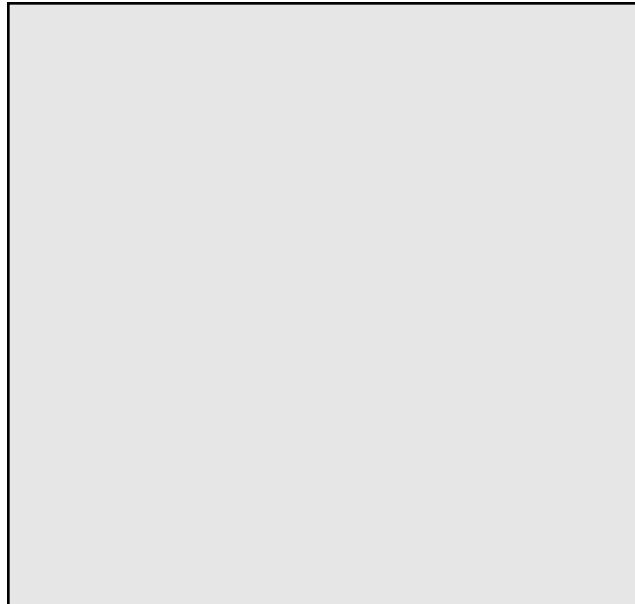


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Moscow and Pyongyang, and between Moscow and Beijing. The collection also includes notes of conversations among key

ary 1950 about the advisability of a military offensive on the Korean peninsula. Unfortunately, the documentary record available thus far does not answer that question clearly; it reveals only that Stalin considered it possible in early 1950 to support Kim's plan because of the "changed international situation."¹¹

We have then to deduce from the mass of evidence what Stalin meant by "changed international situation." We can note first of all from the documents presented here that calculations of the likelihood of U.S. intervention were at every point a key factor in Soviet deliberations about whether to approve a military campaign against South Korea. The timing of Stalin's approval—late January 1950—must therefore have been at least in part a response to the new defense policy announced by Secretary of State Dean Acheson on January 12, that placed South Korea outside the American defense perimeter in the Pacific. The documents presented below, when combined with the record of Stalin's actions in June 1950,¹² suggest the conclusion that if the United States had made it clear that it would defend South Korea, Stalin would never have approved the North Korean attack.

The second most salient component of the "changed international situation" in January 1950 was the formation, then underway in Moscow, of an alliance between the Soviet Union and the newly established People's Republic of China. As Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue Litai have shown so convincingly,¹³ Stalin's relations with Mao Zedong were extremely delicate and fraught with potential disasters for the Soviet leader. Given the close ties between North Korea and China, Stalin's concerns about the new communist regime in Beijing must have figured prominently in his decision to approve a military campaign against South Korea. We see from the documents released thus far that Stalin was careful to draw Mao into the final decision-making on the Korean venture. New Chinese sources also indicate that Stalin and Mao discussed the proposed Korean campaign while Mao was in Moscow.¹⁴ It may well be that Stalin

Shtykov reports that they have a training-military aviation regiment.

Stalin remembers that the last time two came to Moscow, and asks, appealing to Pak Hon-yong, if he was the second.

Pak Hon-yong confirms this.

Stalin says that Kim and Pak have both filled out and that it is difficult to recognize them now.

Kim says that they have a military school, but no military academy and that among the officer corps of the Korean army there is no one who has completed a military academy. He asks permission to send Korean officers to the Military Academy of the USSR for training.

Stalin asks wasn't there such permission.

Kim answers that there was not.

Stalin says that it is possible to permit it.

Kim says that they do not have any more questions.

Chong Chun-taek asks if it will be possible to send Soviet specialists to Korea and Korean specialists for practical training in production technology to the USSR.

Stalin answers that they have already spoken on that question. Soviet specialists may be sent to Korea and Korean specialists may be received in the USSR.

Stalin asks where the Koreans get cotton.

Kim answers that they want to receive cotton from the Soviet Union. Last year they received already 3,000 tons.

Stalin says, joking, that we ourselves want to receive cotton from Korea.

Stalin asks if they have trade relations with other countries: with Japan, China, Philippines.

Kim answers that they have such relations with China, but China is at war and therefore they cannot conduct regular trade [with China].

they will not be able to do this at the beginning of the campaign, maybe later.

3. With regard to the question of how the

the yoke of the reactionary regime. However, until now very little has been done to raise the broad masses of South Korea to an active struggle, to develop the partisan movement in all of South Korea, to create there liberated regions and to organize forces for a general uprising. Meanwhile, only in conditions of a peoples' uprising which has begun and is truly developing, which is undermining the foundations of the reactionary regime, could a military attack on the south play a decisive role in the overthrow of the South Korean reactionaries and provide the realization of the task of the unification of all Korea into a single democratic state. Since at present very little has been done to develop the partisan movement and prepare for a general uprising in South Korea, it is also impossible to acknowledge that from a political side an attack by you on the south has been prepared.

As concerns a partial operation to seize Ongjin peninsula and the region of Kaesong, as a result of which the borders of North Korea would be moved almost to Seoul itself, it is impossible to view this operation other than as the beginning of a war between North and South Korea, for which North Korea is not prepared either militarily or politically, as has been indicated above.

Moreover, it is necessary to consider that if military actions begin at the initiative of the North and acquire a prolonged character, then this can give to the Americans cause for any kind of interference in Korean affairs.

In view of all that has been stated it is necessary to acknowledge that at present the tasks of the struggle for the unification of Korea demand a concentration of maximum effort, in

**Document VII:
Ciphred telegram from Stalin to Shtykov,
30 January 1950**

1. I received your report. I understand the dissatisfaction of Comrade Kim Il Sung, but he must understand that such a large matter in regard to South Korea such as he wants to undertake needs large preparation. The matter must be organized so that there would not be too great a risk. If he wants to discuss this matter with me, then I will always be ready to receive him and discuss with him. Transmit all this to Kim Il Sung and tell him that I am ready to help him in this matter.

2. I have a request for Comrade Kim Il Sung. The Soviet Union is experiencing a great insufficiency in lead. We would like to receive from Korea a yearly minimum of 25,000 tons of lead. Korea would render us a great assistance if it could yearly send to the Soviet Union the indicated amount of lead. I hope that Kim Il Sung will not refuse us in this. It is possible that Kim Il Sung needs our technical assistance and some number of Soviet specialists. We are ready to render this assistance. Transmit this request of mine to comrade Kim Il Sung and ask him for me, to communicate to me his consideration on this matter.

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democratic and bourgeois German state, although evidence on his precise views at this point remains sketchy.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the Soviet leadership was united in its concern over the deteriorating situation in the GDR. A June 2 communiqué by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow, entitled "On measures for the recovery of the political situation in the German Democratic Republic," acknowledged that the mass exodus to the West of East Germans of all professions and backgrounds created "a serious danger for the continued political existence of the German Democratic Republic," and called for an end to forced collectivization and the war on private enterprise, for the revision of the heavy industry plan, and for the relaxation of political-judicial controls and regimentation. It ordered the termination of the coercive measures against the Protestant Church and denounced the "cold exercise of power" by the Ulbricht regime. Significantly, though, it did not explicitly demand an abrogation of the controversial raised work norms. Reflecting the influence of KGB head Beria, who had apparently favored a more drastic reversal in Moscow's German policy, the resolution expressed the necessity to "put the tasks of the political battle for national reunification and the conclusion of a peace treaty at the center of attention of the German people," and stipulated that "in the future the determination of the entire political situation for this or that time period has to take into consideration the real conditions within the GDR as well as the situation in Germany as a whole and the international situation."¹⁷

The resolution was handed to SED leaders Ulbricht and Otto Grotewohl during a three-day trip to Moscow (2-4 June 1953) where, as Grotewohl noted, the Soviet leaders expressed their "grave concern about the situation in the GDR."¹⁸ At the same time, they received promises of substantial aid and relief in reparation payments which complemented the replacement of the old Soviet Central Commission (SCC) by a new Soviet High Commission for German affairs. After having made "a bad impression in Moscow"¹⁹ (Grotewohl), and following several days of intense discussion with the East German leadership in Berlin (5-9 June 1953), the SED politburo, on 11 June, published the famous communiqué announcing the "New Course."²⁰ In addition to the

changes indicated in the 2 June 1953 resolution, the New Course included a general amnesty for all East German refugees, assistance to small and medium-size private enterprises, more liberal policies on interzonal travel and residence permits, an easing of the campaign against the Protestant Church, and the re-issuance of ration cards to the middle classes. Paradoxically, the only segment of the population which seemed to have been excluded from the concessions of the "New Course" was the working class: the arbitrarily-imposed higher work norms remained in force.

The sudden announcement of the "New Course" shocked party members and the East German population. Reports from local party officials to the SED Central Committee Department "Principal Organs of Party and Mass Organizations" under Karl Schirdewan reveal with great candor the widespread disappointment and disbelief, the utter confusion and unrest, among both party members and the public. Contrary to the politburo's expectations, to many in and out of the party, the communiqué signaled the SED's final bankruptcy and the beginning of its demise.²¹ Many party functionaries who had committed themselves to the "Construction of Socialism" could "not comprehend that the party leadership had made such decisive mistakes which necessitated this decision,"²² felt betrayed and "mmmit0 0 0 10 94 42Principal Organs o134xs-dahthe re-issuancelves tm fte sudc

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ner” and they “expected your statement no later than at noon tomorrow.”²⁹

Headed by the plant’s union representative, Feltling, the four-man delegation marched to Grotewohl’s office where they handed the resolution to Grotewohl aides Ambreé and Plaschke who, while accommodating some of their grievances, tried their best to convince the workers that the norm increase was necessary. Later, informing Grotewohl’s personal aides, Tzschorn and Eisermann, they pointed out that some responsibility lay with the “dictatorial enforcement” of the norm increase by SED Berlin district official Baum, a well-known hard-liner who “underestimated the situation” and “merely portrayed it as work of the enemy, without recognizing that his not acknowledging the workers’ justified demands only amplified the enemy’s opportunities for action.” Tzschorn related to Grotewohl that the workers would go on strike if he did not respond satisfactorily, by 7 a.m. Adding in short-hand to his memo to Grotewohl, Tzschorn, however, noted that according to Baum, “this was a larger operation apparently controlled from West-Berlin. Strikes have taken place today already on several construction sites. In doing so, they again and again demand a decision by prime minister Grotewohl.” Underestimating the explosiveness of the situation and misleading Grotewohl on the true origins of the workers’ dissatisfaction, Tzschorn advised Grotewohl against personally speaking to the workers.³⁰

Instead of a high government official, a union leader and fifteen agitators appeared at the Friedrichshain construction site in the early hours of 16 June 1953, apparently sent to persuade the workers to accept the norm increase. In this highly charged atmosphere, the hospital director ordered the gates closed, leading the workers to believe—probably mistakenly—that they would be arrested. Within a short time, the news had spread to the Block 40 construction site in the Stalin allee (a major avenue in the heart of East Berlin), where workers organized a demonstration in support of their fellow workers. After breaking down the hospital gates, a few hundred workers marched downtown, picking up in number as they passed through the streets of Berlin. Apparently, the marchers managed to take over two soundtrucks on the way, allowing them to disseminate their calls for a general strike and a demon-

stration at the Strausberger Platz at 7 a.m. the next day. Just a few hours later, several thousand demonstrators were protesting in front of the “Haus der Ministerien,” the GDR government headquarters in the Wilhelmsstraße. Posing a more immediate threat to the regime, others headed for the party headquarters in the Wilhelm-Pieck Street.³¹

There the politburo had gathered for its regular Tuesday meeting. It is still unclear how well-informed the politburo was about the developments in the streets of Berlin. Under pressure from the marchers, the politburo, after hours of deliberations, decided to revoke the forced norm increase, blaming the developments on the cold-blooded manner in which individual ministries had implemented the measure and on hostile provocateurs who had sowed confusion into the ranks of the workers. An increase in productivity was to be only voluntary. The revocation of the forced norm increase, however, came too late to satisfy the protesters’ demands. So did the earlier appearance of Minister Fritz Selbmann and Professor Robert Havemann, who had tried in vain to calm the crowds in front of the government headquarters. Only in the early afternoon did the demonstration slowly disperse, with a large crowd heading back to the Stalinallee. Clashes and demonstrations, however, persisted until late evening.³²

Later that night, the Berlin “Parteiaktiv” (the most trusted Berlin SED party members and activists) met in the Friedrichsstadtpalast. Demonstrating unity and determination, the entire politburo, headed by Grotewohl and Ulbricht, appeared before the group of nearly 3,000 people. Responding to the day’s events, Grotewohl and Ulbricht acknowledged mistakes by the party leadership and criticized the “cold administering” and police measures. Despite these insights, the SED leadership continued to gravely miscalculate the situation: “Yes, mistakes were made,” Ulbricht told the Berlin party members, but now the task was to “take to heart correctly and draw the right conclusions from the lesson which we received today. Tomorrow even deeper into the masses! (...) we are moving to the mobilization of the entire party, up to the last member! (...) We are now getting to the point that tomorrow morning all party organizations in the plants, in the residential areas, in the institutions will start to work in time and that one is watchful

everywhere: Where are the West Berlin provocateurs?”³³ Based on the myth of an external provocation, the SED leadership expected that a massive propaganda drive was enough to cope with the crisis.

Throughout the night of June 16 and the early morning of June 17, the news of the Berlin strikes and demonstrations spread like a wildfire throughout the GDR. Early in the morning of June 17, workers’ assemblies in most East Berlin workshops decided to go on strike and march downtown. From all East Berlin districts and surrounding suburbs, crowds were marching on the “Haus der Ministerien.” By 8 a.m., the number of protesters in front of the building had apparently reached 15,000; by 9 a.m., the number had increased to more than 25,000. According to estimates by West Berlin police, by 9:40 a.m. 60,000 people were crowding the streets, headed in the direction of the ministries. The few People’s Police officers which the regime had ordered to the scene were soon overcome. Between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m., 80 to 100 demonstrators apparently

and the head of the East German military forces (Kasernierte Volkspolizei [KVP]), Heinz Hoffman, in the early morning hours of June 17 about the deployment of KVP units. Since their reliability and preparation was questionable, this was held out as a last resort. About 10 a.m., the politburo met in the party headquarters "House of Unity" but were, by 10:30 a.m. ordered by Soviet High Commissioner Semyenov, who had effectively assumed control of government power, to pass, the politburmbuurtw (but)Tj T* -4.177 Tinaltivsloyme abotbuajor citierterlit had(rebotHigh)Tj T*63T* 0 T4-4.177 w [tor, the pic

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tions, 1953-1961 (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1994), 48.

16. Harrison, *The Bargaining Power*, 48-52, James Richter, *Reexamining Soviet Policy Towards Germany During the Beria Interregnum*, Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) Working Paper No. 3 (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1992), 13-22; Vladislav M. Zubok, *Soviet Intelligence and the Cold War: The "Small" Committee of Information, 1952-53*, CWIHP Working Paper No. 4 (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1992), 16-17; Gerhard Wettig, "Sowjetische Wiedervereinigungsbemühungen im ausgehenden Frühjahr 1953? Neue Aufschlüsse über ein altes Problem" [Soviet Reunification Efforts in Late Spring 1953? New Evidence on an Old Problem], *Deutschland Archiv* 25:9 (1992), 943-58; Gerhard Wettig, "Zum Stand der Forschung über Berijas Deutschlandpolitik im Frühjahr 1953" [On the State of Research on Beria's German Policy in the Spring of 1953], *Deutschland Archiv* 26:6 (1993), 674-82.

17. The decree, "Über die Maßnahmen zur Gesundung der politischen Lage in der Deutschen Demokratischen TJ T* -0.0146uaS6publik,m Sta6uSleasede in1989, is Spritede in, 32:56

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unswerving move to send all party forces on hand in Berlin to the factories, so as to assure a corresponding change in the mood of the workers.

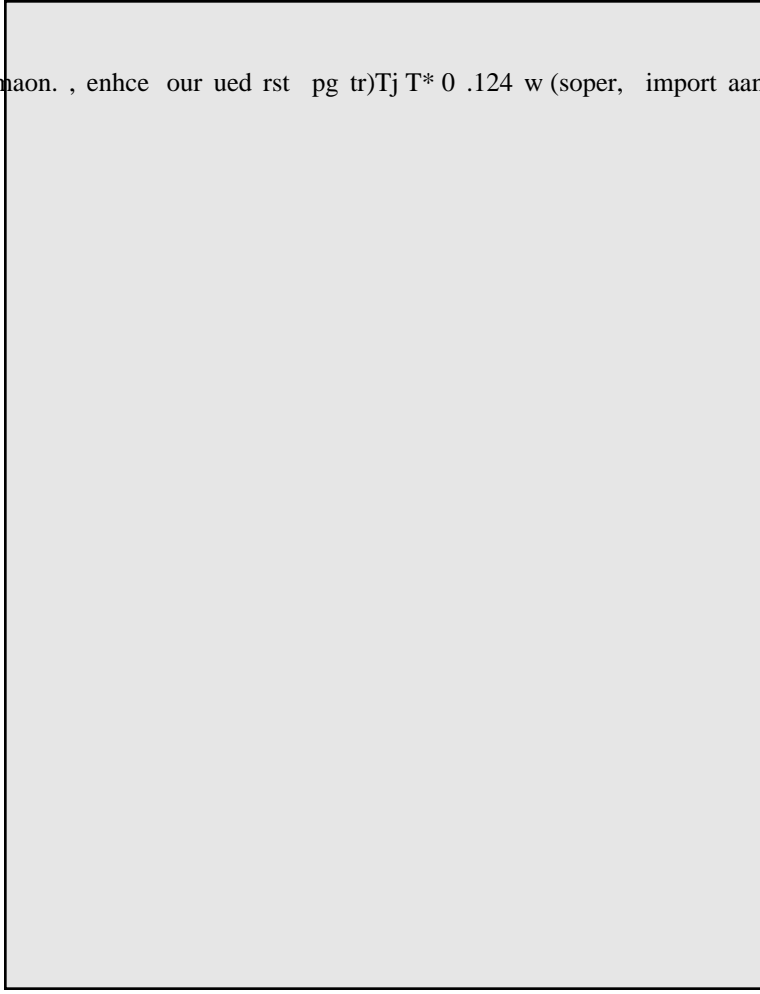
**THE YELTSIN DOSSIER:
SOVIET DOCUMENTS
ON HUNGARY, 1956**

by **Janos M. Rainer**

During a November 1992 visit to Budapest, Russian President Boris Yeltsin handed to Hungarian President Arpad Goncz a dossier of Soviet archival materials related to the 1956 Hungarian Revolution. The documents contained in the file, consisting of 299 pages, have now been published in Hungarian translation in two volumes,¹ and also made available in Russian archives.²

For Hungarians as well as for scholars worldwide, these materials have tremendous significance—quite aside from their political import as a Russian gesture toward creating a new relationship between Moscow and Budapest after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Until the 1990s, Soviet political history could be studied only with the sophisticated analytical tools of Kremlinology and oral history. Now, however, at least a minor, and perhaps a growing, portion of this history can be analyzed using traditional historical methods.

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IMRE NAGY, HESITANT REVOLUTIONARY

by Johanna Granville

In the beginning stages of the Hungarian revolt of 23 October-4 November 1956, Imre Nagy's behavior was oddly hesitant. Having written several times to Moscow in the summer and early fall of 1956 to be readmitted into the Hungarian Workers' Party, he was loathe at first to break ranks completely with the Soviet Communist Party and to declare Hungary's neutrality. The documents below have been selected to convey the confusion of the time, particularly from the perspective of Soviet Minister of Defense Marshal Georgii Zhukov and KGB Chief Ivan Serov in trying to restore order under firm communist control. Fighting, begun on the night of 23-24 October 1956, continued until October 30, two days after Nagy announced a cease-fire. At 6:15 a.m. on November 4, the second, more massive, Soviet intervention was launched. The pace of events seems to have prodded Imre Nagy

forward. He did not immediately go over to the side of the revolution.

There were several key moments of hesitation on Nagy's part. Why, for example, did Nagy forbid the Hungarian Army to resist the Soviet tanks on October 23-24? Why wasn't Nagy as bold as Polish leader Wladislaw Gomulka, who days earlier had told Khrushchev frankly: Turn your tanks around now, or we'll fight you. Even when Nagy finally confronted Andropov on November 1 at a 7 p.m. session of the Hungarian Council of Ministers, he was jittery and unsure of his own authority. In a telegram to Moscow, Andropov wrote: "Nagy in a rather nervous tone informed all those present that earlier that morning he asked the Soviet Ambassador why Soviet troops had crossed the Hungarian border and were penetrating Hungarian territory. Nagy 'demanded' an explanation of this. He spoke as if he were calling me to witness the fact that he was registering a protest. During this time he kept looking at Zoltan Tildy as if wishing to receive his support."¹ Indeed, three days earlier, as the second document reprinted

below reveals, Nagy actually had a slight heart attack from nervous exhaustion; Suslov gave him some medicine.²

And why, on October 23, did Nagy wait so long to go out and address the crowds who were calling his name? Why couldn't he give a more stirring speech on that critical night of October 23-24? He had no microphone, it's true, but the words themselves were hopelessly out of touch with the temper of the rowdy crowd. "Elvtársak!" [Comrades!] he called them.³ We will continue "the June way" (the "New Course" reforms promulgated by the communist government in 1953).⁴

Why didn't Nagy protest when Erno Gero, then First Secretary of the Hun-

ment describes the discussions, participants, contributors, and differences of opinion at the Presidium meetings. Instead, one repeatedly encounters such euphemistic phraseology as “V szootvetsztvii sz obmenom mnyenyijami”, “sz ucsotom obmena mnyenyijami”, “na osznove szosztajascevoszja obmena mnyenyijami” —“in accordance with,” “in regard to,” and “based on” the discussion.⁴ Yet we have no real data on debates, no minutes of the deliberations of the top Soviet leaders.⁵

By contrast, among the declassified U.S. government records on the Hungarian crisis, both published and in archives, researchers readily find numerous documents describing policy debates, including detailed minutes of National Security Council discussions, as well as serious analytical papers prepared by the NSC and various intelligence agencies.⁶ Whether comparable documentation exists on the Soviet side, but remains off-limits, or whether such items of Presidium transcripts on the crisis do not exist, was not clarified in the materials delivered by Yeltsin. In any event, the result is that the crucial factors which determine top-level decision-making can be analyzed only by inference.

An additional problem is that the Soviet documents only treat the Hungarian issue in a very narrow sense—the context of the international situation makes but a dim appearance. Important issues like the Suez crisis, U.S. behavior, the problems of the East-Central European allies, barely receive mention.

Still, while all these issues require further thorough research, even the selected documents permit an illuminating exploration of the thinking, terminology, priorities, and particular style of conduct between the leadership of the Soviet empire and Moscow’s East European satellites at this juncture of the Cold War, as well as of the Soviet style of information gathering and crisis management. In “normal circumstances,” the Soviet leadership gathered information on the satellites through two inner official channels:

a. The higher level, represented by the ambassador, whose scope of authority included keeping in touch with top local party leaders. The Soviet ambassador was at the same time the local

representative of the CPSU CC from the mid-’50s. Beside gathering information he occasionally made recommendations too, and in crisis situations his reports reached the party Presidium. Between 29 April 1956 and 14 October 1956 only four out of Ambassador Andropov’s ten known reports got there. At the end of September 1956, Andrei Gromyko, the deputy minister of foreign affairs, had to summarize Andropov’s communications to the Presidium, when the crisis was becoming apparent.⁷

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tion gathering, once decisions were taken Moscow's representatives paid little attention to them.

The above caveats and limitations notwithstanding, the following observations can be offered regarding Soviet decisions and the Hungarian Revolution, based on the documents provided by Yeltsin:

1. Since the summer of 1956, as the anti-Stalinist opposition gained strength, the Soviet leadership observed the Hungarian crisis with great worry. They saw the solution to the crisis in leadership changes (Rakosi's dismissal) and reserved forceful oppressive measures as a last resort only. In July 1956, Soviet representative Mikoyan reported that "as a result of the Hungarian situation there is an atmosphere of uneasiness prevailing in our Central Committee and in the ranks of the Socialist camp, which is due to the fact, that it cannot be permitted for something unexpected, unpleasant to happen in Hungary. If the Hungarian comrades need it, our Central Committee is ready to give them a

peared simultaneously this could produce Moscow's radical military intervention. The October 26-28 compromise did not directly contradict Moscow's long-range interests (only the initiation of negotiations was mentioned rather than actual Soviet troop withdrawal), which could momentarily reinforce structures in charge of securin3rn-

be sufficient. If the situation further deteriorates, then, of course, it will be necessary to reexamine the whole issue in its entirety. We do not have yet a final opinion of the situation—how sharply it has deteriorated. After the session today at 11 o'clock Moscow time, the situation in the Central Committee will become clear and we will inform you. We think the swift arrival of Comrade Konev is essential.”²⁰ Marshal I.S. Konev was the Soviet commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact’s armed forces, who would lead the invasion of Hungary days after that message was sent.

Once Imre Nagy realized the Soviet leaders’ deception, he did break ranks entirely, declaring Hungary’s neutrality and withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact—something no other East European leader had the courage to do.

1. Ciphred telegram from Yu. V. Andropov in Budapest, 1 November 1956, Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVP RF) [Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation], fond [f.] 059a, opis [op.]. 4, papka [p.]. 6, delo [d.] 5, list [l.] 17-19. Later, it is true, on October 28, at 5:30 a.m. Nagy called off an

attack on the street fighters that had been planned by the Hungarian Defense Ministry and the military sub-committee of the Hungarian Central Committee. Daniel F. Calhoun, *Hungary and Suez, 1956: An Exploration of Who Makes History*

lead the operation for liquidating the riots in the city. There is a field headquarters there, which works in contact with the Hungarians. It should be noted that during a telephone conversation with Gero from the corps headquarters, in reply to our question about the situation, he answered that there is both an improvement and deterioration in the situation, and that the arrival of Soviet troops in the city has a negative effect on the disposition of the inhabitants, including the workers.

After a conversation with military person-

actuality, he will be the first chairman because all the rest of the deputies are "non-party people" and less strong. Apro was a member of the Directory, a member of the Military Commission, and has behaved himself very well these past few days.

The candidacy of [Iosef] Siladi for the post of Minister of Internal Affairs was turned down, because politically he was not very reliable, and Munnich was chosen instead. For the post of Minister of Defense the former deputy minister of rear units Janza Karoi was chosen. He is a communist, reliable, and a worker.

ary committee in Miskolc organized a meeting in front of the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and they forced the workers to lay down their arms and they tortured those who protested. On the same day, a battalion of internal troops was disbanded and spread out among the buildings by this revolutionary committee. In the town of Zalaegerseg, the revolutionary committee disarmed the security organs, and the officials were driven out of the regional limits. These facts apply to other regions as well. There are also examples of actions to the contrary. For example, in some regions, a national militia comprised of students, youth, and private soldiers of the national army are restoring back order in the cities.

4. In the city of Budapest after yesterday's meeting of the new Ministry of Internal Affairs, regional apparatuses of security and police began to renew their work. To avoid provocation the employees of the security organs are dressed in police uniforms.

5. An organized observation of the American embassy confirms that the employees of the embassy are leaving the city with their things. The Americans Olivart and West in a conversation with one of the agents of our friends said if the uprising is not liquidated in the shortest possible time, the UN troops will move in at the proposal of the USA and a second Korea will take place.

6. This morning on Budapest radio there was a speech by an active participant in [Joseph] Ertovi's group of criminals, who was arrested in the military editorial board who said that he is summoning the youth to lay down their weapons, since the new government under Nagy is a guarantee of the fulfillment of the people's demands. They asked Ertovi why he wrote on a leaflet "Temporary Revolutionary Government"? To that Ertovi replied that it was because at that time they had not recognized the government, but that now he wouldn't sign it that way, because the present government is legitimate.

In the city of Budapest today everything is peaceful, except isolated strongholds of streetfighters. However, there are three hotbeds, where insurgents have dug in positions.

SEROV

Transmitted by special line
28.X.56 [28 October 1956]

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok 10; translation by Johanna Granville with Mark Doctoroff.*]

* * * * *

6. KGB Chief Serov, Report, 29 October 1956

Send to CC CPSU
A. Mikoyan

M. Suslov
29.X-1956

To Comrade MIKOYAN, A.I.
To Comrade SUSLOV, M.A.

I am reporting about the situation according to the circumstances on 29 October.

1. There were negotiations during the night with the groups fighting in the region round the Corwin theater, Zsigmund street, Sen Square and Moscow Square to surrender their weapons. Toward evening agreement was reached.

Some small armed groups that had come to Budapest from other cities were identified.

The Soviet military command is taking action to liquidate them.

2. According to information from the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs], on 27-28 October in several cities prisoners were freed from prisons, including criminals, around 8,000 people in all. Some of these prisoners are armed with weapons taken from the security guards. The ammunition was obtained by attacking military depots.

After the government declaration was made on the radio about amnesty to students who participated in the demonstration, the armed groups started to lay down their weapons.

3. The situation in several cities can be characterized in the following way: the population is stimulated against the communists. In several regions the armed people search in the apartments of communists and shoot them down.

In the factory town of Csepel (near Budapest) there were 18 communists killed. When in buses travelling between cities, the bandits do checks and prominent communists are taken out and shot.

In the town of Debrecen the regional committee went underground, contacted the military unit and asked for support. This data is confirmed by telegrams that arrived at the Council of Ministers from the leaders of the "revolutionary committees." The workers' council in Miskolc suggested that the employees of the security organs lay down their weapons and go away. Three employees, including the Deputy Director of the department, Mayor Gati, would not comply with the demands. The employees of the security organs were all hanged as a group. In the town of Keskemet, a crowd decided to punish a communist in the square. The commander of the Hungarian military unit went up in an airplane and with a machine gun dispersed the crowd.

The commander of the Hungarian troops stationed in the town of Gyor alerted a regiment in order to restore order in the city. When order was restored he moved to the neighboring city with the same objective. When he returned to Dier, he had to restore order once again.

4. In connection with the decision of the government to abolish the state security organs,

the morale of the operative staff declined.

