

New Evidence on the End of the Cold War

New Evidence on the “Soviet Factor” in the Peaceful Revolutions of 1989

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In 1999 Eastern European countries celebrated the tenth anniversary of their peaceful liberation from communism. In the commemorative discussions, at conferences, workshops and in the press one would have expected a detailed, informed and dispassionate reconstruction of the events of the “*annus mirabilis*” when the Soviet empire in Central and Eastern Europe ceased to exist. Surprisingly, however, this was not so. First, the events of ten years ago remain the subject of heated and partisan debate in the Central and East European countries; even what seemed to be certain ten years before (e.g. the role of “reformist” wings of the ruling communist establishments, the positions of various factions of anti-communist movements, etc.) are now no longer certain and, in fact, are vigorously questioned. Second, the international aspects of the collapse of communist Europe, the role of “the Gorbachev factor,” and of the devolution of the bipolar Cold War are not evaluated and recognized in a balanced way. Sometimes they are even passed over in silence.¹

Other equally strong passions and biases are present in the discussions and literature produced in the United States and in the former Soviet Union. For many American authors, the collapse of the Soviet Union’s external empire was the beginning of the West’s victory in the Cold War. This created a strong temptation to regard the events through “triumphalist” lenses. Former CIA director Robert Gates contends in his memoirs that the years 1989-1991 were a triumph of the strategy of containment, as formulated in 1946 by George F. Kennan—a vindication of “the belief that, denied new conquests, the inherent weaknesses of Soviet communism ultimately would bring it down.”² Other former officials, particularly President George Bush, his National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, and Robert Hutchings, then a member of the National Security Council staff dealing with Central and Eastern Europe, recognize the importance of Soviet non-involvement. At the same time, they, as well as Gates and other “triumphalist” authors, argue for the importance of “the American factor,” “strategic prudence” and the “vision” of the policy-makers in Washington. Specifically, they point to the United States’ quiet mediation in Poland and other Eastern European countries between “reformist” communists and anti-communist forces, and consistent successful efforts to allay the fears of the Soviet leadership regarding the rapid pace of change.³ Still, the main focus of the “triumphalist” literature in the United States is elsewhere, on the secret policies and initiatives of the Reagan Administration between 1981 and 1987—on the

military, economic, political and psychological factors—that, in this view, broke the back of the Soviet empire and set the stage for the “victory” of the West.⁴

On the Russian side, Mikhail Gorbachev, his assistants and ministers Anatoly Chernyaev, Georgi Shakhnazarov, Vadim Medvedev, Alexander Yakovlev, and Eduard Shevardnadze, emphasize in their writings and speeches that Soviet domination in Central and Eastern Europe had already been doomed by the mid-1980s. They claim that communist leaders of those countries were incapable of change, and did not follow advice from Moscow to alter their traditionalist policies. They emphatically claim that there was no alternative to the Soviet policy of non-involvement during the peaceful revolutions of 1989 which they say stemmed logically from the reformist strategy of overcoming the legacies of the Cold War and integrating the Soviet Union into Europe.⁵

A large group, primarily former party apparatchiks, military and former KGB officials of the last Soviet administration, denounce Gorbachev’s “new thinking” and point to the writings of American “triumphalists” as a proof of Gorbachev’s ineptitude, at best, and high treason, at worst. Some contend, specifically, that the “peaceful revolutions” in Central and Eastern Europe were not totally spontaneous, that one could discern the “hidden hand” of the CIA and other Western intelligence agencies. Some intimate that 1989 was the beginning of the “betrayal,” when the Soviet Union lost its geostrategic advantages and valuable “allies.” The evidence for these claims, however, is largely absent, and those Gorbachev critics closely involved in security affairs and foreign policy (e.g., former KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov, Marshal Dmitry Yazov), conspicuously avoid blaming Gorbachev for the “loss” of Central and Eastern Europe.⁶ It is easy to notice that the fallout of the Soviet Union’s collapse continues to be the main obstacle to serious and sober discussion of 1989 and many other issues of recent history.⁷ In addition, growing apprehension about US goals, specifically deep mistrust of the American world role, tend to color the fluctuating assessments of the year when Moscow “lost” its geopolitical security belt in Central and Eastern Europe.⁸

Still, serious and balanced research has appeared on the international context and Soviet aspects of 1989. The well-documented book by two veterans of the Bush Administration NSC staff, Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, reveals that the real priority for Washington was NATO’s unity and particularly a peaceful reunification of

Germany within the Western alliance. A heated discussion took place from 1992 to 1995 between the proponents of “realism” and its critics, with the critics claiming that under Gorbachev foreign policy “became increasingly inconsistent with power transition and other realist theories,” and that the Soviet withdrawal from Eastern Europe was even more inconsistent.⁹ Canadian political scientist Jacques Lévesque focused on “the enigma of 1989” and concluded that “new thinking” and Gorbachev’s personality played an outstanding, unique role in transforming the realities of power and ending the Cold War in Central and Eastern Europe. Gorbachev, says Lévesque, replaced the faded Stalinist imperial consensus with a new neo-Leninist utopia, based not on force and party monopoly, but on consensus and pluralism. This, more than anything else, led to the quick disappearance of the Soviet European empire in 1989. “Rarely in history,” he writes, “have we witnessed the policy of a great power continue, throughout so many difficulties and reversals, to be guided by a such an idealistic view of the world, based on universal reconciliation, and in which the image of the enemy was constantly blurring, to the point of making it practically disappear as the enemy.”¹⁰

The most difficult task for researchers is finding links between Soviet policies (or non-policies) and the developments in the East-Central European countries during the year of great change. What was the degree of “spontaneity,” and was the element of a “hidden hand” present there? The main problem remaining is that posed by Lévesque—the spectacular non-use of force—in total violation of the “realist” prescriptions of behavior for a great power. Was there at any point a danger of Soviet intervention? What options were discussed in the Kremlin as it witnessed the meltdown of the Soviet empire? How did domestic constraints (e.g., economic and financial crises) and “new thinking” affect the Soviet view of “Eastern Europe”? There are still many gaps in the historical narrative and documentary evidence about 1989. Overcoming the passions of the day and narrow national agendas is a prime purpose of a project developed by the National Security Archive at George Washington University and the Cold War International History Project at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, in collaboration with other universities and research centers in the United States, Russia and East-Central Europe. The new evidence obtained through these efforts¹¹ enhances our understanding of the “peaceful revolutions” of 1989 as an integral part of the intellectual, cultural and political ferment that took place inside the Soviet bloc.

An important part of the story of 1989 is the final demise of Stalin’s imperial, xenophobic legacy in the Kremlin after Mikhail Gorbachev came to power. Within just a few years, from 1985 until the end of 1988, the idea of “Eastern Europe” as a geopolitical *glacis* [*predpolie*] of the Soviet Union came to be replaced by the idea of a “Common European House.” The hostile blocs of NATO

and the Warsaw Pact were to be replaced by the integrationist international structures.

This striking change of mindset stemmed from many factors, the most important of which was the death of communist ideology. At a critical oral history conference in May 1998, Anatoly Chernyaev, veteran of the CPSU CC International Department, recalled the common feeling he had with Italian “Eurocommunists” whom he had met in the 1960s—that “the ideology had stopped working long ago.”¹² Another long-term factor was, ironically, the position of the USSR as a superpower and the persistent strivings of the Soviet leadership to gain international recognition as a “normal” state. They sought it not only through military build-up, but also through *détente*, trade, and economic cooperation with Western Europe. At certain points, for instance in the early 1970s, Soviet political ties to France and West Germany became more important and perhaps warmer on a personal level than relations with some members of the Warsaw Pact. Soviet diplomats as a professional corps, and various Moscow-based academic “think-tanks,” became to a considerable extent a “pro-*détente* lobby.” They even attempted, whenever possible, to encourage the leadership to reform relationships inside the Warsaw Pact, holding NATO as an example.¹³

The combination of these two developments eroded the “imperial-revolutionary” foundation of the Soviet imperial mentality. Soviet expansion was never geopolitical; it was “geo-ideological,” a blend of realism and ideological messianism.¹⁴ At the same time as that blend faded, neither of its components could serve as justification for preserving the Soviet presence in Central and Eastern Europe. In particular, even though Marxist-Leninist prescriptions had served since Stalin’s time as a window-dressing for Soviet security interests, those interests were not systematically spelled out and developed and, consequently, no consistent Soviet “realist” school emerged beneath the ideological façade. This inherent weakness of “realist” thinking in the Soviet political establishment played an important role during 1989.

There was also a lack of conceptual understanding of how to end the Cold War and what would, in this case, be the fate of the East-Central European “empire.” The same could be said about the West (where dominant “realist” thinking precluded any conceptualization of the world beyond containment of communism and bipolarity). But the Soviet case was a unique one: in the minds of an important segment of Soviet apparatchiks and academics the end of the Cold War came to be linked to the issue of profound domestic reforms and, ultimately, with the idea of integration of the USSR into the same world capitalist system that had emerged in opposition to Soviet communism. They secretly believed that through *détente* and rapprochement with Western countries they could help the country resume the process of modernization, as Stalinist autarky and a mobilizational regime had clearly

outlived its usefulness.¹⁵ This prepared the stage for a remarkable willingness on the part of many in the Soviet establishment to accept “Western influences.” For a long time, between 1956 and 1981, the intellectual and cultural ferment in Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, served as a substitute for the “real West.” Consequently in the minds of putative Soviet reformers, Eastern Europe occupied an important place as a source of “third way” ideas.

This all came to an end in the 1980s. Ironically, the defeat of Solidarity in Poland put an end to the intellectual preeminence of Eastern Europe in the intellectual life of the reformist-minded part of the Soviet establishment. “Eurocommunism” and “communism with human face” had already been in crisis by the end of the 1970s. The complete ideological vacuum on the Left pushed Soviet intellectuals and their friends in the *apparat* to look for ideas elsewhere, beyond the Left, and beyond Eastern Europe, in the “real West,” including the United States. This process accelerated by leaps and bounds after 1985 when Gorbachev granted the upper caste of the Soviet “official” intellectual class (*intelligentsia*) the long-

forgotten privilege of meeting foreigners without first asking permission from the highest authorities.¹⁶ The Soviet leader himself developed a new reference circle among foreign politicians and statesmen, including not only “Eurocommunists,” but increasingly Western European Social Democrats, leaders of the “non-aligned movement,” and even leaders of the conservative Right (former US President Richard Nixon, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and later US President Ronald Reagan).¹⁷

All the evidence indicates that Gorbachev and his advisers had no new policy for Eastern Europe as they moved, step by step, from confrontation to reconciliation with NATO powers; on this point his modern-day critics are right. In his defense, Gorbachev suggests that immediately after he assumed power he let Eastern European communist leaders understand that they were now on their own and that the so-called “Brezhnev doctrine” was dead.¹⁸ Chernyaev, who observed Gorbachev for six years when he was in power, confidently claims: “If you presented Gorbachev with the question: would you sacrifice the freedom that you had given to the



Source: National Archives.

President Ronald Reagan and Vice President George Bush with General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on Governor's Island, New York (December 1988).

countries of Eastern Europe, to your colleagues in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere, in the name of preserving the imperial image, of great power status in the old Soviet meaning of the word, he would say that the question for him was absurd.”¹⁹ In reality, however, in the context of 1985-88, “the freedom” that Gorbachev had “given” to Eastern Europeans meant stagnation and preservation of the “status quo.”

Lévesque points out several reasons for Soviet “immobilism” with regard to Eastern Europe, stressing politics, ideology and personality.²⁰ But perhaps there was one more reason for Moscow’s “neglect” of the regions: Soviet foreign policy was focused on the more important task of achieving détente with the Western powers, for this was the level of “grand diplomacy” where Gorbachev’s skills of persuasion and compromise shone brightly and where spectacular breakthroughs could be achieved. By contrast, messy East-Central European affairs could be a bottomless pit and the communist apparatchiks there were too far below him for him to want to be bothered with them.²¹

This, however, does not exhaust the problem of the glaring disconnection between the new approaches of the Soviet leadership towards the West and the lack of any policy towards its allies in Eastern Europe. In the past the Kremlin had acted differently at least once. In 1953, when Stalin’s successors rapidly turned from the near-war situation to “détente,” they simultaneously sought to change regimes, leadership and policies in the Eastern European countries.²² Subsequently however, Soviet leaders never systematically coordinated the “great power” and “alliance” levels of their foreign policy. Neither Nikita S. Khrushchev in 1959, nor Leonid I. Brezhnev in 1971-72, cared much about how Soviet allies felt about the dramatic rapprochement between the USSR and the Western countries and neither did anything to prepare those allies for the new policy. Against this background, Gorbachev’s approach was hardly surprising, but it was not the only possible course. In an interesting episode, soon after Gorbachev came to power, a hard-line senior official of the CC International Department, Oleg Rakhmanin, decided that it was time “to discipline the socialist camp.” According to the recollections of one of his colleagues, everybody in the Department had long known that the bloc had become a mess: “Kádár was doing whatever he wanted, Honecker was hiding some things from us, making deals with West Germany, trading with them, accepting loans, letting people travel, nobody knew what he was doing; the Poles flirted with the Americans and planned to purchase Boeings instead of our airplanes.”²³ Rakhmanin tried to call the allies “to order” and published two articles to that effect in *Pravda*. “Liberal-minded” people in Eastern European communist establishments complained about them to their Moscow colleagues. When Gorbachev learned about the incident, he grew angry, and soon Rakhmanin was sacked.²⁴ When various Eastern European politicians later approached Gorbachev or his advisers,

seeking support for their plans to change the political *status quo*, they came back empty-handed. At the same time, Gorbachev never tried to undercut conservative Eastern European leaders on their home turf; for instance, he remained silent on the Prague Spring during his visit to Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1987.²⁵ Although he had sharp disagreements with Romania’s dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu, in public he avoided any criticism of him and even presented him with Soviet awards. In Hungary, it was not Gorbachev’s actions, but the “Gorbachev effect,” that caused Janós Kádár to retire.²⁶ The Soviet leader’s meticulous non-interference, against the growing tension in Eastern Europe, was, in retrospect, a lucky chance for the anti-communist reformers there, but a gross miscalculation from the viewpoint of traditional Soviet political interests.

By 1988, Gorbachev’s foreign policy had begun to put heavy strains on the *status quo* within the Warsaw Treaty Organization. In particular, Moscow initiated moves for “getting around the Americans” and for “smothering” Western European members of NATO “in [a] tender embrace” by building up contacts and building down the military stand-off in Europe. The Soviets used new, bold methods to advance the traditional goal of fomenting divisions inside NATO,²⁷ the boldest and most far-reaching of which were unilateral reductions of Soviet troops in Central Europe.²⁸

Whatever Gorbachev’s intentions, in terms of power relations, his foreign policy was ruinous. NATO, despite its porous and fragile appearance, remained strong, and Western Europeans were not prepared “to end the cold war” with the Soviet Union without American consent.²⁹ Meanwhile, the foundations of the Soviet presence in Eastern and Central Europe were rapidly eroding. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze had no coherent policy at all for the Warsaw Pact. Adopted in July 1987, the new doctrine of the Warsaw Pact, a carbon copy of the Soviet one, undermined the fundamentals of Soviet military presence in the satellite countries. Instead of rejuvenating and reforming the alliance, this doctrine introduced new elements of instability. As with every outdated and unpopular institution, the Warsaw Pact ran the risk of crumbling during rapidly changing times.

But even more important for Soviet behavior and ultimately for events in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 were domestic changes in the Soviet political and cultural environment. The beginning of radical de-Stalinization and ideological revisions from the top opened the possibility for a split between conservative and reformist elements in the party establishment, and for an across-the-board attack on the foundations of Soviet foreign policy since 1917. Ironically, it was the savy Janós Kádár who, on the basis of Hungarian experience, concluded in 1987 that Gorbachev would bring a catastrophe upon the USSR through his domestic policies.³⁰ But, paradoxically, a majority in the Politburo, the Central Committee, and state apparatus worried more about the allies, rather than about domestic

destabilization. They supported moderate reformism, but feared that radical de-Stalinization could break up the Soviet bloc and throw Eastern Europe into turmoil as had occurred after Khrushchev's 20th Party Congress speech in 1956. An important debate inside the Politburo occurred in March 1988 as a result of the so-called "Nina Andreeva letter."³¹ KGB chairman Viktor Chebrikov warned about "the meltdown [of Soviet] mentality." In a Politburo session, the spokesman of ideological conservatives, Yegor Ligachev, for the first time raised the specter of disaster for the communist "camp:"

Arguably, we will muddle through, will survive the attacks [of anti-Stalinist forces in the Soviet mass media], but there are socialist countries, the world communist movement—what to do about them? Would we risk breaking apart this powerful support that had always existed side by side with our socialist countries? History has become [the tool of] politics and, when we deal with it, we should think not only about the past, but also about the future.³²

Gorbachev ridiculed as panic-mongers those who blamed him for destruction of "what had been built by Stalin."³³ And Shevardnadze declared that "primitivism and intellectual narrow-mindedness had prevented Khrushchev from implementing to the end the line of the Twentieth Party Congress." He bluntly said that, so far as "the communist and working class movement today"³⁴ was concerned, there was not much to rescue. As to the socialist bloc—"take for instance Bulgaria, take the old leadership of Poland, take the current situation in the German Democratic Republic, in Romania. Is it socialism?"³⁵

On 18 May 1988, a "think tank" expert and consultant to the CC International Department, Vyacheslav Dashichev, published an article in *Literary Gazette* with the first reassessment of the Cold War. He wrote that both sides, not only the United States, had contributed to the origins of confrontation. Among other points, he criticized Soviet "hegemonism" in relations with the countries of Eastern Europe and China, and blamed the Brezhnev leadership for renewing the arms race and thus failing to prevent the collapse of détente in the 1970s.³⁶

During 1988, Gorbachev completely discarded the old "revolutionary-imperial" basis for Soviet foreign policy, particularly its key concepts of "class struggle" and bipolarity.³⁷ In October, Chernyaev, observing the meeting between Gorbachev and West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, wrote in his diary: "I felt physically that we are entering a new world, where class struggle, ideology, and, in general, polarity and enmity are no longer decisive. And something all-human is taking the upper hand."³⁸ By that time the full panoply of international principles of "the new thinking" included: freedom of choice, mutual respect of each other's values, balance of interests, reunification of Europe in an "all-European house," a nuclear-free world, and renunciation of force.³⁹ In late October, Gorbachev

began preparations to deliver his principles to the world from the most salient podium, the General Assembly of the United Nations. He told his "brain trust"—Shevardnadze, Yakovlev, Dobrynin, Falin and Chernyaev—to prepare a speech that would be an answer to Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain" speech at Fulton College (Missouri) in March 1946. It "should be an anti-Fulton—Fulton in reverse," he said. "We should present our worldview philosophy based on the results of the last three years. We should stress the process of demilitarization and humanization of our thinking."⁴⁰ The concept of "anti-Fulton" supposed, of course, the dismantling of the Iron Curtain dividing Eastern Europe from the West.

One can hardly overestimate the huge pressure exerted on Gorbachev by the USSR's economic and financial crisis that reached grave proportions by the end of 1988. In November, the Soviet leader cited the Soviet military burden ("two and a half times as much as the United States spends on defense") to obtain approval for the decision on unilaterally withdraw half a million elite Soviet troops from Central Europe.⁴¹ In a later December Politburo session, he admitted: "In no other country is [the military burden] so bad. Perhaps only in poor countries, where half of their budget goes to military spending."⁴² Only future research may determine what percentage of the Soviet gross national product was spent on the Cold War by the end of the 1980s; figures vary from 10 percent of direct costs to 70 percent of indirect costs related to military, defense, international assistance and propaganda needs.⁴³

The importance of structural factors notwithstanding, the role of new ideas, the euphoria of "new thinking," is crucial to understanding the attitudes of Gorbachev, Shevardnadze and others around them toward the problem of a divided Europe.⁴⁴ It would go too far to say that "realist" calculations were completely absent from their minds. For instance, according to Shakhnazarov, he was "absolutely convinced" well before 1989 that the GDR would unite one day with the Federal Republic,⁴⁵ and he argued about it with leading Soviet experts on Germany, among them Vladimir Semyonov and Yuli Kvitsinsky. In November 1987, Vyacheslav Dashichev, head of the scientific-consultative council at the Foreign Ministry for the affairs of "socialist states," presented to the ministry a report arguing that it was impossible to "open" the process of European integration without re-opening the issue of German reunification. Dashichev argued that reunification would leave NATO without a cause and would help ease the US out of Europe.⁴⁶ It is hard to say whether these unrealistic assumptions found much support. The "realist" conclusion for other, more sober-minded analysts could be very different: if reunification of Germany was inevitable, then "other countries of Eastern Europe would become independent, and would be more attracted to the West." The question was when, and at what price?⁴⁷

Not a trace of these discussions surfaced during the crucial debates on the conceptual reformulation of Soviet

foreign policy in July-August 1988. I was present at a special emergency conference of Soviet foreign affairs specialists convened by Shevardnadze, and was struck by the fact that there was still a virtual “taboo” that precluded all speakers, even behind closed doors, from frankly talking about the potential implications of the German question for Central and Eastern Europe. In his crusade for a new universalist thinking, Gorbachev dispensed with Stalin’s cynical logic of *Realpolitik* without supplying any moderate, “enlightened” version of “realism.” For Gorbachev’s predecessors from Stalin to Andropov, “realism,” which was based on strength, coercion, and balance of power, was like mother’s milk; they cared about power and empire as much, if not more, as they did about the “socialist” perspective and “proletarian internationalism.” The stalwart from the past, long-time Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, admitted privately his “mistake” in 1985 of supporting Gorbachev. He called Gorbachev and his advisers “the Martians” for their ignorance of the laws of *Realpolitik*. “I wonder how puzzled the US and other NATO countries must be,” he confessed to his son. “It is a mystery for them why Gorbachev and his friends in the Politburo cannot comprehend how to use force and pressure for defending their state interests.”⁴⁸

By the end of 1988, it was already clear that the changes in Soviet domestic and foreign policy were causing strains in the Soviet alliance so severe that they could no longer be ignored. The Politburo discussed contingencies, and in late January 1989, Gorbachev assigned the Politburo Commission on Foreign Policy (created earlier for other purposes and headed by Alexander Yakovlev) to work in collaboration with various agencies and “think tanks” on contingencies regarding future developments in East-Central Europe. Yakovlev solicited a number of analytical papers from academic and state institutions: most of them predicted an overall crisis of the alliance. There were frank conclusions that Soviet allies were already quietly rejecting “socialism” and were “in a powerful magnetic field” of the West. Looking at scenarios, a memorandum from the Institute of Economics of World Socialist System (IEMSS) concluded that if the ruling parties did not make concessions to the opposition forces, they faced a “political eruption;” another predicted “a most acute social-political conflict with an unfathomable outcome.” However, the thrust of all papers, particularly those from the IEMSS, headed by Oleg Bogomolov, opposed any form of Soviet intervention in East-Central Europe. The typical conclusion was that any political-military intervention did not guarantee success, but instead might trigger a chain-reaction of violence and lead to the self-destruction of the Soviet bloc.⁴⁹

Yakovlev, and Gorbachev himself, were very much inclined to heed this advice. One reason for the policy of non-interference was best put by Fedor Burlatsky: “We have given our allies so much bad advice in the past that we now hesitate to give them good advice.”⁵⁰ The guilty conscience of 1956 and particularly of the suppression of

the Prague Spring in 1968 weighed on the Gorbachevites as part of their generational experience. Gorbachev did not suffer from the trauma of 1968 as some of his intellectual advisers did. But his own experience as a member of the “Suslov commission” on Poland in 1980-81 made him very sympathetic to anti-interventionist voices around him.⁵¹ Georgy Shakhnazarov, one of the anti-interventionists and, by fortunate coincidence, the chief supervisor of policy toward Eastern Europe in Gorbachev’s entourage and the CC CPSU,⁵² wrote to the General Secretary in October 1988: “We should clearly see that in the future any possibility to ‘put out’ crisis situations by military means must be fully excluded. Even the old leadership seems to have already realized it, at least with regard to Poland.”⁵³

The first few months of 1989 were the last time the Soviet leadership could still focus, at least occasionally, on East-Central Europe. Increasingly, an avalanche of domestic developments, most of them triggered by Gorbachev’s reformism but still very much unintended, began to engulf the Soviet leadership. Although Shakhnazarov’s portfolio over East-Central European policy prompted him to send several concerned memos to Gorbachev, the lion’s share of his time was devoted to writing memos and reports on domestic problems, drafting new legislation, and, after the March 1989 semi-free parliamentary elections, drafting Gorbachev’s speeches to the Congress of People’s Deputies that opened on 25 May.⁵⁴ Beginning in late 1988, moreover, the explosion of liberation movements in the Baltic states and the volatile situation in the Caucasus grabbed the Kremlin’s attention. The use of the army against nationalist Georgian demonstrators in Tbilisi (the “Tbilisi massacre”) on 8-9 April 1989 produced the first political eruption of this volcanic year and inflicted for the first time an irreparable blow to Gorbachev’s reputation in the country. Instead of becoming the most urgent concern of the leadership, the Eastern European crisis was overshadowed by the arc of instability inside the Soviet Union itself, and by the major political show in Moscow. “The attention of all of the leadership switched to internal problems,” summarized Shakhnazarov, “and so Eastern Europe was [put] on the back burner.”⁵⁵

By that time, conservative critics inside the USSR were already openly arguing that Gorbachev’s *perestroika* had no path or rudder. On 2 May 1989, Chernyaev confessed to his diary that he, too, could not see where events would take them: “Most likely we will come to a collapse of the state and some kind of chaos.” Gorbachev “feels that he is losing the levers of power irreversibly.” Behind his declarations was “emptiness.”⁵⁶ Increasingly focused on the growing economic and financial chaos at home, Gorbachev and his reform-minded supporters were not in the least inclined to bail out bankrupt communist regimes. Chernyaev recalls that around that time Gorbachev said to the Politburo that he had information from various sources that Poland was “crawling away from us. ... And what can we do? Poland has a \$56 billion debt. Can we take Poland

on our balance sheet in our current economic situation? No. And if we cannot—then we have no influence.”⁵⁷ There were no dissenting voices, although many of the people who then worked with Gorbachev later came to criticize his “passivity” on Eastern Europe. The Politburo leaders also had to agree that economic and financial alternatives for consolidating the European empire had shrunk to a minimum; “socialist integration” had failed and the Soviet Union was nothing more than “a provider of cheap resources.” Even the jewels of Stalin’s empire, Poland and East Germany, began to look to Gorbachev and the reformers like liabilities.⁵⁸

One interesting argument has been advanced by Gorbachev’s supporters since 1990: that by 1989 they were ready to withdraw all Soviet military forces from Central Europe, but they wanted to do it very gradually, largely because of domestic constraints, not geopolitical realities. In Chernyaev’s recent restatement of this thesis (often repeated by Shevardnadze in the past), the fear of the reformers was as follows: “Once we start to withdraw troops, the howling begins: ‘What did we fight for, what did 27 million of our soldiers die for in World War II? Are we renouncing all that?’ For Gorbachev at that time those issues were very sensitive.”⁵⁹

In retrospect, Gorbachev and his advisers emphatically claimed that “realist” practices and bargaining would never have ended the Soviet-American confrontation.⁶⁰ This counterfactual can never be proven by history. What can be established, however, is that the way the Cold War ended did contribute to the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The logic of linkage between the two goals, the end of the Cold War and the successful transformation of the Soviet Union, led Gorbachev to renounce the use of force in the domestic context as well, at a point when nationalist forces began to break the country apart. There could be, in effect, two kinds of linkages between the preservation of the Soviet Union and that of the Eastern European empire. One, traditional in Russian history, was: preservation of the empire requires consolidation of its “outer” rim. Another, based on “new political thinking” was: in order to preserve and transform the Soviet Union, one has to bid farewell to the empire and the use of force. In May 1989, Gorbachev told the Politburo: “We have accepted that even in foreign policy force does not help [*nichego ne daïet*]. So especially internally “we cannot resort and will not resort to force.”⁶¹ Even those closest to Gorbachev abhorred the possible collapse of the state that was implicit in such a choice.⁶² But the Soviet leader remained an incorrigible optimist as much as Stalin had been a dark pessimist.

Gorbachev’s decision greatly accelerated the collapse of communist regimes in East-Central Europe. The “Brezhnev doctrine” and Soviet military doctrine, with their emphasis on Central Europe’s geostrategic importance, was already dead, but the Warsaw Pact still functioned and East-Central European communist leaders could still rule for years, exploiting the capital of fear of Soviet

intervention to restrain the restive opposition. Nobody in Moscow intended to unleash revolutions in East-Central Europe, nor had anybody decided which course to pursue if they were to erupt.⁶³ Meanwhile, swift dismantling of the Cold War mentality in Europe, developments in the Soviet Union, and vigorous public assurances by Gorbachev about the “universal values” of freedom of choice and the non-use of force, pulled the rug from under the East-Central European dictators.

The giant Soviet military, intelligence and diplomatic machinery reacted to the breakdown of the European *status quo* like a beheaded hydra. By 1989, most of the established patterns and ways of working out foreign policy had been broken and abandoned. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze achieved something similar to what Nixon and Kissinger had attempted in 1969-1972: they had created a virtually unlimited space for foreign policy innovations by means of keeping the rest of the party leadership, the military and other hierarchies out of the loop. The real engine of this system was Gorbachev’s personal diplomacy. In a parallel to the Nixon of the Watergate period, Gorbachev became increasingly engrossed in the mounting domestic crisis and delegated much of day-to-day foreign policy activities to Shevardnadze and Yakovlev. In the end, Eastern Europe, which had been the focus of the Soviet leadership and bureaucracies from Stalin’s and Khrushchev’s times, was largely neglected by Gorbachev’s foreign policy.⁶⁴

Gorbachev’s personality had much to do with the peaceful death of communism in Eastern Europe (with the exception of Romania). Lévesque writes about Gorbachev’s inconsistency in his actions and his “reformist illusions.” The Soviet leader continued to believe that the “socialist basis” could be “preserved” in Eastern Europe, and these illusions helped him to ignore a torrent of alarmist and worst-scenario voices and merely to watch with sympathy the spectacular process of dissolution of the communist regimes, first in Poland and Hungary, then in the GDR and the rest of East-Central Europe.⁶⁵ But there were other traits of Gorbachev’s character at work as well: his belief in his “lodestar” and the magic of persuasion as a substitute for actions. Those who know Gorbachev also point out that he had a deep personal, almost physical aversion to spilling blood.⁶⁶ Gorbachev’s friends stress his moral principles and different generational experience that contrasted with his predecessors’ fears of “losing Central Europe.” His political enemies believe that Gorbachev “surrendered” Eastern Europe to the West in exchange for his international stardom and the mantle of the “new thinker.” They think that Gorbachev’s romance with the West distorted his priorities and made him willing to tolerate the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.⁶⁷

It is simply stunning to observe how easily the Iron Curtain fell in 1989, and how complacently the central Soviet leadership reacted, in contrast to the alarmist and warning signals from Soviet representatives in Central

European countries. Strikingly, Gorbachev, Yakovlev, and Shakhnazarov did not even arrange for a “fire brigade” or emergency meetings to discuss developments in Hungary and Poland in the spring. On 3 March 1989, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Hungary, Miklos Nemeth, informed Gorbachev about the decision “to completely remove the electronic and technological protection from the western and southern borders of Hungary. It has outlived its need, and now it serves only to catch citizens of Romania and the GDR who try to escape illegally to the West through Hungary.”⁶⁸ He added cautiously: “Of course, we will have to talk to comrades from the GDR.”⁶⁹ The only words Gorbachev could utter at this historic juncture were: “We have a strict regime on our borders, but we are also becoming more open.”⁷⁰ When the Hungarian leadership sent a note to Shevardnadze about their agreement with West Germany (they received DM 1 billion in loans in exchange for opening the border for East Germans who fled to the West via Hungarian territory), Shevardnadze only answered: “This is an affair that concerns Hungary, the GDR, and the FRG.”⁷¹

The cable traffic and other communications between Moscow and Warsaw at the critical moment when the Poles voted for Solidarity on 4 June 1989, and during the following two months when the issue of Jaruzelski’s presidency was at stake, is not yet available. Mieczysław Rakowski, a leading reformer in the Polish United Workers’ Party (PUWP), recalls that Gorbachev only called him to find out “what is going on.” But he meticulously refrained from any specific advice or anything that could be interpreted as interference in Polish developments.⁷² At the same time, Shevardnadze and Soviet ambassadors in the East-Central European countries (particularly in the GDR) acted to prevent involvement of the Soviet military forces and encouraged the non-violent resolution of crises. Shevardnadze, presumably on Gorbachev’s instructions, worked closely with his counterparts, US Secretary of State James Baker and West German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, during the UN General Assembly meeting in September 1989 in New York to resolve the growing crisis over East German refugees in Prague and Budapest.⁷³

Moscow hoped to prevent open Western interference

in the crises in Eastern Europe. Soviet officials were genuinely concerned about the new position of the Bush Administration, realizing that there was no consensus in Washington on Reagan’s “romance” with Gorbachev. The Bush Administration included many veterans of the Ford Administration who had been severely criticized from the Right for continuing détente with the Soviet Union; they feared lest that the Gorbachev–Reagan détente would become, again, a political trap for them. Robert Gates, Richard Cheney, and Brent Scowcroft, among others, dismissed “new thinking” as atmospheric at best and a deception campaign at worst, especially since Gorbachev posed as a neo-Leninist who gave no inkling of abandoning the goals of communism. Even the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, completed by February 1989, did not convince them. Scowcroft interpreted it as merely “cutting losses” and a retrenchment of Soviet power. “What was not evident was whether their [the Soviets] appetite also had been dampened. Instead of changing, Soviet priorities seemed only to narrow.”⁷⁴ As a result, almost a year was lost for the development of a US-Soviet partnership—the goal in which Gorbachev had invested so much.⁷⁵ Only after his first six months in power did Bush decide to move “beyond containment,” toward engaging the Soviet Union in the process of peaceful unification of Europe.⁷⁶

Bush’s trip to East-Central Europe in July and his personal communications to Gorbachev soon assuaged Soviet fears.⁷⁷ Starting in September 1989, Shevardnadze struck up an extraordinary friendship with Baker. And at the Malta summit in December, after the collapse of all the East European communist regimes save Romania’s, Bush and Gorbachev consolidated their mutual trust and respect.⁷⁸ The US and West German leadership chose to cooperate fully with Moscow, provided Gorbachev’s hands-off course would continue. It did. On 5 October 1989, Chernyaev wrote in his diary: “Gorbachev is flying to the GDR to celebrate its 40th anniversary. He is very reluctant. Called me two times. Today called and said: I will not say a word in support of Honecker. But I will support the Republic and the revolution.”⁷⁹ By that time Chernyaev and other denizens of the Kremlin and the Old Square’s party headquarters could watch CNN and other Western TV channels. Chernyaev recorded the combined

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effect of alarmist reports from Soviet agencies abroad and television coverage of events in his diary: “Today in Dresden—20,000 demonstrate. Yesterday there was a demonstration in Leipzig. Information is reaching us that, in the presence of Gorbachev, people will storm the Wall. Awful scenes when a special train [with East German refugees] passed from Prague to the GDR via Dresden. West German television shot everything and now is broadcasting it.”⁸⁰ Other Soviet observers also admit that West German television reports from Prague about the refugees had “a shattering effect” on them.⁸¹

According to Lévesque, the situation in Eastern Europe really began to spin out of control with the events in Poland in August 1989. But it was the East German refugee crisis, the demonstrations throughout the GDR, and the unexpected collapse of the Berlin Wall that produced such an acceleration of events that the Soviet leadership lost any chance to contain them.⁸² Chernyaev had no illusions about the course of events. “A total dismantling of socialism as a world phenomenon has been taking place. This may be inevitable and good. For this is a reunification of mankind on the basis of common sense. And a common fellow from Stavropol [Gorbachev] set this process in motion.”⁸³

This last line perhaps hints at a most interesting phenomenon: the transformation of perceptions and ideological orientation of communist apparatchiks in the midst of revolutionary change. Whatever his prior illusions, Gorbachev decided—like Imre Nagy in Hungary in 1956 and Alexander Dubček in Czechoslovakia in 1968—to support the peaceful revolutions that overcame the Cold War in Europe. In Berlin-Treptow, at the statue of the Soviet soldier commemorating “liberation,” the Soviet leader recited the poem by Fedor Tyutchev:

The oracle of our times has proclaimed:
Unity must be forged only with iron and blood.
But we will attempt to “forge” it with love,
And then we shall see which is more lasting.⁸⁴

In the words of Zelikow and Rice, “it was certainly a strange way for the leader of the Soviet Union to warn the FRG” to respect the right of the GDR to exist.⁸⁵

But euphoria over witnessing “democratic revolution” in the GDR led to a remarkable degree of wishful thinking on Gorbachev’s part about the nature of processes in East Germany and elsewhere in East-Central Europe. Once Erich Honecker was finally ousted by the SED Politburo, the new GDR leader, Egon Krenz, met with Gorbachev on 1 November to discuss the GDR’s future. When Krenz tested the Soviet leader on his attitude toward Germany’s reunification, Gorbachev responded that, in his opinion, it would be explosive and most Western leaders supported “the preservation of the realities of the postwar period, including the existence of two German states.”⁸⁶ He had doubts about the US, but Shakhnazarov, who was present, interjected that American remarks in favor of German

reunification were probably made for domestic consumption. In retrospect, it is obvious that the Soviet leader was very much impressed by the opinions of Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr, who at that time seemed to strongly believe that “liquidation of the republic [the GDR] would have been a bust for the Social Democrats.”⁸⁷

Gorbachev, hobbled by his own economic crisis at home, was in no position to bankroll the GDR. He was visibly shocked to learn that the GDR owed the West \$26.5 billion and had a \$12.1 billion budget deficit for 1989. “Astonished, Comrade Gorbachev asked whether these numbers were exact. He had not imagined the situation to be so precarious.”⁸⁸ He then admitted that for the GDR, like for Hungary and Poland, there was no way to survive economically without turning to the West. “Today some people criticize us: they say, what is the Soviet Union doing—allowing Poland and Hungary to ‘sail’ to the West [?] But, Gorbachev said, “we cannot take Poland on our balance sheet. Poland ... still owes almost \$50 billion ... You [Krenz] need to take this into account in your relationship with the FRG.”⁸⁹

Gorbachev and Krenz discussed a detailed plan for the GDR. But the Soviet leader, as was his policy and style, refrained from any direct advice or firm commitments. According to the East German record, Krenz told Gorbachev that travel laws would be revised to let East Germans travel (without money) to the West. According to the Soviet record of the meeting, Krenz said: “We have already taken a number of steps. First of all, we gave orders to the border troops not to use weapons at the border, except in cases of direct attacks on the soldiers. Second, in the Politburo we adopted a draft of the Law on Foreign Travel at the Politburo. We will present it for a public discussion, and we plan to pass it in the [Volkskammer] even before Christmas.” The issue of inter-Berlin border control had always been a primary concern of the Soviet leadership during the Cold War, and was, in 1958-61, the cause of a grave East-West confrontation. But this time, remarkably, Gorbachev did not even raise it, implying perhaps an assumption that the GDR leadership would respect the regime of the Berlin Wall. When the Soviet ambassador to the GDR asked Moscow what to do, Shevardnadze’s deputy instructed him not to interfere in the discussion concerning the new travel laws and to consider them as sovereign decisions of the GDR.⁹⁰ By leaving this crucial matter to the chaotic and disorganized SED establishment, Gorbachev and Shevardnadze took a huge gamble—and indeed, the opening of the Berlin Wall turned out, *post facto*, to be an inadvertent, but understandable consequence of this decision.

During this period, the United States turned out to be more conscious of geopolitics than Gorbachev and his people. Early in 1989, for instance, Henry Kissinger brought to Moscow a scheme for the preservation of stability in East-Central Europe through mutual restraint. Gorbachev, however, was not interested. Instead of global *status quo*, his goal was US-Soviet cooperation in

changing the world.⁹¹ At the Malta summit, Bush Administration officials were jubilant when Gorbachev openly recognized the American role in Europe and assured them that the Soviets “don’t want bridgeheads in Cuba and Central America.”⁹² As this global historical change occurred, American strategists found it hard to believe that the Cold War was really over without a single shot. They could not quite grasp how the Soviets, who had allegedly sought in the late 1970s to threaten the Persian Gulf and support left-wing movements in Africa, Central America, and Southeast and Southwest Asia, might now renounce their imperial ambitions in 1989. Lingering doubts prevailed, even as the Soviet Union, much against its traditional interests, joined the United States in a coalition against Saddam Hussein’s Iraq a year later. Speaking to his advisers, Bush vowed not to “overlook the Soviet desire for access to warm water ports.”⁹³ It was one of ironies of 1989 as a milestone of international history that, as the Soviet leadership was burying Stalin’s geopolitical legacy, the US national security elite successfully implemented the assumptions of “realism” in building a strong and unified Europe under the American leadership.

In Poland, Hungary, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria, millions of people marched for freedom and democracy and thought they were making history. They were making it indeed. But students of this history ten years later should not forget the sense of extreme uncertainty that permeated all the actions of the democratic “opposition” along with all the motley disparate forces that joined it. The tensions in Eastern Europe were underscored by the 4 June Chinese crackdown against democratic students in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The macabre *finale* of Ceaușescu’s trial and death in Romania came as the long-awaited shot from the rifle that hung on the wall of East-Central European house throughout much of the summer and fall of 1989. Yet, the uncertainty was not tinged with fear. Instead of making people numb, cautious and passive, it mobilized them in feverish excitement and made them pry open the doors and traps that for decades seemed to be locked from inside, mined and protected. It probably would not have made much of a difference to mass democratic mobilization in Eastern Europe if Moscow had interfered politically and, instead of sitting on its hands, had deployed unusually deft statecraft to try to help transform the unpopular political regimes. During the German refugee crisis, the Warsaw Pact virtually ceased to exist as an alliance, and after 12 November, as a perceptive scholar wrote, “Eastern Europe, in its entirety, [had] finally hurled itself through the Berlin Wall.”⁹⁴

Would it have been possible to stem the tide after October? There was no means to do so without major bloodshed, and according to the analyses done by liberal-

minded Moscow experts in early 1989, the outcome would have been disastrous for Gorbachev’s efforts to promote reforms at home and peace in the world. Even Stalin had spent several years stuffing the genie of East-Central European nationalism and drive for independence into the sealed communist bottle. Once the genie was liberated again in every country—from Poland to Bulgaria—nothing less than a massive and bloody use of force could have undone or stopped the process.

Some scholars write that Gorbachev (had history given him more time) would have preserved the Warsaw Treaty by integrating into it non-communist governments, beginning with Poland. Lévesque, for instance, concludes that Gorbachev’s “project” in Eastern Europe “was far from being devoid of realism” and that its prospects “were excellent in the summer of 1989.”⁹⁵ I disagree. While it is unimaginable that the flood of popular revolutions in East-Central Europe would have occurred without Gorbachev and “perestroika” in the Soviet Union, the Soviet Union (or its successor, Russia) never could have re-consolidated the region on a new, non-totalitarian, non-coercive basis. The non-communist Polish government, for instance, might have stayed for tactical reasons in the alliance with the Soviet Union for a year or two. But democratic politics and the historic national sentiments of the vast majority of Polish people pushed inexorably for a reorientation of the country towards economic, cultural, political, and ultimately military alliance with the West. The same went for the other East European countries. And, as the story of NATO expansion revealed, the US polity could not resist the idea of incorporating the area into its sphere of responsibility. Therefore one must search in vain for signs of “realist” designs in Gorbachev’s non-policy towards Eastern Europe. There were none. “The Soviet factor,” nevertheless, proved to be a crucial factor in the success of the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe and in the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Gorbachev leadership adhered to the illusory belief in “socialism with human face” as a possible third option for Eastern Europe, between old style communism and capitalism. And it was categorically against any direct interference, either by military or non-military means, lest it compromise Gorbachev’s global project of a new world order based on his “new thinking.” One day, when the Central and East Europeans overcome their post-communist hangover, and the political bickering between former reformed communists and former dissidents becomes history, memorials may be erected to remember the “*annus mirabilis*” of 1989. And perhaps, among the various figures on the bas-relief frieze, there might be a place for Gorbachev, the inadvertent liberator.

DOCUMENTS

[Editor's Note: Excerpts from the notes of Anatoly Chernyaev are printed here as a courtesy with permission of their author. Originals and complete transcriptions are stored at the Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, fond 2, opis 2. We are very thankful to Mr. Chernyaev for his generosity and remarkable addition to our understanding of the Soviet role in the end of the Cold War. Copyright on the documents belongs to Mr. Chernyaev. These are excerpts from the forthcoming book edited by Vladislav Zubok, Thomas Blanton, and Svetlana Savranskaya, in the National Security Archive series published by Central European University Press entitled "Masterpiece of History: Gorbachev's 'New Thinking' and the Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe."]

DOCUMENT No. 1

Georgy Shakhnazarov's Preparatory Notes for Mikhail Gorbachev for the Meeting of the Politburo, 6 October 1988

Mikhail Sergeevich!

Maybe you will find these thoughts useful.

Today we are discussing the results of our talks with the leaders or prominent figures from a number of socialist countries—[Laotian Prime Minister Kaysone] K. Phomvihon, [Wo Thi Khong, [East German leader] E[rich] Honecker, [Romanian leader] N[icolae] Ceaucescu, [former Polish Leader Eduard] Gierek. Now [Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party leader Jambyn] Batmunkh is asking for a meeting.

Each country has its unique situation and we would be correct not to approach them across-the-board [*chokhom*]; we are seeking to figure out the specifics of each of them, and to build our policy on the basis of such an analysis.

At the same time today's exchange and, broadly speaking, everything that we know, all the information we receive, encourages us to take a multi-faceted evaluation of the situation in the socialist commonwealth. Notwithstanding all their differences and nuances, there are multiple signs that some similar problems are increasingly plaguing the fraternal countries. The very similarity of symptoms of the disease testifies to the fact that its catalyst [*vozbuditel*] is not some kind of a malignant germ that has managed to penetrate their lowered defenses, but some factors rooted in the very economic and political model of socialism as it had evolved over here, and had been transferred with insignificant modifications to the soil of the countries who had embarked on the path of socialism in the post-war period.

We have already laid bare weaknesses of this model

and are beginning to remove them in a systematic way. This is actually the super-task of *perestroika*—to give socialism a new quality. A number of countries have followed us and began, even ahead of us, the process of deep reforms. Some of them, the GDR [East Germany], Romania, the KPDR [North Korea] still do not admit its necessity, but they do it rather for political reasons, because their current political leadership does not want to change anything. In reality all of them need changes, although we do not tell them this publicly to avoid criticism for trying to impose our *perestroika* on our friends.

But the fact is that obvious signs of a crisis require radical reforms everywhere in the socialist world. And subjective factors play a huge role. For instance, in more than backward Laos, Phomvihon is acting skillfully, and there are some good results. But those who stubbornly turn a deaf ear to the call of the time are driving the malaise ever deeper and aggravate its manifestations in the future.

And this concerns us in a direct way. Although we laid aside our rights of "senior brother" in the socialist world, we cannot renounce the role of a leader, the role that will always objectively belong to the Soviet Union as the most powerful socialist country, the motherland of the October Revolution. When it came to a crisis in any of them, we had to come to rescue at the cost of huge material, political and even human sacrifices.

We should clearly see, moreover, that in the future any possibility to "put out" crisis situations by military means must be fully excluded. Even the old leadership seemed to have already realized this, at least with regard to Poland.

Now we must reflect on how we will act if one or even several countries become bankrupt simultaneously? This is [a] realistic prospect, for some of them are on the brink of monetary insolvency (Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Vietnam, Cuba, GDR). Even Czechoslovakia, which has so far stayed afloat, now has rapidly rising external debt.

What shall we do if social instability that is now taking an increasingly threatening character in Hungary will coincide with another round of trouble-making in Poland, demonstrations of "Charter 77" in Czechoslovakia, etc.? In other words, do we have a plan in case of a crisis that might encompass the entire socialist world or a large part of it?

We are worried about this. When we receive from time to time alarmist cables we do what we can, but all this is at best like applying lotion to sores, not a systematic, thoughtful strategy for treatment of the disease, not to mention preventive measures.

It is high time to discuss these issues at the Politburo in the presence of experts. We should not bury our head in the sand like an ostrich, but we should look into the future with open eyes and ask ourselves the sharpest questions:

Could the socialist countries come out of the pre-crisis situation without Western assistance?

What price will they have to pay for this assistance?

To what extent should we encourage such a course of events or put up with it?

To what degree are we interested in further presence of Soviet troops on the territory of a number of allied countries (excluding the GDR)?

We should assign to the newly-established CC International Commission [the task of preparing materials for this discussion.] This is a huge problem, in scope as well as in significance, we need to tackle it continuously, but the first exchange should take place as early as late December [1988]—early January 1989. There will be a working conference of the Party leadership of the commonwealth in Prague in February, and this gives us a chance to share some of our conclusions with our friends. They are already expecting it, although each of them, of course, sees the situation from “his own angle.”

[Source: Published in G. Kh. Zhakhnazarov, Tsena prozreniia [*The Price of Enlightenment*]. Translated by Vladislav Zubok (*National Security Archive*).]



DOCUMENT No. 2
Excerpt from Anatoly Chernyaev’s Diary,
28 October 1988

Kohl met one-on-one with Gorbachev (plus me and Horst Teltschik, assistant to the Chancellor). And when I saw this striving at the highest level to speak as one human being to another human being (mutually), I felt physically that we were entering a new world, where class struggle, ideology, and, in general, polarity and enmity are no longer decisive. And something all-human is taking the upper hand. And then I came to realize how brave and far-sighted M.S [Gorbachev] is. He declared a “new thinking” “without any theoretical preparation” and began to act according to common sense. His ideas are: freedom of choice, mutual respect of each other’s values, balance of interest, renunciation of force in politics, all-European house, liquidation of nuclear armaments etc. All this, each by itself, is not original or new. What is new is that a person—who came out of Soviet Marxism-Leninism, Soviet society conditioned from top to bottom by Stalinism—began to carry out these ideas with all earnestness and sincerity when he became the head of state. No wonder that the world is stunned and full of admiration. And our public still cannot appreciate that he has already transferred all of them from one state to another...

[Source: Anatoly Chernyaev, 1991: *The Diary of an Assistant to the President of the USSR* (Moscow: TERRA, 1997). Translated from Russian by Vladislav Zubok (*National Security Archive*).]

DOCUMENT No. 3
Anatoly Chernyaev’s Notes from
the Politburo Session,
21 January 1989

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
Central Committee

21 January 1989

Gorbachev is speaking about the Trilateral Commission, with which he met ([former US Secretary of State Henry A.] Kissinger, [former French President Valéry] Giscard d’Estaing, [former Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro] Nakasone). It [the commission] is interested in everything that is going on, especially in our country. It is working on all issues of European world policy. I would emphasize two issues.

First is how are you—meaning we, the Soviet Union—going to integrate into the world economy? These issues are [being] considered in the Trilateral Commission. If you are going to integrate, we should be ready for it, they said to me.

Giscard told me directly that for us (the USSR) this problem would be extremely difficult, but for them as well.

Second issue. They are coming to the conclusion that the biggest fights of *perestroika* are still ahead of us. And in the international sphere the main problems for us will emerge in the Third World. They think that the West “lets the Third World live,” and the Third World, in turn, “lets the West live.” But how are we going to deal with the Third World? They believe that in 10-20 years we all will have to deal with a federation of states named Europe.

Kisa [Kissinger] just shrugged at this statement by Giscard, and asked me a direct question: How are you going to react if Eastern Europe wants to join the E[uropean] C[ommission]? It is not an accident that they asked me about it. They know that our friends are already knocking on the door. And we should also look at what processes are going on there now—the economic and the political—and where they are drifting.

What is going on in Hungary, for example? An opposition party led by [Miklos] Nemeth has emerged there. Hungary is on the eve of a serious choice. Of course, it will be different. And I think that every country should have, and has, its own face. And we will continue to be friends, because the socialist basis will be preserved in all of them. The roads of our development will be very diverse, while we will preserve our commonality. We need a mechanism that will ensure our mutual understanding and interaction. There will be a lot of political, economic, and military-political questions. We should consider them in the Central Committee’s Commission on Eastern Europe. We should undertake situational analysis with scholars. For

example, how would we react if Hungary left for the EC? Comrades, we are on the eve of very serious things. Because we cannot give them more than we are giving them now. And they need new technologies. If we do not deal with that, there will be a split, and they will run away.

And then there is the question of what we should present to the working groups of the leaders of the socialist countries. By the way, let the Commission give us a substantiated answer whether we need this meeting at all. Before it, we should work out what we can give to our friends, and compare it with what the West can give them.

The answer to this question, I am sure, lies with our *perestroika*, with its success. And we should try to involve our friends, to get them interested in our economic reforms. Let [Aleksandr] Yakovlev, with scholars, look at it. We are facing a serious problem there.

The peoples of those countries will ask: what about the C[ommunist] P[arty of the] S[oviet] U[nion], what kind of leash will it use to keep our countries in line? They simply do not know that if they pulled this leash harder, it would break.

It is time to transfer our relations to the forms that we practice in our relationship with China, but we can get to such forms only via the market, and, of course, via technological and scientific developments in our own country.

In that case, we would break the old rule that we keep them attached to us only by means of energy resources.

At the same time, we cannot just tell them that we would cut the deliveries. That would be a betrayal.

Kisa hinted at the idea of a USSR-US condominium over Europe. He was hinting that Japan, Germany, Spain, and South Korea were on the rise, and so, let us make an agreement so that the “Europeans do not misbehave.”

We should work on this range of issues also, but in such a way that it would not leak, because in Europe they are most afraid of that what they understand the Reykjavik summit means. And if you remember, in Reykjavik they saw an effort at conspiracy between the USSR and the USA over Europe.

My impression from the meeting with the Trilateral Commission is the following: they understood in the West that the world needs a peaceful breathing spell from the arms race, from the nuclear psychosis, as much as we need it. However, we need to know it all in detail in order not to make mistakes. They want to channel the processes in such a way as to limit as much as possible our influence on the world situation, they are trying to seize the initiative from us, present criteria of trust as tests: if the Soviet Union would not want to agree to something, we would act in a way to gain more points.

That is why we have to keep the initiative. This is our main advantage.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation (Moscow), f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya (National Security Archive).]

DOCUMENT No. 4

Excerpt from Anatoly Chernyaev's Diary, 2 May 1989

Inside me, depression and alarm are growing, the sense of crisis of the Gorbachevian idea. He is prepared to go far. But what does it mean? His favorite catchword is “unpredictability.” And most likely we will come to a collapse of the state and something like chaos. He feels that he is losing the levers of power irreversibly, and this realization prevents him from “going far.” For this reason he holds to conventional methods but acts with “velvet gloves.” He has no concept of where we are going. His declaration about socialist values, the ideals of October, as he begins to tick them off, sound like irony to the cognoscenti. Behind them—emptiness.

[Source: Published in Anatoly Chernyaev, 1991: The Diary of an Assistant to the President of the USSR (Moscow: TERRA, 1997). Translated by Vladislav Zubok (National Security Archive).]



DOCUMENT No. 5

Excerpt From the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev, 5 October 1989

M.S. [Gorbachev] is flying to the GDR [to celebrate] its 40th anniversary. He is very reluctant. Called me two times. Today [he called and said]: I polished the text (of the speech) to the last letter—you know, they will scrutinize it under a microscope... I will not say a word in support of [East German leader Erich] Honecker. But I will support the Republic and the Revolution.

Today in Dresden—20,000 demonstrate. Yesterday there was a demonstration in Leipzig. Information is coming in that in the presence of Gorbachev people will storm the Wall. Awful scenes when a special train [with East German refugees] passed from Prague to the GDR via Dresden. West German television shot everything and now is broadcasting this all over the GDR. All Western media are full of articles about German reunification.

Tomorrow the congress of the H[ungarian] S[ocialist] W[orkers'] P[arty] will announce the self-liquidation of “socialist PRH” [People's Republic of Hungary].

Not to mention Poland: the P[olish] U[nited] W[orkers'] P[arty] not only lost power—it will hardly survive till its next congress in February.

In a word, the total dismantling of socialism as a world phenomenon has been proceeding... Perhaps it is inevitable and good... For this is a reunification of mankind on the basis of common sense. And a common fellow from Stavropol [Gorbachev] set this process in motion.

[Source: Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Vladislav Zubok. (National Security Archive).]



DOCUMENT No. 6

Soviet Record⁹⁶ of Conversation between M. S. Gorbachev and the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), Egon Krenz, 1 November 1989

Gorbachev: The Soviet people are very interested in everything that is going on now in the GDR. We hope to get the most recent information from you, although, of course, we know a lot. The situation in the GDR, judging by everything we see, is moving at an increasing speed. Is there a danger of getting left behind the reforms? Remember, we said in Berlin⁹⁷ that to be behind is always to lose. We know that from our own experience.

[...] I cannot tell you that we have already “broken in the horse of *perestroika*,” which turned out to be quite restless. In any case, we have not completely tamed it yet. Sometimes it even tries to throw the rider off. But we have gained very valuable experience.

Krenz: [...] At the Politburo we came to the conclusion that the crisis has not emerged [just] in the last several months. Many problems have accumulated over the years.

But the main mistake was probably that we did not make serious conclusions based on the new processes of social development, which began in the Soviet Union, other socialist countries, and which were ripe in the GDR itself. Because if you have the most important ally, you have to understand and share its problems and hardships. One cannot declare friendship in words, and at the same time stay on the sidelines when your ally is trying to deal with its difficult problems. People who are used to thinking of us as close allies felt that suddenly we have lost our unity with the Soviet Union, and that we ourselves erected this barrier.

Gorbachev: From the political point of view, the situation is clear, but from a simply human standpoint—[it is] dramatic. I was also concerned about this. In general, I had good relations with Honecker, but it seemed recently as if he lost his vision. If he had been willing to make the necessary changes in policy on his own initiative 2 or 3 years ago, everything would have been different now. But apparently, he had undergone some kind of a shift, he ceased to see real processes in the world and in his own country. It was a personal drama, but because Honecker occupied a very high position, it grew into a political drama.

Krenz: Yes, you are right, it is a drama, and for me too, because Honecker brought me up, he was my political

mentor.

Gorbachev: Some people now speculate about that, but I think you should not react to that.

Krenz: For Honecker the turn probably occurred exactly in 1985, when you were elected General Secretary of the CC CPSU. In you he saw a threat to his authority, because he considered himself the most dynamic political leader. He lost all touch with reality, and did not rely on the politburo collective. [SED CC Secretary for Economics Günter] Mittag and [SED CC Secretary for Ideology and Propaganda Joachim] Hermann did him a very bad service in this respect. The first as a strategist, and the second as an executive.

[...] Gorbachev: This is a familiar picture. Some time ago, when I already was a Politburo member, I practically did not know our budget. Once we were working with [Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Politburo member] Nikolai Ryzhkov on some request of [former KGB chief and General Secretary Yuri V.] Andropov’s having to do with budgetary issues, and we, naturally, decided that we should learn about them. But Andropov said: Do not get in there, it is not your business. Now we know why he said so. It was not a budget, but hell knows what.

[...] Gorbachev: We knew about your situation, about your economic and financial ties with the FRG, and we understood how it all could turn out. For our part, we were carrying out our obligations to the GDR, including those on oil deliveries, even though some of it had to be reduced at a certain time. Erich Honecker was not very honest with us about those things. We knew about that, but we exercised reserve and patience, led by the highest political considerations.

Krenz: It is very important to define the division of labor between the GDR and the Soviet Union better. It is one of our main reserves. The situation here is far from ideal. We need to remove the existing barriers. There should be only one criterion—efficiency and mutual benefit.

Gorbachev: The issue of the division of labor stands as a major problem in our country as well. The republics that produce raw materials demand a redistribution of money, because they think that those that produce finished products get too much. They present very harsh conditions, up to the limiting and stopping of deliveries.

By the way, yesterday in the Supreme Soviet one of the deputies—[reform economist] Nikolai Shmelev—raised the question about getting the real information about all our foreign economic relations, including the relations with the socialist countries, to the Supreme Soviet.

Krenz: We are prepared to discuss seriously those issues once again with our Soviet comrades.

Gorbachev: I suggested the topic of cooperation to Honecker many times. He was in favor of direct connections, but spoke about cooperation and especially about joint ventures without any enthusiasm. But it is precisely cooperation that had the greatest potential for mutual benefit. You cannot ride on the deliveries of our raw

materials all the time. There are some strict limits here.

[...] Gorbachev: Yesterday Alexander N. Yakovlev received [former US National Security Adviser] Zbigniew Brzezinski, who, as you know, has a head with “global brains.” And he said: If today the events turned out in such a way that unification of Germany became a reality, it would mean a collapse of many things. I think so far we have held the correct line: stood firmly in favor of the coexistence of two German states, and as a result, came to a wide international recognition of the GDR, achieved the Moscow Treaty, gave a boost to the Helsinki Process. Therefore we should confidently follow this same course.

You must know: all serious political figures—[British Prime Minister Margaret] Thatcher, [French President François] Mitterand, [Italian Prime Minister Giulio] Andreotti, [Polish President Wojciech] Jaruzelski, and even the Americans—though their position has recently exhibited some nuances—are not looking forward to German unification. Moreover, in today’s situation it would probably have an explosive character. The majority of Western leaders do not want to see the dissolution of NATO and of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. Serious politicians understand that they are factors of a necessary equilibrium. However, Mitterand feels like he has to mention his sympathy for the idea of the German unification. The Americans are also speaking about such sympathies for the Germans’ pull toward the unification. But I think that they do it as a favor to Bonn, and also because to some extent, they are anxious about too much rapprochement between the FRG and the USSR. Therefore, I repeat, the best course of action now is to continue the same line in the German affairs which we have successfully developed so far. By the way, [former FRG Chancellor and SPD leader] Willy Brandt shares this opinion as well. He believes that the GDR is a great victory of socialism, even though he has his own understanding of socialism. A liquidation of the republic, in his opinion, would have been a bust for the Social Democrats. Therefore, I think, we all should start from the following formula: history itself decided that there should be two German states. But of course, you cannot get away from the FRG. The need for human contacts presumes normal relations with the FRG. You should not disrupt your ties with the FRG, although, certainly, they should be kept under control.

I am convinced that we should coordinate our relations with the FRG better, although Honecker tried to evade this necessity. We know about your relations with the FRG, and you know about our relations with it. Why should we try to hide anything from each other! It would make sense to talk about the possibilities of trilateral cooperation between the USSR, the GDR, and the FRG, especially in the economic sphere. [...]

The situation in Hungary and Poland today is such that they have nowhere else to go, as they say, because they have drowned in financial dependence on the West. Today some people criticize us: they say, what is the Soviet Union doing—allowing Poland and Hungary to “sail” to

the West[?] But we cannot take Poland on our balance. [Former Polish leader Edward] Gierek accumulated \$48 billion dollars of debt. Poland has already paid off \$49 billion, and it still owes almost \$49 billion. As far as Hungary is concerned, the International Monetary Fund has dictated its harsh ultimatum already under the late Hungarian leader Janós Kádár.

Krenz: This is not our way.

Gorbachev: You need to take this into account in your relationship with the FRG.

[...] Gorbachev: We need to think through all of this, and to find formulas that would allow people to realize their human needs. Otherwise we will be forced to accept all kinds of ultimatums. Maybe we can direct our International Departments and Foreign Ministries to think about possible initiatives together. Clearly, your constructive steps should be accompanied with demands for certain obligations from the other side. Chancellor Helmut Kohl keeps in touch with me and with you. We need to influence him. Once under the pressure of the opposition, he found himself on the horse of nationalism. The right wing starts to present their demands for the unification of Germany to the Soviet Union, and appeals to the US. The logic is simple—all the peoples are united, why do we Germans not have this right?

Krenz: We have already taken a number of steps. First of all, we gave orders to the border troops not to use weapons at the border, except in the cases of direct attacks on the soldiers. Secondly, we adopted a draft of Law on Foreign Travel at the Politburo.⁹⁸ We will present it for a public discussion, and we plan to pass it in the *Volkskammer* even before Christmas. [...]

Gorbachev: Kohl was visibly worried when I mentioned the perverse interpretation of some of our agreements with the FRG in my 8 October speech in Berlin. He immediately gave me a telephone call regarding that.

Krenz: Yes, he is worried; I noticed it in my conversation with him. He was even forgetting to finish phrases.

Gorbachev: Kohl, it seems, is not a big intellectual, but he enjoys certain popularity in his country, especially among the petit-bourgeois public.

[...] Gorbachev: I was told that he [Honecker] did not adequately understand even our discussions in the Politburo. But we do not have any ill feelings towards him. Had he made the right conclusions two or three years ago, it would have been of major significance for the GDR, and for him personally. In any case, one cannot deny the things your Party and people have achieved in the past. We have a complete mutual understanding about that.

Krenz cordially thanks Gorbachev for the support, openness, and good advice.

[Source: Notes of A.S. Chernyaev, Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya (National Security Archive).]

DOCUMENT No. 7
Excerpt from Anatoly Chernyaev's Diary,
10 November 1989

The Berlin Wall has collapsed. This entire era in the history of the Socialist system is over. Following the [Polish United Socialist Party] PUWP and the [Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party] HSWP Honecker has left. Today we received messages about the "retirement" of [Chinese Communist Party leader] Deng Xiaopeng and [Bulgarian leader Todor] Zhivkov. Only our "best friends" [Cuban leader Fidel] Castro, [Romanian leader Nicolae] Ceausescu, [and North Korean leader] Kim Il Sung are still around—people who hate our guts.

But the main thing is the GDR, the Berlin Wall. For it has to do not only with "socialism" but with the shift in the world balance of forces. This is the end of Yalta...of the Stalinist legacy and the "defeat of Hitlerite Germany."

That is what Gorbachev has done. And he has indeed turned out to be a great leader. He has sensed the pace of history and helped history to find a natural channel.

[Source: Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, the Gorbachev Foundation Archive, f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Vladislav Zubok (National Security Archive).]

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¹ The author's observation at the conference on the 10th Anniversary of the Polish Roundtable, 7–10 April 1999, organized by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

² Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), p. 575.

³ George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1998); Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed: A Study in Statecraft* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995); Robert L. Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider's Account of U.S. Policy in Europe, 1989–1992* (Washington, DC: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press and Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

⁴ See Peter Schweizer, *Victory: The Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy That Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1994). For useful historiographic data also see Robert V. Daniels, "Was Communism Reformable?" *The Nation*, Book Review, 3 January 2000.

⁵ Anatoly Chernaev, *Shest let s Gorbachevim* [Six Years with Gorbachev] (Moskva, Progress-Kultura, 1993);

see also the English edition (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000); Georgy Shakhnazarov, *Tsena svobody: Reformatsiya Gorbacheva glazami ego pomoshchnika* [The Price of Freedom: Gorbachev's Reformation through the eyes of his assistant] (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994); Vadim Medvedev, *Raspad: Kak on nazreval v 'mirovoi sisteme sotsializma'* [The Breakup: How it brewed in the "world socialist system"] (Moskva: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994); Alexandr Yakovlev, *Muki prochteniya bytiya: perestoika b nadezhdy i real'nosti* [The Pains of Coming to Grips with Reality: Perestroika, its expectations and realities] (Moskva: Novvostki, 1991); Eduard Shevardnadze, *Moi vybor v zashchitu demokratii i svobody* [My choice to defend democracy and freedom] (Moskva: Novosti, 1991).

⁶ See Valery Boldin, *Collapse of the Pedestal: Details for M.S. Gorbachev's Portrait* (Moscow: Republic, 1995) and its English-language version *Ten Years that Shook the World. The Gorbachev Era as Witnessed by His Chief of Staff* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Vladimir Kryuchkov, *A Personal File* (Moscow: Olympus, 1997); Leonid V. Shebarshin, *Zapiski nachalnika razvedki* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994); Nikolai S. Leonov, *Likholetie* (Moscow: Terra, 1997); Valentin Falin, *Politische Erinnerungen* (München: Droemer-Knaur, 1993) and his *Die Perestroika und der Zerfall der Sowjetunion*, *Hamburger Beiträge zur Friedensforschung und Sicherheitspolitik*, Heft 77 (Hamburg, April 1993); Juli Kwitzinskij, *Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten* [On the eve of the storm: memoirs of a diplomat] (Berlin: Siedler, 1993); Vitalii Vorotnikov, *A bylo eto tak: iz dnevnika chlena Politbiuro TsK KPSS* [As it happened: From the diary of a member of the CC CPSU Politburo] (Moskva: Soviet veteranov knigoizdaniya SI-MAR, 1995)

⁷ Gleb Pavlovsky, "How They Destroyed the USSR," *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 14 November 1996, p. 5; for a critique of this thesis of "primitivism" see Georgi Mirsky, *Ibid*, 22 November 1996.

⁸ S.F. Akhromeev, G.M. Kornienko, *Through the Eyes of a Marshal and a Diplomat: A Critical View of Foreign Policy of the USSR before and after 1985* (Moskva: Mezhdunarodniie otnosheniia, 1992), pp. 314–315; see also the criticism of Gorbachev and Shevardnadze's foreign policy in the last chapter of Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents (1962–1986)* (New York: Time Books, 1995) and Anatoly Gromyko, *Andrei Gromyko v Labirintakh Kremliia: Vospominania i razmishlenia yina* [Andrei Gromyko in the labyrinth of the Kremlin: His Son's Recollections and Reflections] (Moskva: IPO "Avtor," 1997); Letter from Oleg Baklanov, Valentin Varennikov, Vladimir Kryuchkov and Nikolai Lenov to Director of Watson Institute of Brown University, Thomas Bierstecker, April 1998, in which they declined to participate in a conference on the end of the Cold War, claiming that it still "continues."

⁹Quoted Richard Ned Lebow, "The Long Peace, the End of the Cold War, and the Failure of Realism," Symposium. The End of the Cold War and Theories of International Relations, *International Organization*, 48, no. 2 (Spring 1994); John Lewis Gaddis, "International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War," *International Security*, vol. 17, no. 3 (Winter 1992/93); William C. Wohlforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," *International Security*, 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/95), pp. 91-129; Ted Hopf, "Getting the End of the Cold War Wrong," *International Security*, 18, no. 2 (Fall 1993), pp. 202-208; Thomas Risse-Kappen, "Did 'Peace Through Strength' End the Cold War? Lessons from INF," *International Security*, 16, no. 1 (Summer 1991), pp. 162-188.

¹⁰Jacques Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), p. 252.

¹¹See in particular "The End of the Cold War in Europe, 1989: 'New Thinking' and New Evidence." Transcript of the Proceedings of the Musgrove Conference of the Openness in Russia and Eastern Europe Project, Musgrove, St. Simon's Island, Georgia, 1-3 May 1998, prepared by Svetlana Savranskaya, and a collection of documents from the Gorbachev Foundation and other sources prepared for this conference by Vladislav Zubok and Thomas Blanton. The documents and the transcript are being prepared for publication.

¹²"The End of the Cold War in Europe: 1989," Transcript, p. 14.

¹³Recollections of Sergei Tarasenko at Musgrove, Transcript, pp. 19-20.

¹⁴Nigel Gould-Davis, "Rethinking the Role of Ideology in International Politics during the Cold War," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 1, vol. 1 (Winter 1999), p. 104; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

¹⁵I rely here on excellent research on the origins of "new thinking" by Robert D. English. See also Robert D. English, *Russia and the Idea of the West: Gorbachev, Intellectuals, and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Columbia UP, 2000).

¹⁶Roald Sagdeev, *The Making of a Soviet Scientist: My Adventures in Nuclear Fusion and Space from Stalin to Star Wars* (New York: John Wiley, 1994), pp. 268-269.

¹⁷This is based on the analysis of Gorbachev's conversations with foreign leaders. Transcripts of these conversations are available in the Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation in Moscow. For the impact of Thatcher's visit on Gorbachev, see Chernyaev's Notes from the Politburo Meeting, 2 April 1987, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, f. 2, op. 1 [Editor's Note: see also statement made by David Wolff at the 1993 Musgrove Conference (footnote 11)].

¹⁸M.S. Gorbachev, *Zhizn i reformi* [Life and Reforms] (Moskva: Novosti, 1995), pp. 311-320; Gorbachev emphasized this point to this author at a meeting in Moscow at the Gorbachev Foundation on 20 February

1996.

¹⁹Musgrove meeting, Transcript, p. 39.

²⁰Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 52-59.

²¹Chernyaev made this point at Musgrove, Transcript, p. 105.

²²See a useful treatment of this case by Mark Kramer, "The Early Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and Upheavals in East-Central Europe: Internal-External Linkages in Soviet Policy Making (Part 1)," *The Journal of Cold War Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Winter 1999), pp. 3-55.

²³Shakhnazarov at Musgrove, Transcript, p. 42; also Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev*, pp. 35-36.

²⁴Shakhnazarov at Musgrove, Transcript, p. 42.

²⁵Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 59-65.

²⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

²⁷Gorbachev on Western Europe at the Politburo, 23 and 26 February 1987, Chernyaev's notes; also Dobrynin on Gorbachev's ideas of trying "to oust the maximum possible number American troops from Western Europe," *In Confidence*, p. 570 and *Sugubo doveritelno*, p. 607.

²⁸Chernyaev's Minutes of the Defense Council meeting, 8 May, 1987, Gorbachev Foundation Archive.

²⁹See Chernyaev, *Shest let s Gorbachevim*, pp. 131-141; Grinevsky about "naivete" of this policy at the conference "Understanding the End of the Cold War," Brown University, May 1998.

³⁰Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 66.

³¹In early March 1988 the newspaper *Soviet Russia* published a feature article by "a professor from Leningrad," Nina Andreeva, under the title "I cannot forsake my principles." It quickly became a manifesto of the forces that opposed the reforms. Some Politburo members, including Yegor K. Ligachev, encouraged this process. Gorbachev was then on a trip abroad, but when he returned, he addressed the issue at the Politburo and used the "Andreeva affair" as an occasion to rout ideologically conservative forces.

³²Anatoly Chernyaev's notes from the Politburo Meeting, 24-25 March 1988, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, f. 2, op. 1.

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴*Ibid.*

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶Yacheslav Dashichev, "East-West: The Search for New Relationships: On the Priorities of the Foreign Policy of the Soviet State," *Literaturnaya gazeta*, 18 May 1988; see also Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 350-351.

³⁷For an explanation of the revolutionary paradigm, see Zubok and Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*.

³⁸Entry for 28 October 1988 in Anatoly Chernyaev, [1991: *The Diary of an Assistant to the President of the USSR*] (Moscow: TERRA, 1997), pp. 11-12.

³⁹Entry for 28 October 1988 in Chernyaev, 1991: *The Diary*, pp. 11-12.

⁴⁰ Chernyaev's Notes, 31 October 1988, Gorbachev Foundation Archive; also see Pavel Palazchenko, *Gorbachev and Shevardnadze. The Memoir of a Soviet Interpreter* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), pp. 103-104.

⁴¹ Chernyaev, *Shest let s Gorbachevim*, pp. 255-257; William Odom, *The Collapse of the Soviet Army*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 141-144.

⁴² Record of the Politburo Meeting, 27-28 December 1988, *Istochnik*, 5-6, 1993; an even more radical version is in Chernyaev, *Shest let s Gorbachevim*, pp. 255-256.

⁴³ See Akhromeyev's opinion cited above. Also Chairman of the Council of Ministers Nikolai Ryzhkov in an interview with Michael McFaul in the summer of 1992, the Hoover Institution's Oral History Project, cited in Wolforth, "Realism and the End of the Cold War," p. 113. The figure of 70% was mentioned by Chernyaev and Shakhnazarov without a source reference during the Brown University conference.

⁴⁴ See Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp 252-55

⁴⁵ Shakhnazarov at the conference in Musgrove, Musgrove Transcript, p. 64. Unfortunately, no contemporaneous documentation to corroborate his words has so far emerged.

⁴⁶ Dashichev, "Nekotorye aspekty 'germanskoi problemy', 17 November 1987." Dashichev presented a copy to Jaques Lévesque; this document is now on file at the National Security Archive; also see Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 69-71.

⁴⁷ Musgrove, Transcript, p. 64.

⁴⁸ Anatoly Gromyko, *Andrei Gromyko*, pp. 182, 184.

⁴⁹ Memo of the International Department of the Central Committee, "On the Strategy of Relations with European Socialist Countries," February 1989, and Memo from the Institute of World Socialist System (Bogomolov), February 1989. Jacques Lévesque obtained both documents from private possession and donated them to the National Security Archive, Washington, DC. They were translated for the Musgrove conference. For the analysis of the Soviet discussion on about the future of Eastern Europe see Lévesque's, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 68-90.

⁵⁰ Interview in *Die Presse*, April 1988; see Charles Gati, *The Bloc That Failed: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 76-77, and Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 68 - 74, and his contribution in this CWIHP *Bulletin* issue.

⁵¹ On the Suslov commission and its conclusions in December 1980 see Vojtech Mastny, "*The Soviet Non-Invasion of Poland in 1980/81 and the End of the Cold War.*" *CWIHP Working Paper No. 23*, (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1998); see also Mark Kramer, *Secret Deliberations During the Polish Crisis, 1980-81*, Special Working Paper no. 1 (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1999).

⁵² Musgrove, Transcript, p. 87.

⁵³ Georgi Shakhnazarov, *Tsenasvobodi. Reformatsiia Gorbacheva glazami iego pomoshnika* [The Price of

Freedom. Gorbachev's reformation through the eyes of his assistant] (Moskva: Rossika-Zeus, 1993), p. 369.

⁵⁴ Shakhnazarov's explanation at Musgrove, Transcript, p. 87; also see changing ratio of documents on foreign and domestic problems in Shakhnazarov's memoirs, *Tsena svobodi*, pp. 384 B 407.

⁵⁵ Musgrove, Transcript, p. 88.

⁵⁶ Anatoly Chernyaev, 1991: *Dnevnik pomoshnika prezidenta*, pp. 15-16.

⁵⁷ Musgrove, Transcript, p. 58.

⁵⁸ Chernyaev's Notes from the Politburo meeting, 10 March 1989, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, f. 2, op. 1.

⁵⁹ Musgrove, Transcript, p. 79.

⁶⁰ Statements by Chernyaev, Shakhnazarov and Tarasenko at the Brown University conference and the conference at Musgrove (the author's notes).

⁶¹ Chernyaev's and Medvedev's notes at the Politburo, 11 May 1989. Discussion of the memorandum of six Politburo members on the situation in the Baltic Republics, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, f. 4, op. 1 and f. 2, op. 3; published in *The Union Could Have Been Preserved: The White Book: Documents and Facts about Policy of M.S. Gorbachev to Reform and Preserve the Multi-National State* (Moscow: April Publishers, 1995), pp. 52, 55.

⁶² Anatoly Chernyaev, 1991: *Dnevnik pomoshnika prezidenta*, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁴ On this neglect see also Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 90.

⁶⁵ Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 83, 178-181, 255.

I disagree with Lévesque's assertion that Gorbachev was misinformed about the seriousness of the brewing crisis in Eastern Europe. On the contrary, Soviet ambassadors and intelligence chiefs in Eastern European capitals, as well as some "roaming" Soviet ambassadors (e.g., Vadim Zagladin, who traveled to Czechoslovakia in July 1989), warned Moscow repeatedly of the grave situation. At the same time, few could predict what direction and character the revolutions in Eastern Europe would take.

⁶⁶ Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1996) , pp. 383-384; Statements by Chernyaev and Shakhnazarov at the conference "The end of the Cold War in Europe, 1989: New Thinking and New Evidence," Musgrove, St. Simon's Island, Georgia, 1-3 May 1998, author's notes.

⁶⁷ Interview with Georgi Kornienko, 10 January 1995, Moscow; interviews with Vladimir Kryuchkov, 13 October 1998, Moscow; with Valery Boldin, 24 February 1999, Moscow (courtesy of Oleg Skvortsov, The Oral History Project on the End of the Cold War, The Institute for General History, Russian Academy of Science).

⁶⁸ Record of conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and the member of the CC of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Hungary, Miklos Nemeth, 23 March 1989, Chernyaev's notes, Gorbachev Foundation Archive.

⁶⁹ Record of conversation between Gorbachev and

Nemeth, 23 March 1989, Chernyaev's notes, Gorbachev Foundation Archive.

⁷⁰ Record of conversation between Gorbachev and Nemeth, 23 March 1989, Chernyaev's notes, Gorbachev Foundation Archive.

⁷¹ Interview of Jacques Lévesque with Laszlo Kovacs, Budapest, 2 May 1992, cited in his *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 153.

⁷² Author's conversation with Rakowski on 8 April 1999, at the conference on the anniversary of the 1989 Polish Roundtable, organized by the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; also see Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 125. Rakowski told Lévesque that Gorbachev refused to see him in Moscow for consultations.

⁷³ There is intriguing evidence on that in the memoirs of the last Soviet ambassador to the GDR, Vyacheslav Kochemasov, *Meine letzte Mission* (Berlin: Dietz, 1994), pp. 168-169. Kochemasov claims it was his own decision to order the Soviet military commander to refrain from interference during the crucial confrontation in Leipzig; on Shevardnadze's activities in New York, see statements by Tarasenko at Musgrove, Transcript, p. 98.

⁷⁴ Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 135.

⁷⁵ Both Soviet reformers and their American sympathizers felt that, because of the change of administration, the momentum of 1986-88 was halted. Chernyaev calls 1989 "the wasted year," and Matlock's title for the early Bush foreign policy is "Washington fumbles" (The author thanks Thomas Blanton for bringing this similarity to his attention).

⁷⁶ NATO allies and domestic critics had urged Bush to come up with a policy much sooner.

⁷⁷ Bush and Scowcroft stress that Bush's meetings in Poland played a crucial role in brokering the dangerous political standoff between Jaruzelski and Solidarity. See *The World Transformed*, pp 117-123. This is fully supported by Jaruzelski himself, see his memoir: Wojciech Jaruzelski, *Les chaînes et le refuge: Memoires* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattes, 1992), p. 337, cited in Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 123.

⁷⁸ James A. Baker III with Thomas M. DeFrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy: Revolution, War and Peace, 1989-1992* (New York: Putnam's, 1995), pp. 144-152; Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 173.

⁷⁹ Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, 5 October 1989, Gorbachev Foundation, fond 2, opis 2.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ivan N. Kuzmin, *Krusheniie GDR: istoriia posledstviia* [The Collapse of the GDR: History and Consequences] (Moscow: Nauchnaia kniga, 1996), p. 48.

⁸² Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, pp. 123-127, 162-163.

⁸³ Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, 5 October 1989, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, fond 2, opis 2.

⁸⁴ Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 83. I slightly changed the translation of Tyutchev's words that Zelikow and Rice quoted.

⁸⁵ Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 83.

⁸⁶ Record of conversation between M.S. Gorbachev and General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist United Party of Germany Egon Krenz, 1 November 1989, notes by A.S. Chernyaev; Gorbachev Foundation Archive, for East German minutes see *Niederschrift des Gesprächs des Genossen Egon Krenz mit Genossen Michail Gorbatschow am 1.11.1989 in Moskau* available at SAMPO-BArch, Berlin, IV 2/2 0391, p.20, and were quoted in part by Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified*, pp. 87-91. Published in full in this *Bulletin* issue.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 15

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 26

⁹⁰ Ibid; Kotschemassow, *Meine Letzte Mission*, pp. 185-186; Zelikow and Rice interviewed other Soviet officials on this episode, see their *Germany Unified*, p. 99.

⁹¹ Chernyaev at Musgrove, Transcript, pp. 158-159; on Kissinger's initiative see Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1993), pp. 14-17, 19-21, 45-46.

⁹² Soviet record of the meeting at Malta, 2-3 December 1989. The record can be found in Chernyaev's notes at the Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation; it was partially published in *Godi trudnikh reshenii* [The Years of Difficult Decisions], (Moskva, 1993), pp. 173-197; Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 165. Pavel Palazhchenko who interpreted at the summit shared with me his astonishment at the concern of the Americans with their own backyard instead of Eastern Europe.

⁹³ Bush and Scowcroft, *A World Transformed*, p. 317.

⁹⁴ Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989*, p. 163.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 257-258; Zelikow and Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed*, p. 70.

⁹⁶ See also the German version of this conversation, published in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

⁹⁷ Gorbachev had visited East Berlin in early October for the 40th GDR Anniversary.

⁹⁸ See the article by Hans-Hermann Hertle in this issue of the *Bulletin*.

On the Eve: A Glimpse Inside the Politburo at the End of 1988

[The following minutes of the 27-28 December 1988 meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union provide a unique glimpse into the discussions within the Soviet leadership, as it assessed the US presidential transition from Ronald Reagan to George Bush and the brewing problems throughout the Soviet empire in Central and Eastern Europe. The meeting took place in the wake of a major reshuffle of the Soviet party leadership and reorganization of the central party apparatus in the summer of 1988 which sidelined key conservative leaders, such as Andrei Gromyko, Mikhail Solomentsev, Victor Chebrikov and Yegor Ligachev. More immediately, the meeting followed Gorbachev's historic 7 December 1988 speech to the United Nations General Assembly in which he recognized the right of all countries to determine their own destinies (implicitly thereby renouncing the "Brezhnev Doctrine" under which the Soviet Union had reserved the right to preserve loyal regimes within the "Socialist Commonwealth" and justified its August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia to crush the "Prague Spring"); supported universal human values rather than the class struggle to form the basis for international relations; and proposed unilateral Soviet troop and tank reductions in Europe and Asia. Not all members of the Soviet leadership had supported Gorbachev's initiative at the UN, which had not been cleared by the Politburo beforehand. Not until the December 27-28 session did the Politburo publicly pronounce its blessing on the UN speech.—Christian F. Ostermann]

DOCUMENT

Minutes of the Meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU CC), 27-28 December 1988 (Excerpts)

**Top Secret
Single copy
(Draft record)**

Meeting of the Politburo of the CC CPSU 27-28 December 1988

Chaired: Cde. M.S. GORBACHEV
Present: Cdes. V.I. Vorotnikov, L.N. Zaikov, E.K. Ligachev, V.A. Medvedev, V.P. Nikonov, N.I. Ryzhkov, N.N. Sliunkov, V.M. Chebrikov, E.A. Shevardnadze, A.N. Yakovlev, A.P. Biriukova, A.V. Vlasov, A.I. Lukiyanov, Yu. D. Masliukov, G.P. Razumovskii, Yu.F. Soloviev, N.V. Talyzin, D.T. Yazov.

1. About practical implementation and practical support [obespechenii] of the results of the visit of Cde. M.S. Gorbachev to the U.N.

Gorbachev. [...] We can state that our initiatives pulled the rug [out] from under the feet of those who have been prattling, and not without success, that new political thinking is just about words. The Soviet Union, they said, should still provide evidence. There was plenty of talk, many nice words, but not a single tank is withdrawn, not a single cannon. Therefore the unilateral reduction left a huge impression, and, one should admit, created an entirely different background for perceptions of our policies and the Soviet Union as a whole.

[...] Such impressive positive shifts created among the conservative part of the US political elite, and not only in the US, concern, anxiety and even fear. Thatcher also shares some of it. This breeds considerations of another kind, the essence of which is—to lower expectations, to sow doubts, even suspicions. Behind it is the plot to stop the process of erosion [and], disintegration of the foundation of the "Cold War." That is the crux of the matter. We are proposing and willing to build a new world, to destroy the old basis. Those who oppose it are in the minority, but these circles are very influential.

In the classified information which we receive they speak directly: we cannot allow the Soviet Union to seize the initiative and lead the entire world. [...]

What kind of policy will the US conduct with regard to us? There are several very interesting and serious versions. [...]

Here is one: changes in the policy of the USSR are caused by the profound crisis of communism and socialism and what is happening in the socialist world and the Soviet Union is allegedly a departure from these ideas. In other words we are dismantling socialism with our *perestroika* and renouncing communist goals. This version is used to devalue our peace initiatives. These are just forced steps, so they say, they do not have another option [*im devatsia nekuda*]. Well, there is some grain of realism in this, but only to a degree. We had something different in mind when we formulated our policy. Of course, we considered internal needs as well.

On the basis of this version comes the conclusion that the United States should do nothing on its part to consolidate positive shifts in international relations. The Soviet Union as well as other socialist countries, so they say have no way out. [The USSR] will give up its positions step by step. This is serious, comrades. The "Washington Times" writes about it. And the "Heritage Foundation" prepared recommendations for the future Bush administration along

these lines.

And here is the viewpoint of liberal circles: The USSR is not renouncing socialism, instead it is rescuing it, as President [Franklin D.] Roosevelt once rescued American capitalism through the New Deal. They remind us that capitalism, in order to solve its problems, many times borrowed socialist ideas of planning, state regulation, social programs based on the principle of more social fairness. So they do not want to allow the Right to play on their version and to devalue our peace initiatives. [...]

If this [conservative] version prevails, it will have a serious political effect. Incidentally, some elements of this concept are present in the thinking of [President-elect George H.W.] Bush. As if they are passing from Reagan to Bush. They are present in Western Europe: they say that under [US President Ronald] Reagan the United States has built up its military potential, activated their support to freedom fighters in various regions, and thereby convinced the Soviet Union that expansionist policy has no future. Some Europeans also want to consider the source of change of Soviet policy as American power.

This seems to be the most influential current. In essence it is close to the official viewpoint. Its danger [vred] is obvious, since, if it takes root and becomes the foundation of the policy of the future administration, it will contribute to the arms race and to military interference by the US in other countries. I am now following these things very closely. [...]

Now we should work out a longer-term plan of practical measures to implement the announced concept [at the UN]. On this issue the Politburo has received considerations from departments of the CC, the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Defense, and the Committee of State Security [KGB]. They provide a program of actions for the near and distant future. Perhaps this is still a first draft. We should pull our heads together and give it time. [...]

In what was discussed during the days of my stay in New York, the major issue was about the future of *perestroika*. And this I would like to emphasize before the Politburo. Could there be a reverse? Incidentally, this is the object of most intense speculation among the Far Right. [...] And if you analyze the content of recorded foreign broadcasts [by a special service called *radioperekhvat*] in languages of our country on all foreign stations, the emphasis is clearly on the difficulties of *perestroika*, on growing obstacles to the process in the economy, in relations among the nationalities, in the process of democratization and *glasnost*, etc.

