  $p$ . Again, the principal loses the wage advanced.

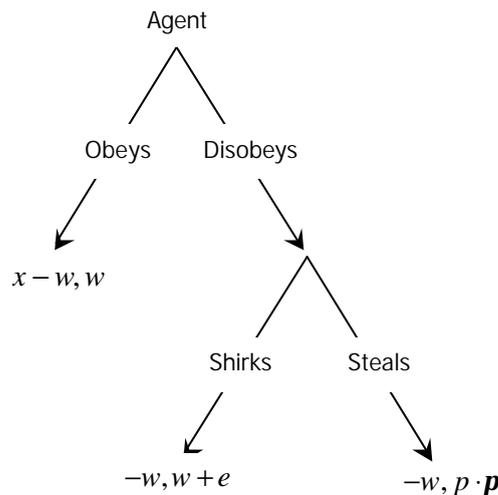
Historically, the problem of command has been solved by a wide range of enforcement mechanisms including monitoring and rewards for compliance, the penalisation of shirking and disloyalty, the use of military power to drive down the rewards of potential liaison with foreign powers, and so forth (Harrison, 2003). Among these was also the regime of secrecy.

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<sup>1</sup> Individual persons have secrets. The economic literature on information has tended to focus on the value of information about individual attributes such as productivity that are costly to observe or signal (e.g. Molho, 1997). Official secrets, in contrast, require protection precisely because they would otherwise be observed at little cost. The revelation principle suggests that when individuals would otherwise wish to keep secret adverse information about themselves such as a poor sickness record there are often countervailing incentives that arise and lead them to reveal it anyway because the value of their secret depends on non-disclosure by others who may lose as a result; the first agents to disclose place the rest at a disadvantage, reducing their gain from nondisclosure (Baird, Gertner, and Picker, 1994: 89-90). Official secrecy, in contrast, forces cooperation by punishing disclosure.

There are distinct literatures on secrecy in central banking (e.g. Rudin, 1988) and Swiss banking (e.g. Guex, 2000), and on secrets that are unprotected by law including wage secrecy (e.g. Danziger and Katz, 1997) and trade secrecy (e.g. Friedman, Landes, and Posner, 1991). The literature on patents touches on the uses of trade secrecy versus the legal protection of valuable information that is registered and therefore in the public domain (e.g. Arundel, 2001); in contrast official secrecy protects the information itself.

Figure 1. The Fundamental Problem of Command



### 3. Secrets and Trade

In this and the following section I will examine motivations for a principal to restrict information that arise in the context of the fundamental problem of command. Under certain conditions the principal may use secrecy to deter the agent from diverting the principal's advance to trade in a private network rather than comply with the principal's orders, and from lobbying the principal to change the terms of a command. This corresponds with the distinction between secret data and secret processes: making *data* secret prevents trade, while making *processes* secret prevents lobbying. By considering the principal's choices we find that the level of information in the command system becomes endogenous.

#### Intuition

A specialised agent in a complex hierarchy may have an incentive to divert the principal's resources to some private use but since resources and uses are themselves specialised this usually involves some sort of horizontal exchange with other agents. In the Soviet command system each agent engaged in authorised horizontal contacts with other agents in order to fulfill the principal's plan. This created the possibility for agents to invest their principals' assets in other, unauthorised horizontal exchanges for private gain. Had this become widespread it would have resulted in a different allocation of resources and also subverted the principle of the command system, the supremacy of compulsory vertical relationships over voluntary horizontal ones. In the model that I develop below, the principal solves this problem by means of secrecy.

The model is presented in terms of an economic market place where resources are traded for financial profit, but could be generalised to a political market place where resources are traded for loyalty. In the model the agent considers trade with an external network. This network could be thought of as a network of agents operating on behalf of other principals in the command system, or as a private or criminal network of operating in the domestic "shadow" economy, or as a network of agents of foreign commercial or state interests. In the case that foreign governments are involved in a potential transaction the argument for secrecy becomes a conventional one couched in terms of national security.

In the context of Gulag think of two specific applications. First, it is clear that some camp commanders lived far above their salaries (Applebaum, 2003: 249-51) but it is not clear where the excess came from. Evidently, controlling large numbers of

slave labourers gave rise to the possibility of extracting a rent from the economic environment which was one of chronic labour shortage. Secrecy did not prevent this, but at least it ensured that the potential scope of corruption was limited to the exploitation of relatively private relationships.