On the evening, 28.X [28 October], the MVD held a meeting. [Ferenc] Munnich called the anti-government demonstration "a meeting of workers for the satisfaction of their justified demands." Fascist elements joined this movement and tried to use it for the overthrow of the government. He said the employees of the security organs honestly did their duty in the struggle with the hostile elements. Then he informed them that an extraordinary court would be organized, whereby those responsible for hanging communists and attacking government and social institutions would be tried.

After this meeting morale declined drastically. Several employees left work and never came back.

In the city a leaflet appeared of names of the "revolutionary committee of students" with a summons to kill the employees of the security organs.

The police on duty are stimulating this mood, declaring that there are traitors in the security organs, and they are angry that the employees of the security organs have started to wear police uniforms.

The Dep[uty], Minister of Internal Affairs Hars came to our adviser, wept, and stated that the employees of the security organs are considered traitors, and the insurgents are considered revolutionaries. He conversed with Comrade Kadar on this issue. However, he did not get a comforting answer.

The leader of the internal troops of the MVD Orban told our adviser that he will collect the officers and will break through to the USSR. The former deputy of the MVD Dekan stated that the provocateurs are arranging the massacre of the employees of the security organs and their families. The bandits are ascertaining the addresses of the employees. Dekan intends to create a brigade composed of the employees and with weapons advance to the Soviet border. If they don't get that far, then they will fight underground as partisans and beat the enemies.

The employees of the central apparatus stopped work and went home, declaring that they are undisciplined and do not have the right to meet with the agency. On the periphery the security organs also stopped working, since the local powers dismissed them.

The regional administration in the city of Sobolcs (40 employees) left for Rumania. The employees of the Debrecen regional administration went to the Soviet border in the region of Uzhgorod and asked the border guards to let them into the USSR. On the border with Czechoslovakia a large group of employees have gathered, waiting for a permit to enter that country.

In connection with the situation created in the MVD in the evening, I intend to call a meeting with Munnich to elucidate his opinion in relation to the further sojourn of our employees, in the

light of the dispersal of the security organs and the further coordination of our work.

SEROV

29.X.56

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok. 11; translation by Johanna Granville.*]

* * * * *

7. Mikoyan-Suslov Report, 30 October 1956

The political situation in the country is not getting better; it is getting worse. This is expressed in the following: in the leading organs of the party organs there is a feeling of helplessness. The party organizations are in the process of collapse. Hooligan elements have become more insolent, seizing regional party committees, killing communists. The organization of party volunteer squads is going slowly. The factories are stalled. The people are sitting at home. The railroads are not working. The hooligan students and other resistance elements have changed their tactics and are displaying greater activity. Now not all them are shooting, but instead are seizing institutions. For example, last night the printing office of the central party newspaper was seized.

The new Minister of Internal Affairs sent 100 fighters who accosted more than 200 people, but did not open fire, because the CC advised not to spill blood. That was late at night. Imre Nagy was sleeping in his apartment, and they, apparently did not want complications with Nagy, fearing that opening fire without his knowledge would be an occasion for the weakening of the leadership.

They [the "hooligan elements"—J.G.] occupied the regional telephone station. The radio station is working, but it does not reflect the opinion of the CC, since in fact it is located in other peoples' hands.

The anti-revolutionary newspaper did not come out, because there were counterrevolutionary articles in it and the printing office refused to print it.

An opposition group in the region around the Corwin theater had negotiations with Nagy for the peaceful surrendering of their weapons. However, as of the present moment the weapons have not been surrendered, except for a few hundred rifles. The insurgents declare that they will not give them up until the Soviet troops leave Hungary. Thus the peaceful liquidation of this hotbed is impossible. We will achieve the liquidation of these armed Hungarian forces. But there is just one fear: the Hungarian army has occupied a wait-and-see position. Our military advisors say that relations between the Hungarian officers and generals and Soviet officers in the past few days has deteriorated. There is no trust as there was earlier. It could happen, that the

Hungarian units sent against the insurgents could join these other Hungarians, and then it will be necessary for the Soviet forces to once more undertake military operations.

Last night by the instructions of Imre Nagy, Andropov was summoned. Nagy asked him: is it true that new Soviet military units are continuing to enter Hungary from the USSR. If yes, then what is their goal? We did not negotiate this.

Our opinion on this issue: we suspect that this could be a turning point in the change in Hungarian policy in the [UN] Security Council. We intend to declare today to Imre Nagy that the troops are leaving according to our agreement, that for now we do not intend to bring in any more troops on account of the fact that the Nagy government is dealing with the situation in Hungary.

We intend to give instructions to the Minister of Defense to cease sending troops into Hungary, continuing to concentrate them on Soviet territory. As long as the Hungarian troops occupy a nonhostile position, these troops will be sufficient. If the situation further deteriorates, then, of course, it will be necessary to reexamine the whole issue in its entirety. We do not yet have a final opinion of the situation—how sharply it has deteriorated. After the session today at 11 o'clock Moscow time, the situation in the Central Committee will become clear and we will inform you. We think it is essential that Comrade Konev come to Hungary immediately.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 89, Per 45, Dok. 12; translation by Johanna Granville.*]

* * * * *

8. "Resolution of the Presidium of the Central Committee About the Situation in Hungary" (Protocol 49) of 31 October 1956

Workers of the World, Unite! Strictly secret
Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Extract from Minutes No. 49/VI taken on the October 31, 1956 meeting of the Presidium of the CC

About the situation in Hungary

1. In accord with the exchange of opinions at the session of the Presidium of the CC CPSU, Comrs. Khrushchev, Molotov, and Malenkov are empowered to conduct negotiations with the representatives of the CC of the U[nited] W[orkers'] P[arty] of P[oland].

2. Confirmed is the text of the telegram to the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade for Comr. Tito (Enclosed). In the event of an affirmative reply, Comrs. Khrushchev and Malenkov are autho-

rized to conduct negotiations with Comr. Tito.

3. Provide Comr. Zhukov with an account of the exchange of opinions at the Presidium of the CC CPSU session, [instruct him] to prepare a plan of measures [*plan meropriatii*], in connection to the events in Hungary, and to inform the CC CPSU.

4. Inform Comrs. Shepilov, Brezhnev, Furtseva, and Pospelov on the basis of the exchange of opinions at the CC Presidium to prepare essential documents and submit them to the CC CPSU for review.

SECRETARY OF THE CC

To point VI of protocol 49
Top Secret
Special Folder, Extraordinary

To the Soviet Ambassador in Belgrade

Quickly visit Comrade Tito and relay the following:

"In connection with the created situation in Hungary we would like to have a meeting with you incognito on the night of November 1 or on the night of 2 November 1956 at 0.00.P TD -0.063s. I(C

escape of the resistance leaders from Hungary, our troops have occupied the Hungarian airports and solidly closed off all the roads on the Austro-Hungarian border. The troops, continuing to fulfill the assignment, are purging the territory of Hungary of insurgents.

G. ZHUKOV

4 November 1956

Sent to Khrushchev, Bulganin, Malenkov, Suslov, etc.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok. 23*; translation by Johanna Granville.]

YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
“ANNALS OF COMMUNISM” SERIES
PUBLISHES FIRST TWO BOOKS

The first two books in a Yale University Press series (“Annals of Communism”) based on newly-accessible Russian archives have appeared: Harvey Klehr, John Earl Haynes, and Fridrikh Igorevich Firsov, *The Secret World of American Communism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); and Lars T. Lih, Oleg V. Naumov, and Oleg V. Khlevniuk, eds., *Stalin’s Letters to Molotov, 1925-1936* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995).

The series is based in large measure on documents from the Russian Center for the Preservation and Study of Documents of Recent History (RTsKhIDNI), headed by K.M. Anderson, formerly known as the Central Party Archives and site of most records of the CPSU CC through 1952. According to Yale University Press (where the executive editor of the project is Jonathan Brent), the series is currently envisioned to run at least 18 volumes, including the following titles (and authors/editors): *Anti-Government Opposition under Khrushchev and Brezhnev* (Sheila Fitzpatrick, V.A. Kozlov); *History of the Soviet GULAG System, 1920-1989* (S.V. Mironenko, V.A. Kozlov, American editor to be announced); *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 1933-1949* (Ivo Banac, F.I. Firsov); *The Katyn Massacre* (Anna M. Cienciala, N.S. Lebedeva); *Georgi Dimitrov’s Letters to Stalin, 1933-1945* (F.I. Firsov, American editor to be announced); *Lenin’s “Secret” Archive* (Richard Pipes, Y.I. Buranov); *The Assassination of Sergei Kirov* (V.P. Naumov, American editor to be announced); *Soviet Politics and Repression in the 1930s* (J. Arch Getty, O.V. Naumov); *The Communist International during the Repression of the 1930s* (William Chase, F.I. Firsov); *Soviet Social Life in the 1930s* (Lewis Siegelbaum, A.K. Sokolov); *Voice of the People: Peasants, Workers, and the Soviet State, 1918-1932* (Jeffrey Burds, A.K. Sokolov); *The Church, the People, and the iT7*;

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the Yugoslav Leaders," Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVP RF) [Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation], fond [f.] 077, opis [op.] 37, papka [p.] 191, delo [d.] 39, list [l.] 86. Also Daniel F. Calhoun, *Hungary and Suez, 1956: An Exploration of Who Makes History* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991), 57.

4. Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chap. 15.

5. The Petofi Circle was an organization of Hungarian communist intellectuals founded in 1955. Sandor Petofi was a revolutionary poet during the 1848 revolt against Austria. (Lajos Kossuth was the Hungarian revolutionary leader in the 1848 uprising.)

6. "Notes of Ivan Serov," 26 July 1956, Tsentr Khranenia Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii (TsKhSD) [Center for the Preservation of Contemporary Documents], f. 89, per. 45, dok. 4, l. 2.

7. Letter of Rakosi to Khrushchev, 15 December 1956, TsKhSD, f. 89, op. 2, d. 3, l. 80.

8. "Expressed opinions at the Hungarian Politburo Session, July 13, 1956," TsKhSD, f. 89, per. 45, dok. 3. "There were 13 Hungarian comrades present—Politburo members and candidate members, as well as comrade Mikoyan A. N. On July 13, 1956 at 3 p.m....he participated in the Politburo session, which continued for four hours....About Nagy, Mikoyan said it was a mistake to expel him from the party, even though he deserved it, given his behavior. If he were in the party, he could be forced to be expedient. *The Hungarian comrades made their work harder on themselves....*" [emphasis added]

9. Most of these documents are still classified. They are located in the personal files for Imre Nagy in the KGB archive and among the Comintern documents kept at RTsKhIDNI (Russian Center for the Preservation of Contemporary Documents). See Valerii Musatov, "Tragediia Nadia," *Novaiia Noveishaia Istorii* 1 (Jan. 1994), 167. Also Kuz'minev, "If We Do Not Close Our Eyes" ["Yesli Ne Zakryvat' Glaza"], *Literaturnaia Rossiia* 51:1507 (20 December 1991), 22-23.

10. Musatov, "Tragediia," op. cit., 166.

11. Ibid.

12. I. Zamchevskii, "About Imre Nagy and his Politics with the Yugoslav Leaders," 4 December 1956, AVP RF, f. 077, o. 37, p. 191, d. 39, l. 82.

13. Ibid.; also Calhoun, *Hungary and Suez*, 62, and Charles Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986), 129.

14. Musatov, "Tragediia Nadia," 169; also Calhoun, *Hungary and Suez*, 61-2.

15. Valerii Musatov, "SSSR I Vengerskie Sobytiia 1956 g.: Novye Akhivnye Materialy," *Novaiia Noveishaia Istorii* 1 (Jan. 1993), 5.

16. Miklos Molnar and Laszlo Nagy, *Imre Nagy: Reformateur ou Revolutionnaire* (Geneva: Librairie E. Droz, 1959), 217-18.

Johanna Granville is assistant professor of political science at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. Currently a Fulbright Scholar (1994-95), she is conducting research in the Communist Party and Foreign Ministry archives in Moscow.

REPORTS ON AGENT "VOLODYA": RUSSIAN DOCUMENTS ON IMRE NAGY

Documents provided and translated by
Johanna Granville

KGB Chief Kryuchkov's Report, 16 June 1989

SPECIAL FILE
Of Special Importance

To the CC CPSU
Committee of State Security KGB of the USSR
June 16, 1989

"About the Archive Materials Pertaining to Imre Nagy's Activities in the USSR"

The data we received show that the full-scale campaign of the opposition forces in Hungary connected with the rehabilitation of Imre Nagy, the former leader of the Hungarian government during the period of the 1956 events, is aimed at discrediting the whole path traversed by the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP), undermining the party's authority and present leadership, and stirring up unfriendly feelings toward the USSR among the Hungarian people.

The opposition organizations demand a full rehabilitation of Imre Nagy. He has acquired the halo of a martyr, of an exceptionally honest and principled person. Special emphasis in all this uproar about Imre Nagy is placed on the fact that he was a "consistent champion against Stalinism," "an advocate of democracy and the fundamental restoration of socialism." In a whole series of publications in the Hungarian press, one is made to think that Nagy, [solely] as a result of Soviet pressure, was accused of counterrevolutionary activities, sentenced to death, and executed. The opposition is trying to raise Nagy on a pedestal and make him a symbol of the "struggle for democracy, progress, and the genuine independence of Hungary."

In the HSWP leadership, there is no united opinion as to the extent Imre Nagy should be rehabilitated. Deciding above all to strengthen their influence in the party and society, I. Pozsgai, M. Sjures, and I. Horvat sometimes openly flirt with the opposition in praising the services and dignity of Imre Nagy. K. Grosz, R. Nyers, M. Jasso and others, in advocating his legal rehabilitation, believe that this full-scale campaign of unrestrained praise for Nagy will strike at the HSWP and at Soviet-Hungarian relations. There are many mid-level and especially senior Hungarian communists who are very critical of such a campaign. Widespread among them is the opinion, founded on the stories of several party veterans, that the behavior of Imre Nagy in the 1920-30s in Hungary and the USSR was not as irreproachable, as is being suggested to the Hungarian population, which is under the control of the opposition's

press.

In the course of the KGB's work on archival materials dealing with the repression in the USSR in the second half of the thirties to the beginning of the 1950s, documents were uncovered that shed a light on the earlier, not well-known activities of Nagy in our country. From the indicated documents it follows that, having emigrated to the USSR in 1929, Nagy from the very beginning, of his own initiative, sought out contact with the security organs and in 1933 volunteered to become an agent (a secret informer) of the Main Administration of the security organs of the NKVD. He worked under the pseudonym "Volodya." He actively used Hungarian and other political emigres—as well as Soviet citizens—for the purpose of collecting data about the people who, for one reason or another, came to the attention of the NKVD. We have the document that proves that in 1939 Nagy offered to the NKVD for "cultivation" 38 Hungarian political emigres, including Ferenc Munnich. In another list he named 150 Hungarians, Bulgarians, Russians, Germans, and Italians that he knew personally, and with whom in case of necessity, he could "work." On the basis of the reports by Nagy—"Volodya"—several groups of political émigrés, consisting of members of Hungarian, German, and other Communist parties, were sentenced. They were all accused of "anti-communist," "terrorist," and "counterrevolutionary" activities (the cases of the "Agrarians," "Incorrigibles," "The Agony of the Doomed," and so on). In one of the documents (June 1940) it is indicated that Nagy "gave material" on 15 arrested "enemies of the people," who had worked in the International Agrarian Institute, the Comintern, and the All-Union Radio Committee. The activities of "Volodya" led to the arrest of the well-known scholar E. Varga, and of a whole series of Hungarian Communist Party leaders (B. Varga-Vago, G. Farkas, E. Neiman, F. Gabor, and others). A part of these were shot, a part were sentenced to various terms in prison and exile. Many in 1954-1963 were rehabilitated.

From the archival materials it does not follow that Nagy was an employee of the NKVD by force. Moreover, in the documents it is directly indicated that "Volodya" displayed considerable "interest and initiative in his work and was a qualified agent."

Taking into account the nature and direction of the wide-scale propagandistic campaign in Hungary, it would probably be expedient to report to the General Secretary of the Hungarian HSWP and K. Gros about the documents that we have and advise them about their possible use.

Chairman of the KGB V. KRYUCHKOV

[Source: TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok. 82.]

* * * * *

Poland, a critical link in the Kremlin's post-war security scheme in Europe. By October 1956, Soviet cadres, many chosen because of their Polish background, dominated the senior levels of the Polish Armed Forces.²

The transformation of the Soviet system after Stalin's death affected the satellite states of East Europe in different ways. The Kremlin, Nikita S. Khrushchev in particular, followed and attempted to influence the pace and nature of the changes throughout the region with varying degrees of success. By October 1956, the de-Stalinization debate in Poland focused on the potential return of Wladyslaw Gomulka³ to the leadership of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP). However, Gomulka, who had spent the summer of 1956 securing his place on the Politburo by gaining the confidence of almost all the Central Committee members, as well as the Soviets, made his return to the PUWP conditional. He stubbornly insisted that Khrushchev complete what he had begun in 1954: the withdrawal of Soviet officers and advisers from the Polish Armed Forces and security apparatus. Gomulka also demanded the removal of Soviet Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski⁴ from the PUWP Politburo.

Three days in October 1956 resolved four outstanding and interrelated conflicts of the de-Stalinization period in Poland. First, the bitter and divisive struggle for political power within the PUWP Central Committee was settled. The fractured Central Committee was nearly unanimous in selecting Gomulka First Secretary of the

to the Central Committee his appointment to the PUWP Politburo: "I do not have enough strength to take up the challenges of active work and present conditions do not encourage one to do so. However, a peculiar political situation has arisen and one simply cannot escape its consequences. This is why I shall not refrain from political activities...Until now you have prevented me from doing so, but should you change your minds today I will not say no. I would like to emphasize that...I consider my views to be correct and I will not retreat. I will be appealing to the Party leadership and even to Party organizations throughout the country. I will make my doubts known. I am a stubborn person. I would like you to know this."¹⁰ Ochab agreed to nominate Gomulka as well as some of his closest political allies for membership in the Politburo at the 8th PUWP Plenum, which was set to take place on October 17.

The debate over the 8th Plenum continued at the Politburo meeting of October 15. The leadership concluded that "there would be no keynote speech and Comrade Ochab's introductory remarks would merely present the situation within the Politburo." They also decided to hold another Politburo meeting and to postpone the 8th Plenum until October 19. More important, the Politburo agreed to add Gomulka and his allies, Marian Spychalski, Zenon Kliszko, and Ignacy Loga-Sowinski, to the leadership.

The Politburo then ordered that a press release be issued for October 16 to announce publicly the planned return of Gomulka to the leadership, and October 19 as the date for the 8th Plenum. Finally, the Politburo decided to hold elections at the next meeting to decide the Politburo and Secretariat membership that would be presented to the 8th Plenum. The debate in the Politburo was heated. Rokossowski and three of his allies in the Politburo—Witold Józwiak,¹¹ Zenon Nowak,¹² and Władysław Dworakowski¹³—attacked the other voting members of the Politburo for trying to exclude them from the leadership. Shortly before the meeting ended, Rokossowski warned: "I view the holding of elections in this situation as desertion."¹⁴

At the Politburo meeting on October 17, a "leadership-search" commission was established. It included Gomulka and three other senior Politburo members: Józef Cyrankiewicz,¹⁵ Aleksander Zawadzki,¹⁶

and Ochab. The mandate of the special commission, which excluded the leading hardliners, was to prepare a list of candidates for the new PUWP Politburo, Secretariat, and Presidium of the Council of Ministers. The special commission met during the break.

When the Politburo meeting resumed, Ochab announced the decisions that had been taken: 1) the Politburo would be limited to nine members; 2) the new Politburo would include Gomulka, Zawadzki, Cyrankiewicz, Loga-Sowinski, Roman Zambrowski,¹⁷ Adam Rapacki, Jerzy Morawski, Stefan Jedrychowski, and Ochab; 3) the Secretariat would include Gomulka,

and Ochab. The mandate of the special commission, which excluded the leading hardliners, was to prepare a list of candidates for the new PUWP Politburo, Secretariat, and Presidium of the Council of Ministers. The special commission met during the break.

Plenum)

The Politburo agrees to the following press communiqué:

On 19 October at 10:00 am the proceedings of the VIII Plenum began. After the meeting was opened by comrade Ochab, and the agenda accepted, comrades Wladyslaw Gomulka, Marian Spychalski, Zenon Kliszko, and Loga-Sowinski were added to the Central Committee so that they could take part in the discussions as fully fledged members.

Comrade Wieslaw [Wladyslaw Gomulka's war-time pseudonym] informed the Politburo about

bership understands it differently. [Especially]
The issue of democratization.⁵⁵

alist sentiments. Your tactics allowed for the regulation of difficult problems without a public discussion, of which the imperialists could have taken advantage. In our declaration of 29 December [1956] we underlined that antagonistic and non-antagonistic disputes should be resolved by various methods. I support the position of comrade Gomulka, Zhou Enlai said, about equality and sovereignty, but the leading role of the Soviet Union must be remembered. The leading role of the Soviet Union is the main point, while equality and errors are points of less value. Comrade Mao Zedong in his talks with comrade Kiryluk correctly underlined that relations between our countries ought to be like relations between brothers, and not like the relations between a father and a son, like the past the relations between the USSR and Poland. For our part, we told the CPSU that their position regarding the leading role of the Soviet Union is correct.

...the leading role of the Soviet Union is the main point, while equality and errors are points of less value. Comrade Mao Zedong in his talks with comrade Kiryluk correctly underlined that relations between our countries ought to be like relations between brothers, and not like the relations between a father and a son, like the past the relations between the USSR and Poland. For our part, we told the CPSU that their position regarding the leading role of the Soviet Union is correct.

At the same time, comrade Mikoyan told comrade Ochab that the position of the Polish comrades corresponds with the main line of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

In connection with this, the Presidium of the CC CPSU has decided to recall all Soviet advisers that have been sent, at the time at the request of the Polish Government, to assist the work of the PPR organs of security.⁷²

During the same conversation, comrade Ochab transmitted the view of the CC PUWP about the need, after the institution of Soviet advisers is abolished, to create new forms of collaboration between the organs of security of the USSR and Poland, with the aim to create a

was made a citizen of Poland, Marshal of Poland, Minister of National Defense, and member of the CC PUWP; joined the Politburo in May 1950; deputy premier in 1952. Expelled from the Politburo and CC in October 1956; recalled to the USSR on 13 November 1956, where he served as a deputy minister of national defense.

5. 1949-50 first deputy defense minister and chief political officer of the Polish Armed Forces; 1950-56 Secretary PUWP; March-October 1956 First Secretary PUWP.

6. Ochab travelled to Beijing via Moscow in September to attend the Eighth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. In Moscow, Ochab informed Khrushchev that Gomulka would be joining the leadership. Ochab also told the Soviets that the PUWP Central Committee wanted the Soviet advisers attached to the Committee for Public Security to leave Poland. In China, Ochab sought Beijing's support in the event the CPSU and PUWP could not come to an agreement. For further details see his interview with Teresa Toranska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets*, trans. by Agnieszka Kolakowska (London: Collins, Harvill, 1987G023]1S6-72ab Gomulka? [Did the Chinese Rescue Gomulka?]) *Polityka* 26 October 1991.

7. "Protokół z posiedzenia Biura Politycznego z dnia 1 of Modern Records] (AANG02Warsaw, KC PZPR, paczka15, tom 58, str. 167-169.8. Panteleimon Kondrat'evich Ponomarenko was Extraordinary Ambassador of the USSR to Poland from 7 May 1955 to 28 September 1957. He joined the VKP(b)-72ab[All-Union worked with Malenkov in the CC apparatus 1938; First Secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party; member CC VKP(b) and CC CPSU 1939-61.

9. "Protokół z posiedzenia Biura Politycznego z dnia 8 i 10 X 1956 r., nr. 124," AAN, KC PZPR [CC PUWP], paczka 15, tom 58, str. 172-174.

10. "Nieautoryzowane Wystąpienie tow. Wiesława na

1956 r.," AAN, KC PZPR, paczka 12, teczka 46a, str. 29-36; and "Protokół z posiedzenia Biura Politycznego z dnia 12 X 1956 r., nr. 125," AAN, KC PZPR, paczka 15, tom 58, str. 187-188. The full text of Gomulka's-72abpresentation reprinted in an important collection of documents by

Gomulka i inni: Dokumenty z archiwum KC 1948-1982

[*Gomulka and Others: Documents from the CC Ar--72abarchives,*

member from 1932; 1942 arrested by the Nazis and sent to a labour camp; 1945 liberated and joined the Soviet army. Returns to Poland in 1947; PWP Provincial Committee Second Secretary in Poznan then Provincial Committee First Secretary in Katowice; 1947-48 head of the PWP Central Committee cadres department;

KHRUSHCHEV'S MEETING*continued from page 1*

1956. A shorter version was originally discovered by Tibor Hajdu of the Institute of History of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest and published in Hungarian in 1992.¹ Although the document below is the most important item to emerge thus far, other materials in Prague are also well worth consulting. In addition to files left from the top organs of the former Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická strana Československa*, or KSC), which are all now housed at the Central State Archive, numerous items pertaining to the military aspects of the 1956 crises can be found in the Czech Military-Historical Archive (*Vojenský historický archiv*).²

The summary report below was presented by the KSC leader, Antonín Novotný, to the other members of the KSC Politburo on 25 October 1956.³ The report is undated, but it must have been drafted and hastily revised in the late night/early morning hours of October 24–25 by Jan Svoboda, a top aide to Novotný. Svoboda was responsible for composing many of Novotný's speeches and reports in the mid-1950s.

The document recounts a meeting of top Soviet officials who belonged to the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) Presidium, as the Politburo was then known. The session was convened at Nikita Khrushchev's initiative on the evening of 24 October 1956, at a time of acute tension with (and within) both Poland and Hungary. Until a day or two before the meeting, Khrushchev's concerns about Eastern Europe focused primarily on Poland, where a series of events beginning with the June 1956 clashes in Poznań, which left 53 dead and hundreds wounded, had provoked anxiety in Moscow about growing instability and rebellion.⁴ In early October one of the most prominent victims of the Stalinist purges in Poland in the late 1940s, Władysław Gomułka, had triumphantly regained his membership in the Polish Communist party (PZPR) and seemed on the verge of reclaiming his position as party leader. Khrushchev and his colleagues feared that if Gomułka took control in Warsaw and removed the most orthodox (and pro-Soviet) members of the Polish leadership, Poland might then seek a more independent (i.e., Titoist) course in foreign policy.

At the Presidium meeting on October 24 (and later in his memoirs), Khrushchev described how the Soviet Union actively tried to prevent Gomułka from regaining his leadership post.⁵ On October 19, as the 8th Plenum of the PZPR Central Committee was getting under way, a delegation of top Soviet officials paid a surprise visit to Warsaw. The delegation included Khrushchev, Vyacheslav Molotov, Nikolai Bulganin, Lazar Kaganovich, and Anastas Mikoyan, as well as the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Ivan Konev, and 11 other high-ranking Soviet military officers. In a hastily-arranged meeting with Gomułka and other Polish leaders, the CPSU delegates expressed anxiety about upcoming personnel changes in the PZPR and urged the Poles to strengthen their political, economic, and military ties with the Soviet Union. For their part, Gomułka and his colleagues sought clarification of the status of Soviet troops in Poland and demanded that Soviet officials pledge not to interfere in Poland's internal affairs.⁶ Gomułka repeatedly emphasized that Poland "will not permit its independence to be taken away." He called for the withdrawal of all or most of the Soviet Union's 50 "advisers" in Poland and insisted that Marshal Konstantin Rokossovskii, the Polish-born Soviet officer who had been installed as Poland's national defense minister in November 1949, be removed along with other top Soviet officers who were serving in the Polish army. The Soviet delegation responded by accusing the Poles of seeking to get rid of "old, trustworthy revolutionaries who are loyal to the cause of socialism" and of "turning toward the West against the Soviet Union."⁷

During the heated exchanges that ensued, Gomułka was suddenly informed by one of his aides that Soviet tank and infantry units were advancing toward Warsaw. The Polish leader immediately requested that the Soviet forces be pulled back, and Khrushchev, after some hesitation, complied with the request, ordering Konev to halt all troop movements. Although Khrushchev assured Gomułka that the deployments had simply been in preparation for upcoming military exercises, the intended message was plain enough, especially in light of other recent developments. The existence of Soviet "plans to protect the most important state facilities" in Poland, including military garrisons and lines of communication, had been deliber-

ately leaked to Polish officials earlier in the day; and Soviet naval vessels had begun holding conspicuous maneuvers in waters near Gdansk.⁸ Despite these various forms of pressure, the Polish authorities stood their ground, and the meeting ended without any firm agreement. The official communique merely indicated that talks had taken place and that Polish leaders would be visiting Moscow sometime "in the near future."⁹ In every respect, then, the negotiations proved less than satisfactory from the Soviet standpoint.

After the Soviet delegation returned to Moscow on October 20, the PZPR Central Committee reconvened and promptly elected Gomułka first secretary and dropped Rokossovskii and several other neo-Stalinist officials from the PZPR Politburo. That same day, an editorial in the CPSU daily *Pravda* accused the Polish media of waging a "filthy anti-Soviet campaign" and of trying to "undermine socialism in Poland."¹⁰ These charges prompted vigorous rebuttals from Polish commentators. Strains between the two countries increased still further as tens of thousands of Poles took part in pro-Gomułka rallies in Gdansk, Szczecin, and other cities on October 22. Even larger demonstrations, involving up to 100,000 people each, were organized the following day in Poznań, Lublin, Łódź, Bydgoszcz, Kielce, and elsewhere. In the meantime, joint meetings of workers and students were being held all around Poland, culminating in a vast rally in Warsaw on October 24 attended by as many as 500,000 people. Although these events were intended mainly as a display of unified national support for the new Polish leadership in the face of external pressure, some of the speakers expressed open hostility toward the Soviet Union. The growing anti-Soviet mood was especially noticeable at a large rally in Wrocław on October 23, which nearly spun out of control.