When I had to stay in isolation [during the trip], I tried during those twelve days, day by day, to analyze and systematize the material on this score and to give my assessment. [Radio voices] are hammering away at the Soviet audience that *perestroika* is losing ground, grinding to a halt, that it has not given anything to the people, that in the leadership and the party chaos reigns, that the country is sliding toward chaos. And no matter what the leadership would undertake, it sooner or later will end up in

a trap. And [that] the future of the present leadership hangs by a thread. To be frank, they say that Gorbachev is living through his last days. According to the most optimistic forecasts, he can have a year, a year and a half. True, Vladimir Alexandrovich [Kryuchkov]?

Kryuchkov. [Chairman of the KGB] People say many things.

Gorbachev. You do not want to speak up. It is so. I should not say that we are very surprised by all this. I do not want to be excessively cheerful [*izlishnee bodriachestvo*], but if they are upset, if they try to make these forecasts, it means that they are afraid of our *perestroika*. [...]

Of course, it is still premature to draw serious conclusions about the policy of the future administration, but something can be said on the basis of contacts and some information. First, it is hard to expect that this administration will aggravate relations with the USSR or will get involved in some risky international adventure [*avantiura*] that can undermine these relations. There seems to be solid ground for saying this. On the other hand, Comrades, I believe with full certainty that the administration is not ready for a new serious turn in relations with the USSR which would correspond to the steps our side has undertaken. At least such is the picture today. So they say: we stay prudent, we will not hurry.

Still, at the last moment, when I managed to break away from Reagan [*otorvatsia ot Reigana*] I spoke to Bush about this indecisiveness. He snapped back: you must understand my position. I can not, according to American tradition, step up front until a formal transfer of power has taken place. This I understand, no question about it. We will have understanding. And he assured me—there will be continuity. He believes we should build on what has been achieved, and he will make his own contribution.

All that we have received through different channels says that, from their side, they will add to our efforts to develop our relations.

We should take into account that Bush is a very cautious politician. They say his idiosyncratic feature is the “natural caution” of Bush. It is inside him. We should see it. And what can make Bush act? Only [a threat] of the loss of prestige for the administration. So we need [these sort of] circumstances which we have now created by our initiatives to promote this process.

The mood of the present administration mostly reflects centrist sentiments in political circles of the US and Bush himself says: I am in the center. Most of those who today turn out to be in Bush's team are people who in America are called traditionalists. These people were brought up in the years of the Cold War and still do not have any foreign policy alternative to the traditional post-war course of the United States with all its zigzags to the Right, to the Left, even with its risky adventures. And we should understand it. And much will depend on how we act. I think that they

[in the US] are still concerned lest they might be on the losing side, nothing more. Big breakthroughs can hardly be expected. We should produce smart policy.

[Georgi] Arbatov has just shared with the following ideas. They [the Americans] have suddenly sent a trial balloon: we are not ready, let's wait, we will see. In general, they will drag their feet, they want to break the wave that has been created by our initiatives. In response they heard that, of course, we could wait because we have much to do in other directions—Europe, Asia, Latin America. Then they say: Well, you misunderstood us.

So we should have a thoughtful, dynamic, practical policy. We cannot allow the future administration to take a protracted time out and slow down the tempo of our political offensive.[...]

Shevardnadze. [...] There is a draft resolution [on Point 1 of the Politburo agenda]. Of course, I do not consider it a final draft. We will have to work on it.[...]

It is not true that the draft [*zapiska*] has not been cleared with the Ministry of Defense. The reasons are well known: comrades were not in place, only Comrade Lobov was present and all these issues, all these points we agreed upon with him. We went to him, obtained his signature, etc. But this is not so important. I fear another thing. What, for instance, does the Ministry of Defense propose in its report? To present data to the Supreme Soviet only after the discussion by the Defense Council and the Politburo, etc. Should we do it, if we are getting ready for a new Supreme Soviet with a new status, new rights, new content and forms of its work? I believe it should not be done.

I have serious reservations about a proposal that the Supreme Soviet receive information only about the main lines of military build-up, and not the [actual] plans of this build-up as the draft suggests. This may result in the absence of any details in discussion of this issue by the Supreme Soviet and in the same negative consequences we have already spoken about. Specific plans will continue to be adopted and implemented in secrecy [*v zakritom poriadke*] without the Supreme Soviet [s' approval]. We should not let this happen. It is absolutely unclear how the Supreme Soviet, without information about specific plans, will be able to consider seriously and approve defense expenditures. This is a very serious issue. It is also hard to understand the reasons for the objection against this clause of the [Foreign Ministry's Politburo draft resolution] where it says about a presentation for a plan and schedule of withdrawal of our troops from the territories of Allies and about its discussion with the friends.

As far as I know, a specific schedule of withdrawal has not been discussed at the Committee of Ministers of Defense [of the Warsaw Pact]. We should have such plans, to agree on them with the allies and to announce them publicly so that everybody knows about our firm intention to carry out what was stated at the United Nations, in a systematic, purposeful and orderly way. Otherwise, if everything is to be decided in a usual business order [*v*

rabochem poriadke], as comrades [from the Ministry of Defense] write, we will become a target for allegations that we are trying to sidetrack the issue of withdrawal [from Eastern Europe] and troop restructuring [*pereformirovanie*] [and] to do everything contrary to what was announced from the pulpit of the General Assembly.

The following issue [in the proposals of the Ministry of Defense] is in direct contradiction to what was said at the [UN] session and to the clause of the [Foreign Ministry] draft resolution. I have in mind the formula of the Ministry of Defense that [Soviet] forces that will stay on the territory of the socialist countries after [unilateral] cuts should adopt a more, I stress, more defensive posture. These are just words but they have significance in principle. Cde. Gorbachev spoke about giving these forces a different, unequivocally defensive structure. An important and big difference. We will be caught by hand on every, so to say, detail. And now they tell us to speak not about structure, but about some kind of abstract direction. Behind this difference in terminology stands various methods of implementation of the General Secretary's address. In practice we should act in accordance with the speech at the U.N., so that will deeds would not diverge from the words.

I cannot agree either with the way the draft of the Ministry of Defense treats the issues of *glasnost* and openness, which are today of principled importance, of highest importance. When we carry out our unilateral steps, *glasnost* and openness would be maximized, in my opinion. Otherwise the desired effect will be lost, and, it seems to me, our policy will sustain a propaganda defeat. Our opponents will not hesitate to take us up on this and to sow doubts [to the effect] that the declared steps are not implemented in full.

[The military] proposes not maximum, but a permissible openness. What permissible openness means is not clear. Even more important [is] that even this permissible *glasnost* and openness is suggested to be applied only to the withdrawal of our troops from the territory of the Allies. As to the reduction measures on our territory, apparently no *glasnost* is permitted. This is, probably, wrong as well.

In general, my conclusion is that the amendments [to the Foreign Ministry draft proposed in the Ministry of Defense's] draft resolution, in particular to the military-political section, are designed not to allow genuine *glasnost* and openness. And I still believe that these issues are of great importance.

In conclusion, Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev], several words. You spoke about some informational reports... They want us to be nervous. And look at them, they are serious people, serious politicians...

Gorbachev. Yesterday in the morning [US Ambassador Jack] Matlock asked for a meeting with [Alexander] Yakovlev and arrived. He listened to a broadcast from Leningrad, engineered [*inspirirovannuiu*] by Comrade Soloviev [first secretary of the Leningrad Party Organiza-

tion]. During this program chairman of the GDR government said that one should keep in mind the plots of imperialist intelligence services and their subversive activities against *perestroika*. Well, Matlock then said: "I have a special request from my leadership, both the current and the future one, to declare that we support *perestroika*."

Shevardnadze. You know, sometimes we help ourselves to blow up some foreign authorities. We found an analysis of this guy [former National Security Adviser Henry] Kissinger. Look what remained of his theory after your speech.

Gorbachev. Nothing remained.

Shevardnadze. If one says, another, second, third, we should not take it as absolute wisdom. I think we should treat it more seriously.

Gorbachev. We are used to the fact, that if, in our country, someone speaks up, then it is necessarily an official viewpoint. And there they just talk [*boltaïut*], you see. [...]

Gorbachev. When we discussed [alternative military service] at the Defense Council, and even considered it in the Politburo, we spoke about reductions of troops by five hundred thousand. Then, in order to resolve the issue [relating to the drafting of] students, we said: add to these five hundred another hundred thousand, to remove the issue of the enlistment of students, but let's continue talking everywhere about five hundred thousand. These five hundred [thousand] are straight army troops, and the one hundred [thousand] are construction troops. Eduard Amvrosievich [Shevardnadze] would like to announce the figure six hundred thousand, and I told him—no, because if we start comparing troop numbers, they will always poke their finger at the fact that these are construction troops, and we will insist that they are not. Therefore, officially we speak about 500 thousand.

Yakovlev. Yesterday I met with Matlock. He told me that Bush is more professional, better informed, but at the same time is more cautious. He tried to convince me that he always took part in the preparation of specific decisions, [that he] was interested in details, [that] knew many, that is: he cast the new president in the best possible light.

What else should we keep in mind in terms of putting pressure on the Americans? They are very afraid of our European and Pacific policies. They would not like to [have to] jump on [an already] departing train, a runaway train no less. They are used to being in the driver's seat. They are upset by our active foreign policy in other regions. [...]

Most importantly, Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev], you spoke many times about it, is the disappearance of the enemy image. If we continue to advance in this direction

and carry out this business, we will ultimately pull the carpet from under the feet of the military-industrial complex [of the United States]. Of course, the Americans will be forced to change their approaches radically.

Yazov. In accordance with the decision of the Defense Council taken on 9 November [1988], the Ministry of Defense has already worked out the plans for withdrawal of troops from the GDR, CSSR, HPR [Hungarian People's Republic] and PPR [Polish People's Republic].

After your speech at the United Nations I attended a Party conference of the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. There was not a single question or provocative remark. Fourteen people spoke, all with approval. On Saturday I was at the conference in Kiev district of Moscow. There was a question: "Would the withdrawal affect preparedness for defense?" I answered. There were no more questions; everyone reacted with understanding. The entire armed forces of the country regard this with understanding. In the [session of the] Committee of the Defense Ministers that was held in Sofia, all ministers took it with understanding.

I believe we are ready to report to the Defense Council on our plans to implement those proposals that have been publicized at United Nations.

The Ministry of Defense does not object to publicity on the issues of military build-up in the Supreme Soviet. But according to the Constitution the Defense Council approves, so I believe that before moving them to the Commission of the Supreme Council, all the issues should be considered at the Defense Council. I do not know why Cde. Shevardnadze disagrees with this. Before Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev] presented these proposals at the United Nations, this issue had been considered by the Defense Council and over here, in the Politburo. How could it have been otherwise? The Americans do not open [up] everything for us either. What we really learn from them we cannot buy for any money in the world. And why should we pass everything right away through the Commission of the Supreme Soviet? Today the Commission of the Supreme Soviet includes a very broad group [of people]. And not everybody should know everything.

Gorbachev. I think this is a misunderstanding. [...] There are many things that the Americans consider behind closed doors.

Yazov. Absolutely true.

Gorbachev. There are things that the Congress does not even consider. They can be done at the discretion of the President and the National Security Council.

Yazov. Now, on the formula about defensive direction, in his speech Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev] really has mentioned cuts of 10 thousand tanks. In doing this, we have to touch on all the troops that are located in the

Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. We have to include our tank divisions [in the reduction]. There are motorized regiments in tank divisions. We intend to preserve these motorized regiments. And to remove tank regiments from the tank divisions that stay in Germany, so that more tanks could be withdrawn. In this situation should we really reveal the entire structure only because we want more *glasnost*?

I believe that this is the prerogative of those countries that provide their territory for our troops. In any case, we will reveal what can be revealed, but it is not necessary to go all the way.

As to the schedule for withdrawal, we are ready to make a report about it. We propose to withdraw three divisions from Eastern Europe during this year and three divisions next year.

As to the part concerning the USSR and Mongolia, we are also prepared to report to the Defense Council on the schedule.

Ligachev. I would like to mention two or three circumstances... In a word, *perestroika* in international relations is very substantial. By the way it does not lose its class character, which was stressed by Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev] in his report at the 19th Party Conference. At the same time we spoke, and justifiably so, about the priority of common human values, common human interests. I believe that if it were not for common interests of the countries that belong to different social-economic systems, there would be no unity in actions. A common interest exists apparently in the following directions. The huge burden of military budgets. It is felt by the world of socialism as well as by the world of capitalism. Issues related to the survival of humanity, ecological problems have become burning issues. All this, taken together, and above all our policy of initiatives, have led to some changes for the better.[...]

Foreign policy is a very large complex of issues. And most important among them, cardinal, is disarmament.[...] We need disarmament most of all. We carried this burden, with relation to the military budget, with the result that in the economic area we could hardly solve anything important.[...]

But this does not mean that we should weaken the defense preparedness of the country. We have enough ways, approaches, and means to reduce the excessively large military expenditures and to use rationally, pragmatically the means for strengthening the defense readiness of the country. We should tell this to the party, [and] to the party activists. Today, when the world has already begun to disarm, slowly but surely, in the final analysis, the power of the state will be determined not by military might, but by a strong economy and by political cohesion of society.

Vorotnikov. [...] I would mention only one point. You, Mikhail Sergeevich [Gorbachev] in your speech have emphasized the ambiguous approach to *perestroika* and

the reaction by the capitalist circles, including the United States. But even in the socialist countries we run into serious problems.

Maybe in our draft resolution we should formulate directions of our policy towards the socialist commonwealth after all? Indeed, there is nothing in the draft, beside [the point about] telebridges that should be arranged together with socialist journalists. I consider the situation in a number of socialist countries so complicated [neprostaiia] that we should in one or another document clarify our thinking. It flows from your speech.

Gorbachev. Comrades, let us call it a day. Our action that we have been preparing for so long and implemented has evoked a large amount of publicity. It elevates us to a new level in our thinking and work.[...] In general, I think that our resolution encompasses all these directions [political, diplomatic, ideological follow-up]. But the comrades should read it once again. Perhaps they will add something useful to it or suggest some corrections. [...]

I also have points to add. Vitaly Ivanovich [Vorotnikov] said that people ask within the country: how did it come about that we “strip down” independently? And Yegor Kuzmich [Ligachev] approached this theme from another angle: the Party should know. We will still keep it a secret, speaking frankly. And we will keep this secrecy for one reason: if we admit now that we cannot build a longer-term economic and social policy without [unilateral cuts], then we will be forced to explain – why. Today we cannot tell even the Party about it; first of all we should bring about some order. If we say today how much we are removing for defense from the national revenue, this may reduce to naught [the effect] of the speech at the United Nations. Since such a [disastrous] situation does not exist in any other country. Perhaps only in poor [nischenskikh] countries, where half of their budget goes to military spending.

Shevardnadze. For instance, in Angola.

Gorbachev. Yes. But there the budget and everything is different. We are talking about another story. If we take this [*glasnost* approach] now, then [people] will tell us: your proposal is rubbish, you should cut your military expenditures by three-fourths. How do we go about it, comrades? First, in our plans we build in military expenses twice as large as the growth of national income, then our national income turns out to be going down the tubes, but we stick to our military plans. So you should [be able to] figure out [*prikinte*] what is going on here. For that reason we should be patient for a little bit longer. But you are all right—we will have to speak about it. Meanwhile only in a political sense.[...] By the time of 13th Five-Year Plan, Yuri Dmitrievich [Masliukov] we will implement all these decisions and will have something to say. Then our expenditures on this article [defense] will be somewhat

closer to the American expenditures.

[...] A lot of work should be done on the issue of our [military] grouping in Eastern Europe. We should do it in a systematic way [*planomerno*]. I know that all these proposals are being prepared for the Defense Council. We agreed to hold it in early January and to discuss all these issues. [...]

[...] See that younger officers do not develop a [negative] mood: is it worth continuing military service, continuing to be in the army. This should be prevented, comrades. ... A country like ours cannot live without [an army]. Everything depends on many factors. I believe that

whatever happens we should modernize the army. Incidentally, the army is needed for the maintenance of internal stability. This is an important tool in every sense. That is it.

Let's finish our exchange. It was necessary. It is really a grand-scale policy-making. I propose to instruct Comrades Shevardnadze, Zaikov, Yakovlev, Yazov, V.M. Kamentsev to finalize the draft resolution of the CC on this issue having in mind the discussion at the Politburo.

MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO. Agreed.

[Source: Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), Moscow, fond 89, perechen' 42, dokument 24. Translated by Vladislav Zubok.]

**Address by Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev to
the 43rd U.N. General Assembly Session,
7 December 1988
(Excerpts)**

Two great revolutions, the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917, have exerted a powerful influence on the actual nature of the historical process and radically changed the course of world events. Both of them, each in its own way, have given a gigantic impetus to man's progress. They are also the ones that have formed in many respects the way of thinking which is still prevailing in the public consciousness.

That is a very great spiritual wealth, but there emerges before us today a different world, for which it is necessary to seek different roads toward the future, to seek—relying, of course, on accumulated experience—but also seeing the radical differences between that which was yesterday and that which is taking place today.

The newness of the tasks, and at the same time their difficulty, are not limited to this. Today we have entered an era when progress will be based on the interests of all mankind. Consciousness of this requires that world policy, too, should be determined by the priority of the values of all mankind.

The history of the past centuries and millennia has been a history of almost ubiquitous wars, and sometimes desperate battles, leading to mutual destruction. They occurred in the clash of social and political interests and national hostility, be it from ideological or religious incompatibility. All that was the case, and even now many still claim that this past—which has not been overcome—is an immutable pattern. However, parallel with the process of wars, hostility, and alienation of peoples and countries, another process, just as objectively conditioned, was in motion and gaining force: The process of the emergence of a mutually connected and integral world. [...]

The very tackling of global problems requires a new "volume" and "quality" of cooperation by states and sociopolitical currents regardless of ideological and other differences.

Of course, radical and revolutionary changes are taking place and will continue to take place within individual countries and social structures. This has been and will continue to be the case, but our times are making corrections here, too. Internal transformational processes cannot achieve their national objectives merely by taking "course parallel" with others without using the achievements of the surrounding world and the possibilities of equitable cooperation. In these conditions, interference in those internal processes with the aim of altering them according to someone else's prescription would be all the more destructive for the emergence of a peaceful order. In the past, differences often served as a factor in pulling away from one another. Now they are being given the opportunity to be a factor in mutual enrichment and attraction. Behind differences in social structure, in the way of life, and in the preference for certain values, stand interests. There is no getting away from that, but neither is there any getting away from the need to find a balance of interests within an international framework, which has become a condition for survival and progress. As you ponder all this, you come to the conclusion that if we wish to take account of the lessons of the past and the realities of the present, if we must reckon with the objective logic of world development, it is necessary to seek—and the seek jointly—an approach toward improving the international situation and building a new world. If that is so, then it is also worth agreeing on the fundamental and truly universal prerequisites and principles for such activities. It is evident, for example, that force and the threat of force can no longer be, and should not be instruments of foreign policy. [...]

Freedom of choice is a universal principle to which there should be no exceptions. We have not come to the conclusion of

(continued on page 198)

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The Tbilisi Massacre, April 1989: Documents

[On 9 April 1989, Soviet Army troops and Interior Ministry forces opened fire on a mass demonstration in front of Government House in Tbilisi, Georgia. The demonstration had begun as a hunger strike by several hundred students to denounce attempts by the Abkhazian minority to secede from Georgia—one of a growing number of ethnic, nationalist, even separatist disturbances that perestroika had unleashed within the Soviet Union. The protest quickly escalated into an anti-government demonstration with calls for a restoration of Georgia's independence. Cutting off escape routes and using toxic gas and metal entrenching tools, the government forces under the command of Gen. Igor Rodionov quickly put a violent end to the peaceful demonstration, killing at least nineteen people. Several hundred demonstrators, many of them women and youth, suffered injuries as a result of crowd rush, stabbing and poisonings. Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who had been abroad during the crisis, quickly criticized the use of force by the Soviet Army and the Georgian Communist leadership. But to opposition groups within the USSR and East-Central Europe, the Tbilisi massacre became a chilling reminder of the fragility of perestroika and the potential for violent reactions by the authorities.]

The documents printed below (in excerpts) were published by S. V. Popov, Yu. V. Vasil'yev and A.D. Chernev in the journal Istoricheskiy Arkhiv. The three cables from Georgian leader Dzhumbar Patiashvili to Moscow had been published earlier in the stenographic record of the first USSR Congress of People's Deputies by A. I. Luk'yanov, but, according to Popov et al., contained a mass of inaccuracies if compared to the archival copies in the Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD). Additional materials on the Tbilisi massacre are likely to be found the records of the Presidential Archive, the Ministry of Interior Archives as well as the General Staff Archives, thus far largely inaccessible to researchers.—Christian F. Ostermann]

DOCUMENT No. 1

**Telegram from First Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, Dzhumbar I. Patiashvili, to the Central Committee (CC) of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU),
7 April 1989**

Incoming enciphered message No. 217/sh

**From Tbilisi
Received 7 April 1989
8:40 p.m.**

The situation in the Republic has recently worsened and is practically getting out of control. A gathering in the village of Lykhny of the Abkhazian ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic] on 18 March of this year which raised the question of the secession of the Autonomous Republic from the GSSR [Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic] served as the pretext. However, events have gone beyond these bounds.

Extremist elements are whipping up nationalist sentiments; calling for strikes and disobedience to authority, are organizing disturbances, and are discrediting Party and government [sovetskiye] bodies. Emergency measures need to be taken in the existing situation.

We consider it necessary:

1. To immediately bring to criminal and administrative responsibility the extremists who are expressing anti-Soviet, anti-socialist, and anti-Party slogans and appeals (there are legal justifications for this);
2. Introduce a special situation [curfew] in Tbilisi with the involvement of additional forces of the MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and the ZAKVO [ZakVO, Transcaucasian Military District];
3. To carry out a number of political, organizational, and administrative measures to stabilize the situation, using Party, government, and administrative activists [aktiv];
4. Not to permit publications which aggravate the situation access to national and Republic mass media.

We request your consent for points 1, 2, and 4.

*Secretary of the CC of the Georgian CP
D. Patiashvili*

[Source: TsKhSD. f. 89. Collection of documents, Xerox copy, published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 95-96. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

DOCUMENT No. 2
Telegram from D. I. Patiashvili to
the CC CPSU,
8 April 1989

Incoming enciphered message No. 219/sh

From Tbilisi
Received 8 April 1989
8:50 p.m.

I report that the situation in Tbilisi continues to remain tense.

A gathering of many thousands of people is taking place at Government House whose main slogans remain as before: "Secession from the USSR, the creation of an independent Georgia", "Liquidation of autonomies", etc.

A 3,500-person rally in the Abkhazian ASSR [Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic] of people of Georgian nationality directed against the secession of Abkhaziya from the GSSR has taken place.

In a number of higher educational institutions parts of the student body have declared a hunger strike in support of the demonstrators. As a whole the CP [Communist Party] CC, the government, and local Party and government authorities have a grip on the situation and are taking the necessary measures to stabilize the situation.

Yesterday, 7 April, a meeting of the Bureau of the CC Georgian CP [GCP] took place and today there was a meeting of the Party activists of the Republic at which measures of Party, government, and law enforcement agencies were approved to strengthen political, organizational, and indoctrination work in labor collectives and places of residence; also, an appeal of the CC of the Communist Party, the Supreme Soviet, and the Council of Ministers of Georgia to the Party members and workers of Georgia has been adopted.

In particular, it was planned to hold meetings of activists in all regions of the Republic and meetings of primary Party organizations with the participation of members of the Bureau and the CC GCP where practical plans of action were worked out for the development of projected measures. A series of speeches of eminent figures of science and culture of the Republic and representatives of the working class and peasantry have been organized on television and radio and in the press. "Roundtables" and youth meetings are being held in higher educational institutions on current issues of the public life of Georgia, the destructiveness of illegal activities, the measures of responsibility for what has been done, and the need to strengthen discipline and order for

the further development of democracy and *glasnost*.

After the activists' meeting everyone fanned out and went to workplaces to explain its materials and the Party policy in present conditions and the unity of the Party and the people in carrying out the tasks of *perestroika*.

Workers' groups [*druzhiny*] consisting of 4,685 people have been created at 111 Tbilisi enterprises and institutions to maintain discipline and orderliness. Specific plans have been developed and are being carried out together with the MVD and ZAKVO [sic] to maintain law and order and adopt, if necessary, exhaustive measures to prevent disorders and illegal acts. The entire staff of the CC, the Supreme Soviet, the GSSR Council of Ministers, the Tbilisi City Party Committee and City Executive Committee are efficiently performing their functions and actively working among the population and demonstrators.

No more additional measures on the part of the CC CPSU or the USSR government are required at the present time besides those adopted earlier.

This is reported for your information.

Secretary of the CC GCP, D. Patiashvili

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 89. Collection of documents, Xerox copy, published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 95-96. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]



DOCUMENT No. 3
Telegram from D. I. Patiashvili
to the CC CPSU,
9 April 1989

Incoming enciphered message No. 220/sh

From Tbilisi
Received 9 April 1989
10:25 a.m.

In Tbilisi after 9:00 p.m. on the night of 8 April 1989, in spite of all measures being taken by the Party, government, and the forces of law and order, the situation at a demonstration of about 15,000 people at the Republic Government House and also in other parts of the city began to be inflamed by extremists and got out of control. Besides anti-Soviet, anti-socialist, and anti-Russian exhortations, appeals began to be spread by extremists for physical violence against Communists, leaders of the Republic, and members of their families. The demonstrators, among whom

were many drunks and drug users, were called upon to organize the entire population of the Republic to strike, commit civil disobedience, and violence against those who did not support them. Groups of extremists began to be delegated together with demonstrators to nearby cities and *rayons* of the Republic. An attempt was made in the city of Rustavi to seize a metallurgical works.

The leaders of the so-called “National Liberation Movement” have begun to publicize their plans to seize power in the Republic. In order to ensure public order and prevent unforeseeable consequences in this situation, a decision was made at 4:00 a.m. to use force to clear the square and Government House of the demonstrators. Subunits of the Republic MVD and the Transcaucasian Military District were used in accordance with a plan developed earlier by competent authorities. As they approached the place where the demonstration was being held, its participants were called upon by leaders of the Republic, members of the CP CC, Party and government activists, and also the Catholicos of Georgia Ilya II to stop the demonstration and peacefully disperse. However, the demonstrators did not react to this. In turn, the organizers of the demonstration inflamed passions to hysteria, calling upon them not to spare their blood or their lives to confront the forces of law and order.

The MVD subunits and ZAKVO [sic] troops did not use small arms or silent weapons [*kholodnoye oruzhiye*]. Instructions about the cautious treatment of women and adolescents were strictly observed. As the first ranks of the demonstrators were driven back, accompanied by fierce resistance by extremists using sticks and stones, the crowd began to become disorderly and moved toward a youth lying on a sidewalk who had declared a hunger strike. Moreover, there were quite a few provocateurs in the crowd who were using silent weapons. As a result of the crush which had formed, 16 people died (13 young women and 3 [young] men) and more than 100 received injuries of varying severity, among whom were 22 servicemen (13 of them were hospitalized). First aid was given to the victims.

At the present time the square at Government House has been cleared of demonstrators and has been taken under guard by troops. The necessary measures are being taken to detain and arrest the ringleaders of the disorders and prevent new demonstrations. A governmental commission has been formed headed by the Chairman of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers, Cde. Z.A. Chkheidze in connection with the tragic consequences of the measures which were taken.

A plenum of the CC GCP is planned for today to review the current situation and identify the measures ensuing from it.

We request your agreement to introduce a curfew in

the city of Tbilisi beginning today in order to prevent mass disorders and to stabilize the situation.

Secretary of the CC GCP, D. Patiashvili

[Source: *TsKhSD, f. 89. Collection of documents, Xerox copy, published in Istoricheskij Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 97-98. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.*]



DOCUMENT No. 4
Resolution of the CC CPSU Politburo
“Measures to Normalize the Situation
in Tbilisi,”
10 April 1989

1. Approve the text of the Appeal of the CC CPSU General Secretary and Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, Cde. M.S. Gorbachev, to Communists and all workers of the Georgian SSR.

2. Be guided by the views expressed at the meeting of the CC Politburo when taking measures to normalize the situation in the city of Tbilisi.

CC CPSU Politburo

[Source: *TsKhSD, f. 3, op. 102 d. 1137, p. 2. Original, published in Istoricheskij Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 98. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.*]



DOCUMENT No. 5
Note from A. S. Kapto, A. S. Pavlov, and
Ye. Z. Razumov to the CC CPSU

In connection with the aggravation of the political situation in the Georgian SSR we consider it advisable to send the following recommendations to local Party committees (attached).

We request your agreement.

A. Kapto Ye. Razumov A. Pavlov

To the CP CC’s of union republics, *kray*, and
***oblast’* Party committees**

The aggravation of the political situation in the

Georgian SSR which is noted in the TASS report of 10 April again shows the entire importance of timely preventive measures on the part of local Party, government, and law enforcement bodies. The CC CPSU directs the attention of the CP CC's of union republics, *kray*, and *oblast'* Party committees to the need for a deep and comprehensive analysis of the situation which has unfolded in each region and the implementation of effective work to put an end to various kinds of antisocial manifestations.

Party committees and primary Party organizations ought to ensure high political vigilance, not permit complacency and lack of principle in evaluating extremism and nationalism, decisively put an end to any fabrications directed at undermining the foundations of the state, and not ignore any instance of illegal actions.

It is necessary to more diligently improve mass political work in labor collectives and the population's places of residence. Sound out the mood of the people sensitively, react quickly to their needs and requests, and root out bureaucratism and red tape. Pay special attention to the organization of educational work among the student population. Mobilize all Party, government, and Komsomol activists for these purposes. Increase the responsibility of leadership cadre for the political situation in each collective and their personal participation in educational work and public speeches before workers and youth.

The CC CPSU stresses the exceptionally important role and responsibility of the mass media for an objective treatment of the processes which are occurring and the correct formation of public opinion.

It is necessary to concentrate the attention of law enforcement bodies on the adoption of timely and decisive measures directed at people committing violations of socialist law, facilitating the kindling of ethnic strife with their inflammatory actions, and inciting people on the path to anarchy and disorder.

In this regard, Party committees and the leaders of law enforcement agencies, using the mass media and the entire arsenal of ideological and educational work, are to ensure the explanation and deep study of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium decrees published in the press directed at a fuller and more effective use of the means of protecting the Soviet constitutional order and ethnic equality; [they] permit a more active struggle to be waged against various kinds of extremist elements.

It is recommended that Party committees investigate additional measures in their Bureaus to strengthen discipline, order, and organization in every way in each region.

[Source: *TsKhSD. f. 5, op. 35 d. 145, pp. 55-57. Original, published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 99-100. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*



DOCUMENT No. 6
Note from A. S. Pavlov, Chief of the CC
CPSU State and Legal Department,
to the CC CPSU
29 April 1989

Secret

CC CPSU

On the Issue of the Events in the City of Tbilisi

In connection with numerous appeals by citizens and statements in the mass media regarding the events in the city of Tbilisi which were provoked by groups of extremists and led on 9 April to the deaths of people, we consider it advisable to form a commission to study the reasons and circumstances of these events for a report to the CC CPSU.

It is advisable to bring comrades into this work who have had no prior association with an investigation of this extraordinary incident.

The commission could include Cdes. G.S. Tarazevich, Chairman of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet Presidium (Chairman); G.V. Sergeyev, First Deputy USSR Minister of Health; V.L. Govorov, Chief of USSR Civil Defense and Deputy USSR Minister of Defense; V.P. Pirozhkov, Deputy Chairman of the USSR KGB; N.I. Demidov, Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs; and O.V. Kvilitaya, First Deputy Chairman of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers.

The candidacy of O.V. Kvilitaya as a member of the commission was per the suggestion of Cde. G.G. Gumbaridze.

A draft CC CPSU Decree is attached.

Chief of the CC CPSU State and Legal Department
A. Pavlov

[Source: *TsKhSD. f. 5, op. 34, d. 796, p. 121. Original, published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 100. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]*

DOCUMENT No. 7
Decree of the CC CPSU Secretariat
“The Issue of the Events in the City of Tbilisi,”
29 April 1989

No. ST 100/105I

Top Secret

The Commission consisting of Cdes. G.S. Tarazevich (Chairman); G.V. Sergeev; V.L. Govorov; V.P. Pirozhkov; N.I. Demidov; and O.V. Kvilitaya is charged with studying the circumstances of the events which took place on 9 April in the city of Tbilisi and reporting to the CC CPSU.

Results of the voting: V. Chebrikov	for
A. Yakovlev	for
V. Medvedev	for
N. Nikonov	for
M. Gorbachev	for
Ye. Ligachev	for
L. Zaykov	for
E. Shevardnadze	for
O. Baklanov	for
N. Slyun'kov	for

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 5, op. 34 d. 796, pp. 118-120. Original, published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 101. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]



DOCUMENT No. 8
Findings of the Commission of the USSR
Congress of People's Deputies to Investigate
the Events which Occurred in
the City of Tbilisi,
9 April 1989

1. Introduction

The Commission to investigate the events which took place in the city of Tbilisi on 9 April 1989 was created by the USSR Congress of People's Deputies and composed of 24 persons, among whom were representatives of 9 union republics, state and public figures, well-known scientists and writers, and representatives of the army and church. A.A. Sobchak was elected Chairman of the Commission; Kh. Yu. Aasmyaeh, A.I. Golyakov and V. P. Tomkus were chosen as Deputy Chairmen and S.B. Stankevich was chosen as the Secretary.

In accordance with the assignment of the Congress,

the Commission considered its mission to be to explain the actual nature of the events which took place on the night of 9 April in the city of Tbilisi, the reasons for the tragedy, the legality of the decisions adopted at various levels of the Party, state, and military leadership associated with them [the events], and to evaluate a number of the consequences of these events. In the process of the Commission's work the need was uncovered to respond to a more general issue: the conditions and permissible limits of using Soviet Army sub-units to maintain public order.

The members of the Commission familiarized themselves with documents received from the commissions which investigated these events under the chairmanship of G.S. Tarazevich, the USSR Ministry of Defense; Chairman, General-Major of the Medical Service G.A. Sofronov; and the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet, Chairman, Professor T.G. Shavgulidze; and also with materials (cipher messages, notes, written reports, stenographic records of meetings, etc.) received from the CC CPSU and CC GCP, the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet, the USSR Ministry of Defense, the command of the ZakVO, the Ministries of Internal Affairs of the USSR and the Georgian SSR, the USSR Procuracy, and other state and public organizations.

The Commission met with the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, General Secretary of the CC CPSU, Cde. M.S. Gorbachev.

The Commission heard the Politburo members who are CC Secretaries: Cdes. Ye.K. Ligachev, and V.M. Chebrikov; USSR Foreign Minister Eh.A. Shevardnadze; Candidate members of the Politburo: First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, A.I. Luk'yanov; CC CPSU Secretary G.P. Razumovskiy; USSR Minister of Defense, D.T. Yazov; USSR Minister of Internal Affairs, V.V. Bakatin; several senior officials of the CC CPSU staff; the leaders of the CC GCP; the leadership of the USSR Ministry of Defense, MVD, the Georgian SSR MVD, the USSR KGB, and the Georgian KGB; representatives of the Main Military Procuracy and the Procuracy of the Georgian SSR; and also the commands of ZakVO, units, and subunits of the Soviet Army, Internal Troops, and militia who took part in the 9 April 1989 operation. Conversations were held with eyewitnesses to the events: militia members [*rabotniki*]; Georgian SSR Ministry of Health and first aid workers; servicemen of the Soviet Army and Internal Troops; representatives of the public; veterans of Afghanistan [*voiny-internatsionalisty*]; clergy (including the Patriarch of the Georgian Orthodox Church, Catholicos of Georgia Ilya II); representatives of the Popular Front and the unofficial organizations of Georgia; and individual citizens, in particular, those victims who were treated in medical institutions in the city of Tbilisi.

Materials were studied which had been published in

the periodic press and also the numerous letters and telegrams which had been sent to the Commission from citizens who live in various regions of our country.

In the process of their work, members of the Commission travelled to the city of Tbilisi and met with representatives of the Georgian public and ZakVO, and visited hospitals and the military units which participated in the events.

To gain a correct evaluation of the events which occurred in the city of Tbilisi on 9 April 1989 it is necessary to proceed from the idea that the country has entered upon an irrevocably democratic path of development which is meaningless without the constant exercise of the most diverse forms of popular social activity. The main substance of this is the aspiration to express one's own interests and take a realistic, constructive part in democratic development by legal means, within the bounds of a strict observance of public order. And in these conditions the duty of state authority and law enforcement bodies is to afford realistic guarantees and protection for such activity.

But of course actions of an anti-social, illegal, and violent nature are possible in the course of these processes. And here the duty of state authority is to display firmness and use force within necessary limits.

The principal significance in this connection is an objective evaluation of the situation. Inaction by the authorities against violence and violations of law would be unforgivable. But the use of force against a peaceful meeting or demonstration which results in casualties is also unforgivable. In both cases this is a blow against *perestroika* and democracy.

Evaluating what took place, the Commission found that *perestroika* has caused an awakening of national consciousness and an attempt to achieve genuine economic independence and state sovereignty, which today characterize the social and political situation not only in Georgia but in other union republics. The conditions for the tragic events of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi developed over a long [period of] time. Signs of a crisis were displayed in them which involved many areas of government administration and public life in the Republic and in the country as a whole.

The Commission notes that in the process of democratization unavoidable differences and extremes appeared in the views and appeals expressed, in the evaluations of trends, and the paths and forms of future political development of the Republic and the entire country. Together with public movements and organizations striving for democratic renewal of the economic and political system of socialism, unofficial organizations appeared in the Republic

whose program also contained positions of an anti-socialist and nationalistic nature. Their activity ran counter to *perestroika* and seriously inflamed the political situation in the Republic.

In these conditions, the most important task for the government and Party leadership of the Republic was to justify its role as the political and ideological vanguard, to act in the spirit of *perestroika* with the conviction [that it could] influence the mood of people and not permit its own estrangement from the actual development of the political processes of the Republic. However the leadership of the CC GCP did not manage to find contact and establish dialogue with the public. Subsequently, as social processes developed the popularity of unofficial groups increased and the leadership embarked on a course of confrontation. It is this which in particular could explain the circumstance in which petitions to hold demonstrations were greeted with refusal, as a rule, with few exceptions, as a result of which illegal meetings began to be held in practice without previous notification to the authorities. Thus the leadership of the Republic gradually lost control over political processes, Party influence over the masses waned, and its authority fell among the broad strata of the population. This occurred back during the events of 1988, when only an active political position of the Georgian intelligentsia and an appeal by M. S. Gorbachev to the Georgian people helped relieve the situation. But the leaders of the Republic themselves were already inclined to use force by then.

Unfortunately the necessary changes in the position and actions of the Georgian leadership did not subsequently occur.

The Commission thinks that such facts as the self-isolation of the leadership of the Republic and the inadequate, at times panicky, evaluation of specific situations, and the inability to positively influence the situation with political methods were some of the main causes which led, in the final account, to the tragic consequences of the events of 9 April in the city of Tbilisi.

2. The Situation in the Republic on the Eve of the Events of 9 April and the Mechanism of the Decisionmaking to Halt the Demonstration

At the end of March and the beginning of April 1989, a serious worsening of the political situation occurred in connection with events in Abkhaziya, which served as a direct pretext for the unofficial organizations to hold an unauthorized multi-day demonstration in front of Government House in Tbilisi. However by 6 April, the anti-Abkhazian nature of the demonstration had sharply changed, in connection with the replacement of the leadership of the Abkhazian Oblast' of the GCP, and an extremist demand was advanced for the withdrawal of Georgia from the USSR. At the same time, many urgent

issues troubling the public were discussed at the demonstration. Thousands of citizens participated in it (from morning to late evening). Hundreds of demonstrators remained at Government House at night. All this led to the disruption of the operation of transportation and of several government institutions in the center of the city and to breaches of the peace in the capital. The appeal of the CC GCP, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and the Council of Ministers of the Georgian SSR broadcast on republic radio and television had no positive effect on the demonstrators. [The] organizers [of the demonstrations] sent their representatives to work groups, higher educational institutions, and schools with a call to begin a strike and join with the demonstrators, and they resorted to picketing. Many higher educational institutions and schools suspended classes.

However, it is necessary to stress that a majority of workers and employees of the capital of Georgia did not support these calls and continued to work.

In the course of the demonstration, irresponsible calls to disobey the legal instructions of authorities were spread, and slogans of a nationalistic, anti-socialist, and anti-Soviet nature were advanced, in particular: "Down with the Communist regime!", "Down with Russian imperialism!", "USSR the prison of peoples!", "Down with Soviet power!", "Liquidate Abkhazian autonomy!", etc. The organizers of the demonstration continued to inflame the situation and called for the demonstrations, strikes, and hunger strikes to continue until 14 April.

Thus, the political situation in Tbilisi on the eve of the events of 9 April was characterized as an emergency and demanded the adoption of urgent and crucial decisions from the leadership of the GCP and the government of the Republic.

The Commission notes, however, that in the course of the investigation no terrorist acts were identified and no facts were established indicating that there was a real attempt to seize power or that there were politically motivated incidents of violence or assaults [*pokusheniya*] against workers of government and Party organizations, Party members, or citizens of non-Georgian nationality.

It is typical that the demonstration was accompanied by such a passive form of protest as the declaration of a mass multi-day hunger strike (more than 100 [people] at Government House took part in a hunger strike).

It was necessary to stop the unauthorized demonstration during this period, but this task should have and could have been carried out by the authorities who were entrusted by law with ensuring public order, the authorities of the Republic MVD. The Commission notes that the MVD of the Georgian SSR and the Directorate of Internal Affairs

of the city of Tbilisi did not perform the responsibilities entrusted to them to stop the unauthorized demonstration, although, according to a statement of the Georgian MVD, they repeatedly raised with the leadership of the Republic the issue of stopping the demonstration that was underway in front of Government House and restoring the normal situation in the capital with the aid of the forces at their disposal. However, this suggestion was not approved by the leadership of the Republic for fear of complications in the form of mass demonstrations by the population which, in their opinion, the available forces of the Internal Troops and militia could not handle.

The leadership of the Republic considered that this measure could have been implemented on condition that a curfew was introduced, for which additional military subunits needed to be brought in.

Therefore they decided to appeal for help to the Soviet authorities. At 8:35 p.m. on 7 April, a well-known telegram, prepared by the Second Secretary of the CC GCP, B.V. Nikol'skiy, was sent to the CC CPSU over the signature of the First Secretary of the CC GCP, D.I. Patiashvili. In the opinion of the Commission, the evaluation of the political situation in the Republic contained in this telegram did not completely correspond to the real state of affairs and was not a sufficient justification for concentrating military subunits in the city of Tbilisi and introducing a state of emergency (curfew).

The Commission notes the existence of serious oversights and violations of law committed by both Soviet as well as Republic authorities in the process of preparing and implementing measures to stop the demonstration at Government House in Tbilisi on the night of 9 April.

A meeting was held in the CC CPSU on 7 April 1989 under the leadership of Politburo member and CC CPSU Secretary Cde. Ye. K. Ligachev in which the following took part: Politburo members Cdes. V.A. Medvedev, N.N. Slyun'kov, V.M. Chebrikov; Candidate members of the Politburo Cdes. A.I. Luk'yanov, G.P. Razumovskiy, D.T. Yazov; Chairman of the USSR KGB, V.A. Cde. Kryuchkov; Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs Cde. V.P. Trushin., and a number of senior officials of the CC CPSU staff. The issue of the situation in Georgia was examined.

The work of the meeting was not recorded and its conclusions were not documented. One can judge the content of the decisions worked out only from the explanations of the participants of the meeting. At the meeting consent was actually given to granting the verbal requests of the leadership of the Republic to make Internal Troops and Soviet Army subunits available. A directive of the General Staff of the USSR Ministry of Defense and an order of the USSR MVD were issued on this basis to send the corresponding military subunits to Georgia.

It was recommended that the leadership of the Republic collectively discuss the situation which had arisen and find a way out of the current situation using political means.

A warning was made about the need to observe extreme caution and to use troops only in an exceptional situation. The leadership of the Republic was informed by telephone that, in view of the current situation, it should make specific decisions about the use of the troops being sent to Georgia jointly with the command of ZakVO. Thus it was not recommended at that moment that a state of emergency be introduced and a curfew be declared in the city of Tbilisi.

The Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, M. S. Gorbachev, returned to Moscow from a foreign trip on 7 April 1989 at 11:00 p.m. and was informed about the situation in Georgia. He then made a suggestion to send Cdes. Eh. A. Shevardnadze and G.P. Razumovskiy to Georgia.

The next day a second meeting was held in the CC CPSU devoted to the situation in Georgia. It was led by Politburo member and CC Secretary Cde. V. M. Chebrikov. The participants were the same as on 7 April 1989 with the exception of Cde. Ye. K. Ligachev, who had gone on leave. Politburo member Cde. Eh. A. Shevardnadze and USSR Minister of Internal Affairs Cde. V.V. Bakatin were also present at the meeting. As [had occurred] the day before, the work of the meeting was not recorded and the decisions made were not documented. By this time an enciphered message of 8 April 1989 had been received signed by D.I. Patiashvili, saying that the situation in the city was stabilizing and was under control. Cdes. Eh. A. Shevardnadze and D.I. Patiashvili had an exchange of opinions by telephone. Referring to the stabilization of the situation on the night of 7-8 April, Cde. D.I. Patiashvili considered the arrival of Cdes. Eh. A. Shevardnadze and G.P. Razumovskiy to be unnecessary and the participants of the meeting agreed.

Thus the dispatch to Georgia of subunits of the Internal Troops, special militia subunits, and troops of the Soviet Army was done by agreement of the above meetings in the CC CPSU on 7 and 8 April. This was in contradiction to existing legislation according to which the right to make such decisions belonged not to Party, but to the appropriate government agencies. Such a decision-making procedure leads to virtual inaction of the constitutional agencies of Soviet power, as happened in this case.

At the Republic level the plan of measures to normalize the situation in the Republic, including measures to introduce a state of emergency and bring in troops from the Transcaucasian Military District, was first adopted by the Bureau of the CC GCP and then approved by a meeting of

Party activists of the Republic held on 8 April 1989. At this meeting of activists an evaluation of the situation was given, a plan of measures to normalize the situation was approved, and a decision was made for all of the activists to go to the demonstration, take part in it, and try to convince the participants to stop the demonstration and normalize the situation. However, this most important decision was not carried out by the Party activists.

The issue of halting the unauthorized demonstration was repeatedly discussed by the Bureau of the CC GCP. The decision to halt the meeting was adopted by the Bureau of the CC GCP on 8 April. At a meeting of the Defense Council of the Republic held the same day, the issues associated with this were discussed, in spite of the fact that it had no authority to do this. The time to carry out the operation was determined later by a narrow circle of people (Cdes. D.I. Patiashvili, B.V. Nikol'skiy, K.A. Kochetov, and I.N. Rodionov) considering that toward morning the fewest number of people remained in the square, as a rule, no more than 200 hunger strikers and their relatives.

The Commission notes that the decisions made at the meetings of the Bureau of the CC GCP and the Defense Council of the Republic were not documented properly or in a timely manner, which gave a number of participants at the meeting an opportunity to deny their participation in the adoption of the decision to halt the demonstration in front of Government House.

The supervision of the preparation and the conduct of the operation to halt the meeting and to develop a plan of operations was entrusted to the Commanding General of the ZakVO, General [-Colonel] I.N. Rodionov, as the one senior in rank and on the basis of the authorization given to him by a decision of the Bureau of the CC GCP, subordinating to him all the men and equipment made available to bring order to the city.

The Commission thinks that the senior officials of the CC CPSU staff present at this time in Tbilisi (V.N. Lobko, V.S. Buyanov, and A. Ye. Selivanov) could have helped the Party leadership of the Republic both in a correct evaluation of the existing situation and in stabilizing and improving the situation by political means.

On the evening of 8 April 1989, an instruction of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers was issued, signed by the Chairman of the GSSR Council of Ministers, Cde. Z.A. Chkheidze, by which the Georgian SSR MVD was directed to enlist servicemen of the Internal Troops and the Soviet Army in taking measures to remove the demonstrators from the area adjacent to Government House. This is the only document about halting the unauthorized demonstration in Tbilisi not adopted by a Party, but by a government body. However, the order contained in the instruction to involve

servicemen in carrying out this task is illegal since the government of the Republic had not provided such authority.

At the same time the Commission notes that the Presidium of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet (Chairman Cde. O.Ye. Cherkeziya) removed itself from making the necessary constitutional decisions in the developing situation.

The marshalling of troops and the preparation for the operation to halt the unauthorized demonstration occurred in the following manner:

Right after the meeting in the CC CPSU on 7 April 1989, a verbal instruction followed from the USSR Minister of Defense, General of the Army D.T. Yazov, to Generals K.A. Kochetov and I.N. Rodionov to go to Tbilisi, where they were to act in accordance with the situation as they saw fit. On the same day (7 April 1989 at 4:50 p.m.) the Chief of the General Staff, General of the Army M.A. Moiseyev, issued a directive on behalf of the Minister of Defense to send an airborne regiment to the Tbilisi area to place the most important facilities under guard and organize monitoring of the main roads leading in and out of Tbilisi. At the same time three military units of the Tbilisi garrison were brought to full combat readiness.

On order of Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs I.F. Shilov subunits of the Internal Troops and special militia subunits (*OMON*), totalling more than 2,000 men, were also sent to Tbilisi from various regions of the country.

After their arrival in Tbilisi on the evening of the same day, Generals K.A. Kochetov and I.N. Rodionov met with the First and Second Secretaries of the CC GCP, D.I. Patiashvili and B.V. Nikol'skiy. At this meeting the Party leaders of Georgia again insistently requested that a curfew be introduced, referring to the lack of a sufficient number of troops. Only then was the illegal decision made to make a show of military force.

On the morning of 8 April 1989, three squadrons of combat helicopters overflew the city at low altitude and about noon combat equipment with armed soldiers proceeded through the streets of Tbilisi along three routes and past the demonstrators.

This action played a provocative role. In reply, individual groups of demonstrators resorted to further violation of the law: they began to seize transport equipment and used it to close off both the exits from Rustaveli Avenue and the exits to the streets adjacent to the Avenue (29 buses, trolleys, and heavy duty vehicles were used in all; six of the vehicles had their tires deflated). At the same time people began to gather in the square. Toward evening

a demonstration by women was held around the residence of D.I. Patiashvili, demanding that troops be withdrawn from Tbilisi. No one talked with them; subsequently the women (numbering about 700) went to the square and joined the demonstrators. Thus the show of military force directly resulted in a sharp increase in the numbers of demonstrators. In this complicated situation it would have been more advisable to hold off with a decision to forcibly stop the demonstration, but having lost the capability by that time to realistically evaluate and manage the processes which were occurring, the Party leadership of the Republic did not see any way out of the given situation other than to use force.

General I.N. Rodionov charged the Chief of the Operations Directorate of the USSR MVD Internal Troops Staff, General Yu. T. Yefimov, who had arrived in Tbilisi on 7 April 1989, with developing a specific plan of operations to force the demonstrators out of the square in front of the Government House.

The plan of operations and the schedule of troop operations were signed by General Yu.T. Yefimov and Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Sh. V. Gorgodze, and then approved by General I.N. Rodionov.

An order with the assignment of missions to individual subunits was given verbally. No reconnoitering with subunit commanders took place.

The operation to stop the demonstration began on 9 April at 4:00 a.m. and ended tragically. The Commission notes that violations of both the procedure for making such a decision and its realization were committed while introducing the curfew in Tbilisi on the evening of 9 April on the basis of a resolution of the Presidium of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet.

3. The Actual Course of the Operation to Stop the Demonstration

According to the decision approved by the leader of the operation, General-Colonel I.N. Rodionov, by 3:30 a.m. on 9 April troops were concentrated on Lenin Square; they were charged with the mission of forcing the demonstrators from the square in front of Government House along Rustaveli Avenue to Republic Square. They consisted of the 4th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the Independent Special Purpose Motorized Rifle Division (*4-y MSP OMSDON*), Moscow City-650 men; a special purpose militia detachment (*OMON*), Perm'-120 men; *OMON*, Voronezh City-40 men; the Higher Militia School (*VShM*), Gor'kiy City-450 men; the 8th Motorized Rifle Regiment (*8-y MSP*), Tbilisi-650 men; the Georgian SSR MVD-250 men; and an airborne regiment (*VDP*)-440 men.

The following took part in the operation: 2,550 men, 6 armored personnel carriers (*BTR*), 8 airborne combat vehicles (*BMD*), 4 fire trucks, and 2 ambulances.

Before the start of the operation General-Major Yu. T. Yefimov verbally assigned the following missions to the commanders of the subunits:

The 4th MSP is to move slowly along Rustaveli Avenue from Lenin Square to Republic Square to force the demonstrators to the line—the “Iveriya” Hotel [sic].

According to the written explanation by Yu. T. Yefimov, approved by an MVD Commission under the chairmanship of Deputy Minister V.P. Trushin, the mission assigned to the 8th MSP was described otherwise than it was written in the decision, namely:

The 8th MSP is to move at the start of the operation with two battalions to the square in front of Government House along Chitadze and Chichinadze Streets, where they are to cut off a group of hunger strikers from the main mass of demonstrators in the square.

VShM (Gor’kiy City)—moving behind the 4th MSP is to close the exits to Rustaveli Avenue from adjacent streets.

A similar mission was given the OMON units. The commander of the firefighting unit was assigned the mission of extinguishing any fires that broke out and with instructions to pay special attention to the armored vehicles accompanying the troops. The mission to disperse the demonstrators using water was mentioned in the decision but it was cancelled afterwards by Yu. T. Yefimov and Sh. V. Gorgodze.

VDP (consisting of two battalions)—moved in a line behind the 4th MSP with the mission to take the square in front of Government House, Rustaveli Avenue, and the streets adjacent to it under guard. Be ready in case of need to help the 4th MSP.

The Internal Troops were equipped and armed with the following to carry out the missions entrusted to them: helmets, bulletproof vests, rubber truncheons; 50% of the personnel had shields, the officers had their personal weapons with them (“PM” pistols) with two clips. A crew to use the “Cheremukha” special agent and directly subordinate to the acting commander of this regiment, Lt. Col. A.M. Baklanov, moved in the 4th MSP.

At 2:50 a.m. on 9 April 1989, the Chief of the Directorate of Internal Affairs of Tbilisi City, Col. R.L. Gventsadze, spoke to the demonstrators, calling on them to disperse before the troops used force. In his words, the demonstrators did not let him speak in front of a microphone and he was forced to use a portable megaphone. Forty-five

minutes before the start of the operation, the Catholicos of Georgia, Iliya II, appealed to the demonstrators. The speech of the Catholicos was heard in deep silence; after his call to reason a 7-minute silence settled in and then a common prayer, “*Otche nash*”, followed. The demonstrators maintained order and calm and there were no visible signs of fear: many sang and danced. Then one of the leaders of the unofficial groups, I. Tsereteli, spoke out with a call to not disperse, to not offer resistance, to maintain calm, but best of all to sit (“they don’t beat sitters!”), which many of them then did, mainly in the area of the stairs of Government House. He concluded his appeal at 3:59 a.m. At 4:00 a.m. General-Colonel I.N. Rodionov, gave the order to begin the expulsion operation.

The Commission notes that the actual situation in the square by that time (the presence of 10,000 people), and the readiness with which the participants of the demonstration intended to continue it, required especially deliberate and cautious decisions in conducting the operation. But none of these circumstances were taken into consideration in an exchange of opinions by telephone between D.I. Patiashvili and I.N. Rodionov. These officials displayed flagrant irresponsibility in unquestioningly confirming the earlier adopted decision.

At 4:05 a.m. four BTRs [armed personnel carriers] appeared on Rustaveli Avenue in the area of the Government House. They crossed the entire width of the avenue, and people let them do so without hindrance, withdrawing in part toward Government House and in part toward the Artist’s House and the Kashveti Church [*khram*, literally “temple” or “shrine”, but later referred to correctly as a church]. The armored vehicles were followed by extended lines of troops, which at 4:07 a.m. stopped at the line from the entrance to Artist’s House to the right lawn in front of Government House. Thus the main mass of demonstrators were left at the stairs of Government House.

Lt. Col A.M. Baklanov suggested to the demonstrators by megaphone that they vacate Rustaveli Avenue and warned them that force would be used if they refused. It should be noted that many did not hear these warnings due to the noise in the square.

When the troops arrived at their forming-up positions, the demonstrators started to leave the square; however, they were not given sufficient time to disperse. Thus it was also not taken into consideration that almost all the exits from the square were closed off by transport vehicles, that is, the evacuation routes were sharply restricted. Three minutes later the operation to force people from the square continued.

The troop lines of the 4th MSP began to hem in the demonstrators both toward Government House and along Rustaveli Avenue. Thus the majority of the demonstrators

located to the left of Government House continued to remain in place, involuntarily preventing the free exit of those people hemmed in from the front. The situation was seriously aggravated by the fact that at this time the 1st Battalion of the 8th MSP, following the verbal order of General-Major Yu. T. Yefimov, began to move to the square from Chichinadze Street. As a result of the movement of the line of servicemen on one side and the increasing density of the mass of people provoking resistance from the demonstrators on the other, a crush began in the area of the right lawn. It is here that most of the dead and victims [sic] of the civilian population were found. Among those who received injuries were also many militia workers and servicemen.

At this stage, some of the demonstrators actually ended up surrounded, that is, squeezed between servicemen and demonstrators who had been unable to leave. A frantic confrontation occurred. The use of rubber truncheons and toxic substances with the grossest violation of instructions and the use of small entrenching tools in dispersing the demonstrators actually turned into savage treatment of Soviet people.

Having studied all the documentary materials available to it, the Commission has come to the firm conclusion that there are no convincing arguments justifying the advisability of bringing a company of a Soviet Army airborne regiment into an operation to force people from the square.

According to the explanation of General Yu. T. Yefimov, when the line of troops was moving forward along Rustaveli Avenue, because of a widening of the avenue in the area of Government House the left flank allegedly was exposed which created, in Yu. T. Yefimov's words, a real threat not only of a penetration into the rear of the servicemen by the demonstrators, but their encirclement.

To close this gap, at General Yu. T. Yefimov's request, General I. N. Rodionov allocated a company of paratroopers and thereby allowed Soviet Army servicemen to get involved in performing functions uncharacteristic for them, grossly violating the General Staff directive about entrusting army subunits only with missions to guard especially selected facilities. In the opinion of the Commission there was no real threat of a disruption of the operation to expel the demonstrators in this situation, hence there was no need to bring in a company of paratroopers.

By 4:21 a.m. the clearing of the square in front of Government House had been concluded. The 1st Battalion of the 8th MSP joined up with the 4th MSP, which continued the expulsion of the demonstrators.

At this stage of the operation, the Internal Troops, overcoming the active resistance of the demonstrators squeezed along Rustaveli Avenue, used the "Cheremukha"

special agent. According to the reports of the leadership of the Internal Troops, the special agent was used by: the first line—Dzhordzhiashvili Street to L. Ukrainka Street; the second line: Lunacharskiy Street to Chavchadze Street; the third line—in front of the Communications Building.

Because of increased resistance on their approach to Republic Square (the exit was blocked by trolleys and buses), Lt. Col. A. M. Baklanov independently gave an order to use the non-standard product K-51 containing a toxic agent, CS. Four grenades were used, one of which did not work.

The unauthorized decision by Lt. Col. A. M. Baklanov to use product K-51, who later concealed the fact of the use of this product, ought to be specially noted.

The accuracy of the description of the lines of use of toxic agents provokes doubt. According to copious testimony of the victims, they were poisoned at earlier approaches (right at Government House and the Kashveti Church).

An incident of a rifle wound to the head of one of the demonstrators took place at the completion of the expulsion operation.

The Commission notes that the special agent was used by the 4th MSP in violation of a current regulation (see Attachment No. 1 to USSR MVD Order No. 0507 1970*). There are residences from the first line of the use of the special agent to the end of Rustaveli Avenue (beginning with the "Tbilisi" Hotel). In Point 23 of Section III of the regulation it mentions warning the civilian population before using a special agent and even evacuating them. However, General Yu. T. Yefimov, ignoring this requirement, gave the order to use "Cheremukha" in a residential area. The same occurred at the next lines. There is information that individual servicemen entered living quarters, where they used the "Cheremukha" special agent.

* - The Attachment is not being published.

The Commission notes with special alarm the premeditated attempts by the Internal Troops leadership to hide the fact itself of the use of toxic agents.

The use of the "Cheremukha" special agent was officially admitted on 13 April, but under pressure of incontrovertible evidence.

Next there was a gradual admission of the use of various modifications of "Cheremukha" and CS gas (product K-51).

For a long time representatives of the Soviet Army also denied the fact of the use of small entrenching tools.

It is appropriate to mention that information about the demonstrators and their intentions was reported by commanders and political workers in distorted form when instructing the servicemen who had been enlisted in the operation.

Thus, a combined analysis of the actual progress of the operation to expel the demonstrators permits us to reliably state that only as a result of the grossest violations of current law, regulations, and instructions, bordering on criminal negligence, on the one hand, and the illegal actions of the organizers and some of the demonstrators, on the other, did it end tragically. The business of the investigation is to look into the degree of culpability both of the conduct of the leaders who approved it and the direct agents [*ispolniteli*] as well as those demonstrators who committed illegal acts.

4. An Evaluation of the Damage to the Health and the Reasons for the Death of the People Who Took Part in the Events of 9 April 1989

The Commission has familiarized itself with the initial medical documentation (the medical history, the outpatient records, the forensic medical examination reports, etc.) of various institutions and organizations of the USSR Ministry of Health, a report of a USSR Ministry of Defense commission, the findings of the Medical Subcommittee of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet, the findings of the USSR Ministry of Health Institute of Forensic Medicine, the report of the International Red Cross medical mission to the Georgian SSR, and a number of other documents regarding the medical consequences of the events which took place in Tbilisi on 9 April of this year.

Members of the Commission conducted additional scientific research and consultations with specialists enlisted for this purpose.

An analysis of available information permits a determination of the scale and nature of the medical casualties associated with the operation to expel the demonstrators.

The total number of demonstrators in the confined area at Government House and the television studio building has not been established, but according to estimates it was 8-10,000. The number of women apparently was close to 50%. It is also known that among those who took part in the demonstrations were many adolescents and elderly people. The weather was described as moderately warm (+9°C), high humidity (90%), and the wind was calm.

The location of the events was well lit by street lights. The density of the demonstrators grew from the periphery of the square by degrees to Government House where the hunger strikers (more than 100 people) and the leaders of

the demonstration were located.

A medical aid station of the city health department had been operating in the Artist's House as of 4 April.

The "expulsion" operation was carried out at night (4:00 a.m.-5:00 a.m. local time). This circumstance needs to be specially noted inasmuch as at nighttime a person's reactions and immunity to harmful factors is sharply reduced in accordance with the nature of biological rhythms.

It has been established that rubber truncheons, "special agents"—toxic irritants—small entrenching tools, and in one case (according to a finding of the forensic medical commission) firearms were used against the demonstrators by the "expulsion forces." For their part, the demonstrators used makeshift objects against the "expulsion forces" as resistance grew.

According to data from the medical aid station personnel, the arrival of the first wounded demonstrators—women, adolescents, and men—was noted five minutes after the start of contact with the "expulsion forces." The influx of the injured in the next 5 minutes became massive. The medical aid station spaces were soon completely filled. Therefore many people were given medical aid in the street. In view of this, additional first aid teams and ambulances were called in.

Testimony has been recorded of cases in which servicemen impeded medical workers rendering aid to the victims. The documents of the first aid vehicle depot of Tbilisi city note six cases of attacks on ambulances with damage to them.

Many participants in the event—civilians, militia workers, and civilians—received injuries of different kinds and severity. The tragic result was that 16 demonstrators died at the site of the incident and three died soon after in a hospital. There were no cases of deaths among servicemen and militia workers.

Some difficulty is being encountered [in trying to make an] exact determination of the number of victims, both of demonstrators as well as of servicemen and militia workers. Nevertheless the Commission has sufficient material to characterize the medical consequences of the events of 9 April as a whole.

According to information of the Georgian SSR Ministry of Health, during the expulsion operation and for several hours afterwards, 251 people visited hospitals in Tbilisi, of which 183 were hospitalized. In succeeding days, an undulating growth in the number of those who turned for medical aid (13, 21, 27 April, and 5 May) occurred. During the period from 9 April through 9 May, the total

number of those who came to medical institutions was from three to four thousand. About 500 in all were hospitalized, and at the present time about 1000 people are on the dispensary registry and undergoing treatment.

According to information of the Georgian MVD, in the course of the events 37 militia workers of Tbilisi City were injured; 22 of them were injured from the actions of servicemen. According to information of the USSR MVD, the number of servicemen who were injured was 69, but the report of the USSR MOD commission produced data that a total 152 servicemen were injured (132 Internal Troops, 22 Soviet Army), of which 26 were hospitalized (22 Internal Troops, 4 Soviet Army). According to a report of the USSR Procuracy, 189 servicemen were injured in these events.

The Commission established that of the 20 Soviet Army servicemen mentioned in the Ministry of Defense report in fact only three received injuries in the course of the events under examination.

The damage to the health of those who took part in the events of 9 April was expressed both in the form of injuries, poisoning by toxic substances, or a combination of both, and in various psychological and emotional disorders of the “mass catastrophe syndrome.”

The demonstrators suffered 290 casualties: contusions—40%, closed head injuries—30%, wounds—20%, and various fractures—10%.

A selective analysis of the medical histories and a poll of a part of victims permits us to establish that the majority of injuries (including head injuries) were inflicted by rubber truncheons; in 21 cases the injuries were associated with the use of a small entrenching tool. It was often noted that people with serious injuries also had been poisoned by toxic substances (combined injuries).

An analysis of the course of the illnesses of people who turned for medical aid due to poisoning presents great difficulties.

The Commission especially notes that the concealment of the use of toxic substances on 9 April and then incomplete information about this issue (the use of CN—on 13 April, the use of CS—on 3 May), and the belated and insufficiently systematized testing for the presence of toxic substances at the site impeded the diagnosis and treatment of those affected and created an extremely unfavorable and tense social situation.

This circumstance, as well as the panic rumors, the concealment of the use of toxic substances, the uncertainty in the diagnosis, and also the published calls to go for medical help—all this and several other circumstances promoted the undulating nature of the number of treat-

ments for medical aid during the succeeding month.

Cases of the “secondary effects of poisoning” occupy a special place in a number of these phenomena, for example the outbreak of doctor’s visits [*obrashcheniya*] on 28 April after flowers were moved from Government House to the church. The circumstances connected with this event have not been sufficiently identified up to now.

The Commission thinks that even in such cases, when based on complaints of a worsening of health, there were indications only from the victims themselves of contact with toxic substances, these cases could have been classed on a sufficient basis as a display of a “syndrome of a reaction to a mass catastrophe.”

In all, about 300 victims of toxic substances were recorded (including 19 servicemen and 9 militia workers). The main mass of them involve people who had been poisoned on 9 April in the square in front of Government House and in several other places along Rustaveli Avenue. In the clinical severity of injury they (according to the evidence of the USSR Ministry of Health commission) were distributed in the following manner: serious—2%, medium severity—7%, slight—91%.

Data about the place, type of toxic substances used, and the nature of the injury suffered was contradictory. However, thanks to the results of detailed research testing of the air, soil, vegetation, clothing, and tissue of the corpses, and also a survey of the victims and eyewitnesses, the Commission was able to clear up these questions to a considerable degree. According to the testimony of victims on the special dispensary registry, [the following] were poisoned by chemical substances: immediately in front of Government House—49%; in the area of Rustaveli Avenue-Chitadze Street—15%; near the First Middle School—9%; at the “Rustaveli” movie theater—3%; and in the area of the Kashveti church—24%. A comparatively small part of the demonstrators were poisoned on Rustaveli Avenue adjacent to Republic Square and also on several neighboring streets.

From this information it ensues that the main places where toxic substances were employed were the square in front of Government House and in the area of the Kashveti church, which does not coincide with areas of toxic substance use referred to by the leaders of the operation.

As follows from the report of the USSR Ministry of Defense commission, three weeks after the events on Rustaveli Avenue in the sector from Pioneers House to the Communications Building the presence of CN and CS was observed in the soil and in two tests even in the atmosphere (in an underpass), which can indirectly confirm the use of a considerable quantity of toxic substances.

The use of chloroacetophenone (KhAF, CN) is indisputably admitted in the form of “Cheremukha” products and the substance CS in K-51 grenades (a toxic irritant substance).

In four tests of the soil taken in the area of Rustaveli Avenue around Government House and the Kashveti church, the research of the Tbilisi State University Chromato-Mass Spectrometry Center also found chloropicrin (a toxic asphyxiant). No explanation has yet been found for its appearance in these tests.

The experience of the use of so-called “police toxic substances” both in our country and abroad shows that the use of these substances within established rules does not lead to serious consequences. Cases of serious poisoning are extremely rare, and fatal outcomes are unique. The picture of the intoxication of the demonstrators in Tbilisi differs remarkably from the usual cases of the use of such types of toxic substances.

It is characterized by its massive nature, a considerable number of poisonings of medium and great severity, and with specific features of a clinical manifestation in the form of signs of “neurotropic” activity.

The Commission thinks that it could have appeared as a result of a combination of a number of circumstances and factors:

1. The circumstances of the weather situation—high humidity and calm wind, which impeded the dispersal of the gas cloud and created a high concentration.
2. The use of toxic substances in a dense mass of people deprived of the opportunity to leave the afflicted location.
3. The use, from the testimony of eyewitnesses and victims, of toxic substances in the form of an aerosol at a distance close enough to perhaps have created a critical concentration of toxic substances.
4. The combination of toxins with physical injuries and psychological stress, which aggravated the clinical finding of injury (a “neurotropic effect”).
5. The increase of the degree of toxic activity of toxic substances on an organism at nighttime in connection with the reduction of the organism’s resistance.

It ought to be noted that the factual data and the ideas presented are not sufficient to completely exclude the probability that some of the victims were poisoned by some other unidentified toxic substance.

The question of identifying the direct causes of the

deaths of the 19 demonstrators occupied a special place in the Commission’s work.

The materials and findings of various groups of experts received by the Commission gave an unambiguous explanation of the factors which led to the deaths of the victims.

In this regard the Commission brought in a group of scientists, and specialists in the field of pathological anatomy and forensic medicine who studied all the available material and came to the conclusion the direct cause of death of all those who died, with the exception of one case of serious skull and brain injury, was suffocation (asphyxia). In the opinion of specialists in the field of asphyxia two simultaneously operating factors played a role—both the compression of the body and the inhalation of chemical substances, which the corresponding macroscopic and microscopic data point to. The combination of the inhalation of chemical substances and the compression of the body mutually intensified their negative effect and served, in the opinion of the specialists, as the reason for the deaths of the victims. In two cases there were additional circumstances in the form of concomitant illnesses.

Nevertheless, it is not possible in each specific case to precisely determine from the available materials the predominance of one or the other factor in the development of asphyxia. The findings of the specialists have been sent to the USSR Procuracy.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The tragedy which occurred on 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi, the deaths of innocent people, caused deep pain in the hearts and consciousness of the Soviet people.

The members of the Commission of the USSR Congress of People’s Deputies share these feelings and express sincere condolences to the families, relatives, and friends of the victims and also to all who suffered on that bitter April morning.

The events of 9 April inflicted a significant blow to *perestroika* and shook our entire society. The show of force, the damage to the health, and the deprivation of people’s sacred gift—life—are incompatible with common human moral principles and values.

The Commission turns to all citizens of the country with an appeal—the most acute problems which life puts before us, conflicts, and misunderstandings can only be resolved by political methods, dialogue, and persuasion.

The Commission calls upon all Soviet people not to allow the sad events of 9 April in Tbilisi to be used to incite mistrust and hostile attitudes toward the Soviet Army.

The Commission calls upon the Congress of People's Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet to draw up and adopt laws strictly regulating the use of force within the country as a top priority.

On the basis of the available materials, the Commission of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies comes to the following conclusions:

1. The reasons for the tragic events of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi were that under the conditions of democratization of the entire public and political life of our society, the leadership of the Republic did not manage to direct the acute and dynamically developing processes of *perestroika* in Georgia, properly evaluate the situation in the Republic, and make adequate political decisions.

The former Secretaries of the CC GCP, D.I. Patiashvili and B.V. Nikol'skiy, bear responsibility for the political and other consequences of the events of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi.

2. The organizers of the unauthorized demonstration at Government House (I. Tsereteli, Z. Gamsakhurdia, G. Chanturiya, and other leaders of unofficial organizations) should bear criminal, political, moral, and other responsibility for their actions. In the course of their actions they committed various breaches of the peace, issued appeals to disobey legal demands of the authorities, and when a real threat of the use of armed force was created, did not take measures to stop it [the demonstration] and thus did not try to prevent the tragic outcome of the events.

3. The decision to send sub-units of the Internal Troops, the Soviet Army, and special sub-units of the militia were formalized by a directive of the USSR Ministry of Defense General Staff (Cde. M.A. Moiseyev) and by an order of the USSR Minister of Internal Affairs (Cde. I.F. Shilov) after a meeting in the CC CPSU on 7 April 1989 (chaired by Cde. Ye. K. Ligachev). Inasmuch as the subject was not simply about troop redeployment but was actually about carrying out operations, introducing individual elements of a state of emergency in the city of Tbilisi, establishing control of entrances to and exits from the city, and taking the most important public and government buildings and other facilities under guard, it ought to be recognized that these decisions were made in gross violation of the law.

4. The instruction of the Georgian Council of Ministers (Cde. Z.A. Chkheidze) of 8 April 1989 to clear the square in front of Government House of demonstrators and to carry out other measures to preserve public order involving the participation of Internal Troops and subunits of the Soviet Army was illegal since

existing legislation does not provide the government of the Republic with such authority.

5. Serious violations were committed during the preparation and execution of the operation to clear the square, manifested in the fact that the operations plan was not corrected in accordance with the actual situation. It was insufficiently studied by the commanders of the sub-units, reconnoitering was not done, and the men and equipment of the Tbilisi city government Directorate of Internal Affairs were not brought into the operation in due measure. In spite of the USSR Minister of Defense's order, paratroop sub-units were used not to guard facilities but to expel demonstrators. Gross violations of public order were committed by the use of special agents; in particular, non-standard special agents (product K-51) were used, and rubber truncheons and small entrenching tools were used illegally.

Generals K.A. Kochetov, I.N. Rodionov and Yu. T. Yefimov bear personal responsibility for these violations and oversights which led to the tragic consequences.

The Minister of Internal Affairs of Georgia, Sh.V. Gorgodze, who removed himself from execution of his direct responsibilities, also bears responsibility in due measure.

6. In the opinion of the Commission, the officials, who issued the order to use special agents and [heavy] equipment on the demonstrators on 9 April in Tbilisi, should be called to official and other forms of account. According to current regulations these "are used in exceptional situations to stop mass unrest accompanied by pogroms, brutality, destruction, arson, and to repel mass attacks on official and administrative buildings, the premises of public organizations and other important facilities, and also in cases when the violent actions of violators of public order threaten the lives and health of citizens, the members of Internal Forces units, and the civilian militia." The Commission has established that on 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi, no grounds to take such measures existed.

7. During the operation to halt the demonstration by clearing the square in front of Government House and Rustaveli Avenue, bodily injuries of varying degrees of severity (including injuries from the use of special agents—tear gases) were inflicted on the demonstrators, servicemen of the Internal Troops and the Soviet Army, and militia workers. Nineteen demonstrators died (mainly women). The Commission perceives the need for criminal liability of the specific individuals guilty of the deaths of people and the infliction of serious bodily injuries.

8. It is also necessary to resolve the issue of the senior officials who:

— violated Point 59 of the Internal Troops Combat Duty Regulations, which prohibits the use of the “Cheremukha” special agent against women, adolescents, children, and in other specifically mentioned instances;

— violated current regulations according to which it is categorically prohibited to use a rubber truncheon against women, children, the aged, invalids with obvious signs of disability, and also to hit people in the face and head;

— used articles with CS tear gas, which is not approved for use in the Internal Troops, at the concluding stage of the operation to expel the demonstrators.

9. The Commission raises the question of the responsibility of those people who permitted the violation of the guaranteed rights and legal interests of citizens when introducing and implementing the curfew in the city of Tbilisi.

10. Political, moral, and in necessary cases, legal responsibility should be borne by any official of both Party and government bodies who permits the concealment of the fact of use of special agents of the “Cheremukha” and article K-51 types containing CS gas.

11. The Commission notes that in the periodical press many items have appeared based on rumors, conjecture, false reports, and a distorted picture of the real course of events. Thus, the Commission has not found evidence of the existence or operation in the square of specially formed groups of guerilla extremists, or the allegation that the first wounded and killed supposedly appeared even before the troops came in contact with the demonstrators.

The widely spread information about the multitudes of people who reportedly were missing after 9 April and the use by demonstrators of specially prepared silent [*kholodnoye*] weapons and firearms has also not been confirmed.

The Commission notes the lack of facts behind the statement by General I.N. Rodionov at the USSR Congress of People’s Deputies that “a real threat of the seizure of vitally important facilities of the Republic had been created” by 9 April. Neither the reports of KGB organizations, nor the official reports of the Republic MVD, nor any other document contain any specific facts of this kind.

The Commission notes that a positive aspect in settling the conflicts between the civilians and military during the curfew in effect in Tbilisi was the organized actions of the veterans of the war in Afghanistan, which facilitated the normalization of the situation. The Commission also notes that, while performing their official duties in difficult extraordinary conditions, many militia workers not only helped medical personnel in the evacuation of the victims but they gave medical aid themselves to the injured civilians and hunger strikers.

In conclusion the Commission submits the following suggestions for the consideration of competent government bodies:

1. Party organizations which accordingly consented or made decisions at the federal or Republic level about sending troops and conducting this operation acted according to a long-held procedure and in the face of the decisions of the XIX Party Conference about the need to delimit the functions of Party and government institutions. In a state committed to the rule of law, the decisions of Party organizations at any level can have obligatory significance for institutions of state power and administration, including the Army, only after they are embodied in a legal act of a competent state institution, a law or a government decree.

In this regard an urgent need has occurred for an acceleration of the practical division of functions of Party and government institutions by making the necessary changes in existing legislation and corresponding Party documents.

2. The events of 9 April in Tbilisi pointed out obvious flaws in existing legislation and the practice of making the most important state decisions about introducing a special situation [*osoboye polozheniye*] or state of emergency using subunits of the Soviet Army to maintain and restore public order inside the country, in particular the possibility of using the armed forces to resolve internal conflicts directly on the basis of decisions adopted by Party, not government organizations.

A clear and exhaustive legislative regulation of the substance and the procedure for introducing martial law (in the case of the armed conflicts) a special situation (in the case of internal unrest) or a state of emergency (in the case of disasters) is required, excluding the situation which developed in Tbilisi when the introduction of a curfew assigned a subunit of the Soviet Army the mission of maintaining public order, which should only be handled by MVD personnel.

3. It seems advisable to review the question of

increasing the strength of the Internal Troops and manning them on a mainly professional basis. It is necessary to determine legislatively the procedure and mechanism for using federal and Republic subunits of the Internal Troops.

4. It is necessary to prohibit legislatively the use of the Soviet Army to put down mass unrest, stipulating the possibility of using Army subunits for these purposes only in exceptional cases directly stipulated by law—by a decision in each individual case by the Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet with a subsequent report to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

5. The rights and responsibilities of militia and Internal Troops personnel need to be spelled out legislatively as to when they perform their responsibilities which are associated with halting illegal activities and mass disorder.

6. The Commission directs attention to the need to strengthen the investigatory group on this case by bringing in workers from the Georgian SSR Procuracy and taking additional measures for the quickest possible conclusion of the preliminary investigation of the case which was brought in connection with the events of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi.

7. The powers of parliamentary commissions created by the Congress of People's Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet need to be spelled out legislatively, in particular the need to provide for the responsibility of officials for giving Commissions knowingly false testimony.

The Commission expresses gratitude to the governmental and public organizations and also to all citizens and officials who gave assistance in its work and helped establish the truth.

Chairman of the Commission A. Sobchak

Deputy Chairmen of the Commission Kh. Yu. Aasmyaeh, A. I. Golyakov, V. P. Tomkus

Executive Secretary of the Commission S. B. Stankevich

Members of the Commission:

S. A. Andronati, N. P. Bekhtereva, G. A. Borovik, B. L. Vasil'yev, O. G. Gazonko, V. L. Govorov, D. S. Likhachev, V. P. Lukin, V. A. Martirosyan, V. M. Miroshnik, N. A. Nazarbayev, K. V. Nechayev, R. K. Odzhiyev, R. Z. Sagdeyev, V. F. Tolpezhnikov, V. I. Fedotova, E. N. Shengelaya, P. V. Pet'ko, A. M. Yakovlev

[Source: TsKhSD, f. 89. (Collection of documents, Xerox copy). Published in Istoricheskiy Arkhiv 3 (1993), pp. 102-120. Translated for CWIHP by Gary Goldberg.]

¹ On Gorbachev's reaction, see Anatoly Chernyaev, *My Six Years with Gorbachev*. Translated and edited by Robert English and Elizabeth Tucker (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), pp. 218-221.

² D. I. Patiashvili, from July 1985 to April 1989 First Secretary of the CC GCP, member of the CC CPSU.

³ Iliya (Il'ya) II (I. G. Gugushauri-Shiolashvili), since 1977 Catholicos-Patriarch of all Georgia.

⁴ *Translator's note:* This term denotes weapons other than firearms, such as bayonets or clubs.

⁵ Z. A. Chkheidze, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Georgia.

⁶ The appeal by M. S. Gorbachev to Communists and Workers of Georgia was published in the Republic press on 13 April and in the central press on 14 April 1989.

⁷ A. S. Kopto, Chief of the CC CPSU Ideological Department; A. S. Pavlov, Chief of the CC CPSU State and Legal Department; Ye. Z. Razumov, First Deputy Chief of the CC CPSU Party Policy and Personnel Work Department.

⁸ On the first page of the document there are [the following] approvals: "Agreed. V. Medvedev. N. Slyun'kov, V. Nikonov, V. Chebrikov. A. Yakovlev". "Report agreement by enciphered communications. Laptev [Laptev, P. P. (born 1928) – First Deputy Chief of the CC CPSU General Department], 11.04.89."

On the back of the document there are the following notes of workers of the CC CPSU General Department: "Cdes. Razumovskiy is on a business trip, Zaykov and Ligachev are on leave. Baklanov is on a business trip." "Agreement has been reported to Cdes. Kopto, Pavlov, and Razumov. 11.04.89." "It has been reported to Cdes. Fedyayev, Polyakova, and Smirnova. 11.04.89." [N. M. Fedyayev; V. I. Polyakov[a]; A. A. Smirnova, Chief of the Secretariats (Offices) of the CC CPSU State and Legal Department, the Party Policy and Personnel Work Department, and the Ideological Department.

[Translator's note: The name appears as Polyakova in the text, but as Polyakov in the footnote] "It has been reported to Cde. V. I. Boldin [Chief of the CC CPSU General Department] and permission has been given for distribution to the field [na mesta]. 11.04.89." "A copy of the telegram has been sent to the 4th Sector [of the CC CPSU General Department which handled enciphered communications] for the CP CC's, kray, and oblast' committees. 11.04." V. I. Boldin.

⁹ G. S. Tarazevich, as of 1985 Chairman of the Presidium of the Belorussian SSR Supreme Soviet, as of 1986 simultaneously Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

¹⁰ G. V. Sergeev, First Deputy USSR Minister of Health.

¹¹ V. L. Govorov, Chief of USSR Civil Defense, Deputy USSR Minister of Defense, [General of the Army].

¹² V. P. Pirozhkov, General-Colonel, Deputy Chairman of the USSR KGB.

¹³ N. I. Demidov, General-Lieutenant of Internal Service, Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs.

¹⁴ O. V. Kvilitaya, as of March 1989 First Deputy Chairman of the Georgian SSR Council of Ministers.

¹⁵ G. G. Gumbaridze, First Secretary of the CC GCP from April 1989 to December 1990.

¹⁶ See document No. 7.

¹⁷ The document was initialed by A. S. Pavlov before the vote.

¹⁸ *Translator's note:* Gorbachev's name was placed to the left and on the same line as Ligachev's name.

¹⁹ V. V. Bakatin, as of 1988 USSR Minister of Internal Affairs.

²⁰ Reference to the mass demonstrations and strikes in Tbilisi in the autumn of 1988.

²¹ This is about the demonstrations for Abkhazian self-determination, which became widespread in the spring of 1989.

²² See Document No. 1.

²³ B. V. Nikol'skiy, Second Secretary of the CC GCP.

²⁴ V. P. Trushin, First Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs, General-Colonel of Internal Service.

²⁵ See Document No. 2.

²⁶ K. A. Kochetov, First Deputy USSR Minister of Defense, General of the Army.

²⁷ I. N. Rodionov, Commanding General of the Transcaucasian Military District, General-Colonel.

²⁸ V. N. Lobko, Inspector of the CC CPSU Party Policy and Personnel Work Department; V. S. Buyanov, Senior Organizer of the CC CPSU Ideology Department; A. Ye. Selivanov, Senior Organizer of the CC CPSU Party Policy

and Personnel Work Department.

²⁹ O. Ye. Cherkeziya, Chairman of the Presidium of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet.

³⁰ M. A. Moiseyev, Chief of the General Staff of the USSR Armed Forces as of December 1988, [General of the Army].

³¹ *Editor's note:* The Chief of the General Staff is ex-officio a First Deputy Minister of Defense and, as such, has the legal authority to issue orders in the Minister's name.

³² I. F. Shilov, Deputy USSR Minister of Internal Affairs, General-Lieutenant of Militia.

³³ Yu. T. Yefimov, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Internal Troops; Chief of the Directorate of Combat Service of the USSR MVD Main Directorate of Internal Troops, General-Major.

³⁴ *Translator's note:* Although not noted here, the parent "Moscow" division was the elite USSR MVD Internal Troops Dzerzhinskiy division actually headquartered in nearby Reutovo designated to quell civil unrest; it was used in October 1993 during the "White House"-led "coup".

³⁵ Sh. V. Gorgodze, Georgian SSR Minister of Internal Affairs, General-Lieutenant of Internal Service.

³⁶ I. S. Tsereteli, one of the leaders of the movement of unofficial organizations in Georgia, chairman of the National Independence Party of Georgia.

³⁷ Z. K. Gamsakhurdia, son of the Georgian writer K. S. Gamsakhurdia. He participated in the dissident movement from the end of the 1950s and had been subjected to repression. In 1989 he was the most prominent leader of the opposition movement in Georgia.

³⁸ G. O. Chanturiya, one of the leaders of the opposition movement in Georgia; chairman of the National Democratic Party of Georgia.

Soviet Approaches to Eastern Europe at the Beginning of 1989

By Jacques Lévesque

The following three documents, which have never before been published, are highly interesting and instructive for the considerable light they shed on both the Soviet's approach and their expectations concerning the situation in Eastern Europe, and for the prospects for change in the region at the beginning of 1989, virtually on the eve of the serial collapse of the communist regimes. The documents help us to understand Soviet permissiveness in the face of these momentous events, a permissiveness which was the most remarkable and surprising phenomenon of 1989. To be sure, as the documents show, the serial collapse was as unexpected in Moscow as it was in the West and in Eastern Europe itself. This unexpected Soviet permissiveness contributed a great deal to the rapidity with which the collapse occurred.

The documents help dispel simplistic views about Soviet behavior which were voiced in the West in the aftermath of 1989, claiming for instance that the Soviet leaders had very poor information on the situation in Eastern Europe, or that they had decided to write off the region as too costly a burden. As the reader will note, Soviet analysts saw the situation as potentially explosive. Considerable change was expected, but based on the assumption that events might well take a turn favorable to Soviet interests, such change was considered risky, yet desirable. The available information was abundant and accurate, and the analysis was sophisticated (at least in two of the documents). However, this analysis was predominantly premised on some of the basic ideological tenets of *perestroika*, namely that a reformed and democratized socialism was both possible and viable and that a reformed Soviet Union would wield new forms of influence.

Up to the beginning of 1989, and even in the months that followed, Eastern Europe was notably neglected in Gorbachev's foreign policy. First priority was given to the East-West rapprochement and reconciliation, which was to be achieved primarily through arms control and disarmament, areas in which the USSR had much to offer in bringing about a new convergent and "more integrated" world. Since some degree of change and democratization in Eastern Europe was considered a necessary ingredient for the realization of the "common European home," a more proactive Soviet policy was in order there.

The ambivalence of Gorbachev's politics

But if Soviet policy in Eastern Europe was subordinated to the needs of its policy towards the West, as the documents clearly show, it suffered from Gorbachev's waverings as well as from contradictions in

his approach. While on the one hand, he preached change and the virtues of reformed socialism, on the other hand, in the name of "freedom of choice," he refused to pressure the conservative leaders of Eastern Europe to engage in reforms. Against the advice of his reformist supporters, in the name of "non-interference," he declined to give explicit and direct support to the reformist challengers of the conservative leaderships. Only indirect signals were sent. This was not only a matter of principle. Gorbachev was convinced that reform could work in Eastern Europe, but he believed that the initiative had to come from the top leadership of these countries. He thought that change imposed from outside could cause destabilization there, which would have had very negative effects on *perestroika* on the home front. In fact, Gorbachev wanted the best of both worlds in Eastern Europe: change and relative stability.¹ The result was increasing polarization in the region at the beginning of 1989. With Gorbachev's encouragement the reformist leaderships of Poland and Hungary pressed ahead, while in a majority of the countries of the area, the conservative leaderships practiced immobilism, defensively, but with Soviet tolerance.

Because Gorbachev's policy toward Eastern Europe was a low priority it was subjected to dual imperatives, pulling in divergent directions. The needs of *perestroika* also had negative consequences of a different type for the countries of Eastern Europe. To improve Soviet economic performance, Moscow was much more demanding and stingy in its economic relations with its allies than it had been in the past. It refused all demands for special economic assistance, and even unilaterally reduced its subsidized oil exports. This of course, created not only economic but also political difficulties for both the reformist and conservative regimes of the Warsaw Pact, while Gorbachev was preaching reform as a panacea for all problems. Therefore it is not surprising that East European leaders complained privately to their Soviet counterparts about Soviet neglect.

In a memorandum sent to Gorbachev on 10 October 1988, his chief advisor for Eastern European affairs, Georgii Shakhnazarov, wondered to what degree the Soviet Union had to encourage the East European countries to develop closer economic relations and seek greater assistance from the West. He recommended that the Soviet leadership pay more attention to their various problems. He suggested that a thorough examination of all these problems be put on the agenda of the new International Commission of the Party, which had been created the month before, chaired by Aleksander Yakovlev.² Apparently, it took three months before the process even started.