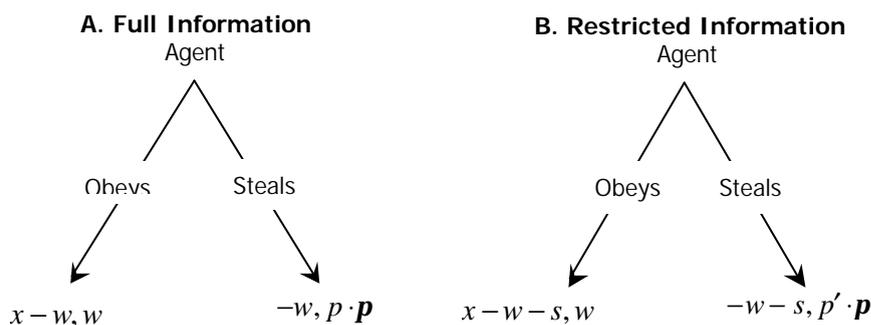
Second, one of the Soviet Union's most important assets in the international arena was its reputation as the world's first socialist state. This reputation was easily damaged by information about slave labour, as Soviet leaders were made aware in 1930 and 1931 (Applebaum, 2003: 75-6). Western workers' organisations were particularly sensitive to competitive threat to their members' employment from Soviet exports of Gulag origin that were underpriced as a result of the repression of labour costs. Loss of reputation threatened the Soviet Union with loss of both influence and valuable commercial opportunities. If its reputation was valuable, so information that undermined it was valuable to its adversaries. Therefore there was scope for an agent to trade with an adversary by selling off the principal's asset, which in this case was information injurious to its reputation.

By making information about the Gulag impossible to verify the Soviet Union was able to cast doubt on adverse information and divide its critics long after Gulag had been wound up and most of its "subsections" disbanded.

### Model

Think of an agent facing a choice between two projects. The principal advances  $w$  to the agent and orders her to undertake a planned project that is expected to return  $x$  to the principal. Alternatively the agent may steal the principal's advance, illegally invest it with a private network of persons that are known to her and so, provided the network completes its side of the exchange, gain  $p$ . But this presumes the existence of horizontal trust. Since trading privately on the principal's advance is illegal an agent considering dealings with the external network must first solve the fundamental problem of exchange without recourse to the law. She discounts the profit that is potentially available by the probability  $p$  that others in the network will steal from her what she stole from the principal in the first place, so  $p$  measures the degree of horizontal trust or "honour among thieves". Alternatively, if thieves fall out she loses the  $w$  she stole and gets nothing.

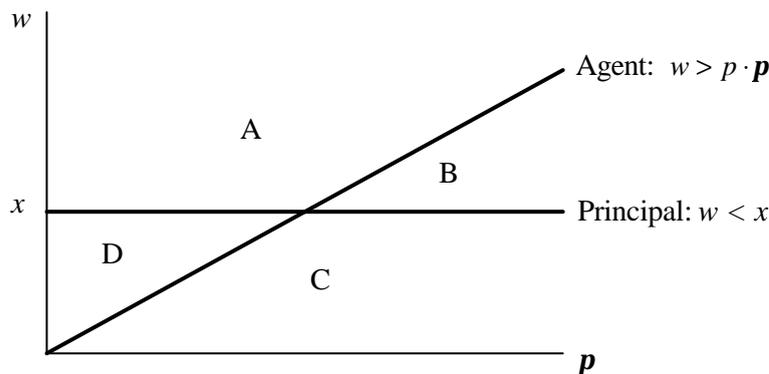
Figure 2. Compliance Versus Theft



In figure 2, panel A shows the case of full information. The principal's only chance of a positive outcome is if the agent obeys, and the agent's best choice is to obey the principal if the latter can offer a wage that exceeds her expected gain from a private trade, i.e. if  $w > p \cdot p$ . In other words, even we start from a presumption that a command system does not allocate resources efficiently and leaves many profit opportunities unexploited, for the agent to consider disloyalty it is not enough that the potential profit from a private exchange should exceed her wage; it must do so by a large margin unless the external network has already evolved well developed relational enforcement mechanisms. This suggests one of the factors that may enable

a command system to persist even in the face of clear evidence of an efficiency deficit.

Figure 3. Participation Constraints for Compliance Versus Theft



Key:

- A. Agent willing to comply but Principal not able to reward compliance.
- B. Agent not willing and Principal not able.
- C. Agent not willing although Principal able.
- D. Agent willing and Principal able.

Figure 3 illustrates the participation constraints of the players under full information. The figure compares the maximum wage that the principal will pay an obedient agent given the return to the planned project with the minimum wage that the agent will accept in return for obedience given the return to the alternative project. The space in the figure is divided into four areas. In areas A and B the principal cannot afford the wage that is paid to the agent, and in areas B and C the wage is too low relative to the known opportunities for trade to induce the agent's compliance. Area D therefore defines the feasible space within which the agent is willing to work for the principal and the principal can afford to pay her. A rise in the profitability of horizontal exchange relative to the yield from the planned project, and an increase in horizontal trust, both shrink this space.

The principal has several advantages in grappling with this problem. Not only does he have on his side the fundamental problem of exchange, a direct result of the criminalisation of private trade. Additionally, he can add to the agent's problem by monitoring her behaviour and imposing penalties for disloyalty. Monitoring and punishments can be costly, however (Harrison, 2002). Finally, he can exploit secrecy.