As tension continued to mount, Soviet leaders began to contemplate a variety of economic sanctions and military options. None of these options seemed the least bit attractive, however, as Khrushchev emphasized to his colleagues during the meeting on October 24: "Finding a reason for an armed conflict [with Poland] now would be very easy, but finding a way to put an end to such a conflict later on would be very hard." Rokossovskii had warned Soviet leaders at

the outset of the crisis that the Polish army would almost certainly put up stiff resistance against outside intervention. Moreover, Khrushchev and his colleagues were aware that Polish officials had begun distributing firearms to “workers’ militia” units who could help defend the capital, and that Gomulka had ordered troops from the Polish internal affairs ministry to seal off all areas in Warsaw that might be used as entry routes by Soviet forces.¹¹

Khrushchev’s reluctance to pursue a military solution under such inauspicious circumstances induced him to seek a *modus vivendi* with Gomulka whereby Poland would have greater leeway to follow its own “road to socialism.” By the time the CPSU Presidium meeting opened on October 24, the prospects for a solution of this sort appeared much brighter than they had just a

tection, and thus became easy targets for youths wielding grenades and Molotov cocktails. Although Hungarian soldiers were supposed to operate alongside Soviet units, troops from the Hungarian state security forces, police, and army proved incapable of offering necessary support, and some defected to the side of the rebels. As a result, the fighting merely escalated. By mid-afternoon on the 24th, at least 25 protesters had been killed and more than 200 had been wounded. The mounting violence, as Soviet observers in

the uprising, Comrade Khrushchev said that according to reports the insurgents had set up their headquarters in the Hotel Astoria. This had been captured by Soviet troops. It appears that the groundwork for preparing a coup was organized by writers and was supported by students. The population as a whole has reacted passively to everything, but has not been hostile toward the USSR.

Comrade Khrushchev recommends that we not cover the situation in Hungary in our press until the causes of everything have been well clarified.

The representatives of the fraternal parties who were present joined the discussion. All of them expressed support for the stance of the CPSU CC Presidium.

Comrade Ulbricht emphasized in his speech that in his view the situation had arisen because we did not act in time to expose all the incorrect opinions that had emerged in Poland and Hungary. He assumed that it would behoove each party to give a response in the press to certain incorrect opinions.

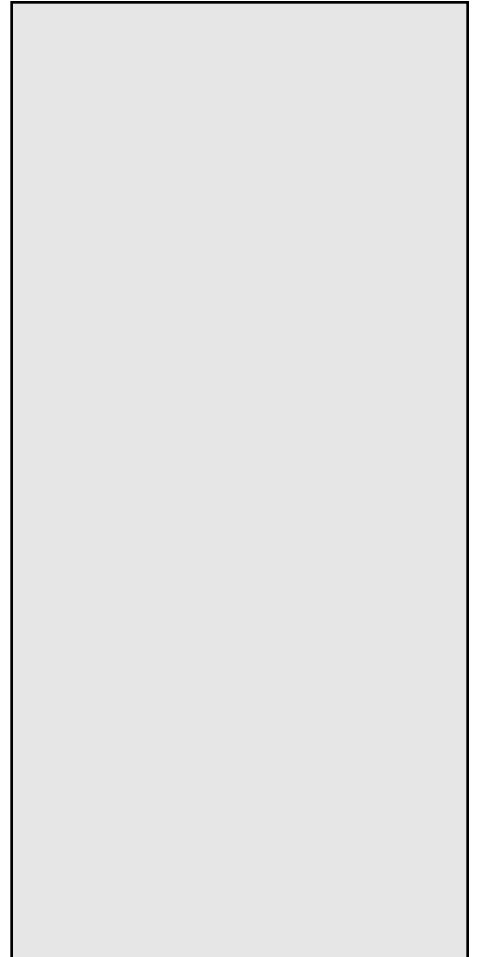
Comrade Khrushchev recommended that they think about the problems in greater depth. We must realize that we are not living as we were during the CI [Communist International], when only one party was in power. If we wanted to operate by command today, we would inevitably create chaos. It is necessary to conduct propaganda work in each party, but we cannot permit this to turn into polemics between fraternal parties because this would lead to polemics between nations. The plenum of the CPSU CC in December will discuss ideological questions and, a bit later, the question of how to raise living standards, particularly the faster construction of apartments as one of the basic prerequisites for boosting living standards. The extent to which patience is required can be seen from the recent case in Zaporozhe.⁴⁸ Here 200 people refused to work because those responsible for guiding the work of the factories, including party functionaries, union leaders, and the top manager, did not do anything to induce the employees to work to the limit. Did they refuse to work because some ideological matters were unclear to them or because they were opposed to the Soviet regime? No, they refused because basic economic and social issues had not been resolved. Ideological work itself will be of no avail if we do not ensure that living standards rise. It is no accident that the unrest occurred in Hungary and Poland and not in Czechoslovakia. This is because the standard of living in Czechoslovakia is incomparably higher. In the USSR more than 10,000 members of the CPSU were rehabilitated and more than a million were released from prison. These people are not angry at us [in Czechoslovakia] because they see we have done a lot to raise the standard of living in our country. In our country they also listen to the BBC and Radio Free Europe. But when they

have full stomachs, the listening is not so bad.

It is necessary to improve ideological and propaganda work and to bolster the quality of the work of the party and state apparatus geared toward managing the economy.

1. Tibor Hajdu, "Az 1956. október 24-i moszkvai értekezlet" [The 24 October 1956 Moscow meeting], in *Az 1956-os Magyar Forradalom Történetének Akadémiai Dokumentációs és Kutatóintézete Évkönyve* 1. 1992. [*The Yearbook of the Institute for the History*

20. "Shifrtelgramma iz Budapeshta," Cable from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, 24



USING KGB DOCUMENTS: THE SCALI-FEKLISOV CHANNEL IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

by Alexander Fursenko
and Timothy Naftali

From the time that former State Department official Roger Hilsman revealed in 1964 that ABC News television correspondent John Scali had served as an intermediary between the U.S. and Soviet governments at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, scholars have had to consider the role that Scali and his contact, Aleksandr Feklisov (alias Fomin), played in the resolution of the conflict.¹ Until 1989, it was generally assumed that the Kremlin had used Feklisov, a KGB officer based at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, to float a trial balloon at the most dangerous moment of the Cuban Missile Crisis because meaningful communication between the two governments had ground to a halt.

But at a conference of scholars and former officials in Moscow in January 1989, Feklisov argued that Western historians had gotten his role in the crisis all wrong. The Kremlin, he said, had not injected him into

negotiations. The famous proposal for ending the crisis, which Robert Kennedy later recalled as having made his brother "for the first time hopeful that our efforts might possibly be successful," had not come from him, but rather had come out of the blue from Scali. Scali, who was also present in Moscow, vigorously disputed Feklisov's account.²

Feklisov's surprising assertion³ and Scali's immediate rejection of this revisionist history posed three questions for students of the crisis:

a) Did the Soviet government use the KGB to find a way out of the crisis on 26 October 1962?

b) Did Feklisov act on his own or did Scali suggest a settlement for his own government to consider?

c) What effect, if any, did the Scali-Feklisov meetings have on the endgame of the Cuban Missile Crisis?

Materials consulted in the archives of the SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service, the new name for the First Chief Directorate of the KGB), resolve some, though not all, of these questions. Documents on the Scali-Feklisov meetings have been opened as part of a multi-book project on the history of the

superpower intelligence services sponsored by Crown Publishers, Inc.⁴

To understand better what can be learned from these documents, it is helpful to revisit the standard account of the role of the Scali-Feklisov channel in the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

According to the traditional version, Scali received a call at his Washington office from Feklisov on Friday, October 26. Scali had been meeting off and on with this Soviet Embassy official for over a year. From the FBI, which Scali had alerted from the outset about his meetings with Feklisov, the journalist learned that this man was no ordinary diplomat. Aleksandr Feklisov ("Fomin") was the KGB Resident, or chief of station, in Washington. On this particular Friday, with the likelihood of US military action against Cuba seemingly mounting, Feklisov asked for an urgent meeting with Scali. Scali suggested the Occidental Restaurant near the Willard Hotel. The lunch was set for 1:30 p.m.

"When I arrived he was already sitting at the table as usual, facing the door. He seemed tired, haggard and alarmed in contrast to the usual calm, low-key appearance

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Russian Foreign Ministry Documents On the Cuban Missile Crisis

Introduction by Raymond L. Garthoff

Among the new archival materials on the Cuban Missile Crisis recently made available by the Russian government are the first batch of diplomatic documents, a selection of 21 documents totaling 147 pages; extensive translations of these materials (as well as of two other documents released from the former CPSU Central Committee archives) follow this introduction. While certainly welcome, this represents only about twenty percent of a file of 734 pages of Foreign Ministry (MID) documents declassified in the fall of 1991 and in early 1992. Moreover, many documents remain classified. Still, it is an important step forward.

The documents were acquired through the efforts of the author and of the National Security Archive (NSA), a non-governmental, privately-funded research institute based at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. [Ed. note: Shortly before presstime, a second group of declassified Foreign Ministry documents reached NSA; however, these consisted mostly of previously-published Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence and other materials that were not

previously published but were of lesser import than those already obtained.]

The 21 documents initially released comprise selections from six categories of material. First are three cables from, and one message to, Soviet Ambassador Aleksandr Alekseyev in Havana sent shortly prior to or during the crisis; second are seven cables sent from Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin in Washington and one to him, also all prior to or during the crisis, and one from Soviet official Georgii Zhukov, also sent from Washington; third are one message from Ambassador Valerian Zorin, Soviet representative to the United Nations in New York, and one to him (and to Deputy Foreign Minister Vasily Kuznetsov) from Moscow; fourth are two messages from Foreign Minister Gromyko to Moscow just before the crisis broke; fifth are three messages from Havana to Moscow reporting on First Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan's negotiations with Prime Minister Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders as the crisis was being ended; and finally, the sixth is a single message from Deputy Foreign Minister Kuznetsov after his meeting with President Kennedy on 9 January 1963, in effect closing the post-crisis diplomatic negotiations. A few of these have been released earlier, in particular one on Mikoyan's talks with Castro. Nonetheless, they are all of interest and together they make a

substantial addition to our documentary base and some contribution to our understanding of the crisis.

These materials expand on the earlier released messages between President Kennedy and Prime Minister Khrushchev. There are, however, no materials on Foreign Ministry evaluations or other interagency deliberations in Moscow, in contrast to the extensive releases of comparable materials by the United States.

Some of the Foreign Ministry documents have been lightly sanitized, and a number of them are only excerpts, but excisions are not noted except where there is an internal blank space in a paragraph. Documents are not identified by their original designators (such as telegram numbers), nor by their Foreign Ministry archive file locations.

The precrisis reports of Ambassadors Alekseev and Dobrynin help to set the stage, but they do not add much to what has been known. Gromyko's cabled report of his meeting with President Kennedy (detailed in his memoir) is not included, but his account of the discussion of Cuba in his meeting that same evening with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and a message giving Gromyko's evaluation of the situation on October 19, are included. Both are quite reveal-

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**“DISMAYED BY THE ACTIONS OF
THE SOVIET UNION”:****Mikoyan’s talks with Fidel Castro and
the Cuban leadership, November 1962**

communist leader from 1953 to 1971, was not merely a Soviet puppet, but, since the late 1950s, made his needs and agendas

by **Vladislav M. Zubok**

The talks between Anastas I. Mikoyan, member of the CC CPSU Presidium, and the revolutionary leadership of Cuba in Havana on 3-12 November 1962, were a lesser known, but nonetheless dramatic episode in the story of the Cuban missile crisis, and also marked a watershed in the history of relations between the Soviet superpower and one of its closest non-European allies.

Thanks to declassified documents from U.S. archives, researchers have begun to appreciate the significance and nuances of U.S.-West German, U.S.-Iranian, and other key patron-client relationships that were vital to American conduct during the Cold War. But until very recently, the existence and importance of parallel commitments and influences on Soviet foreign policy were often grossly underestimated. New East-bloc archival evidence, however, has corroborated suspicions that, to take one key example, Walter Ulbricht, the East German

that he presented.” Thus Scali described in a 1964 television broadcast how this meeting opened. Scali said that Feklisov feared that war would begin soon, and was so concerned that he volunteered a way out of the stalemate.⁵

He asked, according to Scali’s notes, what Scali “thought” of a three-point proposition:

a) The Soviet missiles bases would be dismantled under United Nations supervision.

b) Fidel Castro would promise never to accept offensive weapons of any kind, ever.

c) In return for the above, the United States would pledge not to invade Cuba.⁶

Feklisov was confident that if U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai Stevenson “pursued this line,” Soviet UN ambassador Valerian Zorin “would be interested.” As if to give some weight to his proposal, Feklisov noted that the Cuban delegate to the UN had already made a similar proposal in a session of the Security Council but that it had been met with silence. Feklisov asked that Scali run this proposal by his contacts at the State Department and then gave the journalist his home telephone number, to be sure he could be reached at any time.⁷

Scali rushed this proposal to the State Department. Roger Hilsman, State’s director of Intelligence and Research, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk were extremely interested in it. Rusk considered this to be the first concrete offer from the Soviet leadership for ending the crisis. The letters already exchanged by Khrushchev and Kennedy had only brought about a hardening of each side’s position. So long as the Soviets refused to discuss removing the missiles, there seemed to be no peaceful way out of the deepening crisis.⁸

Transcripts of the ExComm [Executive Committee of the National Security Council] meeting of October 27⁹ confirm that the Kennedy administration interpreted the “offer” from the KGB representative as an elaboration of a more general proposal contained in a private letter from Khrushchev that arrived late in the afternoon of October 26, in which the Soviet leader had written:

ships bound for Cuba are not carrying any armaments. You will declare that the United States will not invade Cuba with its troops and will not support any other forces which might intend to invade Cuba. Then the necessity for the presence of our military specialists will be obviated.¹⁰

By itself the Khrushchev letter did not promise anything except that future Soviet ships would carry non-military cargoes. But when the letter was coupled with what Scali had relayed from Feklisov, the Kennedy administration believed it had received an acceptable offer from the Kremlin. Rusk instructed Scali to contact Feklisov to make clear that the U.S. found a basis for agreement in his offer.

Sometime between 7:30 and 7:45 p.m. on Friday evening, Scali and Feklisov met at the Statler Hotel, near the Soviet Embassy. In a very brief meeting Scali conveyed his message: He was authorized by the highest authority to say that there were “real possibilities in this [proposal]” and that “the representatives of the USSR and the United States in New York can work this matter out with [UN Secretary General] U Thant and with each other.” Feklisov listened carefully, then repeated the proposal to be sure that he understood the White House’s offer correctly. Unsure of Scali, he asked repeatedly for confirmation that Scali spoke for the White House. Finally, Feklisov added that it was not enough for there to be inspection of the dismantling of Soviet missiles, it would be necessary for UN observers to observe the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the southern United States. This idea went beyond Scali’s instructions, so he demurred.

The situation changed the next day, struct it C.necese

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We, for our part, will declare that our

resident to test some ideas that had occurred to him as perhaps the best way of averting nuclear disaster?

The KGB documents suggest that in the heat of discussion, with the fear of war hanging over their heads, Scali and Feklisov fastened on a revival of a formula for ending the crisis that, among others, UN Secretary General U Thant had been suggesting since October 24.¹⁹ Because of the possibility that Feklisov and/or Scali mischaracterized their first meeting on October 26, it may never be possible to resolve the central contradiction between their respective claims. However, the determination of which man actually proposed this plan is less important than the fact that, although the Kremlin was completely in the dark, John F. Kennedy was convinced that Feklisov spoke for the Soviet government, and indeed for Khrushchev personally.

As we now know, President Kennedy decided not to use the Scali-Feklisov channel to settle the crisis. On the night of October 27, JFK sent his brother Robert to Dobrynin to offer a face-saving deal to Khrushchev. In addition to pledging not to invade Cuba, Kennedy offered a secret undertaking to remove Jupiter missiles from Turkey. Nevertheless, the story of the Scali-Feklisov backchannel remains significant

tic reaction. The realization of Kennedy's visit to Mexico, following which he was to have quickly visited Brazil too (this visit was put off to the last months of the year), served the goals of determining the likelihood of attracting these two countries to the anti-Cuban plans of the USA.

Until now none of the attempts of the USA to attract Brazil and Mexico to its anti-Cuban adventures has had any success.

Under pressure from the USA, in a majority of Latin American countries the local authorities are applying the harshest measures aimed at forbidding or tightly limiting visits of any groups or individuals to Cuba, and also their contacts with Cuban delegations in third countries. People who visit Cuba or make contact with Cuban delegations in third countries are subject to arrest, repression, investigations upon return to their home-

**Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to Cuba
Aleksiev to the USSR MFA, 11 September
1962**

TOP SECRET
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eral participants in the meeting, Rusk put much pressure on the meeting. The point of the communique about trade with Cuba, which elicited the most disagreement, was accepted only after Rusk, referring to the mood in the USA Congress, threatened to cut off all American assistance to countries which would refuse to accept that point. In addition to this, Rusk and Kennedy informed the participants in the meeting about the unilateral measures which the government of the USA itself is now considering regarding a maximum limitation on the use of ships of various countries in trade with Cuba.

As indicated by certain information which we are now reconfirming, the following measures were named:

1. American ports will be closed to ships of those countries of which even a single ship would bring arms to Cuba. In essence, this is directed entirely against the USSR and socialist countries.

2. Ships of all countries will not be allowed into ports of the USA and will not be allowed to take on any cargo for the return voyage, if in the past they carried goods to Cuba from the countries of the "Soviet-Chinese" bloc. This refers equally to cargos of military supplies and those of consumer goods.

3. No cargo belonging to the government of the USA (for example, big shipments for "assistance programs) may be carried on foreign ships, if ships of the same owners are used for the shipment of goods to Cuba. This point is directed against "non-communist" countries and allies of the USA, many of whom have now reluctantly

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In these last days the sharpness of the anti-Cuban campaign in the USA has subsided somewhat, while the sharpness of the West Berlin question has stood out all the more. Newspapers bleat about the approaching crisis vis a vis West Berlin, the impending in the very near future signing of the agreement with the GDR, and so on. The goal of such a change in the work of the propaganda machine is to divert somewhat public attention from the Cuba issue. All this is not without the participation of the White House.

Hemisphere itself. What then of the obligations of the USA in other parts of the world? And all this is happening at a moment—as asserted by representatives of the military brass—when America for the time being still has an advantage over the Soviet Union in nuclear missiles, an advantage which is gradually being liquidated by the successes of Soviet weapons, and now also by the creation of a missile base in Cuba in direct proximity with the USA. This means, the American chiefs of staff maintain, that time is not waiting, if the Kennedy government really intends to prevent a further disadvantageous devel-

feelings found their own reflection in his appeal to the American people.

From the very beginning, continued R. Kennedy, the Soviet side—N.S. Khrushchev, the Soviet government in its pronouncements and the Soviet ambassador during confidential meetings - have stressed the defensive nature of the weapons which are being delivered to Cuba. You, for instance, said R. Kennedy to me, told me about the exclusively defensive goals of the delivery of Soviet weapons, in particular, the missile weapons, during our meeting at the beginning of September. I understood you then as saying that we were talking only about /and in the future, too/ missiles of a relatively small range of action for the defense of Cuba itself and the approaches to it, but not about long range missiles which could strike practically the entire territory of the USA. I told this to the President, who accepted it with satisfaction as the position of the Soviet government. There was a TASS declaration in the name of the Soviet government in which it was clearly stated that all military deliveries to Cuba are intended exclusively for defensive goals. The President and the government of the USA understood this as the true position of the USSR.

With even greater feelings of trust we took the corresponding declarations /public and confidential/ of the head of the Soviet government, who, despite the big disagreements and frequent aggravations in relations between our countries, the President has always trusted on a personal level. The message which had been sent by N.S. Khrushchev via the Soviet ambassador and [Kennedy adviser Theodore] Sorensen, about the fact that during the election campaign in the USA the Soviet side would not do anything to complicate the international situation and worsen relations between our countries, had made a great impression on the President.

All this led to the fact that the President believed everything which was said from the Soviet side, and in essence staked on that card his own political fate, having publicly announced to the USA, that the arms deliveries to Cuba carry a purely defensive character, although a number of Republicans have asserted to the contrary. And then the President suddenly receives trustworthy information to the effect that in Cuba, contrary to everything which had been said by the Soviet representatives, including the latest assurances, made very recently by A. A. Gromyko during his meeting with the President, there had appeared Soviet missiles with a range of action which cover almost the entire territory of the USA. Is this weapon really for the defensive purposes about which you, Mr. Ambassador, A. A. Gromyko, the Soviet government and N.S. Khrushchev had spoken?

The President felt himself deceived, and deceived intentionally. He is convinced of that even now. It was for him a great disappointment,

or, speaking directly, a heavy blow to everything in which he had believed and which he had strived to preserve in personal relations with the head of the Soviet government: mutual trust in each other's personal assurances. As a result, the reaction which had found its reflection in the President's declaration and the extremely serious current events which are connected with it and which can still lead no one knows where.

Stressing with great determination that I reject his assertions about some sort of "deception" as entirely not corresponding to reality and as presenting the actions and motives of the Soviet side in a perverted light, I asked R. Kennedy why the President - if he had some sort of doubts - had not negotiated directly and openly with A. A. Gromyko, with whom there had been a meeting just a few days ago, but rather had begun actions, the seriousness of the consequences of which for the entire world are entirely unforeseeable. Before setting off on that dangerous path, fraught with a direct military confrontation between our countries, why not use, for instance, the confidential channels which we have and appeal directly to the head of the Soviet government.

R. Kennedy said the President had decided not to address A. A. Gromyko about this for the following two reasons: first, everything which the Soviet minister had set forth had, evidently according to the instructions of the Soviet government, been expressed in very harsh tones, so a discussion with him hardly could have been of much use; second, he had once again asserted the defensive character of the deliveries of Soviet weapons, although the President at that moment knew that this is not so, that they had deceived him again. As far as the confidential channel is concerned, what sense would that have made, if on the highest level - the level of the Minister of Foreign Affairs - precisely the same is said, although the facts are directly contradictory[?] To that same point, added R. Kennedy, long ago I myself in fact received the same sort of assurances from the Soviet ambassador, however, all that subsequently turned out to be entirely not so.

- Tell me, - R. Kennedy said to me further - [do] you, as the Soviet ambassador, have from your government information about the presence now in Cuba of around half a dozen (here he corrected himself, saying that that number may not be entirely accurate, but the fact remains a fact) missiles, capable of reaching almost any point in the United States?

In my turn I asked R. Kennedy why I should believe his information, when he himself does not want to recognize or respect that which the other side is saying to him. To that same point, even the President himself in his speech in fact had spoken only about some emplacements for missiles, which they allegedly had "observed," but not about the missiles themselves.

- There, you see - R. Kennedy quickly put forth, - what would have been the point of us

contacting you via the confidential channel, if, as it appears, even the Ambassador, who has, as far as we know, the full trust of his government, does not know that long-range missiles which can strike the USA, rather than defensive missiles which are capable of defending Cuba from any sort of attack on the approaches to it, have already been provided to Cuba[?] It comes out that when you and I spoke earlier, you also did not have reliable information, although the conversation was about the defensive character of those weapons deliveries, including the future deliveries to Cuba, and everything about this was passed on to the President.

I categorically responded to R. Kennedy's yj T*.2 (they bout ery spong7 Tnbout, ecreveryresshe ap

He asked me what offer the United States was making, and I told him of the letter that

there could be no bargain over the missiles that had been supplied to Turkey, the president himself was determined to have them removed and would attend to the matter once the present crisis was resolved—as long as no one in Moscow called that action part of a bargain. [p. 406]

...The other part of the oral message [to Dobrynin] was proposed by Dean Rusk; that we should tell Khrushchev that while there could be no deal over the Turkish missiles, the president was determined to get them out and would do so once the Cuban crisis was resolved. The proposal was quickly supported by the rest of us [in addition to Bundy and Rusk, those present included President Kennedy, McNamara, RFK, George Ball, Roswell Gilpatrick, Llewellyn Thompson, and Theodore Sorensen]. Concerned as we all were by the cost of a public bargain struck under pressure at the apparent expense of the Turks, and aware as we were from the day's discussion that for some, even in our own closest councils, even this unilateral private assurance might appear to betray an ally, we agreed without hesitation that no one not in the room was to be informed of this additional message. Robert Kennedy was instructed to make it plain to Dobrynin that the same secrecy must be observed on the other side, and that any Soviet reference to our assurance would simply make it null and void. [pp. 432-44]

...There was no leak. As far as as I know, none of the nine of us told anyone else what had happened. We denied in every forum that there was any deal, and in the narrowest sense what we said was usually true, as far as it went. When the orders were passed that the Jupiters must come out, we gave the plausible and accurate—if incomplete—explanation that the missile crisis had convinced the president once and for all that he did not want those missiles there.... [p. 434]

[from McGeorge Bundy, *Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years* (New York: Random House, 1988)]

Dean Rusk:

Even though Soviet ships had turned around, time was running out. We made this very clear to Khrushchev. Earlier in the week Bobby Kennedy told Ambassador Dobrynin that if the missile were not withdrawn immediately, the crisis would move into a different and dangerous military phase. In his book *Khrushchev Remembers*, Khrushchev states that Robert Kennedy told Dobrynin that the military might take over. Khrushchev either genuinely misunderstood or deliberately misused Bobby's statement. Obviously there was never any threat of a military takeover in this country. We wondered about Khrushchev's situation, even whether some Soviet general or member of the Politburo would put

a pistol to Khrushchev's head and say, "Mr. Chairman, launch those missiles or we'll blow your head off!"

...In framing a response [to Khrushchev's second letter of Saturday, October 27], the president, Bundy, McNamara, Bobby Kennedy, and I met in the Oval Office, where after some discussion I suggested that since the Jupiters in Turkey were coming out in any event, we should inform the Russians of this so that this irrelevant question would not complicate the solution of the missile sites in Cuba. We agreed that Bobby should inform Ambassador Dobrynin orally. Shortly after we returned to our offices, I telephoned Bobby to underline that he should pass this along to Dobrynin only as information, not a public pledge. Bobby told me that he was then sitting with Dobrynin and had already talked with him. Bobby later told me that Dobrynin called this message "very important information."

[Dean Rusk as told to Richard Rusk, *As I Saw It* (New York: Norton & Co., 1990), pp. 238-240]

* * * * *

Dobrynin's Cable to the Soviet Foreign Ministry, 1or2tO1962 Rusk:

Western Hemisphere are ready to give the same assurances—the US government is certain of this.”

“And what about Turkey?” I asked R. Kennedy.

“If that is the only obstacle to achieving the regulation I mentioned earlier, then the president doesn’t see any unsurmountable difficulties in resolving this issue,” replied R. Kennedy. “The greatest difficulty for the president is the public discussion of the issue of Turkey. Formally the deployment of missile bases in Turkey was done by a special decision of the NATO Council. To announce now a unilateral decision by the president of the USA to withdraw missile bases from Turkey—this would damage the entire structure of NATO and the US position as the leader of NATO, where, as the Soviet government knows very well, there are many arguments. In short, if such a decision were announced now it would seriously tear apart NATO.”

“However, President Kennedy is ready to come to agree on that question with N.S. Khrushchev, too. I think that in order to withdraw these bases from Turkey,” R. Kennedy said, “we need 4-5 months. This is the minimal amount of time necessary for the US government to do this, taking into account the procedures that exist within the NATO framework. On the whole Turkey issue,” R. Kennedy added, “if Premier N.S. Khrushchev agrees with what I’ve said, we can continue to exchange opinions between him and the president, using him, R. Kennedy and the Soviet ambassador. “However, the president can’t say anything public in this regard about Turkey,” R. Kennedy said again. R. Kennedy then warned that his comments about Turkey are extremely confidential; besides him and his brother, only 2-3 people know about it in Washington.

“That’s all that he asked me to pass on to N.S. Khrushchev,” R. Kennedy said in conclusion. “The president also asked N.S. Khrushchev to give him an answer (through the Soviet ambassador and R. Kennedy) if possible within the next day (Sunday) on these thoughts in order to have a business-like, clear answer in principle. [He asked him] not to get into a wordy discussion, which might drag things out. The current serious situation, unfortunately, is such that there is very little time to resolve this whole issue. Unfortunately, events are developing too quickly. The request for a reply tomorrow,” stressed R. Kennedy, “is just that—a request, and not an ultimatum. The president hopes that the head of the Soviet government will understand him correctly.”

I noted that it went without saying that the Soviet government would not accept any ultimatums and it was good that the American government realized that. I also reminded him of N.S. Khrushchev’s appeal in his last letter to the president to demonstrate state wisdom in resolv-

ing this question. Then I told R. Kennedy that the president’s thoughts would be brought to the attention of the head of the Soviet government. I also said that I would contact him as soon as there was a reply. In this regard, R. Kennedy gave me a number of a direct telephone line to the White House.

In the course of the conversation, R. Kennedy noted that he knew about the conversation that television commentator Scali had yesterday with an Embassy adviser on possible ways to regulate the Cuban conflict [one-and-a-half lines whited out]

I should say that during our meeting R. Kennedy was very upset; in any case, I’ve never seen him like this before. True, about twice he tried to return to the topic of “deception,” (that he talked about so persistently during our previous meeting), but he did so in passing and without any edge to it. He didn’t even try to get into fights on various subjects, as he usually does, and only persistently returned to one topic: time is of the essence and we shouldn’t miss the chance.

After meeting with me he immediately went to see the president, with whom, as R. Kennedy said, he spends almost all his time now.

27/X-62 A. DOBRYNIN

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, translation from copy provided by NHK, in Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, *We All Lost the Cold War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), appendix, pp. 523-526, with minor revisions.]

* * * * *

**Lebow and Stein comment,
We All Lost the Cold War (excerpt):**

The cable testifies to the concern of John and Robert Kennedy that military action would trigger runaway escalation. Robert Kennedy told Dobrynin of his government’s determination to ensure the removal of the Soviet missiles in Cuba, and his belief that the Soviet Union “will undoubtedly respond with the same against us, somewhere in Europe.” Such an admission seems illogical if the administration was using the threat of force to compel the Soviet Union to withdraw its missiles from Cuba. It significantly raised the expected cost to the United States of an attack against the missiles, thereby weakening the credibility of the American threat. To maintain or enhance that credibility, Kennedy would have had to discount the probability of Soviet retaliation to Dobrynin. That nobody in the government was certain of Khrushchev’s response makes Kennedy’s statement all the more remarkable.