The volatile situation of Poland and Hungary in January 1989

By the end of January 1989, the political situation in Poland and Hungary was evolving very rapidly—both as a result of the reformist courses of their respective leaderships, encouraged by Moscow, and under pressure from opposition groups. The communist parties in these countries were preparing to negotiate major political arrangements, in uncharted waters, with uncertain outcomes. It was in this context that Yakovlev asked the Institute of the Economy of the World Socialist System at the USSR Academy of Sciences (commonly referred to as the Bogomolov Institute) to prepare a report on the political situation in Eastern Europe, as well as in each particular country, with an assessment of all possible developments and their implications for the USSR. After receiving the report Yakovlev ordered similar documents to be prepared by the International Department of the Central Committee, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the KGB. He then organized a meeting among the authors of the four reports to contrast and discuss their conclusions. It is the first three of these reports that are published below.³ Unfortunately, as far as I can ascertain, the report from the KGB remains inaccessible.

Comparison of these three documents is instructive. All three are located within the general framework of the ideology of *perestroika* and *novoe myshlenie* (new thinking). But each represents significantly different shades of that elastic and eclectic ideology. They highlight the heterogeneity of the reformist camp which was setting the political agenda of the USSR at the time. The documents provide rare and fascinating indications of some parameters within which Soviet leaders could read the situation in the following crucial months.

From the Bogomolov Institute: a boldly reformist approach

In the context of February 1989, the report of the Bogomolov Institute is radically reformist—certainly the most reformist of the three. Far from complacent, it presents an alarming picture of the general situation in Eastern Europe, and the predicament of the region's communist parties. At the time, it was quite usual for reformers to dramatize both the internal situation of the USSR as well as its foreign policy, in order to press for change and reform. For example, in the event of a renewal of martial law in Poland, the report evokes the specter of “an Afghanistan in the center of Europe.”

The memorandum embodies one of the basic assumptions on which *perestroika* rested, one which proved to be a fatal illusion: that by taking the initiative in a process of change, a communist party could regain legitimacy, keep control of the process and save a considerable degree of influence. This “initiativist ideology” became a sort of a fetish of the reformers in their struggle against the conservatives. They even argued that it was

the only way for communists to save their power and influence. This went along with an open-ended conception of socialism which, in 1989, was getting closer to and more compatible with social democracy which the memorandum calls a “contemporary socialist vision.”

Even the Polish and Hungarian parties come under criticism for not having been bold and quick enough in “seizing the initiative.” For by doing so, and in working out power sharing agreements with opposition groups, they could, according to this line of argument, achieve a new political preponderance. The report therefore recommends that the Soviet leadership adopt a more proactive policy in supporting more overtly the reformist elements within the communist parties of the conservative Eastern European countries.

The author, Matyana Sylvanskaya, was quite conscious of the precariousness of the position of the Polish Party and even mentioned the possibility that it could lose power and that the “socialist idea” could be defeated in Poland. But this was a worst case scenario. Thus, for Gorbachev and his entourage, the best case scenario seemed to have been realized several weeks after the writing of these reports, when the Polish Party signed an agreement with the representatives of Solidarity. Indeed, this agreement provided for elections in which the opposition was to be satisfied with 35% of the seats in a new parliament, leaving 65% of the seats to the communists and their allies.

Later, in the summer of 1989, the Hungarian Party prepared to transform itself into an explicitly Western-style social-democratic party, and faced free elections. According to reliable polls reported by Radio Free Europe, the Party was expected to win close to 40% of votes, twice as many as its nearest challenger. It would then have remained the pivotal force of Hungarian politics. This was seen in Gorbachev's reformist entourage as a positive prospect. To be sure, Gorbachev himself was not yet prepared to accept party pluralism and free political competition in the USSR. But the issue was already being covertly discussed by those around him, and it was even suggested to him that he take the initiative of splitting the CPSU, so as to have two socialist parties competing with each other, one reformist, the other conservative.

As alarmist as it might be, even in its pessimistic scenarios, the Bogomolov Institute memorandum never anticipated the withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact of any East European country in the foreseeable future. On the contrary; the “certain degree of Finlandization” it advocated pertained only to internal political and economic developments. In order to make a more forceful case for the acceptance of important internal change, the author located her argument at the very core of *perestroika*'s highest expectations. She argued that if the USSR willingly lets the European socialist countries “take a mid-way position on the continent,” this would increase the interest of the Western countries in the economic and political stability in the area, thereby reinforcing the process of disarmament

and détente and reducing the economic burden of these countries on the USSR. All of these developments, in turn, would accelerate the rise of the “common European home.” Moreover, the author argued that such a policy would create a very favorable image of the USSR in the world, and most importantly in Eastern Europe, where the ground for anti-Soviet and nationalist force would shrink, while “the prestige of the Soviet Union and its ideological-political influence on the broad strata of the population will grow.” In other words, a non-antagonistic Warsaw Pact (which together with NATO was to become one of the two pillars of a new pan-European security structure contemplated by *novoe myshlenie*) would be reinforced. To better capture the expected results of the advocated policy, the author used a formulation which wonderfully translates the essence of what *perestroika* wanted to be: “it will be a revolution from above [...] which will prevent a revolution from below.”

Gorbachev did not adopt a really proactive policy towards Eastern Europe in 1989.⁴ But this document does much to help us understand why he took such a benevolent attitude toward the rapid and unexpected turn of events there. He believed it was the best way to create and preserve a new image and influence for the Soviet Union and a voluntary acceptance of the Warsaw Pact. He was given explicit assurances to that effect by Walesa, Mazowiecki and Havel, and more implicitly by the United States which pledged to respect the security interests of the Soviet Union in return for its permissiveness.

From the Central Committee: a “centrist” perspective

The approach, analysis and recommendations of the memorandum of the Central Committee’s International Department also belong to the realm of the *perestroika* ideology. They are, however, substantially different from, and certainly more conservative than those of the Bogomolov Institute. While they may be labeled as “centrist,” this is not to say they were closer to Gorbachev’s view, as Gorbachev often described himself as a “centrist” both during and after his tenure.

The report was less alarmist and more sanguine about the prospects for “a smooth movement toward democratization and the new form of socialism [...] if the initiative for democratic changes originates with the ruling party.” Indeed, it emphasized that “we should not exaggerate the danger of one of the countries simply switching to the capitalist way of development.” At the same time, as Gorbachev continued to do, it advocated patience towards the conservative leaderships of the area.

The International Department tried to make the case for a reversal of the neglect of Eastern Europe by the Soviet leadership. Admitting that the region had become strategically less important for the USSR, it insisted that

“the degree of our interdependence with the socialist countries remains higher than with the rest of the world,” and somewhat prophetically indicated that the stability of the USSR and the future of socialism in the world depended very much on what was going on in the region. In order to stress the importance of Eastern Europe for the USSR, the authors dismissed the idea of the region as an economic burden, and even tried to demonstrate that existing economic ties were beneficial for the USSR.

The option that the USSR might use force in Eastern Europe under certain circumstances was not even mentioned in the Bogomolov Institute report. It had already been discarded by the leadership. It was explicitly rejected in the memorandum by the International Department. But significantly, the document made a recommendation that is entirely absent from the first one. The author wrote that we “should leave a certain vagueness as far as our concrete actions are concerned under various possible turns of events, so that we do not stimulate the anti-socialist forces to try to ‘test’ the fundamentals of socialism in a given country.” Gorbachev did not pay heed to such advice. In the summer of 1989, he increasingly openly rejected the Brezhnev Doctrine, in order to better establish the credibility of *novoe myshlenie* for Western audiences.

Advocating greater interaction between new socialism and modern capitalism, the report of the International Department calls for the clarification of the “possibilities and the limits” of that interaction. At about the time it was written, in Poland, one of Solidarity’s negotiators, Andrzej Stelmachowski (later Minister of Education), talking with General Wojciech Jaruzelski on the sidelines of the Round Table negotiations, asked him: “What are the limits to the changes that the Soviets are willing to accept in Poland?” Jaruzelski responded: “I do not know myself. Let us find them together.”⁵ No wonder Jaruzelski did not know—Gorbachev and the Soviet leaders did not know themselves! As far as the content of “renovated” or “modern” socialism was concerned, people like Yakovlev were against setting “artificial” limits to what was supposed to be an experimental process. To be fair, it must be said that there was a clearer sense of limits in the realm of foreign policy. The Soviet leaders took the continued existence of the Warsaw Pact for granted, as did the main opposition forces in Eastern Europe. While the Bogomolov Institute’s memorandum suggested that Eastern European countries should be allowed to move towards economic integration with Western Europe and to serve as a bridge and “advance” for the Soviet Union, the memorandum of the International Department insisted on a coordinated and common policy between the USSR and Eastern Europe in dealing with Western economic institutions. The objective was to ensure a step-by-step integration of COMECON with the European Economic Community. Gorbachev and

Shevardnadze were definitely closer to this approach.⁶

From the Foreign Ministry: a short and muddled report

The report submitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Yakovlev was disconcerting in many respects. While the first two reports were sophisticated and consistent in their respective analyses, this one was not. Therefore it is revealing not so much for the course of action it advocates for Eastern Europe but in other regards.

The Foreign Ministry's report suffered not only in quality but also in quantity. Only one third of the length of the Bogomolov Institute's document, it reads like a botched memorandum written by a poorly prepared and supervised official. This probably reflects the fact that Eastern Europe was indeed a very low priority for Shevardnadze's Ministry. Policy toward Eastern Europe had always been the responsibility of the Central Committee, to which Soviet ambassadors to these countries reported directly. Even if Shevardnadze was claiming responsibility for all areas of foreign policy for his Ministry in 1989, it is clear that he and his associates were almost entirely focused on the East-West relationship.

The memorandum borrowed arguments from the arsenal of the reformist discourse, but also from the conservative sources. Yet, it did not amount to a coherent centrist position. Rather it was typical of the ideological confusion experienced by many well-intentioned Soviet apparatchiks at that time. They often parroted the slogans of *perestroika* and *novoe myshlenie* without being able to turn them into operative policy recommendations, and, in effect, continued to use much of the traditional language.

In 1989, both the radical reformers and the conservatives were making alarmist assessments of the situation in Eastern Europe for obviously different reasons. As we have seen, the reformers did so in order to promote reform. The conservatives, on the other hand, did so to raise concerns about the threats to socialism stemming from the changes. The alarmist tone of the Foreign Ministry's report was in line with the latter. It warned against the mobilization of "forces alien to socialism" which could take advantage of the access to parliamentary and government institutions to eject the communist parties from power, either "partially or fully." At the same time, it took up one of the pet slogans of *perestroika*, stressing that the "trend toward political pluralism is becoming universal" without showing its benefits to the East European communist parties. Contrary to the analysis of the two other reports, the moderation exhibited by the Western countries concerning Eastern Europe was seen as tactical, with no change in their long term goals.

These are not the only contradictory elements in this document. Showing more zeal in this respect than the document from the Central Committee, the first and "most important" of the Foreign Ministry's recommendations was "not to permit the erosion of socialism in Eastern Europe" and to keep "all the countries of this region on the socialist

path of development." Yet, not surprisingly, the memorandum rejected the use of force. It pleaded for maintaining ambiguity on this issue. At the same time, it recommended that the USSR should refuse to support the use of force by one or the other of the communist regimes, because "repressive actions" would contradict the "international norms in the sphere of human rights." This reflected the fact that showing concern for international norms and human rights was one of the trademarks of Shevardnadze's Ministry in the policy of East-West rapprochement.



DOCUMENT No. 1
Memorandum to Alexander Yakovlev
from the Bogomolov Commission
(Marina Sylvanskaya),
February 1989

CHANGES IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE USSR

Societies in Eastern European countries are beginning to change their character. Attempts to build socialism with Stalinist and neo-Stalinist methods, the spread [*tirazhirovaniye*] of which occurred in the region under consideration not without the active involvement of the Soviet side, ended up in a stalemate. This situation was expressed in an aggravation of contradictions and a growth of crisis developments. The degree and scale of conflicts vary: from the more or less hidden social-political tension, fraught with sudden explosions, to chronic crisis without any visible ways out, signaling the beginning of disintegration of the social-political system not excluding cataclysms as well. Such processes are irreversible; they are the result of the long-term evolution of the regime, and in a majority of countries they accompany a transition to a new model of socialism but also can lead to a collapse of the socialist idea. In the last year or year and a half the development of events in Eastern Europe has sharply accelerated and has acquired elements of unpredictability.

General characterization of social-political processes
in the countries of Eastern Europe

Crisis symptoms are visible in all spheres of public life inside the countries as well as in relations among them.

In the economy the intensity of these symptoms varies from a slowdown of economic growth, a widening social and technological gap with the West, a gradual worsening of shortages in domestic markets and the growth of external debt (GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria) to a real threat of economic collapse (Yugoslavia, Poland). Particularly dangerous is open and hidden inflation that has

become a common phenomenon and only varies by its rate: creeping and galloping inflation is predominant, but one cannot exclude its escalation into hyperinflation (Poland, Yugoslavia). A “shadow economy” and corruption are gaining in strength everywhere and periodically surface in the form of scandals and swindles that carry political connotations.

In the political sphere the crisis manifests itself first of all in the dramatic weakening of the positions of the ruling communist parties, in some cases so dramatic that one can speak about a crisis of confidence in them. Some of these parties undergo an internal crisis: their membership is decreasing since rank-and-file members do not want to bear responsibility for decisions which they could never influence. The old social base is eroding. Infighting in the leadership threatens division (most probably in Yugoslavia; there are obvious symptoms in Hungary, [but] obliterated in Poland and Czechoslovakia). Under pressure from multiplying and intensifying alternative political structures (the embryos of new parties, clubs, and movements) the HSWP [Hungarian Socialist Worker’s Party] and PUWP [Polish United Workers’ Party] have become so weak that they have to share power and accept a coalition form of government, [have to] agree to a transition to a genuine multi-party system, and to the legalization of dissenting opposition forces. In somewhat other forms this occurs in the UJC [League of Yugoslav Communists]. Alternative forces are developing an international character. Conservatives are acquiring international contacts (for instance, in GDR, ČSSR [Czechoslovakia], SRR [Socialist Republic of Romania]).

The sphere of ideology is very much affected. Its old forms block the renewal of the social system or provide a rationale for resistance to reform (GDR, Romania, Czechoslovakia). Strongly dogmatic social sciences are incapable of working out a convincing ideological rationale for long-needed reforms. In the public consciousness—particularly among the youth—apathy, hopelessness, [a] nostalgia for pre-Revolutionary (i.e. pre-World War II and even earlier) times, [and] a lack of faith in the potential of socialism are spreading. Extreme manifestations of these sentiments can be seen in increasing emigration (Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania). The positions of individual social groups are becoming dangerously radicalized; there is a growing trend towards anarchy and violence (Poland, Hungary, GDR, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia). The spread of video equipment, satellite broadcasting, and personal computers with printers is bringing about the explosion of an independent culture (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia).

A degradation of common ties is taking place in various forms. Interest in present forms of integration is visibly weakening as well as hopes to substantially increase its effectiveness through direct ties and cooperation in technology. Due to profound structural problems and flaws in the mechanism of trade cooperation, bilateral trade with the USSR is decreasing, which produces very

negative consequences for the national economies of our partners and creates additional obstacles in the path of economic reforms (underutilized capacities in most countries [and] clearing [*kliringovyye*] inflation). In some cases inter-ethnic relations have grown worse: the Hungarian-Romanian conflict became open; mutual antipathy between Germans and Poles, Poles and Czechs, Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians has increased.

The countries can be divided into two groups by the degree to which they display crisis tendencies.

In Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia crisis processes are developing intensely and openly: having broken to the surface once they have acquired a certain inertia. The acuteness of the social-political situation in these countries stems first of all from the mass scale of workers’ protests⁷. “A new workers movement” is being born. Its scope is such that it is impossible any longer to treat the strikes as sporadic excesses any longer or, as was the case of Poland, to write them off as the influence of anti-socialist forces inside the country and abroad. The strikes are obviously escalating into an ongoing social conflict between the workers and the party and state techno-bureaucracy. Rank-and-file communists often actively take the side of strikers. The trade union movements are getting rapidly politicized (some symptoms of this latter process can also be observed in Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia). Official trade unions are beginning to play the role of a legal opposition; independent trade unions are proliferating; trade union pluralism is taking root.

In all three countries living standards of very substantial parts of the population are falling,⁸ their incomes are shrinking to the social minimum and even further. Simultaneously differentiation in income is becoming more pronounced, and a black market organization is emerging.

Public consciousness is coming to realize processes heretofore hidden from it, such as the fact of the continuing exploitation of wage labor. Some leaders of the UJC have publicly admitted the existence of the struggle for the redistribution of added value produced by workers, and their exploitation (in particular, through inflation). A discussion about specific forms of exploitation has begun in Poland.

The public consciousness of the working class and other working people is increasingly being formed [by forces and factors] outside of the ruling communist parties. The pressure “from below” plays an ambiguous role: by pushing the leadership toward reforms, it simultaneously curbs and even sometimes blocks attempts to revitalize the economy, to modernize the structure of public production at the expense of income growth and a reduction of living standards. When an ongoing crisis erupts from time to time (“crisis inside crisis”) without getting a peaceful and constructive resolution, problematic and even deadlock-type situations emerge as a result. The probability of social explosions is increasing.

The social-class nature of the ruling parties that are

undertaking the turn toward radical reforms is in question now, since it is very problematic that they will be able to rely on the entire working class, particularly on its largest groups employed in the coal industry, metallurgy, ship-building, and other traditional industries which are undergoing a crisis in the whole world. Besides, it is well known that Marxist-Leninist parties traditionally see their historic mission first of all in expressing the interests of workers as the most progressive class whose interests objectively coincide with the interests of the workers. In contemporary conditions this understanding has increasingly complicated taking practical steps towards the revitalization and modernization of the economy, since the short-term material interests of the working class (or at least a substantial part of it—workers employed in physical labor) clash with longer-term interests of society as a whole: a change of the structure of public production in accordance with the requirements of the scientific and technical revolution [NTR] requires a unique “secondary accumulation at the expense of internal sources, that is, a temporary self-limitation in the area of consumption.” The governments of Poland and Hungary are seeking to accelerate the changes in the structures of public production by carrying out the policy of “socialist Thatcherism.” Since such a policy hurts substantial segments of the working class and moreover lacks convincing ideological justification, the workers, including rank-and-file party members, rise in protest, quoting previous ideological formulas.

The ruling parties are chronically and badly late in [providing the] necessary reaction to the course of social-political developments. None of them has so far proved to be capable of seizing the initiative. Apparently this is due to the lack of clear prospects for renewal [and] there is a lack of a contemporary socialist vision. So far this problem has been alleviated because of the absence of constructive alternative programs. But today the opposition has most obviously been attracting the intellectual potential of the countries (Poland, Hungary), and has been developing its own ideology and policy.

The developing situations in Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Poland touch on geopolitical and geostrategic interests of the Soviet Union to varying degrees. Whatever the outcome of the Yugoslav crisis, it would only marginally affect our society, without any serious direct ideological effect. On the other hand, the course of events in Hungary and especially in Poland will affect us directly and very painfully by buttressing the position of [our] conservative forces and breeding doubts on the chances of the survival of *perestroika*.

In Czechoslovakia, GDR, Bulgaria and Romania (all the differences in economic position notwithstanding) analogous internal social-political conflicts are still implicit, even though they have not yet manifest themselves distinctly, nevertheless they have for now a hidden [latent] character. They tend, however, to worsen, and there are

telling symptoms that demonstrate [to political scientists] real harbingers of tension:

- Underfulfillment of excessively optimistic plans and programs (particularly regarding consumption), unexpected growth of inflation, declining indicators of living standards, proliferation of uncontrollable spontaneous processes in the economy.
- Growing dissatisfaction with the existing situation in the sphere of distribution of material goods and with equality of opportunity, aggravation of the problem of social justice.
- Intensifying discussions at party forums, more frequent resignations of politicians, reshuffling of personnel.
- Fermentation in the intelligentsia, particularly in its creative components.
- Exacerbation of the generational conflict.
- A moral crisis, proliferation of social pathologies (crime, drug addiction, etc.).
- Accumulating feelings of social frustration [*obdeleennost'*] (deprivation) in large social groups, spilling over into “witch hunts,” sometimes into aggressive ethnic conflicts, anti-worker, or on the contrary, anti-intellectual sentiments.

These symptoms are manifesting themselves in various combinations and in varying force. Social-political conflicts remain hidden largely due to harsh controls exercised by repressive structures over public life and to strict limitations on the mass media⁹. But in some cases [these factors] are no longer sufficient to prevent acts of protest (in Czechoslovakia, GDR, and even Romania). Further tightening of the controls and persecutions can either trigger an uncontrollable chain reaction—all the way to an explosion (it is quite possible in Czechoslovakia)—or encounter a negative reaction of world public opinion and the introduction of very painful economic and political sanctions. For instance, the repressive totalitarian regime in Romania is increasingly finding itself in international isolation, and amicable contacts with N. Ceaușescu, while promising no advantages in relations with the SRR today [and] even less in the longer term, can only compromise politicians [who engage in such contacts] in the eyes of world public opinion.

Forecast of Developments in the Situation

In the countries of the first group the crisis has acquired visible forms and the sides in the conflict are lined up, but the prospect of further developments is not clear; there are several alternatives. There are none among them that would presuppose the preservation of traditional forms of governance by the ruling parties and their full control over society. Despite all assurances and words, real chances to keep developments in the framework of socialist renewal are shrinking. The existing model of socialism can be transformed only with enormous difficulty

into a more effective and modern social structure. There are serious obstacles to a resolution of the crisis situation with the fewest losses. Furthermore, deadlock and catastrophic scenarios are coming to the fore.

Poland

1. Most favorable scenario: The conclusion of a so-called anti-crisis pact at “roundtable” talks, which could mean an unstable compromise between the PUWP (and its allied parties), Solidarity (and the forces of the opposition intelligentsia) and the official trade unions (VSPS). [There should be a] gradual transition to a mixed economy, decentralization, and privatization of “the giants of postwar industrialization” using shareholding capital and a transition to one or another version of a market economy. Movement towards genuine party-political pluralism (free elections, redistribution of seats in the Parliament, bringing representatives of the present opposition into the government, [giving them] access to mass media) could increase the support on the part of the population of the country and the West. The latter could ameliorate the situation with payment of the external debt [and] opening channels for new credits, which could somewhat reduce internal economic tension. However, even in this case workers’ protests would hardly be neutralized, therefore political instability would continue for a long time, periodically producing micro-crisis. This would complicate the decisive and energetic program of reforms. The weakening of the PUWP would inevitably continue as a result of the ideological crisis and internal struggle, but it would take a more gradual course, in a form which could permit an explosion to be avoided. Relations with the USSR would remain ideologized while Poland would remain a member of the Warsaw Pact.

Conditions for realization: preservation and consolidation of the authority of the present party-state leadership (W. Jaruzelski); containment of the pressure “from below” in a framework that would preclude radicalization of both trade union confederations.

2. Pessimistic scenario: Failure of the anti-crisis pact resulting from a clash between the conservative forces in the PUWP, radicalized VSPS and the extremist wing of Solidarity, while minimal political contacts between the party-government leadership and the opposition survive. A protracted “deadlock” situation. Slow and ineffective changes in the economy, de facto pluralism in society without effective mechanisms of making and implementing decisions. Growing elements of spontaneity [and] anarchy. Transformation of Poland into a chronic “sick man of Europe.”

3. Deadlock scenario: Failure of the anti-crisis pact with an aggravation of relations with the opposition. Rapid escalation of the conflict to an explosion (the most probable time in this case – the spring of 1989). Renewal of martial law or a situation approximating a civil war – “Afghanistan in the middle of Europe.”

4. Recently, the first weak symptoms of yet another scenario have emerged. It is close to the first but is related to the formation of a Christian Democratic Party of Labor which, hypothetically, may grow into a big political force if supported by Solidarity (in a role of a Catholic trade union) and the oppositionist Catholic intelligentsia. The PUWP would probably welcome such a scenario since it could promise cooperation with the Church which seeks to avoid an explosion. Yet the paucity of information provides no clues as to the change of the position of the Church which has so far preferred to stay in the role of arbiter [*treteyskiy sud'ya*].

This last month produced good chances for development of events according to the first scenario. There is no absolute guarantee that it will be realized, since there are no assurances that the traditionalist forces would not dispute the policy [*kurs*] of the 10th Plenum of the CC PUWP at the forthcoming party conference, and that Solidarity would and could contain the rising mass protest and observe the two-year armistice. The specific conditions of Poland do not exclude the first and especially the second scenarios sliding back into a deadlock. The chance for an explosion in Poland is far greater than in other countries of Eastern Europe.

In a longer-term perspective even the most favorable scenario does not ensure preservation of the socialist choice. An evolution towards a classic bourgeois society of the type of Italy or Greece is highly likely.

Hungary¹⁰

1. Most Probable Scenario: Radical reforms in the state sector of the economy, partial reprivatization of industries and agriculture, transformation of the economy into a mixed one, functioning on the basis of market relations. Further strengthening of organizational ties with the European Economic Community [EEC] and perhaps with the European Free Trade Association [EFTA], growing cooperation with Austria. Step-by-step rebuilding of the parliamentary system on the foundations of party pluralism. Along with the inevitable decline of cooperation with COMECON and formal continuation of membership in the Warsaw Pact, there will come a strengthening tendency towards neutralism and possibly a movement towards some kind of Danube Federation if this idea takes shape and gains support among Hungary’s neighbors.

Conditions for realization: the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party, as a result of considerable strengthening of positions of its reformist wing in its leadership and in the party as a whole, seizes the initiative in transformation of the social-economic and political structures; gradual formation of a coalition with the Social Democratic movement (not excluding the transition of a considerable number of the party members to the Social Democrats or the peaceful split into two parties). Even if the influence of other parties increases in the short run, the course of events will probably become a modification of the first

scenario, since none of the movements can compete in strength and influence with the reformist circles of the HSWP and the forces of Social Democratic orientation.

2. Pessimistic scenario: Concessions to the conservative wing of the party which retains strong positions in the middle and lower ranks. Attempts to minimize deviations from the traditional scheme. Inconsistency and compromises in carrying out reforms. The growth of economic and political tension. Further decline of living standards, the growth of a strike movement, politicization of trade unions. Possible declaration of inability to pay the external debt, aggravated relations with creditors, including international monetary and financial institutions. Creation of obstacles on the path to the legal constitution of some oppositionist parties and movements. Postponement of parliamentary elections. Further fall of authority of the reformist wing in the present leadership of the HSWP and of the supporting forces in the party and government apparatus. Weakening electoral chances of the HSWP (even as far as electoral defeat). Transition of initiative to alternative political forces. As a result, a return to the necessity of radical reforms, but under new, economically and politically less propitious circumstances.

3. Deadlock scenario: Collision of extremist forces: the conservative, dogmatic, and lumpen proletariat, gravitating toward opposition. Anarchy, terror. Establishment of a harsh regime, introduction of a state of emergency.

The first scenario would provide Hungary with the financial and economic support of the West in a scale sufficient to escape the crisis without a social cataclysm. The next development would signify an evolution of the social structure in the direction of the socialist ideal, but in a form which Social Democrats imagine it (chiefly the Austrian [Social Democrats]).

The possibility of development along the first scenario is still not excluded, but more probable is a middle path between the first and the second. An unavoidable complication in this case could direct events to a channel of the first scenario or increase the probability of a complete switch to the second.

The third is the least probable, but it is impossible to completely exclude it. A catastrophic development of events unintentionally provoked, for example, the introduction of public security forces into some domestic conflict, is even unimportant and marginal. This scenario is most quickly possible not as the result of an intentional confrontation after political pluralism is formalized but as a consequence of a spontaneous development of events that got out of control.

Yugoslavia

1. The Most Favorable Scenario: The realization of the new economic strategy of the UJC: formation of an open economic system, creation within the framework of the Federation as a whole of an "internal market",

encompassing goods, services, capital, [and] the labor force, serving to remove internal barriers to the path of the free circulation of the principal factors of production. Support of more or less close organizational contacts with the "Common Market."

Conditions for realization: receiving credits from the West, support for reforms by broad sectors of the population, [and] political unity of the public. Development along this path would ensure an escape from the crisis, but the results which it would bring are described in Yugoslavia in different ways, namely:

- a unique post-capitalist society, preserving a system of self-management;
- a recapitalization, that is, the transformation of the present system into another, where mixed, private, and foreign-ownership predominates and market logic operates. In this case the population could in time attain a high level of living conditions and partial social security in the same measure that a highly-developed capitalist society provides it.

2. Pessimistic scenario: Reform reaches a certain level then begins to go into reverse. If in the next 2-3 years it does not manage to overcome the obstruction on the part of the conservative dogmatists and everything boils down to the next compromise the opportunity will be maintained for a choice between the first and third scenarios; the chances of the first will fall and of the third will grow.

3. Deadlock scenario: Adherents of preserving the status quo at any price, supported by the army and state security organs try to create a "Titoist Stalinism", that is, a "firm hand" regime, a dictatorship.

A weakening of the position of the UJC is unavoidable in any case, but in the first scenario it would be the least. Whether pluralism will take final party and political forms is not yet completely clear.

The first scenario at the present time is not likely because of a lack of political unity in society [and] serious ideological and national differences. It will not receive the necessary support from the political governing elite and will hardly win a majority of workers to its side. A post-capitalist society with elements of Yugoslav self-management evidently is as illusory as the system itself.

For now the most probable is apparently the second scenario, for the reforms will be made by the professional management level which has been in power for 40 years and developed the mechanisms of self-management and uses them successfully. Thereby the opportunity is preserved both for the first and the third scenarios.

Preconditions for the third scenario recently show up all the more distinctly: in the political arena a potential dictator [Slobodan Milosevic] arises [and] all the more often the army begins to declare its support for him.

The first scenario's implementation is not yet out of question, but the most probable seems to be some kind of middle way between the first and the second scenarios. Inevitable aggravation of the internal situation in this case

may propel events towards the first scenario or raise the chances of complete slide-back towards the second scenario. [...]

In a long-term perspective the present situation in the countries of the second group appears to be more dangerous for the fate of socialism, and crisis phenomena there will inevitably move from hidden to open form. Czechoslovakia is the first candidate. In Bulgaria and Romania (probably, also in the GDR) changes will come with a change of leaders which will occur from natural causes. The character and tempo of subsequent events will depend on the degree to which the new generation of leadership, willing to defuse the accumulated tension and raise personal prestige, comes to relax the grip of the repressive apparatus over society. Much depends on the character and rate of the future development of events. The available data provides no evidence for a substantive forecast of alternatives, but it seems to be obvious that the more the tension is driven inside, the higher the chances for an explosion in one of these countries, with all the ensuing consequences.

Czechoslovakia

With high degree of probability one can expect rapid escalation as soon as this coming spring or in the fall. Causes: combination of strong public discontent with an unjustifiably harsh crackdown on recent demonstrations,¹⁰ with the first unpopular results of economic reforms (absence of bonuses in many unprofitable enterprises, etc.). Preventing such a course of events is possible by undertaking, at M. Jakeš's initiative, a decisive replacement of a considerable part of the current party-government leadership, removal of all publicly compromised people, joining efforts with L. [Czechoslovak Prime Minister Ladislav] Adamec and a beginning of practical steps towards socialist renewal and broad democratization. However, since, first, the General Secretary of the CC CPCz has already twice failed to live up to public expectations and to declare himself an advocate of a new course,¹¹ and, second, there is too little time left¹² for preparation of such a step, the chances for such a favorable outcome are minimal. Extrapolation of the current situation points to a crisis, during which order would be restored by force and all problems would again be driven inside.

In the course of further events one may expect a consolidation in the political arena of the country of the positions of a new political force—the Club of Socialist *perestroika*, headed by well-known leaders of the “Prague Spring” C. Cisar and Černík who adhere to socialist positions. This group has a solid constructive platform and can expect an influx of a large number of supporters: possibly up to 500-750 thousand. In a struggle with this political adversary, the leadership of the CPCz has minimal chances for a victory. However, the struggle against the politicians and ideas of 1968 will be acute and will lead to a quick and sharp escalation of the crisis.

Romania

1. Favorable scenario: Changes take place in the leadership of the country. As a result, N. Ceaușescu is replaced by reasonable politicians capable of understanding and putting into practice the ideas of radical reforms and a renewal of socialism. There are favorable preconditions in Romania for the use of market relations, a relatively dynamic restructuring, and modernization of the economy with a real liberation of economic initiative and the creation of a multi-sector competitive economy.

2. Middle-deadlock scenario: The present leadership of the country or continuity of policy remains. If the resources that are freed as the external debt gets paid off are used to reduce social tension, then it is possible to maintain general political stability for quite a while, while maintaining the political problems of the country and its further lagging behind in scientific and technical progress. If, however, the leadership chooses to ignore the task of improving the living standards of the population and diverts the liberated resources for the realization of new ambitious projects, then one cannot exclude a social explosion. In case the processes of renewal in other socialist countries by that time have not proven the feasibility of the policy of reform, there could be the danger of a decisive shift of the country in the direction of the West (including its exit from the Warsaw Pact) [as the] population has become disenchanted with socialist values and was traditionally brought up in the spirit of community with the Latin [*romanskiy*] world. Financial and material support from the West, highly probable if there are real changes, may prove to be very effective for a country possessing a good deal of natural and economic resources.

Since the regime still has not exhausted its resources and has recently been accumulating the experience of combined repressive measures and social maneuvering to maintain social stability, the second scenario seems to be more likely. In its favor is a relatively low level of national self-consciousness and the absence of organized opposition in Romania. At the same time, an obvious irrationality of the policy of the current leadership produces growing dissatisfaction not only on the grass-roots level, but even among the ruling elite [*verkhushka*]. Therefore, a possibility of some kind of changes “from the top” cannot be excluded.

German Democratic Republic

The conservative nature of the party leadership, the sectarian and dogmatic character of its positions on ideological questions, authoritarianism and harsh control of the repressive apparatus over the society are weakening the authority of the party and heightening tensions in the country, as well as negativist sentiments among the population. Nevertheless the current policy may survive a change of the leadership for some time.

There is no formal center of opposition in the GDR, although non-conformist movements with more or less formalized platforms do exist. So far they do not represent any force capable of applying a palpable pressure from below or to destabilize the situation. With a degree of probability one can surmise that there are forces in the current ruling apparatus who not only can evaluate the situation soberly and analyze critically, but who can work out a constructive program of changes. Reformist sentiments most likely do not come to the surface because potential advocates of a new course do not have sufficient assurances that the process of renewal in the USSR is irreversible. Besides they understand that deep reforms in the GDR will hardly remain an internal affair and may trigger a change in the status quo in the center of Europe.

With this in mind, a *perestroika* in the GDR, if it occurs, will require from the USSR and other socialist countries a reevaluation of a number of established positions and perhaps a reappraisal of its interests in the center of Europe. Under conditions of democratization and *glasnost* this question will probably become the central one and its resolution will depend on the determination of the [GDR] leadership in carrying out reforms. In the long run one can foresee the proclamation of such goals as the creation of a unified neutral German state on the basis of confederation. An intermediate slogan "one state—two systems" may be also advanced.

Bulgaria

Latent ferment and differentiation of social-political forces are present. So far they manifest themselves in local, impulsive outbreaks of resistance to official ideology and the concept of social development, without growing into any significant movements. Further behavior [*dinamika*] and the directions of social-political shifts will be determined primarily by economic trends.

The leadership of the country has worked out a concept of economic reform, but practical measures for its realization have not yet been sufficiently prepared, so real results ought not be expected in the immediate future. More likely is a deterioration of the economic situation, particularly because of growing indebtedness to the West and the threat of an inability to pay, which would inevitably bring about unwanted social, and then political consequences. Against this background, hotbeds of tensions might proliferate, including strikes, particularly among unskilled and low-skilled workers.

The ideological influence of the party on the society is declining. A mood of opposition is intensifying among intellectuals who resent the use of force against ecologists and the persecution of a number of scientists for critical speeches. There are seeds of alternative movements and extremist elements are becoming more active. Alternative political forces are still weak and not organized, but they can broaden their social base.

Withdrawal from the political scene of the present

number one in the Party may provide an impetus for intra-party differentiation between the supporters of the old leadership and those who seek a genuine renewal. Forces capable of carrying out more balanced and reasonable policy do exist in the party, they enjoy enough authority, but they will face a difficult legacy.

The overall trend of social-economic and political development of the country tends toward the Hungarian scenario with certain differences, time disparities, national specifics and an eclectic stratification of experience of other countries. The fate of the latter [Hungarian] experiment may exercise a serious influence on future developments in Bulgaria.

Possible consequences for the USSR

The prospect of the weakening of the positions of the ruling parties including their removal from power, its transfer into the hands of other political forces, decline of Soviet influence on the countries of Eastern Europe, [and] drawing them into the orbit of economic and political interests of the West require the formulation of the most rational and reasonable reaction of the Soviet Union. We face a choice: to thwart the evolution described above or take it in stride and develop a policy accepting the probability and even inevitability of this process.

Attempts to thwart the emerging trends would be tantamount to fighting time itself, the objective course of history. In the long term these kind of steps would be doomed and in the short run would mean wasting means and resources for an obviously hopeless cause. Attempts to preserve the status quo in Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, which has lost its objective foundations, as well as the support of conservative forces in the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Bulgaria will lay an excessive burden on our economy, for the price of maintaining existing relations will increase in time. The use of forceful pressure on our part will inevitably reinforce the conservative wing in the upper echelons of power, slowing reforms where they have begun, [and] worsening the crisis. Social-political tension in the societies will increase, anti-Soviet sentiments will grow stronger, which might spill over into balancing on the brink of a very acute social-political conflict with an unforeseeable outcome. The direct forceful intervention of the USSR into the course of events on behalf of the conservative forces that are alienated from the people, most evidently signify the end of *perestroika*, the crumbling of trust of the world community in us, but will not prevent a disintegration of the social-economic and social-political systems in these countries, will not exclude mass outbreaks of protest, including armed clashes. In this, not only nationally isolated events, but mutually interacting, "detonating" explosions can be expected.

In the framework of possibilities opened by new thinking and cooperation between the USSR and the United States, East and West, "architects" of American

foreign policy can be seen as changing their priorities. They prefer the support of *perestroika* in the USSR and the creation of an external environment favorable to its success. Serious Western politicians warn against playing on problems of the socialist community [or] its disintegration which, in their opinion, can bring about unforeseeable consequences for the Western world. Responsible Western circles are coming to the conclusion that by cooperating with reformist forces they can achieve more than by attempting to pull individual socialist countries from the sphere of influence of the USSR.

Working through [the options for] a future Western strategy towards Eastern Europe, bourgeois political scientists and some think tanks consider a scenario of “Finlandization” of a number of countries of the region.¹³

What could be the possible consequences of such a scenario for the USSR? The following aspects should be considered: military, international political, internal political, economic, and ideological.

1. Poland will certainly not leave the Warsaw Pact, since this is against its national, state, and geopolitical interests. Hungary will also hardly raise this issue in the foreseeable future. The forthcoming withdrawal of a part of the Soviet troops stationed on the territories of both countries will significantly reduce the political acuteness of this problem. The GDR will also not raise the question of leaving the Warsaw Pact, since its party and state cadres consider this organization as one of its mainstays. Only in the distant future, if *détente* and the construction of a “common European home” progresses sufficiently far, might the issue of a unified German confederate state be put on the agenda. From the international angle this will most likely end up with the neutralization of both parts of Germany and the establishment of special relations of the FRG with NATO and the GDR with the Warsaw Pact. The positions of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia depend on many uncertain factors, but they will hardly leave the Warsaw Pact in the foreseeable future. If relations with us worsen, the Romanian leadership may take up this issue, but with skillful ideological orchestration of this step we will not really lose anything since geopolitical location will force self-isolated Romania to consider our interests. In the case of Yugoslavia, as it is well-known, the question of the Warsaw Pact does not figure at all.

So it is not necessary that the Warsaw Pact—at least in the foreseeable future—sustain significant losses, and the countries of Eastern Europe which are undergoing today serious transformations will stay in alliance with us.

2. As long as new foreign policy trends emerge in these countries of Eastern Europe with which the US and the West associated the special hopes of their differentiated policy, the new foreign policy tendencies taking shape [in] the USSR can consciously seize the initiative from the West, as well as from the oppositionist, social-reformist forces inside these countries (Poland, Hungary) by consciously adopting a certain degree of “Finlandization” of these countries. Such a policy will

demonstrate the seriousness of our global aims to get involved in world economic, political, and cultural relations. Renunciation of the *diktat* with regard to socialist countries of Eastern Europe will nurture a more benevolent image of the USSR in the public opinion of these countries and around the world, and it will make the US seriously correct its foreign policy towards Eastern Europe.

The very chance that European socialist countries may take an intermediary position on the continent will intensify the interest of Western Europe both in the maintenance of economic and political stability of Eastern Europe, and in the stimulation of the process of disarmament and *détente* on the continent and around the world. Inevitable consequences of this will be the growth of the independence and significance of the European factor in world politics and economics, which will help the efforts of the Soviet Union aimed at containing an anti-Soviet consolidation of the Western world and at developing a “common European home.” The economic burden of the USSR will be alleviated. Anti-Soviet and nationalist influences will operate on the shrunken ground, and the authority of the Soviet Union and its ideological-political influence on the broad strata of the population will grow—of course, if the political shift is viewed as a result of our conscious decision and not a result of the pressure of hostile forces. This will be a “revolution from above” in foreign policy which will prevent a “revolution from below.”

3. It cannot be excluded that in some countries of Eastern Europe the crisis has gone so far and reforms have come so late that the ruling parties will not be able to retain power or will have to share it in a coalition with other political forces. By itself the fact of a transfer of power to alternative forces does not mean an external and military threat to our country. On the contrary, history gives examples when the Soviet Union developed relations with the non-communist leadership of Eastern European countries that were not too bad. The normal political activity of communist parties (as one of several political parties) should not instill fear in non-communist governments that, under the guise of international aid there will be a violation of popular sovereignty with a possible violation of its wishes expressed through free elections. Guarantees of non-interference in the internal affairs of neighboring countries [and] respect for their political stability should be seen under present circumstances differently than in 1950s-1970s, for we ourselves have recognized the need for a different understanding of socialism in principle, have stopped trying to expand over the entire world the model that existed in our country, [and] we have begun to realize the need for accounting in the socialist model for some basic characteristics of the Western mode of development (market, competition, civil society, civil liberties, etc.).

There is no question, of course, of renouncing the support of communist and workers’ parties, but an obligatory precondition for such a support should be

voluntary recognition of their leadership by their people, their legitimation. They should pay as any other party in a normal democratic society for the loss of trust. The same logic dictates to us the need for the support of business, civilized contacts not only with those political parties in the countries of Eastern Europe which are currently at the helm, but also with the internal opposition, constructive opposition in society—the same as our practice is toward non-socialist states. Unwillingness to accept contacts with alternative forces in these countries could be interpreted as a form of interference into internal affairs, i.e. something which we have rejected as a matter of principle.

4. The objective outcome of the natural development of the trend towards “Finlandization” could be a new, middle-of-the road position of the East European states, since they, according to their internal order, the nature of economic ties and real international position would pass from the sphere of monopolistic influence of the USSR into the sphere of mutual and joint influence of the Soviet Union and European “Common Market.” It is not excluded that in the foreseeable future the European Economic Union will provide the status of an associate member to some countries of Eastern Europe. They could in this case become the first trailblazers in the process of integration between East and West. This process not only poses no threat to the interests of the USSR, but, on the contrary, will allow [us] to multiply the benefits we receive today from our cooperation with Finland and Austria by linking with Western markets, the achievements of Western science, equipment, and technology. When a common market starts functioning in Western Europe in 1992, East European countries drawn into the orbit of the EU may facilitate access to this sphere for us.

5. In a new situation we will have to liberate ourselves from some persistent ideological stereotypes, for instance from the assumption that only a communist party in power can provide guarantees for the security of Soviet borders. We will have to rethink the notion of a “world socialist system.” But the utility of these [notions] was purely fictional; it existed only in a realm divorced from reality [*zhizn'*], in the didactic ideology which we have been striving to overcome. Consequently, the rejection of such categories and dogmas may only promote a new system of ideological coordinates that are emerging in the process of *perestroika* and the formation of a new political thinking.

An optimal reaction of the USSR to the evolutionary processes taking place in Eastern Europe would be, as it turns out, an active involvement which would put them [the processes] under control and would make them predictable. Even if some decline of Soviet influence in Eastern European affairs takes place, this would not cause us fatal damage, but, perhaps on the contrary, resulting from self-limitation, would put our goals in a rational harmony with our capabilities. For we speak about a voluntary abandonment of only those levers of influence that are incompatible with the principles of international relations proclaimed by the Soviet Union in the spirit of

“new thinking.”

Of course, such a turn of events may produce collisions and conflicts, for instance if openly anti-Soviet, nationalistic groupings get legalized in this or that country. But their persecution and keeping [them] in the underground will only help them gain in popularity, but [their] surfacing, against the backdrop of our restrained policy and with thoughtful criticism of them from friends of the USSR will lay bare the lack of perspective and short-sightedness of anti-Soviet assumptions.

Favorable international conditions for the progress of reforms in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe will give a powerful side effect to the process of internal *perestroika* in the USSR. Structural modernization of their economies [and] the development of market relations will help to overcome the elements of parasitism in their economic relations with the USSR and to transfer them onto the healthy ground of mutual profitability.

Possible practical steps of the USSR

In the light of the aforementioned, the following measures seem to be advisable:

- Working out a strategic program to develop our relations with East European socialist countries in the framework of a new model of socialism and a proportional reflection of this program in official documents and speeches.
- Advancement of our proposals to reform the Warsaw Treaty Organization, stipulating a larger role for the fraternal countries in the leadership of the Warsaw Pact, creation of regional commands (the example of NATO) under the leadership of representatives of the appropriate countries. This would help to “tie” them into the Warsaw Pact, which in practice is still regarded as a predominantly Soviet formation.
- A further gradual reduction of our military presence in Eastern Europe taken at our own initiative and by agreement with the host countries, working out a schedule for the withdrawal of troops, the creation of the most propitious conditions for demilitarization of Central Europe (and its possible neutralization), [and] reduction of American presence on the European continent.
- Development of bilateral consultations on mutually beneficial measures permitting an alleviation of the consequences of restructuring in the countries of Eastern Europe, particularly where strong tensions might lead to an upheaval.
- In case appropriate proposals are made, we should agree to some form of continuous and periodic consultations with West European countries and the US on the issues of prevention of upheavals in one or another country of Central and Eastern Europe.
- Introducing the practice of genuine consultation

on the issues of foreign policy with our allies instead of informing them about decisions that have already been adopted.

- Carrying out a serious analysis of the activities of Soviet embassies in Eastern European socialist countries, in some cases leading to replacement of ambassadors and leading officials of the embassies who act against the interests of our foreign policy in its new phase. Special attention should be paid to our cadres in the countries where potential escalation of tension and even upheaval is possible. During the replacement of cadres we should send to these countries those officials whose appointment will be taken as a sign of the attention [and] high priority the USSR has for relations with socialist countries.
- When arranging summits in socialist countries, one should borrow the methods utilized in leading capitalist countries (organization of “assault landings” [*desanty*] of leading Soviet scientists, cultural figures, etc.).
- It is necessary to work out without delay an integrated line of conduct on the issues of “blank pages” in relations with each East European country (We should not ignore the existing negative consequences that resulted from our postponement of the resolution of these problems with regard to Poland and Hungary).
- It is highly important to radically change our information policy with regard to events in socialist countries of Eastern Europe, to cover events in an objective light and to explain the processes that are taking place there, since it is equivalent to the explanation and justification of measures that lay ahead for us in carrying out our economic and political reforms.
- While covering events in fraternal countries, responding to the speeches of their leaders, we should express a manifest support to those pronouncements which signal their acceptance of reformist ideas (particularly with regard to the leaders of the GDR, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania), thereby leading [them] to understand with which forces and trends the sympathies of the Soviet Union lie.
- Any initiatives associated with the popularization of Soviet publications merits support. Proposals of our embassies in some countries to decline such support are clearly in contradiction with our interests.

Some conclusions

Overcoming the crisis process in the countries of Eastern Europe presupposes outright de-Stalinization. This should encompass both their internal life as well as their relations with the Soviet Union. The model of economic and political development imposed on these countries after 1948 has clearly exhausted its capabilities. The search for more auspicious ways and means of development is leading to the rethinking of the socialist ideal, including the revival of those assumptions which had formed in communist and workers’ parties of East European countries in 1945-1948 (mixed economy, parliamentary democracy, etc.). This means a return to a natural historical social progress that stems from national specifics of each country, instead of [one] deformed by external pressure. To a certain degree one can speak about the end of the postwar era, a partial overcoming [*preodoleniye*] of the Yalta legacy and the split of the world into two hostile camps, [and] about the gradual formation of a more varied and simultaneously more united Europe.

From the viewpoint of the world socialist perspective any attempt to stop this evolution by force could have the gravest consequences: the inevitable sliding back of Eastern European countries to the rank of poorly-developed countries (the so-called “fourth world”), the undercutting of the socialist idea in all its versions, including providing neo-conservatism in the West with new cards to attack social achievements of the workers. Besides, Eastern Europe will inevitably get “flashpoints” and paradiatorial [*paradiktatorskiye*] regimes which would continuously draw off the material resources of the Soviet Union and would practically exclude the prospect of renewal of socialist society in our country. However, the peaceful (without serious upheavals) evolution of East European states would improve to a great extent the situation in the world and broaden international relations. Chances would thereby grow for an accelerated development in Eastern Europe, the use of certain socialist elements that can be found in practice in highly-developed capitalist countries and, as a whole, the prospect of the formation of humanistic and democratic post-capitalist societies in accordance with the socialist ideals would be preserved.

[Source: Donation of Professor Jacques Levesque; copy on file at the National Security Archive. Translated by Vladislav Zubok and Gary Goldberg.]

DOCUMENT No. 2
Memorandum from the International
Department of the Central Committee of the
CPSU to Alexander Yakovlev,
February 1989

Soviet Union
 Communist Party
 Central Committee

**THE STRATEGY OF RELATIONS WITH EUROPEAN
 SOCIALIST COUNTRIES**

1. Our relations with socialist countries, including the allies of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, entered a difficult critical stage. The transition to the principle of equality and mutual responsibility, which began in April 1985 and was affirmed during the Working Meeting in Moscow in 1986, gave us an opportunity to remove many layers and eliminate perceptions of our conservatism. *Perestroika*, the development of democratization, [and] *glasnost*, confirmed the role of the Soviet Union as the leader in the process of socialist renewal. More and more, we are influencing our friends by our own example, by political means.

However, having broken with the previous type of relations, we have not yet established a new type. And the problem is not only that the process of restructuring the interactions between the socialist countries on the basis of “balance of interests,” which we have proclaimed, is objectively difficult, but, subjectively, it creates an impression in the eyes of our friends that we are abandoning them, retreating from the priority character of relations with socialist countries. The problem is that the transition to the “balance of interests” is seriously aggravated by the prolonged crisis of the model of socialism which developed its main features in the Soviet Union in Stalin’s time, and was then transferred to the countries that were liberated by us, or with our decisive participation. Their political system still suffers from a lack of legitimacy to this day, and the stability-oriented socio-economic system is incapable of giving an adequate response to the challenge of the scientific and technological revolution.

The relaxation of tensions, the diminishing of the threat of war, to which the socialist countries contributed in a decisive way, caused deep changes in their national security priorities. The economic factor, the ability of a country to join and to assimilate into the world economy, moved to the top of their priorities, for not a single country can overcome the growing gap individually, but socialist economic integration is clearly in a stalemate, so that if the countries stay with it, they would risk being left out of world development for the foreseeable future. This constitutes the main national interest of the majority of the socialist countries right now, and it should be primarily taken into account in our relations with them.

The European socialist countries found themselves in a powerful magnetic field of the economic growth and social well-being of the Western European states. Against this background, on the one hand, their own achievements grew dim, and on the other hand, the real problems and difficulties that exist in the West are practically imperceptible. The constant comparing and contrasting of the two worlds, of their ways of life, production, intellectual cultures, entered our daily life thanks to the mass media, and there is no way around it. And we are speaking about the countries in which they still remember the times when they were close or on the same level of development with the Western European countries. The influence of this magnetic field will probably grow even stronger with the beginning of functioning of the European Common Market [in 1992].

As a consequence, in a number of socialist countries, the process of rejection of the existing political institutions and the ideological values by the societies is already underway now. Nonconformism is spreading more and more widely among the youth, and it is moving from a passive, kitchen level toward a civil and political one.

2. The difficult and transitional character of the present period is that the ruling parties cannot rule in the old way any more, and the new “rules of the game”—of reconciling the group interests that are pouring out, of finding a social consensus—have not been worked out yet. And to the extent that this process is postponed and prolonged, the parties could find themselves in more and more difficult situation.

Against the background of the general tendencies that are observable in all socialist countries, there are specific features of individual countries, [a fact] which requires a differentiated response from us.

In Poland and Hungary events are developing in the direction of pluralism, toward a creation of coalition, parliamentary forms of government. In these circumstances, the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (HSWP) and the Polish United Workers’ Party (PUWP) can count on preserving their positions only in a framework of political alliances. A lot will depend on whether they are able to attract a part of the opposition to constructive cooperation. Taking into account the fact that a considerable part of the population of Poland is tired of crises, the probability of an evolutionary development here is higher. In Hungary, at the same time, notwithstanding their seemingly better living standards, the situation might unfold in most unexpected ways.

Some of the party activists in both the HSWP and the PUWP expressed their willingness to use extremely forceful measures in case of a rapid deterioration of the situation. There is no unity of opinion on all of these issues in the leadership of the HSWP and the PUWP, therefore we should expect the rise of factional fighting there.

In Czechoslovakia the tension has been rising considerably recently. Here the “1968 syndrome” is still

present, which interferes with the party's ability to define its position toward *perestroika*, especially in the sphere of democratization and glasnost.

A significant part of the leadership leans toward employing administrative measures in the struggle against opposition sentiments. In general, there is a tendency to begin changes in the economy and to postpone the reform in the sphere of democratization and glasnost' to a later stage.

The stabilizing factor is that so far they managed to preserve a relatively high standard of living in the country, although they achieve it with more and more effort now.

In Bulgaria, there is, in essence, a simulation of *perestroika*, which is to a large extent a consequence of Todor Zhivkov's personal ambitions. The loud declarations about a comprehensive reconsideration of Marxist-Leninist theory, and about the creation of a principally new model of socialism lead in practice to endless reorganizations, shuffling of personnel, and to the further tightening of the screws. All this discredits the Party, socialism, and casts a shadow on our *perestroika*.

Nonetheless, T. Zhivkov still controls the situation rather well by employing methods of political manipulation, and by relying on a well-developed administrative apparatus, even though discontent is growing in the Party and in the country.

In the GDR a particularly complex situation is developing against the background of seeming well-being. Even though the GDR can be distinguished from other socialist countries by the better state of the economy and standard of living, the economic situation of the country is deteriorating. There is the debt pressure and the growing dependence on the FRG. The party leadership, to a large extent under the influence of personal ambitions, is striving to avoid the problems of renewal. In giving critical assessments of the conservatism of the GDR leadership, one has to keep in mind that it has some objective basis. The GDR was founded not on a national, but on an ideological, on a class basis, and therefore a rapid transition to democratization, glasnost', [and] openness might be accompanied by special problems in this country.

In Romania, there is still the oppressive atmosphere of the personality cult of Ceausescu's authoritarian rule. Striving to isolate the country from our influence, he is now trying to dress in the robes of a "fighter for the purity of socialism," and indirectly puts forth arguments against us. Some eruptions of discontent are possible in the country, but it is unlikely that they will become widespread at the present time. The situation will, most likely, change only with Ceausescu's departure, which could be accompanied by quite painful developments.

Yugoslavia entered a phase of political crisis in the context of very deep economic problems and national contradictions; this could lead to a substantial weakening of the positions of the UJY [League of Yugoslav Communists], and even to a fracture of the federation.

3. Several possible scenarios for further development

of socialist countries are distinguishable now. One of them is a smooth movement of society toward democratization and a new form of socialism under the leadership of the ruling parties. Under this [scenario], some concessions regarding the issue of authority, significant growth of self-government, [strengthening of] the role of representative organs in political life, bringing the constructive opposition into running society, and even possibly its [the Party] turning into one of the forces contesting for power, cannot be excluded. This road toward a parliamentary, or a presidential socialist republic in some countries (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia) would be preferable to us. If the initiative for democratic changes originates with the ruling party, the chances of preserving internal stability and obligations to allies are very high.

Another scenario—is a way of leaps and bounds, which would be a direct continuation of the preceding development, when the ruling party offers a new portion of political concessions after the next mini-crisis. This scenario lets us avoid the worst—a political eruption—but it moves the Party away, to the curbside of political life, and strengthens the pessimism and the scepticism of socialism, stimulates the demands of the opposition, and gradually prepares society for leaving the framework of socialism. The transition of a country to a traditional mixed economy and free play of political forces would not, in all cases, lead it to abandon its obligations to the allies, but in such a case the foreign policy orientation of that country would become a subject of intense political struggle.

Finally, a third way is also possible—preservation of the existing power relations in society along with suppression of the social and political activity of the masses. Under this scenario, it would be characteristic to undertake an openly conservative course, limited reforms, mostly in the management of the economy, and active non-acceptance of Soviet *perestroika*. In the future, such a course does not exclude a spontaneous resolution of the crisis situation via a social explosion with unpredictable consequences for the country's internal and foreign policy. The main catalyst of such a crisis could be an increase in the dissatisfaction of the population as a result of economic deterioration and worsening living standards.

4. In this critical, transitional period, our relations with socialist countries continue to remain our priority. But not in the sense which we implied before, when the Soviet Union and its allies were, in essence, in international isolation, and so the relations with each other considerably outweighed our ties with the rest of the world. Since then, the new political thinking, the energetic efforts undertaken by the USSR and its allies in recent years have rapidly changed the international situation. It is natural that the relative weight of our relations with the socialist countries in our foreign policy became different. However, that does not change the fundamental fact that the degree of our interdependence with the socialist countries remains higher than that with the rest of the world, and that the internal stability and the influence of socialism in world affairs

depend on that.

From a geopolitical point of view, the importance of European socialist countries for the Soviet Union was determined by the fact that from the very beginning they played a unique role of a security belt, which created a strategic umbrella [prikrytiye] for the center of socialism. Today, notwithstanding all the changes in the international situation, this role of Eastern Europe, and especially of the GDR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, remains unchanged to a certain extent.

It is a complicated question—what could and should be the forms of our influence on the socialist countries under the new conditions?

Authoritarian methods [and] direct pressure have clearly outlived themselves. In the political sphere, even in the case of a sharp deterioration of the situation in one of the countries—and we cannot exclude such a possibility today—it is very unlikely that we would be able to employ the methods of 1956 and 1968, both as a matter of principle, but also because of unacceptable consequences. Use of force would be admissible only in one case—if there were a direct and clear armed interference of external forces in the internal developments of a socialist country. Therefore, essentially, our only methods of leverage could be our political and economic ties.

5. The state of economic relations is assuming growing political importance. Their role is evident for the majority of socialist countries. And for us they have a great importance as well also. We should decisively discard the stereotype of those countries as our parasites [nakhlebniki]. In contradistinction to routine perceptions, the economic effects of our trade with European COMECON countries is rather favorable for us. It can be seen from the following examples.

Share of goods imported from the COMECON countries in the overall volume of goods consumed in the USSR:

Metal rolling machinery—40-50%; food industry equipment—40%, textile industry equipment—50%, chemical industry equipment—35%; lumber and wood-working equipment—about 30%; printing industry equipment—more than 40%; meat, meat products, vegetables and other produce—up to 10%; non-food consumer products—10-15%.

According to our calculations, we get up to 4 rubles of profit for each ruble of the value of the oil sold in the COMECON countries (the effectiveness of oil exports to these countries in 1987 was 493%). Apart from that, by buying food products and consumer goods in those countries, we have a substantial budgetary profit when we sell them in the USSR at our retail prices. Thus in 1987, for each ruble of expense for the import of meat and meat products we had the following profit from domestic sales—96 kopecks, cotton textiles—1.76 rubles, coats and dresses—2.24 rubles, leather shoes—2 rubles, personal care items—2.92 rubles, china—2.81 rubles, furniture—89 kopecks, and so on.

The conditions for grain purchases, in particular, in the countries of COMECON (Hungary, Bulgaria) are more favorable for us than on the world market. For example, we need to sell approximately 1.45-1.5 tons of oil to buy a ton of wheat on the world market for convertible currency; to buy it in the COMECON countries mentioned above, we would need to sell approximately one ton of oil.

At the same time, the old forms of economic cooperation have been to a large extent exhausted. The volume of trade is decreasing. The USSR is already unable to satisfy the demand of the COMECON countries for increases of deliveries of fuel and raw materials; and on a number of vitally important resources—oil, for example—we are actually planning to decrease the deliveries in the coming five-year period. We are also unable to provide these countries with modern technology. As a result of drop in prices for energy resources (mostly oil), by the end of the next five-year period, the Soviet Union could end up with a negative trade balance with European COMECON countries of more than 7 billion rubles.

The issue of a transition to integration has already been raised. It is especially acute for our COMECON partners. Without actively joining the processes of international economic integration they are simply incapable of ensuring a radical renewal of their economies. It appears that the strategic goals established for this sphere earlier—the policy of creating a COMECON common market and appropriate instruments (convertibility of currencies, wholesale trade, and others) continue to be fully relevant. However, their realization has been unsatisfactory. A multitude of joint decisions notwithstanding, industrial cooperation is clearly stagnant. The comprehensive program of scientific and technological cooperation of the COMECON countries, which raised such hopes, has been practically wrecked.

Following the Working Summit in 1986 the joint work of COMECON countries picked up somewhat. Direct ties between enterprises were developed and joint enterprises were established. However, the new forms of interaction have not had any significant impact on the volume and structure of mutual interchange (direct ties represent less than 1% of trade).

The temptation to reorient the economies of the socialist countries toward the West grows stronger. Export of products of the best quality production to the West has become the norm. Often COMECON countries compete with each other on the capital markets.

Experience shows that it is impossible to solve the problem of economic integration with the help of general, even the best programs. It is necessary to accumulate relevant material, organizational, legal, and other types of prerequisites in all the countries. Success here will depend, first of all, on cardinal changes in the Soviet economy, in its structure, in [its] administrative mechanism, and in expansion of its export potential, which would take at least several years.

What could we do in the existing situation? First of

all, we should not allow our prestige as a reliable economic partner to weaken. Each breach of contract—and such cases are becoming more frequent—puts the socialist countries in a difficult, sometimes even hopeless situation. Accumulation of similar facts in the economic sphere unavoidably leads to unfavorable political consequences for us. We should overcome this illness, as far as reconsidering the proposals of our ministries on such a complicated issue as the volume of our oil deliveries for the next five-year period. This should be done in the spirit of our former agreements.

Coordination of efforts for the conversion of the military economy could become one of the new channels of economic influence on the socialist countries, especially because the military-industrial complex of the socialist countries is integrated to a higher degree than their civilian economies. One more opportunity would be to develop a common concept of alleviating foreign debt, which is extremely large in a number of socialist countries.

Lastly, when we intensify our economic ties with the West, it is important to actively try to bring our socialist partners into those [contacts], in order to overcome the impression, which some of them have, that we are lessening our attention to the fraternal countries. We probably should hold specific discussions with them to talk about a possibility of their joining in the realization of projects that are carried out with the help of Western credits, trying in the final account to work out a coordinated strategy of integrating the socialist commonwealth into global economic relations.

6. A number of new tasks have emerged in the sphere of political cooperation. Just several years ago we would have considered many of the developments that are underway now in the socialist countries as absolutely unacceptable for us. Today we need a deeper, more flexible, and differentiated approach to what is useful for us, to what is admissible and what is unacceptable. At the same time, it is important that we realistically assess our opportunities, carefully weighing where we can realistically have an influence, and where our interference could only aggravate the situation.

The measure of socialism in the transformations that are underway now in the socialist countries is a difficult question. Some of them are allowing not only the extensive development of market relations, but also forms of private property, and widespread inflow of foreign capital. And still, it appears that we should not exaggerate the danger of one of the countries simply switching to the capitalist way of development. The roots developed by socialism are very deep. Such a transition would mean a fast breakup of the entire economy [and] its structures, development of crises, [and] rapid deterioration of living standards for the majority of the population. And it is very unlikely that the West would be inclined to take on its balance sheet countries whose economy was marked by crisis elements and large foreign debts.

It is characteristic that the ideas that are presented

from time to time about the “Marshallization” [i.e., a new “Marshall Plan”—ed.] of certain socialist countries (in particular, Hungary and Poland, for example in the form of a conversion of their debt into foreign capital investment) so far have not enjoyed any noticeable support in the West—due to the size of the expense and the unpredictability of economic and political consequences. Although we should not completely discard this possibility in the [future], we should be more concerned about the possibility of an economic collapse or anarchical explosions in the context of social tensions and hopelessness. This concerns the countries where the regimes continue to stay in power by further tightening the screws (Romania, North Korea).

We need to give special comprehensive consideration to the processes of formation of the structures of political pluralism, of the coalition and parliamentary type, [and] legalization of the opposition that are unfolding in a number of countries. Of course, this is an uncharted [and] risky road, which requires that the parties possess both the strength of principles and tactical flexibility; [they need] the ability to lead the process, and not to leave it up to the opposition forces.

The lessons of several crises have shown that the main danger posed by an opposition is not the fact of its existence in itself, but that it could unite all kinds of forces and movements in the society which are dissatisfied by the existing situation in a negative, destructive platform. Therefore, pulling apart of the opposition into the official structure, entrusting it with responsibility for constructive solutions to the problems that have accumulated, could play a stabilizing role.

In the existing difficult circumstances the processes of our perestroika have a special influence on internal processes in the socialist countries. In some sense, it has also created a new situation. Whereas before, any mass expressions of dissatisfaction with the existing situation which flared up from time to time in the socialist countries assumed an anti-Soviet character almost automatically, now there is no such harsh feature. A serious blow has been dealt to the idea of the impossibility of reforming uni-dimensional socialism that finds its basis in the experience and example of the Soviet Union.

Perestroika has brought us objectively closer to the countries which are trying to reform their economic and political systems (China, Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary), but at the same time has created certain problems in relations with some of our traditionally close allies, whose leadership continues to rely on the command administrative methods.

In this situation we have to face the question of how to build our relations with parties and countries, whose leadership exhibits a restrained attitude toward our perestroika (the GDR, Romania, Cuba, North Korea). Here, clearly, we need restraint and tolerance, we need to understand the positions of such parties as the [SED] [and] the Communist Party of Cuba, which, due to their specific, and sometimes even front-like circumstances of

development, experience particular problems in accepting and implementing the processes of economic restructuring and the democratization of society.

7. The general development of world politics and the increased differentiation of the national interests of socialist countries require that we make corrections to the approach to coordinate of our joint steps in the international arena.

Most importantly, the process of deconfrontation in the world, the decreasing weight of the military-strategic and the increasing weight of political factors of security, objectively increases the role of our friends. And it is not only because the reductions of conventional weapons in Europe moved to the forefront of the all-European process in its various dimensions, taking into account the new quality that was conferred on it by the Vienna meeting. Without the active and positive participation of our allies, progress in these directions is simply impossible. Therefore, we can speak about not just mutual information, about informing sometimes “at the last minute,” but about preliminary coordination of our actions.

However, the problem is much larger. Essentially, the period when the reduction of military threat was achieved primarily within the framework of Soviet-American relations is not that far from its logical conclusion. The internationalization of major international issues is growing. And if that is so, then friends’ advice [and] consultations with them should involve not only concrete topics under consideration where their interests are directly affected, but also the entire complex of the issues of world economy and politics. Only in this case can they have a real, not just superficial feeling of belonging to the development and implementation of a common socialist foreign policy. At the same time, our initiatives would assume a more weighty, and, considering the experience of our friends, in some ways a more substantive character.

However, there is also another side to this. The pluralism of interests of different socialist countries is more and more noticeable. Reduction of military budgets in some of them is acquiring a rate that is ahead of our own, whereas in others it creates anxiety for the future of their own military industry [which is] rather developed and integrated with us. In a similar fashion, the humanization of international relations [and their] confirmation of human rights is perceived by the leadership of some governments as a threat to socialism; for others it serves as an additional impulse to enter the road to “openness” in their own countries.

The difference of interests sometimes leads to outbreaks of nationalist feelings that aggravate relations between the countries (Romania-Hungary). It could be anticipated that internal socio-economic and political difficulties would strengthen the desire of the leadership of certain countries to strengthen their authority and play on sensitive nationalistic strings.

Taking into account all these different interests, it is

not at all necessary to try to achieve consensus for the sake of consensus during our discussions and consultations with our friends. We should not allow a situation where one of the countries would tie our hands based on their national ambitions. Each country should have a right to preserve its freedom of action, of course, along with explaining its position to the other allies and substantiating it. It is not in our interest either to transfer any kind of aggravated nationalist tensions between our friends to a multilateral basis, especially if such a “dispute” involves us directly. Of course, it is a different matter if we are faced with opposition to our steps by many, or even a majority, of the socialist countries—in such a case it would be a signal for us to have another look if that step was the right one.

8. Despite the fact that we have repeatedly stressed that we had discarded our command administrative approach to socialist countries, the syndrome of such an approach persists in the thinking of our friends. At the same time, the conservative part of the leadership would like, in essence, for the Soviet Union to continue its role as some kind of “protector” of socialist countries. But a significant portion of the public, on the other hand, expresses its anxiety concerning the existing situation in which they see vestiges of such paternalism. This finds its expression in different attitudes toward the presence of the contingents of our troops in socialist countries, and it is linked with the influence on the internal processes, not with external threats to their security. There is continuing anxiety about how the Soviet Union would react in the situation of a political crisis in one of the countries, in which the ruling party’s control of the situation would be threatened. There is dissatisfaction with the still persistent inequality in the military mechanism of the Warsaw Pact, the leadership of which practically represents a Soviet military headquarters with the purely formal presence of representatives of other countries.

Here lies a significant reservoir of our possible steps for removing the above-mentioned “irritants”, including ensuring real participation of our friends in the military mechanism of control of the Warsaw Pact, eliminating the negative internal political aspect of the presence of our troops, possibly through “internationalization.” It would be advisable to direct our efforts to achieve a situation where in some countries, where it is necessary, they would have, instead of Soviet troops, joint formations of troops of the Warsaw Pact countries which agree to it.

It is most necessary to work out a balanced approach to the problem of the possibility of our interference in the event of a political crisis in one of the countries. It presupposes our affirmation of the principle of freedom of choice as a universal basis of the world order. But at the same time it should leave a certain vagueness as far as our concrete actions are concerned under various possible turns of events so that we do not stimulate the anti-socialist forces to try to “test” the fundamentals of socialism in a given country.

Finally, it is necessary to take into account the growing attention of our friends to the still remaining “white spots” in our relations; this interest will most probably become even more pronounced this year [1989] in connection with the approach of the 50th anniversary of the beginning of World War II and the signing of the Soviet-German pact. It would be expedient to work on our interpretation of the nature and the origins of World War II in advance, employing the newly-defined approaches to the assessment of our policy in the 1930-40s, and to discuss it with our friends.

9. In the present circumstance we could formulate the following “minimum program” for our relations with socialist countries in the transitional period:

First of all, we should have a balanced and unprejudiced analysis of the development of socialist countries, of their relations, and we should prepare scenarios of our reaction to possible complications or sharp turns in their policies ahead of time, at the same time decisively rejecting the old stereotypes, and avoiding willful improvisations which did us great harm in the past. We should step up our joint study of and efforts to find ways out of the existing crisis situation, of a new vision of socialism and modern capitalism, and of the possibilities and the limits of their interaction, mutual influence, and mutual assimilation.

Second, we should keep in mind that the significance of our contacts with the party and state leadership of the socialist countries is preserved and even increases in significance, especially because in the existing situation our friends could develop a “complex of abandonment,” a suspicion that the priority of relations with friends proclaimed by us does not have real meaning. Inter-party contacts, if they are accompanied by an open analysis of problems, discussions, [and] exchange of information about intentions, would allow us to directly feel the pulse of the fraternal parties, to give them moral support.

Third, in explaining the essence of *perestroika* policy, we should carefully try to avoid any artificial transfer of our experience to the context of other countries, which could be perceived by them as a relapse to command administrative methods, restriction of their independence, and could eventually lead to undesirable circumstances.

Fourth, by strictly adhering to our obligations, we should preserve the existing ties that link the socialist countries to the USSR and try to ensure that the inevitable and for the common interests to a certain extent beneficial process of integrating the socialist economies with the West develops in a balanced, coordinated way, [and] is not accompanied by unacceptable economic and political costs, and would strengthen integration processes among socialist countries.

Fifth, taking into account the key role of the armed forces in the case of a possible deterioration of the situation, it is important to maintain genuine partnership between the armies of the socialist countries both on a bilateral basis and in the framework of the Warsaw Pact by

eliminating all elements of inequality.

Sixth, We should continue the policy of decreasing our military presence in the socialist countries, including the future possibility of a complete withdrawal of our troops from Hungary and Czechoslovakia. We should consider the scenario of “internationalization” of the remaining troops, of [the] creation of joint formations.

Seventh, It is certainly in our interest that the changes that are ready to happen in the socialist countries, with all the possible variations, develop as much as possible inherently without unnecessary shocks and crises, within the framework of socialist solutions. But we have to account for a possibility of a different turn of events. In such a situation, it is important that the ideological differences on the issues of the renewal of socialism, and finding ways out of the crisis situations that have manifested themselves in the socialist world, do not assume the character of conflict and do not have a negative influence on the relations between our states, and do not lead to antagonism toward the Soviet Union.

This presupposes making a distinction between the interests of an essential preservation of ruling communist parties at the helm of power and the interests of preserving allied relations with those countries.

Eighth. By making use of the favorable opportunities created by *perestroika* which overturned the stereotypes of “Moscow conservatism,” we should actively seek channels for contacts with all the forces in the socialist countries which compete for participation in acquiring power. Contacts [with] churches are becoming more important because the church’s influence is obviously on the rise in the socialist countries.

In general, at this stage it is particularly important to reject the old stereotypes in our approaches, which have outlived themselves. If a country disagrees with us, and sometimes even seriously—this still does not mean that it is turning to the West; if the role of the Party in one of the countries is questioned—this still does not determine that it would definitely distance itself from us. The dialectics of

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Frequent contributor
Mark Kramer’s article on
“Ideology and the Cold War”
in the October 1999 issue of the
REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL
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was awarded a prize by the
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as the “best article published
in 1999.”

the real processes, as our experience has shown, is much more complex. Yugoslavia and China “distanced” themselves from us some time ago, but they have hardly turned into capitalist states. In Poland, the Party can realistically become just one, and maybe not even the main [one] of the power structures; however, the geopolitical situation of the country is such that even in the opposition there is an understanding of the necessity of preserving some form of alliance with our country.

All this presupposes studying and forecasting specific scenarios of the development of the situation in individual countries, including the most extreme ones, making decisions as to what those scenarios could mean for our relations—and implementing them with practical actions on this basis.

[Source: Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, Moscow; on file at the National Security Archive, donated by Professor Jacques Levesque. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya and Gary Goldberg.]



DOCUMENT No. 3
“The Political Processes in the European Socialist Countries and the Proposals for Our Practical Steps Considering the Situation Which Has Arisen in Them,”
24 February 1989

[MEMORANDUM OF THE SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS]

The socialist community is experiencing the most difficult period in its development in the entire postwar period. An extremely complex situation has arisen in Eastern Europe. We are talking about the fate of socialism in a number of countries of this region, the future of the Warsaw Pact, [and] the fundamental interests of the Soviet Union.

The serious difficulties which the European socialist countries have encountered are chiefly connected with a crisis of the administrative command model of socialism. This model has entered into obvious contradiction with the requirements of the development of society, has become a brake on the path of socio-economic and scientific-technical progress, and has created a real threat of a growing gap [*otstaivaniye*] between the socialist world and the West.

Cardinal political and economic changes have become an objective necessity in all the European socialist countries. However, the awareness of this necessity, the notions of the character and rates of change, [and] the approaches to the theory and practice of socialist construction at the present stage are far from [being] the same.

In some countries—Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia—the leadership is carrying out political and economic reforms extremely decisively, in others—Romania, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria —[the leadership] actually remains a follower of the administrative command system.

Without question, the course of *perestroika*, in the Soviet Union is exercising and will exercise a decisive influence on the character of the processes in socialist countries. Our *perestroika* can either become a catalyst of the ongoing processes of renewal or, in case of slippage, [can] strengthen doubts in socialism as an effective social and political system.

The surmounting of a negative legacy and the renewal of socialism are occurring with difficulty and conflict. The ruling parties of a majority of countries have delayed carrying out reforms and several of them have lost confidence in the public and now are losing control over the course of events. This chiefly concerns Poland and Hungary.

The population associates existing problems and failures mainly with oversights and obvious distortions [*deformatsii*] in the policy of the ruling parties on which all the responsibility for the resulting crisis situation lies. All this has led to a fall of their authority among the population, including the working class. The situation in several ruling parties is aggravated by factional struggle [and] a split in the leadership.

In these conditions opposition forces have sharply stepped up their activity: “Solidarity” in Poland, “Democratic Forum” and other groups in Hungary, the “Chartists” in Czechoslovakia, etc. Social Democratic, Christian Democratic, and nationalist parties are forming. Opposition forces enjoy support in [a] broad [social] strata, including the working class. The opposition is striving to weaken the influence of the ruling parties in all spheres of social and political life and acquire access to power. The question of power in such countries such as Poland and Hungary is coming to the surface all the more.

The ruling parties have been forced into concessions and compromises to preserve the socialist system and their influence in society, resorting to a policy of national accord, and starting on the path of recognizing political and labor union pluralism. This is most characteristic of the Polish United Workers’ Party and the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party. Political reality has put before them the need for cooperation with the opposition [and] drawing [the opposition] into participation in the functioning of government and public institutions. There is no little share of risk in the implementation of the measures by [our] friends.

A tendency toward political pluralism in the European socialist countries is being displayed everywhere and, judging from everything, will become more and more dominant. This will lead to a multi-party system (not obligatory on a coalition basis) [and] the “free play” of political forces. Having received access to parliamentary

and government bodies, the opposition can completely or partially drive the ruling communist and workers' parties from power. All this is a real prospect, even today, for several European socialist countries. Considering that forces hostile to socialism have stepped up their activity, this process could have serious political consequences.

In countries where authoritarian methods of leadership are being retained (Romania, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria) the ruling parties are experiencing growing difficulties in resolving social economic, political, and ideological problems. Hidden dissatisfaction with their policy is intensifying [and it] could be displayed at any moment, but here and there it is already being displayed in the creation of alternative associations, in demonstrations, and strikes. In response, the authorities are intensifying their repressive measures [and] using harsher methods of regulating public political life. Such a practice provokes even more dissatisfaction in society, and a sharper negative reaction abroad. It comes into contradiction with the general tendency in the world community toward democratization and with the principles and provisions of the final documents of the all-European Conference [CSCE] and the Vienna meeting.

It ought to be supposed that [there is a] process of transition in these countries to democratization [and] a genuine renewal of socialism, but this is in the final account unavoidable, will occur more painfully, and be accompanied by deep political and social convulsions.

Perestroika has brought real changes to the character of our relations with the socialist countries. In practice we have switched to the principles of equal rights and mutual responsibility in cooperation [and] to a considerable degree have removed the stratification [*nasloyniye*] of the past. Nevertheless, many problems remain undecided, especially in the sphere of economic cooperation, the development of a modern concept of socialism, [and] the development of relations between people. Moreover, new frictions have arisen in several areas. We have been confronted with facts when the leadership of Romania, the German Democratic Republic, [and] Czechoslovakia are trying to block the spread of the ideas of *perestroika* in their countries, resorting, in particular, to prohibitive measures. Sometimes unconsidered publications in our mass media serve as an excuse for this. This introduces a certain tension in our bilateral relations.

The problem of "white spots" has acquired a special bitterness in the history of our bilateral relations with a number of socialist countries. Among them are the questions connected with the Soviet-German Pact of 1939, the "Katyn Affair," the events of 1956 in Hungary, the 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia, etc. The delay in the work of evaluating these events from positions of new thinking is causing irritation in certain circles of the socialist countries, and in certain strata of the population [this] gives rise to mistrust in our policy of *glasnost*. Aggravated national territorial problems have brought serious discord into the relationships among the socialist countries in recent years.

This is the case in regard to Hungary and Romania, Romania and the USSR, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, Poland and the German Democratic Republic, etc.

As a whole, a growth of nationalism in all East European countries, and a strengthening of centrifugal tendencies in their policies has been observed.

The situation of affairs in the Warsaw Pact is developing in complex ways. Our policy for genuinely equal relations within the alliance, the development of the initiative of each member state, [and] the approval of the practice of co-creation in the development and advancement of large foreign policy initiatives has doubtless had some positive effect.

The further development of collective, democratic principles in the activity of the alliance is being hindered by the obstructionist position of the Romanian leadership, which has obviously taken a course of dismantling the existing organs of political and military cooperation within the Warsaw Pact framework. The allies are all the more prominently [*rel'yefneye*] displaying an attempt to get more from the Warsaw Pact, mainly from the USSR (a guarantee of security, political information), than they contribute to it, [and] to display independence to the detriment of common interests [and] mutual responsibility. They are dissatisfied with the remaining inequality in the military mechanism of the Warsaw Pact leadership, which is practically a Soviet military headquarters with an especially formal presence in it of other countries. Some allied countries (Hungary and Czechoslovakia) are openly finding burdensome the Soviet troops on their territory and display an interest in the quickest possible reduction of their strength.

At the same time, it seems improbable that in the foreseeable future any of the allied countries will raise the question of leaving the Warsaw Pact. We have to deal with the attempt of individual countries, especially Romania and Hungary, to give their participation in the Warsaw Pact a formal character, [and to] avoid coordinated actions which could limit their freedom of maneuver in international affairs.

The US and their allies in NATO are right now placing reliance on an evolutionary path to change the social structure in the European socialist countries [and] a peaceful transition from socialism to bourgeois regimes, using a differentiated approach to each of them. Proceeding from this goal [*ustanovka*], judging from everything, the Western powers do not want confrontations with us on account of Eastern Europe. In the case of a worsening crisis situation in individual countries they [the Western powers] will most likely display restraint and not intervene in their [Eastern European countries] internal affairs, especially militarily, counting on their patience being rewarded with time.

Recently, both in the West and in the socialist countries, predictions have all the more been spread about a transformation of the existing regimes in Eastern Europe into "post-capitalist societies" and their "Finlandization."

The extremely serious domestic political situation in a

number of European socialist countries, [and] the deeply thought-out, long-range policy of the Western states regarding our allies and the socialist community as a whole require from us the greatest attention to the processes occurring in the fraternal countries, to the problems of our cooperation with them, [and] to the prospects for the development of world socialism. In doing so, [we] ought to keep in mind that recently [our] friends could have received the impression that, in conditions of an intense dialogue between the USSR and the US [and] the growth of our attention to global and regional international problems, [our] relations with socialist countries have become secondary for us.

1. In the conditions which have arisen the growth in practice of our attention to relations with the socialist countries [and] an approach to them as a genuinely high-priority main thrust of Soviet foreign policy have special significance.

The most important problem at this stage is not to permit the erosion of socialism in Eastern Europe [and to] keep all the countries of this region on the socialist path of development.

2. In as much as at the present time our influence on the development of the European socialist countries with the aid of economic and scientific technical levers is limited, [we] need to strengthen the emphasis on work with friends in the political and ideological sphere [and] substantially increase comradely attention to the leaders of the fraternal countries. In the present situation even the simple exchange of opinions and experience with the leadership of friends has a significance of no small importance in resolving the problems confronting us. Meetings at the level of general secretaries and CC secretaries, heads of government, ministers, [and] leaders of public organizations are a matter of primary importance. It is necessary to simplify the procedure of these meetings, to give them a more business-like, working character.

The time has come to hold a conference of leaders of fraternal parties in a narrow circle with the object of discussing the urgent problems of socialist construction and increasing the effectiveness of cooperation within the framework of the socialist community.

3. Work to prepare new treaties on friendship, cooperation, and mutual aid between the USSR and a number of allied states in connection with the expiration of current [treaties] would acquire great significance for the further development of relations with the European socialist countries in the spirit of equality, partnership, trust, [and] mutual responsibility. [The treaties] should reflect the new principles of relations between socialist countries [and] the available experience in rebuilding their cooperation, excluding conditions not appropriate for the present character of the mutual relations of socialist countries.

4. [We should] proceed from [the] fact that the use of forceful methods on our part in relations with socialist countries and especially the use of military force is

completely excluded, even in the most extreme situation (except cases of external aggression against our allies). Military intervention not only would not prevent, but would worsen the social and political crisis, cause mass outbreaks of protest even as far as armed resistance and lead in the final account to the opposite effect, the reinforcement of anti-Sovietism. It would seriously undermine the authority of the Soviet Union in the foreign policy field, worsen our relations with leading Western powers and even with other countries, [and] would lead to the isolation of the Soviet Union in the international arena.

At the same time, considering the present complex situation in the European socialist countries, we ought to keep our limited military presence in Eastern Europe as a stabilizing factor and maintain uncertainty as regards the possible role of our troops in a critical domestic political situation.

5. In connection with the ambiguous perception of Soviet *perestroika* by the leadership of the European socialist countries, our attitude toward those of them who have a restrained attitude toward the reforms in the USSR (the German Democratic Republic, Romania, [and] partially Czechoslovakia [and] Bulgaria) should be distinguished by self-restraint and calm.

Considering that the creation of new models of socialism is an objective process, in our relations with fraternal countries [we] ought to avoid any kind of attitude of exhortation [*nazidatel'nost'*] regarding various models, attempts at hanging labels, and more broadly share experience in the area of the theory and practice of socialism. The main thing should be mutual understanding with friends so that reforms be carried out on a socialist basis.

[If] the situation worsens in one or another socialist country, we ought to refrain if possible from giving public support to repressive actions of authorities which contradict international norms in the field of human rights.

6. Inasmuch as in a number of socialist countries there could be created state structures based on a coalition system of power with the participation and significant influence of the opposition, it is advisable now to make it [our] business to establish contacts with reemerging political parties, organizations, and associations, including trade unions acting in a constitutional framework.

7. Closing the remaining so-called "white spots" in the history of our relations with several of these countries would help in increasing trust in the USSR and other socialist countries. This especially concerns Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia.

[We] ought to accelerate the study of our position on such acute questions as the "Katyn Affair", the events of 1956 in Hungary, [and] the 1968 crisis in Czechoslovakia in the light of new political thinking.

In this connection it is required that a political decision be made to open access to the appropriate archival materials.

8. In contrast to the majority of countries of the world

community, substantial restrictions continue to be maintained in the socialist community in the area of contacts between people [and] private trips of citizens. In the political area this does not serve our interests [and] has an adverse effect on the development of trade and economic, scientific, cultural, athletic, and other ties. At the present time, the question of the maximum removal of restrictions on trips of citizens of socialist countries to the USSR and of Soviet citizens to these countries and the creation of corresponding facilities for this has become unavoidable.

9. An important goal should be the preservation of the military-political alliance of European socialist states—the Warsaw Pact.

In accordance with the proposals advanced by us to improve the mechanism of cooperation within the framework of the Warsaw Pact, it is necessary to follow a line of maximum politicization of the activity of the alliance, democratization of the forms of its operation, an increase of the contribution and interest of each of the member states. This would be aided by an atmosphere of a genuine comradely, free, and unstructured exchange of opinions at meetings of the PCC [Political Consultative Committee], KMID [Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs], and KMO [Committee of Ministers of Defense] (in doing so, it is not obligatory [that] they come to a consensus at any price on all questions—each state has the right to preserve its freedom of action, explaining and justifying its position to the other allies); obligatory rotation [of officials] in all bodies and structures of the Warsaw Pact; and the simultaneous increase in the effectiveness of its mechanism—the creation of a permanent political working body, giving the General Secretary of the PCC the role of coordinator within the framework of the alliance. [We] ought to simplify the procedure for preparing and holding conferences and meetings of Warsaw Pact bodies [and] try to ensure continuous working contact of the allied states.

10. All the more pressing has become the problem of establishing a close coordination of the actions of allied socialist states with respect to the East European policy of the US and its partners in NATO and working out coordinated strategy and tactics in this direction.

5-yesh/GG
24.2.89

[Source: Donation of Professor Jacques Lévesque; copy on file at the National Security Archive. Translated by Vladislav Zubok and Gary Goldberg.]

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Jacques Lévesque is Professor of Political Science at the Université du Québec a Montréal and author of The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe (1997), among many other works.

¹ For more details and evidence on Gorbachev's approach and behavior see: Jacques Lévesque, *The Enigma of 1989. The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*, (Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1997), Chapter 4.

² The memorandum is reproduced in: Georgii Shakhnazarov, *Tsena Svobody: Reformatsiia Gorbacheva glazami ego pomoshchnika* [The Price of Liberty: Gorbachev's Reformist Enterprise through the Eyes of his Assistant] Moscow, Rossiska Zevs, 1993), p. 368.

³ Marina Pavlovna Silvanaikaia, a senior research fellow of the Bogomolov Institute was commissioned to prepare the report for her Institute. I want to thank her for providing a copy of the report and of those of the International Department of the Central Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which she had received to prepare for discussion with their authors and Yakovlev.

⁴ His aides were more active in encouraging the reformist challengers of Honecker, Zhivkov and Jakeš, while he himself acted in a much more prudent and indirect manner. For a country by country examination and assessment of the Soviet leadership's behavior, see: Lévesque, *The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*.

⁵ Interview with Andrzej Stelmachowski, Warsaw, 7 May 1992. In my interview with General Jaruzelski, the next day, 8 May, he confirmed the accuracy of the remark.