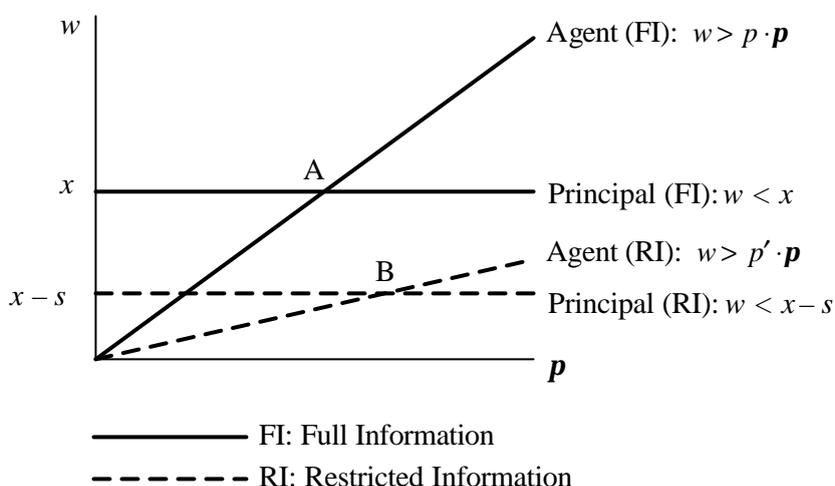
A prerequisite for trade is the sharing of information: buyer and seller must be able to signal each other about *ex ante* supplies and demands (Hayek, 1945). This creates the possibility for the principal to restrict the agent's choices by legislating against the communication of data between the agent and the private network (Harrison, forthcoming). Suppose the principal prohibits the agent from signalling her resources or requirements, and also prohibits others from receiving these signals. Then it is hard to see how a transaction with the private network can arise. The agent may still offer information but it is no longer verifiable, and this must reduce horizontal trust. By criminalising the exchange of signals the principal has reduced the probability of honour among thieves to  $p'$  where  $p' < p$ . Alternatively, the agent must now invest additional resources in restoring trust and establishing the credibility of the signals she sends and receives. This cost arises even before we consider the possible consequences of the fact that the exchange of signals may be detected and punished.

The case of restricted information is shown in panel B. Under secrecy the agent's expected gain is reduced by the lower probability of profit and the increased probability of a loss. The principal, however, must bear an additional overhead, the

direct cost  $s$  of administering the regime of secrecy. The maximum wage that he can afford to pay is now  $w < x - s$  instead of  $w < x$ . The principal's payoff in the event of the agent's compliance is less than before, but the agent is more likely to comply since she will remain loyal under secrecy provided  $w > p' \cdot p$  and  $p' < p$  by assumption.

Figure 4 compares the participation constraints of the players under full and restricted information. With full information the horizontal coordinate of A shows the maximum to which  $p$  may rise before the principal must abandon hope of inducing the agent's obedience; to the right of this point the market offers such high rewards that the agent cannot be induced to go with the plan at a wage the principal can afford. Under a regime of secrecy, this maximum shifts to B. In the case shown, horizontal trust is fragile and secrecy is cheap, so B is drawn to the right of A: in this case secrecy will enable the principal to maintain the agent's compliance despite potential returns from the private network that are too high for an equilibrium under transparency. If secrecy costs are large, however, and horizontal trust is resilient, secrecy will not help the principal.

Figure 4. Participation Constraints in Alternative Information States



In the model that I have presented transparency and secrecy are treated as binary states. In practice information is differentiable and there are degrees of transparency, so data restriction need not mean zero information. In the Stalinist command system, however, principals became unwilling to differentiate between large and small secrets, data restriction often meant complete silence and petty revelations were penalised with as much harshness as large ones

As the anonymous author wrote in the Noril'sk *Stalinets* (Hoover Archive: GARF, R414/4/193, 296): "In questions of the conservation of party and state secrets, in information that is not intended for disclosure there are not and do not exist trifles. Sometimes information that is insignificant at first glance can be of great value to a spy."

One might understand this all-or-nothing attitude in two ways. In a repeated game-theoretic context the dictator might increase compliance and reduce lobbying and renegotiation costs by investing in a reputation for harshness and intransigence, in effect showing an unwillingness to count regime costs. Alternatively, the same pattern might arise from considerations of efficient deterrence. According to Becker (1968: 177) a penalty that deters a potential offender varies directly with the expected gain from the offense and inversely with the probability of conviction. If we consider only efficiency, and completely discount ideas about fitting punishment that flow from social norms and traditions of justice, then there need be no proportionality

between the twin scales of crime and punishment. If the probability of detection is lowest where the expected gain is least, it may be efficient to punish small offenses as severely as large ones or even more so. This appears to match the case of Soviet secrecy.

### Summary

There are various ways in which a principal can inhibit misappropriation of his assets by an agent, and one of them is to impose secrecy on economic information. This model shows how a principal can use secrecy to reduce the incentive for his agent to divert resources into private trade, and it also shows when it will be in the principal's interest to do so: when the agent's expected profit opportunities in private trade are tempting, horizontal trust is fragile, and secrecy itself is cheap.