It is possible that Dobrynin misquoted Robert Kennedy. However, the Soviet ambassador was a careful and responsible diplomat. At the

very least, Kennedy suggested that he thought that Soviet retaliation was likely. Such an admission was still damaging to compellence. It seems likely that Kennedy was trying to establish the basis for a more cooperative approach to crisis resolution. His brother, he made clear, was under enormous pressure from a coterie of generals and civilian officials who were “itching for a fight.” This also was a remarkable admission for the attorney general to make. The pressure on the president to attack Cuba, as Kennedy explained at the beginning of the meeting, had been greatly intensified by the destruction of an unarmed American reconnaissance plane. The president did not want to use force, in part because he recognized the terrible consequences of escalation, and was therefore requesting Soviet assistance to make it unnecessary.

This interpretation is supported by the president’s willingness to remove the Jupiter missiles as a *quid pro quo* for the withdrawal of missiles in Cuba, and his brother’s frank confession that the only obstacle to dismantling the Jupiters were political. “Public discussion” of a missile exchange would damage the United States’ position in NATO. For this reason, Kennedy revealed, “besides himself and his brother, only 2-3 people know about it in Washington.” Khrushchev would have to cooperate with the administration to keep the American concession a secret.

Most extraordinary of all is the apparent agreement between Dobrynin and Kennedy to treat Kennedy’s de facto ultimatum as “a request, and not an ultimatum.” This was a deliberate attempt to defuse as much as possible the hostility that Kennedy’s request for an answer by the next day was likely to provoke in Moscow. So too was Dobrynin’s next sentence: “I noted that it went without saying that the Soviet government would not accept any ultimatum and it was good that the American government realized that.”

Prior meetings between Dobrynin and Kennedy had sometimes degenerated into shouting matches. On this occasion, Dobrynin indicates, the attorney general kept his emotions in check and took the ambassador into his confidence in an attempt to cooperate on the resolution of the crisis. This two-pronged strategy succeeded where compellence alone might have failed. It gave Khrushchev positive incentives to remove the Soviet missiles and reduced the emotional cost to him of the withdrawal. He responded as Kennedy and Dobrynin had hoped.

a portion of the speech, and made it available to us for publication.¹ That portion concerns the Missile Crisis, which Cubans call the October Crisis. The statement not only constitutes President Castro's most extensive remarks about the 1962 confrontation, but also provides his reflection on the episode only five years after it occurred.² This document is usefully read in conjunction with notes taken by the Soviet ambassador to Cuba, Aleksandr Alekseev, during meetings immediately after the crisis between Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan and Cuba's principal leaders. Translated excerpts from both documents are printed below. Taken together, the documents provide a deeper understanding of the nature and roots of the Cuban-Soviet relationship between the crisis and the August 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Those six years were the defining moments of both the Cuban revolution and the remaining 23 years of the Cuban-Soviet relationship. It is notable, then, that just eight months prior to the 1968 invasion, Castro provided his party's leadership with such an extensive review of Cuban-Soviet ties, starting with the Missile Crisis. To

the 27th). In that letter, the Cuban leader predicted that U.S. military strikes, and conceivably an invasion, were likely to occur in the next 24 to 72 hours (that is, possibly 10-12 hours after the Kremlin received the letter). In order to protect Cuba, Mikoyan contended, the Soviet Union had to act swiftly, without consulting Cuba. But, Castro retorted, the formula worked out between Kennedy and Khrushchev seemed to be based on a secret letter the Soviet leader had sent to the U.S. president on October 26, prior to receiving the Cuban leader's assessment.¹⁰ Cuba thus felt aggrieved at being ignored.

Second, Castro was angry over the Kennedy-Khrushchev agreement itself. Why, he demanded of Mikoyan, did the Soviets not extract anything more substantial from the United States that would increase Cuban security and defend Cuba's honor? On October 28, the Cuban leader had articulated five points that he stated should have been the basis of an agreement, including a cessation of U.S. overflights and a withdrawal from Guantanamo Naval Base.¹¹ At a minimum he expected that the Soviets could have forced the United States to meet with Cuba to discuss the five points face to face. That would have at least recognized Cuban sovereignty. Instead, the Soviets seemed oblivious to Cuban sovereignty, even agreeing to an internationally sponsored inspection of the dismantling of the missiles on Cuban soil without first asking Cuba's permission.

Third, there was the issue of Cuba's vulnerability, which had several elements. The Cuban leadership interpreted the agreement as a Soviet capitulation to U.S. threats, and correctly understood at the time what was made explicit only twenty years later: that the Soviet Union was unwilling ultimately to put itself at risk to protect Cuba.¹² "We realized," Castro said to the Central Committee, "how alone we would be in the event of a war." In the same vein, he described the Soviet decision to remove all but 3,000 of its 42,000 military personnel from Cuba as "a freely granted concession to top off the concession of the withdrawal of the strategic missiles."

The Cubans saw the Soviet soldiers more as a deterrent to potential U.S. aggression—a kind of tripwire that would involve the Soviet Union in a Cuban-U.S. conflict—than as a necessary military support. Cuba had more than 100,000 soldiers under arms

and an even greater number in militias. But Cuban leaders did want to retain other weaponry that the United States was demanding the Soviet Union withdraw. Most important were IL-28 bombers, which were obsolete but capable of carrying a nuclear payload. Castro explained in 1968 that

they were useful planes; it is possible that had we possessed IL-28s, the Central American bases [from which Cuban exiles were launching Mongoose attacks] might not have been organized, not because we would have bombed the bases, but because of their fear that we might.

Mikoyan recognized their importance. On November 5, Mikoyan told the Cuban leadership that "Americans are trying to make broader the list of weapons for evacuation. Such attempts have already been made, but we'll not allow them to do so."¹³

"To hell with the imperialists!" Castro approvingly recalled Mikoyan saying, if they added more demands. Nevertheless, Castro lamented in 1968, "some 24, or at most 48 hours later...Mikoyan arrived bearing the sad news that the IL-28 planes would also have to be returned."¹⁴ (Castro's memory may be in error here: according to the declassified Soviet records of the Mikoyan-Castro conversations, Mikoyan conveyed Moscow's decision to withdraw the bomber's, to Castro's evident fury, in a meeting on November 12.¹⁵) From the Cuban perspective, Cuba was even more vulnerable than before the Missile Crisis because the hollowness of Soviet protection was exposed and key weaponry was being taken away.

Castro also was concerned that the U.S.-Soviet accord would weaken Cuba internally and encourage counter-revolution and perhaps challenges to his leadership. He remarked to Mikoyan on 3 November 1962:

All of this seemed to our people to be a step backward, a retreat. It turns out that we must accept inspections, accept the U.S. right to determine what kinds of weapons we can use....Cuba is a young developing country. Our people are very impulsive. The moral factor has a special significance in our country. We were afraid that these decisions could provoke a breach in the people's unity....

Finally, Cuba perceived it was nothing more than a pawn in Soviet calculations. Castro's comments to Mikoyan about this confuse the sequence of events, but the source of the anger and disillusionment is clear. He said on November 3:

And suddenly came the report of the American agency UPI that "the Soviet premier has given orders to Soviet personnel to dismantle missile launchers and return them to the USSR." Our people could not believe that report. It caused deep confusion. People didn't understand the way that the issue was structured—the possibility of removing missile armaments from Cuba if the U.S. liquidated its bases in Turkey.

In 1992, the Cuban leader intimated that this initial confusion hardened into anger during his six-week trip to the Soviet Union, in early 1963, after Khrushchev inadvertently informed Castro that there had been a secret understanding between the United States and Soviet Union for the removal of U.S. missiles from Turkey. This seemed to confirm his suspicion that the protection of Cuba was merely a pretext for the Soviet goal of enhancing its own security.¹⁶ Here were the seeds of true discontent.

The lessons were clear to Castro, and these were what he attempted to convey to the Central Committee in 1968. The Soviet Union, which casually trampled on Cuban sovereignty and negotiated away Cuba's security, could not be trusted to look after Cuba's "national interests." Consequently, Cuba had to be vigilant in protecting itself and in maintaining its independence.

Significance of the January 1968 Speech

Castro's 12-hour speech came at the conclusion of the first meeting of the Central Committee since the Cuban Communist Party was founded in October 1965. The main purpose of the session was to conduct a "trial" of 37 members of the party, who were labelled the "micro-faction." Though the designation "micro" was intended to diminish their importance, there was little doubt that the attack against them was filled with high drama and potentially high stakes for the Cuban revolution.

The meeting began on January 23, and

nated trading bloc of socialist countries.

The January 1968 speech, then, appears to have given the Cuban leadership the freedom to choose a closer relationship with the Soviet Union. By asserting Cuban independence, Castro could accept the kind of ties that would have appeared to make Cuba less independent.

It is impossible to know whether this sort of calculation prompted his speech. In January 1968, the Cuban leadership may not have had a clear sense of where they were taking their country. The internal debate during the following two or three months—which undoubtedly engendered the March closure of small businesses—proved to be critical for the future direction of the Cuban revolution.

With hindsight, it seems that Cuba had few options left. It had experienced a major rift with China by 1966. The October 1967 death of Guevara in Bolivia convinced several Cuban leaders that armed struggle was not going to be a viable means of building revolutionary alliances in Latin America. While the Soviet Union continued to trade with Cuba despite its fierce independence, Kosygin's visit may have been a warning to Castro that the Soviet Union would not give Cuba any more rope with which to wander away from the fold. Indeed, Soviet technicians were recalled during the spring of 1968.²⁹

These factors thus impelled Cuba toward a rapprochement with the Soviet Union, and the decision to do so coincided with the micro-faction trial and Castro's speech. In choosing to join the fold, Cuba would try to do it on its own terms, determined to protect its sovereignty and to be the principal guardian of its national interest. That determination clearly grew out of its experiences during the Missile Crisis and in the prior five years of tense relations with the Soviet Union. It is in understanding these terms with which Cuba established its ties to the Soviet Union that the January 1968 speech makes an important contribution to the history of the Cold War.

1. The full text of the Missile Crisis portion of the speech will be published in James G. Blight and Philip Brenner, *The October Crisis: Fidel Castro, Nuclear Missiles, and Cuban-Soviet Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming).

2. At the time, Castro was First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba and Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban Armed Forces. He was referred to as Commander Castro. Today he is also President of

Cuba.

3. Much of the information has been derived from two major conferences—held in Moscow in 1989 and in Havana in 1992—which brought together former policymakers and scholars from the United States, Soviet Union and Cuba, and included President Castro, as well as from documents declassified through the efforts of the National Security Archive. See James G. Blight and David A. Welch, *On the Brink: Americans and Soviets Reexamine the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2d ed.

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**The October Crisis:
Excerpts of a Speech by Fidel Castro
[Translated from Spanish by the Cuban
Council of State]**

**MEETING OF THE
CENTRAL COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CUBA
PALACE OF THE REVOLUTION
HAVANA
JANUARY 26, 1968
YEAR OF THE HEROIC GUERRILLA**

MORNING SESSION

COMMANDER FIDEL CASTRO: In the early hours of [this] morning we stopped while on the topic of the reply sent to the Soviet Government in response to their letter attempting to find justifications in alleged alarms, and purporting insinuations of a nuclear strike in the sense that we had advised the USSR to attack the United States.¹

These issues were made perfectly clear in that letter. Later there was another long letter containing the same points of view, and though couched in more diplomatic terms, so to speak, answering each of the items in Khrushchev's letter one by one.²

At that time, we also received Mikoyan's visit. Mikoyan's visit was also taken down....No, Mikoyan's visit was not taken down in shorthand; there were notes on Mikoyan's visit. U Thant's visit was the one that was taken down in shorthand. It is a real pity that the discussions with Mikoyan were not taken down in shorthand, because they were bitter; some of the incidents in the meeting were anecdotal.

Initially, after we explained to him our standpoints, we had him clarify what was going to happen with the IL-28 planes, and he vouched

tion, in which they depicted the planes flying above them, the Yanquis sticking their tongues out at them, and their planes and guns covered with cobwebs. And we realized once again to what extent the men who were supposed to be very experienced in struggling against the imperialists were actually totally oblivious to imperialist mentality, revolutionary mentality, our people's mentality, and the ultra-demoralizing effects of such a passive—more than passive, cowardly—attitude.

So we warned Mikoyan that we were going to open fire on the low-flying planes. We even did him that favor, since they still had the ground-to-air missiles and we were interested in preserving them. We visited some emplacements and asked that they be moved given that they were not going to shoot and we did not want them destroyed, because we were planning to open fire on the planes.

We recall those days because of the bitter decisions that had to be made.

1. [Ed. note: Castro is here alluding to his exchange of correspondence with Khrushchev of 26-31 October 1962 (esp. Castro's letters of October 26 and 31 and Khrushchev's letter of October 30), first released by the Cuban government and published in the Cuban Communist Party newspaper *Granma* on 23 November 1990, and published as an appendix to James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, *Cuba On the Brink: Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon, 1993, 474-91.)

2. [Ed. note: It is not clear what lengthy letter Castro is referring to here, or whether it has been made available to researchers: a lengthy letter reviewing the crisis and its impact on Soviet-Cuban relations, dated 31 January 1963, from Khrushchev to Castro was released at the 1992 Havana conference.]

3. Soviet Deputy Premier Anastas Mikoyan arrived in Havana on 2 November 1962. The first meeting with the Cuban leader was on November 3. By the account here, Mikoyan notified the Cubans on about November 5 or 6 that the IL-28s would be removed. Declassified contemporary documents, however, including Kennedy-Khrushchev correspondence and Castro-Mikoyan conversation minutes, suggest that Mikoyan informed Castro about Moscow's acquiescence to Kennedy's demand to remove the IL-28s only on November 12.

4. It is not clear to what Castro is referring. Central American bases were used for training Cuban exiles in 1960 and 1961, and for launching the Bay of Pigs invasion. There is evidence that plans also were made for creating a Nicaraguan and Costa Rican base, but there is not clear evidence on whether they were used. See Fabian Escalante Font, *Cuba: la guerra secreta de la CIA* (Havana: Editorial Capitán San Luis, 1993), 180; Warren Hinckle and William Turner, *Deadly Secrets* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 1992), 165-166.

5. In fact, U.S. estimates were never more than half of that number. See Dino A. Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball: The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Random House, 1991), 308. Also see "'Soviet Military Buildup in Cuba,' 21 October, 1962," in Mary S. McAuliffe, ed., *CIA Documents on the Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962* (Washington: Central Intelligence Agency, 1992; HRP 92-9), 258.

After discussing all the logistical and organizational problems related to the project, the Cuban leader began to recall those troubled days of October 1962 when the fate of the humanity was played out in the game between Moscow, Washington, and Havana. And even though Castro repeatedly spoke on this topic later, that conversation contained a series of statements and judgments that shed some light on the development and outcome of the 1962 crisis, and on Fidel Castro's perspective on it:



parity in the cheapest way. When the Soviet

ognition of all Latin America as a U.S. sphere of influence, and discouraged nationalistic “petit bourgeoisie” from allying with radical forces against the omnipotent Gringos from *El Norte*. “It seems to me,” concluded Che, “... that one should expect a decline of the revolutionary movement in Latin America.” He also stressed that in the Soviet handling of the missile crisis had already produced “a crack” in the “unity of the socialist camp.” Both he and Mikoyan knew that this meant factional splits in many radical groupings in Latin America and a shift of some of them to the PRC’s wing.

In response, Mikoyan reminded the Cubans of Nikolai Bukharin, a young Bolshevik (“although he was repressed, I think he was a good person”) who in 1918 also preferred to promote world revolution even at a risk of sacrificing Soviet power in Russia. “We practically had no armed forces, but those comrades [like Bukharin] wanted to die heroically, reject Soviet power.” “Study Lenin,” he lectured the Cubans. “One cannot live in shame, but one should not allow the enemy to destroy oneself. There is an outcome in the art of diplomacy.” Kremlin apparatchiks would repeat this same litany of prudence time and again, when they had to deal with radical regimes in the Third World later in the 1960s and 1970s.

Mikoyan reminded the Cubans that since 1961, Soviet-Cuban economic relations were trade in name only: the Cubans were getting everything, including weapons, free of charge. “We do not pursue any commercial or national interests in Cuba,” he told Castro. “We are guided exclusively by the interests of internationalism.”¹⁹ He pointed out to Castro that the Kremlin, aware of the American “plan to strangle Cuba economically,” had “without any requests from your side” decided “to supply to you armaments, and in part military equipment for free.” The Soviets had also covered the Cuban balance of payment (\$100 million) “in order to foil the Kennedy plan, designed to detonate Cuba from within.”²⁰ If the American blockade of Cuba continued, Mikoyan warned, “then the Soviet Union would not have enough strength to render assistance, and the Cuban government would fall.”²¹

Mikoyan and Khrushchev evidently expected that these pragmatic arguments would carry the day with the Cuban leadership, and that the danger of a pro-Beijing reorienta-

tion of Latin American revolutionary movement could be stemmed by generous Soviet assistance.

For historians of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the most interesting parts of the documents are where Mikoyan gave the Cubans his version of the recent dramatic events. Though this version was obviously tailored to Cuban sentiments and to Mikoyan’s specific tasks, there is considerable overlap, sometimes almost verbatim, between Mikoyan’s story and the story later told by Khrushchev in his memoirs.²² So all the more intriguing and credible are details that are missing in the Khrushchev’s version. First, the documents hint at what possible countermeasures the Kremlin contemplated against the U.S. attack against Cuba. The conclusions must have been bleak, as he explained to Castro on November 4. “We could not retaliate by a blockade of an American base, for instance, in Turkey, since we do not have another outlet into the Mediterranean. We could not undertake similar steps in Norway, nor in England, nor in Japan. We do not have sufficient capabilities for a counter-blockade.”

Mikoyan and Khrushchev (in his letters to Castro before and after the visit) sang the same tune when they explained to the Cubans the reasons for Soviet secrecy and their misplaced hopes to camouflage the missiles. The most eyebrow-raising aspect of Mikoyan’s explanation deals with the question of Cuban nuclear weapons. “We do not have sufficient capabilities for a counter-blockade.”

after the Congressional elections. As Mikoyan related to the Cubans, "Through confidential channels Kennedy addressed a request to N.S. Khrushchev that he would not aggravate the situation until after the Congressional elections and would not set out [immediately] then to solve the Berlin issue. We responded that we were ready to wait until the end of the elections, but right afterwards would proceed to the solution of the Berlin question. When the Americans learned about the transportation of strategic weapons into Cuba, they themselves began to get loud about Berlin. Both sides were talking about the Berlin crisis, but simultaneously believed that the crux of their policy in the present moment was in Cuba."

Did Mikoyan's mission prevent a Soviet-Cuban split? There is no categorical answer to this question. Castro had accepted Soviet assistance, but not Soviet arguments. The Cuban leader and his comrades thought primarily of the revolutionary "legitimacy" of their regime in Latin America. After the Cuban missile crisis, the "honeymoon" in Soviet-Cuban relations ended and was transformed into a marriage of convenience. This had both immediate and long-term consequences. For instance, Mikoyan's trip had a direct impact on Khrushchev's ongoing correspondence with Kennedy. In his letter of November 22, the Chairman admonished the U.S. president to put himself into Castro's shoes, "to assess and understand correctly the situation, and if you like psychological state, of the leaders of Cuba... and this striving [for independence] must be respected."²⁵ In all probability, Khrushchev addressed these words not so much to Kennedy (who had not the slightest desire to heed them), but to Castro, who on November 3 received copies of all previous Khrushchev-Kennedy correspondence on the settlement of the cri-

defense...[Ellipsis in original.]

And suddenly—concessions...[Ellipsis in original.]

Concessions on the part of the Soviet Union produced a sense of oppressiveness. Psychologically our people were not prepared for that. A feeling of deep disappointment, bitterness and pain has appeared, as if we were deprived of not only the missiles, but of the very symbol of solidarity. Reports of missile launchers being dismantled and returned to the USSR at first seemed to our people to be an insolent lie. You know, the Cuban people were not aware of the agreement, were not aware that the missiles still belonged to the Soviet side. The Cuban people did not conceive of the juridical status of these weapons. They had become accustomed to the fact that the Soviet Union gave us weapons and that they became our property.

And suddenly came the report of the American [news] agency UPI that “the Soviet premier has given orders to Soviet personnel to dismantle missile launchers and return them to the USSR.” Our people could not believe that report. It caused deep confusion. People didn’t understand the way that the issue was structured—the possibility of removing missile armaments from Cuba if the USA liquidated its bases in Turkey.

I was saying, Fidel Castro continued, that in the post-revolutionary years we have carried out much ideological work to prepare people for understanding socialist ideas, marxist ideas. These ideas today are deeply rooted. Our people admire the policies of the Soviet government, learn from the Soviet people to whom they are deeply thankful for invaluable help and support. But at that difficult moment our people felt as if they had lost their way. Reports on 28 October that N.S.

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tion that the threat of aggression was so critical, that there was no time for consultations.

...

Then for half an hour A.I. Mikoyan discussed the issues about which Fidel Castro had talked, but these explanations were interrupted by an incoming report about the death of Mikoyan's wife. The transcript of this part of the conversation will be transmitted with the notes of the next conversation.

3.XI.62 ALEKSEEV

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, obtained and translated by NHK television, copy provided by Philip Brenner; translation by Vladimir Zaemsky.]

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**Document II:
"It was necessary to use the art of diplomacy"
— The Second Castro-Mikoyan Conversation,
4 November 1962**

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

A.I. MIKOYAN with Fidel CASTRO, [Cuban President] Oswaldo DORTICOS TORRADO, [Defense Minister] Raul CASTRO, Ernesto GUEVARA, Emilio ARAGONES and Carlos Rafael RODRIGUEZ

4 November 1962

A.I. MIKOYAN transmitted to the Cuban leaders cordial fraternal regards on behalf of the Presidium of the CC CPSU and N.S. Khrushchev. He said that the Central Committee of the CPSU feels admiration and respect toward Cuban leaders, who from the very beginning of their struggle demonstrated courage and fearlessness, confidence in revolutionary victory in Cuba, readiness to devote all their forces to the struggle. We are proud of the victory achieved by the Cuban revolution against interventionists on Playa Giron [Giron Beach, Bay of Pigs]. Cuban revolutionaries demonstrated such a potent spirit of resistance that it inspires admiration and proves that the Cubans are always ready to fight until victory is achieved. Cuban leaders have shown great courage, intrepidity, and firmness in dangerous days. The CC CPSU admires the readiness of the Cuban people to stand up. We trust Cuban leaders as we do ourselves.

In the course of the Cuban events our party and government were acting having in mind to do whatever was necessary to make [the situation] better for Cuba. When Ambassador Alekseev informed [us] about the opinion of comrade Fidel Castro, that there are some differences between our parties, we were very pained. Immediately all

the leadership held a meeting. For the question of Cuba worries us a lot. We felt it necessary to re-establish mutual trust because trust is the basis of everything, the basis of really fraternal relations. We understood that no correspondence can suffice to explain completely the misunderstanding of those days. Therefore the CC CPSU decided to send me to Cuba in order to explain to our friends the Soviet position and to inform them on other subjects that may be of interest to them. We know, - Mikoyan continued, - that if we explain everything frankly then you, our brothers, will understand us. Comrade Mikoyan made the observation that he, naturally, had no intention to put pressure [on Cuba], that his task was to explain our position. Being acquainted with the Cuban comrades, - A.I. Mikoyan said, - I'm confident that they will agree with it. It is certainly possible that even after our explanations there will remain some issues about which we shall still have different points of view. Our task is to preserve mutual trust which is needed for really friendly relations with Cuba, for the future of Cuba and the USSR and the whole world revolutionary movement.

Yesterday comrade Fidel Castro explained very frankly and in detail that the Cuban people had not understood everything regarding the most

ion. The American press spreads a lot of conjectures regarding the aim of my trip to Cuba. They are writing that I went to Havana allegedly in order to apply pressure on Cuban leaders, in order to “pacify” them, as [U.S. negotiator John] McCloy had stated to the American newspapers. About my conversation with McCloy I can tell you in detail afterward, but first of all I would like to answer the main questions.

As I have already stated before my departure from New York, the Soviet government was supporting the five points put forward by comrade Fidel Castro. The demand on liquidation of the US Guantanamo base is a just and correct demand. I had no plans to speak publicly in New York, but when I read in the American press the speculation about the objectives of my trip, I decided to voice that statement in order to make my position completely clear. Using radio, American propaganda is trying to embroil Cuba [in conflict] with the Soviet Union, is trying to sting Cubans to the quick. It’s natural. Because the enemy can’t behave differently. He always acts like this. But the enemy must be repulsed.

By decision of the CC CPSU, my task includes explaining our position to Cuban leaders within my abilities and capacities, so that no doubts are left. We also want to discuss new problems that arise in front of our two countries. It is not a part of my task at all to put pressure on Cuban leaders. That is an impudent conjecture of American propaganda. Our interests are united. We are marxist-leninists and we are trying to achieve common objectives. We discussed the current situation at the CC CPSU and came to a decision that there was no complete relaxation of tensions yet.

On the military side we can observe a considerable decrease in danger. I can add for myself that in essence currently the danger has abated.

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tance, is why have we decided to withdraw the strategic missiles from the Cuban territory. Apparently you agree that this is the main question. If there is no understanding over this issue, it is difficult to comprehend other questions.

Being in Moscow I did not realize that this question would be asked. Previously it had not arisen.

The fate of the Cuban revolution has always been important for us, especially beginning from

Nevertheless, the Americans managed to take a photo of the missiles in the firing position. Kennedy didn't want to speak about Soviet missiles in Cuba until the end of the Congressional elections. He did not want to strain relations. But two Republican senators [a clear reference to Sens. Kenneth Keating of New York and Everett Dirksen of Illinois—ed.] learned about the fact of the strategic missiles placed in Cuba and therefore Kennedy hastened to take the initiative into his hands, or else he would be hardpressed. We had no information on how he intended to act.

The United States of America organized maneuvers in the area of Vieques Island [in the Caribbean], naming them "Ortsac," i.e., Castro, if you read it backwards. But those maneuvers could appear to be not an exercise, but a sea cover for a strong blow against Cuba. At that moment, when Kennedy made a statement and announced

All of this could take more than 10 hours and such a consultation would not have made sense by that time. It would be too late. It could happen in such a way, that the answer would be received, but Cuba itself would have ceased to exist, a war would have been unleashed. It was a critical moment. We thought our Cuban friends would understand us. Moreover we knew from the cable from Fidel Castro that the Cuban leadership was aware of the direct threat of assault. At that moment the main objective consisted of preventing an attack. We thought, the Cuban comrades would understand us. Therefore, we made the decision to act immediately, but without paying due attention to the psychological factor, about which comrade Fidel Castro spoke here.

Regarding the possibility of a truce at that moment, mentioned by the Cuban comrades, the Americans would not take such a step in those conditions. There are a lot of revanchists in the Pentagon, and Kennedy is a deterrent element with respect to them. The Americans would have burst into Cuba. We had no time. Certainly, it was a decision that created some difficulties for you, the Cuban people.

Let us compare the situation at the present time and the situation before the crisis. Before the crisis the Americans were preparing an intervention against Cuba. Now they have committed themselves not to attack Cuba. It is a great success. Certainly, the events also had negative consequences, especially as American propaganda was trying suit their own ends by using some facts and distorting them. But that is inevitable. These are the costs of events that have crucial importance. Our task is to eliminate the negative consequences of the recent events.

Comrade Dorticos is correct when he asks why did we give our consent to Kennedy's message on non-aggression against Cuba without the concordance of the Cuban government. But it was exactly our consent (and nothing else) that ensured some truce for a certain time.

could not be present on the American continent in whatever form. They know about the Soviet military in Cuba, but do not speak of the Monroe doctrine.

Cuba found itself in the center of international political events. The United Nations Organization is engaged in the Cuban issue. U Thant practically backs Cuba and comes out against the USA policy. And you remember that previously it was not possible to obtain support for Cuba at the UN. World public opinion has been mobilized and even some nations who were previously against Cuba.

the messages we had the possibility to send them quickly to Cuba, but we could not wait for an answer because it would take a lot of time to encode, decipher, translate, and transmit them.

Acting in this way, we were proceeding from our conviction that the most important objective in that situation was to prevent an attack against Cuba. I would like to underline that our proposals to dismantle the strategic missiles and to liquidate the American bases in Turkey had been advanced before receiving the letter from comrade Fidel Castro of 27 October. The order for the dismantling of the strategic missiles and their evacuation was given after we had received the letter from Kennedy of 27 October and the letter from Fidel Castro. In our message of 28 October, as you have noted, the demand for the liquidation of bases in Turkey was no longer suggested. We did this because we were afraid that in spite of our proposal of 27 October the American imperialists could assault Cuba. We had nothing else to do but to work on the main task—to prevent an attack against Cuba, believing that our Cuban friends would understand the correctness of our actions, although the normal procedure of coordination had not been observed.

The question was that there were 24 hours left before an assault against Cuba. It must be taken into consideration that we had only a few [literally, “counted”—ed.] hours at our disposal and we could not act other than we did. And there are results: an attack against Cuba is prevented, the peace is preserved. However you are right that the procedure of consultations, which is possible under normal circumstances, was not followed.

F. CASTRO. I would like to respond to comrade Mikoyan.

We have listened with great attention to the information and explanations offered by comrade Mikoyan. Undoubtedly all those explanations are very valuable because they help us to understand better the course of events. We are thankful for the desire to explain everything to us, for the efforts undertaken in this regard. The arguments, that the strategic missiles after being discovered by the enemy practically lost whatever military significance or their significance becomes extremely small, also cause no doubts among us.

