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Soviets ready for elections - no upsets expected
 On March 4, the people will elect 1,5000 deputies to the Supreme
Oviet - the nation's rubber-stamp parliament. The figures alone, when tabulated, will be enough to bring tears to
the eyes of the most hardened American ward heeler.
The turnout will approach - and perhaps exceed - 99.9 percent. Il of the party-endorsed candidates probably will win. Leonid Brezhnev will be returned to parliament by a mind-
boggling margin the same way Nikita Khrushchev was returned in
the parliamentary elections of 1962, two years before it was decided有 ouster that his mandate was somewhat overstated. exceeding 99 percent. Most go into the elections assured of victories by such margins. That's the way elections - offficially proclaimed as
the most democratic in the world - have always been in the Soviet Nron. the selection and nomination of candidates to the casting of
Fro, it is all calm and procedural, almost as though the Communist votes, it is all calm and procedural, almost as though the Communist
party controlled it all, which is not technically true. the current Supreme Soviet only 72.2 percent, or 1,096 members, are party members.
Candidates do not run against one another in the 750 voting dis-
tricts where delegates to the Soviet of the Union and Soviet of NaHowever, there are provisions for challenges at the nominating level before the name reaches the ballot. It is possible for two or more
candidates to be in contention for a nomination, although this rarely happens. Such challenges are settled before nominating time. Whan it comes to voting, a citizen votes for a a candidate, crosses out
Whent
candidates name in protest, or writes in another name. Crossouts candidate's name in protest, or writes in another name. Crossouts
and write-ins are rare, but tit happens. Ind write-ins are rare, but it happens.
In the 1974 parliamentary election, there were 332,644 votes
against candidates for the Soviet of the Union and 245,750 votes gainst candidates for the Soviet of the Union and 245,750 votes
against candidates for the Soviet of Nationalities. These figures repreent, respectively, 00.21 percent and 00.15 percent of the votes cast.
At the parliamentary level such negativism has no impact. But in
A lections to local Soviets, candidates have been defeated lections to local Soviets, candidates have been defeated. In 1967, 2
million delegates to local Soviets were elected, but 122 faced the unique infamy of being so disliked they actually, lost.
In that rare instance - the defeat of a cand a percent "yes" votes - the election machinery must reorganize
t self for special contests to fill the itself for special contests to fill the seat.
The upcoming elections will take place under an updated election law ratified when the new Soviet constitution was rubber-stamped in