Secrecy is not the only mechanism that can achieve this result. Direct monitoring of the uses of resources and punishments for violations can have the same effect. Therefore, a more complete historical analysis would require investigation of the comparative costs and benefits of alternative mechanisms at the margin.

## 4. Secrets and Lobbying

In this section I look at reasons for imposing secrecy on decision making processes. I extend the fundamental problem of command to examine the character of obedience, which can be conditional or unconditional. This reveals the key to another dilemma that pervades modern hierarchies: the degree to which commands should be open to renegotiation. So far, I have assumed that the returns to different activities are common knowledge. However, hierarchies are normally characterised by an uneven distribution of information: the principal may have better general knowledge than the agent but in local knowledge the agent has the advantage. This gave rise to the possibility that a principal might make a mistaken decision. A command that could be in error was liable to be questioned as soon as it was issued.

### Intuition

The principal's problem lies in the fact that lobbying consumes resources, while the gain from lobbying is uncertain. Moreover, the agent is motivated to consume the potential gain. A principal who closed his door to lobbies deprives himself of the agent's information about needs and resources and loses the possibility of correcting mistaken commands. On the other hand, an open door means the agent will spend much of her own time and that of the principal arguing about decisions already taken instead of carrying them out.

Below I show that the principal may prefer to put a stop to lobbying despite the loss of information that results, and that the means of doing so is to make the process of decision making secret since no one can allocate resources to lobbying, not knowing whom to lobby. If interested persons know whom to lobby they will, regardless of formal rules; the only way to stop them is to deny them knowledge about who takes decisions and even that a decision has been taken.

Again the model is developed in economic terms but can be easily extended to other areas. Consider the judicial process. An open justice system cares about mistakes and presents many opportunities for appeals on matters of fact and procedure. Those facing heavy sentences have little or nothing to lose from appealing. However, appeals are costly. A government that does not care about mistakes and wishes to save the time spent on appeals may choose to transfer proceedings to a closed basis. This is approximately what happened to the prosecution of "political" crimes in the Soviet Union in the 1930s.

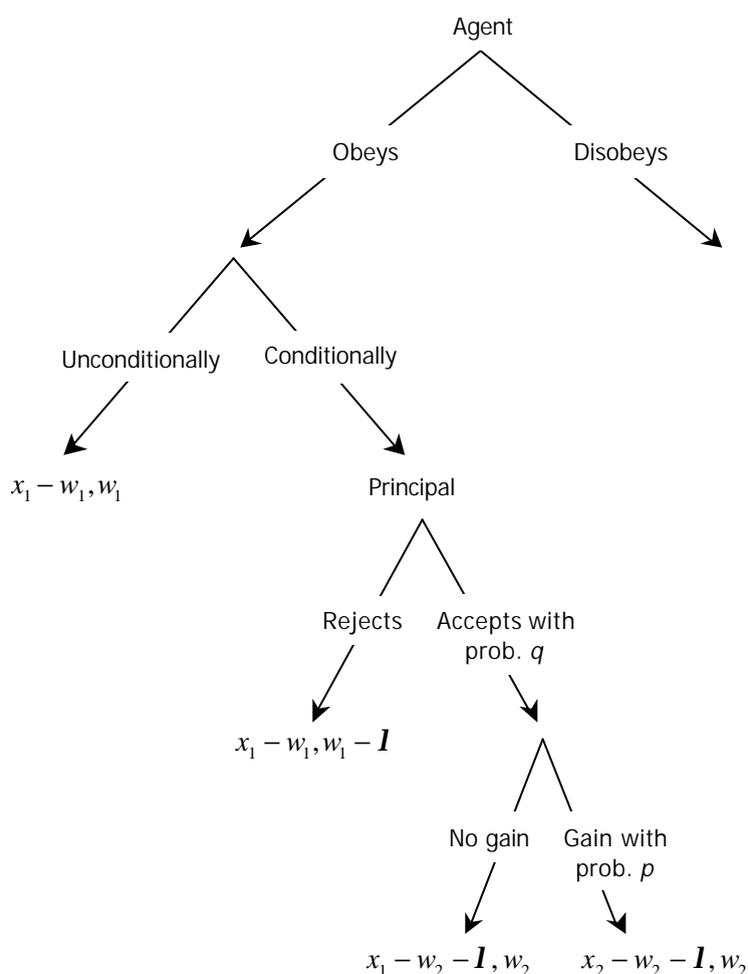
Finally, the framework may be extended to cover the relationship between a dictator and the citizens in society. Citizens who have no formal rights of access to the decision making process may still force their way in by lobbying the dictator. A

regime that wishes to assert an unquestioned dictatorial prerogative can exploit secrecy to avoid questioning.