⁶ Having met with Gorbachev in the preceding weeks, the Chairman of the HSWP (Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party), Rezső Nyers, declared in an interview to an Italian newspaper in September 1989: "Gorbachev shares our own fears and preoccupations which are: that the road to reforms not end in anarchy; that the HSWP remains *one of the essential forces* in the renewal of society; and that Hungary not abandon its friendship with the Soviet Union in a *unilateral* movement toward the West." *Corriere della Sera*, 9 September 1989. (My emphasis)

⁷ In recent years in Yugoslavia the strike movement has grown like an avalanche: in 1982 there were 174 strikes with 11,000 participants, in 1988 about 2,000 strikes with 360,000 participants. Strikes have become more prolonged [and] workers are changing from purely economic protest to political [protest]. At the end of last year the population of a number of republics and autonomous districts went out into the streets en masse. Recently the question of the possibility of organizing a general strike of workers of the textile and light industry was discussed.

In Poland in 1988 two "peaks" of strikes with a tendency toward an increase in the number of workers were observed. Having consolidated the opposition forces around it, "Solidarity" was born. The official trade unions (VSPS) were sharply radicalized. They achieved the resignation of the Z. Messner government but have now refused to unconditionally support the government of M. Rakowski, declaring that the trade unions in principle cannot be pro-government. Since the beginning of this year, in spite of the start of "round table" talks, strikes of

an economic character have begun.

After an absence of many years instances of work interruption have been noted in Hungary. Trade unions are insisting on legal approval of the right to strike and an easier procedure for declaring them. A corresponding bill has been presented to the People's Assembly.

⁸ In Yugoslavia the average wage has fallen to the level of the end of the '50s and the beginning of the '60s. In Poland the standard of living has been thrown back to the level of 1973. In the last year, absolute consumption in Hungary fell for the first time.

⁹ An analogous effect can temporarily produce a unique silent agreement with the public if the authorities are capable of guaranteeing them a sufficiently high level of consumption (Hungary after 1956 or Czechoslovakia after 1968).

¹⁰ The forecast is based on the decision of the CC of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party [HSWP] to transition to a multi-party system and that restoration of unity in the leadership of the Party is practically excluded.

¹¹ On the anniversary of the February events and the day of the death of T. Masaryk this crackdown will probably take place again.

¹² At the moment [he] accepted the post of General Secretary when V. Bilak resigned.

¹³ Inasmuch as internal impulses for such a shift with the present composition of the leadership of the CPCz are very weak, it probably is conceivable only as a result of our skillful and careful influence.

¹⁴ In the political dictionary this term mostly signifies the return of our neighboring states to the bosom of capitalist development while preserving special, friendly relations with the Soviet Union which would guarantee the security of its borders. Such an understanding of the notion "Finlandization" overlooks two significant aspects in the relations between the USSR and Finland. First, they are built on neutrality of our northern neighbor who does not join any military bloc; second, the Finnish communist party by definition cannot come to power and carry out a revolutionary coup, which guarantees the stability of the [Finnish] social-political structure. Since the countries of Eastern Europe will hardly raise the issue of leaving the Warsaw Pact in the near future and the ruling parties, given even their rapid weakening, will retain for a while some social base, the term of "Finlandization" can be used here only with very significant reservations.

America's Embargo Against China and the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949-1963

Shu Guang Zhang

Why would one country impose economic sanctions against another in pursuit of foreign policy objectives? How effective is the use of economic weapons in attaining such objectives? To answer these questions, the author examines how and why the United States and its allies instituted economic sanctions against the People's Republic of China in the 1950s, and how the embargo affected Chinese domestic policy and the Sino-Soviet alliance.

The literature on sanctions has largely concluded that they tend to be ineffective in achieving foreign policy objectives. This study, based on recently declassified documents in the United States, Great Britain, China, and Russia, is unusual in that it looks at both sides of "the China embargo." It concludes that economic sanctions provide, in certain circumstances, an attractive alternative to military intervention (especially in the nuclear age) or to doing nothing. The author argues that while the immediate effects may be meager or nil, the indirect and long-term effects may be considerable; in the case he reexamines, the disastrous Great Leap Forward and Anti-Rightist campaign were in part prompted by the sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies. Finally, though the embargo created difficulties within the Western alliance, Beijing was driven to press the USSR for much greater economic assistance than Moscow thought feasible, and the ensuing disagreements between them contributed to the collapse of the Sino-Soviet alliance.

Going beyond the rational choice approach to international relations, the book reflects on the role of mutual perceptions and culturally bound notions in shaping international economic sanctions. In addition to contributing to a better understanding of the economic aspects of Cold War history, the book attempts to give more empirical substance to the developing concept of "economic diplomacy," "economic statecraft," or "economic warfare" and to relate it to the idea of conflict management.

Cold War International History Project Series

A co-publication of the Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Washington, D.C., and Stanford University Press

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The Political Transition in Hungary, 1989-90

By Csaba Békés and Melinda Kalmár

Marking the tenth anniversary of the political transition in Hungary, historians and political scientists launched several large scale projects to locate, assess, and publish documents pertaining to the historical events of 1989-1990. In June 1999, three principal Hungarian scholarly enterprises, the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the Hungarian Program of the Project on Openness in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, and the newly founded Cold War History Research Center in Budapest—together with the National Security Archive and CWIHP—organized an international conference in Budapest on the transition from Communism.

The Hungarian partners in this multi-national effort focused on three important sources: first, on the records of the former ruling Communist Party, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP). Critical to the endeavor was the preparation of transcripts of the tape recordings of key HSWP meetings, since written minutes of the Politburo meetings were kept only up to 1982. Transcripts were completed for all of 1989 (and some of 1988), and more than 5,000 pages of this extraordinarily significant historical material is being gradually declassified and opened for research¹. A second crucial task was the collection of the minutes and memoranda of the meetings of Hungarian leaders with CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and other Soviet officials, as well as the records of their conversations with other Soviet bloc and Western officials.²

The third, similarly massive project involved the editing and publication of the minutes of the Opposition Roundtable and the National Roundtable that accompanied the transition from one-party rule to democratic pluralism in 1989.³ The series, consisting of eight volumes, contains the negotiations among the emerging opposition parties as they co-ordinated their policies toward the HSWP, as well as all the minutes of the tripartite talks held between June and September 1989. The talks, in fact, acted as a national constituent assembly, working out the procedure and the legal framework of the political transition, eventually resulting in free multi-party elections in March 1990.

Thorough investigation of these new materials—as well as those becoming available in Russia, the United States and other East-Central European countries—will be necessary to understand and assess more fully the transition process in Hungary. The selection of documents published below exemplifies the richness of the new materials and allows a glimpse at the complexity of the events of 1989/90.⁴

DOCUMENT No. 1

Minutes of the Meeting of the HSWP CC Political Committee, 31 January 1989

[On 23 June 1988, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party Central Committee established a committee to analyze Hungary's political, economic and social development during the preceding thirty years. The panel, headed by Imre Pozsgay,⁵ a politburo member and minister of state, included party officials and social scientists. After several months of examining pertinent archival documents, the Historical Subcommittee (one of four working groups) completed and discussed its final report at its meeting on 27 January 1989. Most sensation-ally, the report described what occurred in 1956 in Hungary as not a "counterrevolution" (as Moscow and the regime it installed in Budapest headed by János Kádár had long insisted) but a people's uprising. This very point was announced by Imre Pozsgay in an interview on both the morning news program and the next day, on the most popular political journal of Hungarian Radio, "168 hours," without any prior consultation with the political leadership. The issue triggered a serious crisis in the Party and eventually served as a very important catalyst in the transition process. The following excerpt reflects the first reaction of the Politburo members.]

(EXCERPT)

Imre Pozsgay: With regard to the specific issue, the subcommittee, headed by Iván T. Berend,⁶ had a debate Friday morning, on the basis of a 102-page report.

I had no chance to read the document before the debate because it has just been given to me. Nevertheless, let me point out only one aspect of the debate, namely that six members of the Central Committee were present, and the leaders of two Party institutions. There was no argument about the incriminating assessment; on the contrary, the conclusion was drawn that a minimal public consensus—I merely interpret this, as I have no right to borrow others' words—so, a minimal public consensus does not harm the identity of the Party, nor does it shatter the personal identity of those who tied their lives, career and behavior specifically to this struggle. Nonetheless, it can lead to social reconciliation and national consensus on certain bitter and still all too distressing issues, such as the whole situation since 1948-49, and especially its peak—or nadir, as others believe—the crisis and tragedy of 1956. The committee unanimously agreed on this issue. And finally

we also agreed that this document, even before it is discussed by the Central Committee, has to be publicized, so that scholarly opinion, supported by wide masses of the Party, can be used to create a political direction. These were the fundamentals and basic motives of the committee. In a way it is an answer to the numerous questions, in fact asked from many sides, as to why the Central Committee did not discuss the issue first. According to the earlier procedure, this would indeed have been the way of handling such questions. However, I am convinced that this procedure is the very reason why the Party has been hoisted on its own petard, when it came to discussing similar issues.

As regards further connections and problems that the issue raises: Certainly, or rather undoubtedly, the ensuing political effect—even if it has the minimal consensus I have just referred to—is expected to become a bone of contention within the Party, something that divides people and induces political polemics, although it will not hurt even those who have won the Honor for the Socialist Fatherland for their sacrifices. The committee has been aware of this fact from the very beginning, knowing that we cannot get around this debate, that it has to happen, so in a way the cup of sorrows must be drunk. (...)

Mihály Jassó:⁷ The vast majority is dumbfounded, and not because they have heard the results of the scholarly research from the Historical Subcommittee, but because they feel that a pillar of the institutionalized

political system is about to be uprooted. Party members feel that our political system is somehow based on 1956. And now they have the impression that this foundation is being pulled out from under them. They think that this slice of the past—1956—has to be assessed with subtle differentiation. But now this assessment shows no sign of differentiation either. Figuratively speaking, they used to make a fine cabinet with an axe, and now they are trying to do the same. [sic] I don't intend to be too poetic but I'm coming from the office where I got phone calls and letters today, asking what we are going to call the monument on Köztársaság Square? Who sacrificed their lives there? Defenders of the people's power? Resistance fighters of the people's uprising, or their opponents? It is all confused. What shall we call the Mezo Imre Street? And so on. Because perhaps it was a people's uprising that started the whole thing but it led to something else. Given that, we need at least a subtle, differentiated assessment of the whole period. The present one is not differentiated at all. This is another extreme assessment that sets people far apart. If we start a debate on the issue, which is now, of course, unavoidable, I think it will only result in separating some of the party membership. It is a crude simplification but if we segregate party members into two groups on the basis of this, there would be "pro-uprising" and "pro-counter-revolution" members. Obviously I refer to the underlying political content. Perhaps we cannot avoid the debate, but I am not sure that it has to be induced so

A National Security Archive Reader

Uprising in East Germany, 1953: The Cold War, the German Question, and the First Major Upheaval Behind the Iron Curtain

Compiled and edited by Christian F. Ostermann
(Central European University Press, 2001)

"The 1953 uprising in East Germany is an insufficiently appreciated turning point, marking as it did the first popular rebellion against Communist rule. It was, in this sense, the beginning of the end. This excellent collection of documents pulls together what's been learned about this event since the Cold War did in fact end—three and a half decades later, in a manner foreshadowed by what had happened in 1953. It is an indispensable new source for the study of Cold War history." —John Lewis Gaddis, Yale University



radically at once. (...)

Rezső Nyers⁸ The problem is greater, and we have to widen its scope. Is 1956 really the foundation of the Hungarian communist movement? If 1956 is our foundation, I will not expect the movement to hold out very long, because it is a weak foundation indeed. Our decisions and historical assessment of 1956 were driven by the spirit of the time and not without controversies. While things were going smoothly, people tolerated all this, but when times are hard, the same people seem discontent with what they tolerated before. Therefore we should not consider 1956 as a foundation. 1956 was a tragic event, a moment that manifested the prevailing crisis, and today we have to conclude that in fact 1956 signified a more serious crisis than we thought at the time, or even in 1957. We belittled the problem, but now we all agree—and I think there is a consensus about it in the Party—that it was the materialization of a historical mistake. (...)

Consequently, I have to point out that it would be a serious mistake—especially for the future of the Party—to tie our policy to the 1956 bandwagon.

We have to conclude, having read the document—I have read the document and the material of the Committee debate as well—that Pozsgay's statement and the exposé of the Committee show a unanimous approach. They are in accord. Which does not justify how the statement was publicized. I am still of the opinion that it was disadvantageous, hasty and inaccurate. I hold to my opinion, even though there is no fundamental controversy between the standpoint of the Committee and that of Pozsgay.

As to whether it was a “people's uprising” or “counter-revolution,” my opinion is that a definition without controversy is impossible on this issue. Personally, I think that it was a people's uprising; our declaration in December 1956 acknowledged it in the first paragraph, labeling it as the rightful discontent of the people. I do maintain, though, that hostile enemies gradually joined in, and they could have turned the wheel of history backwards, so the danger of counter-revolution was imminent. As to our opinion on 1956, I argue against the far-fetched criticism of Imre Nagy⁹ and his circle, and the significance of revisionism. ... I declare with communist honesty, it was a mistake. It is not true that the revisionist group around Imre Nagy had such a vital role in the events ... At that time, I myself accepted this interpretation. However, we become smarter, and now we see what went on. We now realize that the mistakes were more serious. We realize that it was wrong to think that between 1953 and 1956 Rákosi¹⁰ was a dime and Imre Nagy was a dozen, so to speak. In that debate, well, Imre Nagy was right. It is a matter of honesty, if someone thinks it over and believes that it is so, one should speak out forthrightly. And I do speak out. Imre Nagy was not a counter-revolutionary, he was not. If a Party ever, with their own... [unintelligible—*Ed.*] One just has to read his speeches. Where the hell do we find counter-revolutionary ideas with Imre Nagy?

Nowhere, absolutely nowhere! And these are matters of honor. Rather, he was a sectarian. If he was still among us now unchanged, he would be more of a Stalinist. His role in the 1956 events remains debatable, it cannot be clarified. The Soviets were mucking around, which we swept under the carpet. Even today we cannot see the truth. I already know, however, that the Soviets had a lion's share in the decision. János Kádár¹¹ and the Politburo of the time took full responsibility, for which I respect them. However, they are far from being the only ones to blame. Their responsibility is without question, because it cannot be accepted either that a decision was made in Moscow, or that it was executed here. Unfortunately, though, I have to emphasize again that we won't be able to come to terms with the question of 1956. Legally Imre Nagy was culpable, because he breached the law. It is not too moral, at a time when everybody is breaching the law—I was breaching it, and so was János Kádár—the lawbreakers themselves accuse and convict the weaker one on the basis of the sectarian law. These are not righteous things. All the same, those who did not live in that situation are unable to imagine how it was—and this is the dramatic aspect. I think, if we leave it as the focus of political debates, it would result in the serious weakening and a crisis of values of the communist movement. Consequently, we have to put history right; it can be corrected. Roughly according to the opinion of the committee, it can be corrected, but let me emphasize that the word “counter-revolution” should not be replaced with a single term, and it has to be decided who makes the correction. I think it is now time for us to try and come to some kind of political consensus. We cannot let the undulations of political life shatter the tenuously forming unity and co-operation of the Party and its leadership, so that other players take over while we eventually fall apart. I also mean that Pozsgay should not become the victim of this affair either. Yet Pozsgay should show more discipline and more mutual responsibility as well.

All in all, we should not let ourselves confront each other to an extreme. What do I think the possible action to take is? I believe that the Central Committee should be summoned and presented the material of the committee. The Pozsgay affair should not be presented on its own; it would be an impossible trial that wouldn't lead to anything. I think that the documents of the subcommittee have to be submitted for debate, and only then could it be discussed whether what he did was wise or not, and what action has to be taken in order to settle the debate. At the same time, principle issues of daily politics should be presented to the Central Committee, such as what should be done now in the question of the single-party system and the multi-party system. Things have passed over our heads. I cannot see another option other than that we accept the multiparty system. But we need to debate all this. And if we decide against the multi-party system, then that will be our decision, and everybody decides according to his conscience whether he takes the political responsibility for his decision. I do admit sincerely, I would take

responsibility for both, even if I do not agree with the decision. It can be done intelligently. Retreat, however, is the worst thing one can do, it can only lead to our defeat. We have to do it sooner or later, anyway. (...)

All in all, I say that we take seriously the compilation of the committee, and consider their report worthy of being presented to the Central Committee. We suggest to the Central Committee that we publicize the documents of the committee. We'll see if the Central Committee will accept the suggestion. (...)

In fact, the most serious and sensitive issue of our policy is quite palpable here, namely how we relate to the Kádár era, to the Kádár regime. In my opinion, it would be a mistake for reformers to entirely do away with the Kádár regime. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to canonize the policy of the Kádár regime and battle to the last man standing in defense of what we have created since 1956. Some in the Party have a leaning towards the latter view, while others are ready to prove and expose the mistakes. Neither of these should be embraced. We have to try to solve the problem rationally. If relevant circles, or the dominant circle of the Central Committee put the issue on the agenda, a consensus is possible. We should start working on activity programs, preparing for the multiparty system. We need these projects for creating a stabilization program that addresses today's conditions, as well as more specific government programs. (...)

[Source: *Magyar Országos Levéltár (MOL)* [Hungarian National Archives, Budapest], M-KS- 288-5/1050 o.e. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]



DOCUMENT No. 2
Record of Conversation between
President M. S. Gorbachev
and Miklós Németh¹²,
Member of the HSWP CC Politburo,
Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the
People's Republic of Hungary,
Moscow,
3 March 1989

[The meeting between M.S. Gorbachev and Miklós Németh, one of the leading reformers and technocrats in the Hungarian leadership, was the first top-level personal consultation between the two countries' leaders following the crucial decisions of the HSWP CC on 10-11 February 1989 to re-evaluate the events of 1956 as a people's uprising and announce the introduction of the multiparty system in the country. The following part of the discussion reflects the determination and the hope of both leaders that the much needed transformation of the political

structure and the economy could and should be realized within the framework of a reformed socialist system.]

(EXCERPT)

M. S. Gorbachev congratulates Németh on the occasion of his appointment as Prime Minister, and asks him how long he has been in office.

M. Németh: For almost a hundred days. I am often asked whether I am thinking about reviewing and sizing up what I have done so far. I usually answer that I have no time for that. Even if I make an assessment, it is for the Central Committee or the parliament. One has to be critical of one's own activities.

M. S. Gorbachev: True enough. In the single-party system self-criticism, is supposed to be an important issue. Possibly the most significant condition is how successfully the leading role of the Party is achieved. On the other hand, our mistakes and shortcomings are all rooted in the lack of criticism. Naturally, I am not only talking about the management, the top layer of party leaders, but I mean it on a larger scale—the whole of the Party. During the Stalin regime, from 1934 to his death, there were only two party congresses.

M. Németh: In the days when Lenin was at the helm, there were endless debates and a clear political line was formed all the same.

M. S. Gorbachev: Yes, because there were entirely different conditions both in the Party and in the country. Now we are opening the way towards socialist pluralism. The multiplicity of opinions is not a tragedy for the society; on the contrary, it is a real advantage. Of course, there are some who want to exhibit democracy for their own selfish objectives, but it can be dealt with, it is merely a question of struggle. [Boris] Yeltsin has now a peculiar position in the Central Committee. His is a typically leftist, rather obnoxious position, which can nevertheless find a favorable reception among the public. We have to put up with several problems that directly concern people's lives, and those who cry out loud enough about these can reap a dividend. The majority of people cannot be blamed for this, as they are hoping that a man like him will one day be able to do something for them. Besides, it is important that they learn on their own the difference between a demagogue and a serious politician. There is nothing flattering I can say about a member of the Central Committee who gambles at the expectations, while he knows very well that the party program is aiming at the quickest possible way of satisfying these expectations.

M. Németh: It happens quite often with us. There are always a few members of parliament who rise to speak from such a demagogic position.

M. S. Gorbachev: The main thing is to be honest and truthful in the Central Committee, in the parliament, and among the people as well, and to have a clear conscience. Otherwise the personality will break down, and downfall is unavoidable.

M. Németh: What we consider the most important task for the time being is creating a majority within the Central Committee that can be joined around a unified program.

M. S. Gorbachev: This, of course does not rule out the possibility of the existence of some kind of left-wing or right-wing views.

M. Németh: Yes, the only important thing is that the center be strong.

M. S. Gorbachev: We are for a majority that relies on democratic development. We would like to revitalize the role of the councils, agitate the activity of MPs, and assure complete publicity. Without these, the real power of the workers does not exist. See what we had before in the past: masses of the people were alienated from property, politics, and culture. Yet the principal goal of socialism is overcoming alienation and putting man in the focus of attention.

M. Németh: I see no difference between pluralism in a single-party system and in a multi-party system. You are absolutely right: if there is freedom of thought and a unified program according to which people behave, everything goes on as it should. In May 1988 we laid the foundations for such a practice in the course of the Party Conference. Nonetheless, there were certain illusions.

M. S. Gorbachev: Experience showed us that nothing could be achieved at the first trial. We have to get back to the accepted agreements and decisions, polish them, make them more precise, and then move on.

M. Németh: Yes, the conditions are changing. Theoretically what you said in Kiev is important for us. Every socialist country is developing in its idiosyncratic way, and their leaders are above all accountable to their own people. Whether it be one party or more—life will show which solution is more effective. Within our conditions, state and party have become the same. This affected the development of the country in a most unfavorable way. We should not eradicate everything with one stroke, because what we achieved is worth noting.

M. S. Gorbachev: I believe that Pozsgay's statements are quite extremist¹³ in this respect. The events of 1956 indeed started with the dissatisfaction of the people. Later, however, the events escalated into a counterrevolution and bloodshed. This cannot be overlooked.

M. Németh: Most important of all, these questions should not cause division in the society. Some say that we need to look at history in the same way, because otherwise there will be no unity in society at all. In reality, however, unity in interpreting the past does not exist. The main thing is that we have unity with regard to the present situation and in the policy to follow.

M. S. Gorbachev: Indeed, every generation is responsible for the present, first and foremost.

M. Németh: I am convinced that the organic interrelation and conformity of the economy and politics in fundamental issues is indispensable. A principal question is that of pace. We Hungarians started economic reform long ago, while leaving the political institutions intact. Since last May, we have witnessed a rapid development and transformation of the political system. A new election system, the reorganization of parliament, and other measures followed one another in such a rapid succession, the wheels of the machine are turning with such dizzying speed that it could pose a potential danger to society if this process interrupted economic development.

Nobody actually doubts that a democratic constitutional state is unavoidable for a successful people's economy to function. Having only that, though, without a productive economy, then political transformations will happen in a void, *l'art pour l'art*. Pozsgay says that there is nothing wrong with politics superseding the economy. We, on the contrary, think that harmonization of the two is needed. We support and develop economic institutions, in parallel with changes in the political sphere. We will act with responsibility.

M. S. Gorbachev: You have touched upon an important issue. The process of renewal is gradually spreading over the entire socialist bloc, and adds to the political culture and historical experiences of all these countries according to the local conditions. The most important for all of them, however, is turning towards the people and revitalizing the socialist system. While listening to you, our own situation came to my mind. Of course, it is difficult to achieve total synchronicity between politics and the economy, but at least we have to try. You might remember what Lenin used to say: "We Bolsheviks have conquered Russia, so now we have to learn how to govern it." They rushed ahead in politics, which was in itself normal at the time. But you are right: if we fail to utilize the political drives and motivations to create a healthy economy, the people will unavoidably become discontented.

(...)

[Source: Gorbachev Foundation Archive, Moscow. Document obtained by Magdolna Baráth, Budapest. Translated by Csaba Farkas. Parts of this document were published in the briefing book for the conference, "The End of Cold War in Europe, 1989: 'New Thinking' and New Evidence," Musgrove, St. Simon's Island, Georgia, 1-3 May 1998.]

DOCUMENT No. 3
Memorandum of Conversation between
M.S. Gorbachev and
HSWP General Secretary Károly Grósz,¹⁴
Moscow, 23-24 March 1989

[On 22 March 1989, the parties and organizations of the emerging non-communist Hungarian opposition established a consultative forum, called the "Opposition Roundtable." Up to this point, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party had used the tactic of dealing separately with "alternative" organizations. Now the danger of having to negotiate with a unified opposition became increasingly likely. The Party's leadership also worried about an impending economic crisis possibly resulting in the destabilization of the political scene. These concerns were infused in Károly Grósz's presentation on the internal political situation.

Gorbachev's "dialectic" approach to the issue of how to evaluate 1956 is remarkable: while stressing that this must be decided by the Hungarian leadership alone by examining the facts, he declared that a recent thorough investigation of the past by the Soviet leadership had undoubtedly proven that what had happened in Czechoslovakia in 1968 was a counter-revolution. Similarly ambiguous were the warnings of the Soviet leader concerning the tolerable scope of the political transition in Hungary. He emphasized that "the limit [...] is the safekeeping of socialism and assurance of stability," however, he also clearly declared that "today we have to preclude the possibility of repeated foreign intervention into the internal affairs of socialist countries."

The timing of the conversation is also noteworthy from Gorbachev's perspective; it occurred on the eve of the legislative elections in the Soviet Union—the freest since the 1917 Revolution. The 26 March vote would elevate reformers (such as Yeltsin) and nationalists (especially in the Baltics) to a strong position to challenge the communist order, and Gorbachev may already have felt pressured by the impending balloting.]

(EXCERPT)

HUNGARIAN SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY
 CENTRAL COMMITTEE
 TOP SECRET
 Made in 2 copies
 Inf/1371/1989
REPORT

for members of the Political Committee
 [29 March 1989]

(...)

Comrade Grósz informed the negotiators about the Hungarian situation. He said that the events in Hungary have accelerated lately. Their direction is according to our intentions, while their pace is somewhat disconcerting. Comrade Grósz emphasized that we wish to retain political power and find a solution to our problems by political means, avoiding armed conflict.

We have a good chance for reaching our goals. People are afraid of a possible armed conflict.¹⁵ Workers, peasants and professionals want to work and live in peace and security, safeguarding their property. (...)

Another major concern is the history of the last thirty years. We have to face our past, hard and painful as it is, as the acting participants are still alive. On the other hand, by drawing the necessary conclusions, we might dishearten certain layers of our policy's active supporters from the Party. Lack of self-confidence is palpable enough in the Party anyway. (...)

Comrade Gorbachev agreed that the Western world does not want instability in Eastern Europe, including Hungary as well, because in the present situation it would be adverse to its interests. Nonetheless, it is quite apparent that they [the Western countries] intend to facilitate the realization and strengthening of a development that suits their own political ideas.

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized: "The estimation of the 1956 events is entirely up to you." You have to stand on a firm ground; you have to examine what really happened then and there. The Soviet leadership has recently analyzed the 1968 events in Czechoslovakia, and they continue to maintain that what happened there was a counter-revolution, with all the idiosyncratic traits of such an event. There were different periods within the Czechoslovak events, but the Dubček regime was unable to prevent openly counter-revolutionary forces from gaining ground through them. (...)

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that we clearly have to draw boundaries, thinking about others and ourselves at the same time. Democracy is much needed, and interests have to be harmonized. The limit, however, is the safekeeping of socialism and assurance of stability.

Comrade Grósz emphasized that when referring to 1956, we adhere to the original evaluation that the Party endorsed in December 1956. The process is described in three consecutive words: student protest, [people's] uprising, and counter-revolution.

Comrade Gorbachev agreed with the above. He emphasized that today we have to preclude the possibility of repeated foreign intervention into the internal affairs of socialist countries. (...)

[Source: MOL M-KS-288-11/4458 ö.e.. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]

DOCUMENT No. 4
Agreement about the Commencement of
Substantial Political Negotiations between the
Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party,
the Members of the Opposition Roundtable
and the Organizations of the Third Side,
10 June 1989

[Between March and June the crucial question of the transition was whether the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party [HSWP] was willing to accept eventually the fact that it would have to negotiate with a unified opposition represented by the Opposition Roundtable [ORT]. Although the HSWP leadership tried to do everything it could to prevent this, by the beginning of June it gave up its previous position. However, the opposition parties had to make a serious concession too, since it was a precondition of the HSWP in agreeing to start official negotiations on the political transition with the ORT that the talks should be tripartite. The "third side" included mass organizations and civil associations, all of which were supporters of the HSWP and/or represented left-wing political ideas.]

The agreement published below was signed at the first plenary meeting of the National Roundtable talks. The document, which put on record the legal framework and the conditions of the subsequent tripartite negotiations which lasted until 18 September. At the next meeting, on 21 June, two intermediate-level committees were established for political and for social-economic issues, each having six working subcommittees in which the bulk of the legal work leading to the establishment of parliamentary democracy in Hungary was carried out.]

AGREEMENT

About the Commencement of Substantial Political Negotiations between the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Members of the Opposition Roundtable and the Organizations of the Third Side, 10 June 1989

I

The necessity to help the nation out of a serious political and economic crisis, and the democratic transformation of the conditions of power appropriate the dialogue between all the political circles that feel responsible for the future. Handling the crisis and creating a multiparty system is only possible with the agreement of the democratic forces. It presupposes that mutual objectives and aims are taken into account, that all participants are willing to make an agreement, and it necessitates trust and self-restraint.

The fate of the nation can be improved by respecting the requirements of the constitution and firmly rejecting violence. It is in our mutual interest that social

conflicts are solved according to the generally agreed norms of European political culture: with public consent. The transition from a single-party system to representational democracy and constitutional government can only be realized by free elections. Well-functioning representative bodies and a firm, consistent government that is trusted by the people are needed to stop the worsening social and economic crisis. The peaceful political transition and the relief of aggravated economic and social tension can only be realized by mutual agreement. An array of historical examples warn us that common problems can only be solved with consensus. All civil organizations and movements have to take part side by side in the hard and contradictory process of transition.

On the basis of these facts and conditions, organizations of the Opposition Roundtable, the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, the Left Wing Alternative Union; the Patriotic People's Front; the Hungarian Democratic Youth Association; the Association of Hungarian Resistance Fighters and Anti-Fascists; the National Council of Hungarian Women; the joint delegation of the Ferenc Münnich Society; and the National Council of Trade Unions express their wish to commence substantial political negotiations. The equal negotiators accept the following governing principles for the talks:

—the basis of power is the sovereignty of the people; none of the political forces can monopolize it and declare themselves the sole repository of the people's will, and none can aspire to unconstitutionally curtail political rights;

—the will of the public has to be expressed without preceding limitations, in the course of free elections, the result of which is binding for everyone, and from which no political organization that complies with the requirements of the constitution can be excluded;

—handling the crisis, ensuring a democratic transition and resolving political conflicts is only possible in a peaceful way, avoiding violence; none of the civil organizations can have direct control over military forces;

—an important condition of the successful and constructive political negotiations is that the nation and [the parties'] interests are considered and respected; a further condition is mutual and anticipatory confidence;

—only mutually acceptable conditions can be the basis of co-operation and agreement;

—when determining the participants of negotiations and their legal standing, exclusion of a political nature is unacceptable, although the functioning of the negotiation process must be considered;

—the objective of negotiations is the formation of political agreements that can be accompanied by the necessary government measures and bills, together

with the deadline for their realization; the negotiations themselves, however, do not directly exercise functions of constitutional law;

—during the course of negotiations the parties refrain from all unilateral steps that would obliterate the goal of negotiations; legislation cannot precede political agreement;

—all negotiating partners will have the political agreements accepted in their own organizations, and represent them in public as well, while assisting the enforcement of the agreements by every possible political means.

II.

Three parties take part in the political conciliation talks, with the intent of reaching political agreements.

- a) The Opposition Roundtable (Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Friendship Society; Alliance of Young Democrats; Independent Smallholders' and Farmers' Civic Party; Christian Democratic People's Party; Hungarian Democratic Forum; Hungarian People's Party; Hungarian Social Democratic Party; Alliance of Free Democrats; and the Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions as observer);
- b) Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party;
- c) The following civil organizations and movements: Left Wing Alternative Union; the Patriotic People's Front; Hungarian Democratic Youth Association; the Association of Hungarian Resistance Fighters and Anti-Fascists; the National Council of Hungarian Women; the Ferenc Münnich Society and the National Council of Trade Unions.

All three negotiating partners are endowed with equal rights in forming a consensus. A speaker represents each of the three parties, who [will] express the opinions of the negotiating parties. Civil associations and movements listed under point c) above, whose participation in substantial negotiations was agreed by the Opposition Roundtable as a compromise during preparatory talks, do express that they support the intention of both the Hungarian Social Workers' Party and the Opposition Roundtable to conduct a constructive dialogue and reach an agreement. They intend to take an active part in the negotiation process.

The Opposition Roundtable determines the number and composition of their delegates. Civil associations and movements listed under point c) above decide among themselves about the method of reconciliation and the method of joint representation of their disputable issues.

1. Representatives of the participating organizations are endowed with a written mandate, which contains their right to make agreements. They present their mandate to the president of the plenary session.

2. The fourth side of the negotiating table can be reserved for observers. Observers have the right to submit their proposed remarks in writing to the president of the meeting, who informs the negotiating parties about the observation.

3. The negotiating parties put on the agenda of conciliatory talks the following issues:

- defining the rules and principles of realizing a democratic political transition;
- strategic tasks for overcoming the impending economic and social crisis.

Final definition of individual issues, based on specific interests, is the task of substantial negotiations.

1. The statutes and working order of the political conciliatory talks are as follows:

- a) Substantial negotiations are conducted in plenary sessions and in committees. The opening plenary session is scheduled on 13 June 1989 (Tuesday) in the Hunters' Hall of Parliament. The Speaker of the House presides over the whole meeting. Representatives of all three negotiating parties are given equal time to speak. In the course of the opening plenary session, negotiating partners issue a declaration of intent. Then they form working committees.
- b) Agreements are prepared by working committees, according to specific issues on the agenda. Statutes of the plenary session logically refer to committee sessions as well. Working committees can form sub-committees—with the participation of experts.

Preparing bills for legislation must involve governmental bodies as well. In the course of political conciliatory talks, some propositions may be opened to public debate. Final documents are ratified by the plenary session. Propositions of the working committees can only be submitted to the plenary session when heads of delegations have signed them. The approved documents are signed by the heads of the delegations who then take care of their publication. Every session is recorded in the minutes, which have to be publicized in case the negotiations are interrupted.

- c) Coming to an agreement is our mutual interest, based on the principle of consensus. Should discord persist in a particular detail, consensus can be reached nevertheless, provided that the dissenting negotiating partner admits that it does not concern the general principle of the agreement.
- d) Plenary sessions are open to the press. Working committees, however, will operate behind closed doors. It has to be assured that [the public] receives

regular and substantial information about the negotiation process. From time to time, negotiating parties will issue a joint communiqué to the Hungarian Telegraphic Agency. Separate statements can only be issued if negotiations break off or a common declaration cannot be agreed on. Nevertheless, this does not concern the right of the parties to express their opinions about the content of certain issues on the agenda.

- e) The parties think it necessary that expenses of the negotiations are covered by the state budget. Handling of documents, photocopying, postage, the costs of organizing meetings, and the wages of possible experts are included in the expenses.

Representing the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party:
György Fejtő
Secretary of the Central Committee

Representing the Opposition Roundtable:

Dr. Zsolt Zétényi¹⁶
Endre Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Friendship Society

Dr. László Kövér
Alliance of Young Democrats

Péter Hardi
Independent Smallholders' and Farmers' Civic Party

György Szokolczai
Christian Democratic Party

Dr. László Sólyom
Hungarian Democratic Forum

Csaba Varga
Hungarian People's Party

Tibor Baranyai
Hungarian Social Democratic Party

Dr. Péter Tölgyessy
Alliance of Free Democrats

Imre Kerényi
Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions, as
observer

Representing the Left Wing Alternative Union; the Patriotic People's Front; the Hungarian Democratic Youth Association; the Association of Hungarian Resistance Fighters and Anti-Fascists; the National Council of Hungarian Women; the joint delegation of the Ferenc Münnich Society and the National Council of Trade Unions:

Csaba Kemény

Left Wing Alternative Union

Dr. István Kukorelli
People's Patriotic Front

Ferenc Gyurcsány
Hungarian Democratic Youth Association

Imre Kerekes
Association of Hungarian Resistance Fighters and
Anti-Fascists

Mrs. Soós Dr. Mária Dobos
National Council of Hungarian Women

Ferenc Berényi
Ferenc Münnich Society

Mrs. Kósa & Dr. Magda Kovács
National Council of Trade Unions

[Source: Published in Ellenzéki kerekasztal. Portrévázlatok. [Opposition Roundtable. Political Portraits. Ed. and interviews by Anna Richter] (Budapest: Ötlet Kft, 1990), pp. 294-300. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]



DOCUMENT No. 5
Minutes of the Meeting of the
Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party [HSWP]
CC Political Executive Committee,¹⁷
24 July 1989

[The end of July brought a definite hardening in the position of the HSWP at the National Roundtable talks. This was obvious in the Communists unexpected refusal to sign an agreement on party law, although it had already been accepted by the experts.

The opposition attributed the harder line to a change in personnel at the top of the HSWP delegation, when Imre Pozsgay's position was taken over by the less flexible György Fejtő.¹⁸ At the 27 July meeting of the National Roundtable, Fejtő made it clear that the HSWP was not willing to give a full account of all of its property, emphasizing that the greater part of it had been acquired legitimately and therefore this issue should not be discussed at the tripartite talks. The HSWP's uncompromising stand on reaching agreement on the de-politicization of the armed services, and concerning the withdrawal of party organizations from work places, finally led to the suspension of the tripartite negotiations. The talks were not resumed until 24 August, when the HSWP delegation was headed again by Pozsgay. Fejtő's speech at the 24 July meeting of the HSWP Political

Executive Committee, published below, provides insight into the making of this new, less flexible and more intransigent policy towards the opposition.]

(EXCERPT)

György Fejti: We are in a complicated situation now, but still, we have to make up our minds. In many questions, especially when it comes to specific details, we have made quite some progress. However, in a series of fundamental and cardinal questions the antagonism seems irreconcilable; apparently the date of the general elections is one of these controversial issues. So, with a flexible negotiating strategy, namely that we give in to certain demands but stand our ground firmly in other issues, we cannot resolve the prevailing antagonism for the time being. Yet time is pushing us. Technically, we have some three or four weeks left to work out the legal conditions of the parliamentary elections in late autumn.¹⁹ Three or four weeks, that's all we have. On the other hand, this more or less open, hesitant, obstructive behavior is physically impeding the process of calling elections. That's why we have to come to a decision, on the basis of the previous issue on the agenda, as to what to do in the face of the present economic situation and the international financial conditions. Because either we accept the fact that we cannot make a compromise in this case, while emphasizing that the ongoing negotiation process should not be jeopardized—it is another question, though, whether the danger holds only for the elections—or, alternatively, we come up with overt reasoning and publicize in due time what the rationale is behind advancing the date of elections. In the latter case we should look to make compromises on other issues instead of this one. Undoubtedly, we jeopardize the success of negotiations; what is more, we even risk their termination. The later we express our intention to call earlier elections, the bigger the danger is.

Rezső Nyers: The only reason to hasten negotiations is to advance the elections? I believe that even if we called elections for next spring, we should speed things up all the same, shouldn't we?

György Fejti: It is a markedly different situation if we want to submit the fundamental laws to parliament in mid-September rather than in December. The meaning of hastening things now depends on whether we show the magnanimous gesture of government—abolishing these laws—in a very broad sense, or the government makes it clear that, even though they are curious how political negotiations will end, they want to submit the bills at the next session anyway, so that nothing can change the date of election.

Rezső Nyers: I have one question—otherwise I completely agree that we hasten the process and the government keep to their schedule, with the one compromise of September. But why does it have to be connected with elections in November?

György Fejti: Because we have no other plausible reason for speeding things up. (...)

György Fejti: Yes, but we have to get back to the unfortunately irrevocable question, that we should decide in a very short time, to what extent the elections of this year are important for us. As long as there is no decision on this issue, we cannot follow a clear and unequivocal line in the negotiations. I can imagine that we might lose this, so let me point out that despite all appearances there is no covert reason that would make it important for me. Yet we cannot carry on the negotiations under such pressure without knowing how important this issue is for our own Party.

Rezső Nyers: Comrade Fejti, it is very important for us. Under one condition, that is if they pass these fundamental laws in September, then the November elections are 100 percent to our advantage. If they do not vote for the bill in September, then nothing is good enough for us. Absolutely nothing. This is the decisive factor. So, I am totally and immediately for the November elections, if these three issues are accepted. Or at least two of the three. Three would be most expedient, though.

György Fejti: You mean if they accept it? It is still a bone of contention. There are and will be several disputable issues.

It is definite that the documents can only be submitted in September with much controversy. This is part of the negotiation strategy. We shouldered responsibility for negotiating these bills. However, the HSWP cannot take responsibility for striking a deal with those powers. We will not be able to come to terms; it is the Parliament's task to ask for a decision, making known and objectively presenting the opposing views. In the present state of negotiations it is an illusion that in these questions—whether it be the party law or election law—a total agreement and final consensus can be reached. An illusion. Possibly we should reduce the number of points that induce confrontation—and there are a lot, at the moment. Just to mention one example: so far, when it came to the party law, the opposition has put in the minutes at every single meeting that the HSWP is not willing to give consent to proposing the bill to parliament if either the assessment or the redistribution of their total property is on the agenda. I think it is absolutely impossible that such a position would be acceptable for us right before the elections. I can't tell when they might take a U-turn on this issue. They will only relinquish if there is a final deadline, by which the negotiations should be completed, otherwise we can stand up, wash our hands and say that the agreement has fallen through but we are not the ones to blame. So that's why entirely clear statements are needed, saying that there is a set schedule and deadline for negotiations; the delegates of the HSWP are unable to do this.

(...)

[Source: MOL M-KS-288-5/1072 ö.e. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]

DOCUMENT No. 6
Memorandum of Conversation between
President Mikhail Gorbachev,
President Rezső Nyers, and
General Secretary of the Hungarian Socialist
Workers' Party (HSWP), Károly Grósz,
Moscow, 24-25 July 1989

[This Hungarian-Soviet summit was the last such meeting preceding the important events of the fall of 1989: the free exit of the East Germans via Hungary to the West in September, the dissolution of the HSWP, the declaration of the Hungarian Republic, and the plans for free elections. While both sides were still intent on stressing that what was occurring in Hungary was aimed at working out a framework of democratic socialism, it is clear from the memorandum that both sides already had serious doubts about the possible outcome of the process.]

The treatment of the issue of Soviet troop withdrawal deserves special attention. During the March visit of Károly Grósz to Moscow it had been the Soviets' condition that such an agreement should be kept secret. Now Gorbachev easily agreed to make such a deal public, obviously hoping that such a concession would strengthen the eroding position of the HSWP.]

(EXCERPT)

Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party
 TOP SECRET!
 Central Committee
 Inf/1451/1989
 REPORT
 to the Political Executive Committee

Invited by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Comrades Rezső Nyers and Károly Grósz visited the Soviet Union on 24 and 25 July 1989. They took part in a two-hour negotiation with Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. The Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party invited the delegates for dinner, with the participation of several Soviet leaders. Comrades Nyers and Grósz negotiated with leaders of the Soviet-Hungarian Friendship Society. Comrade Nyers met Soviet social scientists; Comrade Grósz met leading officials of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party.

I.

Comrade Nyers described the situation of Hungary and the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. He said that the party is preparing for a working congress.²⁰ Decisions have not yet been made on every issue but is quite definite

that internal issues of the Party will be on the agenda. The set task of the congress is to achieve the unity of the Party. Comrade Nyers pointed out that the Party is already getting spirited, [and] new platforms are being formed. The basic concept of the congress is democratic socialism, self-government, parliamentary democracy, and economic democracy. Comrade Nyers emphasized that property reform was considered the primary element of reform. We wish to democratize public property, indeed making it available for the public. We are considering a new system that utilizes the available capital more efficiently. We are planning to increase the ratio of private capital in the economy, and the introduction of foreign capital.

Comrade Nyers mentioned the experiences of parliamentary by-elections.²¹ He emphasized that one should not jump to immediate conclusions from the results. We consider the elections neither a success nor a complete failure. The present state of paralysis within the Party, however, has become apparent. He referred to the fact that in one constituency the opposition united their forces in the campaign against the HSWP, but this is not expected to be a general trend when it comes to the general elections. Comrade Nyers stressed that there are three factors that can defeat the Party. First: the past, if we let ourselves be smeared with it. Secondly: the disintegration of the Party. The third factor that can defeat us is the paralysis of the Party rank-and-file.

Talking about Hungary, Comrade Gorbachev said that the Hungarian events were being followed with much interest in the Soviet Union. The Soviet Communist Party leadership refers to our policy with understanding. In the course of the negotiations, they understood our intention to find our way on the road to democratic socialism. At the same time, Comrade Gorbachev posed several questions with regard to the situation in Hungary and the policy of the HSWP. Among other things, he inquired about our orientation in foreign policy, the role of private property and foreign capital, the experiences with by-elections, the goals of the Party Congress, and the unity of the Party. Comrade Gorbachev put special emphasis on the fact that the Soviet leaders interpreted the mass sympathy towards the HSWP evident at the 14 July 1989 funeral of János Kádár²² as an important political resource to rely on.

(...)

IV.

In the course of the visit, several issues concerning the bilateral relationship were discussed. Negotiators mutually agreed that we should widen the scope of relations between the HSWP and the CPSU, and increase the exchange of experiences. In this way the recently aggravated laxity that has been hindering the co-operation of Soviet and Hungarian party organizations can be effectively eradicated. Hungarian negotiators suggested that the CPSU and other Soviet social organizations develop collaborative relationships with

Hungarian democratic organizations and newly-forming parties as well.²³

The negotiations proved that it is our mutual intention to maintain the friendship of the Hungarian and Soviet nations, to create a new basis for reinforcing the friendship movement, winning over the best professionals and the youth for the friendship between the two nations.

In the course of negotiations, Hungarian and Soviet leaders examined the most urgent issues regarding the stationing of Soviet troops in Hungary. Comrade Nyers reminded the negotiators that at their March meeting in Moscow,²⁴ comrades Grósz and Gorbachev had agreed in principle that troops would continue to be withdrawn. At that time the Soviet negotiators had asked that this agreement should not be publicized. This time comrade Nyers suggested that the March agreement should be confirmed, the question of withdrawing Soviet troops further considered and publicized in one way or another. Speaking for the Soviet leadership, comrade Gorbachev agreed with the idea. His suggestion was that, when dealing with the issue, one should start from what the Soviet press release says about the subject: "In the course of negotiations, the issue of Soviet troops stationed in Hungary came up, and the parties decided that steps will be made to reduce further the number of Soviet troops in accordance with the European disarmament process and with the progress of the Vienna talks." Comrades Nyers and Grósz agreed with the suggestion.

In the course of negotiations we reaffirmed our mutual political intent to seek out opportunities for establishing a new basis for Hungarian-Soviet economic cooperation. Comrade Nyers indicated that the Hungarian government was presently working on a new fiscal system, and it was possible that the proposals would be submitted [as early as] this autumn.

The HSWP leader emphasized that the situation of the Hungarian minority in the Sub-Carpathian region²⁵ was improving, which was of great importance for us in terms of both domestic and foreign affairs. Comrade Gorbachev indicated that they [the Soviet government] were determined to head in this direction.

Another subject raised [in the discussion] were the many Hungarian soldiers who died in action on the Soviet front or in POW²⁶ camps in World War II. Hungarian public opinion was exerting pressure for the memory of these victims to be preserved in due fashion. Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that the Soviet Union was ready to cooperate in this field as well. [He] said that it was virtually impossible to find mass graves on battlefields now. However, they [the Soviets] were ready to specify those cemeteries where Hungarian prisoners of war were buried. They would preserve the tombs; memorial monuments could be installed, and Hungarian citizens could visit these sites. The same practice was working well with the Federal Republic of Germany.

(...)

[Source: MOL, M-KS 288 - 11/4461. ö.e. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]



DOCUMENT No. 7
Record of Conversation between
Representatives of the Opposition Roundtable
and Boris Stukalin,
Soviet Ambassador in Budapest,
18 August 1989

[At their meeting on 27 July, the representatives of the Opposition Roundtable (ORT) decided—at the initiative of József Antall²⁸—to widen the scope of the ORT's negotiating partners and initiate meetings with the chairmen and the secretaries of the parliamentary committees, Deputy Prime Minister Péter Meggyesi and Soviet Ambassador in Budapest, Boris Stukalin.²⁹

Fidesz Press, the organ of the Young Democrats, gave the following account of the meeting and of Viktor Orbán's presentation (the AYD leader who had given a speech at Imre Nagy's reburial in June and who in 1998 would become Hungary's prime minister) calling for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary: "Since 1956 we have known that the Soviet ambassador in Budapest plays a key role in Moscow's assessment of the situation in Hungary, yet at the meeting no really important issues were discussed, it was rather of exploratory character. The different organizations presented their position tactfully, giving broad outlines only, taking the liberty to deal with foreign policy only cautiously. The atmosphere became hot, however, when one of the Fidesz representatives took the floor: the Soviet side 'eyed the game,' the famous political opponent³⁰ for several minutes. Nevertheless, they listened with poker face to Orbán who stated that he was pessimistic concerning the National Roundtable talks because the HSWP had renewed itself only in words, remaining uncompromising on concrete issue (workers militia, Party organs at working places, the property of the Party)."³¹

(EXCERPT: Speech by Viktor Orbán,²⁷ Representative of the Alliance of Young Democrats [AYD])

(...)

Viktor Orbán: Allow me to add just a few remarks to the question of what we think about the possibility of the negotiations eventually ending with success. We believe that the very opportunity of meeting you here today precipitates the prospect of making a successful agreement with the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party. Our organization, inasmuch as it is primarily comprised of

young people, considers it a particular privilege to have the chance of meeting representatives of Soviet diplomatic bodies. We intend to utilize this opportunity, which has never been granted to us before, to hand over a memorandum next week that informs representatives of the Soviet Union about the political ideas of the Alliance of Young Democrats.

Certainly you are familiar with the fact that the issue of revealing the so-called historical white spots is just as important in Hungary as it is in the Soviet Union. Questions and views concerning our past and relations with the Soviet Union, or rather their sudden change, concerns our generation most of all. This is due to the fact that not long ago we were taught exactly the opposite of what even the Soviet Union has lately—and repeatedly—expressed in this respect.

Perhaps this experience explains the skepticism of our generation when it comes to the possible outcome of the negotiations, as compared to the attitude of the previous speakers. Consequently, our generation—that is we, who represent our organization at the Roundtable in the negotiations with the [Hungarian Socialist Workers] Party—we are of the opinion that one should only look at the facts when assessing the intentions of the Party and the political prospects. That is why we observe with considerable apprehension that the Party... the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party has made hardly any progress on the most important concrete issues.

Let me mention a few examples. Naturally, similarly to the previous speakers, I speak with the hope that this opinion will change over time. I must note, however, that the Party, among other things, has not yet made any concessions on the issue of ending party organizations at workplaces. Neither has the HSWP conceded on the question of abolishing the workers' militia that all representatives at the Roundtable consider unconstitutional. No progress was made to guarantee that the political monopoly of the Party in the army and the police force is eliminated once and for all, so that politics and state service are separated within the armed forces. The Opposition Roundtable made specific suggestions on the issue, which have all been rejected so far. I appeal to you: what else could people of my generation and members of my organization think other than that the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party aims at preserving these armed corps and armed forces, the last resort of power in Eastern Europe, intact and unaffected by the opposition. We, Young Democrats, are much worried about this intent. For according to our political assessment, the main issue is not the elections here; we are quite optimistic about the elections. We consider the recent by-elections as a public opinion poll of some sort, on the basis of which we expect an overwhelming victory by the opposition. The question for us Young Democrats, though, is rather what will happen

afterwards? What will happen if the HSWP, which, in our estimation and according to the analysis of the recent results, will lose the general elections, still retains authority over all the armed forces, and is the only one to have political bodies at workplaces.

Consequently, we believe that the question of stability, the stability of the transition, and the solution of that issue is in the hands of the HSWP. Should the Party act according to their purportedly democratic conviction on the questions I have raised, the period of transition after the elections will not suffer from instability whatsoever. The ultimate cause of our pessimism is that the HSWP has shown no sign during the last month of heading in that direction.

Thank you.

Boris Stukalin: May I ask you about something that you mentioned in your speech: the memorandum that you wish to present to us next week? What is it about, what are the main issues that it is concerned with?

Viktor Orbán: We think that the Alliance of Young Democrats has often been branded by the Hungarian press as an anti-Soviet organization. We had the opportunity to express our opinion on the issue, and we repeatedly stated that we do not consider ourselves anti-Soviet but that we have principled views. We have never encouraged aggression towards the Soviet Union, never incited people to any kind of rebellion against the Soviet people, [and] never invited anyone to infringe on the rights of the Soviet state. We think that this opportunity—sitting at the negotiating table with a representative of the Soviet diplomatic corps—gives us the chance of informing you in an articulate written memorandum about our principled opinions on all these issues—which basically determine the general and foreign policy of the Alliance of Young Democrats. In the memorandum we wish to state our standing and suggestions in terms of what changes we think necessary in Hungarian foreign policy.

Let me point out, though, that this is strictly our opinion, bearing in mind that the Opposition Roundtable never intended to form an unanimous consensus in issues of foreign policy, therefore the organizations around this table represent a considerably wide range of [ideas about] foreign policy. Some of them hold opinions that are closer to yours, while others have views that diverge much further—ours is probably among the latter. Nonetheless, we strongly hope that these issues will be clarified in the memorandum.³²

(...)

[Source: Fekete Doboz Archívuma, Budapest, EKA-NKA Gyűjtemény (Archive of the Black Box Video Studio, Opposition Roundtable—National Roundtable Collection), Casette 27-28. Translated by Csaba Farkas.]

Csaba Békés is the Research Coordinator of the 1956 Institute and the Director of the new Cold War History Research Center in Budapest. He is working on a book on Hungary and the Cold War, 1945-1989. He is the author of *The 1956 Hungarian Revolution and World Politics, CWIHP Working Paper No. 16* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1996).

Melinda Kalmár is a freelance researcher working on a monograph on the transformation of Communist ideology in Hungary, 1948-1989. Her most recent book is *Ennivaló és hozomány. A kora kádárizmus ideológiája. [Eats and dowry. Ideology in the early Kádár era, 1956-1963]* (Budapest: Magvető Kiadó, Budapest, 1997.)

¹ Several excerpts of the HSWP Politburo meetings in 1989 were made available for the participants of the international conference held in Budapest on 10-12 June 1999, see: Csaba Békés, Malcolm Bryne, Melinda Kalmár, Zoltán Ripp, Miklós Vörös, eds., *Political Transition in Hungary 1989-1990*; the documents were collected and compiled by Magdolna Baráth, Csaba Békés, Melinda Kalmár, Gusztáv Kecskés, Zoltán Ripp, Béla Révész, Éva Ständeisky, Mikós Vörös, Budapest, 1999 (The manuscript is to be published by Central European University Press in Budapest.)

² Many minutes of Gorbachev's talks are published in: *The End of Cold War in Europe, 1989. New Thinking and New Evidence. A Compendium of Declassified Documents Prepared for a Critical Oral History Conference* organized by the National Security Archive, Washington, D.C., Musgrove, Georgia, 1-3 May 1998. For recently published Hungarian and Russian sources on Gorbachev's policy towards Hungary see: Magdolna Baráth, János M. Rainer, eds., *Gorbacsov tárgyalásai magyar vezetőkkel, Dokumentumok az egykori SZKP és MSZMP archívumaiból, 1985-1990* [Gorbachev's talks with Hungarian leaders. Documents from the archives of the former CPSU and HSWP, 1985-1990] (1956-os Intézet, Budapest, 2000).

³ See András Bozóki, Márta Elbert, Melinda Kalmár, Béla Révész, Erzsébet Ripp, Zoltán Ripp, eds., *A rendszerváltás forгатókönyve. Kerekasztal-tárgyalások 1989-ben.* [The Script of the Political Transition. The Roundtable Talks in 1989], vols. 1-8, Magvető (vols. 1-4) Budapest, 1999, Új Mandátum (Vols. 5-8) Budapest, 2000.

⁴ For the first and still the only complex work on the transition based on the use of (the then available) archival sources see: Rudolf L. Tökés *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution. Economic Reform, Social Change and Political Succession, 1957-1990* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For an English language volume of essays on the transition see Béla Király ed., András Bozóki associate ed., *Lawful Revolution in Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). For a recently published, archive-based collection of essays see Vol. 7. of the series:

The Script of the Political Transition. The Roundtable Talks in 1989. An English language version of this volume will be published by Central European University Press in Budapest in 2001. A bibliography about the transition in Hungary containing some 260 books and more than 500 articles has been compiled by the Cold War History Research Center in Budapest (www.coldwar.hu), see: *Political Transition in Hungary 1989-1990*.

⁵ Imre Pozsgay, 1980-1982 Minister of Culture, 1982-1988 General Secretary of the Patriotic Peoples' Front, 1980-1989 member of HSWP CC and 1988-1989 member of HSWP Politburo, 1989-1990 Minister of State; head of the HSWP delegation at the negotiations of the National Roundtable in 1989, and his party's nominee for the post of the President of the Republic. 1989-1990 member of the Presidium of the Hungarian Socialist Party (HSP), May-November 1990 HSP Vice President. After leaving the HSP in 1990, he founded the National Democratic Alliance. Since 1997 he has been a political adviser of the Hungarian Democratic Forum.

⁶ T. Iván Berend, historian. From 1985-1990 President, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; 1988-1989 member of the HSWP CC; 1989-1990 Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Council of Ministers. In 1990, he became a professor at the University of California.

⁷ Mihály Jassó, 1988-1989 member of the HSWP CC, 1989 member of the HSWP Politburo, from 1989 head of the Budapest branch of HSWP.

⁸ Rezső Nyers, 1957-1989 member of the HSWP CC, 1960 - 1962 Minister of Finance, 1962 - 1974 Secretary of the HSWP CC, 1966-1974 member of the HSWP Politburo. Main proponent in the leadership of the so-called New Economic Mechanism introduced in 1968. As a result of the anti reform campaign at the beginning of the seventies he was expelled from the leadership. 1974-1981 head of the Institute of Economic Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1980 - 1988 its advisor. In 1988, he was one of the founders of the "New March Front," 1988 - 1989 Minister of State, member of the HSWP Politburo. From June to October, 1989 President of the HSWP, from October 1989 to May 1990 President of the Hungarian Socialist Party.

⁹ Imre Nagy, 1953-1955 and in October-November 1956 Prime Minister. In June 1958, executed for his role in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

¹⁰ Mátyás Rákosi, from 1945 to 1956 leader of the Hungarian Communist Party and the Hungarian Workers' Party. Dismissed in July 1956, he spent the rest of his life in exile in the Soviet Union.

¹¹ János Kádár, from 4 November 1956 to May, 1988, First Secretary of the HSWP.

¹² Miklós Németh, 1981-1986 member of department of economic policy of the HSWP CC, later deputy head and head of department. 1987-1988 Secretary of the HSWP CC in charge of economic policy, 1987-1989 member of the HSWP CC, 1988 - 1989 member of the HSWP Politburo, 1989-1990 President of the Council of Ministers, October-December 1989, presidium member of the Hungarian

Socialist Party. Resigned from this post in December, 1988-1991 Member of Parliament for the HSWP, then HSP. From 1991 to 2000 Vice President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

¹³ See document 1.

¹⁴ Károly Grósz, 1984-1987 First Secretary of the Budapest branch of HSWP, 1987-1988 Prime Minister, May 1988-October 1989 HSWP General Secretary.

¹⁵ In fact at the time there was no serious concern among society about a possible armed conflict in Hungary. This reference reflects rather the worry of the party leadership concerning the unpredictable attitude of the armed services, including the workers' militia, towards the unexpectedly fast and radical political changes.

¹⁶ Biographies of all representatives of the tripartite negotiations were published in the briefing book of the conference; "Political Transition in Hungary, 1989-1990," held in Budapest in June 1999. A copy is accessible for researchers at the CWIHP and National Security Archive (<http://nsarchive.org>).

¹⁷ On 23-24 June 1989 the HSWP CC established a 21-member Political Executive Committee replacing the former Political Committee.

¹⁸ Pozsgay went on vacation in mid-July. György Fejti, 1980-1984 First Secretary of the Communist Youth Federation CC, 1984-1987 First Secretary of Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén Committee of the HSWP, 1987-1989 Secretary of the HSWP CC, 1980-1989 member of the CC. In 1989 member of the HSWP's delegation at the National Roundtable.

¹⁹ The HSWP considered early elections advantageous assuming that the opposition parties would lack sufficient time to publicise their programs. However, elections were eventually held in March 1990.

²⁰ The HSWP's 14th Congress was held on 6-10 October 1989. During the Congress, the party dissolved itself and on 7 October a new party, the Hungarian Socialist Party, was formed.

²¹ On 22 July 1989, parliamentary by-elections were held in four constituencies, but the first round brought a final result in only one of them, where the opposition parties formed a coalition and won. The second round of the elections was held on 5 August when candidates of the Hungarian Democratic Forum acquired two of the seats while in one constituency the election was void.

²² The aging János Kádár, of the HSWP after its conference in May 1988 Honorary Party President, died on 6 July; his funeral was held on 14 July 1989 with the participation of several tens of thousand people.

²³ It is more than interesting that just a few days after the return of the two HSWP leaders from Moscow, on 27 July representative József Antall, Hungarian Democratic Forum, made a proposal at the Opposition Roundtable meeting to invite the Soviet Ambassador in Budapest and inform him about the opposition's ideas. This move confirms the likelihood that secret communications existed between the HSWP and some opposition representatives

as it was commonly believed (but never proved) at the time. See document 7.

²⁴ See document 3.

²⁵ Editor's Note: According to the Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement of 29 June 1945, Sub-Carpathian Ruthenia and thirteen communities from Slovakia became part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. A large Hungarian minority lived in this region, in particular in the territories contiguous with Hungary.

²⁶ Editor's Note: Prisoner of War.

²⁷ Viktor Orbán, graduate of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest (1987), founder of István Bibó Special College and the journal *Századvég* [Fin de siècle], in March 1988 one of the founders and spokesman of *Fidesz* (Alliance of Young Democrats), representative of his party at the negotiations of the Opposition Roundtable, since 1993 President of *Fidesz* (after April 1995 called the *Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party*), after 1992 one of the vice presidents of the Liberal International, since July 1998 Prime Minister of the Hungarian Republic.

²⁸ József Antall, historian, in 1956 participant in the re-organisation of the Independent Smallholders' Party, one of the founding fathers of the Christian Youth Association. Temporarily arrested and later dismissed from his job because of his revolutionary activity, 1984 - 1990 director general in Semmelweis Museum of Medical History, among the founding fathers of Hungarian Democratic Forum (HDF), in 1989 member of the Central Committee, then member of the presidium, since October 1989 president of the HDF, participant at the Opposition Roundtable and at the National Roundtable negotiations, from 23 May 1990 to his death Prime Minister of the Hungarian Republic.

²⁹ See note 23.

³⁰ Viktor Orbán became generally known in Hungary and abroad by his speech delivered at the reburial ceremony of Imre Nagy and his associates on Heroes Square in Budapest on 16 June 1989. While all the other speakers were cautiously seeking to avoid raising controversial issues, Orbán sharply called upon the Soviet Union to withdraw its troops from Hungary.

³¹ [Mónika] Vig: "Viktor Orbán and the Soviet ambassador," *Fidesz Press*, 5 September 1989.

³² On the basis of the available documentary evidence this promise seems to have been an improvisation of Viktor Orbán since no such memorandum was presented to the Soviet Embassy subsequently.

**HUNGARIAN SECRET POLICE MEMORANDUM,
“ENSURING THE SECURITY OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE BURIAL OF IMRE
NAGY AND HIS ASSOCIATES [ON 16 JUNE 1989],”
MAY 1989**

(EXCERPT)

[Editor’s Note: In an essay entitled “The New National Alliance,” published in Hittel Dénes Csegey in mid-January 1989, the reassessment of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and its suppression by Soviet troops—“finding a worthy place for it in the memory of the nations”—is described as “one of the fundamental issues and standards of the Hungarian democratic transition.” Indeed, the historical place of the 1956 Revolution—and its leader, the reform communist prime minister Imre Nagy—permeated the national discourse during 1988-89 in Hungary. Political attitudes and actions of regime and opposition crystallized around the issue re-evaluating this pivotal event in Hungary’s postwar history.

One crucial moment in this process occurred with the government-approved reburial of Imre Nagy and his associates who had been arrested and executed in the wake of the Revolution’s bloody suppression. Demands for a reburial of Nagy had surfaced increasingly since the 30th anniversary of the leader’s execution on 16 June 1988, when the regime prevented public commemorations with tear gas, batons and arrests. Instead, a symbolic gravestone was inaugurated on the Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris for Imre Nagy, Gesa Losonczy, Pál Maléter, Miklós Gimes, József Szilágyi and others executed after the 1956 Revolution. Six months later the regime gave permission for the exhumation and reburial of the remains of Nagy and his associates; the exhumation began in March. Fretting that the funeral would turn into an “extremist” political event, the regime took widespread security precautions, as detailed in the following document.. The 16 June 1989 funeral ceremonies on Heroes’ Square and Rákoskeresztúr New Public Cemetery in Budapest, in the course of which hundreds of thousands of people paid tribute to Imre Nagy and his associates, passed peacefully. During the internationally televised event, Victor Orbán, co-founder of the oppositional Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESz) demanded in the name of the young people of Hungary the withdrawal of Soviet troops. Observing the reburial from across the city, the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party Politburo only resolved that a firm response should be given to the perceived anti-Soviet and anti-Communist statements made at the funeral.

The following excerpt from the state security’s operation plan for the Nagy reburial, discovered by Hungarian researcher Janos Kenedi (Institute for the History of the 1956 Revolution, Budapest), reveals the regime’s widespread security measures in an efforts to stay in control of this event which, symbolically, marked the beginning of its demise.]

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR
Directorate III/III

TOP SECRET
Until destroyed!

Approved:
Dr Istvan Horvath
Police Maj. Gen.
Minister of the Interior

Agreed:
Ferenc Pallagi
Deputy Minister

Subject: Ensuring the security of preparations for the burial of Imre Nagy and his associates

Operative Plan of Action

On the basis of the permission [given by] the Government of the Hungarian People’s Republic and the decision of [Nagy’s] relatives, the burial of Imre Nagy and his four associates will take place on 16 June, 1989, in the New Central Cemetery in Budapest.

The family members as well as The Committee for Historical Justice wish to ensure the character of the event

as an act of respect, [but] recognize at the same time that a political aspect will inevitably arise, they will make efforts to keep it—as much as possible—within limits.

As opposed to them, certain extremist social groups—mainly SzDSz [Alliance of Free Democrats], FIDESz [League of Young Democrats] and the Republican Circle are attempting to turn the ceremony into a political demonstration. (...)

The main direction of the activity of the state security service must be to support with all force and means at its disposal the character of the event as one of respect, commemoration and rehabilitation, while preventing, halting, limiting, detouring and influencing in a positive direction all extremist attempts which may be expected from both sides.

Accordingly, it should make special efforts:

- To obtain, analyze and evaluate the ideas of Hungarian émigré groups and the various internal alternative groups regarding the funeral. To provide up-to-date information to the political leadership, and to work out proposals for political and government action.
- To work out and carry out combinations and active measures abroad and at home, orienting [action] toward the tribute-paying line of thought, placing rehabilitation and the paying of final respects [at] the fore. Pushing back and deflecting every initiative to the contrary.
- To initiate operations of misinformation emphasizing that the events may be taken advantage of by extremist groups to stage provocations, which could lead to a halting of the process of democratization and to restoration.
- To initiate measures in the foreign affairs arena, through our network of contacts, mainly toward the US State Department and the US Embassy in Budapest, calling attention to the fact that any action of extremist adventurism may disrupt increasingly broadening and strengthening Hungarian-American relations, and would negatively affect our initiatives toward a pluralistic social order.
- In matters involving games,¹ to convey information to the hostile special services suggesting that a course of events contrary to the intentions of the authorities may lead to a strengthening of the forces urging restoration [i.e., an abandonment of the current relative liberalism].
- To control the activity of politicians, businessmen, press correspondents and camera crews arriving from abroad.
- To investigate and reveal analyses and assessments by officials of foreign representations operating in Hungary concerning the funeral as well as to find out about any eventual effort to influence the events.
- Deliberately use the Hungarian mass media—Hungarian Television, Hungarian Radio, the government and independent press—to spread the suggestion that it will be a proof of the maturity of the nation if the events of 16 June proceed in an orderly manner.
- To spread, through our system of contacts, information influencing the political mood in the desired direction, emphasizing that the current leadership is making positive moves and initiatives, which [is the] reason [why] it would be highly undesirable if extremist forces provoked restoration [of the former order] by their actions on 16 June or 23 October. [...]

In order to co-ordinate state security efforts, an operative committee has been set up consisting of appointed leaders [from] Directorate III/I, III/II and III/III [from] the Interior Ministry which will have regular weekly meetings—at 4:00 PM every Monday—until the funeral. Memoranda will be made of these meetings, which will be submitted to the leadership of the Ministry.

For the operative control of the funeral of Imre Nagy on 16 June 1989, the following related measures are being planned:

IM (Interior Ministry) Directorate III/I:

In the field of intelligence gathering it will mobilize the operative forces at its disposal abroad, and will make efforts to provide continuous information on:

- the plans and activities of Hungarians living in the West regarding the events, and their general attitude and mood;
- it will pay special attention to the discovery and acquisition of information regarding the preparations, plans and activities at home of the Hungarian groups and émigré political personalities travelling to Hungary for the event; (...)

It will analyze and provide up-to-date reports on views and opinions observed in church, especially Vatican circles. It will take steps to win the support of church circles with the purpose of moderating domestic tendencies.

In the area of the employment of contacts (agents, social, official) it will aid, by consistent positive influence:

- the loyalty of external émigré public opinion and that of the incoming groups, emphasizing the tribute-paying and mourning character of the events and playing down their demonstrative elements.
- Through cover organizations and diplomatic channels, it will influence the political and official circles of the receiving countries in a positive manner, in line with our interests.

IM Directorate III/II

- To inform, through official and informal channels, the government organs of the NATO countries—especially the USA and Federal Republic of Germany—that certain extremist forces want to exploit the funeral to disrupt and prevent the paying of respect, and for adventurism political action, endangering thereby the increasingly vigorous process of democratization.
- To influence diplomats, journalists, trade and business specialists of the capitalist countries accredited to Hungary through “friendly conversations” in [such] a direction that, using their own means, they should make efforts to prevent the exploitation of the funeral for the purposes of political demonstration.
- Persuading the émigré politicians—especially Bela Kiraly and Sandor Kopacsi—to declare themselves in support of the memorial character of the funeral through the press and TV.(...)

Use of the channel of operative games:

- Contact code name [henceforth cn.] “Hedgehogcactus”², employed in Game cn. “Tarot”, will send—in a coded letter—the following information to the CIA center: “Certain extremist groups are planning to exploit the funeral of Imre Nagy for anti-government disruption. In such a case, the authorities are expected to act harshly. The IM has been put on special alert.”
- Contact agent (henceforth C.A.) cn. “Muddygrass”, employed in Game cn. “Tarot”, [who] will verbally inform the officer of the BND [the West German Federal Intelligence Service] about the information regarding preparations for the funeral of Imre Nagy. Will talk about the plans of the extremist groups intending to disrupt the funeral and the expected reaction of the authorities. Emphasizes that he believes a conflict would have a negative impact on the process of democratic evolution.

Via the network

- C.A. cn. “Red Thorn” will remind US diplomat cn. “Stone Rose” in a personal conversation that he saw [US] Ambassador [Mark] Palmer on TV among the marchers at the 15 March celebration. Personally he is very pleased with the wholehearted sympathy of the Americans for the Hungarian cause and that they support the democratization process by their participation, but at the same time he is worried about the funeral of Imre Nagy. He has information from university circles that some extremist groups, in violation of the memorial character of the funeral, intend to provoke a political demonstration. He believes that such a step might seriously endanger the process of democratization. It might provoke a violent action from the authorities.

The notions defined in the basic concept will be passed on:

- Via Agent cn. “Agave”, a person in close contact with the Austrian Embassy in Budapest, to the Austrian government.

- Via Occasional Operative Contact cn. “Candleflower” to the “friendly” contact between the US and British diplomats.
- Via S.A. cn. “Stonecrop” to British Press Attaché Stoneman. [...]
- Via S.A. cn. “Coralberry” to the press attaché of the French Embassy in Budapest and to French Intelligence.
- S.A. cn. “Cactus” will arrange that a camera crew of Hungarian Television interview Bela Kiraly (USA) and Sandor Kopacsi (Canada) on the preparations for Imre Nagy’s funeral. The report should emphasize the memorial character of the funeral and both persons should be made to condemn any attempt to take advantage of the funeral for political purposes.

IM Directorate III/III

(...)

Department 1:

- (...) follows continuously the attempts of the organizers of the funeral and the organizers of the planned demonstrations to build contacts with the Church, takes the steps necessary to halt, prevent, and to influence these.

Department 2:

- (...) follows by technical and network means the development of the position of FIDESz.
- Through S.As, cn. “Balsam” and “Flamingo Flower”, it will strengthen the anti-demonstration position.
- Via S.A. cn. “May”, it will leak the divisions within FIDESz regarding the issue to the press.
- It will keep the presidents of DEMISz [Hungarian Democratic Youth Organization] and MISzOT [National Alliance of Hungarian Youth Organizations] continuously informed on the developments (...).

Department 3:

- (...) obtains information (...) on the ideas of the TIB [Committee for Historical Justice] and the relatives.
- Wishes to influence, using its operative positions, the activities of the TIB and some alternative groups so that no political demonstration take place after the funeral.
- Among those operating in various alternative groups S.As cn. “Knotweed,” “Passion Flower”, “Rhododendron”, “Agave”, and “Sword-Flag” will be instructed to exert an influence on their environment, as a result of which they will abandon the idea of initiating, or participating in, a political demonstration.
- A special action plan is to be made for the employment of the services of S.A. cn. “Crown Imperial” inside the TIB (...)
- S.A. cn. “Inca Lilly” will be employed on the basis of a special action plan in order to discover and influence the plans of Imre Mecs in connection with the above. (...)

Department 4:

- S.A. cn. “Calla” will follow the co-ordination meetings of SzDSz in connection with the demonstration. In selecting the scene for the mass rally, he will argue in favor of holding it in the cemetery. If other sites are suggested, he will vote in favor of the less important ones. (...)
- S.A. cn. “Friesia” will obtain information from Sandor Szilagyi at the meetings of the Shelter Committee about the conferences, the planned sites and the manner of organization. At the sessions of the board of the Bajcsy-Zsilinszky Society he will find out about the plans concerning participation of the organization.
- S.A. cn. “Lady’s Mantle” as a leader of the (...) district group of SzDSz, will represent the position of “the relatives” in the group, influence the members and Ferenc Koszeg³ in that direction. If he is invited, he will accept to become an organizer (...)
- S.A. cn. “Bellflower” will explore the plans and ideas of the MDF [Hungarian Democratic Forum] and its participation in the mass rally.
- (...)

Departments III/III-4 and 6 will, in close co-operation, discover the travel and participation plans of Gyorgy Krasso and Zoltan Zsille.⁴

Department 5:

- In the period preceding the funeral: It will collect information through network persons, official and social

contacts for the Hungarian National News Agency (MTI) and print media on the preparation and planned moves of the various alternative organizations with special regard to information received by the National Press Service from the (OS.)⁵

- With the help of S.A. cn. “Sage” and S.A. “Torch”, it will collect information on the intentions of the leadership and members of the Openness Club. They will be instructed to initiate an appeal for calm on behalf of the Club regarding the funeral.
- With the help of S.A. cn. “Autumn Crocus” and S.A. “Bride’s Eye”(…), it will plant articles appealing for peace and calm in the newspapers Reform and Unio.
- Through S.A. cn. “Bride’s Eye”, it will initiate the publication of articles suggesting national reconciliation and keeping calm in the daily Magyar Nemzet.
- Through the Foreign Relations Department of Hungarian Radio, it will obtain information on the foreign radio correspondents registering [to cover the event], and, in close cooperation with Department II/II-12, will check them [out].
- Will Instruct Secret Officer (henceforward S.O.) I-87 to provide as much information as is available to him on the progress of activities within Hungarian Television (program planning, live broadcasts, etc.) involving the funeral.
- Will instruct S.A. cn. “Artichoke” to provide information, as far as possible, on broadcasts planned by MR PAF [Hungarian Radio, Editors of Political Broadcasts] involving the events [..]

I request approval for the execution of the measures contained in the Plan of Action.
Budapest, May “...” 1989

[Source: Janos Kenedi, Kis allambiztonsagi olvasokonyv [*A Concise State Security Reader*], 2 vols. (Budapest: Magveto, 1996). Translation from *The Hungarian Quarterly*, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 146 (Summer 1997), pp. 72-77.]

¹ The term had a two fold meaning: 1) indirect influencing through 2 or 3 persons; 2) intelligence or counter-intelligence operation, the imparting of misinformation to an institution, e.g. through a letter or report.

² The names of agents and games are fictitious, in accordance with the data protection law in force in Hungary—note of *The Hungarian Quarterly* editors.

³ Ferc Koszeg: One of the editors of the dissident magazine *Beszelo*, a leading SzDSz politician—*THQ*.

⁴ Gyorgy Krasso, Zoltan Zsille: prominent dissidents who returned from exile in 1989—*THQ*.

⁵ OS: National Press Service a private initiative news agency founded in 1989 to break the monopoly of MTI, the National News Agency

Announcing the Establishment of
The Cold War History Research Center
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Poland 1986-1989: From “Cooptation” to “Negotiated Revolution”

By Paweł Machcewicz

The documents published below are among those gathered by historians from the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences for the international conference “Poland 1986-1989. The End of the System,” held at Miedzeszyn near Warsaw on 21-23 October 1999 and co-organized with the National Security Archive at George Washington University and the Cold War International History Project.¹ They come from several archives: those of the Polish Senate (*Archiwum Biura Informacji i Dokumentacji Senackiej*), where a great portion of the “Solidarity” documents from 1988-1989 were deposited; the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University, where several leaders of the Polish Communist Party (PUWP) deposited their papers; and private collections of former Solidarity activists Andrzej Paczkowski, Andrzej Stelmachowski, and Stanisław Stomma. With the exception of Document No. 8,² these documents have never been published. The “Solidarity” documents, dealing with the preparation of key decisions by the opposition which led to the removal of communists from power, are unique. To date, no comparable Polish materials have been published in English.³

The selection below covers some of the most important issues and events from 1986 to 1989 relating to the end of communist rule in Poland. The first document is a September 1986 letter from Lech Wałęsa (chairman of the “Solidarity” trade union movement, banned by authorities after the imposition of martial law in December 1981) to the Council of State, following the government’s announcement of an amnesty for political prisoners. In his letter, Wałęsa offers to open a dialogue with the authorities. Documents 2 and 3 chronicle the talks between the authorities and circles close to both the Episcopate and Lech Wałęsa concerning the participation of independent forces in the Consultative Council created by the Chairman of the Council of State, Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski. The creation of that consultative body with very limited powers (in December 1986) was the first half-measure by the authorities to broaden the scope of social dialogue within the political system created by the martial law declaration. In the end, none of the mainstream opposition representatives (centered around Wałęsa) cooperated with the Council which assured its failure. Paczkowski argues convincingly that the authorities’ strategy during that period was one of “cooptation,” i.e. of attempting to include opposition representatives in façade institutions (instead of opening any real or substantive negotiations) which would (had they succeeded) have legitimized the Jaruzelski regime.

The next document (No. 4) presages change in that

strategy, due to the catastrophic economic situation and the authorities’ growing awareness of the political deadlock in which they found themselves. A report prepared by three experts (government spokesman Jerzy Urban; CC Secretary Stanisław Ciosek; and high-level Interior Ministry official Gen. Władysław Pożoga) for the party and government leadership helps explain why in 1988 the regime decided to seek a new understanding with the opposition. Document No. 5 presents the authorities’ offer to cooperate with the opposition in the first half of 1988 (after the first wave of workers’ strikes in April and May) when they still believed that it might be possible to make the opposition share responsibility (“a pro-reform coalition” or an “anti-crisis pact”) without restructuring the system or restoring any form of legality to “Solidarity.”

The subsequent documents (nos. 6-12) illustrate the positions and beliefs held by the opposition circles around Wałęsa during the many long months of negotiations, which eventually led to the establishment of the “Roundtable” on 6 February 1989. Documents 13 and 14 present arguments of the Working Group of the “Solidarity” National Council from the period of its legal existence in the years 1980-1981 charging Wałęsa and his advisers with using undemocratic practices and usurping the right to speak on behalf of the whole Union. The Working Group also contests some elements of the negotiation strategy with the authorities. These differences of opinion within the “Solidarity” camp foreshadowed the subsequent internal conflicts after the “Roundtable” deliberations ended, particularly after the formation of Tadeusz Mazowiecki’s government that summer.

Document No. 15 is an internal PUWP summary of an April 1989 meeting between Jaruzelski and Gorbachev in Moscow at which the Polish leader reported to his Soviet counterpart on the results of the “Roundtable.” The last four documents illustrate debates within the “Solidarity” camp on the most important issues during the critical months between the elections (4 June 1989) and the formation of the “Solidarity government:” the parliamentary elections (No. 16), the presidency of Jaruzelski (No. 17), and finally the formation of the government (Nos. 18 and 19). It is worth noting that as late as 1 August 1989 (less than two weeks before Mazowiecki’s designation as prime minister of the coalition government), most leading “Solidarity” politicians considered participation in the government, much less taking over the premiership, as premature and even highly risky. Mazowiecki himself warned that such a step would provoke a very negative reaction from those groups that constituted the backbone of communist power. (“There are the remaining centers of

power and they will let themselves be known. We are not yet at a stage where parliamentary relations decide.”) He also reminded members of the opposition that “from the opposition-Solidarity side there is no program and within three months this would become dramatically clear.”

In recent history there are very few examples of such great and startling events that occur with such rapidity as to outpace the expectations and prognostications of even the most sagacious actors and observers. However, what in the summer of 1989 had appeared to be the beginning of a long-term set of negotiations with the communists who were still in control of the main instruments of power, had, by the early fall, transformed into the speedy dissolution of the communist system in Poland, and subsequently throughout all of Central and Eastern Europe.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Letter of Lech Wałęsa to the Council of State, 2 October 1986

The Council of State
of the People’s Republic of Poland
in Warsaw

Acting on the basis of a mandate given to me in democratic elections at the First Congress of delegates of the NSZZ [National Commission of the Independent Sovereign Trade Union] “Solidarity” in 1981, as chairman of that Union, led by an opinion expressed by the leaders of national and regional authorities:

—taking into consideration an unusually important decision of the PRL [Polish People’s Republic] authorities relating to the release of political prisoners,⁴ including a group of NSZZ “Solidarity” activists, which creates a new socio-political situation, allowing for an honest dialogue of all important social forces in Poland;

—motivated by my concern about further economic development of our country and having in mind the concentration of all Poles around the task of economic reform as a task of particular importance, in the absence of which we are faced with economic regression and backwardness, particularly in relation to the developed countries;

—drawing conclusions from the attitude of millions of working people, who over the last four years didn’t find a place for themselves in the present trade unions, remained faithful to the ideals of “Solidarity” and wished to get involved together with them in active work for the good of the Motherland within the framework of a socio-

trade union organization, which they could recognize as their own;

I am calling on the Council of State to take measures, which—consistent with binding legislation—would enable the realization of the principle of union pluralism, finally putting an end to the martial law legislation which constrains the development of trade unionism.

At the same time—for the sake of social peace and the need to concentrate all social forces on [the task of] getting out of the crisis—I declare readiness to respect the constitutional order, as well as the law of 8 October 1982 on trade unions.⁵ True, the provisions of this law are far from our expectations, but they nevertheless create possibilities of working and respecting the principles of the freedom of trade unions and union pluralism, and only temporary regulations are blocking the realization of those principles. It is high time to put an end to those temporary regulations and to lead to the normalization of social relations in the area of trade unionism. This is [within] the competence of the Council of State.

I trust that the Council of State will wish to take advantage of that competence and use—perhaps this unique chance—to strengthen social peace and activation of all social forces for the good of our country.

[signed] Lech Wałęsa

Submitted to the Council of State on 2 October 1986.

[Source: *Institute of Political Studies (Polish Academy of Sciences), Warsaw. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.*]



DOCUMENT No. 2

Note on Proposals for Meetings between Chairman of the Council of State and Repre- sentatives of Opinion Making Social Groups, October 1986

A note on a proposal
for meetings of Chairman of the Council of State
with individuals representing opinion-making
social circles who do not have contacts with
the highest state authorities.⁶

I. The amnesty act has created a new situation in

Poland and created possibilities for a broader social dialogue. It is very much needed due to the many unsolved problems and the deteriorating social and economic situation—despite some normalization. Among these problems one should include the following: 1) a sense of lack of prospects and any chances for the future for many people, particularly the youth; 2) the lack of credibility of the authorities, frequently connected with deep aversion to them; 3) [problems] stemming from economic and technical development, or even some regress vis-a-vis the developed countries.

Getting out of the crisis and moving [into] recovery, and particularly undertaking efforts to reform and achieve economic equilibrium, requires, in the first place, changes in peoples' attitudes. Such changes will not be achieved in a sufficiently broad scale without:

- a) conviction, in the sense of effort and sacrifice,
- b) an understanding of the government's policies,
- c) approval of such policies.

So far, signs of any such changes are lacking, and in this respect the situation is getting worse.

II. Taking the initiative [to arrange] meetings with Chairman of the Council of State could be an important factor on the road toward a broadly defined understanding and renewal, if it is conceived:

- 1) as one factor harmonized with other measures contributing to renewal, understanding, and social cooperation, and particularly a change of [the political] climate and human attitudes. Consideration of this initiative apart from the specific social situation and other measures is doomed to failure;
- 2) as a factor in the increasing rationalization of political and economic decisions. However, one needs to note that: a) in observing the work of the state organs one doesn't detect any particular interest in a dialogue with different social groups, and b) experiences of the Consultative Economic Council or the Socio-Economic Council at the *Sejm* [Polish Parliament] have not been encouraging so far;
- 3) as a factor in strengthening the government's position through some kind of legitimacy, as these meetings can and should be recognized as a form of support and cooperation from social circles. It will have an effect both inside and outside, but it will be durable only when these meetings will not be a façade and of temporary character;
- 4) as a factor of dialogue and mediation, particularly in difficult situations.

III. For the dialogue conducted at these meetings to bring about the desired results, it has to:

- 1) meet decisively the postulates of the Polish Episcopate and broad social circles relating to the freedom of association. The question of trade union pluralism⁷ is meeting with particular opposition [by the government]. In the long run, however, one cannot imagine social development without the implementation of this postulate. Right now broad social circles do not have legal opportunities for social activity and expression—[a lack] of which will unavoidably lead to tensions and conflicts. Thus, opening broader opportunities to form socio-cultural associations is becoming indispensable. Catholics will attempt to form professional, agricultural, intellectual, youth or women's associations, acting on the basis of Catholic social teachings, charitable associations and institutions, as well as those preventing social pathology;
- 2) adopt the principle of philosophical neutrality in the school and educational system and accept the principle of philosophical pluralism in scientific and cultural circles;
- 3) invite to those meetings not only publicly known people, but, above all, people who are representative of their [social] groups. In this way opinions and considerations of those circles could be directly presented and defended. This postulate should not contradict the conditions of factual dialogue and limits on the number of participants;
- 4) assure the truly independent character of invited participants, among whom, besides people connected with the Catholic Church, should be properly chosen representatives of other independent circles.

IV. Proceeding to the organization of the above meetings and the possible formation of a consultative body, the following questions should be resolved:

- 1) What is the real motive for organizing these meetings and forming a consultative body?⁸
- 2) What are going to be the tasks and powers of that body?
- 3) Should this body be created by Gen. Jaruzelski as Chairman of the Council of State, or by the Council of State [as a whole]?
- 4) What will be the composition (what social circles and proportions), the manner of appointment, and the size of this body?
- 5) In what way will the society be informed about the work of this body and the opinions of its members?
- 6) Will it be possible to adopt the principle that people who are not representing official political structures and the state organs also be invited?
- 7) Is there a possibility to hold proper consultations with Lech Wałęsa on the participation of people from the "Solidarity" circles?
- 8) Would the state authorities, before the final decision on meetings and setting up the consultative body, publicly take a positive position on the proposal

to expand activities for social associations?

9) Is it possible to calm philosophical conflicts in schools in connection with the study of religions and atheization, as well as with philosophical diversification of teachers in the school system?

[Source: Stanisław Stomma Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 3
Memorandum of Conversation,
18 October 1986

P r o m e m o r i a

for H.E. rev. Abp. Bronisław Dąbrowski⁹ about a conversation in the Belvedere held on 18 October 1986 by A. Święcicki,¹⁰ J. Turowicz,¹¹ and A. Wielowieyski¹² with Vice Chairman of the Council of State, K. Barcikowski,¹³ member of the Council of State K. Secomski,¹⁴ and Secretary of the CC PUWP, St. Ciosek,¹⁵ concerning a Social Consultative Council.

The conversation started at about 9 a.m. and lasted three and a half hours. K. Barcikowski referred to questions which he had received from the Episcopate. He expressed their mutual lack of trust. The proposal [for the Council] is new and startling. It would be the only means to get involved in difficult decisions. Participation in [the proposed Council] is a matter of citizenship, a duty. Its composition [is] well balanced: 30-40 people [would be involved] for certain (but there are proposals to expand that list and to invite other people on an ad hoc basis). Of the Catholics from the circles close to the Episcopate, 8-10 people [would be active]. Besides representatives of the [ruling] party and other parties,¹⁶ non-party people, including those not connected with the authorities (but not extremists, who are re-activating the “S[olidarity]” structures) [would also actively participate].

The proposed Consultative Council is meant to increase trust and develop recommendations, which the Chairman of the Council of State (Gen. Jaruzelski) would pass on to the proper state organs as important proposals. Its effectiveness will depend on the authority [that it can command]. There will be a place for the opinions of its members, and the circles to which they belong. The Consultative Council has to work out some consensus.

The Consultative Council would be set up by the Chairman of the Council of State personally and not by the Council of State as such, which has too narrow a range of responsibilities and competence.

A possible range of activities of the Council [is] building: 1) social understanding, 2) functioning of the State, 3) conditions for economic progress, 4) scientific-technical progress, 5) development of socialist democracy, 6) current and prospective social policy, 7) environmental protection, 8) improvement of the moral condition of society; as well as other important matters.