We are grateful for all these explanations and do understand, that the intentions of the Soviet government cannot be assessed only on the grounds of an analysis of the most recent developments, especially as the atmosphere is rapidly changing and new situations are created. The totality of adopted decisions, which became the basis for supplying strategic weapons and the signing of [the Soviet-Cuban—ed.] agreement, first of all into consideration. It was supno(aor sr.pments, especially aD 0.122y of adounds hhe intnt,)Tj 0 being56ons are v strategic missiles and

the (pandly hiva)Eg 0ings 0.22 and they as in the -J] 22T 85 T 6083 Tw v 0 hcb pp h is nse 0 udf (pa the acheliened whie)Tj 0 -1.167 TD 0.028 Tws, wpcouer [0429 TwitTp ut beer militaradvictagtTpi It wair eactically. We a 0 -1.222 TD -0.136 T(psychoaogcticalimpffoictuestre c 0iuggabl for tt-)Tj 0 -1.167 TD 011 0

word your statement to the CC CPSU and I'm
sure that it will produce gladness on the part of

stand your reaction to my proposal.

Our Central Committee entrusted me to explain in detail the Soviet position on all the issues that are of interest to the Cuban comrades, entrusted me neither to impose our opinion, nor pressure you in order to obtain consent for inspection of the Cuban territory.

F. CASTRO. But verification would be carried out from the Cuban territory.

A.I. MIKOYAN. No, it could be carried out only aboard the ships. For that purpose Soviet and neutral country ships could be used. The UN representatives could live and sleep aboard those steamers.

F. CASTRO. Such a verification in the ports does not differ from control on ships on open sea.

A.I. MIKOYAN. There is no doubt that a verification can be carried out on open sea too, but does not bear relation to Cuba.

O. DORTICOS. It seems to me that now we should interrupt our work. We can agree upon further meetings through Ambassador Alekseev.

Ambassador Alekseev was also present on the Soviet side.

Recorded by V. Tikhmenev
[signature]

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, obtained and translated by NHK television, copy provided by Philip Brenner; translation (by Aleksandr Zaemsky) has been slightly revised.]

* * * * *

Document IV:

**“The USA wanted to destroy us physically,
but the Soviet Union with Khrushchev’s
letter destroyed us legally”—
Mikoyan’s Meeting with Cuban Leaders,
5 November 1962 (evening)**

Copy

Top Secret[letised.]

given document.

Comrade Kuznetsov, who is located in New

acts not only from its own territory. This is a very important point for Cuba.

DORTICOS. It is necessary to work on the editing of this document. We are not prepared for this today. Here, it is necessary to think about the form, and also to work on the editing of this document, although we are essentially in agreement with this document and understand how important it is to achieve success. We can work

from the air.

A.I. MIKOYAN. You, Comrade Dorticos, possess trustworthy information. We told U Thant that it would be good if the Security Council were convened after the elections. I already said that when we withdraw the strategic missiles and present evidence of that fact, we will be able to begin to speak about something else.

Maybe tomorrow in the first half of the day the comrades will work on editing the document, and after lunch we will organize an exchange of opinions.

I would also like to propose that we not publish a report about every meeting. It seems to me that there is no point in doing this today, and in general it would make sense for us to come to an agreement about this.

DORTICOS agrees with Comrade Mikoyan's proposal.

A.I. MIKOYAN. When we complete the evacuation of the missiles, many issues will be seen in a different light. While we still have not withdrawn them, we must maintain a different line. For that, 5-6 days are necessary. It is necessary to hold the line; otherwise they will accuse us of treachery. After we complete the evacuation, we will be able to adamantly oppose overflights, the quarantine, verification by the Red Cross, violations of airspace. At that moment the correlation of forces will change.

It is necessary to get the UN on our side. We must achieve more than was promised in Kennedy's letter. We mustn't underestimate the value of diplomatic means of struggle. They are very important in periods when there is no war. It is important to know how to use the diplomatic arts, displaying at the same time both firmness and flexibility.

E. GUEVARA. I would like to tell you, Comrade Mikoyan, that, sincerely speaking, as a consequence of the most recent events an extremely complicated situation has been created in Latin America. Many communists who represent other Latin American parties, and also revolutionary divisions like the Front for People's Action in Chile, are wavering. They are dismayed [*obeskurazheni*] by the actions of the Soviet Union. A number of divisions have broken up. New groups are springing up, fractions are springing up. The thing is, we are deeply convinced of the possibility of seizing power in a number of Latin American countries, and practice shows that it is possible not only to seize it, but also to hold power in a range of countries, taking into account practical experience. Unfortunately, many Latin American groups believe that in the political acts of the Soviet Union during the recent events there are contained two serious errors. First, the exchange [the proposal to swap

Soviet missiles in Cuba for U.S. missiles in Turkey—ed.], and second, the open concession. It seems to me that this bears objective witness to the fact that we can now expect the decline of the revolutionary movement in Latin America, which in the recent period had been greatly strengthened. I have expressed my personal opinion, but I have spoken entirely sincerely.

A.I. MIKOYAN. Of course, it is necessary to speak sincerely. It is better to go to sleep than to hear insincere speeches.

E. GUEVARA. I also think so. Cuba is a country in which the interests of both camps meet head on. Cuba is a peace-loving country. However, during the recent events the USA managed to present itself in the eyes of public opinion as a peace-loving country which was exposing aggression from the USSR, demonstrating courage and achieving the liquidation of the Soviet base in Cuba. The Americans managed to portray the existence of Soviet missiles in Cuba as a manifestation of aggressive intentions from the Soviet Union. The USA, by achieving the withdrawal of Soviet missiles from Cuba, in a way received the right to forbid other countries from making bases available. Not only many revolutionaries think this way, but also representatives of the Front of People's Action in Chile and the representatives of several democratic movements.

In this, in my opinion, lies the crux of the recent events. Even in the context of all our respect for the Soviet Union, we believe that the decisions made by the Soviet Union were a mistake. I am saying this not for discussion's sake, but so that you, Comrade Mikoyan, would be conversant with this point of view.

C. RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ. Even before your arrival, Comrade Mikoyan, immediately after the famous decision of the Soviet government was made, comrades from the editorial board of the newspaper "Popular" phoned me and requested an interview. They wanted urgently to receive our declaration regarding the situation which had developed, since the representatives of the "third force" were actively opposing Soviet policy. You know that group, it is deputy Trias. I gave an interview, not very long, since though I had been informed about the basic points in the speech of Fidel Castro which should have taken place on November 1, I could not use them, and in conclusion I observed that the development of events in the coming days would show the significance of the decisions that had been made.

A.I. MIKOYAN. The meetings and conversations with Comrade Fidel Castro had for me very great significance. They helped me to understand more deeply the role were is-

the Caucasus, but much later). And so the International Committee accepted a resolution in which it was stated that the concession in Brest was shameful. The point of Soviet power is lost. The comrades accepted the resolution as if rejecting Soviet power itself. Lenin wrote about this resolution: monstrous. How is it possible for such a thought even to occur to a communist? But you know, at that time we practically had no armed forces, but those comrades wanted to die heroically, rejecting Soviet power.

will conclude with some observations about the legacy of the Cuban missile crisis for Warsaw Pact nuclear operations, a legacy that endured until the Pact itself collapsed in 1990-91.

“Lessons” of the Cuban Missile Crisis

Several features of the Cuban missile crisis were of direct relevance to subsequent Soviet nuclear deployments in Eastern Europe. The “lessons” that Soviet officials derived from the crisis were of course not the only factor (or even the most important factor) shaping the Warsaw Pact’s nuclear command structure, but they seem to have been of considerable influence, at least implicitly. Although Soviet leaders had been concerned well before the Cuban Missile Crisis about the difficulty of retaining secure control over nuclear weapons and about the danger of unauthorized actions, the crisis put these risks into a whole new light.⁸ By underscoring how easily control could be lost, the crisis inevitably bolstered Moscow’s determination to ensure strict centralized command over all nuclear operations, including nuclear operations conducted by the Warsaw Pact.

One of the most disconcerting lessons of the Cuban Missile Crisis from the Soviet perspective was the potential for nuclear weapons to be misused if the aims of local actors were not identical to Soviet goals. It is now known that at the height of the crisis Fidel Castro sent a top-secret cable to Moscow urging the Soviet Union to launch a nuclear strike against the United States if U.S. forces invaded Cuba.⁹ Castro apparently had been led to believe that the Soviet Union would be willing to go to war—and risk its own destruction—in defense of Cuba. Nikita Khrushchev’s response to Castro’s plea indicates that the Soviet leader had no intention of ordering the use of nuclear weapons, regardless of what happened to Cuba.

For Khrushchev, this episode was especially unnerving because he initially had given serious consideration to providing Castro with direct command over Soviet forces in Cuba, including the nuclear-capable Frog (“Luna”) missiles and Il-28 aircraft.¹⁰ (Only the medium-range SS-4 and SS-5 missiles would have been left under Moscow’s command.) As it turned out,

Khrushchev decided not to give Castro any direct jurisdiction over Soviet tactical nuclear forces; indeed, the draft treaty on military cooperation between the Soviet Union and Cuba, which was due to take effect once the presence of the Soviet missiles in Cuba was publicly revealed at the end of October, would have left the “military units of the two states under the command of their respective governments.”¹¹ Even so, the Cuban leader’s message on 26 October 1962 still struck a raw nerve in Moscow.¹² It was a vivid reminder of the dangers that might have resulted if the Soviet Union had delegated any responsibility for nuclear operations.

A related lesson about the dangers posed by local actors pertained to the role of the commander of Soviet forces in Cuba, Army-General Issa Pliev, who was chosen for the post because of his long-standing and very close friendship with both Khrushchev and the Soviet Defense Minister, Marshal Rodion Malinovskii.¹³ At no time during the crisis did Pliev have authority to order the use of either medium-range or tactical nuclear missiles, but it is now known that several weeks before the crisis—in the late summer of 1962—Malinovskii had considered the possibility of giving Pliev pre-delegated authority to order the use of tactical missiles against invading U.S. troops if Pliev’s lines of communication with Moscow had been severed and all other means of defense against an invasion had proven insufficient. A written order to this effect was prepared on 8 September 1962, but in the end Malinovskii

forces-d Mav-

downing of American planes except those carrying out an attack.²⁰ When the U-2 was shot down, no one in Moscow was quite sure what had happened—Khrushchev and most others mistakenly thought that Castro had ordered Soviet troops to fire at the plane—but everyone was certain that further incidents of this sort might cause the crisis to spin out of control. The risks posed by accidents would have been especially great if the local commander (i.e., Pliev) had been given independent authority to order the use of nuclear weapons. After all, Pliev and other officers based in Cuba, whose lives were directly at risk during the crisis, were naturally inclined to overreact to unintended “provocations” from the opposing side. To the extent that such overreactions could not be avoided in future crises, it was essential that the consequences be minimized and that further escalation be prevented. Obviously, it would be vastly more difficult to regain any semblance of control if local actors “accidentally” resorted to the use of nuclear weapons.

Hence, the accidents that occurred during the Cuban Missile Crisis underscored the need for rigid safeguards, both procedural and technical, to preclude the use of Soviet nuclear weapons except in the most dire emergency. This lesson, like the others that Khrushchev and his colleagues derived from the crisis, survived the change of leadership in Moscow in October 1964. Although Leonid Brezhnev altered many aspects of Khrushchev’s military policies, he was just as determined as his predecessor to retain stringent political control over Soviet nuclear forces.

Nuclear Operations and the Warsaw Pact

Nuclear weapons first became an issue for the Warsaw Pact in mid-1958 when, allegedly in response to deployments by NATO, Khrushchev warned that the Pact would be “compelled by force of circumstance to consider stationing [tactical nuclear] missiles in the German Democratic Republic, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.”²¹ Shortly thereafter, the Czechoslovak, East German, and Polish armed forces began receiving nuclear-capable aircraft and surface-to-surface missiles from the Soviet Union.²² The Bulgarian and Hungarian armies also soon obtained nuclear-capable aircraft and missiles from Moscow; and

even the Romanian military was eventually supplied with nuclear-capable Frog-7 and Scud-B missiles. In all cases, the deployment of these delivery vehicles was well under way by the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

The new East European weapons were officially described as components of the “Warsaw Pact’s joint nuclear forces” and were later used for simulated nuclear strikes during Pact exercises, but all nuclear warheads for the delivery systems remained under exclusive Soviet control, and the delivery vehicles themselves would have come under direct Soviet command if they had ever been equipped with warheads during a crisis. Moreover, the thousands of tactical nuclear weapons deployed by Soviet forces on East European territory were not subject to any sort of “dual-key” arrangement along the lines that NATO established in the mid-1960s. Whenever Warsaw Pact exercises included combat techniques for nuclear warfare (as they routinely did from early 1962 on), the decision on when to “go nuclear” was left entirely to the Soviet High Command.²³ In every respect, then, the East European governments had no say in the use of the Pact’s “joint” nuclear arsenal.

The exclusivity of Soviet command was reinforced by secret agreements that the Soviet Union concluded in the early to mid-1960s with Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland regarding the storage of nuclear warheads in those countries. Although all the agreements were bilateral, age

Intra-Pact Debate about Nuclear "Sharing"

The effects of the Cuban Missile Crisis could also be felt, if only implicitly, when the Soviet Union had to deal with complaints from its allies about the Pact's nuclear arrangements. The lack of East European input proved unsatisfactory to several of the allied governments, who urged that they be given some kind of role in nuclear-release authorization. Their concerns were prompted in part by changes in Soviet military doctrine in the mid-1960s, which seemed to open the way for a nuclear or conventional war confined to Europe. Under Khrushchev, Soviet military doctrine had long been predicated on the assumption that any war in Europe would rapidly escalate to an all-out nuclear exchange between the superpowers; but by the time Khrushchev was ousted in October 1964, Soviet military theorists had already begun to imply that a European conflict need not escalate to the level of strategic nuclear war.³⁰ Under Brezhnev, Soviet military analyses of limited warfare in Europe, including the selective use of tactical nuclear weapons, grew far more explicit and elaborate.³¹ Although this doctrinal shift made sense from the Soviet perspective, it stirred unease among East European leaders, who feared that their countries might be used as tactical nuclear battlegrounds without their having the slightest say in it.

The issue became a source of contention at the January 1965 meeting of the Warsaw Pact's Political Consultative Committee, where the assembled leaders discussed NATO's plans to create a Multi-Lateral Force (MLF) that would supposedly give West Germany access to nuclear-armed missiles. The PCC warned that if an MLF were formed and the West Germans were included, the Warsaw Pact would have to resort to "defensive measures and *corresponding steps*."³² The nature of these "corresponding steps" was never specified, but Romanian and Czechoslovak officials at the meeting maintained that the obvious solution was for the Soviet Union to grant its Warsaw Pact allies a direct say in the use of nuclear weapons stationed on East European soil.³³ The Romanians were especially insistent on having responsibility shared for *all* Warsaw Pact nuclear systems, including those deployed with the various Groups of Soviet Forces. Brezhnev and his colleagues,

however, were averse to any steps that would even marginally erode the Soviet Union's exclusive authority to order nuclear strikes, and it soon became clear during the meeting that Soviet views on such matters would prevail. As a result, the PCC communiqué simply called for both German states to forswear nuclear weapons, proposed the creation of a nuclear-free zone in central Europe, and advocated a freeze on all nuclear stockpiles.³⁴ The implication was that arrangements within the Warsaw Pact were best left unchanged.

That stance was reaffirmed over the next few months in a series of conspicuous Soviet declarations that "the Warsaw Pact is dependent on the *Soviet* strategic missile forces" and that "the security of all socialist countries is reliably guaranteed by the nuclear missile strength of *the Soviet Union*."³⁵ The same message was conveyed later in the year by the joint "October Storm" military exercises in East Germany, which featured simulated nuclear strikes authorized solely by the USSR.³⁶ In the meantime, the Soviet monopoly over allied nuclear weapons procedures was being reinforced by the series of agreements signed with Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland, as discussed above. The codification of exclusive Soviet control over nuclear weapons deployed in the other Warsaw Pact countries all but eliminated any basis for the East European governments to seek a role in the alliance's nuclear command structure.

Yet even after the Soviet Union tried to put the matter to rest, controversy persisted within the Warsaw Pact about the allocation of responsibility for tactical nuclear weapons. At a closed meeting of Pact leaders in East Berlin in February 1966, Romania again pressed for greater East European participation in all aspects of allied military planning, and was again rebuffed.³⁷ A few months later, the Czechoslovak Defense Minister, Army-General Bohumir Lomsky, publicly declared that the East European states should be given increased responsibility for the full range of issues confronting the Warsaw Pact.³⁸ That same week, a detailed Romanian proposal for modifications to the alliance was leaked to the French Communist newspaper, *L'Humanite*; the document called for, among other things, an East European role in any decisions involving the potential use of nuclear weapons.³⁹ Subsequently, at the July 1966 session of the PCC in Bucharest,

officials from Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary renewed their bid for "greater rights of co-determination in planning and implementing common coalition matters," including (by implication) the use of nuclear weapons. (39)T401000 10 322.4w [658(39)01 T

drew a number of lessons about the risks of even sharing, much less delegating, nuclear authority, the prospects of adopting a “dual-key” system for the Warsaw Pact essentially vanished.

Although Moscow’s willingness to share control over the Warsaw Pact’s “joint” nuclear arsenal would have been sharply constrained even before October 1962 by the lack of permissive-action links (PALs) and other use-denial mechanisms on Soviet nuclear weapons, that factor alone would not have been decisive if the Cuban Missile Crisis had not occurred. After all, when Soviet officials seriously contemplated allotting partial nuclear authority to Castro in 1962, that was long before Soviet tactical weapons were equipped with PALs. The physical separation of warheads from delivery vehicles, as had been planned for the missiles based in Cuba, was regarded at the time as a sufficient (if cumbersome) barrier against unauthorized actions. That approach had long been used for tactical weapons deployed by Soviet forces in Eastern Eu-

901-A4 nuclear warheads and 407-N6 bombs to Cuba for the Frogs and II-28s was not finalized until 8 September 1962, by which time Khrushchev may already have changed his mind about the command-and-control arrangements. See "Nachal'niku 12 glavnogo upravleniya Ministerstva oborony," 8 September 1962 (Top Secret), Memorandum from Defense Minister R. Malinovskii and Chief of the General Staff M. Zakharov, in TsAMO, "Dokumenty po meropriyatiyu 'Anadyr'," F. 16, Op. 3753. It is eminently possible that the

POLISH CRISIS

continued from page 1

1980-81 crisis, though from a quite different angle, will be included in my Working Paper on "The Soviet Union, Jaruzelski, and the Polish Crisis, 1980-1981," which is scheduled to be issued by the Cold War International History Project later this year. Appendices to the Working Paper will feature many other documents I have translated from the Russian, Polish, Czech, and German archives. Soon thereafter, I will be putting together a book-length study and collection of new materials pertaining to the Polish crisis.

Overview of New Sources

Since 1989, a huge quantity of documents and memoirs about the Soviet Union's role in the 1980-81 crisis have become available. An invaluable account, which appeared even before the Communist regime in Warsaw had collapsed, is the interview with the former Polish colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, "Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," *Kultura* (Paris) 4/475 (April 1987), pp. 3-57. Kuklinski was one of five senior officers on the Polish General Staff who were responsible for drawing up plans for martial law in 1980-81. During that time he was also a spy for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and he was able to provide the United States with unparalleled access to all the military secrets of the Warsaw Pact until November 1981, when he was forced to flee. He now lives under an assumed name in the United States. Other indispensable memoirs and first-hand accounts include Wojciech Jaruzelski, *Stan wojenny dlaczego* (Warsaw: BGW, 1992); Wojciech Jaruzelski, *Les chaines et le refuge* (Paris: Lattes, 1992); Stanislaw Kania, *Zatrzymac konfrontacje* (Wroclaw: BGW, 1991); *General Kiszczak mowie . . . : Prawie wszystko . . .*, ed. by Witold Beres and Jerzy Skoczylas (Warsaw: BGW, 1991); Mieczyslaw Rakowski, *Jak to sie stalo* (Warsaw: BGW, 1991); the first interview with Rakowski in *Zanim stane przed Trybunalem: Z Mieczyslawem Rakowskim rozmawie Dariusz Szymczycha* (Warsaw: BGW, 1992); Army-General A. I. Gribkov, "'Doktrina Brezhneva' i pol'skii krizis nachala 80-kh godov," *Voenna-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow) 9 (September 1992), 46-57; and Vitalii Pavlov, *Wspomnienia rezydenta KGB w Polsce* (Warsaw: BGW,

1993). Jaruzelski, Kania, Kiszczak, and Rakowski were all top officials in Poland in 1980-81; Gribkov was the chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact; and Pavlov was the KGB station chief in Warsaw. Gribkov's and Pavlov's accounts make an intriguing contrast with the views offered by Jaruzelski, Kania, *et al.*, as will be discussed below.

A plethora of shorter first-hand accounts and interviews with key participants have appeared as well. For a sample of the countless interviews with and commentaries by General Jaruzelski, see *Novoe vremya* (Moscow) 38 (September 1991), 26-30; "Jaruzelski obrazony: Wyrok w mojej sprawie juz zapadl—napisal general w liscie do przewodniczacego komisji, posla Rzepki," *Zycie Warszawy* (Warsaw), 13 January 1993, 5; "Katastrofa byla nieuchronna," *Gazeta wyborcza* (Warsaw), 3 December 1992, 13; "Rozmawiac bez nienawisci: Wywiad generala Wojciecha Jaruzelskiego z Adamem Michnikiem," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 25-26 April 1992, 8-11; "Oswiadczenia i przeszkody formalne: Rozliczanie stanu wojennego," *Rzeczpospolita* (Warsaw), 25 November 1992, 2; "Ironiczny prymas historii," *Prawo i zycie* (Warsaw), 49 (December 1992), 11;

Stephen Engelberg, "Jaruzelski, Defending Record, Says His Rule Saved Poland," *The New York Times*, 20 May 1992, A-9; and John Darnton, "Jaruzelski Is Now Sorry He Ordered Martial Law," *The New York Times*, 4 March 1993, A-12. For two key interviews with Mikhail Gorbachev, who was a full member of the CPSU Politburo in 1980-81, see "Gorbaczow o stanie wojennym w Polsce: General Jaruzelski postapil prawidlowo," *Trybuna* (Warsaw), 9 November 1992, 2; and "Wywiad z Michaiem Gorbaczowem: 'Jestem inny, niz probuja mnie przedstawic'," *Rzeczpospolita*, 23 October 1992, 9. Shorter interviews with Vitalii Pavlov, whose memoirs are cited above, include "Dostep do wszystkiego," *Polityka* (Warsaw), 8 (20 February 1993), 15; "Byly rezydent KGB w Warszawie: ZSRR nie chcial interwencji," *Rzeczpospolita*, 10 February 1993, 7; and Leon Bojko, "A wejsc nie chcieli?" *Gazeta wyborcza*, 10 February 1993, 6.

Most of the top Polish officials from 1980-1981, including Jaruzelski and Kiszczak, have given testimony before the Commission on Constitutional Oversight of the Polish Sejm (Parliament). The hearings

DECLASSIFIED SOVIET DOCUMENTS ON THE POLISH CRISIS

Translated and annotated by Mark Kramer

CPSU CC Politburo Decision Setting Up Suslov Commission, 25 August 1980

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET

No. P210/P

To: Comrades Brezhnev, Kosygin, Andropov, Gromyko, Kirilenko, Suslov, Tikhonov, Ustinov, Zimyanin, Rusakov, Arkhipov, Kornienko, Zamyatin, Rakhmanin.

Extract from Protocol No. 210 of the session of the CPSU CC Politburo on 25 August 1980

In regard to the situation in the Polish People's Republic.

1. To endorse Comrade L. I. Brezhnev's information about the situation unfolding in the Polish People's Republic.

2. To establish a CC Politburo Commission composed of:

Comrades M. A. Suslov (chairman), A. A. Gromyko, Yu. V. Andropov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, M. V. Zimyanin, I. V. Arkhipov, L. M. Zamyatin, O. B. Rakhmanin.

To instruct the Commission to pay close attention to the situation unfolding in the PPR and to keep the Politburo systematically informed about the state of affairs in the PPR and about possible measures on our part. Suggestions in the event of necessity are to be brought before the CPSU CC Politburo.

CPSU CC POLITBURO

CPSU CC Politburo Report "On Theses for the discussion with representatives of the

in *Fond 5, Opis' 84* in late 1992 and early 1993. (Unfortunately, that access was abruptly terminated in April 1993 for reasons discussed in my article on archival research in *CWIHP Bulletin* No. 3.) Although I was not able to receive photocopies of materials from *Fond 5, Opis' 84* (because of a bureaucratic glitch), I translated verbatim or took extensive notes on all items I consulted.

In Germany, the most important documents from the former East German Socialist Unity Party (SED) archives (the *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv, Zentrales Parteiarchiv der SED*), the former GDR State Security Ministry (Stasi) archives (*Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, Ministerium für Staatssicherheit Zentralarchiv*), and the military archive in Potsdam (*Militarisches Zwischenarchiv*), are being published in the series mentioned above. In addition, a large number of unpublished documents are worth consulting at all three of these archives, especially the first two. In the Czech Republic, two major archives hold numerous documents relevant to the 1980-81 crisis: the Central State Archive (*Statni ustredni archiv*), which houses a vast collection of items left from the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party and from the Czechoslovak government, and the Military Historical Archive (*Vojensky historicky archiv*), which contains files from the Czechoslovak General Staff and Ministry of Defense. The Czech/Czechoslovak foreign ministry archive also contains some pertinent documents, but access for now is more sporadic. The materials in Berlin and Prague amply confirm that the top East German and Czechoslovak leaders in 1980-81—Gustav Husak and Erich Honecker—both hoped to bring a prompt and decisive end to the crisis through external military intervention.

As even this brief review shows, the quantity and quality of new East-bloc sources on the 1980-81 crisis are remarkable. Highly sensitive items are more readily available in this case than for any of the earlier Soviet-East European confrontations. This is not to say, however, that the task of analyzing the Polish crisis is easy. Many aspects of the crisis are still obscure because of insufficient documentation; and even if all the

relevant archives were opened, major differences of interpretation would persist. Nevertheless, it is clear that the profusion of documents and memoirs since 1989 has shed far greater light on the Polish crisis than one ever could have hoped for just five to six years ago.

The Crisis and the Soviet Response

The Polish crisis started out modestly enough, as a wave of protests against higher meat prices announced in July 1980; but it soon posed graver complications for Soviet policy than any event had since the late 1940s. The formation of Solidarity, an independent and popularly-based trade union that soon rivaled the Communist party for political power and that represented the interests of the very same working class in whose name the party had always purported to rule, posed a fundamental challenge to Poland's Communist system. Once the magnitude of that challenge had become apparent to Soviet officials, they reacted with unremitting hostility toward Solidarity. Soviet leaders were equally dismayed by the growing political influence of Poland's Catholic church, which they regarded as "one of the most dangerous forces in Polish society" and a fount of "anti-socialist" and "hostile" elements.³

As the crisis intensified and Solidarity's strength continued to grow, Moscow's condemnations of the Polish trade union became more strident, both publicly and in behind-the-scenes deliberations. The thrust of the Soviet criticisms was that Solidarity and the church had joined ranks with "like-minded counterrevolutionary forces" to wage "an openly counterrevolutionary struggle for the liquidation of socialism" in Poland.⁴ Soviet officials also accused Solidarity of attempting to "seize power from the PZPR" by fomenting "economic chaos" in the country and by embarking on a wide range of other "provocative and counterrevolutionary actions." The whole course of events, they warned, was leading toward "the collapse of Polish socialism and the headlong disintegration of the PZPR," an outcome that would leave "Solidarity extremists in full control."

Throughout the crisis, Soviet leaders were concerned not only about the internal situation in Poland, but also about the effects

the turmoil was having on Polish foreign policy and Poland's role in the Warsaw Pact. Brezhnev and his colleagues repeatedly condemned Solidarity for allegedly "inflaming malevolent nationalist passions" and spurring a "dangerous rise in anti-Sovietism in Poland."⁵ A report prepared for the CPSU Politburo in mid-1981 by the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw, Boris Aristov, warned that the "powerful streams of anti-Soviet rhetoric" in Poland and the "increasing efforts by the West to subvert Polish socialism" would inevitably induce major changes in Poland's foreign alignments.⁶ Aristov acknowledged that "the anti-socialist forces backing Solidarity claim they do not want to change Poland's international obligations and alliances," but he insisted that such changes would be carried out nonetheless, albeit "subtly, without a frontal attack." He emphasized that "the mood of anti-Sovietism is growing, especially in the ranks of Solidarity," and that the "hostile, anti-Soviet forces" both inside and outside Solidarity "are arguing that democratization in Poland is incompatible with membership in the Warsaw Pact."⁷ Aristov's prediction that the crisis in Poland would bring "fundamental changes in Polish-Soviet relations" gained wider and wider acceptance among Soviet leaders as time wore on.

Because of Poland's location in the heart of Europe, its communications and logistical links with the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany, its projected contributions to the "first strategic echelon" of the Warsaw Pact, and its numerous storage sites for Soviet tactical nuclear warheads, the prospect of having a non-Communist government come to power in Warsaw or of a drastic change in Polish foreign policy generated alarm in Moscow. Soviet foreign minister Andrei Gromyko spoke for all his colleagues when he declared at a CPSU Politburo meeting in October 1980 that "we simply cannot and must not lose Poland" under any circumstances.⁸ Although Nikita Khrushchev had been willing in October 1956 to reach a *modus vivendi* with the Polish leader Wladyslaw Gomulka, the situation in 1980-81 was totally different. Gomulka, despite all his heterodoxies, was a devoted Communist, and Khrushchev could be confident that socialism in Poland and the Polish-Soviet "fraternal relationship" would continue and even thrive under Gomulka's leadership. Brezhnev and his colleagues had no such

assurances about Poland in 1980-81.