### Model

Figure 5 portrays lobbying within a hierarchy as an attempt by the agent in receipt of a command to trade private information with the principal before complying in return for a share of the principal's rent. By improving the principal's information the agent loses the ability to shirk or steal and becomes committed to a course of obedience, but obedience becomes conditional on an intervening stage of renegotiation. The principal initially advanced  $w_1$  and expected to receive  $x_1$ . The agent then takes  $I$  out of the wage advanced and invests it in lobbying the principal to persuade him that there is a better project that can yield both  $x_2$  for the principal and  $w_2$  for the agent. The principal expects that the agent's proposal will yield  $x_2 > x_1$  with probability  $p$  and will otherwise yield only  $x_1$  so  $p$  is the probability that his original command was in error. The agent expects her lobbying to succeed with probability  $q$ ; if it succeeds then the principal must advance  $w_2 > w_1$  to the agent and also reimburse  $I$ , the cost of lobbying, but if lobbying fails the agent will get only the original advance out of which she must now meet the cost of the fruitless attempt to renegotiate the order.

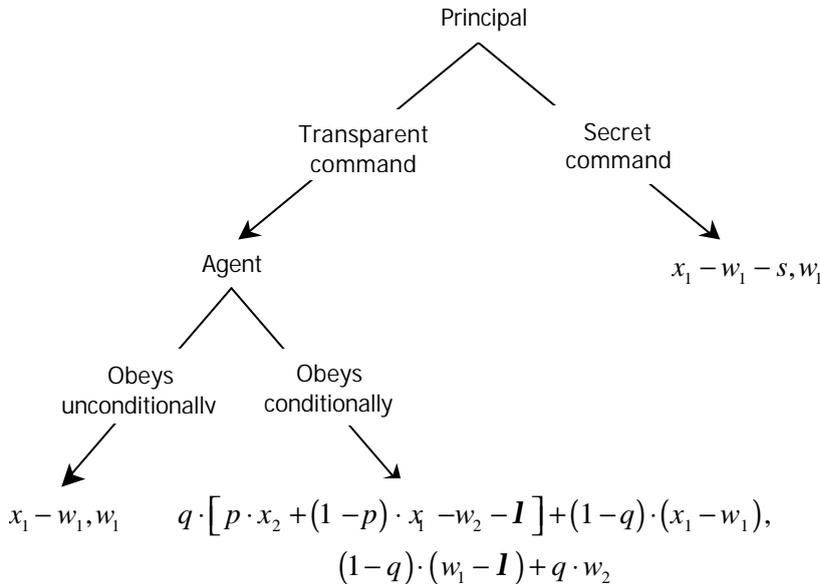
Figure 5. Unconditional and Conditional Obedience



In the context of the fundamental problem of command this has the following significance: the agent does not choose just between obedience and disobedience, but

must also consider how to obey. If the agent's payoff from lobbying turns out to exceed her payoff from unconditional compliance then this can be thought of as a way of mitigating the fundamental problem: allowing the agent a voice in decisions can reduce the relative attractions of shirking or stealing. But while this may help to secure the agent's participation there is still a cost that the principal must be able to offset. Thus, to permit renegotiation is not the solution for the principal's problem under all circumstances.

Figure 6. *Transparency Versus Secrecy*



Alternatively, the principal may prevent the agent from lobbying by denying information about who made the decision, and pays  $s$  in administrative costs to achieve this. Figure 6 shows the possible outcomes. If the principal can expect the agent to obey unconditionally then he has nothing to gain from imposing secrecy since secrecy is costly and, if the plan is mistaken, the unconditionally obedient agent will not tell him. Given a transparent decision, the agent will comply unconditionally with a command and not seek to renegotiate it provided that

$q \cdot (w_2 - w_1) < (1-q) \cdot I$ , i.e. the expected wage gain adjusted by the probability of success in lobbying is less than the cost of lobbying taking into account the probability of failure. The less is  $q$ , the probability that the principal is open to persuasion, the greater is the scope for the agent's unconditional compliance. The principal in turn will prefer to avoid lobbying by means of secrecy where

$p \cdot (x_2 - x_1) + \frac{s}{q} < (w_2 - w_1) + I$ , i.e. the his expected gain from correcting a

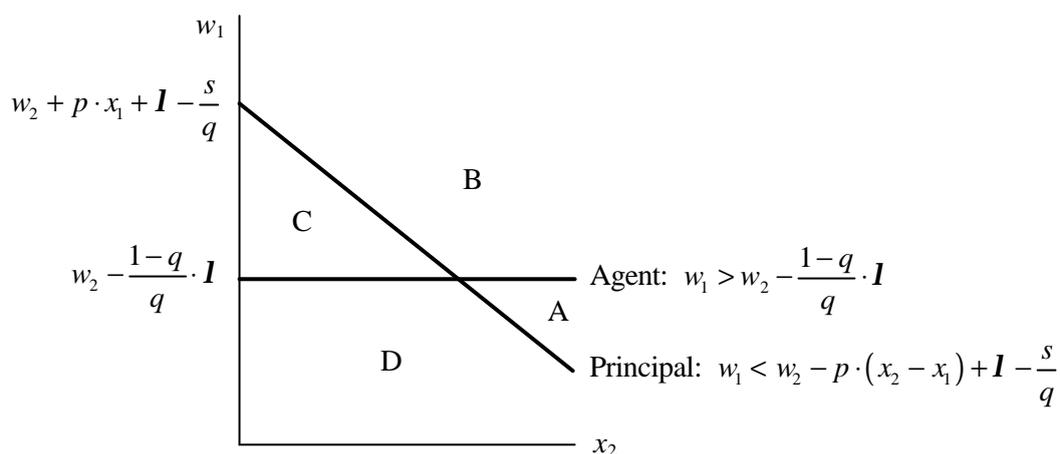
mistake, plus the expected saving of secrecy costs, falls short of the compensation he must return to the agent for successful lobbying, plus the deadweight costs of lobbying activity. The smaller is  $p$ , the probability of a mistaken command, the less ready will be the principal to permit lobbying. A principal who perceives his agent as highly persuasive will also find lobbying to be less beneficial, especially if the