The creation of approximately ten similar “citizens’ convents”¹⁷ for larger agglomerations or several *voivodships* [districts] and also the appointment of a Citizens’ Rights Ombudsman is expected.¹⁸

K. Barcikowski, referring to a note he received at the beginning of the meeting from A. Wielowieyski, said that there is some skepticism toward these proposed bodies, but that he was sure that a “façade counts too.” Criticism towards consultative bodies is incorrect, anyway, as they are actively operating.

Taking a position on particular points of the “Note”

—he called into question an assertion that union pluralism is indispensable for the longer term;

—he expressed surprise that Catholics would aim at forming associations and said that the authorities might take a position on this matter, but only if all the interested parties would first take a position toward the proposed Council (ref. to question 8);

—in schools one can see an aversion shown by Catholics (question 9);

—[he said that] the demand that the Council be representative creates the impression that it was to be made according to a “prescription;”

—[he noted that] the question of informing public opinion about the workings of the Council requires further thought; certainly discretion will be needed (question 5);

—[he questioned if] the participation in the Council, of people connected with the authorities (e.g. with the Party) mean that only people opposed to the authorities should be in the Council? (to question 6—it would be an issue to raise);

—[he said that] consultations with Wałęsa are not being foreseen without [Wałęsa] fulfilling conditions which the government’s spokesman talked [about] (on TV), i.e. cutting himself off from other “S” leaders;

He thought the note was one-sided.

Subsequently a mutual clarification of positions took place.

A. Wielowieyski stated that the configuration of social forces is very unfavorable to efforts to overcome the crisis due to the fact that the majority of society is passive, has no confidence and is skeptical towards the authorities. The greatest need is to create a self-identity—that is how he explained the need for pluralism and having the proper representation of other social groups—identity indispensable for improving the climate and for the defense of the needs of those groups.

A. Świącicki talked about gradual realization of the principle of pluralism. He pointed to: 1) a need to create an educational environment, 2) pressure for secularization in schools (study of religions and verification of teachers) is stimulating a fighting attitude among the clergy, and 3) representation of particular segments of society in the Consultative Council should match the prestige and significance of people proposed (there are indications that people who are invited are not representative of those social segments.)

He emphasized several times that Catholic associations were better educationally, since they were more independent than the parishes, but they could be formed only as local organizations.

J. Turowicz pointed out that “normalization” is perceived negatively by society and seen as a means of reinforcing the totalitarian system. The need to reform the system was broadly felt. He did not think that Catholics should be in majority in the Council, but he questioned the way the extremists were being defined (e.g. Mazowiecki¹⁹ or Geremek²⁰ are counted as part of that group, but these are, after all, reasonable and moderate people).

As far as the names of people for the Council from the government side [are concerned], these could not be compromised names. He repeated arguments about a possible ineffectiveness and ostentatiousness of the Council, and also about the need for school neutrality.

Towards the end of the discussion he emphasized that social pluralism is a fact, and that the institutions in which society could broadly participate could not be licensed exclusively. He also raised the possibility of a role not only for Catholic associations, but for the others too (e. g. he mentioned D and P).²¹

A. Wielowieyski, referring to K. Barcikowski’s words about social organizations, mentioned, among other things, a particular feeling of helplessness on the part of peasants towards the political and economic apparatus governing the countryside (agricultural and mechanical associations),²² associations in which even heads of the

communities are helpless.

K. Barcikowski referring to the above-mentioned matter said (without denying the fact) [that] this would not be easy to fix soon.

—took an unwilling position toward the creation of associations; said the parishes are acting legally, with the authorities’ consent, while there had been talk at the Joint Commission about associations,²³ long ago; says that the more the Church gets, the more it wants (there was unwillingness, but not a decisive refusal);

—he evaluated Wałęsa critically;

—he did not exclude altogether union pluralism in the future though it was inadmissible [now];

—it was difficult to commit to cooperation with people, who were declaring [their] hostility;

—defended pro-governmental social organizations (they were “alive”[active, not moribund]);

—expressed regret that in 1956 religion was not left in schools; since the Church had created its own network of religious teaching, and the “state secular school” was just a response to that network and it had to defend itself against the Church;

—you were making a mistake, you wanted to sell us an “angel” (some kind of an ideal society, which doesn’t exist), your promises will eventually shrink, the Church doesn’t have influence on attitudes toward work; however, towards the end of the discussion, to an argument that the Church nevertheless has had influence on moderation and non-violence within society, he did not oppose it, but said that, after all, both sides have been temperate;

—he emphasized that, after all, all proposals from this talk would have to be approved by the party;

—we appreciated you very much, but we can dispense with your advise, we announced amnesty for political reasons, but we would not have done it if it would have complicated the situation in the country;

—the amnesty had moved the intelligentsia circles tremendously, but for the workers it did not mean much;

—you were maximalists; I did not see a rapprochement; my opinion was authoritative. I did not exclude further talks, but our proposals were not going to change much, we would not come up with concessions because we did not have to. Both sides had been involved, and if it did not work, the country will have to pay for it;

—haste is not in our interest.

Stanisław Ciosek

—recalled the negative results of pluralism in 1980/1981 and rejected it, arguing that the whole world has a totalitarian system;

—the curve of social expectations was declining, and no revolts or tragedies were going to happen now;

—he said he knew the report “5 Years After August [1980],”²⁴ prepared by “Solidarity’s” advisers, but we knew it even better, and that was why we wanted to do something together with you to prevent [Poland from] becoming a colony of a stronger state.

K. Secomski spoke briefly and didn’t bring up anything of importance.

Done by:

Andrzej Wielowieyski

[Source: *Stanisław Stomma Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.*]



DOCUMENT No. 4
[Polish Government] Report,
“A Synthesis of the Domestic Situation
and the West’s Activity,”
28 August 1987

Warsaw, 28 August 1987

A synthesis of the domestic situation of the country
and the West’s activity

The moods in social segments against the background
of the economic situation

—Generally, anxiety is rising due to the prolonged economic crisis. The opinion is spreading that the economy instead of improving is getting worse. As a result, an ever greater dissonance arises between the so-called official optimism of the authorities (“after all, it’s better [now]”) and the feeling of society.

—Criticism directed at the authorities is rising because of

the “slow, inept and inconsistent” introduction of economic reform.

—Social dissatisfaction is growing because of the rising costs of living. The opinion is spreading that the government has only one “prescription,” i.e. price increases. Against this background the mood of dissatisfaction is strongest among the workers.

—[The] belief is growing that the reform has not reached the workplaces, [there is] a lack of any improvement in management and organization of work.

—Confirmations of the above moods are [the following factors:]

a) in the period January-July 1987, there were 234 collective forms of protest, i.e. more than in the same period last year;

b) a total of 3,353 people participated in work stoppages, while only 1,729 people participated in such stoppages last year;

c) the role of workplace union organizations in inspiring conflicts that threaten work stoppages is rising.

—Disappointment and frustration is deepening within the intelligentsia, which placed great hope in the reform for overcoming technical and “civilizational” backwardness, and thus in their own social “promotion” and improvement in their standard of living.

—Characteristic of these circles, [which] otherwise stand far removed from the opposition, is the opinion that the “government is strong when it comes to keeping itself in power, but weak and helpless in fighting the wrongs which lead to economic anarchy and the demoralization of society.”

—Consecutive liberalization measures, such as consent to create several associations, publication of the journal *Res Publica*²⁵, re-issuing of *Ład*,²⁶ or Czyrek’s meeting in the Warsaw KIK,²⁷ have little resonance within society and render little help in improving the “reputation” of the government. One can put forth the thesis that their reception is larger in narrow circles of the so-called moderate opposition and in some circles in the West than in the broader public opinion at home.

—Reaction to the Social Consultative Council, which at the beginning was very positive, is deteriorating. The opinion that the Council has not lived up to expectations, and that it is a “couch” [*Kanapowe*, meaning: composed of a few individuals who can fit on one couch] device, is gaining [ground]. It is pointed out that only about a dozen

members in the Council are active, while the majority is silent or has nothing to say. Even a report submitted in the Council by Prof. Szczepański on resolving the crisis didn't produce any significant response (except in some circles of the so-called moderate opposition and among some Western correspondents).

—These unfavorable trends are not being compensated [for] by active Polish foreign policy and [its] undeniable successes in overcoming barriers of isolation and restoration of Poland to its proper place in the world [after the sanctions imposed by the West following the December 1981 martial law crackdown]. These successes are being noticed and even present an element of surprise in the West, where the “originality” or “national character” of the so-called Jaruzelski Plan is being stressed. The development of political relations with the West is also observed carefully by the internal enemy, causing it irritation and apprehension that the opposition might be left on its own. But for the “average” citizen, foreign policy is something remote, without an effect on the domestic situation of the country and the standard of living of the society, and, what is worse—an impression is created that the authorities are concentrating their efforts on building an “external” image, neglecting the basic questions of citizens' daily lives.

Generalizing, one can say that:

- 1) confidence in the authorities and readiness to cooperate in the reconstruction of the country is declining at a very fast rate, which is caused mainly by the ineffectiveness of actions [taken] in the economic sphere. Liberalization measures undertaken so far are not able to stem this process;
- 2) Against this background, one can also clearly note the declining prestige of the First Secretary of the CC PUPW;
- 3) A state of discontent is growing ([among] workers and intelligentsia groups, and partly in the villages) and it is gradually, but systematically accumulating.

The situation in the camp of the political adversary.

—A seeming decline of activities “on the outside:” fewer leaflets, new initiatives or provocative appeals. Also, the planned ceremonies of the “August Anniversary”²⁸ are less impressive and aggressive in content and form than in previous years;

—The adversary admits that in terms of organization it is at a standstill, and in its political and propaganda interaction it made mistakes and found itself on the defensive vis-à-vis the government (see our campaign around US financial support for “Solidarity”);

—However, a number of symptoms indicate that as far as the adversary is concerned, it is the “calm before the storm.” For the adversary says that:

- a) each action by the authorities in the economic sphere will be favorable to the opposition (failing to implement it or the incomplete realization of economic reform will cause stagnation or regression, and as a result rising social dissatisfaction, but a similar result can be brought about by full implementation of reform, as it will result in a temporary decline in purchasing power, layoffs, etc.);
- b) government policies are approaching bankruptcy, and it must come to the next crisis;
- c) the government has already entered into the next curve and is losing control over the development of events;
- d) the government is becoming more and more susceptible to social pressure;

—Based on these premises, the adversary has come to the conclusion that it does not have to bother much—it is enough to sustain a mood of justified anger and wait and join, at the right moment, the eruption of dissatisfaction, as in 1980;

—the adversary has already undertaken specific preparations in this direction:

- a) energetic steps are being taken to increase and institutionalize financial grants from the West. These steps, for the time being, have succeeded in the US Congress granting “Solidarity” US\$1 million;
- b) under consideration is the reorganization of top leadership bodies, their transformation into a sort of Staff “capable of taking operational decisions and coordinating actions;”
- c) communication systems between the underground and diversion centers and “Solidarity” structures in the West and among particular regions are being perfected;
- d) a network of alarm communication is being set up in case of a general strike;
- e) under consideration is the strengthening of the infrastructure and training for the illegal structures in the regions;
- f) printing facilities are maintained in full readiness (fully loaded with equipment, the underground is

unable to “absorb” the machines transferred from the West);

—a peculiar kind of “detonator” may turn out to be terrorist actions planned by the extremists, preparations for which are advancing;²⁹

—obviously, all areas of activity of the adversary so far are still valid, thus:

a) criticism of the system and the authorities for economic ineptitude, falling behind the Soviet “*perestroika*,” for halfway liberalization measures—most often through interviews of opposition leaders to the Western media and in contacts with representatives of foreign governments and embassies;

b) disruptive activities in relations with the West, through repeated demands that the essential condition for changing the Western attitude toward Poland on questions of trade and credit should be the restoration of trade union pluralism and ensuring legal activities for the opposition;

c) strengthening the so-called second circulation publishing;

d) attempts at rebuilding illegal structures at workplaces.

Activities of the Western special services and centers of diversion

—Activities of the intelligence services are directed mostly at reconnaissance:

a) the state of the economy, the decisiveness of government in implementing reforms, differences of positions in this regard within the top leadership and mid-level *Aktyin* [party activists], as well as the implementation of reforms (from the “top” to the workplace);

b) possibilities of eruptions on a larger scale.

—Assuming such a course of developments, the “spectacle” with American donations for “Solidarity” was arranged on purpose. The point was, among others, to show “who is the master here” and as a result to subordinate even more strongly the illegal structures in the country to the power centers in the West, and in fact to the special services in the US.

—This operation turned out to be a success: the underground (with few exceptions) agrees to be a US instrument. The adversary is so sure of its power in the underground that it steadily extends [the underground’s] range

of tasks:

a) an ever wider realization of demands in the area of economic intelligence;

b) identification of the Security Services functionaries (names and addresses) and preparations for provocation against our apparatus (this scheme is known from previous crises);

c) inspiring terrorist actions.

—At the same time the process of upgrading the opposition leaders as “trustworthy and legally elected representatives of the society” is continuing (e.g. many recent invitations for Wałęsa to foreign events, contacts by Western officials with the leadership of the opposition). The purpose of these measures is quite clearly the re-creation of the opposition leadership elite from the years 1980-1981 in case a similar situation arises.

—Activities coordinated within NATO by the US, aimed at strengthening the position of the Church (contacts with Glemp³⁰ and other representatives of the hierarchy, new inspirations involving the Church in the matters of foundations), are also continuing.

—Activities aimed at strengthening the American presence in Poland on a larger scale are being intensified:

a) independent of official visits, there are more and more visits of politicians and experts, which the Americans themselves define as study travels (what in practice is tantamount to the realization of intelligence demands);

b) the Americans are strengthening their influence among politically active, opinion-shaping circles, which is confirmed by, inter alia, their current fellowship programs. They are most clearly taking an interest in young people, [who are] outstanding in their field, as their aim is to generate a new pro-American leadership elite.

—Similar activities are directed at the centers of ideological diversion.

Changes in evaluations of the economic situation in Poland formulated in the West

—Already in the first months of this year, Western intelligence and governmental experts’ evaluations presented rather positive opinions about a “spirit of change” in Poland and on theoretical assumptions of the reform. Opinions were expressed that if the authorities “introduce proper structures, mechanisms and institutions

enabling effective introduction of the second stage of economic reform,” then Poland “will have a chance for economic development”;

—In Western estimates from this period, one can see that at least some forces in the West have identified their interests with the reform course in Poland. Hence, [there have been] all sorts of “encouragement,” and sometimes pressure, to speed up, deepen, [and] expand the reform process (both in the economy and in the superstructure);

—However, in mid-1987 one can observe increasing criticism in the evaluations and prognoses for the Polish economy made by the Western intelligence services and government experts. These assessments are sometimes extended to the whole domestic situation. For example:

a) intelligence specialists and congressional experts in the US [state]:

- The results of the reform so far are disappointing. So far there is nothing which would indicate that in the near future the authorities will be able to stabilize the economic situation. One should even assume a growing socio-political destabilization.

- Straightening out the mess is dragging on, and as a result Poland may fall into an even more turbulent state than before.

- The inactivity of the authorities may have an exponential effect in the form of increased confrontation and isolation.

- If the government does not take immediate and decisive measures, it may lose an opportunity to escape this labyrinth of difficulties.

b) NATO experts:

- The economic situation is very complex and the opposition’s activity is resulting in a situation for the authorities that is no less dangerous than it was in 1980.

c) A new element is that experts from neutral countries are formulating similarly drastic assessments. For example, the Swedes [note]:

- The reform policy is losing speed, and paralysis in the government’s activities is increasingly visible.

- The danger of an economic and societal crash is approaching.

- Poland is becoming a keg of gunpowder.

- Such evaluations may result in a fundamental change in the position of the West [with their] slowing down political normalization and gradual reconstruction of economic relations with Poland. One proof of this may be [in the] deliberations among the diplomats of NATO countries in Warsaw:

a) Is it worth it to support reform efforts in Poland since the reform cause is losing, and maybe it has already been lost[?]

b) Is it worth it to still invest in the present team[?]

c) It is not by accident that the embassies of NATO countries are currently conducting investigations [into] organizing people, who “lost hope in the possibility of the PUWP improving the situation” and [into] a possible organizing by those people into a new party (association), which “would support [the] PUWP on the basic line, but would use different methods.”³¹

[Source: *Andrzej Paczkowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.*]



DOCUMENT No. 5

Speech by Józef Czyrek, 11 May 1988

A speech by Mr. Józef Czyrek at a founding meeting of the Polish Club of International Relations, held on 11 May 1988

1. Together with our host, Professor Aleksander Gieysztor,³² we have envisioned the founding of a Polish Club of International Relations.³³ The talks conducted on this matter and today’s meeting confirm a positive response to this initiative. I am convinced that outstanding representatives of different circles and orientations will join in the activities of the Club, which we want to base on the recognition of pluralism and understanding.

2. We have stated in a joint letter with Prof. Gieysztor that Poland’s position among the nations of the world demands broad social support, dialogue and public evaluation. This would be the major objective of the Polish Club of International Relations. I want to repeat: *social support, dialogue and public evaluation*. This is the

essence of how we see the activity of the Club.

3. This assumes a wide representation of points of view and opinions, lively and unrestrained discourse on all questions of Polish foreign policy, relations in Europe and the world, aiming at a consensus through dialogue. We assume that the Club will act on the basis of the Constitution of the Polish People's Republic and will be led by the Polish *raison d'état*. However, within the framework of the Constitution and the principles of *raison d'état* there is a wide area for an exchange of views and the drawing of conclusions. I want to express conviction that in the Club's activities we should strive toward the broadest understanding and consensus. After all, there is no doubt that we are led—above all differences of views—by the good of Poland, the good of our nation, of our motherland.

4. Proposals to create this kind of social body have been suggested by different circles for some time. We are now taking this initiative not without reason. We look at the creation of the Club and its activity as one of the important elements building national understanding. Poland needs it as much as [it needs] air. Recent developments not only do not undermine such a need, quite to the contrary—they fully emphasize its importance.

5. We are holding our meeting on a day of very important Sejm deliberations. They fully confirm the will for the implementation of the II [second] stage of economic reform, and very important resolutions are being taken, which are intended to speed up its introduction and increase its impact. The Sejm also confirms its unwavering will to continue and expand political reforms. I think personally that from the process of renewal we will come to a deep reconstruction, to a significant widening of the Polish model of socialism in economic, social and political life. Led by this desire is Chairman of the Council of State Wojciech Jaruzelski, and—contrary to various opinions—he has broad backing, both within the ruling coalition and various patriotic forces, as well as from within our party.

6. In various discussions, including those held within our party, the idea of building some kind of pro-reform coalition or anti-crisis pact is being put forward. There is no doubt that Poland needs this kind of coalition very badly. I am personally convinced that we should strive towards it, build it not for a distant future, but rather for the near one.

7. I am stressing this basic objective because we see, together with Professors Gieysztor and other co-authors of that initiative [discussed above in number 6], such activity as a basic task of the Club. Consensus on the questions of foreign policy, to which the Club should contribute, is as important as consensus on the questions of internal economic, social and political reforms. In fact there can be

no deeper national understanding without a harmony of positions on key international questions for the country. It is important in all countries and in ours in particular.

Foreign policy is certainly the area, which is evoking, relatively, the smallest [number of] controversies. There is a broad understanding of the correctness of the alliance with the USSR and other socialist states as the basis for the territorial integrity and security of Poland. There is also broad support for the unambiguously peaceful purposes of our foreign policy, and particularly [for] active participation in building joint security in Europe and constructively shaping East-West relations, including the need for positive developments in relations with Western countries. We fully appreciate the significance of international law, including human rights, the weight of regional and global problems in the natural environment, the necessity of expanding cultural exchanges and the elimination of all barriers to economic cooperation.

There is no doubt that the purposes of Polish foreign policy are consistent with the national interests of Poland. However, there is also no doubt, that both within the area of objectives and of the ways of their realization, a broad social dialogue is needed. We would like the Club that we are about to set up to serve well such a dialogue, an elaboration—as I have already pointed out—of mutual understanding and consensus on these matters.

8. In our times the significance of the phenomenon which is being called public diplomacy, is growing. This form of diplomacy, engaging various social forces and affecting the shape of foreign opinion on one's country, is one of the great platforms of international contacts. It's even more important, the more representative and the more socially and morally authoritative the persons are participating in it. We are convinced that we can gather many such personalities in the proposed Club. And today's meeting also confirms it.

Based on an idea of national understanding, we would like to see the proposed Club gather people of practically all patriotic orientations. We see it as place for people who, as a result of their present or past activity, have contributed significantly to the development of Polish relations with the abroad. We see in it people, who, from different philosophical or political outlooks, participate or want to participate in expanding contacts with abroad. People from very different circles, of divergent opinions, but ready to get involved in building national understanding.

9. It is our conviction [that] the Club, in addition to its other purposes, should also serve in shaping political culture. It should act on its principles and at the same time make a significant contribution in the deepening of society. We think that this understanding will gain support, because one cannot build a national understanding without political culture.

10. Together with Prof. Gieysztor and other co-authors of the initiative we are deeply convinced that the Club should have a social character. Thus, we do not want to tie it to any state institution, nor to any existing social organization. We see it as an autonomous social body set up on the basis of the law on associations and self-governing principles of activity. We think that this formula is the best one and will gain support of both the personalities gathered here, as well as many other persons to whom we have appealed for participation. The draft statute of the Club is based on such principles, with a significant contribution by Prof. Manfred Lachs, for which I thank him wholeheartedly. This draft will be submitted here for discussion. We also want to submit for discussion a draft list of people, to whom we have turned for participation in the Club's activities.

11. In the end I want to thank wholeheartedly Prof. Aleksander Gieysztor for his co-participation in this initiative and for hosting today's meeting. I hope that the beautiful Castle of which Prof. Gieysztor is so admirably in charge, will be the Club's headquarters.

[Source: *Andrzej Stelmachowski Papers*; translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENTS No. 6
Report on a Working Conference
[of Opposition Leaders],
1 September 1988

A report from a working conference

At a meeting held on 1 September 1988, chaired by Prof. Andrzej Stelmachowski,³⁴ there was a discussion on preparations to a possible "Roundtable." Participants in the discussion were: B. Geremek, P. Czarotorski,³⁵ M. Król,³⁶ H. Wujec,³⁷ A. Michnik,³⁸ J. Kuroń,³⁹ S. Grabska,⁴⁰ K. Śliwiński,⁴¹ T. Gruszecki,⁴² R. Bugaj,⁴³ J. Moskwa,⁴⁴ A. Wielowieyski, K. Wójcicki,⁴⁵ H. Bortnowska,⁴⁶ Z. Grzelak.⁴⁷

Differences of opinion among the participants concerned mostly the degree of to which emphasis should be placed on the [legal] registration of "Solidarity" as opposed to the preparation of broader topics of possible future talks. Attention was drawn to the danger of too wide a range of topics, which might water down the cause of

"Solidarity." In this connection it has been agreed that it is necessary to prepare a detailed schedule of negotiations, in which the question of "Solidarity" would be awarded the first place.

Another matter discussed was the status of social participants in the "Roundtable" discussions. It has been acknowledged that it has to be precisely defined.

In the course of the meeting M. Król submitted a report on his talk with Minister Kiszczak,⁴⁸ and P. Czarotorski described the situation in Silesia.

As a result of the discussion it has been agreed:

1. The point of departure for the preparations for the talks is a document submitted by L. Wałęsa on 25 August 1988, in which three major areas for talks have been formulated: unions, pluralism of associations, and economic and political reforms;⁴⁹

2. The date for the meeting of the so-called Group of 60 was set for 9 October 1988 in Gdańsk (still to be agreed with L. Wałęsa);⁵⁰

3. The formation of topical groups, which were to prepare papers for the Gdańsk meeting, as well as for future talks conducted by L. Wałęsa. The following groups have been set up:

- a group for trade union matters (Kuroń, Merkel,⁵¹ Malanowski,⁵² Wujec, Rosner,⁵³ Milczanowski⁵⁴);

- a group for economic questions (Wielowieyski, Gruszecki, Bugaj—with an invitation to G. Janowski⁵⁵ for agricultural matters);

- a group for pluralism of associations (Geremek, Szaniawski,⁵⁶ Paszyński,⁵⁷ Bratkowski⁵⁸ and possibly M. Król—future systemic questions).

It has been agreed that further topical groups should be established, which would cooperate with a group of "Solidarity" advisors. Among other things, the question of youth and generational differences should be brought up.

The question of contacts, the press and other media was entrusted to J. Moskwa, and the preparation of papers for discussion in Gdańsk—to K. Wójcicki.

[Source: *Andrzej Stelmachowski Papers*. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]

DOCUMENT No. 7
Memorandum by Lech Wałęsa,
“On Starting the Roundtable Talks,”
4 September 1988

On starting the [Roundtable] talks

Right now we can begin to discuss the topics for negotiations, which I presented in my statement of 26 August.⁵⁹ I think that in the beginning of next week talks should be concerned with two questions:

1) implementation of the promise made by the authorities that there would be no repression toward striking workers, and that those [repressive measures] have been applied, will be annulled,

2) union pluralism and within its framework the legalization of NSZZ⁶⁰ “Solidarity”, consistent with the postulate of the striking crews.

I think that the first stage of implementing the principle of the “Roundtable” as a process should be a factual discussion of the above topics and preliminary decisions. The composition of the meeting should initially be trilateral,⁶¹ as was our meeting on 31 August.⁶² I am going to present personal proposals separately.

A positive consideration of the above mentioned questions will allow for a broader debate on economic and political reforms in our country.

Gdańsk, 4 September 1988

[signed ⁶³]

[Source: Andrzej Stelmachowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 8
Report from Andrzej Stelmachowski
to Lech Wałęsa,
6 September 1988

6 September 1988

Mr. Chairman
 Lech Wałęsa

Gdańsk

A report

Yesterday, i.e. on 5 September, I met with Secretary J. Czyrek. The conversation lasted from 5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m., and then for another 10 minutes [we talked] in connection with the need for intervention on behalf of workers dismissed from their jobs or called up for military service as a penalty [for participation in strikes].

At the beginning [of the meeting] I handed him your note of 4 September, and the second one from “Solidarity RI” relating to agriculture [in] which I have agreed with them on my trip to Częstochowa for a harvest festival. To begin with, the Secretary was delighted that we are proposing to start the “Roundtable” in [a] reasonable, not too accelerated time limit. He also said that he had been expecting a second Kiszczak-Wałęsa meeting to discuss the agenda, a list of participants and an agenda, while it would appear from your note⁶⁴ that such meeting is not planned. I responded to this that, of course, a Kiszczak-Wałęsa meeting is always possible if we both agree on what needs to be done.

In that case the secretary has revealed his vision of the “Roundtable.” He sees it as follows:

1) An exchange of views on the proposed changes in: a) the socio-political system, b) the economic system;

2) Work procedure and methods of coming to conclusions. He sees the sequence of work [as follows:]
 1/ Discussion of the democratization process, leading to the creation of a joint election platform and reaching an understanding on restructuring the most important state structures: the Sejm, the government, the chief of state (i.e., a “presidential system”);

2/ Discussion of pluralism of associations (so that its implementation could be achieved by the year’s end);

3/ Discussion of a trade union model. He emphasized, however: “we stand on the position of the trade union law.”⁶⁵

He added: We won’t quarrel about the sequence of the points.

As can be seen from the above, the sequence of his points is exactly the reverse of ours. Therefore, I put up a [a bit of an objection], explaining that “political and legal empowering is the necessary premise of further phases, as

it is difficult to undertake obligations towards anyone without having a legal existence.”

To this the secretary “put his cards on the table” stating that in deciding on the legalization of “Solidarity” the authorities would like to know how the “S” sees its place in the political system. They would like to see “S” as a constructive factor, and not one undermining the system. They do not demand that “S” should get actively involved in the system as it exists today, but they would like to see its co-participation and co-responsibility in the reformed system.

I expressed fear that unleashing a wide-ranging debate on reforming the political system will water down the whole question.

After a longer exchange of views he recognized that besides “a large table,” “smaller tables,” including a “union” one, could also be established. He insisted, however, that reform questions should at least be considered together with the union matters.

In view of my fears that the “large table” debates may be less specific, he has revealed still another proposal. Thus, they would like to set up temporarily a body like a “Council for National Understanding,” which would be entrusted with preparing the reform of the Sejm, government, etc. He asked if “S” would enter into such a council. I in turn inquired how such a council would be chosen: by nomination or by delegation by particular organizations. He responded that it would be through delegation (in this respect it would greatly differ from the Consultative Council) and resolutions would be taken through an “understanding” and not by a “vote.” Such a council would have about 50 persons.

I responded I could not decide this for the “S” authorities, but that I personally thought such participation might be possible, obviously already from the position of a legalized organization.

Then we moved on to the composition of the “Table” and the possibility of a “union table.” I said that for the time being we don’t have any proposals regarding the “Table,” while at the “union table” there would be 7-8 people, including about 5 worker activists and about 2-3 people from a team of “advisors” (I did not mention names). He responded by saying that on their side also there would have to be workers and that people from the OPZZ cannot be excluded.⁶⁶ He also asked if the strikers would be included in the “S” delegation. I responded that yes, that, for Lech, people who are “dynamic” are right now more important than those who already belong to “Solidarity’s ZBOWiD.”⁶⁷ I appealed to him not to interfere, as far as possible, into the composition of the other side; we are ready to accept people even from the “party’s concrete”⁶⁸ (at which he smiled and said this would be an exaggeration, as he would like to lead [the talks] to a positive conclusion).

As far as the “Large Table” is concerned, he mentioned several names such as Kozakiewicz,⁶⁹

Kostrzewski⁷⁰ (President of Polish Academy of Sciences), Stomma,⁷¹ Przeclawska,⁷² Marcin Król, etc. I acknowledged it.

As far as setting the date for starting the debates, it would be next week (according to your note). I merely said that I did not like the figure 13, thus it would be either 12th or 14th. He said he did not have aversion to the 13th, but since a meeting of the Politburo is scheduled on that day, that day would be out of question anyway.

So much for your information. To sum it up—we are faced with a dilemma as to whether to agree to parallel debates at both tables: the “big one” and several small ones, including the “union” one, or not. If so, then we should invite to the “large table” people from the “Group of 60,” invited for Sunday⁷³ (besides the “unionists”).

There is also the question whether the Kiszczak-Lech debate should be renewed to complete these things, or whether I should do it with Czyrek.

Before leaving the CC building I made a phone call to Rev. Urszulik⁷⁴ (I had an earlier appointment, but due to the late hour I wanted to cancel it). Then attorney Ambroziak,⁷⁵ who was there, broke the news to me about a call-up of the military in Gdańsk and Stalowa Wola and about the layoffs of 28 people from the Northern Shipyard in Gdańsk. Therefore, I returned back to Secretary Czyrek and intervened. He promised to take up this matter.

Since Urszulik was urging me to come over (he sent a car), I drove to the Secretary of the Episcopate, where I met, with Rev. Orszulik, Abp. Stroba⁷⁶ and Bp. J. Dąbrowski. I reported to them on my conversation with Czyrek.

They were of the opinion to agree to both a “large” and “small” table.

While writing this note (at 9:50 a.m.) I got a call from Czyrek, who told me the following:

1) Call-ups to the military are not a new event, but implementation of earlier instructions dating back to the strike period. He pointed out that it has to do with “short” mobilization exercises, 5 days, 10 days, 14 days at most.

2) He promised to explore the question of layoffs in the Northern Shipyard in conversation with the first secretary in Gdańsk, who is expected to arrive today for a Politburo meeting.

I pressed [him] to eliminate as fast as possible the above mentioned measures, emphasizing the harmfulness of using the military for penal purposes (Minister Czyrek

was against using this term).

Secretary Czyrek said that Gen. Kiszczak would be inclined to begin the “Roundtable” on the coming Wednesday (14th) or Thursday (15th).

With warm wishes to all of
you,

P.S.

Please set up a fast telephone communication with Lech (i.e. specific hours and telephone number).

[Source: Andrzej Stelmachowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec.]



DOCUMENT No. 9
Note by Lech Wałęsa Regarding
Further Procedure of Talks,
[not dated]

A note regarding further procedures of talks

The organization of the “Roundtable” talks has not been, as yet, precisely defined. Preliminary arrangements are needed very quickly. In particular, I am expecting a response to the following questions:

- 1) How large a team is going to participate in the general debates of the Roundtable?
- 2) What persons and representatives of what organizations have been invited or are going to be invited?
- 3) What is the preliminary estimate of the duration of the Roundtable (what is meant here is the time estimate of the “first session,” ending with decisions)?
- 4) How large are the working groups going to be?

From my part I am already proposing to define the agenda for the working groups, namely (in brackets I give the names of my plenipotentiaries for the particular teams)

- 1/ Union pluralism (T. Mazowiecki)
- 2/ Economic questions (A. Wielowieyski)
- 3/ Social pluralism (K. Szaniawski)
- 4/ Political reform (B. Geremek)
- 5/ Law and the judicial system (J. Olszewski)⁷⁷
- 6/ Agriculture and agricultural union (A. Stelmachowski)
- 7/ Mining questions (A. Pietrzyk).⁷⁸

Following these preliminary explanations it will be possible to set the date of the first meeting.

[signed by **Lech Wałęsa**]

[Source: Andrzej Stelmachowski Papers; . Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 10
Letter from Andrzej Stelmachowski
to Lech Wałęsa,
1 October 1988

1 October 1988

Tel. 33-96-11

Mr. Lech Wałęsa
Chairman of NSZZ
“Solidarity”

in Gdańsk

Dear Chief:

On 20 September I held another talk with Secretary J. Czyrek. In the beginning, according to the instructions, I protested the arrest of the 17 students who make up the National Council of the Independent Student Union (NZS),⁷⁹ expressing hope that the next meeting of this kind would not be disturbed, even more so because at stake here is a selection of delegates to the “Roundtable.” I also intervened on behalf of two members of the Striking Committee at Stalowa Wola, who still have not been re-admitted to their jobs, drawing his attention to the fact that the recommendation to re-admit about 200 miners to their jobs in Silesia also have not been implemented.

Secretary Czyrek promised to take care of these matters: he would go personally to Silesia to settle things and also for his part to prepare a “miners’ table.” At the same time he has raised far-reaching grievances towards Onyszkiewicz⁸⁰ because of his appearance before a U.S. Congressional Committee, that is before the body of a foreign state (it was indeed a great blunder).

As far as the “Roundtable” talks are concerned, we have agreed on the following:

- 1) The main “Roundtable” will number 50-70 people.
- 2) Individual teams will have about 20 people each, and their compositions may change as the need arises.
- 3) There will be 5 teams (union, systemic-political, economic, social pluralism and agriculture), and an additional sixth “table” will be operating in Katowice (on mining and matters related to that region⁸¹). Secretary Czyrek didn’t agree to set up a separate table for dealing

with law and order, but agreed to discuss these matters at the systemic-political "table."

4) On the governmental side, representatives of the Party and allied parties will be invited but also large social organizations, such as NOT,⁸² PTE,⁸³ agricultural circles, leaders of self-governmental and cooperative organizations, etc., but more on a personal rather than an institutional basis.

5) It has been decided that "Solidarity's" representation will be as large as the party-government representation, including the "allies;" however, there will be a third category of "miscellaneous," comprised of well-known personalities who are not directly connected to either side. Here Church representatives will be included.

6) As far as the duration of the "Roundtable" talks is concerned, there is a proposal to start them on 17 October and finish before 11 November. If everything goes well, there would be a great ceremonious ending, combined with the 70th anniversary of regained independence.

7) The "Roundtable" will make only the most important decisions and will form a Council for National Understanding, which would receive proper powers from the Sejm and would prepare legislative drafts necessary for the introduction of political reform, as well as essential elements of economic reform.

In connection with this, we allowed ourselves to conduct a number of consultations, as a result of which we have prepared together with Bronisław, Tadeusz and Henryk⁸⁴ draft lists of participants with a kind request for approval or correction.

The list of the "Roundtable" contains both a proposal of people comprising the "S" delegation, as well as those supported for a "bargain" with the government side. I would also like to reserve the right of "exchanging" from our side some people if the need arises.

I would also like to propose for the future the openness of deliberations, so that the public can be properly informed.

I am requesting your approval of the above arrangements, and particularly the date of starting the talks and the list of participants.

Shaking your hand,
[signed]

[Source: A. Stelmachowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]

DOCUMENT No. 11
Letter from A. Stelmachowski
to Józef Glemp, Primate of Poland,
24 October 1988

24 October 1988

His Eminence
Józef Cardinal Glemp
Primate of Poland
in Gniezno

Your Eminence,

In view of the prospect of Your Eminence's talks with Gen. W. Jaruzelski, I feel it is my duty to inform you about a crisis which has arisen in connection with the "Roundtable" negotiations and the prospect of [their] breakdown at the very start.

First I am going to describe the difficulties which we have encountered:

a) Contrary to the impressions we received from preliminary talks held on 31 August and 15 and 16 September that the authorities were ready to come forward towards "Solidarity's" position, an acute press campaign has been intensified (particularly in "Trybuna Ludu"), in which it is incessantly repeated that the "Roundtable" cannot lead to the re-legalization of "Solidarity." This campaign, conducted through the central party daily, gives an impression that the authorities not only do not attempt to convince their own "hardliners" on matters which were to be discussed at the "Roundtable," but that since that time they themselves have hardened their position, creating a general impression that now, after setting up the Rakowski government,⁸⁵ they are less interested in the "Roundtable."

b) Despite arrangements agreed upon with Mr. Czyrek, that each side decides on the composition of its delegation to the "Roundtable," we have encountered an attempt to interfere with the list presented by Mr. Wałęsa. Nine persons were called into question. They are: Jan Józef Szczepański,⁸⁶ Andrzej Szczepkowski,⁸⁷ Stefan Bratkowski, Zbigniew Romaszewski,⁸⁸ Henryk Wujec, Jan Józef Lipski,⁸⁹ Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Jacek Kuroń, and Adam Michnik. Now the opposition relates to the two latter ones. Lech Wałęsa takes the position that the principle of mutual non-interference into the composition of delegations should not be violated. However, in a letter that he sent over a week ago to Gen. Kiszczak he stated that he would see to it that the whole "Solidarity" delegation will abide by all arrangements and prove the will for a sincere and honest dialogue.

c) An objection has been raised that "Solidarity" representatives had been meeting with the extreme opposition circles, such as the KPN,⁹⁰ "Fighting Solidarity,"⁹¹ and others. This charge is biased and exaggerated on purpose.⁹² That meeting was not directed against the

“Roundtable,” but was aimed at making sure that those groups would not undermine the idea of the “Roundtable” meeting and the position which “Solidarity” intends to take at it. It is also a fact that “Solidarity” representatives at that meeting were rather under attack.

Another charge that was raised was that [we are responsible for the] street disturbances in Gdańsk, which took place on Sunday, 16 October, when ZOMO⁹³ made it impossible for a group of demonstrating youth to pass through from the Saint Brigid church to the NMP.⁹⁴ Such events, which were also influenced by ZOMO’s attitude, testify not so much of “inspirations” from the “Solidarity” side, but rather of radicalization of the young generation.

Procedural difficulties and charges put forward by the authorities are—it seems—of a fallacious nature. The real obstacles are as follows:

1) The question of goals of the “Roundtable.” Mr. Czyrek has formulated them (in personal conversation with me) as an attempt to form a Council for National Understanding,⁹⁵ which would deal with all controversial problems. In our opinion the “Roundtable” should adopt guiding resolutions on major questions and the proposed Council for National Understanding should deal with the implementation of those resolutions and technical matters, if need be.

2) The question of union pluralism. The prospects of settling this question are more than unclear. The press campaign, as I have indicated, has been aiming for some time at questioning union pluralism. The most important element here is a statement by General Jaruzelski himself, published in today’s press, in which three premises for the implementation of such pluralism are being defined. The most distressing one is economic, which the General has defined as: “[The] achievement of indispensable, fundamental economic equilibrium, so that some kind of spontaneous social pressures [*licytacja roszczeń*, claim bidding] would not endanger a highly complex reform process.” This means sticking to the theory that economic reform can be realized without social support (in any case a meaningful number of workers), and union pluralism is a sort of luxury, which should be realized later on.

3) The question of social pluralism. Last week Mr. Czyrek questioned the advisability of setting up a team for social pluralism (despite the fact that earlier such a team had been envisaged) explaining that some social organizations like the Polish Literary Union, Union of Artists, or the Journalists’ Union of the Polish People’s Republic do not want to sit at the same table with representatives of the previous regime’s creative unions. Admittedly, he later expressed willingness to reactivate the government-church negotiating group, which had been preparing a draft law on associations, with the possibility of some enlargement of its composition. However, an important question arises, which is whether the reserve shown [by some of the social organizations such as the Polish Literary Union, Union of Artists, and the Journalists’ Union of the Polish People’s Republic] will adversely affect the drafting of the pro-

jected law on associations.

4) The question of post-strike repression. Some time ago the Church representatives became guarantors of job restitution for all those who had been dismissed from work for their participation in the August strikes. At a meeting on 15 September, General Kiszczak very solemnly promised to withdraw all repression. That promise has brought about positive effects on the Seacoast (in Gdańsk and Szczecin), while in Silesia jobs have not been restored to 114 miners, and in Stalowa Wola to 2 people. A communique of the press bureau and the Episcopate on this question was confiscated by the censorship office last week and it has not appeared in the national mass media.

In this situation I would be extremely grateful to your Eminence for an explanation of the essential prospects for the realization of both “pluralisms” (trade union and social). The whole thing can be reduced to the question: “Are the reforms (economic and political) to be realized jointly with an empowered society, which also means with ‘Solidarity’—or without it?” If the prospects are not encouraging, I don’t see the purpose of further preparatory talks, which would only serve narrow purposes, instead of [those of] the society.

With expressions of a son’s devotion,

[signed by Andrzej Stelmachowski]

[Source: A. Stelmachowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 12
Letter from A. Stelmachowski
to Lech Wałęsa,
20 January 1989

20 January 1989

Mr. Lech Wałęsa
 Chairman of NSZZ
 “Solidarity”

Gdańsk

Dear Chief,

Since I have to stay in Warsaw on Saturday due to the ongoing state-church talks, I am taking this opportunity to convey to you (also for possible use at a KKW⁹⁶ meeting) the following suggestions and conclusions:

1. I think that an important matter is to set up a not-

too-large team to work out draft statutes for “Solidarity,” which would adapt our Union to the law on trade unions. Particularly important is to work out a pattern for workplace organizations, operating with uniform statutes at workplace levels [that] would allow [one] to preserve the unity of the Union. Of course, the drafts should also include higher bodies, including the central one. I think that Lech Kaczyński⁹⁷ should be chairman of such team as a professional and also living on the spot in Gdańsk.

2. I think it is high time to break away from the secrecy of the Union structure, particularly at workplace levels (except for publishing and financial matters). The Union should create open structures as much as possible.

3. I would also like to express my opinion on an unpopular and personally for you irritating matter. Namely, I think that in view of the chance of “Solidarity’s” legalization an attempt should be made to unite all “Solidarity members,” who still consider themselves members of the Union. Thus, I am in favor of the last year’s scheme of A. Celiński,⁹⁸ i.e. to convene a “*sejmik*,” at which both members of the National Commission,⁹⁹ remaining in the country, as well as members of structures created during the martial law period, and finally representatives of the newly-created structures (strike committees from 1988 and organizing committees, founding committees) should participate. Personally, I think that representatives of the newly-created structures should have at least half of the delegates.

4. I think that the CC resolution on union pluralism¹⁰⁰ provides a basis to undertake the “Roundtable” talks, but based on our experience from last fall I would advise against a large body. I think a small leading group (a sort of presidium) should be selected, which should participate in the meetings of particular teams with changing composition, depending on the questions under discussion.

5. I am informing [you] that on 17 January there was a hearing in the Main Administrative Court on the “Social Foundation for Workers’ Solidarity,” of which you are a benefactor. The NSA¹⁰¹ has annulled the decision of the Ministry of Health and Public Welfare, in which the Ministry had demanded unfounded statutory changes. I hope that after that verdict the Ministry will not resist approval of the statute. In the next few days I will resume new efforts in this matter.

With warm greetings,
[signed by A.
Stelmachowski]

[Source: A. Stelmachowski Paper. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]

DOCUMENT No. 13
Letter from Andrzej Słowik to
“Roundtable” Chair Władysław Findeisen,
12 February 1989

The Working Group of the National Commission of NSZZ
“Solidarity”¹⁰²

Lodz, 12 February 1989

Mr. Professor
Władysław Findeisen¹⁰³
Chairman of the “Roundtable”
Chairman of the Social Council of the Archbishop of Poland

Dear Professor,

We want to share with you the following remarks, concerns and anxieties:

As members of the National Commission elected by the First National Congress of Delegates of the NSZZ “Solidarity,” we feel responsible for the mandate entrusted to us by the electorate and voluntarily accepted by us.

This responsibility and honor has been forcing us to conduct social actions for the benefit of the Union, the working people and the Motherland, interrupted only by periods of arrests, internment or prison. We are conducting them with faith in the victory of good and [the belief] that sooner or later Poles will be able to overcome prejudices, anxieties, to forgive injustice, and to jointly begin building in our country law and order, based on truth, justice, freedom and love. We can be relieved of responsibility for the fate of the Union and its activity only by an act equivalent to the one that entrusted us with this responsibility. But of citizens’ responsibility toward Motherland—nobody can [be relieved]. Hence our concerns and anxieties.

The once great social hopes placed in the current talks of the “Roundtable” have now apparently faded—particularly among the working class—as the importance of these talks is not any longer a sufficient argument to stem the spontaneous eruption of strikes.

To some degree it is a result of uncertainty regarding intentions, arising for different reasons. The initial public enthusiasm following the announcement of the talks (in the beginning of September) burned out in an excessively long wait for their start.

Additional disappointments in some socially active circles is caused by an incomplete representation of the so-called social side, which cannot always be justified by categorical refusal of participation of that or another group or circle. The conviction prevails that not all significant groups or organizations have received such an offer.

Moreover, the NSZZ “Solidarity” delegation is not fully representative. It does not include many authentic activists of the Union (signatories of the August 1980 Agreements,¹⁰⁴ elected members of the National Commis-

sion and its Presidium, and still active leaders of the regional structures), who, not questioning either the need of reaching an understanding with or a statutory function for Lech Wałęsa, think that the Union is not someone's private or group property, [but] that it had been created as a democratic and pluralistic organization, obeying its own voluntarily adopted rights—and it should stay as such.

The "Solidarity's" delegation represents only one group, and even if it is now a group in control of the main spheres of the Union's life, it is still only one group, and it is difficult to expect that other groups would feel bound by an agreement on which they will have (from the very beginning) no influence whatsoever.

An understanding which has a chance to be national, may be perceived in important public circles as being particularistic. If the PRL [People's Republic of Poland] authorities were inclined toward a policy of confrontation, then controversies within the "Solidarity" would certainly be to their advantage. (However, experience is teaching us that in a confrontation the Union consolidates.) With regard to a course toward an understanding, matters look rather different. Will an additional secret agreement for the defense of a particularistic understanding be concluded, and will the parties to such agreement be co-sponsoring a policy of repression toward its opponents, whom they had not even heard earlier? For us it is hard to imagine, though such fears also exist.

Even more serious is another apprehension—a fear that incomplete representation at the "Table" and hence a limited focus on the [actual] situation will mean that particular arrangements (or even parts of them) will be so far below social aspirations that with a verbal acceptance they will, in fact, be rejected by the society.

Please, excuse this frankness. It is dictated by the sense of responsibility and concern about the future of our Fatherland. We trust we shall be properly understood. This is already the last moment when these and other dangers (not articulated here) can be prevented through supplementing the "Table." But it needs to be done before the final decisions are taken. Perhaps an expansion and diversification of the delegation's composition will cause greater difficulties in negotiations, perhaps even part of the common record will be questioned—but it is probably better that controversies take place at the Table *before* concluding the agreement than outside of the Table after its conclusion.

We are submitting to you the readiness of the Working Group of the National Commission of NSZZ "Solidarity" to send our delegation to the negotiations.

With the authorization of the
Working Group of National
Commission

Andrzej Słowik¹⁰⁵
[signed]

[Source: A. Stelmachowski Papers, Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWHIP.]



DOCUMENT No. 14
Papers of the Working Group of the
National Commission of NSZZ "Solidarity,"
25 February 1989

Jerzy Kropiwnicki¹⁰⁶
ul. Jasna 2 m. 9
91-350 Łódź

Professor
Andrzej Stelmachowski

Dear Professor,

I would like to kindly ask you to act as an intermediary in passing the enclosed documents to Lech Wałęsa. I am compelled to turn to you as I want to be sure that they will reach him and will be treated seriously. Experiences of sending [documents] by other methods are not encouraging.

I would also like you to know their content.

I apologize for this unusual request.

With best regards,
J. Kropiwnicki
[signed]

[Attachment No. 1]

Working Group Lodz, 25 February 1989
of the National Commission
of NSZZ "Solidarność"

A Statement on the "re-legalization"
and [versus] "legalization" of the NSZZ "Solidarity"

1. The Working Group of the National Commission of the NSZZ "Solidarity" states with satisfaction, that during the past few months a far-reaching rapprochement between the advisory bodies to Lech Wałęsa, which have a dominating influence on the policy of Chairman of the National Committee and aspire to a leadership role of "Solidarity" by the National Commission on the one hand, and the Working Group of the Commission on the other, has taken place.

In the fall of 1987 and still in spring 1988 (before the outbreak of the April-May strikes), leading representatives of that political orientation, Jacek Kuroń (see, e.g. "The landscape after a battle")¹⁰⁷ and Andrzej Celiński (see an interview for "Newsweek" of 23 November 1987) have

clearly stated that they consider the history of “Solidarity” as a trade union over.

The strikes of 1988 have proved that the Working Group of the National Commission was right to maintain consistently, from the beginning (i.e. from 1985) the position that “Solidarity” is first of all and has to remain a trade union.

In the fall of 1988, Lech Wałęsa’s advisers and the National Executive Commission (KKW¹⁰⁸) adopted a position close to that of the Working Group (GR KK).

In December of that year, a significant political event—the preliminary institutionalization of the socio-political movement in the form of the Citizens’ Committee as a separate institution—took place. The creation of the Citizens’ Committee, which all leading representatives of the same political orientation as Lech Wałęsa and the KKW joined as members, will undoubtedly facilitate the realization of their political ambitions on a more suitable platform for this purpose than the trade union one. At the same time, it offers a chance to restore the pluralistic character of the NSZZ “Solidarity.”

Still controversial is the question of [the] relationship [of Solidarity] to the law of 8 October 1982, which Lech Wałęsa’s advisers adopted as a basis for negotiations with the authorities of the People’s Republic of Poland.

The subsequent rapprochement to the GR KK took place when the negotiators on behalf of Lech Wałęsa and KKW adopted the position that:

1. The Union has to be registered as a whole (and with its original name), and as one set up separately in each work place.
2. It has to have a territorial, and not a branch structure.

It remains controversial as to whether it is to be registered as a new Union, or restored as a legal entity existing continuously since 1980.

It appears, based on the pronouncements of Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki to the mass media, that the “social-solidarity side” at the “Roundtable” had assumed that it ought to be registered as a new union (so-called legalization).

The Working Group of the National Commission is of the opinion that the indispensable condition of both a lasting understanding (or a lasting compromise) with the PRL authorities and the restoration of unity in “Solidarity” is [based on] the restoration of registration to the existing union (its “re-legalization”).¹⁰⁹

2. The Working Group of the National Commission is of the opinion that “forming the Union anew” will come in conflict with social aspirations, and may even lead to a breakdown of the Union.

a) Many Union activists and members have experienced all sorts of repression—prison, arrest, physical violence (some lost their life), dismissal from a job, unemployment, monetary penalties, constraints in their

professional career, all for their struggle in defense of the existing Union. For them it is inadmissible to [consider] giving away at the table all that they [had] defended and suffered for, and without even asking for their opinion.

b) For many, the adoption of the law of 8 October 1982 as a basis for restoring normal Union activity would mean some sort of legitimization of martial law. It is different to avoid this question “for the benefit of the cause” than to prejudge it (even indirectly) in a way inconsistent with convictions of a great majority of society.

c) A “renewed formation” of the Union closes the possibility of revindication of the property taken over by the PRL authorities. Many people think that the Union may give up on its claims, but those rights have to be recognized.

d) Founding the Union as a “new one” will make it difficult or simply impossible to rehabilitate the members who were sentenced or to restore to work those who were dismissed for their defense of “Solidarity.” Many of them are ready to give up on seeking someone else’s guilt, but not from recognition of their own innocence.

3. “Legalization,” that is a renewed formation of the Union (even on the basis of the previous Statute of 1981) would mean recognition that the NSZZ “Solidarity” was really disbanded on 8 October 1982. This “dissolution” has been recognized neither by the Union, nor by the MOP,¹¹⁰ nor by trade unions in the democratic countries. The World Federation of Labor and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, guided by the principles of international law, have carried out the affiliation of the NSZZ “Solidarity” as an existing trade union (though deprived of domestic registration). In this way they have confirmed a universal norm that the union exists based on the will of its members, and not by the grace of the authorities.

Giving up the demand for restoring registration of the union existing continuously since 1980, the NSZZ “Solidarity” would probably be the first trade union in the world, associated in those bodies, which had recognized the right of state authorities to dissolve trade unions. It would be a dangerous precedent both in political and moral meaning. Dissolution of the NSZZ “Solidarity” could be done only by a National Conference of the existing Union, elected according to its Statute and Electoral Law of 1981—and not a “solidarity-social party,” the National Executive Committee (KKW), or even a founding conference of a new Union.

Let’s keep in mind that organizations that had been suspended or dissolved inconsistently with their own statutes (the last example: the Labor Party—SP, “dissolved” long ago by its own Head Council and “united” with the Democratic Party—SD), are being reclaimed today.

4. The Working Group of the National Commission appeals:

- to the “solidarity-social side” not to take decisions at

the Roundtable, which are reserved for the statutory authorities of the NSZZ “Solidarity.”

- to the leaders and sympathizers of the Union not to give away at the table what thousands of Union activists and members did not give up during the martial law period and multiple repressions,

- and in particular to Lech Wałęsa, Zbigniew Bujak,¹¹¹ Władysław Frasyniuk¹¹² and Antoni Tokarczuk¹¹³—as chairman of the KK¹¹⁴ and members of [the] KK Pre-sidium—not to be unfaithful to their oath of loyalty to the Statute of the NSZZ “Solidarity.”

- to Lech Wałęsa, to remember that he has entrusted our Union to the protection of Our Lady of Częstochowa,

- to all others to be aware of their responsibility towards the society, the nation, God and history.

5. The Working Group is of the opinion that for the sake of our nation an understanding with the PRL authorities is indispensable; it will be real if it is based on respect for the inalienable and unalterable employee, citizen and human rights.

6. The Working Group is of the opinion that for the benefit of our nation, unity of the NSZZ “Solidarity” is indispensable. Its basis can only be respect for its Statute and union rights, a Statute [embodying the], democratic and pluralistic character of our Union.

[signed]
J. Kropiwnicki

[Attachment No. 2]

Working Group Lodz, 25 February 1989
of the National Commission
of NSZZ “Solidarność”

A Position on Workers’ Self-Government

1. The Working Group of the National Commission is warning the “solidarity-social” side against treating workers’ self-government as an objective, the only appropriate form of managing the so-called all-social or state property. The concept of replacing the state bureaucracy with workers’ self-government remains, within the socialist thought, as a postulate of “real socialization of the means of production.” For non-socialist political orientations this concept may be unacceptable.

2. Building the economic system based on workers’ self-government, the essence of which boils down to bestowing the right of management of productions assets to an imprecisely defined owner, toward whom the management, not being owners in any other sense than symbolic, should feel responsible, would be an experiment on an unheard of scale, a solution without any useful patterns and experiments whatsoever.

3. A self-governmental solution can be, at most, some form of temporary instrument in the elimination of the

nomenklatura from the economy.

4. Target solutions ought to be sought in those areas where there is maximal connection between work and ownership. The first step ought to be the abolition of hitherto indivisible state property. The second one [ought to be] dissemination of property—that is bestowing the rights of property to particular work places, their conversion into joint-stock companies and enfranchisement of the nation through employees’ shareholding. The sphere of state management in industry should be limited to an absolute minimum. In the area of energy and communications, the scope of public ownership should be defined on the basis of the experiences of the developed countries of Western Europe. Commerce should be gradually privatized (both retail and wholesale).

5. Experience teaches that all forms of collective property, in which individual participation is not secured by the alleged owners, are being treated as “nobody’s property” and in the best case [scenarios] are becoming some form of bureaucratic property (in the case of communist countries—the *nomenklatura*’s property).

For conformity,
[signed]
J. Kropiwnicki

[Source: A. Stelmachowski Papers. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 15

Report on a Working Visit of Wojciech Jaruzelski to Moscow, 9 May 1989

For a Politburo meeting

Sent out to Politburo members, associate members and CC secretaries

9 May 1989
9.V.1989 L.dz. KS/619/89 to point “3”

Report
on a Working Visit of Wojciech Jaruzelski in Moscow

Confidential

On 28 April 1989, the First Secretary of the CC PUWP, Chairman of the Council of State of the Polish People’s Republic, Wojciech Jaruzelski, paid a working visit to Moscow at the invitation of the First Secretary of the CC CPSU, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Mikhail Gorbachev.

In the course of the talk, lasting over three and a half

hours, both leaders devoted their utmost attention to the problems of the transformation being conducted broadly in both countries.

Wojciech Jaruzelski gave information on the measures undertaken by the PUWP in the realization of socialist renewal in Poland, including the significance of the X Plenum of the Central Committee, [and] on the preparations to the National Conference of Delegates to the X Party Congress. He also informed [Gorbachev] about the significance and results of the “Roundtable,” which have opened up prospects for an understanding of different social and political forces in Poland. He explained difficult problems of the country and the means to their solution. He emphasized the significance of the further development of Polish-Soviet relations in all areas.

Mikhail Gorbachev stated that despite a variety of forms and methods of renewal of the socialist system used by the fraternal parties, this process has a common guiding principle—democratization, aspirations to create conditions for real participation of working people in running the economy and in solving political questions.

He also stated that *perestroika* in the USSR has reached such a stage, and transformations in all spheres of life have reached such depth, that the Party is expected to double its effort in the realization of these unusually difficult tasks. As was said at the last CC CPSU Plenum, the Soviet people have spoken once again in the recently-held elections [26 March 1989] for *perestroika* and have demanded its steadfast, consistent introduction.

Mikhail Gorbachev also stated that the Soviet economy is coping with complicated problems related to the shift to new methods of economic activity, monetary regulations, [and] shortages in inventories of goods.

Despite these difficulties, they did not give a thought—Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized—to hampering changes. That is why it is so important to ensure the widest possible democracy and at the same time discipline, openness and responsibility, pluralism of outlooks and consistency in activity, solving of urgent current problems and activity designed for the future.

Wojciech Jaruzelski and Mikhail Gorbachev expressed satisfaction about the development of relations between the two parties and states. They stressed mutual interest in the promotion of economic contacts, the need to work out a complex model based on sound economic considerations, and the principle of economic accounting of enterprises with a view to creating a joint socialist market.

Both leaders praised very highly the realization of tasks defined in the Polish-Soviet declaration on cooperation in the field of ideology, and also in the joint Polish-Soviet statement and stipulations adopted during last year’s visit of Mikhail Gorbachev in Poland.

As a result of these stipulations, among others, an agreement on an exchange of youth between Poland and the Soviet Union has been prepared, and the work of a joint group of scholars, researching the so-called “white

spots” in the history of Polish-Soviet relations, is being continued.¹¹⁵

It has been acknowledged that in the near future a joint document will be published in the Polish and Soviet press, prepared by scholars, dealing with the period preceding the outbreak and beginnings of World War II.¹¹⁶ Research on other problems is coming to an end. It has been stated that these efforts should be sped up, so that the bilateral commission of scholars¹¹⁷ and other respective organizations can present their assessments and conclusions regarding all the “white spots,” and particularly with regard to Katyn.¹¹⁸

In the course of the conversation the questions of international policy were brought up and views were exchanged on other areas of world policy.

At the end of the talk Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized the invariable faithfulness of the CPSU and the Soviet people to Soviet-Polish friendship and also sent to Wojciech Jaruzelski, the communists and all people of Poland best wishes for success in solving the tasks of socialist renewal.

[Source: Hoover Institution Archive. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP]



DOCUMENT No. 16
Information on a Meeting of the Chairmen
of the Regional Citizens’ Committees¹¹⁹
held in the Citizens’ Committee in Warsaw,
at 6 Fredra St.,
12 June 1989

Participating in the meeting were chairmen or representatives of 46 regional committees and Prof. Bronisław Geremek, editor Andrzej Wielowieyski, Jacek Kuroń, Jarosław Śleszyński.¹²⁰ The meeting was chaired by Henryk Wujec.

The debates concentrated on three basic issues:

1. Preparations for the second round of elections.¹²¹

Professor Geremek, in his brief introduction, and the chairmen of the Citizens’ Committees, in their speeches, have raised the following issues:

The elections were a huge, startling success, particularly if one considers the conditions under which the election campaign had been run. Even in places where victory in the first round has not been achieved, there is a great chance that in the second round all of [our] candidates will squeeze in.¹²²

Fears were expressed that in the second round electoral attendance may be very low, which is dangerous, because electoral attendance of the coalition may be relatively high.

The *voivodships* have declared assistance to their

neighboring regions, in which our candidates will be fighting for mandates in the second round. Thus, Poznań will be helping Piła (delegating two people from its staff, printing 20 thousand posters and leaflets). Piła will also be helped by Włocławek and Szczecin. Piotrków, Kielce and Lublin came up with an initiative to help Radom.

Some *voivodships* had already successfully supported candidates from outside of the Citizens' Committee in the first round. In others, decisions regarding possible support for the coalition's candidates varied: some of them have already decided for which candidate they will vote, others are hesitating, afraid of being suspected of collaboration, in some cases one cannot find any suitable candidate. H. Wujec stated that the Committee leaves it up to the regions to support particular candidates, provided that it is done from the bottom and cautiously, without concluding contracts, supporting people who guarantee reliability.

2. The question of a national list.¹²³

The participants raised the issue that in their regions there had been numerous voices of anxiety and resentment due to "delegating" to the government side the decision regarding the re-election of candidates from the national list. Concern by our side about the fate of that list was premature, clumsy, it was stated point-blank that it had been a political mistake.

Explanations have been submitted by B. Geremek, A. Wielowieyski and Jacek Kuroń. It looks as if the situation which has arisen—the necessity to keep the contract on the distribution of mandates that was concluded at the Roundtable—from the legal point of view had no clean solution. In the meantime the huge electoral success has resulted in other, more radical demands [being made] by society as well as growing impatience due to a gradual realization of the democratic process.

3. The future of the Citizens' Committees

The participants drew attention to the fact that during the elections a huge amount of human capital had been created, which numbered in the hundreds of thousands, organized spontaneously and from the bottom up, verified in action. What is more, these masses of activists have organized themselves on their own in the areas that had been void in this respect earlier—in small towns and communities.

This capital must not be wasted. It has been noted that [these people] are potential activists for the regional self-governing bodies, in the future members of the Sejm senatorial teams, now in the process of organization, keeping communication offices of deputies and senators [in contact with] the voters.

Regional delegates expressed anxiety over potential strains between the Citizens' Committees and regional Solidarity bodies. Voices were heard that creation of the committees had weakened Solidarity, depriving it of some of its leaders. In the union movement mostly workers are gathered, while the intelligentsia has crossed over to the citizens' committees (a voice from Katowice). On the other hand the citizens' movement is enriching Solidarity

ideologically and expands its tasks. Citizens' Committees form a platform for cooperation of different groupings: Clubs of Catholic Intelligentsia, *Dziekania*, workers' "S," and "S" of individual peasants, youth movements. It has been noted that this constitutes their strength, creating an integrated platform for the opposition, at the same time, their variety would be an obstacle to a possible transformation of that movement into an association or a party.

An overwhelming majority of the participants was in favor of keeping the Citizens' Committees. In this connection attention was drawn to the necessity of working out a legal framework for their existence, their organizational structure after the elections and, most importantly, their financial basis.

It has been decided not to take any hasty organizational decisions in the near future, instead, keeping a form of understanding of organizations, initiating talks with the authorities regarding an extension of activities of the Citizens' Committees (officially they are to end their activity on 18 June 1989), and coming up immediately with various territorial initiatives of the National Councils.¹²⁴ The shape of the Committees in the future need not be the same. [...]

[Source: Archives of the Bureau of Senate Information and Documentation. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 17 Minutes from a Meeting of the Presidium of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club,¹²⁵ 15 July 1989

Present: B. Geremek, O. Krzyżanowska¹²⁶, Z. Kuratowska¹²⁷, J. Amroziak, A. Celiński, K. Kozłowski¹²⁸, J. Rokita¹²⁹, A. Stelmachowski, J. Ślisz¹³⁰, A. Balazs¹³¹, E. Wende¹³², J. Kuroń, G. Janowski.

The agenda:

1. A report by A. Stelmachowski on his visit with Gen. Jaruzelski
2. The Club's meeting of 10 July
3. Preparations for a meeting with Gen. Jaruzelski¹³³
4. A Statute of the National Assembly and election of a president
5. Structure and composition of Commissions
6. Miscellaneous matters.

A. Stelmachowski: On Thursday, Gen. Jaruzelski paid me a visit, and later on, Minister Czyrek. The talk with Jaruzelski lasted 1 hour and 45 minutes. We raised the

following:

- The question of presidency: the thing is that despite his personal unwillingness, he feels obliged to run for it. He is referring to three elements:

- A clear stand by the body of generals, the MON¹³⁴ and the Council for National Defense.¹³⁵

- Some outside reactions are unmistakable: statements at the [Warsaw Pact] Political Committee at Bucharest,¹³⁶ and some wordings by President Bush.¹³⁷

- The position of the majority of colleagues at the Plenum.

Due to these pressures he has been forced to revise his position. An obstacle—Solidarity is explicitly in favor of Kiszczak.¹³⁸ It would be good if support for Kiszczak could be revised. To meet Solidarity half-way—he is proposing a different solution than a hearing in a Sejm debate—he will appear in different Clubs with Kiszczak. Since it is rather unusual, he will ask for the formula that he comes at the invitation of the OKP.¹³⁹ And also that it should be without the presence of journalists.

- In Bucharest, Gorbachev asked Jaruzelski if it would not be proper for Wałęsa to come to Moscow. If we would oppose it, he would not pursue it further.

- He showed anxiety over the agricultural situation. He asked if the situation is so dire. Would a transition to the market economy improve this situation? The meeting with Czyrek headed in a similar direction. He said that the question of the presidency is becoming more and more urgent, that one must keep in mind the possibility of provocations. In this context he informed me about the death of Rev. Zych.¹⁴⁰ He asked about [...words missing] of the government. A great coalition is desirable. We exchanged views [... words missing] conclusions. Wałęsa is saying in public statements that he would like to go to Moscow. Gorbachev said in Paris [...words missing] arrival is fine, but he does not want to see him come under a formula of union invitation—could Wałęsa come as a social leader, a Noble Prize laureate. It would be a mixed invitation by the Parliament and the Peace Council.¹⁴¹

A. Wielowieyski: Has Jacek Kuron given a report about his talk with Prof. Orzechowski?¹⁴² The two of us [Wielowieyski and Kuron] gave him a formal invitation for Jaruzelski. He argued they had agreed that voting in other Clubs is going to be open. ZSL¹⁴³ will be voting for Jaruzelski, and so will SD.¹⁴⁴ However, they can obtain only a slight majority, thus there is some anxiety.

J. Ślisz: According to my information, 9 SL¹⁴⁵ deputies will be voting for neither candidate.

A. Stelmachowski: Kozakiewicz is predicting that 25 SD deputies will be voting against.

Wende: Can we afford not to take a position?

Ziółkowski:¹⁴⁶ Orzechowski said he would like to meet on state matters.

J.M. Rokita: I spoke with Janowski—he cannot imagine that his party might be against it. He has 6 “rebels.”

B. Geremek: This has been a brief overview of the situation, tomorrow is the Club meeting at 10 a.m. What is the agenda?

A. Wielowieyski: The Commission matters—at least information on the work of the Extraordinary Commission. Item 2, the National Assembly:¹⁴⁷

1. Statute of the National Assembly.

2. Matters relating to the election of a president.

3. A meeting with the General [Jaruzelski] at 3 p.m.

We have not received a response as to whether Wałęsa will be coming; the General asked for a meeting with him half an hour earlier.

How do we imagine that meeting will take place? For how long is he coming?

J. Kuroń: As long as necessary, he is at our disposal. At the meeting there are going to be only parliamentary deputies and a recording clerk.

E. Wende: If absence of the press is required by the guest, we are not going to vote on this in the Club.

Z. Kuratowska: We have the right to present our position: the guest does not wish to have the press, we have invited him.

B. Geremek: If there are protests from the floor about the press, we will vote on it.

E. Wende: There may be a surprise given that the deputies will demand openness and the press.

J. Ślisz: We have invited him, he just asked to have it without the press, as is the case in other Clubs, we have agreed to it.

B. Geremek: We should ask if the Club wishes to meet with the General. [...]

B. Geremek: We are asking whether to invite Gen. Jaruzelski, assuming that a press conference will follow the meeting, but no journalists at the meeting.

Will questions be asked from the floor, or handed over on a slip of paper and signed?

K. Kozłowski: A few questions should be prepared at the beginning.

B. Geremek: A few words of welcome should be in order. Next we expect answers from the candidate to several basic questions. We give him a chance with the first question: Stalinism, with the second one—martial law—we deprive him of such a chance. The third question relates to an agenda of democratic reforms. I would set such agenda pragmatically: 1. access to TV, 2. territorial self-government, 3. the courts, 4. on his model of the state running in the transition period. The opposition is demanding an Extraordinary Commission, which would have an insight into the workings of the government.

A. Wielowieyski: Confirmation of democratic elections after four years!

E. Wende: Should the questions from the floor not be given on a slip of paper to the chairman?

Then, it would be possible to look at them and request withdrawal. There might be a question—how many AK [*Armia Krajowa*- Polish “Home Army” during World War II] members has he murdered?

J. Ślisz: Questions should be asked from the floor.

J. Kuroń: Questions from the floor are better. Even that question about AK members can be put, provided that the form of the question is proper. This should be said clearly.

G. Janowski: What do we want to achieve by a question on the Economic Council—he is open for anything anyway.

B. Geremek: In our conversations, the words were used that this is a takeover of the government. The thing is that he is a candidate who should be engaged.

G. Janowski: Questions from the floor should be with only a brief explanation, and not some sort of historical-political reports.

A. Stelmachowski: This is the reason why I think questions should be put on paper, otherwise they will talk and talk.

G. Janowski: He has time for us, it is not an every-day opportunity, let them talk.

A. Wielowieyski: That is nonsense, it is Jaruzelski who is to talk.

J.M. Rokita: If the questions are to be on paper, then the burden of selection and ordering will rest with the Presidium.

B. Geremek: Then there will be resentment, as each type of selection will stir up suspicions.

J. Ślisz: In the ZSL there were direct questions, then selection is automatic.

J.M. Rokita: When he gets questions from the floor, it gives him an opportunity to better present himself to the people asking questions.

G. Janowski: Do you want to facilitate him?

J.M. Rokita: Yes, I do this time!

J. Ziółkowski: On the agenda there are no questions about the nomenklatura. Such questions should necessarily be raised. An interaction is important—face to face. The culture of formulating questions is very important. In this circle there is great sensitivity for admonition. To depend on their responsibility!

A voice from the floor: That iss too much!

B. Geremek: Should we limit [time] to 1 minute. It is enough—1 to 2 minutes.

J. Ziółkowski: We may appeal to ask factual questions.

O. Krzyżanowska: There will be a question on how he sees the role of the Party.

E. Wende: In what form will Kiszczak be there?

J. Kuroń: Orzechowski said that there would be only one candidate—Jaruzelski.

Thus, can we ask him questions?

— [unidentified speaker:] Only if he would be a

candidate.

J. Kuroń: It’s not obvious that such a meeting is a man-to-man fight. [...] Here it is not so, as 260 are besetting a single one. We absolutely need to talk about culture.

B. Geremek: There are things about which the Presidium cannot talk. I think in the first part of the meeting there will be a discussion and this problem will emerge. It has been decided that questions will be asked directly. We are not saying how long the meeting is going to last, we do not set any time limit, unless the meeting starts dragging on.

The Statute of the National Assembly and Election of the President

B. Geremek: We assume that we have to have a discussion:

- on the form of voting;

- on the statute of the National Assembly.

The National Assembly will most likely meet on Wednesday.

A. Stelmachowski: Kozakiewicz says it will certainly be on Wednesday, but it will probably be necessary to call the National Assembly on Tuesday afternoon to discuss the statute. The question is whether the voting should be open or secret. The General was inclined to recognize a secret vote, but Czyrek vehemently opposed it.

B. Geremek: Discussion on the statute—how awful. Urban¹⁴⁸ will exploit it, as there is a clear tendency toward deprecating parliamentary institutions. A statute of the National Assembly is going to be proposed by the Coalition, we will introduce amendments. Only a vote for or against. Then comes voting, either they accept or reject it.

J.M. Rokita: But there is going to be a polemic from the Coalition’s side.

B. Geremek: The Speaker of the Sejm doesn’t have the right to refuse to give the floor to someone. In our Club we will submit for a vote the proposed statute.

A. Celiński: The Extraordinary Commission hasn’t come to an understanding, it decided there would be a discussion on this problem; a debate or so, open—not open. It’s about to meet tomorrow and will present positions to the Clubs.

A. Stelmachowski: We give up on the debate.

O. Krzyżanowska: That question was to be taken up at the Seniors’ Convent on Monday.

Z. Kuratowska: Let’s have a discussion on the statute on Tuesday morning.

A. Stelmachowski: Or tomorrow, time permitting.

B. Geremek: Let’s vote on it tomorrow:

-secret or open

-debate or no debate.

K. Kozłowski: There must be a discussion in the Club on where a secret vote leads us, and where the open one does.

J. Kuroń: Nobody will agree to a debate. If there is a debate, we will denigrate him [the President].

Are we anxious to have the President denigrated?

E. Wende: The question of behaving on the floor. Are we supposed to save Jaruzelski's presidency?

K. Kozłowski: I would go even further, for an open vote, without debate, without leaving and without demonstration—we are serious people.

A. Wielowieyski: Should I present the numbers? They may be short 15 to 21 votes—they are “in a flap,” they are stretched to the limit. Everyone who doesn't do anything is giving Jaruzelski half a vote.¹⁴⁹

J. Kuroń: We have to be aware of what the President's case means—the peasants won't get markets [for their goods], physicians won't get a raise, the government stays on, we are entering into a terrible mess. Consequences of demonstrating our morality are falling upon the society.

B. Geremek: Not electing a PUWP member would settle the question of physicians. The election can be repeated. General Jaruzelski wants to be elected in the first round and probably this will happen. If it doesn't happen, it's not a drama. All will reflect [on the situation], and it will be repeated.

A. Balazs: The Club has decided it will not vote for Gen Jaruzelski. If Jaruzelski convinces us at that meeting, will we be voting for him?

J. Kuroń: Everybody votes as he likes, consistent with the will of the electorate. That's what has been decided.

O. Krzyżanowska: The behavior of the SD and ZSL is new. We thought that they would elect him. But right now our position begins to be decisive.

J.M. Rokita: There may be a statutory crisis if there is only one candidate, as the statute says that the candidate who gets the least [number of votes]—drops out. There has to be either a recess in the debates, or new candidates need to be submitted.

J. Kuroń: That discussion will start in the National Assembly.

J. Ślisz: He won't pass the first time, he won't pass the second time. One needs to be prepared for a new situation.

E. Wende: Can we change that provision?

B. Geremek: First we need to introduce statutory changes to avoid changing them in the process.

G. Janowski: We have to submit our own candidate.

J. Kuroń: Then we would enter into a war with them.

G. Janowski: People have placed great confidence in us. At pre-election meetings they were telling me “a spanking from a parent's hand isn't painful.” We are handing everything over to bureaucrats' hands. We say: we are not ready. Why not?—there is Geremek, Trzeciakowski¹⁵⁰ ... Let's keep in mind that in the third voting we will have to submit our candidate.

J. Kuroń: I argued in the Club in favor of taking over the government. A set-up in which [we] have the presidency but not the government would be fatal. It would mean taking responsibility for their government. For me a prerequisite of a functioning government, which sooner or later we will get, is their having the presidency. Our

president is not going to have such prerogatives, he will be a figurehead. Besides, it's a total, confrontational change.

A. Celiński: We need to close this discussion. This is not the place for it.

A. Wielowieyski: We are not going to say anything more during this discussion.

J. Ślisz: And what if a candidate drops out in the third voting?

A. Wielowieyski: Then the coalition will put forward someone new, I don't imagine that someone from our side would agree to run.

J. M. Rokita: We may talk with members at the Club on what to do in case of such a crisis.

E. Wende: The presidential crisis may be much more serious than was the case with the national electoral list. We have to be aware of it. In my heart I am with Mr. Gabriel's voters, but we have to make decisions thinking occasionally for them.

G. Janowski: People think better than we do.

A. Wielowieyski: We have decided that we have to inform Club members rather clearly of what may happen and how they should behave.¹⁵¹

B. Geremek: Lech Wałęsa is pondering if he should meet with Jaruzelski. He wants to come for the National Assembly, but in what role? He should be in Warsaw, but probably not in the Sejm.

A. Stelmachowski: He may play his role tomorrow, but not on Wednesday.

B. Geremek: The Sejm session will probably take place on the 20th. The question of retiring the government—will there be a debate on this? Bugaj has submitted a motion for a report—will there be a discussion then?

O. Krzyżanowska: If the government is resigning there is no reason for a debate. There will be a discussion at the Senior Convent if that decision is subjected to a vote.

B. Geremek: When a new prime minister presents his cabinet there will be an occasion to evaluate the resigning government. In other words, we are against the report and against the debate.

The Structure and Composition of the [Sejm] Commissions.

J. Ambroziak: He is reporting on their proposals, which are at variance with ours.

1. Creation of a Commission on Trade and Services.
2. Taking forestry away from the Environmental Protection [Commission] and placing it in the Commission for Agriculture.
3. Economic policy, including budget and finance.
4. Combining social policy, health and physical culture.
5. Creating a separate Commission for Economic Cooperation with Abroad (we wanted to have it in the industry).

They didn't want minorities—they may submit it for a general debate.

A. Wielowieyski: What has been gained is progress. We need to fight for the separation of health and social policy, give up on minorities (as it will become anyway a question of German minorities—the Silesians). Housing construction has been omitted, it should be added to the Commission on Industry.

B. Geremek: There is no reason to return back to that discussion, we will defend [our position] at the plenary session. On matters of divergences there will be brief statements of our deputies. [...]

[Source: Archives of the Bureau of Senate Information and Documentation. Translated by Jan Chowaniec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 18
Minutes of the Meeting of the Presidium of
the Citizens' Parliamentary Club,
1 August 1989, 8 p.m.

Present: J. Kuroń, K. Kozłowski, A. Stelmachowski, Z. Kuratowska, T. Mazowiecki, B. Geremek, J. Ambroziak, A. Wielowieyski, H. Wujec, A. Balazs, J.M. Rokita, O. Krzyżanowska, J. Ślisz, J. Ziółkowski, A. Michnik, E. Wende.

B. Geremek: I will remind you of the things that have taken place within the last few days and hours. I had a meeting with Gen. Kiszczak at 2 p.m. It turns out that, at a Politburo meeting, out of four candidates submitted for the position of prime minister only one is left—Rakowski. Baka¹⁵² and Malinowski¹⁵³ have declined. Kiszczak is not willing either, but he thinks it's his duty. He asked about the position of our Club. The Club decided to vote against [him] or to abstain. Wałęsa took the position: "I supported Gen. Kiszczak for president of the Polish People's Republic, I refuse to support him for prime minister." He asked me to inform the OKP about it.

Kiszczak had a very difficult meeting with the PUWP Club yesterday, when it was deciding about the discipline [in party line bloc] voting. Today only 120 members showed up, which means that 50 have deserted [the PUWP Club].

From the other Clubs the figures are changing. At one point, half of the ZSL and half of SD were against. Today it's even worse—the whole ZSL is against [him], and from the SD only 4 persons [are in favor of him]. He lacks 80-70 [sic] people to ensure his [Kiszczak's] election.

Meetings of all three Clubs are going on, debating separately. The leaders have arrived, debates are stormy.

ZSL has come up with a proposal to form a government with the OKP. They think that the opposition should

form the government. Bentkowski¹⁵⁴ argues that the ZSL is decidedly against the candidacy of Kiszczak. He has contacts with the PUWP—there is a group of young PUWP parliamentary delegates who would like to meet jointly with [me], B. Geremek. If I meet with them, it would be an attempt to interfere with the coalition. They have to ask for it themselves.

Today it is to be decided whether General Jaruzelski will withdraw the letter proposing Kiszczak [for Prime Minister].

Bentkowski says [ZSL] cannot form a government with the PUWP. They are ready to do it with us.

[ZSL] is asking if we would leave the three main ministries with the PUWP if we were to form a government. This is an indispensable guarantee of a peaceful transfer of power.

When PUWP proposed a coalition with them, ZSL was offered 4 ministries and a vice premier. They were not expecting this from the opposition. They put forward their proposal not for the sake of bargaining, but because there is no other way out of the crisis in the country. If we would recognize this, they [ZSL] would be satisfied with 2 ministries. At 6 p.m. there was a meeting with Orzechowski. Based on that conversation, the situation is at a critical point, the President's motion is suspended.

On the other hand Bentkowski was still presenting doubts as to whether to enter into coalition with the PUWP. I admitted he was right—we know what cooperation with the PUWP did to the ZSL. They didn't perceive it as arrogance. To be sure, after that conversation Jacek Kuroń critically summed it up for me: we will take power if PUWP makes better conditions in the country for us.

We have to take into consideration quite unexpected solutions. Our whole Club is opposed, and yet they have to have a majority.

If Kiszczak won't get through, then [perhaps] another candidate—Sekuła.¹⁵⁵ Club meetings are stormy, sharp with mutual accusations. Party leaders are convincing their Clubs to [decide in favor of] the coalition with PUWP.

We may very well dream that this is a parliamentary democracy and that the majority decides. But the dream may be cut off and reality will let us know where we are. We have to see the situation clearly.

J. Kuroń: Is it true that the Senate has issued some sort of statement relating to the annulment of the President's election?

A. Stelmachowski: Such motion has come in from Senator Leszek Piotrowski¹⁵⁶—I sent it out to the proper commission.

A. Wielowieyski: What is the motive of those 41 PUWP [members] who have not come to the meeting with Kiszczak?

J. Ślisz: I spoke with Bąk¹⁵⁷—a peasant, for them a membership card is not important, they want Bronisław [Geremek]. As far as Bentkowski is concerned, they would like to have Olesiak¹⁵⁸ in the government. Approximately 40 deputies are not going to vote for Kiszczak.

A. Balazs: Bentkowski said that Sekuła's candidacy also won't get through.

J. Ślisz: From a talk with Świtka¹⁵⁹—we would have support of SD deputies.

J. Ambroziak: As of 8 p.m. the information is as follows:

PUWP—12 deputies are against Kiszczak

ZSL—60 deputies are against [Kiszczak]

SD—the whole is in favor [of Kiszczak for Prime Minister].

Pax¹⁶⁰, UChS¹⁶¹—in favor [of Kiszczak for Prime Minister].

A. Michnik: Will the Club be in favor of not being involved in it?

J. Ślisz: The ZSL was asking if we would be ready to propose a prime minister. We need to think about this.

A. Balazs - If we put forward our candidate for prime minister, the whole ZSL will be for him.

A. Stelmachowski: To sum it up, the situation is as follows:

- some consensus is emerging to vote against Kiszczak.

- are we to vote negatively against each PUWP candidate?

- do we see the possibility of forming our own government with small concessions?

T. Mazowiecki: My position is known to all of you. When I was invited to the Council, I went, putting aside any other considerations. Since the moment I have learned about Kiszczak's candidacy, I have been trying to form an opinion on this matter.

- I think that the Club's decision to vote against Kiszczak is not good. I do not share the position of our Chairman, who is sending out this news by telex. SIS¹⁶² communicated this news yesterday evening.

- My political assessment is the following: if such a strong man is being proposed, then the power is being shifted towards the line of the parliament-government. It's going to be a strong government, a situation will emerge, which will stabilize the process which has already begun. There is no need for the Club to vote against, it may abstain. I am afraid that the situation with the national list may repeat itself—first we are booming radicals, but then we withdraw. If we are not reaching for power ourselves, we should permit the other side to do it.

- As far as the ZSL proposal is concerned, one ought to remember that the ZSL doesn't have access to the proper centers of power. I would not bet on this combination. There are other centers of power, which will let themselves be known. We are not at a stage, at which parliamentary relations decide.

I am opposed to Adam's¹⁶³ concept also for the reason that on the opposition-Solidarity side there is no program and within three months that would become dramatically clear.

I think that the most proper position on the question of prime minister is a neutral one. But if we were faced

with a situation of the state crisis, then some talks about a great coalition might be possible, but not us in coalition with the ZSL.

I think that the moment is very serious. The public would not tolerate a situation in which first they see advances, and then withdrawals.

A. Celiński: [...] I exclude the possibility of a great coalition.

The nearest option is something that took place in Spain¹⁶⁴—a government stands somewhere aside, it gains support from the ZSL, part of the Party, our Club can be convinced.

J. M. Rokita: I get the impression that a Kiszczak government, after all, would not be strong in a situation where it wouldn't have support of a strong majority in the Sejm.

It would be a government in which we would constantly have to be hypocrites. In the long run it would be a trap for us.

Coalition with the ZSL is absurd. It would mean a clash of opinions from the beginning—that reforms are being introduced with a strong power center, the PUWP. Technically such coalition cannot be realized in defiance of the power centers.

In case there is a government of a purely communist coalition, the reforms will be coming from them, they will be throwing them upon us, but they will not strike at the system, as markets would do. They will be lumping together various ideas and we would think there is no other alternative. It will be a consolidation of the system.

It is necessary that we have at least part of the political initiatives. Something that is called a great coalition is a matter of time. It will come, it may be delayed, or accelerated. So, we should not be confusing people.

E. Wende: (to Mazowiecki) Do you take into consideration a situation in which the President will not recommend Kiszczak but Geremek?

T. Mazowiecki: It is possible, but we don't have such a situation. At this moment there are back-corner talks with the ZSL.

There are two ways out:

A better one—a Kiszczak government, the strongest one from the other side. A big offensive, execution of legal reforms, great stability.

The second one—a great coalition with the PUWP.

A. Balazs: It's a pity that such a discussion was not held prior to the presidential election. The situation that arose was the fault of both the Presidium and the Club. It would be very unfortunate if it were to repeat itself.

We have no chance for a coalition government, it would be short-lived and tragic for us because of the economic situation and the fact that we don't have the people.

But the opposition certainly has a candidate for prime minister, as people from other parties see it. There are also people on the other side whom we might be able to put

forward, e.g. Kwaśniewski.¹⁶⁵

A. Wielowieyski: Two arguments can be added against the coalition:

- We should not be wasting our social capital by entering into a small coalition. I see no gain from it.
- The Big Brother has other methods of conducting politics. Depriving the PUWP of power would be a blow to Gorbachev. The result—a mortal poisoning of our life, impossibility of realizing anything.

It is apparent that we will have to support one government or the other. We must get them to understand that another candidate would get our support. Though Kiszczak is not bad.

[Break]

J. Ziółkowski: We are observing a great acceleration of the political process. *Pacta sunt servanda*—this has been our principle. The fact that Jaruzelski is president is good, it is a stabilizing factor. There is a great weakness of power, a rebellion with the Party itself. There is a dissension within the coalition, the ZSL is bending over backward, in the SD [the situation] must be likewise—as it is improbable to have complete silence after those noisy declarations about a crown in the eagle, etc. There are two possibilities:

- a great coalition-us and the PUWP.
- a small coalition-us, the ZSL and other smaller groups.

One of the elements of the situation is tremendous social impatience. Adam [Michnik] has had a sense of this impatience—[they say] so much is in your hands, and you don't react.

The new configuration means a strong triumvirate,¹⁶⁶ unusually tight. A strong Kiszczak, about whom there was talk here, is too strong. [...]

We have to approach Kiszczak negatively. [...] This is a configuration in which we have a minimal possibility of maneuver.

What can we do? Coalition with the ZSL is dangerous, as we cannot steer this process. A small coalition is on their good grace or the lack of it. In the end there are not too many of those contestants.

Only a great coalition is acceptable—a Government of National Salvation.

J. Kuroń: That triangle is not a solution under any circumstance. Abstaining from voting—impossible, in any case we would lose the steering wheel, the Club would kick us out through the window.

The first variant: the strikes take off, which will start costing money. Anarchy will follow. Someone will have to bring stability. When a fire bursts, Jaruzelski will call on us to form a government.

With each day our situation is becoming increasingly difficult. Empty shelves are being played out against us, as it was in 1981. And our statements are in the Sejm.

If they [PUWP] are battered in the ZSL, SD—then in

which groups do they find support? In the SD they are still trying to steer, but are saying that this cannot go on.

Stabilization is an illusion. If we remain passive, we will lose—then we will have to take it over in a worse situation and with less social confidence [then even currently exists]. As long as we don't make a decision—we are not going to have a program.

Could it be a government of a great coalition? Initially it was supposed to be such a government: for us two, three ministries. What "Solidarity" has to give social confidence, less likely [perhaps the] possibility of obtaining a moratorium on debts.

The government should be ours, i.e. formed by us. We should vote against all of Kiszczak's candidates.

H. Wujec: a PUWP government means a continuing crisis, waiting for a change. Now those price increases, people see it clearly. We are delaying solutions.

The only chance is a broadly based Government of National Salvation. It would have to represent a new line, new spirit, have a different social perception. Can we do it? We have to search already for programs, people. We have to keep in mind that everything moves quickly.

J. Ślisz: We need to form a government that is a great coalition—in which we should be the dominant force. How do we let the other side know that they should propose letting us have the position of prime minister? The coming 24 hours have to decide.

J. Stelmachowski: I agree with the diagnoses, but I don't agree with the conclusions. The strategy is to wait until an auspicious moment. If the economic diagnosis is bad, it would be a folly to take over the government until such time as the "Solidarity" is the only way out. If we are expecting a deterioration [of the situation], we should not assume responsibility for it. They are not so weak and it's not the parliament that decides. We need to be against Kiszczak; a strong PUWP government is not in our interest. It would be ill-perceived abroad—two generals in top positions. It was rightly pointed out as a jamming phenomenon. We should be voting against, but I would not vote against any candidate put forward by the General.