Moreover, quite apart from the situation in Poland itself, Soviet officials suspected—with good reason—that the crisis would have destabilizing repercussions in other Warsaw Pact countries. Soon after the historic Gdansk accords were signed in August 1980, senior commentators in Moscow began asserting that Solidarity's "strategy of permanent chaos" would inspire similar developments elsewhere that would "threaten not just Poland but the whole of peace and stability in Europe."⁹ Equally stern pronouncements emanated from the chief Soviet ideologist, Mikhail Suslov, who claimed that "any deviation from our revolutionary teachings" in one socialist country "will entail ruinous consequences for the whole socialist world."¹⁰ Much as Soviet and hard-line East European leaders in 1968 had feared that the Prague Spring would be "contagious," so now they believed that Solidarity's rise would set a crucial precedent and spark "anti-socialist" ferment elsewhere, most notably in the Soviet Union itself. In response, officials in Moscow and most of the other Warsaw Pact capitals promptly took steps to control and even halt the dissemination of Polish newspapers and journals in their countries. Such steps had been recommended in a top-secret report approved by the CPSU Secretariat in December 1980, which warned that "undesirable materials" of an "anti-socialist and anti-Soviet nature" were streaming into the Soviet Union from Poland.¹¹

Even more worrisome from Moscow's perspective was the growing evidence that turmoil in Poland was spilling over into the union republics of the USSR, especially the three Baltic states and Ukraine, where protests and demonstrations in support of Solidarity had begun as early as August 1980.¹² In the Russian Republic, too, there were disturbing indications of a surge of labor unrest inspired—directly or indirectly—by the accordnan PtriTTw KGBaritym MaS4 Tmyo-

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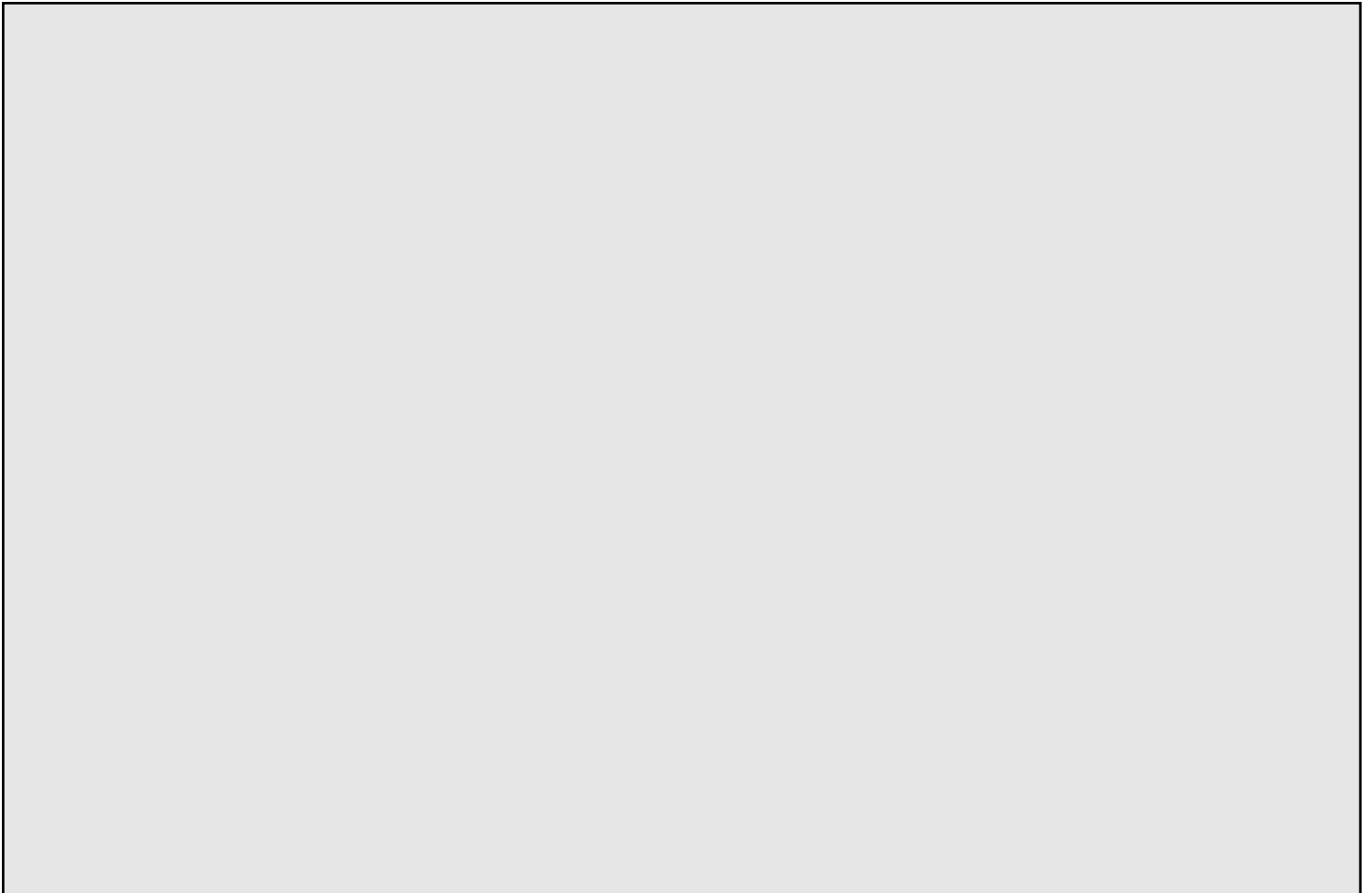
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the option of invading Poland was necessarily on the agenda in Moscow and most of the East European capitals. Elaborate plans for

suggests that at least some top officials in
Moscow were willing to resort to force if



to “keep a close watch on the unfolding situation in Poland.”⁴¹

The lack of any overt disagreement on the question of military intervention does not necessarily mean that the apparent consensus emerged easily or spontaneously. The transcript may not tell the full story. A number of former senior members of the CPSU Politburo—Egor Ligachev, Nikolai Ryzhkov, and Vadim Medvedev, among others—have recently disclosed that Soviet leaders sometimes gathered informally before Politburo sessions to iron out their different views of highly controversial issues.⁴² As a rule, these informal meetings (referred to obliquely as “exchanges of opinions”) were not included in the final transcripts of official Politburo sessions. Hence, it is eminently conceivable that an unrecorded preliminary meeting on 10 December 1981 featured at least some give-and-take regarding Soviet military options vis-à-vis Poland. Nevertheless, even if that is the case, it does not change the basic fact that the consensus by the time of the formal Politburo session on December 10 was in full accord with Suslov’s non-interventionist stance. The outcome in this case is of greater interest than the process that may have led up to it.

Having set out all along to resolve the crisis through martial law rather than through direct military intervention, Soviet leaders did everything they could to ensure that an “internal solution” would succeed. The rapid expansion of Poland’s ZOMO forces during the crisis went largely unnoticed thanks to the distractions provided by a long succession of Warsaw Pact military exercises and by the buildup of Soviet and allied troops along Poland’s borders. Equally important, Soviet military officials carefully assessed the reliability of elite Polish army units who would eventually be responsible, along with the ZOMO and other security forces, for carrying out the martial-law operation. At one point, this involved a tour of the whole country by eighteen Soviet generals who asked detailed questions at each military garrison about the readiness of Polish commanders to perform their duty against “counterrevolution.”⁴³ Similarly, diplomats at the Soviet embassy and consulates in Poland were ordered to monitor and report back on the reliability of Polish troops and security forces in their vicinity.⁴⁴ These constantly updated assessments, and simi-

lar information flowing into Moscow from Soviet intelligence agents, were crucial when Polish and Soviet leaders settled on the final options for martial law in November and early December 1981. By that point, the sentiment in Moscow was so strongly in favor of proceeding with the imposition of martial law, and the plans and preparations were so far advanced, that it is doubtful whether any gestures or concessions on Solidarity’s part, no matter how dramatic, could have averted the crackdown.⁴⁵

As elaborate as all these preparations were, there was always some risk that the “internal solution” would encounter unexpected problems. Had that been the case, it is far from clear what would have happened. There is no indication that the Soviet Politburo ever arrived at a final decision in 1981 on whether to invade Poland if “Operation X” (the code-name for the martial-law operation) collapsed. Most political leaders and collective bodies tend to put off onerous decisions until the last possible moment. That was certainly true of the CPSU Politburo under Brezhnev, and all evidence suggests that the members of that body were inclined to defer a final decision about military intervention in Poland as long as possible.⁴⁶ There is no doubt that the Soviet Union had serious contingency plans to “enter and occupy Polish territory” and “neutralize the Polish army” on 13 or 14 December 1981 if the martial-law operation went disastrously awry, but there is equal reason to believe that no decision was ever made on whether those plans should be implemented.⁴⁷

The postponement of any final decision would have made perfect sense if Soviet leaders had been highly confident in December 1981 that Jaruzelski would successfully impose martial law and resolve the whole crisis without external help; but, interestingly enough, the transcript from the CPSU Politburo’s meeting on 10 December 1981 suggests that no such confidence existed.⁴⁸ The outlook in Moscow just three days before “Operation X” began was far more somber than one might have expected. The problem was not that Soviet leaders doubted the soundness of the plans and preparations for martial law, which they had helped supervise. On the contrary, Gromyko assured his fellow Politburo members that “we can expect positive results if the measures that [the Polish authorities] intend to carry out are indeed implemented.” The problem, instead,

was that no one in Moscow was certain whether Jaruzelski would actually follow through in the end and, if so, “what direction the events in Poland will take.” Andropov, for example, said there were “very disturbing signs” that Jaruzelski “is abandoning the idea of carrying out this step” and trying “to find some way to extricate himself.” Gromyko likewise expressed dismay that “Jaruzelski is now vacillating again” and that “the Polish leadership . . . is continuing to relinquish its positions by failing to adopt decisive measures.” Others at the meeting complained that Jaruzelski was in a “highly agitated state [and] has been transformed into a man who is extremely neurotic and diffident about his abilities.” These sorts of comments hardly imply great optimism.

At the same time, the transcript and other documents confirm that Soviet leaders had not given up all hope as of December 10; far from it. They were confident enough about the prospects for an “internal solution” that they saw no need to give Jaruzelski a direct military guarantee as a hedge against the possible collapse of “Operation X.” There is ample evidence, both in the Politburo’s documents and in recent first-hand accounts by senior participants, that Jaruzelski tried to obtain such a guarantee but was rebuffed.⁴⁹ Jaruzelski himself has now claimed that he did not ask for a Soviet military guarantee in the lead-up to “Operation X,” but even if that is so, the evidence clearly suggests that the members of the CPSU Politburo *believed* he wanted a guarantee and that they felt they had to “dispel any notions that Jaruzelski and other top officials in Poland may have” about receiving military assistance.⁵⁰ The Soviet leadership’s unwillingness to provide Jaruzelski with a military guarantee was due in part to concern that any such promise might become a crutch that would cause the Polish leader to refrain from implementing martial law as forcefully as he should. “If [the Polish authorities] show any sign of wavering during the struggle against the counterrevolution or afterwards,” Gromyko warned, “nothing will remain of socialist Poland.”⁵¹ Even more important, however, was the Soviet Politburo’s collective desire to avoid any decisions about military intervention unless events in Poland unexpectedly took a disastrous turn.

This collective desire to put off a decision outweighed whatever benefits the Soviet Union might have gained by extending

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**THE WARSAW PACT AND THE
POLISH CRISIS OF 1980-81:****Honecker's Call for Military Intervention****Translated and Introduced by Mark
Kramer**

The following letter, dated 26 November 1980, comes from the archive of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) of the former German Democratic Republic (DDR). It is one of many valuable documents pertaining to the 1980-81 Polish crisis that have been collected from the East German archives by a group of researchers at the Free University of Berlin. These documents are now being published (in the original German) in a multi-volume collection entitled *SED-Politbüro und polnische Krise 1980/1982*. The item translated below is included in the first volume (Band 1: 1980), which was published in January 1993. Volumes covering 1981 and 1982 are currently in preparation.

The letter below was sent by Erich Honecker, the SED General Secretary, to the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Leonid Brezhnev, during a tense phase of the 17-month crisis in Poland. At the time, the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Stanisaw Kania, was coming under intense pressure both at home and abroad as strikes escalated and the unofficial trade union Solidarity posed an ever greater political challenge to the PZPR. For the previous three months, Brezhnev and his colleagues had been urging the Polish authorities to

D. F. Ustinov, and K. Yu. Chernenko to the CPSU Politburo, in APRF/Osobaya Papka.

27. Gribkov, "'Doktrina Brezhneva' i pol'skii krizis nachala 80-kh godov," 54.

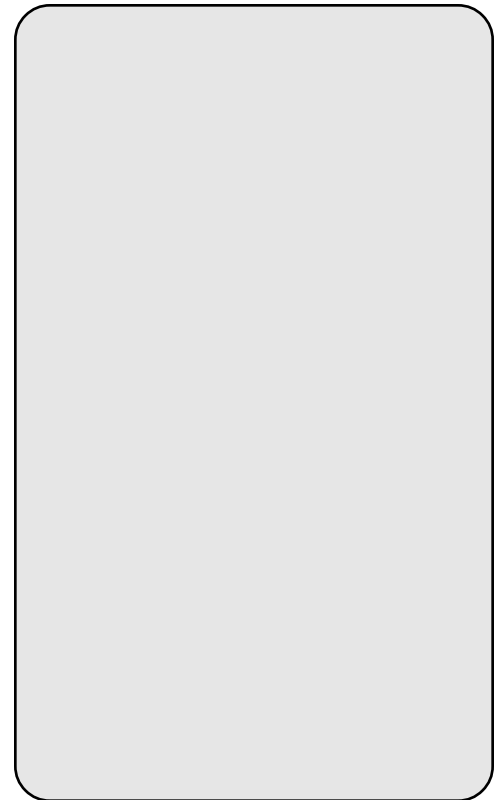
28. "Vladislav Achalov: Takoe vpechatlenie, chto nikto nikogda nikogo nichemu ne uчил," *Nezavisimaya gazeta* (Moscow), 7 February 1995, 7.

29. Maj.-General Vladimir Dudnik, "Tainy 'temnoi komnaty,'" *Moskovskie novosti* 14 (5 April 1992), 17;

and "Juz siedzielismy w czolgach: Z generalem majorem Stanislawem Prochazka, rozmawia Leszek Mazan," *Polityka* (Warsaw) 37 (15 September 1990),

13. See also "Generalmajor S. Prochazka z vojske obrodyrika: 'Meljsme okupovat Polsko,'" *Zemedelske noviny* (Prague), 16 August 1990, 1.

30. "O nastroenyakh sredi soldatov i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e,"



People's Republic of Poland and in the CSSR in 1968": "In both their essence and their goals, and also partly in their methods, there is a striking congruity. The only differences are in the priority of demands, the concrete plan of attack, and the timetable for the counterrevolutionary offensive." (ZPA JIV 2/2/1859, Bl. 56.) *The SED was convinced that the opposition in Poland was seeking not only reform, but the outright elimination of socialism.*

This direct comparison with Prague in 1968 was the basis on which the SED Politburo would act thereafter, both publicly and privately, in its policy toward its eastern neighbors. On 30 September 1980 the SED Politburo, backed by Brezhnev, urged the convocation of a meeting of the party leaders of the Warsaw Pact states to consider the Polish question. (*Ibid.*, Bl. 2.) In so doing the SED wanted to set in motion the Warsaw Pact's consultative mechanism according to the model of Prague 1968.

The Polish Supreme Court's decision on 11 November 1980 to accept the existence of the trade union "Solidarity" in Warsaw without requiring the "PZPR's leading role" to be upheld within the trade union was, for the SED leadership, the point at which the "capitulation" of the PZPR leadership had gone so far that intervention from outside could no longer be avoided. On 20 November Honecker expressed his disappointment regarding the weak behavior of the PZPR leadership to the acting Polish ambassador in the GDR, Olszowski, in the following way: "*Without a doubt this compromise was an immense setback for everyone who was still hoping that you could resolve your problems on your own.*" (ZPA JIV 2/2 A/2363.) From the SED Politburo's point of view, the situation in Poland in the fall of 1980 was already more dire than in the

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mended the violent suppression of the Polish opposition analogous to the crises of 1953, 1956, and 1968.

Referring to economic and military interests, Brezhnev emphasized in his summary report that “*the situation in Poland and the danger hanging over Poland are not just Polish concerns. They are the concern of us all.*” In accord with the doctrine named after him, he further declared that neither Poland’s own communists nor the friends and allies of Poland would permit Poland to be torn from the socialist community. “Poland was and will remain an inviolable member of the . . . system of socialism.” (*Ibid.*)

The decision of the Warsaw Pact states not to intervene in Poland in December 1980 was of course accepted by the SED

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country. The complexity of the struggle against it stems, in particular, from the fact that the members of the opposition disguise themselves as defenders of the working class and as laborers.

The agreement does not eliminate the underlying causes of the crisis events; and what is more, the urgent problems of the Polish economy and Polish society are now becoming more complicated.

Because the opposition intends to continue the struggle to achieve its aims, and the healthy forces of the party and society cannot acquiesce in regressive movement by Polish society, the compromise that has been achieved will be only temporary in nature. One must bear in mind that the opposition is expecting, not without reason, that help will be forthcoming from outside.

2. Under the pressure of anti-socialist forces, who have succeeded in leading astray a significant portion of the working class, the PZPR had to go on the defensive. Now the problem is how to prepare a counterattack and reclaim the positions that have been lost among the working class and the people.

In launching this counterattack, it would be advisable to use all the capabilities afforded by the ruling party and its strong, healthy core, by the state apparatus, and by mass social organizations, while showing political flexibility. These institutions will provide necessary support to the vanguard ranks of the working class. In the event of necessity, it would be advisable to use the contemplated administrative means.

The party must give a principled political evaluation of the August events and must also accelerate the formulation of its own program of action, which will include steps to improve the life of workers.

3. It is necessary to give overriding significance to the consolidation of the leading role of the party in society.

The current political crisis has sharply weakened the influence and authority of the party among the working class. In such circumstances one must adopt all necessary measures for its organizational and ideological cohesion and for the reestablishment of its influence and authority.

Among some concrete recommendations, one might list the following:

—On an urgent basis, carry out measures to raise the combativeness of all party organizations, taking account of the lessons of the political crisis. Act decisively in removing people who are clearly alien to the party, while conforming with the specific conditions existing right now in the country.

—Convene a plenum of the Central Com-

mittee as soon as possible in order to work out a detailed, positive program specifying the main policy directions. The program must, in particular, undercut the significance of the demands of the strike committees in Gdansk and Szczecin as much as possible in the eyes of the workers. In accordance with materials from the CC plenum, convene expanded plenary sessions of PZPR provincial, city, and county committees, sessions of the party aktiv [core members and activists—ed.], and party meetings at enterprises.

—Consider the possibility of convening a party congress, at which a full-scale program of action for the party would be worked out, new directives for the five-year plan would be affirmed, and necessary changes in the leading organs would be introduced.

—An increase in the combativeness of the party in rural locations will require the comprehensive organizational strengthening of the PZPR county committees, which since the administrative reforms of 1975 have been serving in the role of regional committees.

—Consider the direction for the leading work in party organs carried out by experienced political workers of the Polish Army.

4. The reestablishment of the severed link between the party and the working class will require a fundamental renewal of the activity of the trade unions. Do everything necessary to prevent the dissolution or disintegration of the existing trade unions (CRZZ) and their organizations. Convene as soon as possible the regular 9th Congress of the trade unions of Poland, where the foremost task will be to move the trade unions as close as possible to the workers and to earn their full confidence.

—Put up a defense of the basic principles of the trade union movement in the conditions of a socialist society. Abide by certain provisions in the agreement with the ZKS and at the same time adopt all measures to limit and neutralize the effect of the most dangerous articles in the agreement. Come forward with bold initiatives of a social character, which would bolster the authority of the trade unions.

—Raise the quality of personnel in trade union organizations by bringing in advanced, trustworthy workers. Carry out elections of trade union activists before this is done in the so-called “self-managed” trade unions.

—Seek to limit the activity and influence of the so-called “self-managed” trade unions among the masses, a task that will be accomplished predominantly by mobilizing public opinion. Move actively in infiltrating the so-called “self-managed” trade unions with people devoted to the party.

5. In light of the danger created by the activity of the anti-socialist forces, use state structures to carry out necessary measures for the

strengthening of the socialist legal order.

—Pay greater attention to the army and devote special attention to the military-political preparation of soldiers. Use the opportunity to attract army command personnel to perform party-economic work as well.

—Adopt necessary measures to expose the political nature and designs of the ringleaders of the opposition.

6. In the sphere of the mass media and propaganda, concentrate efforts on the further strengthening of party leadership and supervision over these organs. This is especially necessary when in practice the question has arisen of the “limitation of censorship” and the expansion of access for the anti-socialist forces and the Church to the mass media.

—In these circumstances it is necessary to provide an elaborate definition of what is permissible, having openly declared that the law on the press forbids any statements against socialism.

—Adopt necessary measures to put an end to the wide circulation of anti-Communist publications, films, and television productions in the PPR, and to maintain strict control over the sources of information emanating from Poland, including the activity of bourgeois journalists.

Strengthen party control over the work of the central and local press, over the leaders of editorial collectives, and above all over the television and radio.

Using the mass media, show that the events in Poland have been caused not by any shortcomings of the socialist system per se, but by *mista*. 15ha92 -.009

cisively rebuffing all attempts to use nationalism in the propagation of anti-socialist and anti-Soviet sentiments, as well as all attempts to misrepresent the history of Soviet-Polish relations and the nature of cooperation between the USSR and the PPR;

—launch relentless counterpropaganda against the efforts to water down the class content of socialist patriotism under the slogan of “All Poles in the world are brothers,” as well as the

tional-party work and the CPSU CC Department are to hold a conference in May-June 1981 for representatives from corresponding oblast and municipal committees of the CPSU to discuss urgent questions of ties between local party organs of the CPSU and PZPR.

By agreement with the PZPR CC, send to Poland in May-June 1981 a group of senior officials from the central council of the branch trade unions headed by the secretary of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council, who will familiarize themselves with the state of affairs in the Polish trade union movement and make on-site studies of the opportunities for political support of the branch trade unions and for increased cooperation between them and the Soviet trade unions.

Instruct the CPSU Komsomol CC to present a set of measures by 5 May 1981 on ways to strengthen our influence within the youth movement in Poland.

The Union of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, the Soviet Veterans' Committee, and the Committee of Soviet Women are to continue pursuing the set of measures agreed on with the native Polish organizations and to offer them the necessary help.

Taking account of the complex situation in the creative unions of the PPR, the Unions of Writers, Journalists, Composers, Artists, and Filmmakers of the USSR are to carry out work within the youth movement.

measures that must be implemented and complicates our work, since the mood in society is indifferent. But we will be trying to do everything possible to improve the situation.

This is what I wanted initially to convey to you and to keep you informed about.

Once again I want to thank you very much for your kind words.

L. I. BREZHNEV. I again wish you, Wojciech, the best of health and the best of success.

W. JARUZELSKI. Thank you. Good-bye.

* * * * *

**CPSU CC Politburo Protocol (extract) and
Text of Oral Message from Brezhnev to
Jaruzelski, 21 November 1981**

To be returned within 3 days to the
CPSU CC (General Department, 1st sector)
Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

ing a division of power among the PZPR, ‘Solidarity,’ and the church, with the result that socialism would collapse. It is also clear that they are exploiting their current influence among the masses to establish a huge advantage in the upcoming elections for the national councils, thus continuing their path toward the legal seizure of power in the country.

“This, it seems to me, implies that it will be fundamentally important for the leading role of the PZPR to be greatly strengthened in the ‘Front of National Accord,’ as well as for the participants in the Front to recognize the PPR Constitution, socialism, and Poland’s international alliances. Will these things be done in the Statutes and other documents of the Front, and more important will they be guaranteed in practice? What do you propose to do about the elections for local organs of power, bearing in mind the risk of the party’s destruction?”

“In this connection another urgent matter arises. During many of our discussions we have emphasized the same theme over and over: We are not opposed to agreements. But such agreements must not make concessions to the enemies of socialism. And the key thing is that the agreements must not become ends in themselves. Along with measures you take to gain support among the popular masses and the different political forces, you must also take decisive actions against the sworn enemies of the popular order. You agreed with this way of framing the question and spoke yourself about your intention of struggling for the hearts and minds of the workers while at the same time attacking the class enemy.

“But now the impression emerges that you’re focusing only on the first part of this two-part formula. We know that there are still people in the leadership of your party who are still pinning all their hopes on a continuation of the bankrupt course of Kania. It would be dangerous to succumb to their entreaties. It is now absolutely clear that without a resolute struggle against the class enemy, it will be impossible to save socialism in Poland. The essential question is not whether there will be a confrontation or not, but who will begin it and by what means it will be carried out, as well as who will seize the initiative.

“I’d like to emphasize that when we speak about a confrontation, we believe it is contingent on a struggle to lure back to the side of the PZPR the workers and toiling masses who have fallen under the influence of ‘Solidarity’ and who now occupy a passive position and bide their time, waiting for things to sort themselves out at the top.⁴

“You and I, Wojciech Wladyslawovich, have both experienced war and we know that the strategy of fighting is crucially dependent on the question of time. This is directly related to the adverse situation that has now emerged in Poland. The leaders of the anti-socialist forces, who long ago were already gradually, and in some

places openly, preparing for a decisive onslaught, are now seeking to time it for the moment when they will have an overwhelming advantage. In particular, they are placing great stakes on the fact that a new group of recruits will be entering the army who have been worked on by ‘Solidarity.’⁵ Doesn’t this suggest to you that a failure to take harsh measures against the counterrevolution right away will cost you invaluable time?”

“The key question is how to isolate the sworn enemies of socialism. Until that is done, nothing will change. Moreover, such an overtly counter-revolutionary organization as the ‘Confederation for an Independent Poland’ (KPN) is enlisting new supporters and is able to function legally. It’s obvious that this has been possible because the party is in fact losing control over the judicial organs, as is evident from the whole episode with the trial of Moczulski and the other leaders of KPN.

“I want to share with you some thoughts about one further matter of great urgency. It’s obvious that any actions in defense of socialism demand in the first instance a vigorous struggle for the Marxist-Leninist character of the PZPR and an increase in its combat readiness. After the 4th plenum of the PZPR CC, signs began to appear that the party organizations were springing back to life. It is important to step up this work and to prevent the local Communists from falling back into their state of passivity and hopelessness. And for this what is needed most of all is for the members of the party to be able to believe that words and deeds will no longer diverge, and that the leadership is intent on firmly and consistently implementing decisions that have been adopted.

“The strengthening of the PZPR depends also on a clear-cut line with regard to different currents of thought among its ranks. In your country some have argued that there now exist three basic directions in the party—the left, the right, and the center—and they have recommended the severance of all ties with the leftists and rightists, leaving them completely isolated by the force of the blows. This is a dangerous recommendation. Who is it, after all, that is being branded “leftists” or “hardliners”? Why, the Communists who have long been supportive of Marxist-Leninist positions, while in no way dismissing the need to rectify mistakes and distortions that have been committed. And who are the so-called rightists? These are the people who espouse revisionist views and ultimately become members of ‘Solidarity.’ It is clear that any sort of actions against staunch Communists would be suicide for the PZPR as a Communist party. And it is just as clear that until you get rid of the revisionists, including the ones in the party leadership who are trying to uphold the previous capitulationist line, they will weigh on you like a heavy burden.

“I believe these considerations provide the key to a solution of the mounting problems with

personnel. I am convinced that by working with your comrades who are oriented toward the “leftists,” and by giving them your support, you will find that it is precisely these people who provide a sound basis for the struggle to overcome the crisis.

“Esteemed Wojciech Wladyslawovich! Having raised, for your benefit, several matters that are troubling us, and having offered you my views, I naturally have left aside a number of problems that can be considered during a face-to-face meeting.⁶

L. BREZHNEV”

Confirm transmittal by telegram.

* * * * *

**CPSU CC Politburo transcript,
10 December 1981**

Top Secret
Single Copy
(Working Notes)

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO

10 December 1981

Presided over by Comrade L. I. BREZHNEV.

Also taking part: Comrades Yu. V. Andropov, V. V. Grishin, A. A. Gromyko, A. P. Kirilenko, A. Ya. Pel’she, M. A. Suslov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, P. N. Demichev, B. N. Ponomarev, M. S. Solomentsev, I. V. Kapitonov, V. I. Dolgikh, 7 TD 0.001shuicide g223 -0.0647 Tat are031222 0.0atura

farm produce.⁸

If we speak, for example, about reserves of grain, then Poland this year has accumulated more than 2 million tons. The population is not going hungry. Urban dwellers ride out to the markets and buy up all they products they need. And there are ample supplies of them.

As is known, by the Politburo's decision and at the request of the Polish comrades, we are providing Poland with an aid shipment of 30 thousand tons of meat. Of these promised 30 thousand tons, 15 thousand have already been shipped abroad. It should be added that the produce, in this case meat, is being delivered in dirty, unsanitary freight cars normally used to transport iron ore, making for an unpleasant sight. During the transport of this produce to the Polish stations, genuine sabotage has been taking place. Poles have been expressing highly obscene comments about the Soviet Union and the Soviet people, have refused to clean out the freight cars, etc. One couldn't even begin to keep count of all the insults that have been directed against us.

Viewing the situation from the standpoint of the balance of payments, the Poles want to introduce a moratorium on the payment of their debt to Western countries. If they declare a moratorium, then all Polish vessels in the waters of other states or in harbor, and all other Polish property in the countries to which Poland owes debts, will be seized. For this reason the Poles have given instructions to the captains of ships to refrain from entering ports and to stay in neutral waters.

Now I will offer several words about my discussion with Comrade Jaruzelski. He reaffirmed the request made earlier by Obodowski regarding the delivery of goods. Then in the evening I again went to Jaruzelski's office, accompanied by our ambassador and Comrade Kulikov. Also taking part in this discussion were Obodowski and the PZPR CC secretary who handles these matters. Jaruzelski was in a highly agitated state. It seemed that he had been deeply disturbed by the letter from the head of the Polish Catholic Church, Archbishop Glemp, who, as is known, promised to declare a holy war against the Polish authorities. True, Jaruzelski promptly responded that in the event of untoward activities by "Solidarity," they will detain all hostile elements.

As far as the party organizations are concerned, they are ruined and inactive in the outlying regions. And with regard to the party as a whole, Jaruzelski said that in essence it no longer exists. The country is being destroyed, and the outlying regions are not receiving any sort of reinforcement, because the Central Committee and government are not giving firm and clear-cut instructions. Jaruzelski himself has been transformed into a man who is extremely neurotic and diffident about his abilities.