alternative of imposing secrecy is inexpensive, i.e. if  $\frac{s}{q}$  is small.

Figure 7 shows the participation constraints of the players. The figure divides into four spaces. In areas A and B the opportunity represented by  $x_2$  that the principal's initial plan fails to exploit are large enough that he will prefer to receive the agent's lobbying despite the costs that may arise as a result. In areas B and C the wage that

the principal offers initially is high enough that the agent will not invest effort in lobbying for more. In areas A and B, therefore, the decision process is open; in area A there is lobbying but in area B no lobbying results. In area C the principal is willing to fend off the agent by imposing a cloak of *konspiratsiia* on the decision process but the agent is willing to comply voluntarily without lobbying. In area D the agent would wish to lobby the principal but the principal's best strategy is to prevent this through secrecy. Thus, secrecy pays for itself when unexploited opportunities, and the wage that the principal can afford to pay the agent, are both low.

Figure 7. Compliance Under Secrecy and Transparency



Key:

- A. Transparency + Lobbying
- B. Transparency + Voluntary Compliance Anyway
- C. Secrecy if Required + Voluntary Compliance Anyway
- D. Secrecy + Forced Compliance

## Summary

Plan bargaining was an entrenched feature of the command system. What has escaped analysis so far in the literature is why such bargaining might have been in the principal's interest. One answer is that the agent's representations often carried credibility in so far as everyone knew the plan system was based on imperfect information and incorporated mistakes. Hence, bargaining can be understood as a form of rent-sharing: the agent's trading of additional private information in return for additional income. However, the renegotiation process was costly and it is natural to suppose that principals should have taken these costs into account.

Thus, the framework of the fundamental problem of command provides a unified explanation of some further features of the Soviet command system. It explains why command was so commonly accompanied by negotiation and lobbying. On the other hand, by imposing secrecy on the decision making process, a principal could avoid having to commit time and effort to continually reviewing decisions for uncertain gain. It is true that by doing so he might worsen the quality of information that he received, so we could suppose that a principal who cared more about information than transaction costs might still prefer to receive lobbies. It seems likely that the quality of planning mattered: the more the principal becomes aware that plans were failing to exploit profitable allocation opportunities, the more likely he would be to open up the decision making process. This may throw some light on the reasons why Soviet-type economies became less conspirative after Stalin's death and began to evolve more formal mechanisms for plan bargaining (Brus, 1986: 97-111; Kornai, 1986).

More generally, the model suggests why administrative systems of all kinds that are found in governments, corporations, public services of all kinds including universities, and even armies normally allow for some degree of consultation or renegotiation of decisions and commands, ranging from lengthy and complex formal procedures to the momentary hesitation that arises when a soldier responds to an order with “But *Sir!*” It implies that successful hierarchies should carefully regulate the degree of renegotiation and the level of resources that lobbying may consume.

## 5. Other Costs and Unintended Consequences

An important unintended consequence of the regime of secrecy in the defence industry was its exploitation by agents to protect themselves against the demands of principals, both hierarchical superiors and planned consumers. This means that their opportunistic behaviour gave rise to unforeseen costs to the principal.

Sometimes the problem was not so much to keep defense matters secret as to ensure that those who needed it had access to them. This was because managers and officials were too ready to use secrecy rules to turn defense-related data into private information in order to extract additional rents; for example, industrial managers tried to keep production cost statistics secret in order to retain discretion over prices and profits and prevent defense purchasers from verifying them (Harrison and Simonov, 2000: 233-5; Barber et al., 2000: 19-23). They argued against disclosing information about the production cost of weapons to the defence ministry on the grounds that such data were an important military secret.

On the same grounds Gosplan and the finance ministry were regularly starved of defence industry data. In order to counter this tendency, central government repeatedly enacted rules to enforce the upward flow of defense information. For example, a Politburo resolution of January 1932 required that defense industry production *should* be included in the calculated totals for industry as a whole. In January 1935 deputy commissar for heavy industry G.M. Piatakov proposed to prime minister V.M. Molotov on grounds of national security that defense industry should no longer have to report its progress to the finance ministry or Gosplan’s statistical administration. In March, following a counter-claim from Gosplan’s statistics branch, Sovnarkom made limited concessions to Piatakov but still required defense industry to report both real outcomes and ruble aggregates to Gosplan in Moscow, real outcomes for civilian products only to local statistical agencies, and ruble aggregates to the Ministry of Finance (Simonov, 1996a; Simonov, 1996b: 1362, 1364n; Markevich, 2000).