A. Michnik: I have been listening with some surprise to what the Senate Marshal was telling us. It's something from the area of games, we don't have time for it. I am afraid that in a little while we will have to leave that parliament, called off by people from the queues.

From my point of view, neither Kiszczak nor anyone else will change anything. This configuration is sentenced to death. Do you know what will be left of the PUWP—only trash will be left. There is a 60 percent probability that our talk is an academic discussion, but if Kiszczak doesn't get through—I propose Mazowiecki, Stelmachowski and others. We have such an international constellation, a historical moment, when we can catch something. We should not use an argument that there is no program—as no one in the world has that recipe, e.g. what should Russia or Yugoslavia do?

We are doomed for one [program]—a sharp, sudden

entrance into the market. To say this a year ago would have been a lot, we need to keep this in mind when we say that something is impossible.

There is no one who would defend a coalition with the ZSL. It's falling apart. We are not attacking frontally, rather we propose something, e.g. Kwaśniewski for vice premier, someone who will pull over the reformist elements.

O. Krzyżanowska: Tomorrow we need to vote almost ostentatiously. Our government will be in a much worse situation, as the Union is inclined to press demands and we will be calling for belt-tightening. If we don't preserve the ethos of the Union and the opposition—the future election will be lost. Our hands are tied by the Union. Perhaps it will be our prime minister, but not our government.

K. Kozłowski: The situation is difficult, we should speak up strongly against Kiszczak and Sekuła. Maybe in the end they will come up with something that will be acceptable and we will abstain from the vote. Perhaps in a few weeks they may desperately seize upon some combination, which will be acceptable. If they cannot come up with anything, then a government of National Salvation will appear to be a solution. If this happens, we will not join into a coalition but we salvage Poland: we then must have prime minister and demand tolerable names. A crisis situation, a Geremek or Lech government. The first thing that our new prime minister would have to do is to talk with the MON. History teaches that invasions, martial laws are threatening when the power structure is falling apart. We are close to this. I don't know which general, but one of them will do it.

Tomorrow vote against [Kiszczak for prime minister], press ahead, see what can come out of it. Do not reject the option of a tolerable government, [if it is] partly a non-party one. Otherwise, press for hard terms into the government.

E. Wende: If this government fails the country, will there be an economic chance to get out of it? We must clearly say—no, it won't be better. So, will our prime minister have better or worse chances of rescuing the country?

Z. Kuratowska: We have to vote against. Sekuła doesn't have a chance. We cannot wait any longer. What kind of professionals are they? It's very hard to find them. Are we supposed to leave the country? The ovation at Powązki was a kind of an opinion poll[!] They were telling Brzezinski¹⁶⁷—we are ready to wait out this situation if you [the US government] are going to decide.

J. Ślisz: In the corridor there are gentlemen from the ZSL and PUWP, they want to come here and talk.

(A brief consultation and the conclusion that this should not be discussed at the meeting. B. Geremek and A. Michnik are going for talks). [Recess]

B. Geremek: According to the latest news the situation is as follows:

PUWP—12 against [Kiszczak] (despite party discipline and threats)

ZSL—21 against
SD —?

It looks as though the solution is still that Kiszczak will form the government.

In justifying our position we will argue that we are against the continuation of the present rule. We are not in a position to extend credit to the teams which have been in power so far. We are accepting a diagnosis that under the present international situation our taking over the government is impossible. But potentially we are ready to do it.

A government of a great coalition came out of Jaruzelski's mouth: "you are coming into our government." If we are taking over, we form the government, we see in it a place for representatives of different social forces. It is a government formed by the opposition. It is an anti-*nomenklatura* government. That is how our position can be presented.

We reject a government [of] General Kiszczak plus Solidarity. If there is a chance to form a Government of National Salvation, which would have a chance of gaining public trust. If such a possibility doesn't exist, then we will perform a controlling function to see that aspirations expressed in the election are met.

T. Mazowiecki: I don't see a difference between the conceptions of government; from the general point of view each of them is a coalition government.

B. Geremek: It is a government formed by the "S" on the basis of a coalition. We are leaving the undemocratic system and the main problem is the structure of power.

A. Stelmachowski: It is the model that Hitler gave to Hindenburg—he just wanted the ministry of internal affairs and the chancellery.

T. Mazowiecki: This is a government proposed by us, but it still is a great coalition government.

B. Geremek: Lech Wałęsa has two possibilities:
- he will form that government
- or someone else will.

If we would get to the next stage (a 1 percent probability), if the president would talk with us, that is how I would present the proposal of Wałęsa's government.

A. Balazs: We need to allow the possibility that they will form a government and wait for their overthrow. Within three months they will be completely finished in terms of propaganda. They are in the ultimate situation. This is a very difficult situation for us, too. We need to find some alternative solution.

B. Geremek: I told Kiszczak that his candidacy is not good, that someone else would be better. He has recognized this argument.¹⁶⁸

B. Geremek: The motion on an Extraordinary Commission has not passed. It has the backing of half of the ZSL, half of SD and a little in the PUWP, it has a chance of passage.

The following team will be needed: 1. R. Bugaj
2. J. Osiatyński¹⁶⁹

3. G. Staniszevska¹⁷⁰
4. the Peasants will fill in
5. the Peasants will fill in
6. K. Dowgałó¹⁷¹
7. J. Łopuszański¹⁷²

M. Rokita: Najder¹⁷³ is thanking [us], asking to take care of his dispossession of Polish citizenship.

A. Ballazs: a 10 day vacation break is needed, right now it's a harvest time.

[Source: Archives of the Bureau of Senate Information and Documentation. Translated by Jan Chowanec for CWIHP.]



DOCUMENT No. 19
Minutes of a Meeting of the Presidium
of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club,
16 August 1989, 11:30 p.m.

Present: A. Balazs, G. Janowski, J. Ślisz, J. Rokita, E. Wende, O. Krzyżanowska, A. Stelmachowski, A. Celiński, J. Kuroń, J. Ambroziak, T. Mazowiecki, B. Geremek, L. Wałęsa, K. Kozłowski, A. Wielowieyski, H. Wujec, A. Michnik, J. Kaczyński, L. Kaczyński.

B. Geremek: Today I received an invitation to have a conversation with Gen. Jaruzelski. I responded that first I wanted to meet with Chairman Wałęsa, whom I had not seen for a few days. There have been important meetings recently: a meeting of Primate Glemp with [Soviet] Ambassador Vladimir Borovikov and the second meeting of Glemp with Jaruzelski.

The time-table for the next few days [is:] today or tomorrow the Sejm is to vote on a resolution on the [1968] intervention in Czechoslovakia. It's a controversial matter. Tomorrow L. Wałęsa is meeting: at 9 a.m. with

Malinowski
 at 10 a.m. with Józwiak¹⁷⁴
 at 12 with Jaruzelski

K. Kozłowski: The PUWP wants to do everything to eliminate Lech Wałęsa. There will be a compromise candidate—Kwaśniewski.

B. Geremek: Is it possible that they will appoint Wałęsa?

E. Wende: Orzechowski has very clear plans regarding two ministries.

A. Stelmachowski: With bargaining there will be more!

L. Wałęsa: Generally we are reporting that a new coalition has been set up. It will select the most suitable candidate for prime minister. For the time being we don't say who that will be.

E. Wende: He is referring to information from the PUWP circles, we should not exaggerate, there are warnings.

J. Kaczyński: The question of two ministries has been stated clearly in talks. With the preservation of the president's prerogatives, this needs to be stated once again. The compromise has to be reached on their side.

A. Stelmachowski: The government here in Poland has never had the position of a true government, the disposition centers have always been somewhere aside (Pilsudski¹⁷⁵—the Chief Inspectorate). We need to return back to the main political decisions reached at Magdalenka.

L. Wałęsa: We have learned that there is always someone above the authorities and above the law.

A. Michnik: How do you perceive the position of the PUWP?

L. Wałęsa: We need to create a new coalition, which will stand up to the PUWP. How to form a government to secure both freedom and be tolerant.

B. Geremek: The main thing is that the PUWP doesn't form the government.

L. Wałęsa: and doesn't impose it!

A. Balazs: I have a suggestion that the "S" RI should not be treated by PUWP like ZSL is.

B. Geremek: Do you foresee a meeting with our Club after your meetings tomorrow?

L. Wałęsa: It's not me who wants to be prime minister. I have my three candidates.¹⁷⁶ If this proposition doesn't break down, I will be asking you to form the government.

B. Geremek: Does anyone have any comments?

A. Michnik: I think that if you listen to their argument, it means that you are going into their paws. Królewski¹⁷⁷ and Malinowski were stubbornly sticking to this coalition, which means they were doing it with Jaruzelski's approval. We need to form a government with the masters, not with the lackeys.

T. Mazowiecki: This would lead to a series of talks of the type of a new Magdalenka with the masters, talks with the actual disposers of power, i.e. with the military and the police.

A. Michnik: You are not going to make a real government with the ZSL and the SD. The PUWP can be broken down.

B. Geremek: The present phase—with the assistance of the ZSL and SD—is an attempt to break down PUWP's monopoly.¹⁷⁸

[Source: Archives of the Bureau of Senate Information and Documentation; translated by Jan Chowanec for CWIHP.]

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brance in Warsaw. He is author of the prize-winning 1956: *Polski rok* (1993) and a co-organizer of the conference "Poland, 1986-1989: The End of the System," held in Miedzeszyn-Warsaw, 21-23 October 1999.

¹The conference was modeled after an earlier conference held at Jachranka, concerning to "Solidarity" and the martial law period ("Poland 1980-1982. Internal crisis, International Dimensions," Jachranka, 8-10 November 1997), which was organized by the Institute of Political Studies in conjunction with the same American partners. The conference format was also similar (*critical oral history*), which, in our opinion, fully stood the test at Jachranka, bringing forth new facts and new positions. It was a joint debate of scholars—historians, political scientists, sociologists—with politicians, participants and actors in those events, people taking important political decisions or close to the decision making centers. As at Jachranka, debates took place both on the internal processes in Poland, and on external influences (on the one hand those of Moscow and other countries of the Soviet bloc, on the other, Washington and Western Europe), and the significance of Polish developments of setting in motion democratic changes in Central and Eastern Europe. The conference covered the period from the amnesty of September 1986, giving an opening for the opposition to public activity, to the formation of the Mazowiecki government in September 1989, closing an essential part of a "negotiated take-over of power," or a "negotiated revolution," as it has been called. Conference participants included many of the most important actors, such as Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, leader of the Communist Party and from July 1989 president of Poland, and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who headed the first non-communist government in the Soviet bloc.

²See Tomasz Tabako, *The Strajk 88* (Wwa: Niezal. Ofic. Wydawn. Nowa, 1992).

³The most important Polish-language collection is "The Last Year of Power, 1988-1989", published by "Aneks" of London in the series *Tajne Dokumenty* [Secret Documents] (London: Aneks, 1994), edited by Stanisław Perzkowski and containing CC PUWP Politburo and Secretariat documents. Two very important collections of documents were published by Krzysztof Dubiński, Assistant to the Minister of Internal Affairs, and Czesław Kiszczak, who had participated in all confidential meetings at Magdalenka near Warsaw. Government and opposition representatives had been preparing the "Roundtable" at Magdalenka and finding solutions to the most important controversies appearing during the course of official meetings ("Magdalenka - transakcja epoki. Notatki z poufnych spotkań Kiszczak-Wałęsa," (Warszawa: Sylwa, 1990); "Okrągły stół" (A Roundtable), (Warszawa: Krajowa Agencja Promocyjna, 1999). Also impressive is a collection of documents illustrating the Church's dialogue with the government.

Besides the consecutive volume published by the London "Aneks" (*Państwo - Kościół 1980-1989* [The State-Church 1980-1989], London-Warszawa, 1993), these are mostly items prepared by Peter Raina ("Rozmowy z władzami PRL, Arcybiskup Dąbrowski w służbie kościoła i narodu" [Talks with the authorities of the Polish People's Republic, Archbishop Dąbrowski in the service of the church and the people], vol. II: 1982-1989, (Warszawa: K.S. Polska, 1985); ("Droga do 'Okrągłego Stołu.' Zakulisowe rozmowy przygotowawcze" [The Road to the Roundtable. Preparatory talks behind the scene], Warszawa 1989). One should also mention the most important items dealing with "the end of communism" in Poland. First of all, the work of Jan Skórzyński *Ugoda i rewolucja. Władza i opozycja 1985-1989* [Conciliation and Revolution. The Authority and the Opposition 1985-1989] (Warszawa: Presspublica, 1995). "The Roundtable" and the process of the takeover of power by the opposition is also discussed by Antoni Dudek in the first part of his book "Pierwsze lata III Rzeczypospolitej" [The First Years of the III Polish Republic] (Warszawa: Presspublica, 1997). A very interesting analysis of transformation from communism to democracy is presented by Andrzej Paczkowski in his paper "Polska 1986-1989: od kooptacji do negocjacji" [Poland 1986-1989: from cooptation to negotiations] (published in 1997 by the Institute of Political Studies as a working paper, and then in the book "Od sfałszowanego zwycięstwa do prawdziwej klęski" [From a fraudulent victory to the real defeat] (Kraków: Wydawn. Literackie, 1999).

⁴ By the terms of an 11 September 1986 decision by Minister of Internal Affairs Czesław Kiszczak, all political prisoners were freed.

⁵ A law passed by the Sejm on 8 October 1982 dissolved the NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁶ The note was expressing the position of the Episcopate and was handed over to CC PUWP Secretary Kazimierz Barcikowski in October 1986.

⁷ A watchword of trade union pluralism practically meant the legalization of the independent self-governing trade union (NSZZ) "Solidarity", which had been active underground following the 8 October 1982 law dissolving the Union.

⁸ It refers to the Consultative Council appointed by the Chairman of the Council of State, set up on 6 December 1986.

⁹ Archbishop Bronisław Dąbrowski, archbishop of Warsaw, in 1969-1993 secretary general of the Episcopate of Poland, from 1970-1989 delegate of the Conference of the Episcopate of Poland on relations with the government of Poland; chief negotiator of the church side in confidential talks with the PUWP (more detailed information on many people mentioned in the documents can be found in "Kto był kim in the years 1986-1989" [Who was who in 1986-1989], a paper prepared by Inka Słodkowska and published in the briefing book for the conference "Poland 1986-1989: End of the System").

¹⁰ Andrzej Świącicki, president of the Warsaw Club of Catholic Intelligentsia (KIK), forced by Club members to resign this function following his acceptance of Gen. Jaruzelski's invitation to participate on the Consultative Council.

¹¹ Jerzy Turowicz, chief editor of "Tygodnik Powszechny" since 1945, member of the Citizens' Committee (KO) appointed by the Chairman of the NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant.

¹² Andrzej Wielowieyski, secretary of the Warsaw KIK, advisor to the Episcopate of Poland, from 1983 advisor to Lech Wałęsa; member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant and from June 1989 senator and vice marshal of the Senate.

¹³ Kazimierz Barcikowski, PUWP Politburo member, deputy chairman of the Council of State, from 1980 chairman of the Joint Commission of Government and Episcopate.

¹⁴ Kazimierz Secomski, economist, member of the Council of State, member of the Consultative Council appointed by the Chairman of the Council of State.

¹⁵ Stanisław Ciosek, CC PUWP secretary and Politburo member (from December 1988), 1988-1989 National Council of Patriotic Movement for National Renewal secretary general; "Roundtable" participant.

¹⁶ It refers to the PUWP's so-called "allied parties."

¹⁷ Never brought into existence.

¹⁸ A Spokesman for Citizens' Rights was appointed in 1987. He/she was to be an institution to which people could appeal in cases of conflicts with the state authorities. Prof. Ewa Łętowska became the first Spokeswoman.

¹⁹ Tadeusz Mazowiecki, chief editor of the Catholic monthly *Więź*, and in 1981 of the weekly magazine *Solidarność*, one of Wałęsa's closest advisors; "Roundtable" participant (co-chairman of a team for trade union pluralism, from August 1989 prime minister).

²⁰ Bronisław Geremek, a historian, one of Wałęsa's closest advisors, from 1988 an informal leader of the NSZZ "Solidarity" Citizens' Committee; "Roundtable" participant (co-chairman of a team on political reforms, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm, chairman of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club (OKP), formed by "Solidarity" deputies and senators).

²¹ Konwersatorium "Doświadczenie i Przyszłość" [Experience and the Future], a discussion forum created by intellectual circles maintaining contacts with both the opposition and government.

²² Agricultural circles and "Samopomoc Chłopska" [Peasants' Self-support]—peasants' co-operatives controlled by the government.

²³ A Joint Commission of Government and Episcopate—a forum for negotiating and finding solutions on disputed questions between the authorities and the Church.

²⁴ "Raport—Polska 5 lat po Sierpniu" [Poland - 5 years after August] - an assessment of the political and social situation in Poland, announced in 1985 by a group

of people concentrated around Wałęsa, published in "the second circulation" (this was the term used for illegal publications, printed and circulated by the opposition circles).

²⁵ *Res Publica* - a monthly published in the "second circulation." In June 1987, the authorities in an unprecedented move, gave permission to its legal publication.

²⁶ *Ład* [An Order] - a weekly published by a group of Catholics (Polish Catholic-Social Union) cooperating with the authorities.

²⁷ Józef Czyrek, a CC PUWP Politburo member and secretary, co-chairman of the National Council of PRON; in 1987-1988 initiated and conducted talks with the opposition Catholic intellectual and Church representatives; the meeting mentioned in the document was held on 11 July 1987.

²⁸ Refers to the anniversary of the 31 August 1980 signing of an understanding between the authorities and the Inter-factory Striking Committee in Gdańsk, which opened the way for the birth of NSZZ "Solidarity."

²⁹ There were no "terrorist" actions; also nothing is known of any preparation to this kind of actions.

³⁰ Cardinal Józef Glemp, from 1981 archbishop metropolitan of Gniezno and Warsaw, Primate of Poland, chairman of the Episcopate of Poland.

³¹ A "new" workers' party was not created until the end of the PUWP rule. In the second half of the 1980s, in pro-reform circles on the margins of PUWP, ideas were put forth to bring into being a second Marxist party, which would compete with the PUWP, thus introducing democratic dynamics into the communist system without undermining its fundamentals.

³² Aleksander Gieysztor, a distinguished historian-medievalist, director of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, in 1988-1989 participated in a number of meetings between government representatives and opposition circles.

³³ The Polish Club of International Relations did not play any important role in subsequent events, but its creation—and particularly the speech by J. Czyrek—was one of the stages in seeking an understanding between government and opposition circles.

³⁴ Andrzej Stelmachowski, an advisor to the Episcopate and Wałęsa, from 1987 president of the Warsaw KIK, member of the Citizens' Committee appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", in the years 1987-1989, as a plenipotentiary of L. Wałęsa, conducted confidential talks with the authorities, which led to the "Roundtable;" from 1989 a senator and marshal of the Senate.

³⁵ Paweł Czarторыcki, a member of the Warsaw KIK leadership, member of the Citizens' Committee appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant.

³⁶ Marcin Król, editor-in-chief of the monthly magazine *Res Publica*, member of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

³⁷ Henryk Wujec, an active member of the Warsaw KIK, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity", from

1988 secretary of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm, secretary of the National Committee for Reconciliation (OKP).

³⁸ Adam Michnik, in the 1970s an activist of the Committee for Workers' Defense (KOR), from 1980 an advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant from May 1989 editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza*, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm.

³⁹ Jacek Kuroń, in the 1970s a leading KOR activist, from 1980 an advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity", member of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm.

⁴⁰ Stanisława Grabska, vice-president of the Warsaw KIK, member of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" member.

⁴¹ Krzysztof Śliwiński, member of the Warsaw KIK leadership, member of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁴² Tomasz Gruszecki, an economist, from 1980 an advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁴³ Ryszard Bugaj, an economist, in the 1970s cooperated with KOR, from 1980 an advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity", member of the KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm.

⁴⁴ Jacek Moskwa, a journalist, (supporting) secretary of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁴⁵ Kazimierz Wójcicki, a journalist, secretary (assistant) of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁴⁶ Halina Bortnowska, editorial member of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁴⁷ Janusz Grzelak, a psychologist, from 1980 activist of NSZZ "Solidarity", participant of the "Roundtable."

⁴⁸ Czesław Kiszczak, CC PUPW Politburo member, minister of internal affairs, chief initiator of the "Roundtable", in August 1989 nominated for Prime Minister, however unsuccessful in formulating the government due to "Solidarity's" refusal to participate.

⁴⁹ "Oświadczenie w sprawie dialogu" [A statement on dialogue] of 25 August 1988, published in *Tabako. Strajk 88* (Warszawa, 1992), pp. 248-250.

⁵⁰ A group of Lech Wałęsa's advisors, who in December 1988 formed a Citizens' Committee of Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity" (political representation of the "Solidarity" camp just on the eve of "Roundtable" deliberations).

⁵¹ Jacek Merkel, "Solidarity" activist from Gdańsk, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity" "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm.

⁵² Andrzej Malanowski, a lawyer, scholar at the University of Warsaw, activist of the Polish Socialist Party (an opposition group activist from 1987).

⁵³ Andrzej Rosner, a historian, chief of the "second-circulation" publication "Krag" [Circle].

⁵⁴ Andrzej Milczanowski, a lawyer, "Solidarity" activist from Szczecin, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant.

⁵⁵ Gabriel Janowski, an activist of the "Solidarity" of Individual Peasants (RI), member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant.

⁵⁶ Klemens Szaniawski, philosophy professor, chairman of the Committee for an Understanding of Creative and Scholarly Associations, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁵⁷ Aleksander Paszyński, journalist, businessman, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity", "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator, Minister of Construction and Space Economy in the Mazowiecki government.

⁵⁸ Stefan Bratkowski, a journalist, in the years 1980-1981 leader of a grass-roots reformist movement within the PUPW, president of the Polish Journalists' Association, member of KO of the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity."

⁵⁹ It concerns a "Statement of the Dialogue" of 25 August 1988, submitted to the authorities on 26 September 1988. See footnote 16 in document No. 6.

⁶⁰ Niezależne Stowarzyszenie Związków Zawodowych, the Independent Association of Trade Unions.

⁶¹ It means representatives of the authorities, "Solidarity" and the Church.

⁶² On 31 August 1988 a meeting occurred in Warsaw, with Cz. Kiszczak, S. Ciosek, L. Wałęsa and archbishop J. Dąbrowski participating.

⁶³ Illegible signature of Lech Wałęsa.

⁶⁴ See preceding document.

⁶⁵ The trade union statute 8 October 1982, which outlawed "Solidarity."

⁶⁶ Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych [The All-Polish Association of Trade Unions]—closely connected with the authorities.

⁶⁷ Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Democrację [The Union of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy] - a veteran organization. Here it implies "Solidarity" veterans from the 1980-1981 period.

⁶⁸ The Party's hardline conservatives.

⁶⁹ Mikołaj Kozakiewicz, member of ZSL, member of the National Council of PRON, "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm, Sejm's Speaker.

⁷⁰ Jan Karol Kostrzewski, a physician, professor of the Medical Academy, president of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

⁷¹ Stanisław Stomma, a lawyer, since 1945 an editorial member of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, in 1956-57 one of the organizers of the Clubs of Catholic Intelligentsia, in 1957-1976 a deputy to the Sejm within the Catholic group of ZNAK, 1981-1985 chairman of the Social Council by the Primate of Poland (an advisory body to the Primate),

1984-1989 president of the Club of Political Thought “Dziekania” (a moderate right discussion forum), member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, from June 1989 a senator.

⁷² Anna Przeclawska, professor of pedagogics, member of the National Council of PRON, “Roundtable” participant.

⁷³ A group of Wałęsa’s advisors.

⁷⁴ Rev. Bishop Alojzy Orszulik, in the years 1958-1993 director of the Episcopate’s Press Office, 1989-1994 assistant secretary of the Episcopate, member-secretary of the Joint Commission of Government and Episcopate; during the martial law period a liaison between Wałęsa and the Episcopate, in the years 1988-1989 a participant on behalf of the Church in confidential talks with the PUWP which led to the “Roundtable.”

⁷⁵ Jacek Ambroziak, legal advisor in the Secretariat of the Episcopate of Poland, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm, minister-chief of the Prime Minister’s Office (Council of Ministers) in the Mazowiecki government.

⁷⁶ Rev. Archbishop Jerzy Stroba, archbishop-metropolitan of Poznań, member of the Main Council of the Episcopate of Poland, member of the Joint Commission of Government and Episcopate.

⁷⁷ Jan Olszewski, from 1980 an advisor to NSZZ “Solidarity” and the Episcopate of Poland, defense counsel in court trials of “Solidarity” activists, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity.”

⁷⁸ Alojzy Pietrzyk, an activist of NSZZ “Solidarity” from Upper Silesia, one of the strike leaders from 1988

⁷⁹ An Independent Association of Students, founded in 1981, outlawed under the martial law.

⁸⁰ Janusz Onyszkiewicz, a “Solidarity” activist from 1981, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participants, from June 1989 deputy to the Sejm.

⁸¹ That “Table” in Katowice was never set up.

⁸² Naczelna Organizacja Techniczna [Chief Technical Organization].

⁸³ Polskie Towarzystwo Ekonomiczne [Polish Economic Society].

⁸⁴ Bronisław Geremek, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Henryk Wujec

⁸⁵ Mieczysław Rakowski, CC Politburo member, from June to December 1988 CC PUWP secretary, from September 1988 to August 1989 Prime Minister, from July 1989 CC PUWP first secretary.

⁸⁶ Jan Józef Szczepański, a writer, in the years 1980-1983 president of the Polish Literary Union, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participant.

⁸⁷ Andrzej Szczepkowski, an actor, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, from June 1989 a senator.

⁸⁸ Zbigniew Romaszewski, KOR member, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ “Solidarity”, member of KO ap-

pointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 a senator.

⁸⁹ Jan Józef Lipski, KOR member, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ “Solidarity”, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, from June 1989 a senator.

⁹⁰ Konfederacja Polski Niepodległej [Confederation for an Independent Poland]—a radical opposition group, proclaiming goals of independence (led by Leszek Moczulski).

⁹¹ A radical group (led by Kornel Morawiecki), which in the second half of the 1980s departed from the main “Solidarity” movement.

⁹² A meeting of the representatives of the main “Solidarity” stream with the outside-solidarity opposition groups took place on 13 October 1988.

⁹³ Motorized Battalions of Citizens’ Militia—a special formation used for breaking up demonstrations.

⁹⁴ The church of Our Lady in the old section of Gdańsk [NMP= *Najświętszej Marii Panny*, Virgin Mary].

⁹⁵ The Council for National Understanding eventually was not created. Instead, a Conciliatory Commission with narrower powers was set up, which was to take care that decisions of the “Roundtable” were implemented.

⁹⁶ Krajowa Komisja Wykonawcza [National Executive Commission] - the executive body of NSZZ “Solidarity”, set up in October 1987.

⁹⁷ Lech Kaczyński, a lawyer, co-worker of KOR, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ “Solidarity”, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 a senator.

⁹⁸ Andrzej Celiński, KOR member, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ “Solidarity”, from 1987 secretary of KKW, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 a senator.

⁹⁹ Komisja Krajowa (KK) - the top executive body of NSZZ “Solidarity” set up at the first National Congress of Delegates in December 1981.

¹⁰⁰ The CC PUWP Xth plenary meeting adopted a resolution in January 1989, allowing for union pluralism, thus opening up the road for legalization of “Solidarity.”

¹⁰¹ NSA - Naczelny Sąd Administracyjny [the Main Administrative Court].

¹⁰² The Working Group of the National Commission (GR KK) of NSZZ “Solidarity” - an opposition group against Lech Wałęsa and his group of “Solidarity” leaders and activists from the years 1980-1981. It charged Wałęsa with undemocratic practices in steering the Union, monopolizing negotiations with the authorities and of being too soft towards the latter.

¹⁰³ Władysław Findesein, a physics professor, chairman of the Social Council by the Primate of Poland, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity”, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 a senator.

¹⁰⁴ An understanding signed between representatives

of the striking plants and the authorities in Szczecin on 30 August 1980, in Gdańsk on 31 August 1980, and in Jestrzëbie on 3 September 1980.

¹⁰⁵ Andrzej Słowik, in the years 1980-1981 chairman of the Board of the Regional NSZZ "Solidarity" in Łódź, in the martial law period an activist of the underground "Solidarity", from 1987 member of the Working Group of the National Council of NSZZ "Solidarity."

¹⁰⁶ Jerzy Kropiwnicki, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" in Łódź, member of KK NSZZ "Solidarity", from 1987 of GR KK NSZZ "Solidarity."

¹⁰⁷ An article by Jacek Kuroń "The Landscape after a Battle" was published in the underground *Tygodnik Mazowsze* of 2 September 1987.

¹⁰⁸ Krajowa Komisja Wykonawcza

¹⁰⁹ It had been agreed even before the opening of the "Roundtable" that the NSZZ "Solidarity" would be legalized on the basis of the existing law on trade unions (thus, there was no talk about "relegalization" as proposed in the formula of GR KK). It was a concession by the Lech Wałęsa camp, who had also gained an important concession from the authorities: NSZZ "Solidarity" was to be registered at once as a national organization, and not through registrations of subsequent factory units as desired by the PUWP negotiators.

¹¹⁰ Międzynarodowa Organizacja Pracy [International Labor Organization].

¹¹¹ Zbigniew Bujak, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity in Warsaw", in 1980-1981 chairman of the "Mazowsze" region, one of the leaders of the underground "Solidarity," member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant.

¹¹² Władysław Frasyniuk, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" in Wrocław, in 1981 chairman of the Lower Silesia region, one of the leaders of the underground "Solidarity", member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participants.

¹¹³ Antoni Tokarczuk, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" in Bydgoszcz, one of the leaders of the underground "Solidarity," member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participants, from June 1989 on a senator.

¹¹⁴ Komisja Krajowa, Cracow Committee.

¹¹⁵ "White spots"—controversial questions in Polish-Soviet relations, passed over in silenced or forged by the official propaganda and historiography.

¹¹⁶ For the USSR, WWII did not "start" until 22 June 1941.

¹¹⁷ In April 1987 the Polish and Soviet governments created a Joint Commission of Historians, which was to investigate "white spots" in their relations.

¹¹⁸ The place where the NKVD in 1940 murdered several thousand Polish officers, who had been taken prisoners of war in September 1939.

¹¹⁹ On 7 April 1989 the KKW decided to entrust the management of the election campaign to the Sejm and

Senate to the KO of the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity." Under its aegis, citizens' committees popped up all over the country, whose main task was to manage the election campaign for "Solidarity" candidates.

¹²⁰ Jarosław Śleszyński, manager of the cultural section of the Warsaw KIK, "Roundtable" participants.

¹²¹ The first round of elections took place on 4 June 1989, the second on 18 June 1989.

¹²² In the first round "Solidarity" candidates gained 160 of the 161 possible seats in the Sejm (within the 35% of seats allocated to candidates outside of the PUWP and its "allied parties"). In the election to the Senate "Solidarity" candidates gained 92 seats out of the 100 possible (as opposed to the lower chamber of parliament, elections to the Senate were held according to fully democratic procedures). In the second round "Solidarity" gained the last missing seat in the Sejm (thus, gaining 161 seats for 161 possible), as well as the next 7 seats in the Senate (in total 99 of 100 possible).

¹²³ On the national (central) list the authorities placed 35 leading PUWP activists and "allied party" candidates. Only two of them gained more than 50% of votes, which in view of the electoral law meant that 33 seats would not be filled. That would obviously undermine a precise parity of mandates, agreed upon at the "Roundtable", depriving the PUWP and its allies a secure majority in the Sejm. In this situation the KO of the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity" agreed to modify the electoral law to shift the 33 mandates from the national list to the regional ones. In the second round the candidates of the PUWP and the "allied parties" could fight for them. The agreement for changing the electoral law between the I and II round of elections was considered by many observers as inconsistent with the law. It also provoked voices of protest within the "Solidarity" camp.

¹²⁴ The territorial authorities.

¹²⁵ On 23 June 1989, deputies and senators of "Solidarity" formed a Citizens' Parliamentary Club (OKP).

¹²⁶ Olga Krzyżanowska, a physician, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity," from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm.

¹²⁷ Zofia Kuratowska, a physician, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator.

¹²⁸ Krzysztof Kozłowski, deputy editor of *Tygodnik Powszechny*, advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity," member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator.

¹²⁹ Jan Maria Rokita, an activist of NZZ and NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm.

¹³⁰ Józef Ślisz, an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" RI [Rolników Indywidualnych - individual Peasants], member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator and deputy speaker of the Senate.

¹³¹ Artur Balazs, an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" RI,

member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity” RI, “Roundtable” participant, from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm, a minister without portfolio in the Mazowiecki government.

¹³² Edward Wende, a lawyer, defense attorney in political trials, member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarity,” from June 1989 a senator.

¹³³ Wojciech Jaruzelski met with the Citizens’ Parliamentary Club on 17 July 1989.

¹³⁴ Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej [Ministry of National Defense].

¹³⁵ Rada Obrony Narodowej [National Defense Council], a body composed of top generals.

¹³⁶ The Advisory Political Committee of the Warsaw

Pact met on 7-8 July. It stated that Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski should take the position of president of Poland.

¹³⁷ President George Bush paid an official visit to Poland on 9-11 July 1989. He gave support to the candidacy of Wojciech Jaruzelski for the position of president.

¹³⁸ At the beginning of July 1989, Lech Wałęsa declared his support for the candidacy of Kiszcak for president several times.

¹³⁹ Ogólnokrajowy Komitet Porozumiewawczy.

¹⁴⁰ Rev. Sylwester Zych, linked with the “Solidarity” circles had been murdered by “unknown” criminals. The suspicion fell on those of the party “baton” and Security Services, who wanted to torpedo an understanding between the authorities and the opposition.

FIRST DECLASSIFICATION OF EISENHOWER’S INSTRUCTIONS PREDELEGATING NUCLEAR WEAPONS USE

In April 2001, President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s top secret instructions that delegated nuclear-launch authority to military commanders and the Secretary of Defense under specific emergency conditions, were declassified for the first time. The US Interagency Security Classification Appeals Panel (ISCAP) declassified this document and several related ones in response to an appeal by National Security Archive senior analyst William Burr, director of the Archive’s nuclear documentation project. President Eisenhower began making decisions for advance authorization of nuclear weapons use (“predelegation”) in the mid-1950s when he approved instructions for the use of nuclear weapons for the air defense of U.S. territory. Soon he came to support broader instructions that would allow specified commanders to react quickly to other kinds of attacks. By early 1959, two years after he had issued an authorization requesting instructions, Eisenhower approved, subject to later revision, “Instructions for the Expenditure of Nuclear Weapons in Accordance with the President Authorization Dated May 22, 1957.” This and other documents show that authorized commanders—including US Commander-in-Chief, Europe; Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic; and Commander-in-Chief, Strategic Air Command—could “expend” nuclear weapons “when the urgency of time and circumstances clearly does not permit a specific decision by the president.” According to the documents, top commanders could not use nuclear weapons in response to “minor” incidents but only when Soviet or Chinese forces launched air or surface attacks against “major” US forces in international waters or foreign territories “with the evident intention of rendering them militarily ineffective.” In the event of a nuclear attack on the United States, the instructions authorized the Secretary of Defense or top commanders to order retaliatory action if they were unable to communicate with the president or his successors. Eisenhower apparently had confidence that his commanders would not break discipline but he closely monitored the drafting of the instructions so they would not be misinterpreted as “giving license” for nuclear weapons use. National Security Archive staff first requested the “Instructions” in 1993 under the mandatory review provisions of Executive Order 12356, although other requesters had begun pursuing them in 1989. Declassification took over ten years because the “Instructions” were among the deepest US military policy secrets of the Cold War. The documents have are published online at <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB45>.

¹⁴¹ Wałęsa's visit to Moscow did not occur at that point.

¹⁴² Marian Orzechowski, a Politburo member, CC PUWP secretary, from June 1989 a deputy to the Sejm and leader of the PUWP Parliamentary Club.

¹⁴³ Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe, the People's Party.

¹⁴⁴ Stronnictwo Demokratyczne, the Democratic Party.

¹⁴⁵ Stronnictwo Ludowe.

¹⁴⁶ Janusz Ziółkowski, a sociology professor, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity," member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator.

¹⁴⁷ National Assembly (the joint Sejm and Senate) elected the president.

¹⁴⁸ Jerzy Urban, the government press spokesman.

¹⁴⁹ By abstaining or giving an invalid vote, it reduced the majority needed to elect the president.

¹⁵⁰ Witold Trzeciakowski, an economist, advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity," member of KO appointed by the Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarity," "Roundtable" participant, minister without portfolio in the Mazowiecki government, chairman of the Economic Council.

¹⁵¹ The OKP ultimately did not adopt a motion on voting discipline in the presidential election, leaving the decision up to its members. On 19 July Gen. Jaruzelski won the election by the majority of one vote. 7 OKP members deliberately turned in invalid votes, thus enabling Jaruzelski's election.

¹⁵² Władysław Baka, an economist, Politburo member, deputy chairman of the Council of State.

¹⁵³ Roman Malinowski, president of the Main Committee of ZSL, together with L. Wałęsa and J. Józwiak from SD was a signatory of a statement of 17 August 1989 on the formation of the "Solidarity"-ZSL-SD coalition.

¹⁵⁴ Aleksander Bentkowski, a defense attorney, ZSL activist, Justice Minister in the Mazowiecki government.

¹⁵⁵ Ireneusz Sekuła, from October 1988 to August 1989 vice premier in the Mazowiecki government, chairman of the Economic Committee of the Council of Ministers, PUWP "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a Sejm deputy.

¹⁵⁶ Leszek Piotrowski, a defense attorney, advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity" in Upper Silesia, "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a senator.

¹⁵⁷ Józef Bąk, a peasant, from June 1989 a Sejm deputy (no party affiliation).

¹⁵⁸ Kazimierz Olesiak, member of ZSL leadership, from October 1988 to August 1989 vice premier in the M. Rakowski government, "Roundtable" participant.

¹⁵⁹ Jan Eugeniusz Świtka, an SD activist, from June 1989 a Sejm deputy.

¹⁶⁰ PAX—a "satellite" Catholic group toward the PUWP.

¹⁶¹ Unia Chrześcijańsko-Społeczna [A Christian-Social Union]—a Catholic "satellite" group toward

PUWP.

¹⁶² SIS—Serwis Informacyjny of "Solidarity."

¹⁶³ Adam Michnik. On 3 July 1989, Michnik published an article in *Gazeta Wyborcza* titled, "Your president, Our premier," postulating the formation of the government by the "Solidarity" camp.

¹⁶⁴ Refers to the democratic transformation in Spain after the death of Franco in 1975.

¹⁶⁵ Aleksander Kwaśniewski, an activist of PUWP and the youth movement, in 1988-1989 an minister and chairman of the Socio-Political Committee of the Council of Ministers, "Roundtable" participant, from January 1989 chairman of the Polish Social Democratic Party, since 1995 president.

¹⁶⁶ The Triumvirate: President Wojciech Jaruzelski, Premier Czesław Kiszczak, CC PUWP First Secretary Mieczysław Rakowski.

¹⁶⁷ Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor to President Carter.

¹⁶⁸ On 2 August 1989 the Sejm entrusted formation of government to Czesław Kiszczak. OKP deputies voted against that resolution. Eventually Kiszczak failed to form a government.

¹⁶⁹ Jerzy Osiatyński, an economist, from 1981 advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity", from June 1989 a Sejm deputy, head of the Central Planning Office in the Mazowiecki government.

¹⁷⁰ Grażyna Staniszevska, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" in Sub-Beskidy area, "Roundtable" participant, from June 1989 a Sejm deputy.

¹⁷¹ Krzysztof Dowgłań, from 1980 an activist of NSZZ "Solidarity" in Gdańsk, from June 1989 a Sejm deputy.

¹⁷² Jan Łopuszański, a lawyer, from 1981 an advisor to NSZZ "Solidarity," from June 1989 a Sejm deputy.

¹⁷³ Zdzisław Najder, a literary historian, in the years 1982-1987 director of the Polish section of Radio Free Europe in Munich. Charged with spying and sentenced to death (in absentia) by a court in the Polish People's Republic.

¹⁷⁴ Jerzy Józwiak, a lawyer, chairman of the Central Committee of SD, together with L. Wałęsa and R. Malinowski from ZSL was a signatory of a statement of 17 August 1989 on the "Solidarity" - ZSL - SD coalition.

¹⁷⁵ Józef Piłsudski, a marshal, Chief of State in the years 1919-1921, after a military putsch in May 1926 he actually ruled Poland till his death in 1935. He had never been president nor— with the exception of a brief period (1926-1928 and in 1930)—prime minister, but he held the function of Chief Inspector of Military Forces.

¹⁷⁶ Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Bronisław Geremek, Jacek Kuroń.

¹⁷⁷ Bogdan Królewski, member of the ZSL leadership.

¹⁷⁸ On 19 August Tadeusz Mazowiecki was designated by president Jaruzelski to the position of prime minister, and on 24 August that mission was entrusted to him by the Sejm.

Bay of Pigs: 40 Years After Historic Conference Sheds New Documents and Oral History

On 22-24 March 2001, an international conference, “Bay of Pigs: 40 Years After,” brought together former officials from the Kennedy Administration, the CIA, and Brigade 2506 members, and their counterparts in the Cuban military and government of Fidel Castro, to discuss one of the most infamous episodes in the Cold War—the April 1961 invasion at the Bay of Pigs. National Security Archive Senior Analyst Peter Kornbluh, director of the Archive’s Cuba Docu-



Fidel Castro receives copies of the Cold War International History Bulletin from ***Christian Ostermann***

The US delegation included Arthur Schlesinger Jr. and Richard Goodwin, two former advisors to President John F. Kennedy; two retired CIA covert operatives, Robert Reynolds, chief of the Miami station in 1960-61, and Samuel Halpern, the executive officer on Operation Mongoose; and five members of the 2506 Brigade, including two former presidents of the Brigade’s Veterans Association, Alfredo Duran and Robert Carballo; and a small group of historians. The meeting was organized by the Universidad de La Habana, Centro de Estudios sobre Estados Unidos, Instituto de Historia de Cuba, Centro de Investigaciones Historicas de la Seguridad del Estado; Centro de Estudios sobre America, and co-sponsored by The National Security Archive at George Washington University, a longstanding CWIHP partner. *On the occasion of the conference, the Cuban government released some 480 pages of declassified Cuban documents relating to the invasion, including Cuban intelligence reports on US preparations and Fidel Castro’s directives during the battle, records that, according to Kornbluh, “shed substantial light on Cuba’s ability to repel the invasion.”* One of the Cuban documents, for example, a January 1961 report on the CIA’s clandestine training camps in Central America and Florida, shows that Cuban intelligence analysts estimated there were as many as 6,000 CIA “mercenaries” training at a camp in Guatemala, overestimating by far the agency’s 1,400-man invasion force. National Security Archive and CWIHP plan to translate and publish the documents. For further information on the conference, contact Peter Kornbluh (National Security Archive, 202-994-7000) or the CWIHP. Additional information is also available on the Archive’s website <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/bayofpigs> or on the CWIHP website (<http://cwihip.si.edu>).

mentation who organized the US delegation for the conference, called the meeting “an historical, and historic, event,” organized to produce “new documents, details, and interpretations” of events before, during and after the 3-day battle at the Bay of Pigs. The meeting was planned “in the spirit of historical exploration,” according to Thomas Blanton, executive director of the National Security Archive. Given the continuing tension in U.S.-Cuban relations, he noted, “it is imperative to learn the lessons of this conflict so as not to repeat the past, and this kind of serious scholarly discussion—with actors, witnesses, experts and declassified evidence—gets us beyond rancor to dialogue.” The Cuban delegation was led by Cuban president Fidel Castro, who was accompanied by a number of current and former military commanders, political advisers and scholars.

The Fall of the Wall: The Unintended Self-Dissolution of East Germany's Ruling Regime

By **Hans-Hermann Hertle**

East Germany's sudden collapse like a house of cards in fall 1989 caught both the political and academic worlds by surprise.¹ The decisive moment of the collapse was undoubtedly the fall of the Berlin Wall during the night of 9 November 1989. After the initial political upheavals in Poland and Hungary, it served as the turning point for the revolutions in Central and Eastern Europe and accelerated the deterioration of the Soviet empire. Indeed, the Soviet Union collapsed within two years. Along with the demolition of the "Iron Curtain" in May and the opening of the border between Hungary and Austria for GDR citizens in September 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall stands as a symbol of the end of the Cold War,² the end of the division of Germany and of the continent of Europe.³

Political events of this magnitude have always been the preferred stuff of which legends and myths are made of. The fall of the Berlin Wall quickly developed into "one of the biggest paternity disputes ever"⁴ among the political actors of that time, and it is not surprising that the course of and background to the events during the night of 9 November 1989 still continue to produce legends.

Was the fall of the Berlin Wall the result of a decision or intentional action by the SED leadership, as leading Politburo members claimed shortly after the fact?⁵ Was it really, as some academics argue, "a last desperate move to restabilize the country,"⁶ "a last desperate effort to ride the tiger, control the anger and the ebullience, that had challenged the government"⁷? Or was it, as disappointed supporters of the GDR civil rights movement suspected, the last revenge of the SED, designed to rob the civil rights movement of its revolution?⁸ Did Mikhail Gorbachev or Eduard Shevardnadze order the SED leadership to open the Berlin Wall,⁹ or was Moscow completely surprised by the events in Berlin? Were the Germans granted unity by a historical mistake, "a spectacular blunder,"¹⁰ or "a mixture of common sense and bungling"¹¹? Did four officers from the Ministry for State Security (MfS, or Stasi) and the Interior Ministry, the authors of the new travel regulation presented at the fateful November 9 press conference, trick the entire SED leadership?¹² And if the MfS was involved, could the fall of the Wall have been the Stasi's "opus magnum," as supporters of conspiracy theories want us to believe?¹³ The fall of the Wall—a final conspiracy of the MfS against the SED state?

Sociology and political science did not predict the collapse of the GDR, other Eastern bloc regimes, or even of the Soviet Union itself.¹⁴ Since 1990, post-mortem analysis of the communist system has taken place, but this is problematic methodologically. The Sovietologist Bohdan Harasymiw said, "Now that it has happened (...) the collapse of communism is being everywhere foreseen in

retrospect to have been inevitable." He labeled this thinking "whatever happened, had to have happened," or, more ironically, "the marvelous advantage which historians have over political scientists."¹⁵ Resistance scholar Peter Steinbach commented that historians occasionally forget very quickly "that they are only able to offer insightful interpretations of the changes because they know how unpredictable circumstances have resolved themselves."¹⁶

In the case of 9 November 1989, reconstruction of the details graphically demonstrates that history is an open process. In addition, it also leads to the paradoxical realization that the details of central historical events can only be understood when they are placed in their historical context, thereby losing their sense of predetermination.¹⁷

The mistaken conclusion of what Reinhard Bendix calls "retrospective determinism"—to view events "as if everything had to come about as it ultimately did come about,"¹⁸—as well as the opposing view, which seeks to grasp historical change as a random accumulation of "historical accidents,"¹⁹ can only be avoided by connecting structural history (*Strukturgeschichte*) and the history of events (*Ereignisgeschichte*), as will be attempted to a certain extent in the following essay. This paper focuses on the conditions and modalities of specific decision-making situations in 1989, through the reconstruction of the intended and actual course of events. It also examines the contingencies which helped to bring about the fall of the Wall, removing one of the most important underpinnings of the SED state. The analysis will primarily concentrate on the central decision-making bodies of the party and state apparatus, their perceptions of the problems, and their actions.²⁰

The paper is based on the documentary evidence from the relevant East German archives, specifically the SED Archive, as well as the archives for the Council of Ministers, the MfS, and Ministry of the Interior. The archival sources are supplemented by approximately 200 interviews with the "main actors" from both German states, the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain, and France, who were involved in the political and military decision-making process.²¹

It is generally accepted that developments and changes in the politics and economics of East Germany can only be analyzed within the framework of the political and economic relations "triangle" linking the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic, and the GDR. In addition, relations between the superpowers, i.e. the international context, cannot be ignored.²²

The internal and external conditions that contributed to the rapid collapse of the GDR after the fall of the Wall

developed during the ostensibly stable Honecker Era (1971-1989), gradually corroding the pillars upon which the political system was based. The Soviet empire had been in decline for at least a decade, the GDR economy was on the brink of ruin, the “leading role” of the party was exhausted, the SED leadership had become senile, the party cadre was worn down by years of crisis management, the ideology had become a hollow shell, and the security police were politically disoriented. Structural factors of the crisis restricted the range of possible decisions and options for action available to the SED leadership in the fall of 1989, but did not predetermine the actual course of events. The two most important factors were the exhaustion of the Soviet global strategy and the economic decline of the GDR.

The existence of the GDR as a state was, above all, legitimated by an outside force. The state’s existence was based on the military, economic, and political guarantee provided by the Soviet Union as well as the USSR’s imperial claim and will to power. The signs that the Soviet global strategy had run its course had increased since the early-1980s, and the superpower was increasingly unable to provide the necessary means of support for its empire.²³

Mikhail Gorbachev himself made it perfectly clear that the economic problems in his country had forced him to introduce political reforms after he took power in the Soviet Union in 1985, and affected its relationship with the satellite countries.²⁴ The Soviet Communist Party (CPSU) General Secretary first distanced himself from the Brezhnev Doctrine in November 1986 at a meeting of the party leaders of the COMECON [Council for Mutual Economic Assistance] member countries. He proclaimed “the independence of each party, its right to make sovereign decisions about the problems of development in its country, its responsibility to its own people” as unalterable principles of the relations among the socialist states.²⁵ It was not his intention at that time to dissolve the alliance; rather, the new principles of independence and autonomy of the national parties, equal standing in relations (with the USSR), and voluntary cooperation were designed to place the socialist community on a more solid basis. Gorbachev was still convinced in 1989, according to his closest foreign policy advisor, that “he would be able to reduce the confrontation [with the West] and retain competing socio-political systems.”²⁶

After 1986, it became increasingly clear that, due to the economic crisis, the Soviet leadership was forced to agree to Western demands at the East-West talks in Vienna. The United States and its alliance members made progress in disarmament negotiations, expansion of trade and economic aid contingent upon Soviet compromises on human rights. To the disgust of the SED leadership, Gorbachev and Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze demonstrated their desire to create “peaceful and positive conditions abroad for domestic political reforms” in the Soviet Union without consulting with their allies.²⁷

Furthermore, in the opinion of the SED leadership, these far-reaching compromises on human rights issues would come at the expense of the Soviets’ allies.

Conversely, SED General Secretary Erich Honecker’s state visit to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in September 1987, something the CPSU had blocked for years, fueled the Soviet leadership’s fears of a German-German *rapprochement* and detente behind their backs. Finally, sources inside the SED Politburo fully informed Moscow about the GDR’s desolate economic situation and its financial dependency on the West, especially the Federal Republic.²⁸ The German-German summit accelerated a change in Soviet policy toward Germany (*Deutschlandpolitik*) and served as an important turning point in the relations among Moscow-East Berlin-Bonn. The Soviet-West German relationship began to flourish. The German-German relationship on the other hand, stagnated.²⁹

The wide-ranging declaration of intent in the German-German “Joint Communiqué” of September 1987, particularly the creation of a mixed commission for further development of economic relations, proved to be a farce within a few months.³⁰ Rather than increasing, German-German trade decreased in 1987 and 1988. One last aspect that still flourished was the SED’s policy of using human beings as bargaining chips. In May 1988, the Federal Republic increased its lump sum payment from DM 525 million to DM 860 million for the 1990-1999 period in return for the GDR’s easing of travel restrictions for East Germans visiting the West. In all other respects, however, Bonn restricted its relations with East Berlin to the minimum that was diplomatically necessary and, above all, non-binding.

In the course of 1988, Moscow and East Berlin each grew increasingly uneasy about the other’s intentions. At the conclusion of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) follow-up meeting in Vienna in January 1989, the signatory states pledged to observe the right of every individual “to travel from any country, including his own, and the unrestricted (right) to return to his country.” The GDR had signed similar international agreements many times before without ever putting them into effect domestically. But in Vienna, initially under steady pressure from the Soviets, it agreed to guarantee this right by law and to allow observation of its implementation.³¹ Soviet foreign policy forced domestic political obligations on East Berlin that, if implemented, would threaten at least the stability, if not the existence, of the GDR by softening its rigid isolation from the outside world.

The main source of domestic instability for the SED regime was the desolate state of the economy. In 1971, together with the CPSU, the SED had changed its economic strategy to the so-called “policy of main tasks,” which was memorably formulated in 1975 as the “unity of economic and social policy.”³² The SED leadership’s promise of welfare-state measures—such as a housing-construction

program, increases in salaries and pensions, an improved supply of consumer goods, as well as numerous social policy initiatives—was not based on sound economics, but on opportunistic political and legitimacy-oriented considerations. The latter stemmed from the inner condition of the regime, which it always considered to be precarious, as well as from the experience of the Prague Spring in 1968 and the workers' unrest in Poland in 1970. The "unity of economic and social policy" sought to "compensate for the lack of legitimacy by providing consumer goods and social security."³³

It quickly became apparent that this "real socialist" welfare program could not be supported by the GDR's economy, not least because of the changing international economic conditions. The (social-)political stabilization measures subverted the economy's productive capacity. Increasing the consumption quota burdened the economy's vitality and occurred at the expense of economic revitalization: the investment quota was lowered, the production capacity reduced, infrastructure decayed, buildings deteriorated, ecological exploitation occurred to an unprecedented degree. The changing terms of trade within the Soviet bloc to the advantage of the raw material supplier (the Soviet Union), and the deficit caused by the COMECON exchange of goods were compensated for by investment and consumer goods imports from the West, financed by credit. The debt spiral set in motion by such policies had been an object of concern and discussion at the highest levels of the SED since 1975, but the policy had not been changed despite the increasing severity of the crisis.³⁴

Transfer payments from the Federal Republic, especially the billion-mark loans in 1983 and 1984, had helped to cover the decreasing economic support from the Soviet Union (reduction in the delivery of crude oil beginning in 1982, or delivery for Western currency) and other shortages, and maintain the GDR's credit ratings in international financial markets. These payments, however, could not help the GDR master the heightening foreign and domestic economic crises that began in the mid-1980s. The German-German sense of a common bond sharpened, strengthened by "humanitarian gestures" like expanding travel opportunities for GDR citizens. This in turn resulted in further instability.

The proclaimed "unity of economic and social policy" changed the nature of the legitimacy of the party. The universalistic, humanistic utopia of the communist society as an association of free and equal individuals was reduced, via the technocratic promises of reform of the New Economic System, to a profane socialism based on consumption as the daily task.³⁵ The idea of socialism merged with the fulfillment of welfare-state goals, with the result that the revocation or even the failure of the latter would have to be considered the end of socialism itself. The unity of economic and social policy, as then Central Committee Secretary for Security Issues Egon Krenz told a small group of Politburo members in May 1989, "has to be

carried forward, because this *is* after all socialism in the GDR."³⁶ Consequently, the innovative development of alternatives was precluded at any level of government. Years of crisis management wore out the economic cadre and led to deep distress within the party bureaucracy in the second half of the 1980s.

All domestic and foreign political symptoms of the crisis intensified in the first half of 1989. On 16 May 1989, Gerhard Schürer, the head of the GDR State Planning Commission, told a small circle of SED leaders that the GDR's debt to the West was increasing by 500 million Valutamarks (VM)³⁷ a month, and that, if things continued along these lines, the GDR would be insolvent by 1991. The spending reductions that had already been introduced had to be complemented "by a number of economic measures related to consumption."³⁸ But fearing political repercussions, the Politburo did not dare lower the population's standard of living just five months before the 40th anniversary of the GDR.

At the Bucharest summit of the Warsaw Pact in July 1989, the Soviet Union officially revoked the "Brezhnev Doctrine" of limited sovereignty for the alliance's members. Their future relations were to be developed, as the concluding document put it, "on the basis of equality, independence and the right of each country to arrive at its own political position, strategy, and tactics without interference from an outside party."³⁹ The Soviet guarantee of existence for the communist governments was thereby placed in question—Moscow's allies could no longer count on military support in the event of internal unrest. After the communist parties in Poland and Hungary started down the path of democratic reforms designed to construct multi-party democracies, the SED was confronted with the necessity of legitimizing its rule to its "people" on its own.

After learning from media reports that the barbed wire along the Hungarian-Austrian border was being removed in early May 1989, growing numbers of GDR citizens, above all youth, began to travel to Hungary in the beginning of the summer vacation period in the hope of fleeing across the Hungarian-Austrian border to the Federal Republic. East Germans seeking to leave the GDR occupied the West German embassies in Prague and Budapest, as well as the FRG's permanent representation in East Berlin.

Effective 12 June 1989, Hungary agreed to abide by the Geneva Convention on Refugees. Three months later the Hungarian government decided to give priority to its international agreements and treaties over solidarity with the GDR. Following a secret agreement with Bonn, they opened the border to Austria for GDR citizens on 10 September. In return, the Federal Republic gave Hungary credit in the amount of DM 500 million and promised to make up the losses that Hungary might suffer from retaliatory measures by the GDR.⁴⁰ Tens of thousands of East Germans traveled to the Federal Republic via Austria in the days and weeks that followed. The GDR experienced its largest wave of departures since the construction of the

Berlin Wall in 1961.

This mass exodus demonstrated the weakness of the SED leadership on this issue and undermined the regime's authority in an unprecedented manner. The exodus was a necessary precondition for the founding of new opposition groups, and ultimately, the mass demonstrations. The dual movement of mass exodus and mass protest started the process of collapse in the GDR.

The SED leadership's options were increasingly reduced to the alternatives of either introducing—with uncertain results—political reforms, or constructing a “second Wall” between the GDR and its socialist neighbors Czechoslovakia and Poland and putting down the demonstrations by force.⁴¹ Closing the border to the ČSSR on 3 October 1989 to those without visas, the use of violence against demonstrators before and after the state celebrations for the fortieth anniversary of the GDR on 7 October, and the preparations for forcibly preventing the Monday demonstration in Leipzig on 9 October pointed to the leadership's preference for the second alternative. But in the end, too many people took to the streets, and the heavily armed forces of the state capitulated to the 70,000 peaceful demonstrators.⁴² After 9 October, the strategy of employing violence moved from the forefront to the background, although the possibility of announcing a state of martial law remained an unspoken option among members of the Politburo. Hence, the non-violent resolution of the crisis was not a matter of course in the aftermath of 9 October.

The essential structures of the system itself exacerbated the crisis once cracks had occurred. The party-state was guided, oriented and controlled from above, not integrated from below. The Party's mass organizations reached deep into society and functioned as information-gathering and early-warning systems for the party leadership, but did not possess their own decision-making capacity, let alone a capacity for addressing conflict or solving disputes. The state-controlled economy transformed every economic challenge into a challenge to the state, just as the union between Party and State transformed every criticism into a criticism of the Party. The centralized and personalized decision-making structure directed criticism via the local and district representatives to the top of the system: the Politburo and the Central Committee. The protests by the population, as well as the mood of party members, put the Party and State leadership for the first time in the history of the GDR under such enormous pressure that it had to respond directly through far-reaching personnel changes. The palace revolution against Erich Honecker on 17 October and the dismissal of Günter Mittag and Joachim Herrmann as SED Central Committee Secretaries of Economics and Agitation and Propaganda, respectively, was followed by the 7 November resignation of the Council of Ministers and the 8 November resignation of the entire Politburo.

The resignations not only compounded the Party's

loss of authority in the eyes of the population, but also increased the instability of the centralized leadership structure, since the nomenclature system was based on ties of personal loyalty and carefully developed cooptation rules. Gaining stability and coherence among the leadership would have taken much more time (as the relatively calculated and limited replacement of Honecker's predecessor Walter Ulbricht in 1971 had shown) than the leadership had to regain control under the circumstances.

Although Honecker had succeeded in restabilizing the power of the Party when he took power in 1971, his fall in autumn 1989 had the opposite effect. The change at the top of the party at a time when it had lost control of the masses only accelerated the decay of power. SED members lost their faith in the ability of the party leadership to control the situation; the loss of authority by the SED leadership over the party members was yet another factor in the crisis, adding to the problems that resulted from its loss of authority over the population.

It was not only short-term foreign and domestic political pressures that led to restraints on the unconditional use of police and military force; economic realities in particular argued against the compatibility of a hard-line approach and the demands of long-term stabilization.

By the end of October 1989, the GDR's debt had increased to the point that the country's leading economists considered drastic changes in the economic and social policy necessary, accompanied by a reduction in the standard of living by 25 to 30 percent. However, out of fear of a further loss of power, they considered such an austerity policy impossible. Violent repression of the protests would have ruined the SED's last resort, suggested by the economists in the Politburo on 31 October 1989. They argued that in order to guarantee the solvency of the state, it was absolutely necessary “to negotiate with the FRG government about financial assistance in the measure of two to three billion VM beyond the current limits.”⁴³ While that would increase the debt, it would win time and avoid a possible diktat by the International Monetary Fund. In order to make West Germany's conservative-liberal government more amenable to an increase in the GDR's line of credit, the FRG should be told, albeit expressly ruling out any idea of reunification and the creation of a confederation, “that through this and other programs of economic and scientific-technical cooperation between the FRG and the GDR, conditions could be created even in this century which would make the border between the two German states, as it exists now, superfluous.”⁴⁴

If it had been the original intention of Schürer and his co-authors to open discussion of a possible confederation in light of the threatening bankruptcy, their effort was carefully disguised. Out of consideration for those Politburo members whose primary orientation was toward the Soviet Union, Krenz had pushed Schürer to exclude

any reference to reunification or confederation from the draft, to avoid a discussion of these issues. In the version adopted by the Politburo, the passage in the draft that “put the currently existing form of the border” on the table was eliminated.⁴⁵ The editing alone could not eliminate the fact that the leading economists had suggested using the Wall as a bargaining chip with the FRG government for new loans, as a final resort to guarantee the GDR’s political and economic survival.

Justifying his draft in the Politburo, planning chief Gerhard Schürer explicitly emphasized his idea of trading the Wall for money: “On the last page, we go as far as to address high politics—the form of the state border. We want to make it clear how far considerations should reach. These suggestions should bring to your attention that we could now extract economic advantages from the FRG for such ideas.” He continued, warning that “if the demands are made first from the streets or even from the factories, it would once again eliminate the possibility of us taking the initiative.”⁴⁶

Schürer’s fears have to be seen against the background of the growing protest movement against the SED which, by the end of October, had swept the entire country, including small and middle-sized cities. The MfS had registered a total of 140,000 participants in 24 demonstrations in the week of 16–22 October; the following week, 540,000 people participated in 145 demonstrations, and from 30 October to 4 November, some 1,400,000 people marched in 210 demonstrations. Their main demands were free elections, recognition of opposition groups, and freedom to travel. In addition, the number of applications to leave the GDR increased by 1,000 per week, reaching a total of 188,180 by 29 October.⁴⁷

The issue of travel and permanent exit connected the GDR’s foreign, domestic, and economic problems at the beginning of November. When he took over power on 18 October 1989, SED General Secretary Egon Krenz had promised expanded travel opportunities; a new law was to take effect in December. But the Ministry for State Security dragged its feet on the issue, since it feared that hundreds of thousands would leave the GDR. The State Planning Commission raised the objection that no funds were available to provide those traveling with foreign currency.

One day after the Politburo discussion of the debt crisis, on 1 November, Egon Krenz reported in Moscow on the desolate situation in the GDR to USSR General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev.⁴⁸ But Gorbachev made it clear to Krenz that he could not count on economic help from Moscow, due to the Soviet Union’s own economic crisis. Gorbachev’s advice was essentially that the government had to tell its already dissatisfied populace, which was leaving by the tens of thousands, in as positive a manner as possible that it had been living beyond its means and had to adjust its expectations to a more modest level. If Krenz did not want to accept this logic, with its uncalculable results for the political stability of the GDR,

then his only remaining option was to follow the economists’ recommendation and discreetly attempt to expand German-German cooperation as quickly as possible.

Hence Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, who had been responsible for secret negotiations with the FRG for years, was sent to Bonn on 6 November with the assignment of negotiating informally with CDU Interior Minister Wolfgang Schäuble and Minister of the Chancellery Rudolf Seiters a comprehensive expansion of German-German relations. The central issue in the negotiations was the GDR’s hope for loans totaling DM 12–13 billion. The most pressing request Schalck made was that the FRG government participate, in the short-term run, in the financing of the tourist traffic expected with the adoption of the travel law. The aid requested amounted to DM 3.8 billion, based on estimates of DM 300 for some 12.5 million tourists per year.⁴⁹

The FRG government displayed a willingness to discuss the issues, but made increased economic cooperation contingent upon political conditions. Seiters told Schalck in confidence on 7 November that if the SED relinquished its monopoly of power, allowed independent parties, and guaranteed free elections,⁵⁰ Chancellor Helmut Kohl was prepared, as he announced the next day during a *Bundestag* debate on the state of the nation, “to speak about a completely new dimension of our economic assistance.”⁵¹ Due to the Chancellor’s forthcoming state visit to Poland, the SED’s negotiation channels in Bonn were blocked until 14 November.

Thus the SED leadership was ahead of its people in its secret orientation toward the Federal Republic. The chants of “we are one people” and “Germany, united fatherland” would not dominate the demonstrations until the second half of November. The Party’s goal was admittedly the opposite of that of protesters: the SED leadership intended to stabilize its rule with Bonn’s help, while the demonstrators sought to eliminate the SED state and bring about German unity under democratic conditions.

On 6 November, the SED leadership published the promised draft travel law. Fearing a “hemorrhaging of the GDR,” the party and ministerial bureaucracy limited the total travel time to thirty days a year. The draft also provided for denial clauses that were not clearly defined, and therefore left plenty of room for arbitrary decisions by the authorities. The announcement that those traveling would only be given DM 15 once a year in exchange for GDR marks 15 demonstrated the GDR’s chronic shortage of Western currency and proved to be the straw that broke the camel’s back. Instead of reducing the political pressure, the draft legislation spurred even more criticism during the large demonstrations taking place that same day in a number of cities. At first, the demonstrators chanted sarcastically “Around the world in thirty days—without money,” and then demanded “Visa free to Shanghai,”⁵² “We don’t need laws, the Wall must go,” and, ultimately, “The SED has to go!”

As early as 1 November, the threat of strikes in southern districts had forced the SED to remove the ban on travel to the ČSSR. The Prague embassy of the Federal Republic immediately filled with a new crowd of GDR citizens eager to depart for West Germany. Under pressure from the ČSSR, the SED leadership decided to allow its citizens to travel to the FRG via the ČSSR as of 4 November. With this move, the Wall was cracked open not only via the detour through Hungary, but also through its direct neighbor, the ČSSR. Within the first few days, fifty thousand GDR citizens used this path to leave the country. The ČSSR objected strenuously to the mass migration through its country, and gave the SED the ultimatum to solve its own problems!

A majority of the Politburo on the morning of 7 November still considered immediate implementation of the entire travel law inappropriate, given, for one thing, the ongoing negotiations with the FRG about financial assistance. As a result, the ministerial bureaucracy was given the task of drafting a bill for the early promulgation of that part of the travel law dealing with permanent exit.⁵³ Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer reported these limited plans to the Soviet ambassador, Vyacheslav Kochemasov, on the same day, and asked for Soviet approval.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, the four ministerial bureaucrats' (officers from the MfS and the Interior Ministry) charged with redrafting the bill felt that their assignment had not been thoroughly thought through. After all, doing what they had been charged to do, these officials argued, would privilege those who were seeking permanent exit as opposed to those who were only interested in short visits and who wanted to return to the GDR. Thus it would have forced everybody to apply for permanent exit. Acting out of loyalty to the government and a desire to uphold the state, the officers revised the draft to fit what they perceived as the needs of the situation, expanding the regulation of shorter visits to the West. These changes, however, went beyond the plans that had been presented to the Soviet Union for approval just two days earlier.

At no time did the officers intend to grant complete freedom to travel as further clauses in the draft made clear. Private trips had to be applied for, as had been the case before, and only those who possessed a passport for travel could get a visa. Only four million GDR citizens had passports; all others, it was calculated, would have to apply for a passport first and then would have to wait at least another four weeks for a visa. These regulations thus effectively blocked the immediate departure of the majority of GDR citizens. The officers decided to place a media ban on the release of the information until 4 a.m. on 10 November, hoping that a release of the information by the GDR media at this early hour would not attract as much public attention. The local offices of the Interior Ministry and MfS and the border patrols were to be instructed about the new regulations and had until that morning to prepare for the mass exodus.

The officers' draft, including the prepared press

release, was presented to the Security Department of the Central Committee and the ministries participating—the MfS, the Interior Ministry and the Foreign Ministry—for approval around mid-day. In the course of the Central Committee meeting (which had begun the day before), or to be more exact, during a “smoking break,” several members of the Politburo approved the draft. The draft was then submitted to the Council of Ministers in a “fast track procedure” (*Umlaufverfahren*), which was designed to guarantee a quick decision—by 6:00 p.m.⁵⁵

One copy of the draft went to Egon Krenz. Around 4:00 p.m., he read the proposed regulation to 216 Central Committee members and added, “No matter what we do in this situation, we’ll be making the wrong move.”⁵⁶ The Central Committee showed approval for the measure nonetheless. At this point, the travel regulation was nothing more than a “proposal,” as Krenz emphasized, or a draft. The Council of Ministers had not yet made a formal decision. Krenz, however, spontaneously told the government spokesman to release the news “immediately,” thereby canceling the gag order in passing.

This decision could have been corrected since government spokesman Wolfgang Meyer had been informed about the blackout and its background. But Krenz's next decision could not be reversed. He handed the draft and the press release to Politburo member Günter Schabowski, who was serving as party spokesman on that day, and told him to release the information during an international press conference scheduled for 6 p.m. that evening. This interference by the Party in the government's procedures led to the collapse of all of the MfS and the Interior Ministry careful preparations for the new travel regulations.

Without checking, Schabowski added the draft for the Council of Ministers to his papers. He had not been present when the Politburo confirmed the draft travel regulation that afternoon, nor had he been present when Krenz read the travel draft to the Central Committee. He therefore was not familiar at all with the text. Around 7 p.m., during the press conference, carried live by GDR television, Schabowski announced the new travel regulations. It was possible to apply for permanent exit and private travel to the West “without presenting [the heretofore necessary] requirements,” and GDR officials would issue approval certificates “on short notice.”

Journalists asked when the regulations would go into effect. Schabowski appeared a bit lost, since “this issue had never been discussed with me before,” as he later said. He scratched his head and glanced at the announcement again, his eyes not catching the final sentence that stated that the press release should be made public no earlier than 10 November. Rather, he noticed the words “immediately,” and “without delay” at the beginning of the document. Thus, he responded concisely: “Immediately, without delay!”⁵⁷

Tom Brokaw, anchorman for the American television

station NBC, who did not have any advance knowledge of the announcement,⁵⁸ succeeded in organizing an exclusive interview with Schabowski immediately after the press conference.⁵⁹ Brokaw believed that the broken phrases that the interpreter cobbled into English meant that the border would be opened. In the second floor of the press center, he now hoped to extract a clear, unmistakable statement from Schabowski. Hence Brokaw and his team of reporters were even more surprised at Schabowski's improvised and uncertain answers, which gave the interview a surrealistic atmosphere.⁶⁰ According to Brokaw and his colleague Marc Kusnetz, Schabowski asked his assistant to show him the text once more in the course of the conversation:⁶¹

Brokaw: "Mr. Schabowski, do I understand correctly? Citizens of the GDR can leave through any checkpoint that they choose for personal reasons. They no longer have to go through a third country?"

Schabowski: "They are not further forced to leave GDR by transit through another country."

Brokaw: "It is possible for them to go through the Wall at some point?"

Schabowski: "It is possible for them to go through the border."

Brokaw: "Freedom to travel?"

Schabowski: "Yes. Of course. It is not [a] question of tourism. It is a permission to leave GDR."⁶²

In spite of the information gleaned from consulting his "notes" again, Schabowski's confusion could not have been greater. On one hand, he confirmed that the new regulations meant the freedom to travel; on the other hand, he emphasized in the next sentence that it was not a matter of tourism, but the ability to leave the GDR, meaning permanent exit. "When I sat down with him for an interview, he was still learning about the policy," Brokaw noted before airing the interview.⁶³

A short time after his exclusive interview, Brokaw stood in front of the Berlin Wall at the Brandenburg Gate. NBC had opened a direct line to New York the day before, and Brokaw reported live to America from the historic stage that was, at that point, nearly empty. "Tom Brokaw at the Berlin Wall. This is a historic night. The East German government has just declared that East German citizens will be able to cross the Wall from tomorrow morning forward—without restrictions."⁶⁴ Brokaw had boiled down Schabowski's convoluted answers to the shortest possible—and correct—statement. He had grasped correctly when the new regulation would come into effect ("as of tomorrow morning"), and left open the question whether the right to cross the border included the right to return to the GDR.

The German public was not as correctly informed as the American one. Schabowski's announcement was the lead story in both the East and West German nightly news broadcasts that aired after the press conference, between 7 p.m. and 8:15 p.m. Western press services—including West

German television—interpreted the contradiction-laden statements from Schabowski to mean an immediate "opening of the border." The Associated Press headline from 7:05 p.m. read "GDR opens borders," and the German Press Agency released the "sensational information" at 7:41 p.m. that "the GDR border is open." The climax of these instances of reporting leading events was the late news from the West German public station First German Television (ADR). Anchorman Hanns Joachim Friedrichs announced that "the gates in the Berlin Wall stand wide open," while a live shot immediately following the announcement showed the still-closed border, a picture that was quickly declared an exception. The media suggested to an audience of millions in East and West a reality which had yet to come about. The distribution of this false image of reality contributed significantly to transforming the announced events into reality. It was the television reports in particular that mobilized ever greater numbers of Berliners to go to the border crossings.

Without any information on the new policy or orders from the military leadership, the GDR border patrols stationed at the Berlin border crossings faced growing crowds that wanted to test the alleged immediate freedom to travel. Initial inquiries by the border patrols to their superiors did not yield any results, since during the evening only deputies, or deputies of deputies, were available. They, in turn, could not reach their superiors because the meeting of the Central Committee had been extended to 8:45 p.m. without notice. The highest echelons of the party and the government were therefore unaware of the press conference, the media reaction it had engendered, and the gathering storm on the border crossings.

The crowds were the heaviest at the Bornholmer Strasse crossing, located in Berlin's densely populated Prenzlauer Berg district. At first, the border guards reacted by telling the gathering crowds to wait until tomorrow. To relieve some of the pressure, they allowed certain individuals to exit, but they placed an "invalid" stamp in their identification cards. Without knowing it, the first East Berliners who crossed Bornholmer Bridge into West Berlin had been deprived of their citizenship by this maneuver to "let off steam."

When the Central Committee meeting finally ended and the higher levels of the party hierarchy were available to formally make decisions, they were shocked by the news. But they had already missed the time for corrective action. The room for maneuvers that would not destroy the plans for the coming days had been reduced to a minimum. The dynamic of the events, constantly accelerated by the live reports of the Western media, overtook the decision-making process. In contrast, the exchange of information between the SED leadership, the MfS, Interior and Defense ministries moved like a merry-go-round; the decisions that were ultimately made were based on information that no longer was up-to-date.

The maneuver "to let off steam," rather than reducing the pressure at the border crossings, had raised it to the

boiling point instead. Passport controllers and border soldiers at the Bornholmer Strasse crossing, fearing for their lives, made the decision on their own to cease all controls at 11:30 p.m. “We’re opening the floodgates now!” announced the chief officer of passport control, and the barriers were raised. The border guards gave way to the pressure from the crowds until midnight at most of the border crossings in the inner city, allowing East Berliners to cross without papers. The same thing happened until 1:00 a.m. at the border control points around Berlin and on other parts of the German-German border. Thousands of Berliners crossed the fortifications and the Wall at the Brandenburg Gate, and then strolled for several hours around Pariser Platz. Dances of joy erupted along the Wall; the symbol of the division of Germany had fallen.

The governing apparatus in East Berlin, Bonn, and in the capital cities of the Four Powers were caught by surprise. In a matter of hours, the East Germans had overpowered the armed forces of the GDR and outmaneuvered the cleverest border regime system in the world. US President George Bush managed to utter in a first reaction that he was “very pleased,” but appeared pensive and reserved.⁶⁵ British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher spoke of a “victory for freedom,” but was very concerned about a possible destabilization of Gorbachev’s position and the prospects for German reunification.⁶⁶ French President François Mitterrand described the fall of the Wall as a “joyous event” and “progress for freedom in Europe.”⁶⁷ Internally, however, he reacted with horror. Gorbachev could never accept this development, he believed; the Germans were risking a world war without realizing it.⁶⁸ Chancellor Helmut Kohl learned of the events in Berlin during his state visit to Poland. Cut off from his most important information channels, the chancellor felt “like [he was] on another planet” in Warsaw.⁶⁹ He interrupted his visit the next day and returned to Bonn via Berlin. The politicians in the Western capitals looked to Moscow with anticipation: How would the Soviet Union react?

While the fall of the Wall occurred during prime time television in the United States, because of the time difference, Moscow was at a disadvantage. It was two hours later there than in Berlin. When the border crossings were “flooded” and East Germans were dancing on the Wall, the Soviet leadership was sound asleep. Mikhail Gorbachev reported that “I learned what had happened during the night of 9 November on the morning of 10 November from a report from the ambassador. I asked him what the GDR leadership had done, and he started to explain the situation and told me about Schabowski’s press conference. He informed me that they had opened all border crossings along the Wall. I told him that they had taken the proper action, and asked that he inform them of that.”⁷⁰

The CPSU Politburo met a few hours later. As then Foreign Minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, remembered:

“Before the meeting, a phone conversation took place between Mikhail Gorbachev and myself. We had made contact as usual, whenever we had to discuss such important issues [...] We spoke about different options, and we only rejected one possibility from the beginning, that of the use of force [...] The events were the result of a mass movement that could not be held back by any government.”⁷¹ While the question of whether to recreate the former *status quo* was not debated by the high-level politicians, such discussions occurred in the military. But, Shevardnadze said, “the Soviet Army was very disciplined and would not have done anything without a specific order. If we had used force to close the Wall, we would have started a spiral of violence that would have started World War III.” Gorbachev, according to Shevardnadze, therefore strongly recommended to the East German leadership that “they not shed blood under any circumstances.”⁷²

Since military intervention was not to be part of the equation, the Soviets’ political room for maneuver in reaction to the fall of the Wall was also very limited. Gorbachev’s conclusion was “that politics must now be guided by the people’s will.”⁷³ The conclusion he drew from the situation was “We had to adapt policies to the situation at hand.”⁷⁴ Adapting policies to the situation at hand first required an analysis and definition of the situation. To criticize the obvious incompetence of the SED leadership at this point, or to expose Krenz as a “fool” or a “dead man on vacation” in this situation, as Central Committee staffer Nikolai Portugalov later did,⁷⁵ would only weaken the GDR further and increase the Soviet Union’s problems. Therefore, according to Portugalov, Gorbachev gave orders to back Krenz.⁷⁶ Foreign Minister Shevardnadze explained to the press that the Soviet Union viewed the “events in the GDR entirely as an affair of the new leadership and its people, and wished them much success.” He praised the “border and travel regulations” as a “correct, clever, and wise decision.”⁷⁷

In the late afternoon and evening, Gorbachev sent verbal messages to Chancellor Kohl as well as François Mitterrand, Margaret Thatcher, and George Bush. The message to Kohl, passed from the Soviet ambassador in Bonn, Yuli Kvisinski, to Horst Teltschik, the advisor to the chancellor, reached the chancellor during a rally in West Berlin.⁷⁸ Gorbachev asked the chancellor “in the spirit of openness and realism” to take “the necessary and pressing measures to assure that a complication and destabilization of the situation is not permitted.”⁷⁹

With reference to what he considered the “correct and far-reaching decision of the new GDR leadership,” Gorbachev immediately informed Bush, Mitterrand and Thatcher about his message to Kohl. He expressed his concern about a possible “destabilization of the situation not only in the center of Europe but also beyond” if the “postwar realities, meaning the existence of two German states” were called into question. Gorbachev added that the Soviet ambassador in East Berlin had been told to make

contact with the representatives of the three Western Powers in West Berlin in order to work together to assure that “the events do not take an undesirable path.”⁸⁰

Even during the rally in Berlin, Teitschik and Kohl puzzled over whether Gorbachev’s message was “a request based on concern” about renewed spontaneous breakthroughs in the Wall or rather “a veiled threat.”⁸¹ Upon his return to the chancellor in Bonn, Teitschik received a call from Brent Scowcroft around midnight. The National Security Advisor to the US President informed him about the verbal message from Gorbachev to Bush. For Teitschik, the interesting part of the message was Scowcroft’s confidential notification “that Gorbachev had ordered the SED leadership to guarantee a ‘peaceful transition’ in the GDR.”⁸² This news solved the puzzle for the chancellor and his advisor: “There would not be a repetition of 17 June [1953]. Gorbachev’s message, which he also passed on to George Bush, was the request to work together to assure that politics did not allow events to spin out of control.”⁸³

The restrained reaction of President Bush and Secretary of State James Baker sent the clear message to Moscow that US foreign policy welcomed the changes in East and Central Europe, but was not hoping for instability or to gain advantage at Soviet expense.⁸⁴

After conversations with Thatcher, Bush, Krenz, and Mitterrand,⁸⁵ Kohl called the Soviet party chief midday on 11 November. He assured Gorbachev that he “rejected any form of radicalization and [...] did not wish to see any destabilization of the situation in the GDR.” Gorbachev forcefully asked the chancellor to give the reforms in the GDR time to develop. “Under no circumstances,” according to Gorbachev, “should the developments be forced in an unforeseen direction, turned toward chaos [...] And I hope, that you will use your authority, your political clout, and your influence to keep others in line, as the time and its demands require.”⁸⁶ Kohl and Teitschik both breathed a sigh of relief after this call. Teitschik wrote in his journal: “No threat, no warning, just the request to be circumspect. Now I am absolutely sure that there will not be a violent return to the *status quo ante*.”⁸⁷

The early hopes of the SED leaders to regain control of the Wall and restore order the next day or the day after were not fulfilled. The crowds in Berlin and at the German-German border over the weekend were huge. For reasons unknown, elite units of the GDR army were still placed on higher alert at midday on 10 November, and the entire MfS was called on duty until further notice—but neither were deployed. The fall of the Wall proved to be irreversible.

The historical reconstruction of the political decisions and actions that led to the fall of the Wall eliminates explanations that portray the event as a planned action by the SED leadership, a masterminded plot to oust the party and the state leadership, or even as the “opus magnum” of the MfS.

The fall of the Wall can be analyzed as a classic case of an unintentional result of social action, a concept

developed by Robert Merton.⁸⁸ In particular, Merton’s category of a self-fulfilling prophecy can be applied to the circumstances surrounding the fall of the Wall.⁸⁹ Merton made use of the well-known “Thomas theory:” “When people define situations as real, they become real in their consequences.” People do not react only to the objective aspects of a situation, Merton explains, “but also, and often primarily, they react to the meaning that the situation has for them.” Once they had given a situation a meaning, he continued, it determined “their subsequent actions, and some results of these actions.”⁹⁰

On the evening of 9 November, it was the media that decisively influenced the “definition of the situation” as a result of the uncoordinated decisions by the SED leaders and the dissynchronization of the leadership structures. The restrictive details of the planned travel regulations were not covered up by the press agencies and the television reports, but were very quickly pushed into the background by the far-reaching and heavily symbolic interpretations.

The interpretations publicized by the Western media (“GDR opens border”), incorrect assumptions (“The border is open”), and “false” images of reality (“The gates of the Wall stand wide open!”) ultimately caused the action that allowed the assumed event and the “false” image of reality to become fact. Those television viewers who actually had only wanted to be a part of the event and therefore had hurried to the border crossings and the Brandenburg Gate actually brought about the event they thought had already happened. A fiction spread by the media took hold of the masses and thereby became reality.

The prerequisite for that occurrence was admittedly that “real existing” reality, meaning the political and military leadership of the GDR, border soldiers, passport controllers, and the people’s police did not stand in the way of these actions. The most important condition for the peaceful outcome of the storming of the Wall was, again, that the Soviet leadership under Gorbachev—after the democratic upheavals in Poland and Hungary—kept the 350,000 Soviet soldiers in the GDR in their barracks and accepted the fall of the Wall without military intervention. It is certain that they did not anticipate that the “pearl of the Soviet empire” would be lost in less than a year.

The fall of the Wall, however, created a completely new situation. With the end of the forced detention provided by the Wall, the SED government lost control of “its” citizens over night. The lack of legitimacy became obvious and led to the dissolution of the SED state. Hans Modrow, newly elected chairman of the Council of Ministers, was deprived of his most important negotiating tool with the FRG government for the billion-mark loans needed to stabilize the GDR’s economy—the people had destroyed the last real collateral in the GDR by breaking through the Wall.⁹¹ The people nullified Modrow’s idea of at least allowing free elections and relinquishing the party’s leadership claim in the GDR constitution in return for emergency loans from the FRG government. The mass demonstrations against the

government continued during the second half of November and forced these concessions even before the negotiations with Bonn could be completed.

Even before the fall of the Wall, the choruses of “Germany—united fatherland” were heard at demonstrations, but they were submerged in the volume of slogans. After 9 November, the choruses changed quickly: instead of “We are *the* people,” demonstrators chanted “We are *one* people.” Banners with “Germany—united fatherland,” as well as black-red-golden flags without the GDR emblem, were soon the prevalent image of demonstrations throughout the country. Leaders of citizens’ movements, authors, artists, and intellectuals, who had until then considered themselves the spokespersons and protectors of the demonstrators, distanced themselves from these new slogans. Their attempts to play on anxieties about a sell-out of “our material and moral values” and to propagate the GDR’s independence from the FRG as a “socialist alternative” to the Federal Republic, however, failed,⁹² and ended with a marginalization of the civil rights movement’s *avant garde*.

Movement into the FRG again rose dramatically: more than 120,000 people left the GDR from 10 November to the end of 1989; in all of 1989, 343,854 left; in January 1990, 73,729 left; in February, 63,893 left, and in March, the total was 46,241. Under the continued pressure of the demonstrations and increasingly from the SED membership, the central party structures disintegrated—the Politburo, Central Committee Secretariat, and the Central Committee dissolved themselves. The Party’s ability to direct the mass organizations also collapsed, as did the cadre nomenclature system. Without the guiding central point of the Party, the state government structures crumbled.

After the fall of the Wall and the end of the SED, which later reconstituted itself as the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the Soviet Union was the last guarantee for the GDR’s existence as a state. At first, the Soviet leadership energetically opposed all tendencies toward unification by both German states. But the USSR’s internal problems—increasing nationality conflicts, severe economic and supply crises, threatening insolvency to the West, and the signs of deterioration of the Warsaw Pact—and the unstoppable deterioration of the SED’s power accelerated the recognition in January 1990 that the GDR could no longer be saved.⁹³ Gorbachev agreed to unification in principle with Modrow, Baker, and, on 10 February, finally, with Kohl. The first free parliamentary elections on 18 March 1990, from which the CDU-lead “Alliance for Germany” emerged as the strongest force with 48.1% of the vote, finally presented an unambiguous statement by the East Germans in support of a rapid path to a currency, economic, and social union⁹⁴ and to German unity.

The self-dissolution of the SED state after the collapse of the ruling system marked the German special path (*Sonderweg*) to the end of communist one-party rule in

Central and Eastern Europe. The reference to the German nation-state, however, was “not a new expression of a nationalistic consciousness,” as Rainer Lepsius has correctly pointed out. Rather, the nation-state was “the existing frame of reference,”⁹⁵ which had retained its normative claim to validity throughout the years of the division of Germany.



DOCUMENT No. 1
Memorandum of Conversation Between
Egon Krenz, Secretary General of the
Socialist Unity Party (SED),
and Mikhail S. Gorbachev,
Secretary General of the
Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU),
1 November 1989

Top Secret

To all members and candidates of the Politburo
 [1 December 1989]
 signed Egon Krenz

Berlin, 1 November 1989

After the extremely friendly welcome, Comrade Egon Krenz pointed out that he had read in *Pravda* about the slogans by the CC CPSU on the occasion of the 72nd anniversary of the October Revolution. He had been touched in particular by the slogan “Greetings to October, greetings to the socialist countries”.

Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev expressed his pleasure about the fact that Comrade Krenz had come to Moscow even before the October [Revolution] festivities. This symbolized that both parties and countries were striving to implement the ideals of the October Revolution.

He sincerely welcomed Comrade Krenz to Moscow on behalf of all comrades of the Politburo of the CC CPSU and of the leadership of the Soviet Union as well as in his own name. Despite an extremely tight schedule, they had tried to make arrangements in order to free up this day for extensive conversations with Comrade Krenz. He [Gorbachev] was hoping in particular for vivid information on developments in the GDR. Although information about them had come in, the report by Comrade Krenz would be of extraordinary importance for him. Even the most extensive information needed to be evaluated thoroughly, and who could do this more precisely than the comrades from the GDR?

Presently, the entire world was witnessing that the SED had embarked on a course of fast changes. But the events were moving very fast as well, and one should not

fall behind. This had been the long-standing experience of the Soviet Union. Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that he had already said in Berlin [on 7 October 1989] that one must not miss the time for changes. A dialogue with society was necessary. There was no other way for a leading party to act. On the one hand, it [the Party] had to take the time to analyze the situation thoroughly and work out its political orientation. On the other hand, life was developing with its own dynamism, and one had to prevent a knot of problems from being created that could not be sorted out.

Comrade Gorbachev recommended not to be deterred by the complicated problems. From his own experience he knew that comrades were at times depressed because even after several years of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union there were still such great problems to resolve. He then always told them that the Party itself had wanted *perestroika*. It had involved the mass of people in politics. If now some processes were not running as expected, if there were stormy and emotionally charged arguments, then one would had to cope with that, too, and not become afraid of one's own people.

He did not mean to say that *perestroika* had been fully achieved in the Soviet Union. The horse was saddled but the ride was not over. One could still be thrown off. On the other hand, much experience had already been gained, which had great significance. Now the phase of intensified work for the continuation of *perestroika* was beginning in the Soviet Union.