RUSAKOV. Comrade Baibakov has cor-

rectly described the situation regarding the Polish economy. What, then, should we be doing now? It seems to me that we should deliver to Poland the goods provided for under the economic agreements, but that these deliveries should not exceed the quantity of goods we delivered in the first quarter of last year.

BREZHNEV. And are we able to give this much now?

BAIBAKOV. Leonid Ilyich, it can be given only by drawing on state reserves or at the expense of deliveries to the internal market.

RUSAKOV. The day before yesterday they had a conference of secretaries from the provincial committees. As Comrade Aristov⁹ reported, the secretaries of the provincial committees are completely baffled by Jaruzelski's speech, which did not present a clear, straightforward line. No one knows what will happen over the next few days. There was a conversation about "Operation X." At first, they said it would be on the night of 11-12 December, and then this was changed to the night of 12-13. And now they're already saying it won't be until around the 20th. What is envisaged is that the chairman of the State Council, Jablonski, will appear on radio and television and declare the introduction of martial law. At the same time, Jaruzelski said that the law on the introduction of martial law can be implemented only after it is considered by the Sejm, and the next session of the Sejm is not scheduled until 15 December. Thus, everything has become very complicated. The agenda of the Sejm has already been published, and it makes no mention of the introduction of martial law. But even if the government does intend to introduce martial law, "Solidarity" knows this very well and, for its part, has been preparing all necessary measures to cope with that.

Jaruzelski himself says that he intends to deliver an address to the Polish nation. But in his address he won't be speaking about the party. Instead he will appeal to Polish nationalist sentiments. Jaruzelski has talked about the need to proclaim a military dictatorship, of the sort that existed under Pilsudski.¹⁰

hope to receive assistance from other countries, up to and including the introduction of armed forces on the territory of Poland. Jaruzelski is basing this hope on the speech by Comrade Kulikov, who reportedly said that the USSR and other socialist countries would indeed give assistance to Poland with their armed forces. However, as far as I know, Comrade Kulikov did not say this directly, but merely repeated the words voiced earlier by L. I. Brezhnev about our determination not to leave Poland in the lurch.

If we consider what is going on in the provinces, one must candidly say that the strength of the party organizations there has been completely dissipated. To a certain degree the administrative apparatus there is still functioning, but in effect all power has now been transferred to the hands of "Solidarity." In his recent statements, Jaruzelski is apparently trying to pull the wool over our eyes, because his words fail to reflect a proper analysis. If the Polish comrades don't quickly get organized, prepare themselves, and resist the onslaught of "Solidarity," they will have no success at all in improving the situation in Poland.

ANDROPOV. From the discussions with Jaruzelski it's clear that they have not yet reached a firm consensus about the introduction of martial law. Despite the unanimous vote by the PZPR CC Politburo on the need to introduce martial law, we still haven't seen concrete measures on the part of the leadership. The extremists in "Solidarity" are attacking the Polish leadership by the throat. The Church in recent days has also clearly expressed its position, which in essence is now completely supportive of "Solidarity."

Of course in these circumstances the Polish comrades must act swiftly in launching "Operation X" and carrying it out. At the same time, Jaruzelski declares that we will resort to "Operation X" when "Solidarity" forces us to do so. This is a very disturbing sign, particularly because the latest session of the PZPR CC Politburo and the decision it adopted to introduce martial law had suggested that the Politburo was beginning to act more decisively. All the members of the Politburo expressed support for decisive action. This decision put pressure on Jaruzelski, and he is now compelled to find some way of extricating himself. Yesterday I spoke with Milewski and asked him what measures they intended and when it would be done. He replied that he simply doesn't know about "Operation X" and about the concrete timeframe in which it would be carried out. Thus, it would seem that either Jaruzelski is concealing from his comrades the plan of concrete action, or he is simply abandoning the idea of carrying out this step.

I'd now like to mention that Jaruzelski has been more than persistent in setting forth economic demands from us and has made the implementation of "Operation X" contingent on our willingness to offer economic assistance; and I

would say even more than that, he is raising the question, albeit indirectly, of receiving military assistance as well.

Now, if you look at the list of goods we are providing to the Polish comrades, we can candidly say that serious doubts arise about the necessity of supplying these products. For example, what is the connection between the success of "Operation X" and the delivery of fertilizer and certain other goods? In connection with this I would say that our position, as it was formulated earlier during the previous session of the Politburo and was expressed even earlier on several occasions by Leonid Ilyich, is entirely correct, and we must not depart from it at all.¹² In other words, we support the position of internationalist assistance, and we are alarmed by the situation unfolding in Poland; but as far as "Operation X" is concerned, that must entirely and unequivocally be decided by the Polish comrades themselves. Whatever they decide is what will be. We will not insist on any specific course, and we will not dissuade them from pursuing what they decide.

As far as economic assistance is concerned, it will of course be difficult for us to undertake anything of the scale and nature of what has been proposed. No doubt, something will have to give. But again I want to say that the mere posing of the question of the apportionment of goods supplied as economic assistance is an insolent way to approach things, and it is being done purely so that if we refrain from delivering something or other, they'll be able to lay all the blame on us. If Comrade Kulikov actually did speak about the introduction of troops, then I believe he did this incorrectly. We can't risk such a step. We don't intend to introduce troops into Poland. That is the proper position, and we must adhere to it until the end. I don't know how things will turn out in Poland, but even if Poland falls under the control of "Solidarity," that's the way it will be. And if the capitalist countries pounce on the Soviet Union, and you know they have already reached agreement on a variety of economic and political sanctions, that will be very burdensome for us. We must be concerned above all with our own country and about the strengthening of the Soviet Union. That is our main line.

In general, it seems to me that our position

On Information about the Polish question for the leaders of the fraternal countries.

To affirm the draft instructions to the Soviet ambassadors in Bulgaria, Hungary, the GDR, Mongolia, Czechoslovakia, the Republic of Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos (see attached).

CC SECRETARY

Regarding point 26 of Prot. No. 40

Secret

SOFIA, BUDAPEST, BERLIN, ULAN-BATOR,
PRAGUE, HAVANA, HANOI, VIENTIANE

SOVIET AMBASSADOR

CC: WARSAW — SOVIET AMBASSADOR

Pay a call on T. Zhivkov (J. Kadar, E. Honecker, Yu. Tsendenbal, G. Husak, F. Castro, Li Duan, K. Phomvihan) and, referring to the CPSU CC's instructions, transmit the following:

"As our friends know, the Polish leadership has introduced martial law in the country, announced the formation of a Military Council of National Salvation, and detained the most extremist elements of 'Solidarity,' the 'Confederation for an Independent Poland,' and other anti-socialist groups.

"A good impression has been created by W. Jaruzelski's address to the people, in which, in our view, all the basic questions were given appropriate emphasis. In particular, what is especially important is that the address reaffirmed the leading role of the PZPR and the commitment of the PPR to the socialist obligations stipulated by the Warsaw Pact.

"To ensure the success of the operation, the Polish comrades observed strict secrecy. Only a narrow circle around Jaruzelski knew about the action.¹³ Thanks to this our friends have succeeded in catching the enemy completely unawares, and the operation so far has been implemented satisfactorily.

"On the very eve of implementation of the projected operation, W. Jaruzelski communicated about it to Moscow.¹⁴ We informed him that the Soviet leadership looked with understanding upon the decision of the Polish comrades. In so doing we ensured that the Polish comrades would resolve these matters solely by internal means.

"In our preliminary evaluation, the measures taken by the Polish friends are an active step to repulse counterrevolution, and in this sense they correspond with the general line of all the fraternal countries.

"In these circumstances the question arises about offering political and moral support to the Polish friends and also about giving additional

economic assistance. The Soviet leadership, as previously, will act on the Polish question in close contact with the fraternal countries."

Confirm transmittal by telegram.

* * * * *

**CPSU CC Politburo transcript (excerpt),
14 January 1982**

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO
14 January 1982

Presided over by Comrade L. I. BREZHNEV.

Also taking part: C[omra]des. Yu. V. Andropov, M. S. Gorbachev, V. V. Grishin, A. A. Gromyko, A. P. Kirilenko, A. Ya. Pel'she, M. A. Suslov, N. A. Tikhonov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, P. N. Demichev, V. V. Kuznetsov, B. N. Ponomarev, V. I. Dolgikh, M. V. Zimyanin, K. V. Rusakov

2. On the Results of the Negotiations with the PZPR CC Politburo Member and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish People's Republic Cde. J. Czyrek

BREZHNEV. I think we all agree that Mikhail Andreevich [Suslov]'s and Andrei Andreevich [Gromyko]'s discussions with Cde. Czyrek were useful. Western officials, especially the Americans, are exerting enormous pressure on Poland. In such circumstances, it is important to offer constant political support for our friends and to bolster their spirits. One cannot permit their spirits to sag or to allow them to relinquish what they have achieved with such difficulty.

Martial law in the PPR has already lasted a month. As Jaruzelski says, the counterrevolution is now crushed. However, the tasks ahead are more complicated.

After introducing relative stability in the country, the Polish comrades must now, one might say, resolve the strategic problems of what to do with the trade unions, how to revive the economy, how to change the consciousness of the masses, etc.

The most important question is the situation in the PZPR. Our friends are trying to find a solution. No doubt, Jaruzelski does not intend to disband the party or to change its name, but he can exploit martial law to carry out a sweeping purge. This might yield good results.

In general one gets the impression that the general as a political actor is very strong and is able, on most occasions, to find proper solutions. Sometimes it seems that he is too cautious and acts more often than necessary with an eye to the West and the Church. But in the current situation such gestures will only ruin things. Along with firm, hardline measures on matters of principle, one

THE CARTER-BREZHNEV PROJECT
U.S.-Soviet Relations and the Collapse of Detente
in the Late 1970s: What Went Wrong?

Ed. note: With this issue, the CWHIP Bulletin begins to publish findings from the Carter-Brezhnev Project, an exploration of U.S.-Soviet relations and the collapse of superpower detente in the late 1970s. The project gathers former government officials, scholars, and newly-declassified documents at a series of conferences intended to produce a deeper understanding of the troubles that bedeviled relations between Washington and Moscow between 1976 and 1981, in the hope that the results will enhance public and scholarly analyses of those historical events and at the same time contribute to present and future U.S.-Russian relations. It has been organized by an international collaboration of institutions and individuals spearheaded by Dr. James G. Blight of the Center for Foreign Policy Development (CFPD) of the Thomas J. Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University. (Blight and his collaborators previously organized the series of five oral history conferences on the Cuban Missile Crisis between 1987 and 1992 that brought together U.S., Soviet (and then Russian), and Cuban former officials and scholars and resulted in a series of pub-

retary of State Cyrus Vance, former National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, and former Director of Central Intelligence Stansfield Turner, and on the Soviet/Russian side, former First Deputy Foreign Ministry Georgy M. Kornienko, former ambassadors Anatoly Dobrynin and Oleg Troyanovsky, and former Warsaw Pact commander Gen. Anatoly Gribkov. Project activities so far have included a planning meeting, held at Pocantico, New York, in October 1992; a conference on "SALT II and the Growth of Mistrust," on 6-9 May 1994 at the Musgrove Plantation, St. Simons Island, Georgia; a small oral history session on Soviet Policy in the Third World, in which Kornienko and former CPSU Central Committee (CC) International Department official Karen N. Brutents participated, held at Lysebu, Norway, in October 1994; and a conference on "Global Competition and the Deterioration of U.S.-Soviet Relations, 1977-1980," on 23-26 March 1995 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida; an additional conference, focussing on the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan and the collapse of detente in 1979-80, is planned for Oslo, Norway. (A related workshop on the Polish Crisis, 1980-81, is being organized by NSA and CWHIP in conjunction with the Institute of Political Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw.)

For each conference, an effort is made to open and declassify new U.S. and Russian archival documents for the dual purpose of contributing to the conference discussion--which is subsequently transcribed and published--and to scholarly research and publications. The declassified documents are generally available at the appropriate archival repository, and are also available at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C.

In the case of the Russian documents printed below beginning on page 144 (with one exception, the 18 February 1977 CPSU CC directive, which had been

previously declassified in Moscow), all belong to a group specially declassified by the Russian Foreign Ministry in early 1994 for use at the Musgrove conference, which centered on the distrust and acrimony surrounding the March 1977 visit to Moscow of Secretary of State Vance. They include a complete set of the correspondence between President Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev from the time of Carter's inauguration on 20 January 1977 until shortly before Vance's departure; cables from Dobrynin describing two important conversations, a 1 December 1976 meeting during the transition period with unofficial Carter emissary Averell Harriman and a 21 March 1977 discussion with Vance in which the U.S. proposals at Moscow were previewed (unfortunately, Dobrynin's record of his first conversation with Carter, on 1 February 1977, which appears to have had an important influence on Soviet perceptions of the new president, has not yet been made available); also included is the aforementioned CPSU CC Politburo directive as an illustration of the rising tensions between Washington and Moscow during this period on the human rights issue.

Georgy Markovich Kornienko, the former senior Soviet diplomat and CPSU CC Politburo member, contributes an introduction to and interpretation of the documents and the issues they illuminate, adapted and translated from his Russian-language memoirs, which have not as yet appeared in English. Introducing Kornienko's analysis, in turn, is Mark Garrison, who during the Carter Administration served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and who, based at CFPD, has been actively involved in the Carter-Brezhnev Project.

The CWHIP Bulletin plans to publish additional materials emerging from the Carter-Brezhnev Project and related research in future issues.

Hopes Raised and Dashed—
Carter, Brezhnev, and SALT II:
An Introduction to G.M. Kornienko's
Commentary

by Mark Garrison

For the last decade or more of the Brezhnev era, Georgy Markovich Kornienko was the principal Americanist in the Soviet Foreign Ministry (not counting Gromyko, who considered himself an expert in dealing with Americans), rising to the rank of First Deputy Minister and membership in the Party's Central Committee. Kornienko's recollections about the hopes for U.S.-Soviet relations generated in Moscow by Jimmy Carter's election in 1976, and about the dashing of those hopes, explains the title of his article (and the chapter of the book from which it is drawn). Although not a document from the archives, it provides an insight into Soviet thinking, or at least thinking in the Soviet Foreign Ministry, not available in documents.

What mattered most in the U.S.-Soviet relationship, in Kornienko's view, was the negotiation of a strategic nuclear arms treaty. He believes that the defining moments on that issue, and for relations between the two countries during the rest of the Carter Administra-

tion, came in February and March 1977. Brezhnev felt strongly that negotiations on SALT II should proceed within the framework he had agreed with Ford at Vladivostok in late 1974; he had overridden opposition from his own military to achieve that framework, and considered it a personal achievement. Early signals from Carter, conveyed through Averell Harriman prior to the inauguration, led the Soviet side to expect that Carter was prepared to start with Vladivostok before moving on to deeper cuts. (Contrary to the charge by some Carter Administration officials that the Soviets should have known better than to listen to an allegedly self-appointed intermediary, Harriman's papers in the Library of Congress contain clear evidence that prior to the election he was acting on explicit instructions from Carter.) Soviet hopes were encouraged by Carter's first letter to Brezhnev after taking office, dated January 26, 1977. But Carter's next letter, dated February 14, was a rude awakening in Moscow.

Kornienko's commentary illuminates the dry texts of exchanges between the governments at the time, including the Carter-Brezhnev correspondence (which Russian Foreign Ministry released in 1994 for the Carter-Brezhnev project, organized by Brown University's

Watson Institute). It is possible to see how the Soviets convinced themselves that Carter was signaling, without actually saying so, that he was willing to start from Vladivostok, and why they were therefore incensed by his February 14 letter that did not even mention Vladivostok but urged moving on immediately to a grander vision. The stage was thus set for a rude rebuff to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance when he came to Moscow at the end of March bearing Carter's deep-cuts proposal. Although SALT II was completed and signed over two years later, the hope on both sides that rapid progress on strategic arms might lead to a new era in U.S.-Soviet relations was frustrated. Kornienko believes a deep-cuts SALT III could have been worked out by the end of Carter's term absent the opening contretemps over Vladivostok. Kornienko places the blame squarely on the Carter administration; without saying so (he is not given to psychological interpretations), he implies that Brezhnev's attachment to Vladivostok was emotional as well as political and that the U.S. side should have taken that into account. He acknowledges no misgivings that at the crucial point in early 1977 the Soviet side did not summon up even that degree of flexibility that eventually led to the conclusion of SALT II.

COLD

paign statements that the final aim in disarmament must be the abolition of all nuclear weapons on our planet, Carter characterized as a “critically important first step” on the road to this aim the “achievement of the SALT-2 Treaty without delay” and agreement after that on movement toward further limitations and reductions of strategic weapons. In the context of previous public and private statements by Carter, these formulations were understood in Moscow as signifying his readiness first to quickly conclude and sign the SALT-2 Treaty, based on the Vladivostok accords of 1974 and made concrete in subsequent negotiations still under Ford. Such an approach was fully in accord with the intentions of the Soviet leadership, as was the proposal of the President to send Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to Moscow at an early date to discuss these questions. Consequently, Brezhnev’s reply of February 4 to Carter maintained an extremely positive tone.

But the following letter from Carter dated February 14 not only puzzled Brezhnev and his colleagues but aroused their indignation. In his letter, while as before calling for the rapid conclusion of work on the SALT-2 Treaty, Carter at the same time made it clear that he did not at all have in mind that treaty whose framework was worked out at Vladivostok and in subsequent negotiations. In the first place, Carter proposed to anticipate already in this treaty, rather than in the next one, a “significant reduction” in strategic weapons, and secondly he proposed (also contrary to the Vladivostok accords) to leave out of the SALT-2 Treaty, for later negotiations, long-range cruise missiles, that is to give a free hand to a strategic arms race in those directions where the USA, as in most other cases, was at that time ahead of the USSR.

In Carter’s letter there were also other elements that caused irritation among Soviet leaders, in particular his declared intent to take a public position on human rights in the USSR. Added to this was the public letter from Carter to A.D. Sakharov. But these irritating elements were not the main things that concerned Moscow. The principal disappointment was the clear departure by the new President from Vladivostok. In view of the internal collisions that Brezhnev had had to endure to achieve agreement with Ford in Vladivostok, such a turn by Carter was extremely painful to him not

only because of the unacceptable nature of the new American proposals but also as an antagonistic act toward him personally. Consequently, Brezhnev’s response was marked by a hard, and in places sharp, tone.

A similar tone was maintained in Carter’s message to Brezhnev of March 4, which arrived in Moscow not through the usual diplomatic channels but via the “hot line” between the White House and the Kremlin, which was reserved for use in emergency situations. As Carter’s national security adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, wrote in his memoirs,⁵ this was done at his initiative, in order that the President’s message would go immediately to Brezhnev, bypassing the Foreign Ministry. But the result turned out worse, since at the Moscow end of the “hot line,” maintained by the KGB, translators were on duty who were far from highly qualified, and were moreover unfamiliar with the subject matter of the strategic arms negotiations. Therefore their translation of Carter’s message was marred by many inaccuracies and rough spots, which did not exactly facilitate its good reception by Soviet leaders.

Brezhnev’s response of March 15 was formulated in calmer tones. But the positions of the sides before Vance’s visit to Moscow scheduled for the end of March were basically divergent. While the Soviet side firmly maintained the necessity of completing work on the SALT-2 Treaty on the basis of the Vladivostok accords, the American side was attempting to transform the Vladivostok accords into something completely different, unacceptable to the Soviet leadership from the purely military-strategic as well as the political and psychological point of view. And as the time for the Vance visit approached, it became more and more clear—from Carter’s public statements, from controlled “leaks” in the American press,

and was in 1993 from the article “On the completion of the Vladivostok accords (1974)” in *Digital*

areas to which Mr. Brezhnev had referred. With good will on both sides, President-elect Carter believes, progress can be made in the matter of cooperation between the USA and the USSR, which will strengthen peace in the whole world.

Harriman said further—continuing to read—that Carter is very satisfied with the tone of the General Secretary's message. Noting that before he assumes the post of President he is not in a position to conduct negotiations, Carter at the same time declared that when he receives the authority, he will quickly and insistently act to achieve an agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons. Carter added that he would like to be sure that limitations will be mutually advantageous and that the relative power of the two sides will not be changed during the process of reductions. In addition he stressed that a means must be found to assure our peoples that the agreement will be fulfilled.

The current problems in the negotiations on the limitation of nuclear weapons are too technical for him to comment on at the present time, and he, Carter, cannot, it goes without saying, be bound by the past negotiations. At the same time he fully will take into account the work that has been done over the past two years.

Further Harriman said that Carter hopes that the negotiations on limiting strategic weapons will be concluded at a summit meeting, i.e. at a personal meeting between him, Carter, and L.I. Brezhnev.

Carter thinks that the negotiations which will begin after he assumes the post of President would be accelerated if it would be possible to maintain the practice, which had justified itself in the past, of dispatching at the decisive moment in the negotiations a special trusted representative of the President to set forth the President's proposals and thoughts personally to General Secretary L.I. Brezhnev.

Harriman further reported in confidence that Carter had asked him whether L.I. Brezhnev would accept an invitation if he, Carter, invites the General Secretary to come to the United States for the final stage of the negotiations and the conclusion of an agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons.

Harriman, in his words, had expressed to Carter his own opinion to the effect that he hopes that L.I. Brezhnev will accept such an invitation, insofar as there is already established a definite order of visits of the countries' leaders to each other for summit meetings, and it was now the President's turn to invite the General Secretary to the United States.

along with the question of limitation of strategic arms will be a priority in his plans regarding negotiations with the Soviet Union after he assumes the post of President.

He, Carter, is very worried by the spread of nuclear technology around the world. And although many chances had already over the past years been missed, there is still, in his opinion, time to take certain joint measures to put a brake on this process. As on the question of limitation of strategic weapons, so far Carter has no more concrete thoughts on this issue. In Harriman's words, Carter himself said that the details of his position still need to be worked out.

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA
[signature]

/A. DOBRYNIN/

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, Moscow; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff.]

* * * * *

President Carter's Letter to General Secretary Brezhnev, January 26, 1977

Top secret
Copy 1

Embassy of the USSR in the USA
Washington, D.C.

From the diary
of DOBRYNIN A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with the USA Secretary of State

C. VANCE

January 26, 1977

Secretary of State Vance today transmitted the following letter of President Carter to L.I. Brezhnev:

"Confidential"

To His Excellency
Leonid I. Brezhnev
The General Secretary
of the Central Committee
of the Communist Party
of the Soviet Union
Moscow, Kremlin

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

Having assumed the position of President of the United States, I want to share with you my views about relations between our two countries.

I want to express my gratitude for the unofficial letters which I received from you, and in this connection I want to confirm that my aim is to improve relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of reciprocity, mutual respect and advantage. I will pay close personal attention to this goal, as will Secretary of State Vance.

I read your public statements with great interest and they make me believe that we share a common aspiration for strengthening and preserving the perspectives for stable peace.

As I understand your highly important speech in Tula, the Soviet Union will not strive for superiority in arms, it will stand against such a conception, and that it will require only a defense which is strong enough to deter any potential enemy. The United States does not want anything less or more for itself either. Therefore, our two countries, with consistency and wisdom,

the following letter from L.I. Brezhnev to President J. Carter:

“To His Excellency
James E. Carter
The President of the United States of America

Dear Mister President,

I want on my own behalf and on behalf of my colleagues in the leadership to congratulate you once more on your assumption of the position of the President of the United States.

I attentively familiarized myself with your letter of January 26, and find it in general constructive and hope inspiring. We accepted with satisfaction confirmation of the fact that the goal of your policy is improvement of relations with the Soviet Union, and also your intention to pay attention to this. This coincides with our basic approach, which I expressed again in public not long ago. I want to stress now that we are ready to realize by mutual efforts a new major shift in the relations between two our countries.

As far as I understand we are establishing with you a business-like, trustful dialogue.

It is important, of course, that from the very beginning of our contact we have clarity and mutual understanding of principle questions.

The most important thing here—and it is confirmed by past experience—is the necessity to strictly observe the basic principles of equality, mutual consideration of lawful interests, mutual benefit and non-interference into the internal affairs of the other side. With this, and only this approach from both sides, in complete accord with the “Fundamentals of Mutual Relations” between our countries signed in 1972, can a stable, progressive development of relations between the USSR and the USA, and the potential to find mutually acceptable solutions to emerging issues, be provided.

For objective reasons, at the present time the central sphere of relations between the USA and USSR really is to ensure cooperation between our two countries with the goal of stopping the arms race and of disarmament. Only in this way can the main task of our peoples, as well as that of all other peoples—elimination of the threat of war, first of all, of course, nuclear-missile war—be completed.

As you also recognize, we have to finish the development of a new agreement on limitation of strategic offensive weapons without delays. We believe that this task is completely manageable. Because the main parameters of the agreement are, in fact, already determined on the basis of the agreement which was reached in Vladivostok. The successful conduct of this exclusively important and necessary affair to its conclusion would allow us to start hard work on more far-going measures in this area and, undoubtedly, would give a new impulse for a constructive

development of Soviet-American relations in general.

We believe that it is these questions of limitation of strategic weapons that will occupy the main place in the conversations with Secretary of State C. Vance when he comes to Moscow.

In our opinion, without further delay we have to put into practice Soviet-American Treaties on limitation of underground tests of nuclear weapons and on explosions for peaceful purposes. At the same time we have to—and we are ready to cooperate with the USA on this issue—intensify our efforts directed at a total and universal ban on nuclear weapons tests and at prevention of nuclear proliferation.

We want to bring about a shift in the Vienna negotiations on reduction of armed forces and weapons in Central Europe. We would like the new American government to treat with attention the proposals which were introduced there by the countries of the Warsaw Treaty last year.

There are other questions of limitation of weapons and of disarmament which are waiting to be solved. The Soviet Union has put forward concrete proposals on many of them, and we hope that your government approach this review constructively.

Of course, under conditions when it is still not possible yet to achieve a halt to the arms race in the world, we can not but take care about security of our country and our allies. Our defensive potential must be sufficient so that nobody will risk to attack us or threaten us with attack. In this respect, using your expression, we do not want anything more or less for ourselves.

Yet I want to stress once more with all determination that the Soviet Union does not strive for superiority in weapons. We are deeply convinced that genuine security for all countries and for each of them in particular is based not on competition in the sphere of weapons, but

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February 4, 1977

In Vance's own opinion, it is a good letter. It will be given to the President today.

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA
[signature]

/A.DOBRYNIN/

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, Moscow; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff.]

* * * * *

**Carter's Letter to Brezhnev,
February 14, 1977**

TOP SECRET
Copy No. 1

THE USSR EMBASSY IN THE USA
Washington, D.C.

From the journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with Assistant to the President
Z. Brzezinski

February 15, 1977

Today Brzezinski, Assistant to the President, called me. He said that President Carter had just written a letter in response to L.I. Brezhnev.

Since the White House is preoccupied with meetings with the President of Mexico, he, Brzezinski, asked acting Secretary of State [Warren] Christopher, who was with him at the moment, to give me that letter.

Brzezinski said that he would be ready, should I have any questions, to discuss various aspects of this letter in a couple of days during our next unofficial meeting (we had a previous arrangement with Brzezinski to meet for breakfast this coming Friday, i.e. on February 18).

An hour later Christopher handed me a letter to L.I. Brezhnev, signed by President Carter:

"To his Excellency
Leonid I. Brezhnev,
the General Secretary of the Central
Committee of the Communist Party
of the Soviet Union
Moscow, Kremlin

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

I am very pleased to note that our first exchange of letters has brought us at once to

consideration of the central questions of universal peace. Our two great countries share a special responsibility not only for doing everything possible for the lessening of tension, but also for working out a series of mutual understandings which can lead to a more reliable and less dangerous political climate in the world.

I know the history of your country and admire it. As a child I developed my literary taste reading your classics. I also know how much suffering your people endure very recently, during the last war. I know about your own role in this war and about the losses suffered by each Soviet family. That is why I believe that we both are sincere in our declarations about our devotion to peace, and that gives me hope for the future.

The question is how we can turn this devotion into reality. How can we start a process which could widen our cooperation and simultaneously restrain and finally limit our rivalry. This rivalry—it is real, extremely expensive, and undeniable—can at any moment become very dangerous, which is why we must not allow it to develop without restraint. In my opinion, this demands, at least, first, work to widen where possible our coordinated efforts, especially in the area of limitation of nuclear weapons; and second, to demonstrate highly deliberate restraint towards those unstable regions of the world where direct confrontation could arise between us.

I especially welcome your desire to develop cooperation with the idea of stopping the arms race, and to achieve without delay concrete agreements on disarmament.

It is precisely in the sphere of arms limitation that we must, in my opinion, put the main emphasis. I will as always give it my personal attention and I can assure you that the officials in my administration who are responsible for these matters will consider any and all of your proposals in the most careful way and with the most positive attitude.

It goes without saying that we must have mutual security from successful attack, and we have to use our role as the most mighty states to start a significant reduction of the level of conventional and nuclear arms. We have no definite time limits as such, but it is really necessary for us to achieve some maximum progress without delay.

I agree that in our exchanges of opinion and in the conversations which Secretary of State Vance will have in Moscow at the end of March we must concentrate mainly on the question of achieving an agreement on the second stage of strategic arms limitation, possibly including some significant reductions of the level of forces. Maybe

ments, but I treat them only as steps on the way to the common goal of bringing a total halt to nuclear testing. Until then our government will observe these unratified agreements.

As far as I know there were proposals in the past to demilitarize the Indian Ocean, and these proposals were not seriously studied. I asked my colleagues to study the the Indian Ocean question thoroughly, so that we will be ready to speak more specifically about the possibility of reaching an agreement, which could promote universal peace. I ask you to inform me of your concrete ideas on this matter. I presume that in such a situation it makes sense to pay particular attention to the military activity of both countries in this region. This, as it seems, is that obvious case where mutual profit calls for a balanced agreement leading to a general reduction of military efforts in the whole region.

As you know from my public statements, I intend energetically to continue attempts to reduce the sale and transfer of conventional weapons to countries of the third world and I hope that you will join these efforts. It seems to me a senseless competition and we, as the main suppliers, are particularly responsible for placing a limit to such transfers. Obviously other providers should also be involved in these efforts, and we will widen the discussion of the question to include them.