In military research and development designers who did not want to share their ideas with others and risk their own priority also used secrecy to monopolise their work and prevent collaboration. For example in 1938 designers at the Leningrad research institute for naval shipbuilding wished to study the work of the gas turbine engineer V.V.Uvarov at the All-Union Thermal-Technical Institute in Moscow. On 3 May an official of the Leningrad institute wrote to the commissariat of the defence industry (Moscow: RGAE, 8328/1/995, 5-6, emphasis added):

Our attempts to gain access to the work of Prof. Uvarov have not succeeded. From personal conversations of our colleague military engineer (first grade) Zotikov with Prof. Uvarov it became apparent that serving as motives for refusal were hostility to LMZ *im. Stalina* [the Leningrad Metallurgical Factory] (more precisely, to chief of the steam turbine bureau Prof. Grinberg) and in addition ostensibly *special instructions about the secrecy of the work*.

The reply was a curt refusal to intervene.

Agents’ exploitation of secrecy to protect their interests was not confined to the 1930s. In fact, it persisted through the postwar period and was still in evidence in the

last years of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev according to Julian Cooper (1990: 188) who wrote, citing *Pravda*, 9 May 1988 and *Moskovskaia pravda*, 21 April 1988:

Critics of poor-quality civilian goods manufactures at defense-industry enterprises now openly express their frustration at the way in which secrecy is used to obstruct the investigation and exposure of shortcomings. One author, discussing the fire hazard presented by low-quality televisions, notes that some of the producers “have hidden themselves in zones literally closed to criticism. State ‘secrets’ are invoked. Even people’s control [an inspection organisation] has difficulty breaking through into the ‘boxes’ (*iashchiki*).” Another author, in a remarkably outspoken article entitled “On ‘boxes’, open secrets, and departmental interests”, berates the aviation industry for its use of secrecy to protect its own interests and shows the absurdity of some of the security measures adopted.

## 6. Conclusions

We have been looking at explanations of secretiveness in the Soviet economy that are derived from its general features as a command system, and that result from the motivation of principals to weigh the benefits against the costs. The result is to show secrecy as one factor in an equilibrium that enabled principals and agents to participate in the command system and enabled the system itself to persist.

The level of explanation that has been attempted is parsimonious although crude. It turns out that secrecy may have assisted principals in combatting two kinds of opportunistic behaviour that are more or less present in all kinds of hierarchical organisations. One was the temptation for the agent to steal the principal’s resources so as to do a private deal with someone else, an agent in another ministry, a private criminal network, or even the agent of a foreign power. The other was the temptation for the agent to try to renegotiate the principal’s commands on more favourable terms, and potentially therefore to some extent at the principal’s expense.

The central feature of this framework is that secrecy emerges as a conditional choice. Principals preferred to make economic information secret when the agent’s expected profit opportunities in private trade were tempting, horizontal trust was already fragile, and secrecy itself was cheap. It paid them to make decisions in secret when unexploited opportunities, and the wage that the principal could afford to pay the agent, were both low. Thus, we may suppose that Soviet secretiveness became more and more difficult to sustain through time to the extent that planning mistakes became more costly and horizontal trust relations in society became more robust.

## Appendix. The Scope of Secret Information

### Document No. 1

In a memorandum of 17 June 1947 (Hoover Archive: GARF, R9414/1/335, 11-12) Gulag acting chief Dobrynin listed those aspects of “the work of Gulag of the USSR MVD and its peripheral agencies that are *gosudarstvennaia taina*” as follows:

- 1) “The location of corrective-labour and verification-filtration camps, colonies, deportation prisons, and other Gulag subsections.
- 2) “Summary data concerning the stock, movement, and labour utilisation of detainees.
- 3) “Demographic data concerning the detainees (information concerning sex, age, character, depiction of offenses committed, terms of sentences, nationality, and citizenship.
- 4) “Summary data concerning the physical condition, morbidity, and mortality of detainees, and outbreaks of disease in camps and colonies.
- 5) “Summary figures for escapes, arrests among detainees, and other crimes in camps and colonies.
- 6) “Summary data concerning transfers of camp contingents and railway movements involving them.
- 7) “Summary data concerning the dimensions of accommodation provision of camps, colonies, and deportation prisons.
- 8) “Information concerning the servicing of facilities of other ministries by detainees’ labour power.
- 9) “The establishment strength and demographic composition of the officer corps and freely hired employees [*ofiterskogo i vol’nonaemnogo sostava*] of Gulag and its peripher[al agencies], information about the degree of staffing [*ukomplektovanii*] and demographic data concerning personnel, and materials of special-purpose verification [*materialy spetsproverok*, i.e. documentation of the security vetting of personnel].
- 10) “The organisation, numbers, degree of staffing, demographic data, location, fighting power, armament, equipment, combat training, political and moral condition, and material provision of units and sub-units of militarised security.
- 11) “All [documentary] materials and data concerning undercover operations [*po operativno-chekistskomu obsluzhivaniuu*] in ITL, UITLK, OITK, and their subsections.<sup>2</sup>
- 12) “The organisation, material and financial provision, and mobilisation and operational plans of Gulag and its peripheral agencies, [documentary] materials underlying their development, and the production of defence items.