The people and the Party in the GDR were presently also facing profound changes. He wished Comrade Krenz success for this. The Soviet Union would, of course, stand at the side of the comrades in the GDR in this process. This had never been in question, not even as problems emerged which should actually have been discussed openly. There had never been any doubt for the Soviet Union and the CPSU that the German Democratic Republic was its closest friend and ally. Second to the people of the GDR, the Soviet people were probably the one wishing the GDR the most success in its endeavor. In this vein he wished to welcome Comrade Krenz to his visit in Moscow.

Comrade Egon Krenz expressed his thanks for the welcome and communicated cordial greetings from the comrades of the Politburo of the CC SED. He appreciated that Comrade Gorbachev had so quickly found time for this talk. He also thanked him for his visit to Berlin on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the GDR, and in particular for his conversation with the entire Politburo of the CC SED, which had moved ahead many things. This applied above all to the remark that one cannot be late [in adapting to changes], otherwise one will be punished by life [*daß man nicht zu spät kommen darf, sonst werde man vom Leben bestraft werden*].

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that he had actually been speaking about himself.

Comrade Krenz explained that this remark by Comrade Gorbachev and his entire appearance had met great

resonance within the Politburo. It had initiated the process of discussing the future policy of the Party.

The SED could state rightfully that it had made great strides since its last party convention. On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the GDR, one could draw the balance that a lot of good and lasting things had been done for the people. One could also build upon a good foundation.

The population, however, resented the Party for having the mass media in particular create a world of illusion that did not coincide with the practical experience of the people and their everyday life. That caused a break of confidence between Party and people. This was actually the worst thing that could happen to a party.

Some say that the cause for this is to be found in the fact that the party leadership misjudged the domestic political situation in the last three months. It proved to be speechless when so many people left the GDR. This was a tough accusation. In addition, besides political mistakes, important psychological mistakes were also made in this difficult situation: In the newspapers it was stated that we did not weep any tears after these people left. This deeply hurt the feelings of many mothers and fathers, relatives, friends and comrades of these people whose leaving caused them great pains.

Despite these facts the Politburo of the CC of the SED agreed that the political crisis in which the GDR currently found itself had not just begun this summer. Many problems had been accumulating for a long time.

Today one can say that the main reason [for this situation] was the mistaken approach of the XI SED Party Congress, which was not based on a realistic estimate of the situation. The solution of economic questions was derived from subjective opinions that failed to reflect the opinions prevalent in the Party and the population. Incorrect conclusions were drawn from important international developments—in the Soviet Union, in other socialist countries—as well as from the domestic developments in the GDR.

Comrade Krenz asked not to be misunderstood; if one had an ally and wanted to go through thick and thin with him, one could not just state this friendship in declarations and communiqués and one should not distance oneself when it came to the solution of concrete economic and other questions. But one had to stand together as friends and solve the emerging problems together.

He saw a great problem in the fact that young as well as older people had reservations about the development of socialism in the GDR since they suddenly felt that, on the basic questions of the evolution of socialism, the Soviet Union and the GDR were not seeing eye to eye any longer. This was the GDR's problem; the barriers had been build on its part. The people today, however, were educated and smart. They perceived very well that while the right words were used, the deeds did not follow suit.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that the people in the GDR also received information from the Soviet Union

which they evaluated independently. They were also informed from the West and drew their conclusions.

Comrade Krenz stated that they in the GDR had unfortunately left many questions regarding *perestroika* in the Soviet Union to the judgment of the enemy and failed to have a dialogue with the people about it. This happened despite the fact that Comrade Gorbachev had advised Comrade Erich Honecker at one of their first meetings to deal with the opinions which had appeared in Soviet publications and with which he disagreed.

Comrade Krenz pointed out that the prohibition of [the Soviet magazine] *Sputnik* in the GDR had led to a situation in which the enemy could raise questions about the GDR citizens's right of access to information. The comrades and citizens outside the Party who complained about it were not primarily concerned about the contents of *Sputnik*. The problem was that the GDR leadership on the one hand was watching as the population was receiving broadcasts from the Western TV stations every evening for many hours, but, on the other hand, prohibited the reading of a Soviet newspaper. This was an important turning-point in the political thinking of GDR citizens. After the 9th Plenum of the CC of the SED [on 18 October 1989], one of the first steps to be ordered therefore was the return of *Sputnik* onto the list of permitted newspapers.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that the GDR still has the right to criticize statements by Soviet news media with which it disagreed. You could read the most diverse things in Soviet newspapers nowadays; hardly anything could shock him in this regard. As an example he mentioned that a newspaper from a Baltic republic had recently cited a well-known Soviet economist to the effect that a conspiracy was being prepared in Moscow.

Comrade Krenz agreed that when the newspapers at home raise critical questions, one could quickly enter into a dialogue. Today one could hear among the GDR citizens that the [GDR TV show] "Aktuelle Kamera" was now already more interesting than Western TV [shows].

Comrade Krenz emphasized that despite all the imperfections and problems in the GDR and in face of the fact that there was still no coherent concept for the future developments, one thing had been achieved after all: The problems of the GDR were now not being brought into the GDR from the West, but were discussed in our country [by ourselves].

This was very important, Comrade Gorbachev interjected.

Comrade Krenz explained that even though he knew that Comrade Gorbachev was well informed about the developments since he personally had had many extensive conversations with [Soviet] Ambassador [Vyacheslav] Kochemassov, he nevertheless wanted to say that the road to the 9th Plenum of the CC of the SED had been very complicated.

When Comrade Krenz returned from his trip to China,⁹⁶ he decided to act. After consultation with Comrade Willi Stoph [Deputy Chairman of the Council of State] it was

agreed that he would propose a declaration by the Politburo on the current problems of the situation in the GDR. The draft of this declaration was basically very watered-down, since it was initially intended just to overcome the situation of paralysis together with Comrade Erich Honecker. Therefore they were willing to agree to a number of compromises.

Comrade Krenz handed the draft resolution to Comrade Honecker who later called him and stated the following:

1. If Comrade Krenz introduced the resolution in the Politburo, he [Honecker] would consider this as a move against him personally. He himself had never undertaken anything against Comrades Wilhelm Pieck [former GDR president (1949-1960)] and Walter Ulbricht [former SED First Secretary (1953-1971)]. Comrade Krenz commented that this was not the truth but had been stated [by Honecker] in this way.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that he himself remembered Comrade Ulbricht's affair still very well.⁹⁷

2. Comrade Honecker declared that if Comrade Krenz introduced the resolution in the Politburo, he would divide the leadership of the Party. Comrade Honecker would try to prevent this resolution from being adopted.

3. If Comrade Krenz introduced this resolution in the Politburo, he would have to expect that the cadre decisions, which would sooner or later be introduced in the Politburo, would look different from those that had been planned. He was thereby referring to Krenz personally.

Comrade Krenz introduced the draft resolution in the Politburo against the will of Comrade Honecker. Comrade Honecker, who chaired the session, stated this fact explicitly. After a long discussion all other members of the Politburo, with the exception of one comrade, spoke out in favor of the declaration. On the evening of the first day of this two-day Politburo session, the attempt was made to constitute a commission composed of Comrades Günter Mittag [SED CC Secretary for Economics] and Joachim Herrmann [SED CC Secretary for Propaganda], along with Comrade Krenz. The objective was to water down the resolution even more. At the demand of Comrade Krenz, Comrade Günter Schabowski was involved in the work of the commission. Both fought together for the adoption of the resolution, which was eventually achieved.

Comrade Gorbachev remarked in this regard that, politically, this was all clear to him. In human terms, however, he viewed this development as a great personal tragedy for Comrade Honecker. He had always had a good personal relationship with him, and there had been no problems in this area. He had, however, noticed with surprise certain changes in Comrade Honecker within the last years. Had he [Honecker] made some basic policy changes two or three years ago at his own initiative, such deficits and difficulties as they currently existed would have been neither necessary nor possible. Comrade Erich Honecker obviously considered himself No. 1 in socialism, if not in the world. He did not really perceive any more

what was actually going on.

Comrade Krenz explained that he had personally been very much affected by this development since he had been close to Comrade Erich Honecker throughout much of his life.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that this had also caused a certain amount of speculation in the West. But they should not be afraid of this.

Comrade Krenz went on to say that the change of Comrade Honecker had occurred in 1985 when Comrade Gorbachev was elected as secretary general of the CC of the CPSU. Suddenly, Comrade Honecker saw himself confronted with a young dynamic leader who approached new questions in very unconventional ways. Until that time he had viewed himself in that role. Slowly he lost his sense of reality. The worst thing was that he relied less and less on the collective and more and more on Comrade Günter Mittag.

Comrade Gorbachev asked about the role of Comrade Joachim Herrmann.

Comrade Krenz explained that Comrade Herrmann had, for the most part, followed orders by Comrade Honecker without his own input. Comrade Mittag, by contrast, had manipulated Comrade Honecker, created mistrust toward other members of the Politburo, and influenced tactical as well as strategic decisions by Comrade Honecker in selfish ways.

Comrade Krenz reported that the Politburo had discussed an analysis of the economic situation yesterday. Prior to the meeting they had requested to get an untarnished picture of the real situation of the GDR economy. Such an analysis had never before been discussed in the Politburo.

Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that he had found himself in the same situation. He had also had no knowledge about the state budget when he became secretary general. As early as during the tenure of Comrade [Yuri] Andropov [CPSU General Secretary from 1982 to 1984], he and Comrade [Nikolay] Ryzhkov [President of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union (1985 to 1990)] had been tasked to analyze the situation of the economy since it was felt that something was rotten there. But when they tried to find out the full truth they were ordered to back off. Today it was clear to him why this had happened. Basically a national budget no longer existed. They were still coping with the consequences today.

Comrade Krenz explained that they had begun the 9th Plenum on the premise that they would face up to the truth. But if he stated the truth about the state of the economy before the CC, this could cause a shock with bad consequences.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that they had known about the real state of the GDR economy in the Soviet Union. They also were informed about the relations with the FRG and about the problems that were arising in that respect. The Soviet Union had always tried to fulfill its obligations towards the GDR. Apart from the fact that 2

million tons of oil [deliveries] had to be canceled due to great domestic problems, they had always understood that the GDR could not function without the help of Soviet Union. This support was the internationalist responsibility of the Soviet Union. They had wondered at the same time, however, why, given this situation, the GDR [leaders] was constantly lecturing about GDR successes. This was particularly hard to take since they knew about the real situation in the GDR. Comrade Gorbachev said that he once tried to talk to Comrade Honecker about the GDR debt. This had been curtly repudiated by him [Honecker] as such problems would not exist [in the GDR]. Comrade Honecker apparently thought he was the savior of his homeland. The entire development was a great personal tragedy for him.

Since he held such a high office, this [personal tragedy] turned into a political tragedy. Comrade Gorbachev emphasized he had tried to maintain a good personal relationship until the end. This had not been easy as he was aware of Comrade Honecker's statements and real opinion. He had, however, tolerated this since other things were more important.

Comrade Krenz emphasized that one had to take into consideration that many comrades had been aware of the problems for a long time. They, however, remained silent to maintain the unity and cohesion of the Party. He had distinctly realized for the first time in the Politburo session on 31 October 1989, how much of an impediment the [otherwise] correct principle of unity and cohesion could become in certain situations when problems are not faced frankly and honestly.

Comrade Gorbachev expressed his conviction that if Comrade Honecker had not been so blind and had not relied exclusively on Comrade Mittag, but had also consulted with Comrade Krenz or Comrade Stoph, things might have developed differently. He had particularly felt badly for Comrade Stoph because he had effectively been very much humiliated by Comrade Honecker.

Comrade Gorbachev remarked that he had been struck particularly badly by the way Comrade [Hans] Modrow [SED leader in Saxony] had been treated.

Comrade Krenz related on this point that he had actually received an order as early as two years ago to depose Comrade Modrow. Back then the artists at two Dresden theaters had demanded to implement *perestroika* in the GDR, too. Comrade Honecker was on vacation during that time. He called Comrade Krenz on the phone and ordered him to go to Dresden. There he was to lead the discussion with the objective of deposing Comrade Modrow. Comrade Krenz went to Dresden and had a very frank talk with Comrade Modrow. They found a tactical solution to the effect that Comrade Modrow was to be criticized but not dismissed from his office.

Comrade Gorbachev said that Comrade Krenz had addressed a very deep and important issue, namely that a mere formal unity within the Party was to be avoided. Unity had to be created based on a variety of opinions [and] respect for the opinion of others. Problems always

arose when a leader tried to maintain his position at any price and merely expected his [comrades] to agree. In the Soviet Union, they had watched Comrade Honecker enlarging the Politburo further in order to be able to play one comrade against another in this large committee. This had not been right.

Comrade Gorbachev reported that nowadays everybody was speaking their minds freely within the Politburo of the CC of the CPSU. If anybody would get to listen in, he would conclude that the Party was on the brink of collapse. But this was not the case. Even staffers of the comrades who participate in the sessions are at times allowed to speak up.

Comrade Krenz interjected that for such a procedure a lot of time was necessary.

Comrade Gorbachev explained that the Politburo of the CC of the CPSU took the time for this. Sometimes he would like to put an end to the long debates, but then would bite his tongue and made sure that the conclusions he drew would not offend the comrades. He would push through the line that he considered correct, but always in consideration of the opinions of the other comrades. This had created an entirely new situation. This way prevented them from making major mistakes.

Comrade [Georgy] Shakhnazarov, personal assistant of Comrade Gorbachev, who participated in the talks, added that policy would not be implemented by administrative means, but by argument and persuasion.

Comrade Krenz expressed his view that he had never experienced the Politburo of the CC of the SED [to be] as emotional as recently.

Comrade Gorbachev interjected that such controversial sessions, lasting for more than two days, had also taken place in the Politburo of the CC of the CPSU—once during a discussion on the letter of Nina Andreeva,⁹⁸ and another time during the debate on the long-term economic orientation.

Comrade Krenz explained that while the Soviet comrades were well-informed about the political and economic situation, he still wanted to describe the current economic situation since it was strangling the hands of the SED leadership in making urgently necessary political decisions. [...]

On the GDR balance of payments, Comrade Krenz provided the following information: Until the end of 1989, the foreign debt would grow to USD 26.5 billion, that is, 49 billion valuta [West German] mark.

The balance in convertible foreign exchange at the end of 1989 would look like this:

Income: USD 5.9 billion

Expenses: USD 18 billion

The deficit thus ran at about USD 12.1 billion. This meant that they had to take on new loans. It was likely that this imbalance would increase further.

Astonished, Comrade Gorbachev asked whether these numbers were exact. He had not imagined the situation to be so precarious.

Comrade Krenz explained that the GDR had to take on new loans in order to pay of old debts. Currently, they had to spend USD 4.5 billion on interest payments alone, which equaled 62 percent of the annual export profits in foreign currency.

Comrade Krenz emphasized that the high foreign debt was created above all because they had to take on loans at very high interests during the time of the Western financial blockade of the socialist countries. The situation grew particularly precarious due to simultaneously emerging new demands on the economy and new expectations by the population that could not be satisfied. The state of the balance of payments was currently not known in the GDR. If one would go on realistically and base the standard of living exclusively on the own production, one would have to lower it [the living standard] by 30 percent immediately. But this was not feasible politically.

Comrade Gorbachev gave the following advice on the issue based on his experience: Comrade Krenz and the SED leadership generally had to find a way to tell the population that it had lived beyond their means in the last few years. Comrade Krenz could not yet be held personally responsible for this. But it was increasingly necessary to tell the full truth. First one needed time for a comprehensive analysis. But later full information [of the population] was unavoidable, since otherwise Comrade Krenz would be blamed himself for the growing difficulties. Slowly the population had to already get used to this idea today. [...]

[Comrade Krenz] stated that he also agreed with the remarks by Comrade Gorbachev on the relationship with the FRG. He asked [Gorbachev] to explain more clearly what role the USSR ascribed to the FRG and the GDR in the all-European house. This was of great significance for the development of relations between the GDR and the FRG. He went on to explain that there was an important difference between the GDR and other socialist countries. The GDR was, in a certain sense, the child of the Soviet Union, and one had to acknowledge one's paternity with regard to one's children.

Comrade Gorbachev agreed with this and made reference to a conversation between Comrade Yakovlev and [former US National Security Advisor to President Carter] Zbigniew Brzezinski. They had, among other things, discussed whether one could imagine a situation in which the reunification of Germany could become a reality. Brzezinski emphasized that to him this would be the collapse.

Comrade Gorbachev welcomed Comrade Krenz bringing up this question. The GDR, the Soviet Union, and the other socialist countries had thus far followed a correct course on this question. This [course] had led to the recognition of the existence of two German states, to the international recognition of the GDR, to its active role in the world, to the conclusion of the [1970] Moscow Treaty, and other treaties, and ultimately to the [1975] Helsinki Conference.

In recent talks with [British Prime Minister] Margaret

Thatcher, [French President] François Mitterrand, [Polish leader Gen. Wojciech] Jaruzelski and [Italian Prime Minister Giulio] Andreotti, it had become clear that all these politicians presumed the preservation of the postwar realities, including the existence of two German states. They all viewed the question of German unity as extremely explosive in the current situation. Nor did they want the Warsaw Pact and NATO to dissolve, and therefore they favored Poland's and Hungary's remaining in the Warsaw Pact. The balance of power in Europe was not to be disturbed since nobody knew what repercussions this would have.

Even the US had thus far taken a similar attitude. However, currently many discussions among the FRG's allies were taking place. One sympathized in words with the FRG's concerns about a divided Germany. There were some nuances in the USA in this regard which would still have to be analyzed.

Comrade Shakhnazarov interjected that those statements were probably all made for domestic consumption.

Comrade Gorbachev agreed and emphasized that in practice the US was continuing its old policy. To his mind, the best policy now was to continue the current line. [Former West German Chancellor] Willy Brandt was of the same opinion. He had declared that for him the disappearance of the GDR would be a spectacular defeat for Social Democracy since it considered the GDR as a great achievement of socialism. While he distanced himself from the communists, he nevertheless considered Social Democracy as a branch of the labor movement and continued to cling to the socialist idea. [Egon] Bahr [West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) leader] had expressed this openly [and] with much clarity.

For the socialist countries, Comrade Gorbachev emphasized, the best thing was to emphasize that the current situation was a result of history. Nobody could ignore, however, that manifold human contacts existed between the two German states. These [contacts] could not be prevented; one had to keep them under control and steer them in the right direction. For this reason it was necessary to make some changes in policy to gain the understanding of the populace. Comrade Gorbachev offered that they could consult with the Soviet comrades about this question.

It would be very damaging to reduce or even sever the relations between the GDR and the FRG. In this connection, he [Gorbachev] wanted to point out the following factors:

1. It was important to improve coordination of the relations in the triangle GDR—FRG—Soviet Union. He had also talked about this with Comrade Honecker. The Soviet Union knew from other sources how relations between the GDR and the FRG were developing. They even knew within three days what had been discussed in the National Security Council of the United States. On the other hand, the US was also well-informed about developments in the

Soviet Union. Such after all was the situation. Therefore it was completely unnecessary to keep secrets from close allies.

Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that years ago there had been a joint office which coordinated the relations of the GDR and the Soviet Union with the FRG. At the time, it had been headed by Comrades Mittag and [Nikolai] Tikhonov [Chairman of the Council of Ministers, 1980-85]. It had silently ceased its activities, but it had to be revived.

Comrade Krenz mentioned that Comrade Honecker had been pleased that he could decide on trips to the FRG or China on his own. He very much favored finding ways at the working level through which common policies towards the FRG and West Berlin would be better coordinated. Comrade Gorbachev recommended discussing this question in the Politburo of the SED CC or in an even smaller circle.

2. It was also important to consider the relationships within this triangle very carefully. The Soviet Union was trying to bring the FRG as a partner into a closer relationship. Then the GDR would also be in a more favorable position within this triangle. Efforts in this direction were being made in the FRG. [The FRG] was ready to cooperate with the Soviet Union on a broad set of issues, but expected that the Soviet Union would lend support with regard to reunification. There was talk that the key to this lay in Moscow. The Americans stated this as well. This was a very convenient excuse for them. In their talks with the FRG, they spoke of their support for reunification, but always pointed to Moscow's key role. Moscow was to be handed the "black Peter."⁹⁹ On the other hand, the US was not pleased by the rapprochement between Bonn and Moscow in the economic and political field. In practical terms, not much had happened thus far. And one should not rush anything in this area either because the FRG representatives needed time.

For the GDR it was important to maintain and continually develop its relationship with the FRG. One had to be careful to prevent the ideological enemy from gaining positions—which he could exploit. Thus the GDR would continue to receive raw materials from the Soviet Union, and at the same time cautiously develop its relationship with the FRG, avoiding a total embrace by the FRG.

3. It was important for the GDR to develop its relations with other nations besides the FRG. Here, too, they could work closely with the Soviet Union. Hungary and Poland were already very active in this field. They, after all, had no choice in this matter. It was often asked what the USSR would do in this situation. But it could do very little in economic terms. It was an absurdity to think that the Soviet Union could support 40 million Poles. The root of the problem lay with [former Polish leader Edward] Gierek who had taken on loans totaling US\$ 48 billion. Meanwhile the Polish comrades had already paid back US\$ 52 billion and still owed US\$ 49 billion.

In 1987 Comrade [Hungarian leader János] Kádár was given an ultimatum by the I[international] M[onetary]

F[und]; in case of non-compliance with the numerous demands a suspension of the loans was threatened.

Comrade Krenz pointed out that this was not our way.

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that such problems also existed in the GDR-FRG relationship. One was aware in the Soviet Union that GDR microelectronics were based to a large degree on Western components. Comrade Krenz remarked that [State Security Chief] Comrade [Erich] Mielke and his department were partly responsible for this. Moreover, Soviet components were also used. As a result, one had to collaborate more closely today. But it had to be a balanced collaboration with clearly set priorities.

Summing up, Comrade Gorbachev remarked that one had to continue the current policy, which had brought about success. The GDR and its people could be proud of that.

There was no reason to speculate how the German Question would eventually be resolved. The current realities had to be taken into consideration. This was most important.

If the tendency of rapprochement in Europe would continue for several decades, if the processes of integration would develop regardless of social systems, but in recognition of independent developments of politics and culture, development, and traditions, and if the exchange of intellectual and material goods evolved further, then the issue might present itself in a different light some day. But today this was not a problem of actual policy. The established line had to be continued in the current political situation. Comrade Gorbachev asked Comrade Krenz to communicate this to the comrades in the Politburo. There was an understanding about this between the Soviet Union and its former partners from the era of the Anti-Hitler Coalition.

Comrade Krenz pointed out that this policy had to be secured in ideological terms. Comrade Honecker posed the well known five-demands of Gera in the early 1980s.¹⁰⁰ On the one hand, the GDR had concluded numerous mutually beneficial treaties with the FRG since then; the FRG, on the other hand, had not shown any movement on any of these five demands. This had led to certain mistaken assumptions within the GDR. Since many prominent GDR representatives traveled to the FRG, average citizens were also demanding this right. There was a lot of talk about universal human values, but that had created a general German problem. Therefore the issue of de-ideologizing the FRG-GDR relationship was a very difficult question. The issue posed itself differently in relationships between other countries. De-ideologizing relations would mean abandoning the defense of socialism. Questions like the wall or the border regime with the GDR would arise anew. The GDR found itself in the difficult situation of having to defend these somehow anachronistic, but nevertheless necessary things.

Comrade Gorbachev expressed his opinion that this all had to be reconsidered. The time was ripe for this. If the GDR could not find a solution which allowed people to

visit their relatives, then this would be a very dissatisfying state of affairs for GDR society. The GDR would be threatened by new ultimatums. It had to take the initiative in its own hands. The Soviet Union was ready to talk about such measures. The GDR would have a better feel for what had to be done. It was certainly necessary to take some concrete steps which, however, had to be linked constantly with certain obligations and actions by the other side. It was time to exert greater pressure on Chancellor Kohl, now that he had established contacts with Comrade Gorbachev and Comrade Krenz. In the FRG, the national question was heavily exploited in politics. There were people in the government parties who wanted to get rid of Kohl. He, however, had put his bets on the nationalist issue. There were even more extreme demands from the right wing. The CDU [*Bundestag*] delegate [Jürgen] Todenhöfer had issued a letter to the US and Soviet Union demanding the immediate reunification of Germany. There was wild speculation about this subject in the FRG.

Comrade Krenz explained the envisioned measures to be taken by the GDR with regard to this set of issues:

1. The GDR will try to prevent any use of firearms along the border. The border guards had been instructed accordingly. They would only fire if there was acute danger to the life and health of the border guards.

2. The draft of a new travel law had been adopted by the Politburo and had been sent to the Council of Ministers, which would put it up for public discussion. [The draft law] was to be adopted by the *Volkskammer* [GDR Parliament] before Christmas.

According to this law, every GDR citizen had the opportunity to receive a passport and a visa for travel to all countries. The circle of those who would be excluded from this for security reasons would be kept very limited.

3. Unfortunately, the GDR was unable to provide travelers with sufficient foreign exchange. One could not continue to live over one's means. The publication of the travel law would be accompanied by a commentary which would explain that the foreign exchange generated by the FRG citizens travelling to the GDR would not be sufficient to provide GDR travelers with foreign currency.

Comrade Gorbachev suggested that one option would be the gradual achievement of convertibility of the GDR mark. This would be an incentive for workers to work harder, to strive for higher productivity and quality, by means of which such goals would be obtained.

Comrade Krenz explained further steps by the SED leadership over the next few days and weeks. On 8 November 1989, the 10th Plenum of the CC would be convened. It was to find an answer to the question of the GDR's future. If there was no serious answer to this question, the party leadership would continue to come under criticism by the CC.

Comrade Gorbachev repeated that the international reaction about the speech by Comrade Krenz before the *Volkskammer* in particular had been very positive.

Following his speech at the 9th Plenum of the SED CC, skepticism had been pervasive. The reaction had been very cautious. Now it was important to deepen the positive impression further.

Comrade Krenz pointed out that the instructions given to the Soviet ambassadors in various countries had contributed much in this regard.

Comrade Gorbachev informed [Krenz] that he had received positive responses from all the important statesmen to which he had turned.

Comrade Krenz reported that he had received congratulatory telegrams from them all, including Chancellor Kohl. He had had a brief phone conversation with the latter. Kohl pointed out his constant contact with Comrade Gorbachev and recommended that this would also be done with Comrade Krenz. Comrade Krenz responded that it was always better to speak with each other than to talk about each other. Kohl immediately brought up concrete proposals with regard to transit traffic, environmental issues, relations with West Berlin, etc [...] Comrade Krenz agreed to explore all concrete questions with the Chancellor's representative. Kohl above all wanted to speak about questions on which agreement was possible, not about those on which both sides disagreed. Comrade Krenz pointed out to Kohl explicitly that both the GDR and the FRG had their own interests. He [Kohl] had to expect that he [Krenz] would represent GDR interests more consistently than had heretofore been the case. Kohl had been very excited during the conversation. He frequently did not finish his sentences.

Comrade Gorbachev stated that Kohl was not an intellectual heavyweight, but rather a petit-bourgeois type. It was these classes that understood him best. But he was nevertheless a talented and stubborn politician. After all, even Reagan had been popular and had stayed in power relatively long. This also applied to Kohl.

Comrade Krenz predicted that the 10th Plenum of the SED CC would be a very stormy session. Many comrades were preparing for it and wanted to take the floor. The discussion had not been officially prepared. The times of deference toward the Politburo were over. The question was sharply raised as to the responsibility of the Politburo collective for the current situation. This also concerned his own personal responsibility. He hoped that they would find a smart answer to the question.

The Plenum was to adopt an action program. The reason was that the 7th and 8th Plenums of the CC had been overtaken by the events. The envisioned action program was to briefly outline the direction of future work. They would try to answer the question as to what constituted a better, more modern and attractive socialism, which socialist values had to be defended and which ones were questionable.

The Plenum would discuss radical economic reforms. The government would obtain the task to formulate the main directions. It was clear that the answer had to be found in socialism, not in the free market.

The second question concerned the broad development of socialist democracy. A series of new laws were in preparation. Elections posed a big problem. It had already been stated that we would use all experiences of previous elections and wanted to prepare a new election law. One would deal with constitutional issues, such as freedom of the press, *glasnost*, and freedom and dignity of the individual. The issues of the leading role of the Party under the new conditions had to be discussed. They had to further develop criticism and self-criticism in order to avoid subjectivism. The changes ranged as far as the proposal to set a term limit on the official tenure of the office of general secretary and other high officials.

Comrade Krenz informed [Gorbachev] that the Plenum would also deal with cadre issues. Those who had asked for relief from their functions included Comrades Mielke, [Politburo member Alfred] Neumann, [Politburo member and chairman of the SED *Volkskammer* faction Erich] Mückenberger, [Council of State member Kurt] Hager, and [Politburo member and foreign policy expert Hermann] Axen. Comrade [President of the *Volkskammer* and Politburo member Horst] Sindermann justified his intention to stay in office until the Party Convention. But the demands from the Party [rank-and-file] went even further.

Comrade Gorbachev had a very high opinion of Comrade Stoph. He had been in a difficult situation in recent years. He had maintained his dignity when he was forced into a corner by Comrade Mittag. He had consistently taken a very principled position in decisive situations. One must not throw all old comrades into one pot.

Comrade Krenz expressed his regret about the case of Comrade [Free German Union League (FDGB) Harry] Tisch. He was now forced to resign. The reason was that he had made a major political mistake during a TV broadcast. He had blamed responsibility for the current situation above all on the lower functionaries. According to him, the union officials had not fulfilled their duties because they had listened too much to the party secretaries in the factories. This had evoked great outrage among the union members. In the Politburo they agreed not to decide the matter here in order not to diminish the independence of the unions. For now the FDGB leadership had postponed its decision on this issue until 17 November. But even that was not accepted by many union members. There was even talk about the possibility of a split of the union if Comrade Tisch did not resign. Meanwhile Comrade Krenz had received a call to the effect that Comrade Tisch would resign immediately.

On the subject of the still on-going demonstrations, Comrade Krenz stated that the situation was not easy. The composition of the demonstrators was diverse. Some real enemies were working among them. A large part were dissatisfied [citizens] or fellow-travelers. The SED leadership was determined to resolve political problems by political means. The demonstrations would be legalized, and there would be no police action against them.

The situation, however, was developing according to its own dynamics. For the weekend, a large demonstration with possibly half a million participants was planned in Berlin. It had been initiated by artists and some of their associations.

Comrade Gorbachev provided the following information in this regard: Prior to his visit, he had received a letter from the GDR League of Culture through Raissa Maximovna Gorbachev in her function in the Soviet Culture Fond. [The letter] described the situation in the GDR and pointed out that the League of Culture would address an appeal to the GDR people if they had not received a response from the Party leadership by the time of the anniversary of the [GDR].

Comrade Krenz confirmed that if Erich Honecker had given a different kind of speech on the occasion of the anniversary [of the GDR], the situation might have taken a different course. With regard to the demonstration, the Politburo had decided to call on party members to participate. Comrade Schabowski would be among the 17 speakers in order to prevent the opposition from remaining among itself at this demonstration. They wanted to do everything to assure a peaceful event but had to take certain precautionary measures. One measure was to prevent the masses from attempting to break through the Wall. This would be bad because the police would have to be deployed and certain elements of martial law would have to be introduced. But such a development was not very likely, but one had to be prepared.

They expected the following slogans at the demonstration:

- Naming those responsible for the current situation
- Resignation of the senior Politburo members
- Changes in the composition of the government
- Travel opportunities
- Changes in the status of the union and the youth organization
- New electoral law
- Recognition of the opposition
- Abolishment of privileges
- Freedom of the press and thought
- Improvement of the living standard and continual production.

They were currently trying to avoid any criminalization of the demonstrators and to proceed very carefully. The question of recognizing the [opposition movement] "*Neues Forum*" had not yet been determined. So far they were unable to evaluate fully their political orientation. One had to avoid any developments similar to that of Solidarity in Poland.

Comrade Gorbachev shared Soviet experiences on these questions from the first phase of *perestroika*. Back then, many informal organizations and other movements were created. The leadership had watched them with skepticism. Good and bad [movements] were thrown into one pot. That way time was lost in certain republics. They

failed to integrate these movements into the activities of the Party, which in turn created polarization. Some of these forces developed into an opposition against the policy of *perestroika* and represented separatist, nationalist and anti-socialist views.

One should not waste any time with regard to these questions. Anti-socialist and criminal elements were one thing. But one could not generally consider the people as the enemy. If it rose against [the political leadership], one had to consider what political changes had to be made so that it accorded with the interests of the people and socialism. One should not miss the [right] point in time so that such movements would get on the other side of the barricades. The Party should not shy away from such problems, it had to work with these forces. They were now doing this in the Soviet Union, but it was already very late. These organizations had brought about their own leaders and worked out their own principles.

Where anti-Sovietism was involved, communists had no business being there. But for the most part they [these opposition groups] were concerned workers who worried about numerous neglected questions.

Comrade Krenz confirmed that the SED would approach the problem in this manner. But this would be a long process.

With regard to the remarks by Comrade Gorbachev, Comrade Krenz asked to check if the exchange of experience with the CC departments of the CPSU on a number of questions, with regard to which the Soviet Union had already accumulated many years of experience, could be expanded. This related to the fields of party organizations, security questions, and others. Generally, the exchange of know-how between the departments of the Central Committee should be intensified again.

Comrade Gorbachev welcomed this suggestion.

Comrade Krenz stated that the SED would again send cadres from training to Soviet party schools in the near future.

Comrade Krenz pointed out some currently unresolved problems in the field of economic cooperation. They included:

- an improved usage of the ferry connection Mukran-Klaipeda, which was of great significance for imports and exports;
- mutual improvements in living up to contractual obligations;
- examination of the possibility of a further increase in natural gas deliveries from the USSR, which the GDR would greatly appreciate;
- an agreement on further deliveries of the "Lada" automobile to the GDR, given that at the moment questions about the supply of consumer goods for the population, among others with cars, play a crucial role in the debate. This was a result of the extraordinary high savings in the GDR and the enormous budget deficit. Liquidity among the

population was very high. Add to this a systematic demand of goods, in particular by Polish citizens.

Comrade Gorbachev confirmed this in the case of the Soviet Union as well.

Comrade Krenz emphasized that, for the SED, the decisive issue was to restore the harmony [of hearts] with the CPSU and the USSR which was vital for us. The Soviet side had always been ready for this, but on our side there had been certain impediments. He wanted to declare on behalf of the Politburo of the CC of the SED that both parties should return to the method of frankly and honestly raising all questions of concern. The calls for “Gorbi, Gorbi” during the demonstrations in Berlin had shown that it was impossible to destroy the good relationship of the young people and the GDR entire population with the Soviet Union, even if the leadership had failed in this respect.

Comrade Gorbachev reported that the greatest difficulty for him in participating in the 40th anniversary of the GDR had been that he had been aware of the mood, and that he had felt very uncomfortable standing at Erich Honecker’s side.

Comrade Krenz interjected that he had even been accused of organizing this mood, especially among the young people. But it was simply a free expression of the attitude of the people.

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that the visit of Comrade Krenz so shortly after his election was extraordinarily important for mutual agreement at the beginning of a new era. The point was to demonstrate jointly that they stood with each other, that the development in the Soviet Union was close to the one in the GDR, and vice versa. This was also important for the other socialist countries and for the entire world. In the FRG they were also interested in what Gorbachev and Krenz had agreed upon.

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that he, in principle, shared all of the thoughts Comrade Krenz had expressed. They were dictated by the actual situation. For the SED it was now very important not to lose the initiative. The processes were developing very dynamically and could accelerate in pace. The party leadership had to react accordingly. It would be a great tragedy if the development would gain in spontaneity or lose its political orientation. This would create a situation, in which there was no other resort. Then it might be possible that mistaken slogans would dominate the situation and the situation could be exploited by other forces. Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that he had made his own experiences in this respect. Due to the hesitation by the [Soviet] leadership some problems had increased sharply; this concerned above all the economy. Comrade Krenz had emphasized correctly that the next plenum had to give an evaluation of the difficult situation. This evaluation had to be balanced but decisive. Comrade Gorbachev recalled in this context the January 1987 Plenum of the CC of the CPSU. There it was stated for

the first time that the Party would take responsibility for the current situation. Simultaneously, a concrete program of *perestroika* was proposed. It was possible that the development in the GDR could take different stages. But for the reputation of the secretary general it was extraordinarily important that he approached the problems with great responsibility and great respect for the truth. Otherwise nobody would believe him.

Comrade Krenz interjected that there already was criticism of the fact that comrade Honecker’s resignation had been explained in terms of bad health.

In Comrade Gorbachev’s opinion, here as well further explanations were necessary.

Comrade Gorbachev commented as correct to indicate at the plenum first outlines of the policy of the next era and adopt a respective action program. A detailed plan was not yet to be made public since this might make the secretary general seem hypocritical as he obviously was not taking the time to study and consider thoroughly proposals and recommendations from all sides. But the main directions of the action program were already becoming evident—more socialism, renewal, democratization. One would carry on what had been good and useful in the past. This, for example, concerned the social orientation of the GDR economy, which had always been its strong suit. This should not be abandoned. This was an asset of the GDR.

In the field of cadre policy, decisive changes were certainly imminent at the plenum. As an old communist, Comrade Mielke certainly wanted to set an example for others with his resignation. This made it possible for Comrade Krenz to separate cadre questions from the substantive question of *perestroika*. Certainly there was no question of a collective resignation of the Politburo or the cabinet but profound changes in the leadership were by no doubt necessary. The plenum had to take the first step. He recommended to elect a few intelligent and innovative figures from the CC to the Politburo and to adopt prominent representatives of culture and academia as members or candidates of the CC as well. This would increase the reputation of the bodies. With regard to Comrade Honecker, he could certainly still be defended within the plenum but it was questionable whether that was still feasible with regard to the people. The people had risen and today stated their opinion frankly. Therefore they had to respond not only to the Plenum of the CC but also to the people. In this respect as well it was necessary not to miss the signs of the times. Society would continue to pose the question of responsibility for the situation, and for this reason profound leadership changes were due, too.

Despite determined policy changes, a complete negation of the past was to be avoided. This would also be disrespectful of the people who had made the previous achievements of the GDR. One also had to find a form of dialectical negation whereby one kept the good that contributed to the strengthening of socialism and added as new what life produced.

Comrade Gorbachev emphasized that Comrade Krenz

had the reputation of being a man of courage. A secretary general could not avoid the problems either but had to face them; he had to act in consideration of the concrete situation and accurately assess changes in society. Coming up with new ideas and implementing them—all this was expected from a secretary general.

Comrade Gorbachev expressed his full agreement with Comrade Krenz on relations with the FRG. It was necessary to revitalize cooperation and coordination between the GDR and the Soviet Union. Each of them was well aware of the other's relations with the FRG. One therefore ought not to make a secret out of it but cooperate and take advantage of it. The FRG, too, had the necessary information and was very interested in cooperating. Comrade Krenz was right in thinking that the parties should increasingly be put in control of cooperation. He therefore welcomed the proposal to intensify again the exchange of experience between the departments of the Central Committees. The same applied to the CC secretaries.

The working-level and close contacts in this field were, however, most important. The joint work of the academies of social sciences ought to be strengthened as well. In this connection, Comrade Gorbachev inquired about the fate of Comrade [Otto] Reinhold. He had always been viewed as working especially closely with Comrade Honecker.

Comrade Krenz stated that Comrade Reinhold had also changed his mind [*Wende vollzogen*]. This had practically happened overnight. He was criticized for a remark he made in a TV discussion during which he apologized for previous statements that had been specifically ascribed to him.

Comrade Gorbachev remarked jokingly that Comrade Otto Reinhold had written about the 10 deviations from Marxism-Leninism by Comrade Gorbachev.

Comrade Krenz also informed about the fate of Comrade Hans Albrecht, the former first secretary of the district leadership in Suhl. He did not cope with his work any longer. In addition, there existed resentment in the CC about an unprecedented statement by him about the secretary general of the CPSU CC. He had remarked at the last CC Plenum that Comrade Gorbachev had not performed in a class-conscious manner during his last visit to the FRG. Comrade Albrecht would no longer be serving as first secretary of the district leadership already in the coming days.

Comrade Gorbachev explained that it was now necessary to revive creative Marxism, socialism in a Leninist way, the humanistic and democratic socialism in which man really felt that this was his society and not an elite society. This process was not easy to implement. Of this he had become aware during his visit to Cuba. There had been a tense atmosphere initially. He himself, however, had explained that *perestroika* resulted from the development of the Soviet Union, and was necessary for the solution of Soviet problems. The question of whether socialism in the Soviet Union would succeed or fail was of importance for the entire world, including Cuba. The Soviet

Union on the other hand welcomed all measures, which the C[ommunist] P[arty of] Cuba thought necessary under its conditions. They trusted its responsibility and its competence. It was important, Comrade Gorbachev explained, that revolutionary *perestroika* could not be forced upon anybody. Even in the GDR the situation had to develop to this point, which now made the process very difficult and painful.

Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that he had always exercised the greatest restraint towards the comrades in the GDR. The objective had been to avoid any ill feeling in the relationship, even though they were well aware of the situation in the GDR. They had been patient because they understood that the Party and all of society had to mature first before making these changes.

Today the important thing in the socialist countries was that each of them had to think on its own. On the other hand there were certain criteria and main characteristics for socialism in all countries.

Comrade Gorbachev reported at the conclusion of his conversation on domestic problems in the Soviet Union. He related that he would continue that same day discussions with leading economists. Very controversial debates on the future development of the Soviet Union were currently taking place in all fields. Some demanded the re-introduction of private property of the means of production, and the employment of capitalistic methods; others demanded the admission of more political parties. There were arguments about whether the Soviet Union ought to continue as a federation or confederation. In the economic field in particular, these debates were increasingly of a principled [ideological] character.

There were already comrades who had a different idea about the economic development and attempted to force capitalistic prescriptions upon the CPSU out of disappointment over previous failures. The workers had realized this immediately and reacted with demands to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat. There were also calls for a return to the old administrative command system. This would, however, be a great tragedy for the Soviet Union.

The current arguments illustrated clearly that *perestroika* was a true revolution. Comrade Gorbachev expressed with great determination, however, that he would not let the confrontation develop to the point of civil war or bloodshed. The situation, however, was very tense, and they were dealing with a true political battle. Therefore it was necessary to prove that socialism was capable of constant development, of perfection, and full realization of its potential. It was a weakness of socialism that changes in the leadership could lead to severe shake-ups at any time. The reason for this was that the people were not involved in the decisions [and] that the democratic mechanisms were not fully working. They had to be put in full action. It was important to further consolidate society, to mobilize its creative forces, and to achieve clarity on the kind of socialist society they wanted to build. All concrete proposals and constructive ideas were welcome. A current

problem in the Soviet Union was the debate with those who seriously called for a return to private ownership of the means of production. For this purpose some had even come up with quotes from Marx and Lenin by which they attempted to prove that private property did not have to mean exploitation. To their minds, the main problem was the character of power by which private property could be put to use for or against the people.

Comrade Gorbachev pointed out that there could well exist forms of private property—in manufacture, in the countryside—as it, for example, was the case in the GDR. But this was not individual property. These minor forms were, however, not a major problem for a socialist society. There existed, however, forces in the Soviet Union that wanted to go much further. Comrade Gorbachev predicted that the GDR would also face such discussions, even more so since the capitalist example was so close geographically. In addition, the FRG was a very wealthy capitalist country the existence of which would be ever present in the political debates.

Comrade Krenz expressed that his decision to act had been made when he realized during the conversation between Comrade Gorbachev with the Politburo of the SED CC that Comrade Honecker did not comprehend the statements by Comrade Gorbachev, or did not want to understand them.

Comrade Gorbachev stated that he had had the impression during that conversation that he was throwing peas against a wall. He did not hold any grudge against Comrade Honecker but was only sad that he had not initiated this change of course himself two or three years ago. This period could have been the highpoint of his life. After all, the GDR had achieved very much under his leadership. All this had been achieved together with the Party and the people. Under no circumstances should this [fact] therefore be denied. That would be disrespectful of the people who then would have basically lived in vain. This development had to be viewed in dialectical terms. The progress of society, the prologue for the future, and the great potential had to be considered, as well as the factors that had recently slowed down the development of society.

Comrade Krenz agreed and expressed his thanks in cordial terms for the extensive and profound conversation.

[Source: Stiftung “Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der ehemaligen DDR im Bundesarchiv” (SAPMO-BA), Berlin DY30/JIV2/SA/3255. Document obtained by Christian F. Ostermann and Vladislav Zubok and translated for CWHIP by Christian F. Ostermann.]

DOCUMENT No. 2
Cover Note from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz,
6 November 1989¹⁰¹

WITH ATTACHMENT,

“Notes on an Informal Conversation between Comrade Alexander Schalck and Minister of the Chancellery Rudolf Seiters and CDU Board Member Wolfgang Schäuble on 6 November 1989”¹⁰²

Dear Comrade Krenz!

I enclose the notes on the conversations with Federal Minister Seiters and CDU Board member Schäuble.

Seiters will, in the course of this evening have an opportunity, together with Schäuble, to inform the Chancellor [about the conversation]. If this should already result in useful items, he [Seiters] will inform me on 7 November 1989, by phone.

I ask for acknowledgement and determination of further steps.

On the basis of the authority currently given to me for the informal negotiations with the government of the FRG, I ask you cordially that you agree that I should not take part in any public discussions (including television) in order to prevent any informally discussed options from being leaked to the public by potential mishaps on my part. Should these negotiations reach a conclusion, I will, of course, be further available to the media, pending your permission.

With socialist greetings
[Schalck’s signature]

ATTACHMENT

Notes on an informal conversation between
Comrade Alexander Schalck and Federal Minister and Chief
of the Chancellery, Rudolf Seiters,
and CDU Board member Wolfgang Schäuble,
6 November 1989

Continuing the informal conversation of 24 October 1989, I first repeated the GDR’s basic positions on further political and economic cooperation with the government of the FRG and the West Berlin Senate. I emphasized that the GDR was prepared, in implementing the obligations accepted in the CSCE process, to renew societal development. I also emphasized that the SED was prepared to cooperate constructively with the other democratic parties in a manner that served socialism and the interests of the GDR.

Within the framework of the decision to develop laws to guarantee the rule of law, the criminal code of the GDR will be amended to expand personal freedom, freedom of expression, and other issues to meet the new requirements.

To secure tourist and visitor traffic, the GDR is prepared to implement generous regulations for travel between the capital of the GDR and West Berlin via newly opened border crossings.

The implementation of these measures will create significant financial and material costs.

It is assumed that the FRG will cover these expenses to a great extent.

It was pointed out that the GDR is prepared to develop economic cooperation, including new forms like joint ventures and capital sharing in certain branches and sectors. It is assumed that the FRG government will take over the necessary loans in the cases of smaller and mid-sized businesses.

The GDR would be prepared to take out long-term loans up to ten billion VE, backed by collateral [*objektgebunden*] in the next two years that would be financed by the new [economic] capacity that will be created. It is assumed that repayment of the loans will begin after full production begins, and the loans are to be paid out over a period of at least ten years.

Further, the GDR sees the necessity of discussing additional lines of credit in hard currencies beginning in 1991 and totaling DM 2-3 billion to meet the demands connected with the new level of cooperation in a number of areas.

In light of the planned visit by Federal Minister Seiters to the GDR on 30 November 1989 and his official conversations with the General Secretary of the SED Central Committee and Chairman of the State Council of the GDR, Egon Krenz, as well as with Foreign Minister Oskar Fischer, Seiters was informed that the GDR is prepared to make binding commitments in a "protocol of understanding" about the extension of trade and economic relations, further negotiations on the issue of environmental protection, negotiations over the further development of postal and long-distance phone connections, and other plans.

Seiters was asked, in reference to the discussions of 24 October 1989, to give the FRG government's position on the most pressing issue of the moment: the possibility that his government would take over part of the additional expenses the GDR would incur in connection with its planned expansion of tourist and visitor traffic within the framework of the new travel law.

Seiters thanked me for the presentation and stated that these decisions were of great importance to the government of the Federal Republic.

Seiters presented the following thoughts on my proposal that GDR citizens travelling abroad be given the possibility to exchange DM 300 once a year at an exchange rate of DM 1 = East Mark 4.4:

—With the precondition that the minimum exchange requirement be lifted, a travel fund could be established with

foreign currency by the FRG (with 12.5 million travelers, the account would be worth approximately DM 3.8 billion). The FRG's previous annual payment of DM 100 "greeting money" per person would be eliminated. The DM 400 million that the GDR has received in the minimum exchange would also be paid off through the travel fund.

—The amount exchanged by GDR citizens for travel currency (with 12.5 million travelers, approximately DM 16.7 billion yearly) will be earmarked for a fund that the FRG and GDR will control jointly. The FRG thinks these funds should be used for the construction of border crossings, environmental protection measures, or for other projects that are of interest to both sides, such as transportation or postal and long-distance services.

The FRG also assumes that the necessary number of border crossings between the capital of the GDR and West Berlin will be constructed and opened. Provisional measures will be part of the construction, which can then be expanded in stages.

These measures are to guarantee an orderly border-crossing procedure for the increased tourist, visitor and transit traffic.

The FRG's position is that the contributions from the exchanged funds for travel will finance the construction.

The questions associated with the cost of train travel (between the FRG and the GDR/Berlin) can be addressed later.

Seiters stated openly that the domestic political passage and justification of the proposed positions by the GDR would necessarily have certain political consequences.

In this context, he mentioned the possibility for all [East German] citizens who had left the country legally or illegally to return to the GDR, so that all GDR citizens, with the exception of individual cases to be documented, could return to the GDR for visits.

He did not make a secret of the fact that a number of responsible politicians in the governing coalition had reservations after the "Saturday Meeting" in Berlin.

Seiters also made it clear that under no circumstances could he give a final answer immediately, and his comments were to be understood only as his own expression of the first contours of ideas.

Schäuble, clearly acting under careful instructions from the Chancellor, made it clear that a great deal depends on the speech by the General Secretary at the tenth meeting of the SED Central Committee. This speech had to make it clear that the turn toward renewal was credible, that the announced reforms were clear, and that trustworthy people not tainted by their positions in the previous administration would be responsible for their implementation.

Article 1 of the GDR Constitution, which establishes the leading role of the Marxist-Leninist Party, poses a fundamental problem in this context.

Schäuble strongly recommended that the SED, to allow a peaceful transition to a societal development born by all political, societal and religious organizations, make it clear

that it is prepared to change the GDR Constitution to correspond to the current state of societal development and the obligations it accepted under the CSCE treaty. This amendment of the Constitution should transform the leading role of the SED into a constructive, consensus-building cooperation among all democratic forces in the interests of socialism and the GDR.

Schäuble recommended that we give representatives of the Church an important role in the GDR.

In reference to the state border to West Berlin, constructed on 13 August 1961 to protect the GDR, Schäuble also proposed making this border more passable, in accordance with the CSCE process, through the construction of new border crossings.

Schäuble made it clear again that all economic and financial decisions by the FRG government assumed that the GDR would lower its subsidies decisively.

Schäuble also said that many politicians in the FRG did not understand the reticent stance on providing information about the events on 7-8 October 1989. In his opinion, the GDR would be well advised, and it would be in their interests, to name the security officer directly responsible and announce the measures taken.

[He mentioned that] there are occasionally attacks in the FRG that are being investigated.

If the GDR does not take action, the topic will be played up again by certain forces.

Further consideration by the FRG government was necessary for the other issues involved in developing [further] cooperation, particularly in the economic sector and on the question of [extending further] credits. The FRG was not yet in the position to make concrete suggestions for future binding agreements.

The reserved attitude of the FRG government was clear, and it wants to wait until the results of the tenth meeting [of the SED Central Committee] to resume negotiations.

In conclusion, Schäuble again strongly recommended that General Secretary Egon Krenz deal with the aforementioned issues in his speech. If that were not the case, Chancellor Kohl would not be in a position to justify financial assistance from FRG taxes [for the GDR] to the parliament.

[Source: Published in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Der Fall der Mauer. Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstauflösung des SED-Staates, 2nd edition, (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999), pp. 483-486. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]

DOCUMENT No. 3

Letter from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz, 7 November 1989¹⁰³

Dear Comrade Krenz!

After my conversation yesterday with Seiters and Schäuble, Federal Minister Seiters informed me today of the results. The Chancellor transmits the Chairman of the GDR State Council the following:

The course of yesterday's demonstration in Leipzig and the spontaneous exits from the GDR to the FRG which have occurred in the last few hours have produced public demands in the FRG, and increasingly in certain circles of the SPD, for the Chairman of the [GDR] State Council to declare publicly that the GDR is prepared to guarantee that opposition groups will be permitted and affirm that free elections will be held within a period to be announced if the GDR wants to receive material and financial assistance from the FRG. This applies also to the financial arrangements regarding travel [by East Germans to the West].

It should be noted that this path is only possible if the SED relinquishes its claim to absolute power. [The Party] should be prepared to work on equal terms, and in consensus, with all societal forces, churches and religious communities to discuss a true renewal, with the goal of achieving democratic socialism, and with the understanding [that they are] to be prepared to carry out any resulting decisions.

Under these conditions, the Chancellor thinks a great deal can be achieved and every option can be explored.

Federal Minister Seiters is authorized to be available for further informal discussions.

I ask that you take note of this.

With socialist greetings,
[Alexander Schalck]

[Source: Published in Hans-Hermann Hertle, Der Fall der Mauer: Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstauflösung des SED-Staates, 2nd edition (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999), pp. 486-87. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 4

Minutes No. 49 of the Meeting of the SED Politburo, 7 November 1989

[EXCERPTS]

Information by Comrade O. Fischer on the situation regarding GDR citizens departing via the ČSSR.

Report compiled by:

O. Fischer

1. Comrade O. Fischer will make a suggestion, in agreement with Comrades F. Dickel and E. Mielke, for the SED Central Committee which allows for this part of the travel law that deals with permanent exit to be put into effect immediately through an executive order [*Durchführungsbestimmung*].
2. Comrade O. Fischer will inform the USSR's Ambassador to the GDR Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Comrade V[yacheslav I.] Kochemassov, and the Czechoslovaks about the proposal and the Politburo's position. At the same time, consultations with the FRG are to be carried out.
3. The mass media should use their influence to help that GDR citizens do not leave their country. They should inform about people who have returned. Responsible: Comrade G. Schabowski.
4. Comrade G. Schabowski is assigned to discuss this problem with the representatives of the bloc parties [Christian Democrats, Liberal Democrats] in order to reach a joint position.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, DY 30/J IV 2/2/2358. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 5
Memorandum of Conversation between
Comrade Oskar Fischer and the
Soviet Ambassador V[yacheslav] I.
Kochemassov,
7 November 1989, at 11:45 a.m.¹⁰⁴

The conversation took place at the request of the Minister, Comrade Fischer.

I

Comrade Oskar Fischer stated that the Politburo had discussed the problem of exits by GDR citizens, and the connected problems in the ČSSR (blocking of the border crossings...). [It was the GDR's duty] to relieve the Czechoslovak comrades. The GDR/FRG border would not be opened, because this would have uncontrollable effects. For the same reason, the border to the ČSSR could not be closed.

The following measures were planned:

1. The media campaign aimed at inducing GDR citizens to remain in their country will be intensified. It was being attempted to co-opt certain people (personalities) to join the campaign. At the same time, returnees from the FRG should also be effectively used in this

campaign.

2. The campaign against the FRG's "duty to take care of [the East Germans]" will also be intensified. In this effort the support of our allies is desirable. Our ambassadors in Western Europe have been instructed to work along the same lines.

3. The [implementation of the] part of the travel law that deals with permanent exit of GDR citizens will be put in effect in advance.

4. It is to be discussed with the ČSSR as to whether including its border crossings to Bavaria [Brambach-Vojlanov] as an exit route would bring relief. At the same time the ČSSR would be asked as to whether it could close the border with the GDR. That would mean, however, punishing well-intentioned GDR citizens. If the GDR were to close [its border], a power struggle would ensue.

5. The GDR will inform Bonn about what they can expect as far as GDR citizens traveling to the FRG are concerned. It will demand forcefully that the FRG oppose the entry of GDR citizens. We will take them at their word.

6. Comrade Schabowski will inform the bloc parties about these things today, and Comrade Jarowinsky will talk to the representatives of the churches.

7. Comrade Ziebart will be informed by the Minister immediately, since he has an appointment today in Prague at 1:15 p.m. with Comrade Lenart.

II

Comrade Gorbachev's opinion as to the larger picture as well as to our plans for the travel law is very important to Comrade Krenz. The GDR would appreciate the support of the USSR.

Comrade Kochemassov thanked Comrade Fischer for the information. As an additional measure, he suggested including the former allies (USA, Britain, France) in order to prompt them to put pressure on the FRG.

Comrade Fischer agreed.

Comrade Kochemassov assured [Comrade Fischer] that the request would be forwarded to Moscow at once and promised a prompt response.

[Source: BA, Berlin, DC-20 4933. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]

DOCUMENT No. 6
Material for the Session/For Circulation
in the Council of Ministers,
Draft: Temporary Transition Rules for Travel
and Permanent Exit from the
GDR, Berlin,
9 November 1989

Material for the meeting
 For Circulation in the Council of Ministers
 Berlin, 9 November 1989
Members of the Council of Ministers

It is requested that the attached draft resolution Temporary Transition Rules for Travel and Permanent Exit VVS b2-937/89 by the GDR Chairman of the Council of Ministers be approved through circulation today, Thursday, 9 November 1989, by 6:00 p.m.

[Harry] Moebis¹⁰⁵

Material for the meeting
 Secret
 Council of Ministers Circular b2-937/89
 [11/9/89]
 [40th] copy 4 pages
 V 1204/89

Title of the draft:
 Temporary—Transition
 Rules for Travel and
 Permanent Exit from the GDR

Draft presented by:
 Chairman of the Council of Ministers

signed: Willi Stoph

Berlin, 9 November 1989

Draft Resolution

The attached resolution on the temporary transition rules for travel and permanent exit from the GDR is approved.

Draft Resolution

To change the situation with regard to the permanent exit of GDR citizens to the FRG via the ČSSR, it has been determined that:

1. The decree from 30 November 1988 about travel abroad of GDR citizens will no longer be applied until the new travel law comes into force.
2. Starting immediately, the following temporary transition regulations for travel abroad and permanent exits from the GDR are in effect:
 - a) Applications by private individuals for travel abroad

- b) The responsible departments of passport and registration control in the People's Police district offices in the GDR are instructed to issue visas for permanent exit without delays and without presentation of the existing requirements for permanent exit. It is still possible to apply for permanent exit in the departments for internal affairs [of the local district or city councils].
 - c) Permanent exits are possible via all GDR border crossings to the FRG and (West) Berlin.
 - d) The temporary practice of issuing (travel) authorizations through GDR consulates and permanent exit with only a GDR personal identity card via third countries ceases.
3. The attached press release explaining the temporary transition regulation will be issued on 10 November.

Responsible: Government spokesman of the GDR
Council of Ministers

Press release

Berlin (ADN)¹⁰⁶

As the Press Office of the Ministry of the Interior has announced, the GDR Council of Ministers has decided that the following *temporary transition regulation* for travel abroad and permanent exit from the GDR will be effective until a corresponding law is put into effect by the *Volksammer*:

- 1) Applications by private individuals for travel abroad can now be made without the previously existing requirements (of demonstrating a need to travel or proving familial relationships). The travel authorizations will be issued within a short period of time. Grounds for denial will only be applied in particularly exceptional cases.
- 2) The responsible departments of passport and registration control in the People's Police district offices in the GDR are instructed to issue visas for permanent exit without delays and without presentation of the existing requirements for permanent exit. It is still possible to apply for permanent exit in the departments for internal affairs [of the local district or city councils].
- 3) Permanent exits are possible via all GDR border crossings to the FRG and (West) Berlin.
- 4) This decision revokes the temporary practice of issuing (travel) authorizations through GDR consulates and permanent exit with only a GDR personal identity card via third countries ceases.

[Source: *Bundesbeauftragter für die Unterlagen der Staatssicherheit (BstU), Central Archive, MfS Working Group Nieber 553, sheets 15-19. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.*]

DOCUMENT No. 7
Transcript of the Tenth Session of the
SED Central Committee,
9 November 1989,
from 3:47 p.m. - 3:55 p.m.

[EXCERPTS]

Krenz: Comrades! Before Günther¹⁰⁷ speaks, I have to digress from the agenda once more. You are aware that there is a problem that wears on us all: the question of exit [from the GDR]. The Czechoslovak comrades are increasingly finding it a burden, as our Hungarian comrades did earlier. And, whatever we do in this situation, it will be a move in the wrong direction. If we close the border to the ČSSR, then we are basically punishing the upstanding citizens of the GDR, who would not be able to travel, and in this way put pressure on us. Even that would not have led to our gaining control of the situation, since the Permanent Mission of the FRG has already informed us that they have finished with renovations. That means that when they open the building, we will face the same problem again.

And, Comrade Willi Stoph, as acting Chairman of the Council of Ministers, drafted a decree which I would like to read to you here and now. Although the draft has been approved by the Politburo, it has such an impact that I wanted to consult the Central Committee.

Decision to change the situation for permanent exit of GDR citizens to the FRG via the ČSSR.

It is decreed:

1. The decree of 30 November 1988 about travel abroad for GDR citizens will no longer be applied until the new travel law comes into force.
2. Starting immediately, the following temporary transition regulation for travel abroad and permanent exits from the GDR are in effect:
 - a) Applications for travel abroad by private individuals can now be made without the previously existing requirements (of demonstrating a need to travel or proving familial relationships). The travel authorizations will be issued on short notice. Grounds for denial will only be applied in particularly exceptional cases.
 - b) The responsible departments of passport and registration control in the police county offices [VPKÄ] in the GDR are instructed to issue visas for permanent exit without delays and without presentation of the existing requirements for permanent exit. It is still possible to apply for permanent exit in the departments for internal affairs.
 - c) Permanent exits are possible via all GDR border crossings to the FRG and (West) Berlin.
 - d) The temporary practice of issuing (travel)

authorizations through GDR consulates and permanent exit with only a GDR personal identity card via third countries ceases.

3. The attached press release explaining the temporary transition regulation will be issued on 10 November.

The press release reads as follows: “As the Press Office of the Ministry of the Interior has announced, the GDR Council of Ministers has decided that the following temporary transition regulation for travel abroad and permanent exit from the GDR will be effective until a corresponding law is put into force by the *Volkskammer*.”

Then follow the four points that I do not need to read to you again.

I said that however way we do this, it will turn out bad. But it is the only solution that saves us from the problems of having to do everything through third countries, which does not further the international prestige of the GDR. Comrade Hoffmann?¹³

Hoffmann: Comrade Krenz, could we avoid this word “temporary”? It creates a constant pressure, as if people didn’t have any time left and had to get away as soon as possible. Wouldn’t it be possible—I don’t know the entire text—to avoid that or work around it?

Krenz: Yes, we could write: “According to the *Volkskammer*’s decision, the following transition regulation” and simply take out “temporary.” Transition regulation, after all, means temporary.

Dickel:¹⁰⁹ Until the travel law comes into effect.

Krenz: So, until the travel law comes into effect, the following things are valid, OK?

(noise)

Krenz: Agreed? (noise) Comrade Dickel, do you foresee any difficulties? It’s correct as it is, isn’t it? [noise, Chair rings bell]

Dickel: As far as the announcement is concerned—(shout: louder!) it perhaps would make sense for the Press Office of the Council of Ministers to make the announcement rather than the Ministry of the Interior, although we will actually carry out the decree, since it is a decree from the Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

Krenz: I would suggest that the government spokesman make the announcement right away. (shouting) What? (noise)

Banaschak:¹¹⁰ Isn’t it dangerous to adopt such a passage, “temporary”? ... (shouts: louder!) If we adopt such a passage, one that contains “temporary” or “transition solution,” couldn’t that have the effect that people aren’t sure what will come next... (noise, shouts: They just said that! Further noise, shouts)

Krenz: Therefore, we will say that we will avoid “temporary” as well as “transition rule” and say: until the travel law, which is to be passed by the *Volkskammer*, comes into effect, this and that is decreed. Agreed, Comrades? (shouts: yes!) Good, thank you very much. Günther Jahn, you have the floor.

(Quietly, to his neighbor at the presidium table, with the microphone turned off): It is always good to do something like that. (Loudly, with microphone turned on): After Günther Jahn, Günter Sieber will take the floor.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, tape Y 1/TD 738, transcribed in Hans-Hermann Hertle and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan (eds.), *Das Ende der SED: Die letzten Tage des Zentralkomitees*, 4th edition, (Berlin: Dietz, 1999), pp. 303-306. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 8
Günter Schabowski's Press Conference in the
GDR International Press Center,
9 November 1989,
6:53-7:01 p.m.¹¹¹

Question: My name is Ricardo Ehrman, representing the Italian press agency ANSA. Mr. Schabowski, you spoke about mistakes. Don't you believe that it was a big mistake to introduce this travel law several days ago?

Schabowski: No, I don't believe so. (Um) We know about this tendency in the population, this need of the population, to travel or to leave the GDR. And (um) we have ideas about what we have to bring about, (such as) all the things I mentioned before, or sought to mention in my response to the question from the TASS correspondent, namely a complex renewal of the society (um) and thereby achieve that many of these elements... (um) that people do not feel compelled to solve their personal problems in this way.

Those are quite a number of steps, as I said, and (um) we can't start them all at once. There are series of steps, and the chance, through expanding travel possibilities ... the chance, through legalizing exit and making it easier to leave, to free the people from a (um) let us say psychological pressure... Many of these steps took place without adequate consideration. We know that through conversations, through the need to return to the GDR, (um) through conversations with people who find themselves in an unbelievably complicated situation in the FRG because the FRG is having a great deal of trouble providing shelter for these refugees.

So, the absorptive capacity of the FRG is essentially exhausted. There are already more than, or less than provisional (um), that these people have to count on, if they are put up there. (um). Shelter is the minimum for constructing an existence. Finding work is decisive, essential...

Beil: (softly) ... integration...

Schabowski: ...yes, and the necessary integration into the society, which cannot happen when one is living in a tent or an emergency shelter, or is hanging around unemployed.

So, we want... through a number of changes, including the travel law, to [create] the chance, the sovereign decision of the citizens to travel wherever they want. (um) We are naturally (um) concerned that the possibilities of this travel regulation—it is still not in effect, it's only a draft.

A decision was made today, as far as I know (looking toward Labs and Banaschak in hope of confirmation). A recommendation from the Politburo was taken up that we take a passage from the [draft of] travel regulation and put it into effect, that, (um)—as it is called, for better or worse—that regulates permanent exit, leaving the Republic. Since we find it (um) unacceptable that this movement is taking place (um) across the territory of an allied state, (um) which is not an easy burden for that country to bear. Therefore (um), we have decided today (um) to implement a regulation that allows every citizen of the German Democratic Republic (um) to (um) leave the GDR through any of the border crossings.

Question: (many voices) When does that go into effect?... Without a passport? Without a passport? (no, no)—When is that in effect?... (confusion, voices...) At what point does the regulation take effect?

Schabowski: What?

Question: At once? When...

Schabowski: (... scratches his head) You see, comrades, I was informed today (puts on his glasses as he speaks further), that such an announcement had been (um) distributed earlier today. You should actually have it already. So, (reading very quickly from the paper):

- 1) "Applications for travel abroad by private individuals can now be made without the previously existing requirements (of demonstrating a need to travel or proving familial relationships). The travel authorizations will be issued within a short time. Grounds for denial will only be applied in particular exceptional cases. The responsible departments of passport and registration control in the People's Police district offices in the GDR are instructed to issue visas for permanent exit without delays and without presentation of the existing requirements for permanent exit."

Question: With a passport?

Schabowski: (um...)(reads:) "Permanent exit is possible via all GDR border crossings to the FRG.¹¹² These changes replace the temporary practice of issuing [travel] authorizations through GDR consulates and permanent exit with a GDR personal identity card via third countries."

(Looks up) (um) I cannot answer the question about passports at this point. (Looks questioningly at Labs and Banaschak.) That is also a technical question. I don't know, the passports have to ... so that everyone has a passport, they first have to be distributed. But we want to...

Banaschak: The substance of the announcement is decisive...

Schabowski: ... is the ...

Question: When does it come into effect?

Schabowski: (Looks through his papers...) That comes into effect, according to my information, immediately, without delay (looking through his papers further).

Labs: (quietly) ...without delay.

Beil: (quietly) That has to be decided by the Council of Ministers.

Question: (...Many voices...) You only said the FRG, is the regulation also valid for West Berlin?

Schabowski: (reading aloud quickly) "As the Press Office of the Ministry ... the Council of Ministers decided that until the *Volkskammer* implements a corresponding law, this transition regulation will be in effect."

Question: Does this also apply for West Berlin? You only mentioned the FRG.

Schabowski: (shrugs his shoulders, frowns, looks at his papers) So ... (pause), um hmmm (reads aloud): "Permanent exit can take place via all border crossings from the GDR to the FRG and West Berlin, respectively."

Question: Another question also: does that mean that effective immediately, GDR citizens—Christoph Janowski, Voice of America—does that mean that effective immediately, all GDR citizens cannot emigrate via Czechoslovakia or Poland?

Schabowski: No, that is not addressed at all. We hope instead that the movement will (um) regulate itself in this manner, as we are trying to.

Question: (many voices, incomprehensible question)

Schabowski: I haven't heard anything to the contrary.

Question: (many voices, incomprehensible)

Schabowski: I haven't heard anything to the contrary.

Question: (many voices, incomprehensible)

Schabowski: I haven't heard anything to the contrary. I'm expressing myself so carefully because I'm not up to date on this question, but just before I came over here I was given this information. (Several journalists hurry from the room.)

Frage: Mr. Schabowski, what is going to happen to the Berlin Wall now?

Schabowski: It has been brought to my attention that it is 7:00 p.m.. That has to be the last question. Thank you for your understanding.

(um...) What will happen to the Berlin Wall? Information has already been provided in connection with travel activities. (um) The issue of travel, (um) the ability to cross the Wall from our side, ... hasn't been answered yet and exclusively the question in the sense...., so this, I'll put it this way, fortified state border of the GDR.... (um) We have always said that there have to be several other factors (um) taken into consideration. And they deal with the complex of questions that Comrade Krenz, in his talk in the—addressed in view of the relations between the GDR and the FRG, in ditto light of the (um) necessity of continuing the process of assuring peace with new initiatives.

And (um) surely the debate about these questions (um) will be positively influenced if the FRG and NATO also agree to and implement disarmament measures in a similar manner

to that of the GDR and other socialist countries. Thank you very much.

[Source: Author's transcript of television broadcast. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 9
Verbal Message from Mikhail Gorbachev
to Helmut Kohl,
10 November 1989¹¹³

As you, of course, know, the GDR leadership made the decision to allow the citizens of East Germany unrestricted travel to West Berlin and the FRG. It is understandable, that this decision was not an easy one for the new leadership of the GDR. At the same time, the decision underlines the fact that deep and fundamental changes are taking place in East Germany. The leadership is acting in a concerted and dynamic manner in the interests of its people, and they are opening a dialog with various groups and levels of society.

Statements from the FRG made against this political and psychological background, designed to stimulate a denial of the existence of two German states and encourage emotional reactions, can have no other goal than destabilizing the situation in the GDR and subverting the ongoing processes of democratization and the renewal of all areas of society.

We have received notice that a meeting will take place today in West Berlin, in which official representatives of the FRG and West Berlin will participate. A meeting is planned in the capital of the GDR at the same time.

With the current situation of *de facto* open borders and huge numbers of people moving in both directions, a chaotic situation could easily develop that might have unforeseen consequences.

In light of the time pressure and the seriousness of the situation, I thought it necessary to ask you, in the spirit of openness and realism, to take the extremely pressing steps necessary to prevent a complication and destabilization of the situation.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/319. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]

DOCUMENT No. 10
Verbal Message from Mikhail Gorbachev
to François Mitterrand, Margaret Thatcher
and George Bush,
10 November 1989

In light of the rather extreme situation currently taking place in the GDR, its capital city, and in West Berlin, and in reference to what I consider the correct and forward-looking decision by the new East German leadership, I have just sent a verbal message to Chancellor Kohl. I consider it necessary to inform you of the contents of the message as well.

According to our information, a meeting is taking place today in West Berlin in which official representatives of the FRG and West Berlin will participate. A parallel meeting is planned in East Berlin. With the current situation of *de facto* open borders and huge numbers of people moving in both directions, a chaotic situation could easily develop that might have unforeseen consequences.

I have appealed to Chancellor Kohl to take the extremely pressing steps necessary to prevent a complication and destabilization of the situation.

Our ambassador in Berlin was instructed to contact the representatives of the governments of the three Allied powers in West Berlin. I hope that you will also contact your representatives so that the events do not take an undesirable turn.

In general, I would like to emphasize that deep and fundamental changes are currently taking place in East Germany. If statements are made in the FRG, however, that seek to generate emotional denials of the postwar realities, meaning the existence of two German states, the appearance of such political extremism cannot be viewed as anything other than attempts to destabilize the situation in the GDR and subvert the ongoing processes of democratization and the renewal of all areas of society. Looking forward, this would bring about not only the destabilization of the situation in Central Europe, but also in other parts of the world.

I would like to express my hope that you receive this news with understanding.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/319. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant.]



DOCUMENT No. 11
Information about the Content of a Telephone
Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev
and Helmut Kohl,
11 November 1989¹¹⁴

The conversation took place on 11 November on the Chancellor's initiative.

The Chancellor said he wanted to respond to the verbal message from Mikhail Gorbachev, which he had received at the beginning of the meeting in West Berlin the previous day.

Helmut Kohl stated that the FRG welcomed the beginning of reforms in the GDR and hoped that they could be carried out in a calm atmosphere. He said: "I reject any radicalization and do not wish to see any destabilization of the situation in the GDR."

The Chancellor admitted that the majority of East German citizens that had crossed the borders to the FRG in the last few days did not want to stay in West Germany forever. He also assured him [Gorbachev] that the leadership of the FRG did not seek this either. Kohl said a mass resettlement to the FRG would be an absurd development. "We want the Germans to build their futures in their current homes." Kohl informed him [Gorbachev] that he was preparing for a meeting with Krenz at the end of November. In this context he mentioned that, given the current conditions in East Germany, the new GDR leadership should work dynamically to implement the reforms.

Mikhail Gorbachev emphasized that the current profound changes in the world would take different forms and occur within varying shape and intensities in different countries. It was necessary for all sides to maintain stability and to take a balanced approach.

[Gorbachev:] Overall, the basis for mutual understanding was improving. We were growing closer, which was very important.

As far as the GDR is concerned, the current leadership has a far-reaching program. All those questions, though, have to be worked through carefully, which required time.

I understand that all Europeans, and not only they, are following the events in the GDR. This is a very important point in world politics. But it is also a fact that the FRG and the Soviet Union, for historical reasons as well as due to the character of their current relationship, also have a greater interest in this development.

Naturally, every change is accompanied by a certain degree of instability. When I speak of maintaining stability, I mean that all sides should think through their actions very carefully.

I believe, Mr. Chancellor, that we are currently experiencing a historic change to different relationships and a different world. We should not allow careless actions to damage this change. Under no circumstances should the developments be forced in an unpredictable direction, which could lead to chaos. That would not be desirable under any circumstances.

Therefore I take very seriously what you told me during our conversation. I hope that you will use your authority, your political weight and your influence to keep others within the boundaries required to meet the demands of the time.

Kohl agreed with Gorbachev's statements. According to

him, the FRG government had discussed this question in this spirit.

The Chancellor emphasized his interest in maintaining contact, including with regard to the situation in the GDR.

[Source: SAPMO-BA, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/319, pp. 12-19. Translated for CWIHP by Howard Sargeant]

Dr. Hans-Hermann Hertle is a research fellow with the Center for Contemporary History Research Potsdam and an expert consultant for the Bundestag Commission on Social and Political Change in the New Laender.

¹ The paper is based on the following works by the author: Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Der Fall der Mauer: Die unbeabsichtigte Selbstauflösung des SED-Staates*, 2nd edition (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1999); *Chronik des Mauerfalls*, 8th edition (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1999); Hans-Hermann Hertle and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, eds., *Das Ende der SED. Die letzten Tage des Zentralkomitees*, 4th edition (Berlin: Ch. Links, 1999); Hans-Hermann Hertle/Kathrin Elsner, *Mein 9. November. Der Tag, an dem die Mauer fiel* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1999).

² See Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1994); John Lewis Gaddis, *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).

³ For the international aspects of German unification, see the seminal work by Philip Zelikow and Condoleezza Rice, *Germany Unified and Europe Transformed* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1995); also see Werner Weidenfeld (with Peter Wagner and Elke Bruck), *Außenpolitik für die deutsche Einheit: Die Entscheidungsjahre 1989/90* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998); Karl Kaiser, *Deutschlands Vereinigung* (Bergisch-Gladbach: Bastei-Lübbe, 1991); and Konrad H. Jarausch, *The Rush to German Unity* (New York: Oxford Press, 1994).

⁴ Mary E. Sarotte, "Elite Intransigence and the End of the Berlin Wall," *German Politics* 2:2 (August 1993), p. 270.

⁵ See Egon Krenz, *Wenn Mauern fallen* (Wien: Neff, 1990); idem, "Anmerkungen zur Öffnung der Berliner Mauer im Herbst 1989," *Osteuropa* 4 (1992), pp. 365-369; Günter Schabowski, *Das Politbüro* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1990); idem, *Der Absturz* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1991).

⁶ James A. McAdams, *Germany Divided: From the Wall to Reunification* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 199. Similar arguments may be found in Frank A. Ninkovich, *Germany and the United States: The Transformation of the German Question since 1945* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), p. 163, and Catherine McArdle Kelleher, "The New Germany. An Overview," in Paul B. Stares (ed.), *The New Germany and the New Europe* (Washington: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 16.

⁷ Charles S. Maier, *Dissolution: The Crisis of Communism and the End of East Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 161.

⁸ See Friedrich Schorlemmer, "Frieden vor Einheit sagen," in Peter Neumann (ed.), *Träumen verboten. Aktuelle Stellungnahmen aus der DDR* (Göttingen: Lamuv, 1990), p. 54.

⁹ See *Sunday Times*, 19 November 1989; Don Oberdorfer, *The Turn From the Cold War to a New Era: The United States and the Soviet Union 1983-1990* (New York: Poseidon Press, 1991), p. 363; Michael R. Beschloss and Strobe Talbott, *At the Highest Levels: The Inside Story of the End of the Cold War* (Boston/Toronto/London: Little, Brown, 1993), p. 134; Robert M. Gates, *From the Shadows: The Ultimate Insider's Story of Five Presidents and How They Won the Cold War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), p. 468.

¹⁰ Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR 1949-1989* (Oxford: New York, 1995), p. 259.

¹¹ Timothy Garton Ash, *In Europe's Name* (New York: Vintage Books 1993), p. 345.

¹² See Cordt Schnibben, "Diesmal sterbe ich, Schwester," *Der Spiegel*, No. 42, 8 October 1990, pp. 102-109; Friedrich Kurz, *Die sieben Mythen der Wiedervereinigung* (München: Ehrenwirth, 1991), pp. 165-191.

¹³ See, e.g., Henryk Broder, "Eine schöne Revolution," *Die Zeit*, No. 3, 16 January 1992.

¹⁴ Even Zbigniew Brzezinski, one of the few analysts who predicted the end of communism, considered the GDR a stable state. See Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure. The Birth and Death of Communism in the 20th Century* (New York: Macmillan, 1989).

¹⁵ Bohdan Harasymiw, *Soviet Communist Party Officials: A Study in Organizational Roles and Change* (Nova Science Publishers, 1996), p. IX.

¹⁶ Peter Steinbach, "Deutsche Systemumbrüche im 20. Jahrhundert," *Das Ende der SED: Die letzten Tage des Zentralkomitees*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), p. 258.

¹⁸ Reinhard Bendix, *Freiheit und historisches Schicksal* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1982), p. 65.

¹⁹ For an example, see Claus Offe, "Wohlstand, Nation, Republik" in Hans Joas and Martin Kohli, eds., *Der Zusammenbruch der DDR* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1993), p. 296.

²⁰ In the following presentation, aspects of the relationship among the party's leadership, its functionaries, and its members, the analysis of security policy, the development of ideology, the political behavior of the population in the years prior to 1989, and the genesis and policies of the reform and citizen movements will not be emphasized.

²¹ The documents of the government of the Federal Republic, in contrast to the readily available documents of the GDR, still fall under the usual restriction that they not

be released for thirty years. A selection of relevant documents is printed in *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik. Deutsche Einheit 1989/90*, compiled by Hans Jürgen Küsters and Daniel Hofmann (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1998).

²² Mary E. Sarotte demonstrates the knowledge gained by taking the international context of apparently exclusive German-German relations into consideration in her exemplary study on the international context of the basic treaty negotiations (1969-1973) in *Deutschland Archiv* 6 (1997), pp. 901-911. For her complete study, see Mary E. Sarotte, *The East German Ruling Regime and Ostpolitik in the Context of Superpower Détente, 1969-1973*, New Haven, 1999, dissertation ms.

²³ For an analysis of the decline of the Soviet Union, see Hannes Adomeit, *Imperial Overstretch: Germany in Soviet Policy from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998).

²⁴ See Mikhail Gorbachev, *Erinnerungen* (Munich: Goldmann, 1996).

²⁵ *Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der DDR im Bundesarchiv* (SAPMO-BArch), DY 30/IV2/1/658; see Daniel Küchenmeister, ed., *Honecker-Gorbatschow: Vieraugengespräche* (Berlin: Dietz, 1993), pp. 14-15.

²⁶ Anatoli Tschernajew, *Die letzten Jahre einer Weltmacht: Der Kreml von innen* (Stuttgart: Deutsche

Verlags-Anstalt, 1993), p. 245.

²⁷ Eduard Schewardnadse, *Die Zukunft gehört der Freiheit* (Hamburg: Reinbek, 1991), p. 106.

²⁸ See Hans-Hermann Hertle, "Der Sturz Erich Honeckers: Zur Rekonstruktion eines innerparteilichen Machtkampfes," in Klaus-Dietmar Henke, Peter Steinbach and Johannes Tuchel (eds.), *Widerstand und Opposition in der DDR* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), pp. 327-346.

²⁹ For a representation of the Federal Republic's *Deutschlandpolitik* in the 1980s, see Karl-Rudolf Korte, *Deutschlandpolitik in Helmut Kohls Kanzlerschaft. Regierungsstil und Entscheidungen 1982-1989*, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998).

³⁰ The communiqué is printed in *Ein Erfolg der Politik der Vernunft und des Realismus* (East Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1987), pp. 37-38.

³¹ Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "Concluding Document of the Vienna CSCE Conference. Vienna, 15 January 1989," *Deutschland Archiv* 4 (1989), pp. 467-69.

³² The seventh SED Party Convention in 1971 proclaimed the "increasing of the people's material and cultural standard of living on the basis of a high rate of development of socialist production, increasing the effectiveness of scientific-technical progress and increased work productivity as the main task."

³³ M. Rainer Lepsius, "Die Bundesrepublik—ein neuer Nationalstaat?," *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 1 (1994),

Excerpt from the Diary of Anatoly Chernyaev, 11 October 1989

Wednesday, 11 October 1989

I have read the record of conversation of M.S. [Gorbachev] with Honecker in Berlin. I spoke with him [Gorbachev] about this. [Georgy] Shakhnazarov was present. M.S. [Gorbachev] called Honecker an "asshole" [*mudak*]. He, Gorbachev added, could have said to his [East German] lieutenants: I have undergone four operations, I am 78 years old, the stormy time requires too much strength, let me go, I have done my job. Then he might have kept his place in history.

Shakh[nazarov] and I voiced our doubts that even if he had done so he would have kept his place in history. 2-3 years ago it might have been possible. Today he has already been cursed by his people... The Politburo [of the SED] is in session for the second day in Berlin. [Honecker's future successor Egon] Krenz has promised "to raise a question" about changes to our Ambassador [Vyacheslav Kochemassov] for transmittal to Gorbachev. Honecker warned him: [If you do it] you will become my enemy.

However, Krenz seems to have taken the step. What is about to happen?

[Source: Notes of Anatoly Chernyaev, Archive of the Gorbachev Foundation, f. 2, op. 2. Translated by Vladislav Zubok (The National Security Archive).]

p. 10.

³⁴ On this issue, see Theo Pirker, M. Rainer Lepsius, Rainer Weinert and Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Der Plan als Befehl und Fiktion: Wirtschaftsführung in der DDR* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1995).

³⁵ See Sigrid Meuschel, *Legitimation und Parteiherrschaft in der DDR* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992).

³⁶ Heinz Klopfer, *Persönliche Notizen über die Beratung beim Generalsekretär des ZK der SED und Vorsitzenden des Staatsrates der DDR, Erich Honecker*, Berlin, 16 May 1989, p. 42.

³⁷ The Valutamark (VM) was the currency the GDR used for foreign trade with the West. One VM corresponded to one (West German) DM.

³⁸ "Darlegungen Gerhard Schürers zur Zahlungsbilanz mit dem nichtsozialistischen Wirtschaftsgebiet," 16 May 1989, BA, Berlin Branch, E-1-56321.

³⁹ "Communiqué of the Meeting of the Political Advisory Committee of the Member States of the Warsaw Pact," 7-8 July 1989 in Bucharest, *Europa-Archiv* 20 (1989), p. 599; see also Thomas Blanton, "When did the Cold War end?" *CWIHP Bulletin* 10 (March 1998), pp. 184-7.

⁴⁰ Stephen Szabo, *The Diplomacy of German Unification* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1992); Helmut Kohl, *Ich wollte Deutschlands Einheit* (Berlin: Propyläen 1996), p. 74.

⁴¹ See Hannes Adomeit, "Gorbachev and German Unification," *Problems of Communism*, no. 4 (1990), p. 6.

⁴² Tobias Hollitzer, "Heute entscheidet es sich: Entweder die oder wir." Zum 9. Oktober in Leipzig, in *Horch und Guck* 2 (1998), p. 23-37; Elizabeth Pond, *Beyond the Wall: Germany's Road to Unification* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1993), p. 111-129; Ekkehard Kuhn, *Der Tag der Entscheidung: Leipzig, 9 October 1989* (Berlin-Frankfurt/Main: Ullstein, 1992).

⁴³ Gerhard Schürer, Gerhard Beil, Alexander Schalck, Ernst Höfner and Arno Donda *Vorlage für das Politbüro des Zentralkomitees der SED, Betreff: Analyse der ökonomischen Lage der DDR mit Schlußfolgerungen*, 27 October 1989, SAPMO-BA, DY 30/J IV 2/2A/3252.

⁴⁴ Gerhard Schürer's comments: "We had the idea of bringing the continued existence of the Wall into the discussion. That is the first official document from the former GDR that, to my knowledge, dared bring up the Wall for discussion. Up to this time, Honecker's saying, 'The Wall will stand another hundred years!' was still the official line."

It was clear to me that the GDR's sovereignty could only be maintained in a restricted manner, since it was clear to me that if the FRG was going to give us 8-10 billion, the money would come with political demands attached. As economists, we could no longer have such an illusion because we knew that there was no other possible way out. The only way out was for us to gain access to capital for investments in new technology. If we were not able to do

this, annexation was the only possible result." (Author's conversation with Gerhard Schürer, 21 February 1992.)

⁴⁵ Compare the final version of the Politbüro draft, SAPMO-BA, ZPA-SED, DY 30/J IV 2/2/2356, with the original draft in SAPMO-BA, ZPA-SED, DY 30/J IV 2/2A/3252.

⁴⁶ Gerhard Schürer, Explanatory section of the draft "Analyse der ökonomischen Lage der DDR mit Schlußfolgerungen" (speech text), Berlin, 31 October 1989, p. 9.

⁴⁷ If not stated otherwise, sources and notes for the following section can be found in Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Der Fall der Mauer*, pp. 143-44.

⁴⁸ Memorandum of Conversation between Comrade Egon Krenz, General Secretary of the SED Central Committee and Chairman of the GDR Council of State, with Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party and Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, 1 November 1989 in Moscow, Berlin, 1 November 1989, SAPMO-BA, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/329 (Document No. 1).

⁴⁹ Alexander Schalck's notes on his informal conversation with Wolfgang Schäuble and Rudolf Seiters is documented in Hans-Hermann Hertle, *Der Fall der Mauer*, p. 483-85. (Document No. 2).

⁵⁰ Letter from Alexander Schalck to Egon Krenz, 7 November 1989 (Document No. 3).

⁵¹ *Deutscher Bundestag*, 11th Electoral Period, 173rd Meeting, 8 November 1989, Stenographic Report, p. 13017.

⁵² In German, the chant rhymes, "Visa frei bis Shanghai."

⁵³ See Document No. 4.

⁵⁴ See Document No. 5.

⁵⁵ See Document No. 6.

⁵⁶ Tenth meeting of the Central Committee of the SED, 9 November 1989 (transcription of a recording), documented in Hans-Hermann Hertle and Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, eds., *Das Ende der SED*, p. 305 (Document No. 7).

⁵⁷ See Document No. 8.

⁵⁸ Tom Brokaw: "I would like to tell you that I knew that the Wall would come down. That was not the case. I did think that there would be a very interesting and important political story. So I went to Berlin simply to be in the midst of that story." (Author's interview with Tom Brokaw, 4 November 1998.)

⁵⁹ Michael E. Geisler, "Mehrfach gebrochene Mauer-schau: 1989-1990 in den US-Medien," in Rainer Bohn, Knut Hickethier and Eggo Müller, eds., *Mauer-Show: Das Ende der DDR, die deutsche Einheit und die Medien* (Berlin: Sigma, 1992), pp. 260-61.

⁶⁰ Author's interview with Michelle Neubert (NBC), 11 July 1995.

⁶¹ See the portrayal by Marc Kusnetz in Robert Goldberg and Gerald Jay Goldberg, *Anchors: Brokaw, Jennings, Rather and the Evening News* (Secaucus, NJ: Carol Publishing Group, 1990), p. 262, as well as Peter Ross Range, *When Walls Come Tumbling Down: Covering The*

East German Revolution, (Washington, DC: The Woodrow Wilson Center, 1991), p. 7.

⁶²NBC Nightly News, Thursday, 9 November 1989, Title: "Berlin Wall is opened for unrestricted travel for the first time since its construction 28 years ago." Hit time: 7:01:47 (NBC News Archives, New York).