We hope to see exactly this kind of a responsible approach when the Secretary of State Vance comes to Moscow.

This refers to the problem of strategic weapons limitation as well as to other questions, connected with stopping the arms race. We definitely are counting on the American side supporting our proposals, including the proposal to ban creation of new kinds and systems of weapons of mass destruction, to ban chemical weapons, and to conclude a world treaty on non-use of force. Our proposals on this and some other questions, including that of the Indian

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

Your letter of February 25 raised in me some concern because of its moderately sharp tone, because in it there was no recognition of my own good intentions, and because it did not contain any positive answer to the concrete proposals which were set forth in my previous letter. Differences between our countries are deep enough and I hope that you and I will never aggravate them with doubts regarding our respective personal motives.

The fact is that neither in Vladivostok, nor during the subsequent negotiations, was any final agreement achieved on the question of cruise missiles and the bomber "Backfire". I am sure that such agreements can be achieved in the future, and I am committed to achieving them. I understand your concern about postponing these questions until future negotiations, yet I believe that we will gain a definite benefit in that we will give an impulse toward a quicker resolution of an agreement, and I want to stress that postponement of these two controversial questions would be aimed only at expediting a quicker agreement, with all its positive political consequences. I am also sure that with a mutual demonstration of good will we should be able to reach an agreement on such questions as conventional weapons, tactical nuclear arms and throw weight.

Not for a minute do I allow myself to underestimate the difficulties which stand in our way. Solving these problems will demand determination, patience and decisiveness. Keeping precisely this in mind, I wanted to make two more suggestions, and both of which aim at resolving the disagreements between us.

First of all, I think it would be extremely useful, if you shared with us your own views on a significant reduction of strategic forces levels which we could achieve in the next four or five years. During previous negotiations on strategic weapons limitation, we were inclined to take small steps in the direction of a vague future; I propose that instead of this we now strive to define a concrete, longer-term goal, towards which we later could advance step by step with a greater guarantee of success.

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L.I. Brezhnev.

Dear Mr. President,

Having become acquainted with your letter of March 4, I would like once again to set forth the essence of our understanding of the situation regarding the preparation of the agreement (for the period until 1985) on limitation of offensive strategic weapons and in more detail to explain our position on the concrete questions which so far remain unresolved.

Let me start with several general considerations. We, it goes without saying, are in favor of concluding an agreement as quickly as possible, without delay. But an effort to do that on the basis of some sort of artificial, simplified variant will hardly accelerate the matter, if we have in mind the goal which we have posed for ourselves, that is: to genuinely limit strategic weapons, guided by the principle of not inflicting any loss on either of the contracting sides. In exactly the same way, the preparation of an agreement would not be accelerated if while setting aside those questions on which a lot of work had been done, we took up some sort of new questions, particularly those which have no direct relation to the subject of the given agreement.

The conclusion of a new strategic arms limitation agreement between our countries, of course, would have great political significance both for Soviet-American relations and in a wider context. However, this will become possible only in the event that the agreement represents a genuine step towards limiting strategic weapons. In the contrary event, there would be an opposite effect.

And so it would be if the issue of cruise missiles was left outside the agreement. This question is not only tied to the heart of a new agreement, but, and this is vitally important, much has already been worked out. Even certain concrete formulas have already been agreed. To propose now to leave cruise missiles outside the framework of the agreement would not only mean returning to initial positions but would also leave open the path for the development of the arms race in a new and dangerous direction.

I don't think that this is in any way consonant with the goals of a quick conclusion of a strategic arms limitation agreement. Therefore we confirm our concrete proposals on the whole complex of cruise missiles, including:

—to view heavy bombers equipped with cruise missiles with a range of 600 km. to 2500 km. as delivery vehicles equipped with MIRV with individual placements, and accordingly to count them under the ceiling (depending on the type of heavy bomber) established for that type of delivery vehicle—1320 items; cruise missiles ALCM (trans. i.e. "Air to Ground") with a range

of more than 2500 km. will be banned completely; the equipping with cruise missiles with a range of between 600 km. and 2500 km. of other types of flying apparatus besides heavy bombers will likewise be forbidden.

—all cruise missiles based at sea or on land with a range of more than 600 km. also should be entirely banned.

Once again, I would like also to remind you that our agreement to count under the ceiling for MIRVed missiles (1320 items) all missiles of those types, of which at least one missile was tested with MIRV, was and remains conditional on achieving final agreement on the issues related to cruise missiles.

As for the Soviet intermediate bomber which you call "Backfire," we provided official data about the range of this plane (2200 km.) and expressed readiness to reflect in the negotiating record this data as well as our intention not to provide this plane with the capability to cover intercontinental distances—all this under the condition that the question of "Backfire" once and for ever will be completely withdrawn from further negotiations. We continue to maintain this position.

The question of mobile launchers for ballistic missiles of intercontinental range, naturally, must find its solution in the current agreement. Earlier we proposed an agreement by which during the period covered by this agreement the sides should restrain from deployment of mobile launchers for ground-based ICBMs. Our approach to the question of possible further strategic forces reductions by the USSR and the USA is laid out in my letter of February 25 of this year. I repeat, we will be ready to start discussing this question immediately following the signing of the agreement. Yet in that case we must take into consideration factors about which I have already written to you on February 25, such as: the difference in the geographic positions of the sides, presence of American means of nuclear forward basing and an operation of air-based delivery vehicles near the territory of the USSR, the fact that the USA NATO allies nuclear weapons and other circumstances, which must not be ignored.

Taking into consideration the facts and ideas laid out above regarding cruise missiles, it could be possible for the sides not only to limit the level of strategic nuclear means delivery vehicles (2400 and 1320), but also to discuss the number of such vehicles, which are subject to reduction even before expiration date of the current agreement.

Ideas, expressed above, represent our official position, which we intend to maintain during the coming negotiations with Secretary of State Vance. It goes without saying that the additional questions, which you, Mr. President, mentioned in your letter also demand attention. We will be ready to set forth our preliminary ideas on these questions. Special negotiations would be carried

out on those questions where we note a chance of finding a mutually acceptable solution. Should we make some progress, corresponding agreements could be signed simultaneously with the agreement on strategic weapons limitation.

In conclusion, I would like to point out, Mr. President, that I do not quite understand the meaning of your statement about the tone of my letter of February 25. Its tone is usual—business-like and respectful. If you mean the directness and openness, with which our views are expressed in it, my reasons were and are that this very character of our dialogue coincides with the interests of the matter. But if you mean our principle attitude to the attempts to raise questions which go beyond the limits of interstate relations,—there can be no different reaction from our side.

I believe that our private correspondence will serve the interests of constructive development of relations between our countries.

With respect, L. Brezhnev, March 15, 1977".

Vance said that it [the letter] will be reported to the President.

The Ambassador of the USSR in the USA (signature)

/A. DOBRYNIN/

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, Moscow; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff]

* * * * *

Dobrynin's Conversation with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, March 21, 1977

Top Secret
Copy No. 1

Embassy of the USSR in the USA
Washington

From the Journal of
Dobrynin, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION
with the Secretary of State of the USA
C. Vance

March 21, 1977

I met with Vance on his invitation.

The Secretary of State said that in view of my forthcoming departure for Moscow on the eve of his arrival there he would like in the most general terms to describe their approach to a new agreement with the Soviet Union on the limitation of strategic weapons. In this regard he

THE SUDOPLATOV CONTROVERSY:

The Authors of *SPECIAL TASKS* Respond to Critics

[Ed. note: The previous issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin* (Issue 4, Fall 1994) contained several articles that expressed criticisms of a book by former KGB officer Pavel Sudoplatov—*Special Tasks: The Memoirs of an Unwanted Witness—A Soviet Spymaster*, by Pavel and Anatolii Sudoplatov with Jerrold L. and Leona P. Schecter (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1994)—particularly its assertion that several leading scientists involved in the Manhattan Project, including Enrico Fermi, J. Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard, and Niels Bohr, knowingly and improperly provided secret atomic information to Soviet espionage. At the time, the *Bulletin* invited Sudoplatov or his co-authors to respond in the next issue, and they do so below, in letters from the Schecters, from Pavel Sudoplatov (for the paperback edition of *Special Tasks*), and from Stanford University professor Robert Conquest, who contributed the foreword to *Special Tasks*. As before, the *Bulletin* welcomes contributions from anyone wishing to contribute evidence to the debate, or to respond to statements contained in the letters below, in future issues.]

April 21, 1995

TO THE EDITOR:

A year after the publication of *SPECIAL TASKS* by Pavel A. Sudoplatov, and the media uproar it evoked, not one of Sudoplatov's critics has shown him to be mistaken in any significant aspect of his revelation of how Soviet atomic espionage was conducted.

In the *CWIHP Bulletin*, fall 1994, three critics were given extensive space to attack the validity of Sudoplatov's account without providing any opportunity for opposing views to be stated examining the validity of their criticisms. There was no presentation from those who consider Sudoplatov's oral history a major contribution to understanding the Stalin period and atomic espionage. David Holloway, Yuri Smirnov and Vlad Zubok, each with their own unstated agenda, dismiss both Sudoplatov's account of Soviet atomic espionage and the Bohr documents that verify a part of it. Attacks on

Sudoplatov's character are not substantive rebuttal. It is rather curious that David Holloway, who at great length explains the difficulties of meshing the sources of his scholarship, refuses to listen to the one living participant who, because of the senior role he played, has a unique perspective on how the parts of the story fit together.

The publication of *SPECIAL TASKS* brought forth a latent and angry battle in Moscow over who should take credit for the success of the Soviet atomic bomb. Lining up against Sudoplatov and his co-workers were scientists who feared that they would lose the honors and credit they received for their contribution. Yuri Smirnov is the leader of this group. Standing beside them are present day Russian intelligence officers, successors to the KGB, who had their own publishing contract to tell the atomic espionage story and were under pressure to produce documentation on their alleged super-spy Perseus. On Sudoplatov's side, able to verify pieces of the story, were elderly intelligence veterans, fearful of coming forward because of threats to their pensions.

This angry debate spilled over into the American media. Writers like Holloway and Richard Rhodes, who had done significant research among scientists, but were unable to come up with primary sources on Soviet atomic espionage, acted as surrogates for the scientists and attacked Sudoplatov. Holloway relies heavily on the point of view of surviving scientist Yuli Khariton, whose interest is not to give credit to the contributions of the hated Soviet intelligence apparatus. Sudoplatov, contrary to claims by Smirnov and Zubok, has been evenhanded in giving credit to both scientists and intelligence officers.

We helped Sudoplatov tell his story by organizing the chronology and translating his words into readable English. We did not alter accounts of poisoning, terrorism, espionage and perversions of ideology that made him an unwanted witness in Russia and an NKVD monster in the West. He remains a Stalinist with few regrets. We did not soften his tone nor did we enhance his account.

It was professionally irresponsible for the *Bulletin* to print Smirnov's and Zubok's

dismissal of the Bohr documents without an equal side-by-side explanation from physicists who have affirmed the intelligence value of the answers Bohr gave to the questions prepared by Soviet intelligence in November 1945. Holloway's contention that Bohr did not go beyond the Smythe report in his replies to Terletsky has been seriously contested by physicists who examined the documents (See *Sunday Times* [London], June 26, 1994). The claim that Bohr was only a theoretician and could not have commented on engineering problems is belied by Margaret Gowing, an author who wrote about the British bomb program and who is highly praised by Holloway.

Smirnov and Zubok can hardly be counted disinterested critics, since each is transmitting the position of his constituency.

A few of the recent affirmations of Sudoplatov's story are worthy of note:

According to Yuri I. Drozdov, former chief of KGB Illegal Operations 1980 to 1991, and who served in the New York residency of the KGB from 1975 to 1979, "Sudoplatov's information on the cooperation of outstanding American physicists with Soviet intelligence is quite reliable."

Drozdov's statement was solicited and quoted by the editorial board of *Juridical Gazette*, a Moscow publication, in a footnote to a book review of "Special Tasks" in March, 1995.

The review, written by Leonid Vladimirovich Shebarshin, head of the First Chief Directorate (foreign operations) of the KGB from 1988 to 1991, reads in part:

"The book *SPECIAL TASKS* is very attractive and in its totality appears to be reliable. If there were legends in the intelligence service Pavel A. Sudoplatov would have been the hero, but the traditions of the intelligence service are not to reminisce. The more important the case the narrower the list of people who know about it, and these people are accustomed to keep silence.

"Now (fifty years later) the archives are stolen and the enemies of Russia exploit the secrets of the country in their interests. Here comes a remarkable and surprising event in the midst of these unjust judgments, where false witnesses dominate the scene and where

the judges pursue their own goals. Here comes a witness who is alive and tries to speak the truth about the events of many years ago.”

The director of the Russian State Archives, Sergei Vladimirovich Mironenko, affirmed that Sudoplatov’s account of Soviet atomic espionage was “correct in essential points” according to documents of the NKVD from 1944 to 1953, which were released in June 1994. (See *Moscow News* #23, 1994). They include the documents on Terletsky’s mission to Niels Bohr and the formal establishment of the committee headed by Sudoplatov to coordinate atomic espionage. “The main sensation is not this but what we learned about the system. We therefore are confronted with the necessity of looking into other documents,” said Mironenko, who urged that the Presidential archives and the security ministry archives open their files.

Former KGB officer Vladimir Barkovsky (who handled agents in England) has affirmed Sudoplatov’s account that Donald Maclean was the first to warn the Soviets that the British were seriously investigating the possibility of constructing an atomic weapon. British critics of Sudoplatov were in error in attributing the early report to John Cairncross.

The presence of intelligence officer Kosoy, a TASS correspondent under cover in Sweden, confirmed a triangular link among Sweden, the U.S. and the Soviet Union as a path for espionage information.

Soviet intelligence officer Arkady Rylov, who handled incoming espionage documents for Sudoplatov, stated on Russian TV that Semyon (Sam) Semyonov, a Soviet intelligence officer instrumental in acquiring atomic secrets in the United States, told him the sources of the material were Oppenheimer, Fermi and Szilard.

Zoya Zarubin, who was a young translator working for Sudoplatov in the early 1940s, stated in a videotaped interview that she worked closely with Igor Kurchatov (director of the Soviet atomic bomb program) to translate the first espionage documents into workable Russian. She said that Soviet intelligence officer Zoya Rybkina, for whom she also worked, proudly told her that she was in contact with Niels Bohr on important information. Elizabeth Zarubin, the intelligence officer whom Sudoplatov said was successful in penetrating

Oppenheimer’s circle, was Zoya Zarubin’s stepmother.

In his own letter, which will appear in the forthcoming paperback edition of SPECIAL TASKS, Pavel Sudoplatov offers more

with former colleagues who worked with me and they reminded me that in 1949 top level American nuclear scientists turned down the approach of our illegals in the United States, led by Colonel Rudolf Abel, to resume cooperation "with the international anti-fascist scientific community." By that time the Cold War was on and the Americans knew we had our own bomb.

Certainly, I do not pretend to know everything about Soviet intelligence operations during the period 1930 to 1953, but as chief of one of the main intelligence services I must stress that from 1941 atomic issues were discussed in my presence at the regular meetings of the four chiefs of Russian military and NKVD intelligence headed by Beria. At first the purpose was to assess the possibility that the Germans might develop a weapon similar to the British-American project. In 1944 I was assigned coordinating functions to gather atomic intelligence and in 1945 I took all formal responsibility for atomic intelligence in the USSR when I was appointed director of the second (intelligence) bureau of the special committee of the Soviet Union Council of Ministers. I am the only living witness from the Center to know how all top secret information was received and processed in 1941-46 from the USA, Great Britain and Canada.

We received top secret information on the atomic bomb from two directions. One line was to indoctrinate scientists to cooperate in open discussions and the other was to bring in top secret documents and information on the atomic bomb. Elizabeth (Liza) Zarubina and Sam Semyonov were the first to establish friendly contacts with the American scientific community and influence them to cooperate with anti-fascist scientists. Liza Zarubina and her colleague, the Soviet vice-counsel in New York, Pastelniak, (whose code name was Mikheev) handled our veteran agent Margareta Konenkova, (code name Lukas), the wife of the famous Russian sculptor Sergei Konenkov, who was working in Princeton on a bust of Einstein, to influence Oppenheimer and other prominent American scientists whom she frequently met in Princeton from 1943-1945. There are photographs of Margareta with Oppenheimer and Einstein in the Konenkov's family museum in Moscow. When they returned from the USA to Russia in December 1945 the Konenkovs were granted special privileges by a government enactment

in reward for their services to the Soviet Union while abroad.

The other line was traditional espionage tradecraft, handled from 1944 to 1946 by officers such as Anatoli Yatskov and Aleksandr Feklisov.

The recently published documents of the meeting of Professor Yakov Terletsky with Neils Bohr in November 1945 not only confirm my account, but provide additional details. There were three meetings with Bohr in November 1945. Contrary to attacks by historians, Bohr did comment on the drawings (graphs) in the Smythe report. The operation was top secret and even the director of NKVD Foreign Intelligence Pavel M. Fitin was not informed. The British physicist Dr. John Hassard, of London's Imperial College confirmed the importance of the secret information revealed to Terletsky by Bohr (*Sunday Times* [London], June 26, 1994). This was not reported by either the American or Russian press. Bohr confirmed the validity of the Smythe report and resolved stormy debates among Russian scientists over how to approach construction of a nuclear reactor (whether to use heavy water or graphite) and the test of samples of uranium and plutonium provided by Soviet intelligence. Bohr's answers to Terletsky's carefully prepared questions helped to verify scientific papers of Oppenheimer, Szilard and Fermi and others which were obtained by our intelligence and made available for our scientists. In fact, before the State Archive of the Russian Federation released the Bohr documents, the Federal Intelligence Service asked me to help reconstruct the mission because it did not have the documents in its files.

We were aware of Bohr's contacts with British intelligence, but he played both with us and the Western special services. My colleagues reminded me that when Bohr escaped to Sweden in 1943 he asked the Swedish physicist H. Anfeld to approach Soviet representatives and inform them that the possibility of making an atomic bomb was being discussed in the German scientific community. Anfeld met the TASS correspondent in Sweden, M. Kosoy, a Soviet intelligence officer, who promptly informed Moscow. On the basis of this news the NKVD initiated the famous letter from Kapitsa to Bohr, inviting him to come and work in the Soviet Union.

In Sweden our intelligence officer, Zoya

Ribkina, received the cooperation of Niels Bohr. Back in Moscow she told Zoya Zarubina, who translated atomic documents, that "this is a very important enterprise we're doing together with the biggest scientists in America and the world. We are trying to be as strong as any other country would be. I am happy I am instrumental in putting this together with Europe, with Niels Bohr." Ribkina spoke freely with Zoya because she is the stepdaughter of Liza Zarubina, the intelligence officer who performed so well for us in America working with Oppenheimer's wife. Zoya met in her office a number of times with Academician Kurchatov to clarify the meaning of the new vocabulary of atomic physics. Kurchatov urged her to probe the possible variants of meaning in the documents; he barely controlled his excitement over the new information. "Come on girl," Kurchatov told Zoya, then 25, "try that sentence another way. Remember your physics. Is there any other meaning we missed?"

The information that Enrico Fermi had put into operation the first nuclear reactor in December 1942 was initially provided in a very general form to Kurchatov in January 1943. Fermi's success was at first not fully understood by our scientists. Therefore it triggered Kurchatov's letter of March 22, 1943 to deputy prime minister Pervukhin asking him "to instruct intelligence bodies to find out about what has been done in America in regard to the direction in question," and naming seven American laboratories as targets. Several months later, in July 1943, Kurchatov again asked for clarification of the data in his memorandum.

Our scientists were at first skeptical of Fermi's accomplishment, and until February 1945, when full mobilization was ordered, only a few in influential scientific and government circles believed that the creation of a new super weapon was realistic.

The progress of the atomic project was retarded by the lack of resources during the early war years. In 1941 it was the intelligence reports from Donald Maclean of progress in the British program, recently confirmed by Vladimir Barkovsky, that pushed us to initiate our efforts in 1942.

Both the Soviet and the American governments did not fully believe in the possibility of nuclear weapons before the first explosive test in July 1945. My colleagues reminded me recently that apart from scien-

tific information provided by senior scientific personnel of the Manhattan Project we also channeled to our government reports about security rules in Los Alamos and code names used in internal U.S. government correspondence on the matter of atomic research. My colleagues recalled that in 1946, under direct orders from Beria and Vannikov, I transferred from Lefortovo and Lubyanka all technical intelligence information on the atomic problem to the administration of the Special Government Committee on Atomic Energy. The sources of that information were very closely held under Beria's direct personal control and when he was arrested in 1953 his files were moved to the Kremlin under Malenkov's orders. Beria's intelligence records, which contain the names of sources of secret atomic bomb information, have not been released and their location remains uncertain. Beria's atomic intelligence materials are not in the Enormous File of the Federal Intelligence Service. Perhaps the most secret parts of the Enormous file are in Beria's personal file in the Ministry of Security archives from that period. The Bohr documents were not found in the Enormous File, which contains the atomic espionage materials, but in the Russian State Archives files of the Interior Ministry.

My story is based on what I remember. I had no direct access to archives which in small details may be more or less correct than my memory. However, the thrust and important facts of my story are irrefutable and it was my duty to reveal the hidden motives of tragic events in Soviet history. I am glad that my explanation of the death of Raoul Wallenberg in *Special Tasks* will be included in the proceedings of the Russian-Swedish Commission on the Wallenberg Affair, which met in Moscow in 1994.

There are those in the former KGB and the scientific community who want to direct the public not to believe me because my story interferes with their book contracts or detracts from their scientific honors. Some would like to erase the record of combat and terrorist operations in the Stalin years. Today Russian and Western clandestine special operations continue in the Middle East against Syria, Iraq and Iran, described as criminal and terrorist governments, and against nationalities seeking their independence from Russia. These facts of international life still exist. Neither they nor the

Special Tasks I have described can be denied simply because they have never before been revealed. That something has not been told before does not mean it is not true.

signed/ Pavel A.Sudoplatov

* * * * *

6 February 1995

To the Editor:

Your treatment of the Bohr document [in *CWIHP Bulletin* #4], highly interesting in many respects, nevertheless is peculiar in others. Most of your contributors are concerned to defend Niels Bohr's moral integrity. But this is not at issue, though his political attitudes may be. Whatever information he did or did not give was certainly in accord with his principles. The question is merely a factual one. Some of your contributors say he did not have any secrets, so could not give any to the Soviets; others that he had some, but would not have given them. And did he only say what was already in the Smythe Report? Yuri Smirnov puts it that "practically" everything he told was in the Report. Kurchatov's comment says that two points were of use. A British and an American physicist are lately on record to the effect that his replies were clearly helpful. A layman, while thus noting that professional opinion is by no means as one-sided as implied in your pages, is not in a position to judge. (Even a layman can indeed note remarks—for example on the vast number of spectrographs—which are not in the Report, though perhaps not of great use.) In any case, the NKVD feared it was being misled by the Smythe Report, as Feklisov (as quoted by Zubok) noted: so at least from an intelligence point of view, even mere confirmation was welcome. The question remains far less clear cut than your contributors imply.

The other concern of most of these contributors is to attack Sudoplatov. Sudoplatov certainly misunderstood, misremembered, or exaggerated, much of the significance of the Bohr interview. But some of the criticisms make no sense. David Holloway doubtless wrote in jest when he said that since Sudoplatov had co-authors it was impossible to know which wrote what. There are dozens of books of the same type. In any case, on the main point at issue,

Bohr's providing of information, Sudoplatov was already on record in July 1982. Again, The Enormous File of the Federal Intelligence Service, H-59-059a

occasions.

The document is the record of the Politburo meeting of October 22, 1986, which appears on page 85. The second item on the agenda of that meeting deals with the 1986 crash in South African territory of the aircraft, piloted by Soviet military personnel, carrying the Mozambican President Samora Machel. While sitting as Chairman, General Secretary Gorbachev states: "The last report of our pilot was: 'We have been shot down.'"

The event in question is certainly not a major one in Cold War political history, but the Gorbachev quotation raises the problem of the accuracy of Soviet documents, and in this case, at the very highest level: Was information that reached the most senior Soviet leadership "doctored" in some cases in advance? If so, at what level? By intelligence or administrative agencies? If it was not, was the Politburo nevertheless purposefully misinformed on certain occasions?

Following the aircraft crash which resulted in their President's death, the Mozambican government established a Board of Inquiry, which carried out an investigation of the crash. The possibility that the aircraft was shot down was eliminated in the very early days of their investigation. There was no mention of the plane being "shot down" on the tape of the aircraft's cockpit voice recorder. Instead, there was substantial evidence that the crash was accidental. The basic cause of the accident was a laxity in routine operational precautions at several points. In particular, the aircraft had taken off for a return flight to the Mozambican capital with the minimum fuel needed to reach its destination. It therefore had no leeway for any unexpected contingency. The aircraft was off-course at nighttime when fuel ran out, which the flight crew perceived, and it crashed when the fuel was exhausted.

It was impossible to resolve the question of whether a South African decoy beacon had contributed to the plane being off course, since the South African government did not make the records of its military, intelligence or air traffic control agencies available to Mozambique. The South African government instituted a National Board of Inquiry of its own, and closed it with a declaration that the cause of the crash was accidental. However, given the date—1986—substantial skepticism can be permitted as to whether South Africa would have disclosed the operation of a beacon if

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WARSAW PACT "LESSONS"

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Stenografische Niederschrift," February 1966 (Top Secret), in SAPMDB, ZPA, IV 27/208/85.

42. "Oplot mira i sotsializma," *Krasnaya zvezda*, 14 May 1966, 5.

43. "La Roumanie n'a formulé aucune demande en ce qui concerne le Pacte de Varsovie: Mise au Point du ministère des Affaires étrangères à Bucarest," *L'Humanité* (Paris), 19 May 1966, 3.

44. "Stenografische Niederschrift des Treffens führender Repräsentanten der Bruderstaaten des Warschauer Vertrages," July 1966 (Top Secret), in SAPMDB, ZPA, IV 2/202/431.

45. "Kompleksny material: Cvicenie 'VLTAVA'," in VHA Praha, F. HPS, 1966, HPS 30/2; and "Vyhodnotenie cvicenia 'VLTAVA'." VHA Praha, F. Sekretariat MNO, 1966, OS/GS, 4/2.

46. Maksimov et al., eds., *Raketnye voiska strategicheskogo naznacheniya*, 125-126.

47. See, e.g., *ibid.*, 125-126. See also "Razvitie voennogo iskustva v usloviyakh vedeniya raketno-yadernoi voyny po sovremennym predstavleniyam," pp. 325-334.

48. See *ibid.*, 330-336 and *passim*.

Mark Kramer is a research associate at Brown University's Center for Foreign Policy Development and Harvard University's Russian Research Center. An earlier version of this article was presented at a conference on "The Cuban Missile Crisis in Light of New Archival Documents," co-sponsored by the Russian State Archival Service and the U.S. Naval Academy, in Moscow, 27-29 September 1994.

CLINTON EXECUTIVE ORDER

continued from page 143

cation of state of the art technology within a U.S. weapon system;

(5) reveal actual U.S. military war plans that remain in effect;

(6) reveal information that would seriously and demonstrably impair relations between the United States and a foreign government, or seriously and demonstrably undermine ongoing diplomatic activities of the United States;

(7) reveal information that would clearly and demonstrably impair the current ability of United States Government officials to protect the President, Vice President, or other officials for whom protection services, in the interest of national security, are authorized;

(8) reveal information that would seriously and demonstrably impair current national security emergency preparedness plans; or

(9) violate a statute, treaty, or international agreement.

CARTER-BREZHNEV

continued from page 154

presented the dual American proposal in his talks in Moscow with Soviet leaders, in particular Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko, on 28-30 March 1977. The Soviet side flatly rejected both variants in the American initiative, insisting on strict adherence to the Vladivostok framework and refusing to table a counter-proposal.

The dispute quickly broke into public view in a series of dueling press conferences. On March 30, Vance told reporters in Moscow that "the Soviets told us they had examined our two proposals and did not find either acceptable. They proposed nothing new on their side." In Washington the same day, Carter defended the proposals as a "fair, balanced" route to a "substantial reduction" in nuclear arms. Next, in his own, unusual press conference, Gromyko angrily denounced the proposals Vance delivered as a "cheap and shady maneuver" to seek U.S. nuclear superiority, described as "basically false" Carter's claim that Vance had presented a "broad disarmament program," and complained, "One cannot talk about stability when a new leadership arrives and crosses out all that has been achieved before."

Those interested in additional information on this acrimonious episode in U.S.-Soviet relations and the SALT II negotiations may wish to consult, in addition to the memoirs of former officials (including Carter, Vance, Brzezinski, Kornienko, et al.), the accounts by Strobe Talbott, Endgame: The Inside Story of SALT II (New York: Harper & Row, 1979; Raymond L. Garthoff, Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), esp. 883-94; and forthcoming publications emerging from the Carter-Brezhnev Project.]

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Woodrow Wilson Center
1000 Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20560
Tel.: (202) 357-2967; Fax: (202) 357-4439
e-mail (editorial inquiries): wwcem123@sivm.si.edu
e-mail (requests for copies ONLY): wwcem181@sivm.si.edu

Editor: James G. Hershberg
Associate Editors: P.J. Simmons, Bonnie Terrell
Researchers: Mark Doctoroff, Michelle King, Stephen Connors, Helen Christakos, Daniel Rozas

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1. [Ed. note: The texts of those messages, as well as Harriman's related records of conversation with Carter, can be found in the Harriman Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.]

2. [Ed. note: The State Department had protested the arrest on February 3 of Aleksandr Ginzburg, a prominent dissident, for alleged currency violations.]

3. [Ed. note: Evidently an allusion to Carter's supportive letter to Andrei Sakharov, disclosed on February 17, 1977.]

4. [Ed. note: When shown this translation by the editor of the CWIHP *Bulletin* during an informal discussion at the May 1977 Carter-Brezhnev conference in Georgia, Vance denied the accuracy of the comments attributed to him here by Dobrynin, saying that perhaps the Soviet Ambassador had exaggerated his response.]

5. [Ed. note: Evidently a reference to the use of the "hot line" for this letter noted by G. M. Kornienko in his introduction.]