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<sup>2</sup> This string of abbreviations, like the somewhat lengthier “all ITL, UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD” that is found in document no. 2, translates roughly as “all labour camps and colonies at all levels of the forced labour system, Union, republican, and local”. Specifically ITL, *ispravitel’no-trudovoi lager’* = corrective labour camp; UITLK, *upravlenie ispravitel’no-trudovykh lagerei i kolonii* = republican MVD administration of corrective labour camps and colonies; OITK, *otdel ispravitel’no-trudovykh kolonii* = UITLK department of corrective labour colonies; MVD, *ministerstvo vnutrennykh del* = ministry of the interior of the USSR and Union republics; UMVD, *upravlenie ministerstva vnutrennykh del* = local MVD administration. Finally, Applebaum (2003: 110) notes that “subsection” was an internal NKVD codeword for a labour camp.

- 13) "Data concerning the numbers, movement, and labour utilisation of special-purpose contingents in camps and on MVD construction sites, and the regime for their maintenance.
- 14) "The numbers and movement of those sentenced to corrective labour (without deprivation of freedom), data concerning the character of crimes committed by them, and summary information concerning means deducted from these contingents for the revenue of the state.
- 15) "Documents containing detainees' proposals for inventions and rationalisations of defensive or important national economic significance.
- 16) "Statistical data concerning the composition and movement of communists among the party organisations of camps and colonies, and [documentary] materials of party conferences and active groups [*aktivov*].
- 17) "Information concerning the production and economic activity of camps and colonies:
  - a) "production and financial plans of industry, agriculture, subcontract work, capital construction, and sideline auxiliary enterprises, calculations and groundwork of these plans, and also data of accounting or operational reporting concerning their fulfillment;
  - b) "the quantity, capacity, and characteristics of the condition of production equipment in industry, agriculture, capital construction, and sideline auxiliary enterprises;
  - c) "the stock and qualitative condition of all kinds of transport, energy bases, and their fuel provision;
  - d) "the quantity and condition of areas sown, gross yields, livestock herds, and information concerning the prevalence of animal diseases.
- 18) "Supply plans for all kinds of allowances [*dovol'stviia*, i.e. subsistence allowances] for camp contingents and data concerning stocks requested and received.
- 19) "The character and quantity of freights despatched to camps, colonies, and deportation prisons.
- 20) "The finance, planning, and supply of medications and the medical stocks of the network of hospitals, clinics, and other [*lechebnykh, lechebno-sanitarnykh, i prochikh*] establishments for the servicing of contingents located in camps and colonies.
- 21) "All correspondence concerning archived documents that touch on the issues listed above."

## Document No. 2

In a further statement of December 1951 (Hoover Archive: GARF, 9414/1/335, 71-2) minister of the interior Colonel General S. Kruglov confirmed the text of a memorandum issued the previous 4 October by Gulag chief Lieutenant General I. Dolgikh. This memorandum listed matters relating to the Gulag that were to be classified "absolutely secret (special file)":

- 1) "Composite data concerning the overall numbers of the contingent of detainees held in all MVD camps (including special ones) and colonies, their physical condition and labour utilisation"
- 2) "The location and information concerning the quantity of Gulag contingents engaged in construction of especially important closed special-purpose construction [sites] of Glavpromstroi.
- 3) "Composite data concerning the location of USSR MVD corrective-labour camps and colonies and deportation prisons.
- 4) "Summary information concerning mortality among detainees for Gulag as a whole.

- 5) “Information concerning the organisation and reorganisation of camps and colonies envisaged in mobilisation plans.
- 6) “Composite data for all ITL, UITLK, and OITK for Gulag as a whole concerning organised violence [banditskikh proiavlenii], homicides and woundings, organised outbreaks, and insubordination by detainees in MVD camps and colonies.
- 7) “Composite data concerning the presence of the undercover and informer network [*agenturno-osvedomitel’noi seti*] in all ITL, UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD.
- 8) “Composite data concerning the quantity, character, and depiction of undercover work in the Gulag as a whole.
- 9) “Composite data concerning escapes and detainee arrests in all ITL, UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD.
- 10) “Composite data concerning the presence of the non-commissioned officer and rank-and-file personnel in all ITL, UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD.
- 11) “Composite data concerning political and moral conditions among the personnel of militarised security in all ITL, UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD.
- 12) “Military [equipment] orders, mobilisation assignments, and mobilisation work by cadres.
- 13) “Composite data concerning the establishment position of corrective-labour camps and construction [sites], UITLK, and OITK of MVD-UMVD.”

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