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ A camera crew from the German television station SFB captured this scene with Tom Brokaw. The interview with Schabowski was aired on the NBC evening news shortly after 7:00 p.m. EST on 9 November 1989 (10 November, 1:00 a.m. in Berlin).

⁶⁵ George Bush: "I felt emotional about it. But I did not want to overplay the hand of the United States of America. I did not want at that critical moment for us to gloat, to stick my fingers in Mr. Gorbachev's eyes, which would have been the worst thing you could possibly do. So, restraint was called for." (Author's interview with George Bush, 2 July 1998.) See "Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session with Reporters on the Relaxation of East German Border Controls," 9 November 1989, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, George Bush, 1989*, Book II: July 1 to December 31, 1989 (GPO: Washington, 1990), pp. 1488-1490. See also George Bush and Brent Scowcroft, *A World Transformed* (New York: Knopf, 1998), pp. 148-151.

⁶⁶ Margaret Thatcher, on BBC Radio 4, 10 November 1989, 2:00 p.m. For the British Prime Minister's approach, also see Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), pp. 792-794, and Percy Cradock, *In Pursuit of British Interests: Reflections on Foreign Policy under Margaret Thatcher and John Major*, (London: John Murray, 1997), pp. 102-104.

⁶⁷ Francois Mitterrand, *France 1*, 10 November 1989, 6:00 p.m.

⁶⁸ See Jacques Attali, *Verbatim*, vol. III, (Paris: Fayard 1995, p. 337.

⁶⁹ Author's interview with Helmut Kohl, 25 November 1998.

⁷⁰ Author's interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, 8 December 1998.

⁷¹ Author's interview with Eduard Shevardnadze, 18 December 1998.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Author's interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, 8 December 1998.

⁷⁴ "Schön, ich gab die DDR weg." Interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, *Der Spiegel* (2 October 1995), p. 72.

⁷⁵ Nikolai Portugalov, in: Ekkehard Kuhn, *Gorbatschow und die deutsche Einheit* (Bonn: Bouvier, 1993), pp. 65, 70.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 70.

⁷⁷ ADN, 10 November 1989, 6:45 p.m.

⁷⁸ See Yuli A. Kvizinski, *Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), p. 15.

⁷⁹ Verbal message from Mikhail Gorbachev to Helmut Kohl, 10 November 1989, in SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV 2/

2.039/319, sheets 15/16 (Document No. 9).

⁸⁰ Verbal message from Mikhail Gorbachev to President François Mitterrand, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and President George Bush, 10 November 1989, in SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/319, sheets 20/21 (Document No. 10).

⁸¹ Helmut Kohl: "I took Gorbachev's message very seriously. I also believe that this request was fateful for the following days. We now know that GDR State Security and parts of the SED leadership were sending their Soviet friends very threatening scenarios. They told them that order had broken down completely and that Soviet facilities and possibly the troops could be caught up in the chaos, and that their security—that was Gorbachev's concern—could no longer be guaranteed. The KGB had passed on such information from the Stasi to Gorbachev.

I now know from my later conversations with Gorbachev just how decisive this moment was, that he rather believed us than the KGB. Developments certainly would have taken a different path if Gorbachev had, to put it sharply, turned the military loose on 10 November 1989, as the Soviet leadership had in June 1953. That would have had terrible consequences.

We informed Gorbachev that his fears were groundless, that there was no upheaval, but that the people simply wanted to come together, that the mood remained upbeat and things were taking place peacefully. In this decisive hour, Mikhail Gorbachev believed me." (Author's interview with Helmut Kohl, 25 November 1998); Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage: Innenansichten der Einigung* (Berlin: Siedler, 1991), p. 20.

⁸² Ibid., p. 23.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ "We wanted to welcome the change diplomatically, almost clinically—and try as best we could not to be overly emotional, so that Gorbachev, Shevardnadze, and other Soviets who saw our reaction would not feel, as the President put it, 'that we were sticking our thumb in their eye'." James A. Baker, with Thomas A. Defrank, *The Politics of Diplomacy. Revolution, War and Peace* (New York: Putnam, 1995), p. 164.

⁸⁵ The chancellery's notes on the phone conversation are documented in Hans Jürgen Küsters and Daniel Hofmann, eds., *Dokumente zur Deutschlandpolitik: Deutsche Einheit 1989/90* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), pp. 505-507.

⁸⁶ Information about the contents of the phone conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl on 11 November 1989, SAPMO-BArch, DY 30/IV 2/2.039/319, sheets 17-19 (Document No. 11). Also see Teltschik, *329 Tage*, p. 27.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 28.

⁸⁸ See Robert K. Merton, "The Unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action," *American Sociological Review* 1 (1936), pp. 894-904.

⁸⁹ Robert K. Merton, "Die Self-Fulfilling-Prophecy," *Soziologische Theorie und soziale Struktur* (Berlin: de

Gruyter, 1995), pp. 399-413.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 399.

⁹¹ See M. Rainer Lepsius, "Die Bundesrepublik - ein neuer Nationalstaat?," *Berliner Journal für Soziologie* 1 (1994), p. 10.

⁹² See the statement of the "Neues Forum" of 12 November 1989, "Die Mauer ist gefallen", *Die ersten Texte des Neuen Forum* edited for the state press agency for New Forum, (East Berlin: Tribüne Druckerei, 1990), pp. 20-21, as well as the proclamation "Für unser Land," dated 26 November but published on 28 November 1989 (see *Neues Deutschland*, 29 November 1989).

⁹³ See the detailed account in Rafael Biermann, *Zwischen Kreml und Kanzleramt: Wie Moskau mit der deutschen Einheit rang* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1997).

⁹⁴ Also see Dieter Grosser, *Das Wagnis der Wirtschafts-, Währungs und Sozialunion: Politische Zwänge im Konflikt mit ökonomischen Regeln* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1998).

⁹⁵ See Lepsius, "Die Bundesrepublik—ein neuer Nationalstaat?," p. 10.

⁹⁶ From 25 September to 2 October 1989, Krenz participated in the ceremonies on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the People's Republic of China.

⁹⁷ On Ulbricht's 1971 ouster, see Mary E. Sarotte, *Dealing with the Devil: East Germany, Détente and Ostpolitik, 1963-1973* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

⁹⁸ On the Nina Andreeva affair, see Archie Brown, *The Gorbachev Factor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 168, 172-74.

⁹⁹ Reference to a German card game. The "black Peter" is a card you want to avoid holding at the end of the game.

¹⁰⁰ Reference to Honecker's hardline 13 October 1980 speech in Gera, in which the East German leader had demanded, among other things, the Western recognition of GDR citizenship.

¹⁰¹ Krenz's handwritten note on the address: "Kr. 7 November, 1989."

¹⁰² The note bears a handwritten comment from Krenz on the first page: "Comrade Schalck. 1) Thank you! 2) Please send me relevant material for talks with Seiters. 12 November/Kr"

¹⁰³ Krenz signed off on this letter with his initials "Kr."

¹⁰⁴ The document does not bear a registration stamp and is signed with Stoph's handwritten abbreviation "St."

¹⁰⁵ Head of the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers since 7 November 1989.

¹⁰⁶ Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst, the official GDR press agency.

¹⁰⁷ Günther Jahn, the First Secretary of the SED District leadership of Potsdam, was next on the list of speakers.

¹⁰⁸ Hans-Joachim Hoffmann, born 1929, from 1973 to 1989 the GDR Minister of Culture and from 1976 to 1989/90, he was a member of the SED Central Committee and a Representative in the GDR Parliament. Hoffmann died in 1994.

¹⁰⁹ Friedrich Dickel, Army General, successor to Karl Maron as Minister of the Interior and the head of the People's Police, member of the SED Central Committee and delegate in the GDR Parliament, member of the National Defense Council.

¹¹⁰ Professor Dr. Manfred Banaschak, editor-in-chief of the SED theoretical journal "Einheit" [Unity].

¹¹¹ Author's transcript from the television recording. Schabowski was accompanied to the press conference by three other members of the Central Committee: Professor Manfred Banaschak, Helga Labs, Chair of the Teachers' and Instructors' Union, and Foreign Trade Minister Gerhard Beil.

¹¹² Schabowski at this point at first skipped the words: "and (West) Berlin, respectively," but this point brought a second question. See below.

¹¹³ The Soviet ambassador in Bonn, Yuli Kvizinski, presented the verbal message from Gorbachev to Kohl's advisor Horst Teltschik during the program in front of the Schöneberg Town Hall in Berlin. See Yuli Kvizinski, *Vor dem Sturm* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), p. 15; see also Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage*. The SED leadership received the written version of this message from the Soviet embassy in East Berlin with the date of 13 November 1989.

¹¹⁴ The document is, like documents 10 and 11, information sent from the Soviet embassy in East Berlin to the SED General Secretary. According to Horst Teltschik, the phone conversation took place around 12:00 p.m. See Horst Teltschik, *329 Tage*, pp. 27-28.



1989: Bulgarian Transition to Pluralist Democracy

By Jordan Baev

Though induced by similar social and economic conditions, the political changes in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 had different historical, psychological and functional characteristics in each country. Against the background, or rather the foreground, of the succession of reforms in Poland and Hungary, the dramatic changes in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, and the bloodstained epilogue of the Romanian dictatorship, the events taking place in Sofia that November passed by, barely noticed by the international community.¹

The process of the Bulgarian transition to pluralist democracy is still largely unknown in the West. There were three main internal political factors which brought about the change in the Bulgarian political system: first, behind-the-scene political ambitions and infighting within the ruling elite; second, the ethnic conflict in the eastern part of the country; and, finally, the increasingly open social discontent, expressed predominantly within intellectual circles. All three factors have foreign analogues but they differ in their peculiar Bulgarian origins. Just as in some other Eastern European countries, the first challenge to authority in Bulgaria came not from traditional opposition organizations, but from newly-formed ecological and human rights groups, inspired to some extent by the example of the “green” movements in the West. The independent trade union “Podkrepa” [Support] was created as a Bulgarian analogue of the Polish “Solidarity.” In Romania, an important cause of the internal conflict was the oppression of the Hungarian minority in Transylvania. Similarly, in Bulgaria the treatment of the Bulgarian Turks by the authorities after 1984 had turned into a peculiar “detonator.” In combination with the worsened economic situation, this issue played an important part in the heightening of social tensions. Moreover, the Soviet embassy in Sofia, following Mikhail Gorbachev’s unambiguous instructions, played an important role in changing who ruled in the Bulgarian capital.

The overthrow of Todor Zhivkov,² the longest ruling communist leader in Eastern Europe, was the result of joint behind-the-scene efforts by communist party reformers and senior Soviet diplomats in Bulgaria. No authentic documents on the events preceding Zhivkov’s “resignation” on 10 November 1989 are thus far available. Various memoirs offer contradictory information and prejudiced attempts to mythologize or demonize key persons and events. During the last decade, I have had the opportunity to interview many of the participants crucial to Zhivkov’s ouster. Generally, they lacked clear and definite answers to the key issues. Among those interviewed were former Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov,³ Todor Zhivkov’s successor as political leader and head of state in November

1989; the late ex-prime ministers Stanko Todorov⁴ and Andrey Lukanov;⁵ Dimitar Stanishev, former Secretary of the Central Committee [CC] of the Bulgarian Communist Party [BCP] in charge of international relations during the period 1977–1990; Gen. Dobri Dzhurov⁶ and Gen. Atanas Semerjiev,⁷ the defense minister and chief of staff, respectively, each with the longest service of any in a Warsaw Pact country. Analysis of the decision-making process requires careful reading “between the lines” of the available information and a critical comparison of the existing fragmentary articles. The following documentary publication is a first selection of Bulgarian “political elite” documents from 1989.

A specific characteristic of Cold War Bulgaria was the lack of strong anti-communist opposition, not to mention the lack of influence on the part of traditional bourgeois parties in the political life of the country before November 1989. Individual acts by some intellectuals (many of whom either had a communist background, or were connected in some way with the ruling elite) as well as feeble efforts to create dissident groups (inspired mainly by the Czechoslovak and Polish examples),⁸ did not draw much public response until the mid-eighties. The strongest challenges Todor Zhivkov had ever faced had come many years earlier from reformist or Stalinist circles within his own party.⁹ Hence, one of Zhivkov’s favored measures since 1956 had been to reshuffle the hierarchy periodically, thus rendering potential rivals harmless and keeping the remaining members of the leadership in check.

In 1987–88 several “informal” ecological, human rights and reformist groups came into existence in Bulgaria—groups in which communist intellectuals took an active part as well. In most cases, however, these groups did not call for a change of the political system, but for its reform. The secret services were shocked when they discovered that among the leaders of these groups were BCP CC members. Following Zhivkov’s personal instructions, the authorities retaliated with repressive measures which, however, proved counterproductive. At the same time, Zhivkov conducted his regular reshuffling of his favorites and opponents. The appointment of Zhivkov’s son to one of the leading positions in the arena of Bulgarian culture aroused particularly strong resentment among many Bulgarians. It triggered protests even within the circle of Zhivkov’s closest associates, including Defense Minister Dzhurov.

Among those expelled from the Communist Party for participation in an “informal” group was Sonya Bakish, the wife of Stanko Todorov, the former prime minister and then chairman of the Bulgarian parliament. As a result Todorov submitted his letter of resignation from his position in July 1988. Although his resignation was not accepted, the episode for many was one of the first indications that the

anti-Zhivkov opposition had reached into the top echelon of power. The second half of 1988 was most likely the time when certain Politburo members began to consider seriously their chances of changing the *status quo* in the long run and toppling Todor Zhivkov. That became a reality a year later when the regime became internationally isolated (owing to the persecution of the Bulgarian Turks), when the country sank further into economic recession, and the growing controversies within the Eastern European system aggravated the situation in Bulgaria.

The key factor in the events of 10 November 1989 in Bulgaria, however, was the Kremlin's position. Gorbachev's increasingly cool attitude toward Zhivkov—outward expressions of “fraternal friendship” notwithstanding—was something of a public secret. Recently, a number of new facts regarding the energetic activities by the Soviet embassy in Sofia (mainly on the part of Ambassador Victor Sharapov and of Counselor Valentin Terechov) have become well known.¹⁰ Sharapov and Terechov's purpose was to unite the efforts of some members of the party and state leadership to oust Zhivkov. Rather significant is the fact that even the KGB representative in Bulgaria, Gen. Vladilen Fyodorov, was kept in the dark about these efforts until the very last moment for fear of a “leak.” The evidence seems to suggest that the embassy's efforts in Sofia were known only to Gorbachev's closest associates, among whom numbered Alexander Yakovlev, a key figure in the policy arena. As far as the evidence indicates, the main role in the events was assigned to Moscow-born Andrey Lukanov whose grandfather had been held in Stalin's prisons as a “rightist opportunist” and whose father had been Bulgarian foreign minister in late 1950s. While closely linked to influential circles in Moscow, Lukanov maintained at the same time good contacts with Western politicians and financial magnates, such as Robert Maxwell. Two things served as catalysts for the action against Zhivkov—Petar Mladenov's 24 October 1989 letter to the BCP CC Politburo,¹¹ and the replacement of Communist Party leader Erich Honecker in East Germany.

Participants in the events between 24 October and 9 November 1989 give conflicting accounts of their sequence. All of them, however, agree that the action to depose Zhivkov was carried out under central direction and conspiratorially to be able to succeed even under an enormously repressive system and to secure Moscow's discreet logistic support. All of this made possible Todor Zhivkov's acceptance of his ouster without any visible resistance at a Politburo session on the evening of 9 November. The acceptance of the resignation of the BCP CC Secretary General at the plenary session of the Central Committee on the following day was a mere formality. Zhivkov's overthrow was engineered so smoothly that neither the US ambassador in Sofia, Sol Polansky, nor top Washington officials responsible for Eastern Europe, such as Robert Hutchings and Condoleezza Rice, knew anything in advance.¹² Not until a month later did US Secretary of State James Baker inform his deputy Lawrence S.

Eagleburger that he had received reliable information on the role that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had played in Zhivkov's ouster. Shevardnadze himself still keeps silent on the matter.

The actions of the new party-government team in Bulgaria after 10 November 1989 intended to preserve the political system through reforms and by changes in its outward appearance. Much of the blame was laid on Todor Zhivkov personally plus a few of his closest associates. In order to secure the survival of the authors of the “coup” as leading political figures in the future political system, some of them used their political influence and contacts to move into decisive economic positions. That was the main reason for the “duel” between Andrey Lukanov and Ognyan Doynov,¹³ the other party leader, specialized in foreign trade, also known for his connections with financial and business circles in the West. In the course of the following months another “recipe,” recommended earlier by the authors of the Soviet *Perestroika*, was used—the sharing of the responsibilities of power with the newly established political opposition. Initially, during the spring of 1990, the Polish-Hungarian “round table” model was applied. Several months later the outbreak of a political crisis was overcome through the formula “your President—our Government.” A year later, a “coalition government” was also tried. The anticommunist opposition responded to the requests with the reply “all power forever” and with demands for the prohibition of the former Communist Party (renamed in the spring 1990 as the Socialist Party). The bipolar model of fierce confrontation was typical during the first few years of political transition to a multiparty system



Former Prime Minister Andrey Lukanov

following 1989.

The Bulgarian documents presented below have never been published before. The first document has been obtained from the Diplomatic Archive, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the last two from the Archive of the Bulgarian Parliament. The rest of the documents are from the as yet unprocessed collections in the former BCP records.¹⁴



DOCUMENT No. 1
Memorandum from
Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov
to the Politburo of the Central Committee
of the Bulgarian Communist Party,
12 July 1989

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
 No. 01-05-20/ 12 July 1989

TO THE POLITBURO OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
 OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (THE CC OF
 THE BCP)

INFORMATION

by Petar Mladenov, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Comrades,

The routine session of the Political Consultative Committee of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact was held on 7 and 8 July in Bucharest [...]

The most pressing problems of socialism and the present day were analyzed in a business-like, constructive, and on some issues, critical and self-critical spirit; the paths were mapped out for accelerating the positive processes leading to a more stable and democratic world. Comrade Mikhail Gorbachev's speech set the tone for this atmosphere.

It was emphasized during the exchange of experience and information about the course of the renewal processes in the allied countries that, despite the diversity in national conditions, practically all socialist countries were struggling to resolve a series of similar problems. [These problems] had sprung from the necessity to overcome the negative tendencies in [these countries'] internal development and to stimulate and fully utilize the potentials of socialism.

The allied countries have lagged behind, especially in the field of new technology [and] in growth rates; the currency debts are perceived by the West as the "sunset of socialism." With regards to [these facts], the necessity to prove the advantages of the new order through both strong arguments and real actions was emphasized. The further influence of the socialist countries on positive

changes in the world will depend to a crucial degree on the ability of socialism to renew itself [...]

In the future, the socialist countries' political philosophy in the field of international relations should be a combination of active struggle for transition toward a new international order and a reliable defense of our countries.

In the process of exchanging opinions on the cardinal problems of disarmament, the leaders of the allied countries stressed the importance of signing a Soviet-American agreement on a 50% reduction in both countries' strategic offensive weapons, providing a strict adherence to the 1972 Agreement on Anti-Ballistic Missile Defense [i.e., the ABM Treaty]. The universal and complete ban on chemical arms and the liquidation of [chemical arms] stockpiles continue to be issues on the agenda of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact.

The meeting paid special attention to the process of building a "pan-European home." It analyzed the results of the recently held forums in the framework of the Helsinki process. Emphasis was placed on the interests and values common for the European peoples, on the need for equal dialogue and an enhancement of contacts in various areas. The unity of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals is possible and necessary in the conditions of preserving each country's identity and its social, economic and cultural diversity, which should be viewed as a treasure of European civilization. The meeting confirmed that every attempt to destabilize the situation in any socialist country will have an impact on the balance in Europe, and on the confidence building process between the two halves of the continent. Such an attempt will destroy what has been already achieved.

The Soviet leader informed the meeting about new developments in the relations and policies of the USSR towards the FRG [Federal Republic of Germany] and France. [...]

Cde. Mikhail Gorbachev confirmed the readiness of the USSR to coordinate the size of the Soviet contingents and the order of their withdrawal from Eastern Europe with the leaderships of the allied countries. The combination of political, military and geographical factors should be taken into consideration during the discussion of [the above-mentioned] possibility because it would influence the European situation after the realization of such a withdrawal. It was emphasized that the US proposal for equal ceilings on Soviet and American military contingents in Eastern Europe and Western Europe respectively, should be considered in a broader context. An optimal position should be prepared for counting the military contingents of the other NATO countries in the FRG as well.

The process of conventional military disarmament should be started in the shortest possible time. The Soviet leadership considers that real steps in this respect should be made around 1992-1993. At that time the question about NATO modernization is going to be worked out, a United Europe will be created, and new elections for the American

presidency are going to be held.

The importance of the allied [Warsaw Pact] countries' efforts and pragmatic steps in realizing regional initiatives was stressed unanimously [at the meeting]. At the same time, cde. Gorbachev criticized the passivity of the Warsaw Pact countries in realizing a number of collective and individual proposals. There is a compelling necessity to unite our initiatives in order to strengthen the purposefulness and efficiency of the coordinated activities in the area of disarmament.

The need to pay more attention to the questions in the "second basket" of the pan-European process was stressed [at the meeting]. The time has come for developing joint programs with Western Europe in areas such as transport, environment, technology, nuclear power safety, and so on. This cooperation should be pursued based on the mutual respect of interests, the strict observation of the principles of international behavior. There was a common view that the process of integration in the West and in the East should not lead to a perpetuation of the division on the continent. During an analysis of West European integration, it was determined that the allied countries should: first, derive all the benefits from their cooperation with the EEU [European Economic Union] including also [cooperation between the EEU] and the COMECON [Council for Mutual Economic Assistance], and second, they should prepare themselves for the emergence of the united West European market.

This means that there is a need for stimulating the processes of integration between the fraternal countries in the economic area, and the development of elements of an united socialist market. Simultaneously, the allied countries should strengthen their relations in the areas of culture and science, between the highest representatives of the organs of power, between public organizations, youth unions, etc.

The leaders of the member countries of the Warsaw Pact analyzed the achievements and the problems in the area of human rights and humanitarian cooperation. It was stressed that the most recent pan-European fora have put forward the idea of "pan-European legal space," based on the commonwealth of law-abiding states. As a whole, however, the differences in the positions of the allied countries became most obvious on this question, in particular those between the PRH [People's Republic of Hungary], the SRR [Socialist Republic of Romania] and the GDR

During the discussion of the Soviet proposal for convening a second Helsinki (1975)-type meeting it was stressed that its realization could culminate in the first stage of the Vienna negotiations. In case the negotiations are prolonged, the convening of such a meeting at the beginning of 1992 will provide [us] with the opportunity to make the relevant conclusions on all "baskets" of the Helsinki process and to speed up the process [of building] a more secure Europe.

In his statement, the leader of the Bulgarian delegation, Todor Zhivkov, laid out the arguments for the

strategic need to realize the new historic content of world development and to realize the opportunities, which appear as a result of the unavoidable effect of qualitatively new positive tendencies that reflect objective developments.

The theoretical conclusion was drawn that the new line of "opening" the US and the West toward the socialist countries is an expression of the objective need of new global economic redistribution, which will allow the developed capitalist countries to solve their own socio-economic problems. Therefore, it is possible to develop sufficiently wide cooperation between East and West without concessions on our part, which could lead to a "step by step transformation" of socialism.

The questions regarding the necessity of strengthening the positions of socialism occupied an important place in [Todor Zhivkov's] speech. He stressed the international responsibility of our parties and states to combine the renewal of socialism with upholding its fundamental principles and ideals. He warned about the danger of destabilization and disintegration of some of our countries as units of the Warsaw Pact and the socialist community; this requires joint political decisions. Comrade Todor Zhivkov convincingly spoke in support of the necessity to renew the [allied countries'] economic and political cooperation in the framework of the COMECON and the [Warsaw Pact].

[Todor Zhivkov] set forth the position of the PRB [People's Republic of Bulgaria] on the question of Turkey's destructive actions in the Balkans and [its] unprecedented anti-Bulgarian campaign which is a part of broader plans aimed against socialism as a ruling system. Simultaneously, [he] affirmed our readiness for a dialogue with Turkey and for developing positive tendencies in the Balkans.

In the coordination of the final documents, difficulties were caused by: the exaggerated pretensions of the HPR with regard to human rights and the minorities question; the peculiar positions of the representative of the SRR on a number of important issues concerning international relations and reconstruction in the socialist countries; and the intensifying contradictions between the HPR and the SRR which already encompass opinions on a broad set of questions and assume differences in principles. Cde. N[icolae] Ceaușescu emphasized in his speech the negative factors in international life, expressed doubt in the concept of "pan-European home," and ridiculed the significance of the renewal processes.

Some changes in the SRR's position provoked definite interest regarding the question of the Warsaw Pact's role in the present situation, and the unity and cooperation of the allied socialist countries. Cde. N. Ceaușescu opposed in his speech the one-sided disbanding of the Warsaw Pact and pointed out that our countries would have to continue to cooperate [in various areas], including the military field, even after the removal of all European military alliances. [He] underlined the need to jointly analyze the problems of socialist construction and to [undertake] joint measures for overcoming the crisis.

In connection with this, Cde. Ceaușescu suggested that a meeting be held between the Secretary Generals and the First Secretaries of the Parties, or among the Party and Heads of State of the allied countries, no later than October this year. [The goals of this meeting should be] to make a joint analysis of the problems of socio-economic development and socialism construction and to work out a realistic program for joint measures. [Ceaușescu] demonstrated his efforts to achieve a greater flexibility on the questions of perfecting the mechanisms of cooperation in the framework of the Warsaw Pact. [He] invited [us] to participate in the XIV Congress of the RCP [Romanian Communist Party] in October this year, at the highest level.

In this context the expressed opinion of N. Ceausescu about the necessity of discussing the question of how to overcome the present problems outlined in cde. Todor Zhivkov's speech as well as for ensuring further cooperation on the Balkans should also be viewed. These questions should be considered at least among the Balkan socialist countries and possibly with the participation of other socialist countries. [...]

In general, the meeting proceeded in an open, friendly and constructive spirit.

During the meeting of the PCC [Political Consultative Council] a separate meeting between the delegation leaders took place (an additional report was prepared¹⁵) as well as two meetings of the ministers of foreign affairs.

The first joint meeting of the Committee of the Foreign Affairs Ministers and the Committee of the Ministers of Defense took place. It discussed the question of perfecting the mechanisms of cooperation between the allied countries.

[Source: Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Opis 46-10, File 29, p. 4-12. Document obtained by Jordan Baev.]



DOCUMENT No. 2
Letter from Foreign Minister Petar Mladenov
to the BCP CC,
24 October 1989

On 23 October 1989, I was scheduled to meet with the US ambassador [Sol Polansky] for a working lunch. Comrade Todor Zhivkov knew about this meeting, just as he knew about all my meetings and activities. The purpose of this session was to analyze the state of bilateral relations as they stood after the talks between [Deputy Foreign Minister Lyuben] Gotzev and First Deputy Secretary of State [Lawrence S.] Eagleberger and between Secretary of State [James] Baker and myself. That day—October 23—I had a meeting with the Swedish Minister of Foreign Trade at 11:30 p.m. When I reached my office at 12:30 p.m.

—that is, just 10 minutes before my appointment with Ambassador Polansky—I was told that Todor Zhivkov had

been trying to reach me by telephone. [Deputy Foreign Minister] Ivan Ganev was waiting in my secretary's office to see me. I asked him to come into my office and told my secretary to put me through to comrade Todor Zhivkov.

Comrade Ivan Ganev, without waiting for me to talk to comrade Zhivkov, told me that, at my meeting with US Ambassador Polansky, I had to protest against the gross US interference in our internal affairs. I had to say that this was unacceptable and that *Perestroika* could advance in Bulgaria only under Todor Zhivkov's leadership. I do not know who had instructed [Ganev] to speak to me in such an abrupt manner or what basis there might be for thinking that I was unclear how *Perestroika* should proceed in Bulgaria. Then comrade Todor Zhivkov called. He told me in an irritated tone that the US was grossly interfering in our internal affairs and that I had to express that bluntly—in other words, I had to repeat what Ganev had said. [Zhivkov] said that he knew about my appointment with the US ambassador and that such sessions, where we talked [only] gibberish, were unnecessary. I replied that it was not my intention to “talk gibberish” and that this meeting, which had been under preparation for a long time, was necessary for our country. I told him that I regretted his attitude but that I had always tried, in my work, to avoid damaging and irrelevant discussions. The extent to which I was permitted to do this was quite a different matter. Following my reply Todor Zhivkov adopted an altogether more respectful tone.

In connection with the episode I have just outlined, I request that the CC of the BCP and the Politburo take a position on this rude, indecorous, and totally unwarranted attack on me. I feel that, in view of the attitude of comrade Zhivkov—who is Secretary General of the CC of the BCP and Chairman of the State Council—I cannot continue to discharge my duties either as a member of the CC of the BCP and the Politburo or as Bulgaria's minister of foreign affairs. I request that this letter be taken to mean that I am resigning from these posts.

On analyzing my experience further, I have come to the conclusion that the real reason for comrade Zhivkov's irritation and rudeness is that he realizes that he has led our country into a deep economic, financial, and political crisis. He knows that his political agenda, which consists of deviousness and petty intrigues and is intended to keep himself and his family in power at all costs and for as long as possible, has succeeded in isolating Bulgaria from the rest of the world. We have even reached the point where we are estranged from the Soviet Union and we find ourselves entirely on our own, in the same pigs' trough as the rotten dictatorial family regime of Ceaușescu. In a word, with his policies Zhivkov has forced Bulgaria outside the currents of our age.

Do you think that it is easy to be the foreign minister of such a state, headed by such a leader? I believe that it is finally time for the Politburo, Central Committee, and Party to take up these questions. One fact that we should all be aware of is that the Bulgarian public took up these

questions long ago and now discusses them openly. I think that we all understand that the world has changed and that, if Bulgaria wants to be in tune with the rest of the world, it will have to conduct its political affairs in a modern way. If we do not believe in anything else, we should at least believe in the Soviet Union and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Comrades, like all of you, I think I have a realistic picture of Zhivkov's moral character. I know that he will stop at nothing, not even the most outrageous crimes, when what he holds most sacred—his power—is impinged upon. I know that he will fabricate a mass of lies and insults against me. He has already done this [with others]. I do not even rule out his trying to take physical retribution against me or members of my family. If this does happen, the responsibility will be yours, my comrades, with whom I have worked so long, whom I respect, and for whom I have great esteem and affection. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to all the comrades that I have worked with

[Source: Archive of the Bulgarian Parliament, Sofia. Document obtained by Jordan Baev.]



DOCUMENT No. 3

Transcript of the Plenum Session of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, 16 November 1989

INFORMATION

about the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party [CC of the BCP], held on 16 November 1989 [...]

[...] The Secretary General of the CC of the BCP, Petar Mladenov, was given the floor:

“The Politburo of the CC of the BCP proposes that the Plenum discuss certain changes in the membership of the Central Committee of the Party, the State Council, and the Council of Ministers of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Regarding the Central Committee of the Party:

1. The following comrades are to be dismissed from their positions as members of the Politburo and the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Party, and to be removed from the membership of the Central Committee: Milko Balev,¹⁶ Grisha Philipov, Dimitar Stoyanov.¹⁷ They are to be retired with a pension.

Comrades Milko Balev and Grisha Philipov [are to be dismissed] because they lack the necessary qualities and they undermine the prestige of the Party and its leadership with their behavior and actions.

Strong negative attitudes have accumulated against them in society.

As Secretary of the CC of the BCP responsible for organizational issues and managing the work of the Secretariat of the Central Committee and that of the Council for Coordinating the Activities in Connection with the Situation in the Country, comrade Dimitar Stoyanov made glaring blunders, which contributed to increased tensions in the country.

2. Petko Danchev¹⁸ is to be dismissed as a candidate-member of the Politburo and removed from the membership of the Central Committee of the Party.

Cde. Danchev lacks the necessary political and moral qualities. Ever since he was appointed to office in the Council of Ministers, he has failed to handle even a single serious problem.

3. Cde. Stoyan Ovcharov¹⁹ is to be dismissed as a candidate-member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Party.

Resentment has developed against Cde. Ovcharov among the public and among economic managers due to the fact that he did not manage to master the work entrusted to him.

4. Cdes. Vassil Tzanev and Hristo Hristov²⁰ are to be dismissed as Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Party and to be retired with a pension.

5. Vladimir Zhivkov,²¹ Nikola Stefanov,²² and Hristo Maleev²³ are to be expeditiously removed from the membership of the CC of the BCP.

6. The Plenum of the Central Committee is to revoke its resolutions of July and December 1988 to remove from the membership of the Central Committee of the Party comrades Stoyan Mihaylov²⁴ and Svetlin Rusev,²⁵ and to reinstate them as members of the CC of the BCP.

7. The following candidate-members are to be promoted to full membership of the CC of the BCP: Vassil Nedev—chief director of the firm “Metalokeramika”—Sofia; Georgi Pirinski—Deputy-Minister of Foreign Trade; Gospodin Yordanov—brigade leader of the electricians' brigade at the Nuclear Power Plant—Kozloduy; Dichka Slavova—chairwoman of the agricultural collective in the village of Nicolaevka, Varna region; Rumens Serbezov—chief advisor to the Council of Ministers.

8. Comrade Nacho Papazov²⁶ is to be promoted to member of the Central Committee of the Party. He is presently chairman of the Party's Central Control Commission.

9. The following comrades are to be elected as members of the Politburo and Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Party: Andrei Lukanov—candidate-member of the Politburo of the CC of the BCP, and Nacho Papazov—chairman of the Central Control Commission of the BCP.

10. The following comrades are to be elected as members of the Politburo of the Central Committee:

Panteley Pachov—first secretary of the Regional Committee of the BCP in Plovdiv, and Mincho Yovchev—first secretary of the Regional Committee of the Party in Haskovo.

11. Comrade Jordan Jotov²⁷—member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Party, is to be dismissed from his position as Secretary of the Central Committee.

12. The following comrades are to be elected as candidate-members of the Politburo of the Central Committee: Dimitar Stanishev²⁸—Secretary of the Central Committee, and Ivan Stanev—brigade leader of an assembly brigade in the construction department at Kremikovtzi.

13. Comrade Prodan Stoyanov—director of the Personnel Department of the Central Committee of the BCP is to be elected as Secretary of the Central Committee

Regarding certain changes in the State Council.

The following changes in the State Council and the leadership of the permanent committees of the People's Assembly are to be proposed:

1. Comrade Yaroslav Radev²⁹ is to be dismissed as deputy chairman of the State Council, as chairman of the Council on Legislation, and as chairman of the Legislative Commission of the People's Assembly.

I would like to tell you, comrades, that we do not have any particular objections against comrade Radev personally. He has worked in this office for 18 years. It is deemed that a certain renewal should occur in the State Council and that there should be some rejuvenation.

2. Comrades Grisha Philipov, Dimitar Stoyanov, Milko Balev, and Andrey Bundgulov³⁰ are to be dismissed as members of the State Council.

3. The following comrades are to be removed from the leadership of the permanent commissions of the People's Assembly: Grisha Philipov—chairman of the Commission on Socio-Economic Development; Milko Balev—chairman of the Commission on Foreign Policy; Emil Hristov³¹—chairman of the Commission on Social Policy; Vassil Tzanov³²—deputy-chairman of the Commission on Preservation and Restoration of the Environment.

4. Comrade Todor Zhivkov is to be dismissed from his position as chairman of the Commission for Preparing a Draft Proposal for Changing the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

5. Comrades Andrey Lukanov and Nacho Papazov³³ are to be elected members of the State Council.

These are the proposals. [...].

I would also like to tell you, Comrades, in connection with these proposals, that I was handed the following letter from Cde. Milko Balev yesterday evening. I would like to familiarize you with it.

“To Cde. Petar Mladenov—Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Party

Esteemed Comrade Mladenov,

Through you, I direct a request to the Politburo to propose at the upcoming Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party that I be relieved from my position as member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Central Committee of the BCP.

After the session of the Politburo and the November Plenum, I made a serious self-critical analysis of my work and of my personal responsibility for the present situation of the Party and the country. I hope you do not have doubts that I have worked honestly for the cause of the Party.

I ask you to believe me that I accept the November Plenum resolutions with deep awareness, and that I will do everything within my abilities for the realization of the new course of the party. This is my deep communist conviction.

With respect—Milko Balev
14 November 1989”

Because this is a resignation request, the Politburo familiarized itself with it and deemed it advisable that [the request] be reported at the Plenum. Simultaneously with this, the Politburo insists on its proposals, which were just reported [...]

Then, comrade Pencho Kubadinski³⁴ proposed on behalf of the Politburo to the session of the People's Assembly, which took place in November this year, to nominate Cde. Petar Mladenov as Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria. He pointed out that the combination of the two positions is extremely necessary at the present moment. It will allow better coordination in the activities of the Central Committee and that of the State Council during the period of reconstruction and in preparations for the Fourteenth Congress of the BCP. [...]

Then the speeches started. Comrade Nicolay Zhishev³⁵ took the floor first. [...].

The main conclusion that could be reached, said cde. Zhishev, is that during the last few decades there has not been such an outstanding political event to have excited communists and all classes of the population so deeply and spontaneously. Life convincingly proves that all-round analysis and objective assessment of the situation as well as correct conclusions for the future work and active practical actions regarding reconstruction of the work of the party, state, economic, and public organs and organizations are necessary. [...]

After him spoke Cde. Hristo Hristov who supported the proposals for cadre changes and pointed out that the November Plenum held earlier this month, its resolutions, as well as comrade Petar Mladenov's speech, were received by the Party and the people as the long-awaited word of the BCP. The results of the Plenum found overwhelming approval, support, and a readiness for an upsurge, for a truly revolutionary revival of the fatherland. [...]

The cadre turnover in the Council of Ministers since 1987 turned out to be unsuccessful, continued comrade Hristov. Intrigues and struggles for political supremacy occurred. Attempts were made to create authority and social prestige through bombastic phraseologies and promises. The last two years were a hard period for the work of the Council of Ministers. Comrade [Georgi] Atanasov made tremendous efforts to achieve the [desired] results but it was very difficult for him when his deputies informed him after their visits to the building of the CC of the BCP that the decisions had already been made. It was obvious that everything was pointing against the authority of the head of the government. [...]

I listened to the proposals and I cannot believe, said Slavcho Transky,³⁶ who took the floor later, that such significant changes can be made during such a short period of time. And I keep wondering about the degree of deformation in the previous bureaucratic course. I also wonder about certain people who remained in the Politburo for 15, 20, or more years, and who could not find the moral strength to leave with dignity, but had to be dismissed in such a disgraceful way now.

He supported the proposals put forward, and noted that there were few people with economic specialization in the Politburo and recommended that more economists be included in the future.

Later on, cde. Transky emphasized that the people received with satisfaction Todor Zhivkov's dismissal and Petar Mladenov's election, and stated that the change was imperative, because socialism in our country was in crisis.

Then he pointed out that with the beginning of reconstruction in our country a new socialist model has begun to be discussed. He noted that while we [the partisans] were struggling for freedom and independence, we had no idea or awareness that socialism could have various models and could assume whatever one we desired. He called for modesty in our choice of concepts, such as accelerated development, mature socialism, realistic socialism and the statement that we had built two Bulgarias [made originally by Todor Zhivkov]. Afterwards he drew the conclusion that we needed to break away from voluntarism and conformism as soon as possible [...]

The speaker made the following suggestions:

1. We should think objectively and calmly once more about the next Congress—should we hold it in 1990, or should we postpone it until 1991 taking into account the impoverished market, the discouraging

report of the [Central Statistical Agency] for the first nine months of this year, the state of the economy, and the particularly bad labor discipline[?]

2. The persecution of people who are not enemies of the state, but just think differently than we, should be terminated. Now that we have taken up a responsible mission, we especially need different opinions and pluralism.

3. We should determine if Politburo members, with the exception of the Secretary General and the head of state, if the two positions are to be separated, need personal guards. Perhaps we need to reduce the number of militia officers who guard [industrial] objects and replace them with civil guards; the regular militia should concentrate on maintaining domestic order and controlling the highways in order to decrease the number of car accidents. [...]

Later, cde. Nacho Papasov took the floor. [...]

While cadre issues are being raised now, [he said] I would like to make several comments on them. It is not a secret that there was a crude violation of the collective style and method of management in our government, that there was a lack of principles in our cadre policy, as well as an instability in the structures, which cde. Slavcho Transky just discussed. And I would say that in Bulgaria a “nonstop reorganization” syndrome was created, a syndrome that made us the laughing-stock not only in this country but also abroad. The prestige of the government has gone downhill, most of all that of Todor Zhivkov. During the past 10 to 15 years comrade Zhivkov praised himself through incessant rambling memoranda, reports, commentaries, speeches and so on, all full of pseudo-scientific phrases, but poor in terms of content. [...]

Now, stated cde. Papasov further, we are reaping the fruits of a policy that led Bulgaria into a degree of isolation that the country had not experienced before. [...]

The floor was given to cde. Niko Yahiel.³⁷

Having emphasized the crucial importance of this period for the Party and the people, and expressed his genuine joy about the onset of changes, he stated: I will not conceal that after long and joyless self-critical reflections on the decades spent mostly in cde. Todor Zhivkov's cabinet, I decided I ought to speak out not only to express my fervent support for a course which I personally deem only as life-saving and decent, but also to share my thoughts about things which in my opinion could restrict or threaten this course [of action].

The first steps taken after 10 November are decisive and strongly promising. They have already ensured the Party its first credit of confidence. However, public opinion is extremely strained and sensitive, more than I can remember since the [Stalin] era of the cult of the personality. [...]

Comrade Yahiel stressed that it was only natural for a number of things to occur in this new situation that would

surprise and even startle us with their unusual obviousness. Pessimists, anti- and pseudo-restructurers, demagogues, and self-made innovators would emerge or simply people who would try to take advantage of the situation to make personal profit. Such occurrences will certainly create problems, not necessarily easy ones. However, all of this is inevitable in the course of a powerful democratic process and should not discourage and confuse us, or encourage us to take rash actions. We should protect this new course of development particularly strenuously from the leprosy of political demagoguery. The drastic difference between promises and actions, typical of the style of the former Secretary General of the Central Committee, has already once before robbed us of the people's trust.

Later comrade Yahiel said that public opinion in the country is presently united on the issue of the economy's dire situation.

The key question now is overcoming the constantly rising market deficit. He suggested that the measures for change be determined not by a narrow circle of people, traditionally working in anonymity, but be worked out by parallel and competing teams of widely recruited scientists and specialists, who will offer alternative opinions on ways out of the crisis and on the economic future of the country. No more instances of gross interference should no longer be permitted in the work of the Council of Ministers.

Everything indicates, continued comrade Yahiel, that in the upcoming months and years life will neither be simple nor easy for Bulgarians. This requires open and honest communication [between the people and their government]. We should at last start considering the study of the public as a guide to a more sensible and effective political and state governance.

In connection with this, the establishment of new relations between the Party and the mass media is highly imperative. We should cease patronizing and constantly instructing professionally and politically literate people on how to do their job. Humanity has not yet invented a more massive and effective means of dialogue between the people and its leaders [than the mass media]. The mass media is not just a tribune, but a daily People's Assembly which debates real life, reflects and, simultaneously, shapes public opinion. This is why we should treat it as a respected partner. [...]

Next to speak out was comrade Georgi Milushev³⁸ who said he had taken the floor because he had held the position of director of the Department of Safety and Defense (DSD), as a result of the Party's decision, for three years and one month. It was specific work, [he said,] in a department with clearly defined activities. This was a period of great suspicion and immense lack of trust. Only one person was trusted there who also played a part in resolving a number of cadre issues.

I believe, said cde. Milushev, that the Department of Safety and Defense [DSD] should take into consideration

the decisions of the Politburo and the Secretary General, but it is actually a sub-department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The one-person management of such a significant and specialized sub-department should be avoided.

In response to a question from the audience to provide the name of the person who was trusted at the DSD, cde. G. Milushev replied that the person's name is Ani Mladenova. She is registered in the DSD as an officer, a major, and holds the position of chief inspector and senior medical nurse, with an impressive number of [special] privileges.

We have put forward, said cde. Milushev, various motions, taking into consideration the specific character of the administration's work in the spirit of reconstruction, democratization, and *glasnost*. This is a department which is directly relevant to our high-level political and state management, and every action or inaction on our part has repercussions because the DSD is a living organism with clearly defined political functions.

At the second session at 3 p.m., the first to speak was Vassil Mrachkov³⁹ who expressed support for the proposed cadre changes in the Politburo, and classified them not so much as cadre changes, because we have experienced many such changes before, but as the first real step towards changing the work and policy of society's governance.

As a party member, a citizen, and a professional, stated cde. Mrachkov, I am concerned with the problems of our legislation in the conditions of reconstruction. Shortly after the July Plenum, a new political directive was developed by the Central Committee, concerning the decrees adopted by the People's Assembly. Two such examples are the decree for the self-government of municipalities and one for committing socialist property to the care of labor collectives. These decrees replace the Constitution and various other laws, and act as a "mini Constitution." The decrees were also announced at the eighth session of the Ninth People's Assembly on 28 July 1988. Politburo members and Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Party repeated these decrees at crowded gatherings of the party and state activists. These decrees did considerable damage to the rule of law in the country, created confusion among the cadres, and restricted the activities of the law-enforcing institutions because they were dictated "from above." This led to legalistic nihilism and voluntarism manifested in the contemptuous attitude toward the laws and toward the supremacy of the People's Assembly that adopts them.

My second comment, continued Cde. Mrachkov, concerns some crude legal violations as well as the trampling on the morality and human virtues in whose name the Party came to power. We have ceased appreciating them. People's waning confidence in us results from immoral displays and from certain leaders taking advantage of their official state and party positions to enrich themselves. Last but not least, [people's waning

confidence] comes from our attitude toward the people with whom we work and govern. It seems to me that all of us gathered in this hall stand in need of exercising greater morality in our exercise of power, and more *glasnost* in our professional and public work. And I would also add that we need more *glasnost* in our behavior as citizens.

Cde. Mrachkov's final comment referred to the current social situation, to the accumulated dissatisfaction and tensions, to the pluralism in opinions and the necessity of greater freedom and legal guarantees for ensuring the right to citizens' assembly.

In his statement, comrade Pavel Matev pointed out that the time for naming things by their real names had come, because we had had enough deformations and had lost our credibility before the people. Social tensions had built up and the main responsibility lay with the person who spoke against the monopolization of power the most, but hurt the feelings of numerous people, including many artists. He did not care about the gifted people of Bulgaria. He engaged in writing books perhaps as a way of having a rest so that nobody could deny his efficiency, said cde. Matev. He was writing on all possible topics, about all sciences and all the arts, including literature. [...]

Comrade Konstantin Atanasov stated in his speech that despite the considerable tensions in various social sectors, efficiency had always been low, so low as to fall below zero. The only reason behind this is the anti-party and vicious style of party rule which was quickly transformed from collective, into ostensibly collective and finally became solely totalitarian during the past few decades.

Under the initiative of cde. Zhivkov's personal retinue, everything possible was tried to promote all of his family members, relatives and friends to the highest-level positions, said comrade Atanasov. Of course, not all of them lacked abilities, but having found themselves in such a [favorable] position, they were quickly corrupted.

Ljudmila [Zhivkova] was not only promoted to the Politburo, but her exaltation began during her second year [in the Politburo]. It was hinted in various forms that she should succeed her father as head of the Party. True, Ljudmila had certain leadership qualities and contributed considerably to the popularization of our culture abroad, nevertheless, her talents were rather modest [for the exalted position of head of the Party]. She had not matured ideologically, or, to put it more precisely, she was confused and lacked the necessary experience.

Especially striking is the case of Vladimir [Zhivkov's] promotion as a member of the Central Committee. At the most inappropriate time [he was promoted as] director of the Department of "Culture" at the Central Committee with the prospect of becoming a member of the Politburo. All those acquainted with him could say with a clear conscience that he lacks both the experience and qualities required for party work, let alone the question of his educational degrees which are undisputably subject to re-evaluation.

We all know that Milko Balev lay at the bottom of all these initiatives. Evidently, he had numerous helpers; however, he best knows who they are.

Comrade Balev published a book on Ljudmila in which he infused so many inaccurate appraisals and exaltations that if Ljudmila had been alive to read it, she would have felt embarrassed.

Comrade Balev went to an extraordinary amount of trouble to present a number of party documents and reports as Todor Zhivkov's personal work. Why was this all necessary? [...] He did not accidentally remain indispensable for over 30 years nor was he accidentally promoted to become a member of the Politburo. After comrade Lilov was dismissed, [Balev] did not lack in ambitions to even become a Deputy Secretary General.

If we should discuss cde. Balev's performance as a leader, cde. Atanasov proceeded after citing several examples, it could be said that his principal obligation consisted of strengthening Todor Zhivkov's position by all means possible. In his direct work he pretended to work and in effect blocked the work of the International Department. The commission he ran has not put forward a single substantial motion before the Politburo.

[I would like to introduce] a case to illustrate how far he had gone in his initiatives to strengthen Todor Zhivkov's position. Perhaps only few know that secret negotiations were conducted even with kings to make Todor Zhivkov a laureate of the Nobel Peace Prize. This was really a shameful conspiracy that took place in Europe.

Milko Balev was the sole Politburo member whom the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not invite nor receive.

In order to create a truly calm atmosphere within the party, comrade Atanasov pointed out that it is imperative that [we] dispel the psychosis that spying devices have been installed in the offices of all party and state leaders. [The use of such devices] not only paralyzes the cadres' abilities, but also places the MIA [Ministry of Internal Affairs] above the Party and inevitably leads to legal deformations and to totalitarian methods of government.

To decisively overcome this [paralyzing] atmosphere, I suggest that the Plenum charge the Politburo to assign members of the Central Committee to a commission. [The latter] should conduct an inspection in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in certain subdepartments and units which may eventually need to be disbanded. This does not mean that the loyalty and dedication of the MIA cadres will be questioned, but that the above-stated units and methods of work should be re-evaluated. [...]

Comrade Krastju Trichkov said that he was taking the floor in order to express his approval of the recently undertaken measures, and to support the motion for cadre changes.

We were too slow in dismissing some comrades, he said. I mean first of all the dismissal of Grisha Philipov and Milko Balev as well as the removal of Vladimir Zhivkov and Petko Danchev. We should not allow any more instances of

promotion on the basis of kinship in our party. Those who signed such resolutions in the past also bear responsibility.

At last year's meeting with students, Todor Zhivkov stated: [""] The Ministry of Economics and Planning suggests a 12 % increase in the commodity funds. [""] (While, in truth, we had discussed this option in the People's Assembly and found it unfeasible.) [""] We, [""] Zhivkov said, [""] decided in the Politburo to increase them by 20 % .[""] Let Todor Zhivkov come forward now and explain the meaning of the word "illusion"! Where is this 20 % increase in commodity funds? Irresponsible job! Irresponsible. I worked for five years as his first Deputy in the State Council. He had one saying. When we advised him against various decisions, he used to say: [""] Only God is above us. Whatever course we decide to take, it is correct.[""] He had gone that far.

I read, continued cde. Trichkov, the transcripts of comrade Mladenov's meeting with representatives of the intelligentsia, and here also several comrades posed the question about the Bulgarians connected with Islam. We hear voices demanding a reversal, even the recognition of a Turkish minority and the restoration of [Muslim] names. These are serious questions and we no longer have the right to resolve such an issue according to political motives and considerations. We have erred enough. The government forced many of us to register as Macedonians according to similar political considerations on the Macedonian question. Even today certain individuals are pressuring us to betray history. There are no minorities in Bulgaria. We made a mistake, but it was a mistake in our approach—we violated the principle of pursuing cooperation in our work with them [the Muslims], the political approach.

I believe it only fair, cde. Trichkov stated in conclusion, that each of us should perceive his or her own guilt for the fact that during the period of 35 years we tolerated as head of the party and the state a person who managed to manifest himself as a cult and to monopolize power for himself. We should not run away from our guilt. We are responsible people. Each of us is responsible for alienating the people from the party. Everyone should make a self-evaluation in order to purge himself, and understand his own responsibility for the present situation. [...] Otherwise, we will be mistaken if we consider that one person is solely responsible for everything. We are all guilty and everyone should see his or her own guilt. Of course, some are guilty to a much greater degree [...]

Next to take the floor was comrade Andrey Lukanov who stated that he did not intend to make a speech because he had already participated in the Politburo session and fully supported the proposals presented. He only wanted to share several thoughts in connection with comrade Dimitar Stoyanov's speech (not from a personal perspective). He expressed his enthusiasm for what was happening at the Plenum. [He was also glad] that the roots connecting us to the most glorious moments of the

Bulgarian Communist Party's historic course were not destroyed. I am satisfied, said comrade Lukanov, with [Stoyanov's] self-critical spirit, with his declaration of loyalty to the Party cause, loyalty that I do not doubt because of his rapidly evolving position. Nevertheless, this speech requires a commentary. It is not that I want to put comrade Stoyanov in a more distressing situation, I would certainly not wish anyone to feel the way he is feeling now. In my opinion, the main problem here is that despite his self-criticism, comrade Stoyanov failed to comprehend the major issue in question—that, voluntarily or not, he became the voice and vehicle of a failed administrative system, of a historically rejected style of political governance. Under his direct leadership and with his active participation, the merger of the staff of the CC of the BCP with certain specialized structures in the National Security Services rapidly approached realization. This symbiosis, rarely seen in the practice of the fraternal communist parties for several decades, was pursued to guarantee the affirmation and perpetuation of the regime." [...]

After 28 people had spoken, comrade Peter Mladenov suggested that the word be given to comrade Yotov, comrade Todorov, and comrade Philipov, as all of them had expressed a desire to speak. [He also] suggested that the rest of the people who wanted to speak take the floor at the upcoming December Plenum.

Comrade Jordan Jotov said that he wanted to clarify some issues but not because of a desire to be acquitted or have his responsibility and guilt reduced:

First, regarding the article against cde. Stoyan Mihaylov: I have not taken part in initiating this article nor in developing it, he said. It was worked out in another cabinet and you can guess yourself to which cabinet I am referring.

Second, regarding cde. Vladimir Zhivkov's promotion: I bear responsibility and, naturally, guilt in this case. What actually happened? For a year or so, the Ministry of Culture, Science and Education had a Minister, but it was not a Ministry in practice. As agreed upon between the two of us, comrade Georgy Yordanov had drawn up several proposals and projects for developing such a Ministry, and suggested different structures, and so forth. All were rejected. Why? I could not comprehend. The Department of Ideological Policy [of the CC of the BCP], which was previously managed by cde. Stoyan Mihailov, remained at a standstill for a year.

During this period, conversations with me were conducted on different occasions, but one question was always present: how do you, comrade Jotov, see my son's situation? I said once during the first or second such conversation: "Comrade Vladimir Zhivkov has one major disadvantage—that he is your son and therefore his promotion.... [would seem inappropriate]." But the conversations continued and eventually I yielded. When I proposed him [for promotion], I must admit that in the subsequent procedures the idea of splitting the

Department of Ideological Policy was conceived. When I recommended comrade Vladimir Zhivkov as director of this department in the Politburo, comrade Dobri Dgurov objected categorically. Because comrade Zhivkov was absent from the conference room at that moment, [Dgurov] asked me to relate his objections to the proposal. I did so but, as you all saw, they were not heeded.

I would also like to say two words on the question of the informal groups. In our work in this respect, we committed many mistakes. We reacted to individual cases, but did not make the effort to analyze or study the entire phenomenon. We used to reduce everything to a common denominator. This was our [major] mistake. [...]

What is the way out of the situation? The way out is through a change in the present system. The system could give birth not only to one, but to two, three, five, or even a hundred Todor Zhivkovs. The only way out is to reform the system.

Comrade Grisha Philipov turned down the offer to take the floor.

Comrade Stanko Todorov announced that he was taking the floor in connection with the proposal for him to be included in the membership of the Politburo. This proposal was put forward by Ivan Pramov⁴⁰, Kalajdgiev, and Radoslav Radev. After he thanked them for appreciating his work, he asked them to withdraw their proposal.

The story with my resignation in July of last year is well-known, he said. There is no point in delving into it once again. Then, as you know, I posed the request to be relieved from my post in the People's Assembly. After the [July] plenum, I asked the chairman of our Party's Parliamentary Commission—comrade [Pencho] Kubadinski⁴¹—to approach the Secretary General [with this question] and to choose with him a candidate for the chairperson's position in the People's Assembly and to propose him or her for nomination at the next session. Kubadinski went to the Secretary General, came back and told me: "The Secretary General does not agree to accept your resignation. We both want to recommend that you stop creating problems for the Party by trying to resign from the People's Assembly. You have to remain at work there." I said: "If I am creating problems for the Party [by wanting to resign], then I will endure." After this [episode], however, things remained unchanged at the People's Assembly: the Politburo and the State Council continued to completely ignore and deprive the People's Assembly of authority. Apparently, all comrades have felt this, as indicated from the speeches on this question made by many comrades here.

I was compelled to write a letter to the Politburo on 14 December of this year, in which I raised the question that the violations of the Constitution should be ended and the authority of the highest organ should be restored as it has lost prestige in the eyes of our society. The legislative work is not up to the level required to carry out the July Plan and neither is the control work. In fact, presently

there is no legislative work because the country is governed lately by decrees. As to the control activities, the head of the government has not accounted for his work for eight consecutive years, although the People's Assembly annually includes in its agenda a provision for such a report. At the Secretary General's order, and of course with the cooperation of the head of the government, this report invariably came to be meaningless.

In addition, two years have already passed since the Commission on Changes in the Constitution was appointed. The chairman of this commission, Todor Zhivkov, failed to find time to gather the commission and begin work on a draft proposal for changing the Constitution.

What was the reaction to my letter? I remember that I was called on 14 September by comrades Dimitar Stoyanov and Pencho Kubadinski who informed me that the Politburo had discussed my letter. [The Politburo had] rejected my critical comments on the grounds that things were not this way, that the People's Assembly was developing well, that the parliamentary commissions were working well, and so on. I stated before the two comrades that I had nothing to change in what I had already written in my letter. With this, the question was closed.

I believe, Cde. Todorov finished his speech, there is no need for me to be included in the Politburo. If the comrades from the Central Committee feel that I can remain chairman of the People's Assembly until the end of this mandate, I will continue to perform this duty without being a member of the Politburo. In a month's time I am turning 69 and beginning my 70th year. The prospect to develop further is nonexistent for me. It is only appropriate that we give the new Secretary General the opportunity to select young and promising cadres for the Politburo.

I was rather hoping that the example of my resignation would be followed by some of my colleagues, but, unfortunately, my hopes were not realized.

Comrade Petar Mladenov said in conclusion:

"Comrades, I suggest that we draw the speeches to a close. I am well aware that the things I will say here should be brief and, therefore, they would not be considered as a concluding speech to the discussion that took place. I want to touch on only a few proposals.

In my opinion, this Plenum proved to be a natural continuation of the memorable 10 November Plenum. Moreover, I think we need to acknowledge that it turned out to be something of a purgatory, a purgatory for all of us. Earlier I shared this opinion with others in the corridor and cde. Elena Lagadinova understood it correctly. I call it a purgatory for the Party, a purgatory for the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party, because many things were said and many bitter truths were revealed here.

Was there another way? No, because such a Plenum would not have happened or it would not have followed the spirit of the resolutions adopted on 10 November. Nor would it have been held in the spirit of this new political line, this new political course which we have undertaken.

I believe that the Plenum deserves high marks. I am

deeply convinced that if the rest of the comrades, who signed to speak, had had their word, they would have contributed additionally to this high mark. I regret that we needed to put an end to the speeches. We have, however, come to the agreement that those comrades will have the opportunity to speak first at the next Plenum [...]

The last point I want to make concerns the proposal for my candidacy for Chairman of the State Council. I would like to tell you, comrades, and let this remain here in the Central Committee, that I am deeply convinced that the two positions [Chairman of the State Council and Secretary General of the BCP] should not be held by the same person. And if I gave my consent for putting forward my candidacy before the Politburo plenum, I did so only because it was deemed that the present political moment necessitates such a combination of duties. I believe it is advisable that the Commission on Preparing a Draft Proposal for Changing the Constitution be gathered during the upcoming week. Its work should be examined, evaluated and voted upon. The above-discussed question should be generally resolved through changes in the Constitution and its new version. This is the only appropriate course of action. I mention it so that you will be aware that I have some reservations when you cast your votes [on the proposals].

After comrade Petar Mladenov's speech, the Central Committee proceeded to vote on the Politburo's proposals. The results from this voting were published.

The Plenum closed at 7:50 p.m.

[Source: CC BCP Records, Bulgarian Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1b, Opis 65. Document obtained by Jordan Baev.]



DOCUMENT No. 4
Letter by Ognyan Doynov to
Delegates of the People's Assembly,
13 December 1989

ESTEEMED MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY,

In reality, our economy is in a very dire situation. The diagnosis of the disease was very precisely defined at the last Plenum of the Central Committee.

There is no doubt that everyone is responsible for allowing the government of Socialist Bulgaria to become absolutist and autocratic. Everyone who has participated in the totalitarian machine, regardless of the field in which he or she has worked, is culpable to one degree or another for the grave deformations in the society and the economy of the country.

I do not underrate or hide my own political and personal culpability.

First, I admit responsibility that, as a former member of

the Politburo, I voted for the dismissal of many capable comrades whose main fault consisted in the fact that Todor Zhivkov saw in them rivals and pretenders for his position. The fact that I am not aware of even one occasion during the whole period that I was in the government when someone stood up or voted against such unjust dismissals does not excuse me.

Second, I cannot help but be ashamed that, together with others, I have participated in the panegyric praising of Todor Zhivkov's personality, virtues, and achievements.

Third, I bear a distinct guilt that I did not stand up against the unjust decisions concerning the life and plight of the Bulgarian Muslims. No one has given us the right to determine by decree their ethnic origin and to deprive them of the freedom to choose their own names. The sacred democratic right of every individual to be a member of the ethnic group that he or she believes they belong to cannot be abolished. So many family and personal tragedies were created that we will not be able to wash away the shame and disgrace of these deeds in the near future.

Fourth, I definitely do not wish to overlook my own responsibility for the sectors of which I was specifically in charge, because it is precisely my work there and the modest contribution that I made in those sectors that justifies my conscience for remaining a politburo member for 11 years. [...]

His [Todor Zhivkov's] true attitude towards me started showing strongly and openly after the end of 1985. He began to prepare my dismissal. He and his retinue endeavored for three whole years to manipulate public opinion through improbable rumors about me that were spread according to instructions by the centers for disinformation at the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs]. It was alleged, and always from "reliable sources," that I possessed several luxurious villas each of which were worth hundreds of thousands of dollars; that I had a great deal of money, foreign currency; that I took bribes; and many other [allegations].

In less than three years after 1986, it was decided that I would be removed from various positions as each time I was demoted to a lower and lower rank and a narrower field of specialization. Two out of five such decisions were never realized because they were revoked. I remained for more than 5 months without a work appointment. Eventually, I was appointed chairman of one of the numerous associations. [...]

We know in whose hands the entire legislative and executive power of the country was concentrated and to whom the responsibility for managing the economy was entrusted. This was and still is Georgy Atanasov.⁴² Did Todor Zhivkov take away all his rights and leave him in a limbo? Is it not his responsibility above all for everything that happened, even for the endless reorganizations which led to chaos in the economy? Was he not the person who dismissed many capable economic activists by falsifying their actual economic results. We all remember the case of Ivan Andonov from Farmahim.

Much could be said about his [Atanasov's] economic incompetence and primitivism in working in the economic field.

I also want to address A. Lukanov and to ask him whether he feels himself the main culprit for the tremendous increase in the foreign debt. Who managed the currency commission? The privileged and [Todor Zhivkov's] retinue lined up to run this commission: Todor Zhivkov, Grisha Philipov,⁴³ Georgy Atanasov. Invariably, Andrei Lukanov was either its chairman or its operative manager. [...].

I propose that G. Atanasov, A. Lukanov, and P. Pachov immediately hand in their resignation from all posts and duties currently occupied in order to avoid being disgracefully expelled later. [...]

I have spoken seriously and made serious accusations. I am prepared to answer to them. Those who accused me of being one of Todor Zhivkov's retinue should not hide behind anonymity, behind the flag of the Party and the country.

I do not call for revenge, but for justice. Hatred is a destructive force. We need love and optimism now in order to go forward.

In the past, there was a ready scenario for a speech such as mine. The voters were advised to request a recall of their people's representative. This was followed by prison and, as a result of the imprisonment, a lack of access to any documents with which a person could defend himself or herself.

Let us now see how this matter will be dealt with in democratic conditions.

Now, if we want the new-born democracy to survive, I propose that a parliamentary commission with the wide participation of public organizations and the mass media hears out everyone who is being accused or has something to say. In this way the members of Todor Zhivkov's retinue could be revealed as well as the real culprits responsible for the present situation.

Justice could be served only by uncorrupt people who will not take advantage of their power in order to hide their own shame and disgrace.

All of us who worked in the days of Todor Zhivkov, both good and bad, ought to leave and give way to new and young people, morally and mentally unburdened by the horrid deformations which we lived through.

13 December 1989
Ognyan Doynov

[Source: Archive of the Bulgarian Parliament, Sofia. Document obtained by Jordan Baev.]

DOCUMENT No. 5
Letter by People's Representative and
Candidate BCP CC Politburo Member Andrey
Lukanov to Stanko Todorov,
Chairman of the People's Assembly,
18 December 1989

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY,
CDE. STANKO TODOROV

Comrade Chairman,

I would like to share several comments in connection with the accusations which the People's Representative Ognyan Doynov directed at me in his speech during the last session of the People's Assembly.

Before I dwell on these accusations, I would like to emphasize that I reject the principal thesis which Ognyan Doynov developed at the end of his speech concerning the equal guilt and culpability of all who worked under Todor Zhivkov—"both good and bad." This thesis could benefit only people with guilty consciences who would want to hide their own concrete guilt and concrete deeds behind collective responsibility.

I am also dismayed at Ognyan Doynov's statement that he has never been in Todor Zhivkov's retinue.

Lately, many of those who Todor Zhivkov promoted and set against the honest people in the leadership of the party, and later removed according to his own reasons, present themselves as his victims and even as fighters against his personal dictatorship. Such is the case with the people's representative Ognyan Doynov.

And now, about Ognyan Doynov's accusations.

The first concerns my culpability for the increase of our foreign debt. Obviously, all of us who were in the government carry such responsibility to some extent. I do not believe Ognyan Doynov has forgotten that at the time when I was entrusted with the duties of Secretary of the Politburo's currency commission, together with all the respective rights and authority, Bulgaria's foreign debt was reduced from \$4 billion in 1978 to \$2.923 billion in 1984.

Of course, no one should take personal credit for this because the sharp decrease in debt was the result of a truly nationwide mobilization.

Grisha Philipov announced in 1984 on instructions from Todor Zhivkov that I was not to deal with capitalist countries and currency problems any longer so that I could concentrate my attention on relations with the member-countries of the COMECON.

Regardless of this, during the past few years as a member of the government, I have opposed many times, with varying success, requests for an increase in the country's currency expenses and a respective increase in

the interest on debt. Such requests were made very often in connection with propositions for additional currency expenses by Ognyan Doynov or other individuals whom he managed. My colleagues in the government during these years can confirm this.

If we truly desire to be objective, we should also take into account that the reasons for the increase in the foreign debt during the last few years are connected not only to the deformations in economic policy, but also due to outside factors and domestic and international conditions. [...]

Analyzing Ognyan Doynov's accusations and his whole speech, I ask myself what motivated him to utter so many untruths at once. Knowing him well, I am convinced that this is not accidental and is not due to a lack of knowledge about the true state of affairs. I come to the conclusion that in this case he is trying to place himself ahead of truthful revelation in order to present himself as a victim once again—this time a victim of the present party and state leadership. I am confident that this tactic will not hinder the clarification of actual facts, provided the requirements for objectivity and impartiality are fully adhered to.

As for me, I understand very well that I am one rather "inconvenient" witness to Ognyan Doynov because I am very well familiar with many of his risky projects and concrete actions due to the authority of the duties I performed.

He expressed doubts about my impartiality by voting against my appointment as chairman of the parliamentary commission for investigations and for resolving urgent issues related to deformation and violation of the law. Taking this into account, I have already asked the commission to relieve me of the obligation to deal with the cases concerning Ognyan Doynov. This will be performed by other members of the commission against whom he has not expressed reservations.

I will be grateful, esteemed Comrade Chairman, if you bring this letter of mine to the attention of the people's representatives.

18 December 1989

With respect,
[signature]

Andrey Lukanov,

People's Representative from the 248th Electoral
Region of Sliven

[Source: Archive of the Bulgarian Parliament, Sofia.
Document obtained by Jordan Baev.]

Dr. Jordan Baev, a senior fellow at the Institute of Military History and Associate Professor at the University of National and World Economy (Sofia), is Vice President of the Bulgarian Association of Military History.

¹ On the events in Bulgaria, see Raymond Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), pp. 399, 603.

² First Secretary (1954-1981); Secretary General (1981-1989) of the CC BCP, Prime Minister (1962-1971); Chairman of the State Council (i.e. President or Head of State) of Bulgaria (1971-1989). Under home arrest (1990-1996).

³ Member of Politburo (1974-1989); Secretary General of Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party; Minister of Foreign Affairs (1971-1989); President of Bulgaria (Nov 1989 – June 1990).

⁴ Member of Politburo CC BCP (1962-1988); Deputy Prime Minister (1962-1971); Prime Minister (1971-1981); Chairman of the Bulgarian Parliament (1981-1989).

⁵ Associate Member of Politburo (1979-1989), Deputy Chairman of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (1990-1991), Deputy Prime Minister (1976-1989), Prime Minister (Jan.-Dec. 1990). Both Stanko Todorov and Andrey Lukanov are no longer alive. Lukanov was shot in front of his home in Sofia a week before a scheduled visit to the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, D.C., to join an International East-West Project in October 1996. In May 1999 there were arrested three Russian professional killers were arrested, suspected for Lukanov's and several other murders in Eastern Europe from Hungary to Macedonia.

⁶ Minister of Defense and Member of Politburo CC BCP (1962-1990).

⁷ Chief of General Staff, Bulgarian Armed Forces (1962-1989); Minister of the Interior (Jan.-Jul. 1990); Vice-President of Bulgaria (Aug. 1990-Jan. 1992).

⁸ See e.g., Open Society Archives [OSA], Budapest, Fonds 300, Subfonds 20, RFE Background report 156, 10 July 1978–Dissidence in Bulgaria by J. L. Kerr.

⁹ See e.g., National Archives & Record Administration, Washington, Record Group 59, Central Foreign Policy Files, 1964-1966, Box 1952, 1953.

¹⁰ Terechov's posthumous memoirs appeared recently in some Bulgarian newspapers "The Coup d'état," *24 Hours*, Sofia, 6-9 February 1999.

¹¹ The letter was cited for the first time in the West by Stephen Ashley, but with a wrong date—OSA, 300/20/1/123, RFE Situation Report 11, 15 December 1989.—Some evidence indicates that Lukanov took Mladenov's letter to the Kremlin while he was in Moscow in late October as Bulgarian representative to a Council for Mutual Economic Assistance [COMECON] meeting.

¹² Robert Hutchings, *American Diplomacy and the End of the Cold War: An Insider's Account of US Policy in Europe, 1989-1992*. (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow

Wilson Center Press, 1997), p. 81. In a 9 November 1989 cable in the afternoon Polansky informed the State Department: "That people wanted changes was clear; what was equally clear was that no one is prepared to mount any direct challenge to Zhivkov... We tend to agree... that there probably will not be major personnel changes." The National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.

¹³ Secretary of CC BCP (1976-1986); Member of Politburo (1977-1988); Deputy Prime Minister (1974-1976; 1986-1988).

¹⁴ All documents are slightly abridged.

¹⁵ Not printed.

¹⁶ Head of Todor Zhivkov's office at CC BCP (1956-1986), member of Politburo (1982-1989).

¹⁷ Member of Politburo (1981-1989) and Secretary of CC BCP (1988-1989), Minister of Interior (1974-1988).

¹⁸ Minister (1987-1989); Deputy Prime Minister (July-Nov. 1989).

¹⁹ Minister of Economy (1987-1989).

²⁰ Minister of Foreign Trade.

²¹ Son of Todor Zhivkov; head of Department in CC BCP (1988-1989)

²² Head of Education Department CC BCP (1973-1986); Head of Todor Zhivkov's Office (1986-1989)

²³ Relative of Todor Zhivkov; Deputy Head of International Department CC BCP; Ambassador in Spain.

²⁴ Secretary CC BCP (1978-1988); removed from CC BCP 1988.

²⁵ Head of Union of Bulgarian Painters (1973-1985); Deputy Minister of Culture (1982-1984); removed from CC BCP 1988.

²⁶ Secretary of CC BCP (1962-1966); Chairman of Party Control Commission (1986-1989); Minister of Education (1959-1962); ambassador to Japan (1967-1971); Chairman of State Committee for Science & Technical Progress (1972-1984).

²⁷ Director of Party Newspaper "Rabotnichesko Delo" (1977-1981); Secretary of CC BCP and Member Politburo (1981-1990).

²⁸ Head of International Department CC BCP (1976-

1989), Secretary of CC BCP (1977-1990)

²⁹ Deputy Chairman, State Council of Bulgaria (1981-1989).

³⁰ Associate Professor of Sociology in Sofia University; First Secretary of Communist Youth Organization (1986-1989).

³¹ Secretary CC BCP (1986-1988).

³² Secretary CC BCP for Agriculture in 1980s.

³³ Secretary of CC BCP (1962-1966); Chairman of Party Control Commission (1986-1989); Minister of Education (1959-1962); Ambassador to Japan (1967-1971); Chairman of State Committee for Science & Technical Progress (1972-1984).

³⁴ Member of Politburo (1966-1989); Deputy Prime Minister (1962-1974); President of the Fatherland Front organization (1974-1989).

³⁵ First Secretary of Burgas District of BCP and member CC BCP in the 1980s.

³⁶ Repressed as Yugoslav and British spy 1950-1951; Deputy Minister of Defense (1962-1981); Chairman of the Committee of Solidarity with Asia, Africa and Latin America (1982-1989); Member CC BCP until 1991.

³⁷ Adviser of Todor Zhivkov (1950-1988); Member of Board International Sociological Association (1972-1986); President of Bulgarian Sociological Association (1982-1988).

³⁸ Former head of Politburo Guard B Security & Guard Department at the Ministry of the Interior (1986-1989).

³⁹ Former General Prosecutor of Bulgaria; Member of Parliament (1990-1991).

⁴⁰ Minister of Agriculture (1957-1962); Secretary of CC BCP (1962-1978).

⁴¹ Member of Politburo (1966-1989); Deputy Prime Minister (1962-1974); President of the Fatherland Front organization (1974-1989).

⁴² Member of Politburo (1981-1990); Prime Minister (1986 to Jan 1990).

⁴³ Secretary of CC BCP (1972-1981, 1986-1989); member of Politburo (1974-1989); Prime Minister (1981-1986); member of the State Council (1986-1989).



Czechoslovak November 1989

By Oldřich Tůma

It is difficult to select only a few documents from among the hundreds that vividly illustrate the collapse of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia. As the uniqueness of the Czechoslovak case consisted in the considerable dynamism of the process, one possible solution to the dilemma is to illustrate the unexpected acceleration of the Czechoslovak crisis using several documents from the regime and opposition issued immediately after the “Velvet Revolution” of 17 November 1989.

The collapse of the regime actually occurred in the ten to fourteen days after the evening of 17 November, when disciplinary police brutally broke up a demonstration of many thousands in downtown Prague. The nucleus of protesters was formed by university students. The following day, students from Prague University and the Technical University decided to react decisively. The students proclaimed a strike and also called for a general strike on 27 November. Theaters, first in Prague and then around the country, immediately went on strike. Instead of performances, spontaneous political debates took place in numerous theater buildings every day.

On 19 November, the Civic Forum (CF) was successfully set up as a coordinating organ of the opposition, that became, stage by stage and in cooperation with the students’ strike committee, a major political force in the country. Demonstrations in Prague went on for days: on 20 November, for the first time, the number of participants exceeded a hundred thousand; on 25 November perhaps three quarter of a million men and women took part in an opposition demonstration in Prague. From 20 November on, many thousands of men and women demonstrated daily in numerous Czech and Slovak towns across the country.

That same day, first some of the print and then the electronic media freed themselves from the regime’s control. On 24 November, the leadership of the CPCz (Communist Party of Czechoslovakia) abdicated. The new leadership also failed to regain the initiative. On 26 November the first official meeting and negotiation between the government and Civic Forum (CF) took place. The next day a two-hour general strike gripped the country. On 29 November, due to public pressure, the Communist Party rescinded the constitutional article on the leading role of the Communist Party.

In the ensuing days and weeks a new government was established with the participation of the CF and its Slovak

partner, Public Against Violence (PAV). Parliament, which was to be chaired by former communist party leader Alexander Dubček, ousted after the Prague Spring in 1968, was reconstituted, and former dissident Václav Havel was elected president. All of the important power shifts were finally completed with the first free elections in June 1990.

The powerful clash of people and principles lasted from about 17-29 November 1989. Documents 1-5, in which the leaders of the CPCz struggle hard to notify and furnish party members with instructions, show quite clearly their growing irresolution, helplessness and lack of control over the events. They also illustrate that when the CPCz could no longer make up its mind and wavered over the use of force (17 November was the last time that violence against the public was used), the leadership was powerless in the face of the growing opposition. Attempts at political mobilization proved ineffective and futile. Teleprinters (telexes) and information from the center increasingly became statements of its own concessions and impotence, as well as of the opposition’s éclats and their achievements. In the document of 29 November, the opposition is already accepted as a political partner, even though only a few days earlier the regime had refused to establish any contacts with those forces. Similarly, despite the CPCz’s insistence on the continuation of Gustáv Husák’s presidency, on the continued existence of the People’s Militia, the party organizations in the workplace, and party control over and ownership of vast amounts of property, the regime was unable to defend these positions. As early as 10 December, Husák abdicated the presidency, and before the end of the year the People’s Militia had been disarmed and broken up, party organizations at the work place had been forbidden, and soon after the elections, even the CPCz’s property was confiscated.

Two important documents from the opposition, documents nos. 6 and 7, also give proof of the speed of the events: the CF *Proclamation* of 19 November and the CF *Program Principles* of 26 November. *What We Want* states that the problems of the country would not be solved by replacing people in positions of power or by the withdrawal of several politicians from public life. Yet, it was exactly that solution which the proclamation of CF had demanded a week earlier—and which had seemed at that time, extremely radical. The proclamation *What We Want* already brings a rather vague but consistent and rounded-off program of essential changes in all areas of public life—simply said, it calls for the end of the Communist system.

DOCUMENT No. 1
Teleprint from CC CPCz to First Secretary
CC CPCz and Secretaries of Regional
and District Committees,
19 November 1989

19 November 1989, Prague—Teleprint from the CC CPCz to the First Secretary of the CC CPS [Communist Party of Slovakia] and the Head Secretaries of the Regional and District Committees of the CPCz on the situation and roles of the Communist Party.

As you are already informed, at the end of the commemorative procession on the participants 50th anniversary of the 17 November in Prague there occurred an anti-government demonstration by several participators. In view of the character of the event, necessary measures were undertaken by the disciplinary forces. As a result of the dissemination of incorrect information about the death of one of the participants—the student Martin Šmíd—a hostile psychosis arose, especially among the students and actors from the theaters in Prague and in some counties which announced a week-long strike and want to misuse the theater buildings in order to sway the residents with their opinions, which are in conflict with the interests of the majority of the citizens and the state.¹

Their aim is to launch a general strike on 27 November in the CSSR. It is necessary to assume that they will try to influence the cultural workplace and schools in the entire republic. They even want infiltrate the factories and the JZD² [Standard Farming Cooperative] in order to gain support for their destabilizing plans from all strata of society.

Anti-socialist groups headed by the Charter [-77] are evidently behind this activity. The plan of action is coordinated by the Western media.

The Presidium of the CC CPCz dealt with these questions today, 19 November, in the evening hours and adopted the necessary measures allowing [it] to confront these plans.

The Presidium calls on the regional and provincial committees to do everything necessary to reject the enemy's efforts in the counties, districts, in the factories, in the cooperatives, in the schools and in other workplaces, and to ensure that uninterrupted work, peace and order be secured.

It is desirable that the collectives publicly express their resolute position against efforts to bring about a political coup in our country.

Within the framework of the adopted measures it is necessary to secure the readiness of the People's Militia to protect the workplaces from the efforts of the enemy forces to penetrate into the workers' collectives.

The Presidium has called on responsible workers to step up the offensive in their ideological work in this connection, especially in the media, with the aim of

politically isolating the forces seeking an overthrow. Adopt the same measures in the counties and districts.

With comradely regards,

General Secretary,
 [Jakeš's signature]

[Source: *SÚA, ÚV, KSČ - teleprints and letters, ÚV-134/89. Obtained by Oldřich Tůma.*]



DOCUMENT No. 2
Teleprint from the Presidium of the CC CPS to
the Secretaries of Regional Committees of the
CPCz [and] CPS and the Party Municipal
Committees in Prague and Bratislava
21 November 1989

The Central Committee of the Communist Party of
Czechoslovakia

Prague, 21.11.1989
 #ÚV-0135/89

Dear Comrades,

In the last few days a disturbance of the peace and public order occurred in Prague and a list of other places in our republic. The organizers of these acts abused a segment of the public, especially the student youth. They are dramatizing the situation, influencing the feelings and opinions of young people, heightening emotions. They are misusing the cultural front for this. Strikes are being organized in a series of theaters.

Revolutions and demands with ultimatums calling for cadre changes in the leading organs, for the resignation of the government, for the destruction and liquidation of the CPCz, for the discrediting of the SNB³ (police). This is a direct attempt to overthrow the socialist order.

The forces of the opposition are trying to widen their influence beyond the scope of the capital. They are sending their organizers out to universities and various gatherings which are taking place in many areas at their initiative.

The current situation demands deliberate yet principled and offensive action on the part of all party organs and organizations and individual communists, in order not to let the situation slip out of our hands.

It is urgently necessary to mobilize party organizations, communists and all citizens who care about socialism, to support the position of the CSSR government, the

CSR and the SSR, made public on 21 November of this year, and to help bring about an atmosphere of peace and prudence.

The most important is mass political work among the people. The functionaries and apparatus of the party and people's councils, the leading workers must go to the workers' collectives to prevent efforts to call a general strike, which the forces of the opposition are planning for 27 November. Every managerial worker is personally responsible for the situation in his collective.

It is necessary to engage in discussions with the students and apprentices, who are being manipulated by irresponsible elements. It is especially important to strengthen the influence of the teachers and parents over the younger generation.

The main goal is to show convincingly that straining the situation is a threat to every citizen of our society, the safety of every family. The eventual strikes, which the opposition threatens to carry out, would significantly damage our national economy, lead our market and supplies to destruction (especially now in the winter period before the Christmas holiday).

The organizers of revolutionary acts will continue in their efforts to seek the support of the workers for their demands. They are trying to enlist support in the factories. Therefore it is necessary to prevent their emissaries from entering businesses, factories and other institutions and prevent them from using other methods of influencing the workers' collectives. The factory management and party leadership must ensure proper defense of these interests. In these times the leading workers—communists and non-communists—must realize their responsibility for the handling of the political situation in their sphere of influence.

We must pay special attention to the media. The Presidium of the CC CPCz adopted measures which ought to stifle the high passions [of the public] and ensure uniform information [being given out by] the Czechoslovak Press Agency⁴ (ČTK), radio and television. Concrete tasks were handed down to the executive directors of these information agencies to this end.

The party press must influence the public. This applies in full also to regional, district, business and factory dissemination and information media. It is necessary for them to broadcast the positions of the worker's collectives and individuals supportive of the politics of reconstruction and democratization, a dialog in the interests of socialism. The voices condemning the efforts to disrupt our society should be heard.

In this situation it is necessary to mobilize the ideological activists of the party, all those who have the ability to influence the opinion of communists and the public-at-large in the counties and districts. To ensure prompt information and uniformity of opinions, it is necessary to incorporate lecturers and propagandists of social organizations, including the Socialist Academy, into this group of activists.

We recommend that operational staffs be established in regional and district party committees, which would evaluate the situation, [and] its development and would propose concrete measures.

All party organs and organizations must act quickly, decisively and unanimously, and secure the support of the regional and district committees of the National Front, organizations affiliated with it, and national committees at all levels.

The positions and resolutions in support of the politics of the party should be sent without delay to the Central Committee of the CPCz.

The Presidium of the CC CPCz

[Source: SÚA, ÚV, KSČ - teleprints and letters, ÚV-0135/89. Obtained by Oldřich Tůma.]



DOCUMENT No. 3
Teleprint from Jozef Lenárt,
Secretary of CC CPS, to Regional Committees
and Municipal Committees
in Prague and Bratislava,
23 November 1989

It is evident from the information of the party regional (municipal) committees that in all regions measures were adopted according to the teleprint of the General Secretary of the CC CPCz. Working groups of party organs were dispatched to crucial centers and businesses in order to secure uniformity of information and analysis of the political situation. But even when the measures were adopted for the protection of businesses and factories against penetration by the opposition and the spread of negative demonstrations, in a series of instances the posting of appeals, flyers, organization of petitions eliciting pressure tactics against the CPCz and the government took place.

The students are continuing their efforts to establish contacts with workers in establishments and gaining support for the general strike. In factories, no tendencies toward strikes have been exhibited so far. On the contrary, in important political-economic centers, the workers are expressing demands for peace and work.

The opposition forces are trying to unite striking students and the part of the public which is in solidarity with them in the demands of the "proclamation" of the Civic Forum, established on 19 November. The Civic Forum consists of: Charter 77, The Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee, The Circle of Independent Intelligence, The Movement for Civic Freedom, Artforum, Renewal, indepen-

dent students, The Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative, VONS, Independent World Coalition, Open Dialogue, Czechoslovak PEN Club Center, several members of the Czechoslovak Socialist Party, Czechoslovak People's Party, representatives of religious, creative and other groups, several former members of the CPCz. The proclamation was signed by: Eng. Rudolf Battěk, Petr Čepek, Václav Havel, Milan Hruška, Prof. Dr. Milan Jelínek, Milan Křáňko, Dr. Lubomír Kopecký CSc., Jiří Křížan, Václav Malý, Martin Mejstřík, Petr Oslzlý, Dr. Libor Pátý CSc., Jana Petrová, Jan Ruml, Prof. Dr. Věnek Šilhán, Ondřej Trojan, Eng. Josef Vavroušek CSc., [and] Saša Vondra.

The demands of the Civic Forum's proclamation go much further than the original expectations of the students, expressed in the joint statement of the Presidium of the Municipal Council of the SSM⁵ in Prague and the MVR SSM, and the statement of the Secretariat of the CC SSM. It is necessary to reveal this fact. We present a shortened version for your information, for it contains a clear confrontational character, demagoguery and tactics of mounting attacks against the party through certain individuals. It can be expected that these demands will increase in intensity. Text of the proclamation:

1. That those members of the Presidium of the CC CPCz who are directly connected with the preparation of the intervention [in Czechoslovakia] by the five members of the Warsaw Pact in the year 1968 and who are responsible for the long years of devastation of all areas of our society, and who for years refused any kind of democratic dialogue with society, will immediately step down.
2. That the First Secretary of the Municipal Committee (MC) CPCz in Prague and the Federal Minister of the Interior, who are responsible for all of the measures which the police have carried out over the last few months against the peaceful demonstrations of citizens, immediately step down.
3. That a committee be set up which will concretely investigate these measures, find the culprits and propose punishments for them. Civic Forum representatives must be included in this committee.
4. That all political criminals, including those who have been detained in connection with the last demonstration, be immediately released.

In its proclamation, the Civic Forum further calls for carrying out a general strike on 27 November 1989, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

In discussions with students and the public, it is necessary to show that the Civic Forum is misusing the original demands of the students, directed primarily at the investigation into the security force's intervention on 17 November 1989. It broadens them to ever more momentous political demands, aimed at destroying our social order. Several flyers distributed in Prague signed by "students on strike" endorse these demands.

Strike committees, the composition of which often changes, are negotiating with school administrations. Students are outside of the school buildings and their faculties throughout the day. Students are keeping watch to make sure that only students and school workers enter.

At several universities other demands are being submitted of a general political nature, which the university administrations are rejecting.

The student strike committees are run from one center which is probably connected to the spokespersons of the independent initiatives. Some artists and representatives of independent initiatives also have made appearances at several universities and led discussions with the students that often have called for a general strike and agitated for an active connection between the student strikes and the worker unions at factories and collectives. The majority of strike committees are in negotiation with the school administrations.

The CPCz Works Organization and CZV CPCz at the universities are planning their political acts in such a way that the employees and teachers in schools would be able to continue fulfilling their work duties, which is not the case in the majority of instances. At several universities, however, differences of opinion exist between the teachers and the staff, especially the younger ones, for whom several—including party members—generally support the political demands of the students which the school administration opposed.

The Ministry of Education adopted measures to bar the students from using duplication technology, and computers, and to try and keep the students in the schools.

The main task is to resume instruction in high schools and universities as soon as possible. In those places where it is impossible to engage in discussion with the students, it is necessary to offer them a specific program to turn their attention to a constructive outlet for their activities.

At the high schools we must take advantage of the PTA meetings [to ensure] that the school administrations are in constant contact with the students' parents. The national committees and school administrations are responsible for the situation in the schools, and must control the situation and direct the activity of the teachers.

The representatives of strike committees from all schools and representatives from the universities in the CSR will meet on 23 November at the agricultural college in Prague Suchdol with the representatives of the Ministry of Education of the CSR for an open dialogue intended to exchange information on the situation and to reach agreement on the next steps, including the resumption of the normal school year and an end to the strike.

The situation among the workers of the cultural front is basically unchanged. Other cultural institutions in the capital and in other regions of the republic are gradually joining in the protests against the intervention of the security forces on 17 November 1989. Prague sculptors and painters have [now] also joined the strike. The attempt

to reverse the decision to strike has so far been unsuccessful. Some theater directors have said that their influence on the developments could be even further diminished because the strike committees are handling the decisions.

The situation in the clergy and religious groups was basically solid on 21 November, without any tendencies toward activism on the part of spiritual and religious people.

While there is peace within the clergy and religious groups in our republic, the prevailing sentiment [among them] is one of apprehension about possible further developments.

The exception is the Roman Catholic Church. Cardinal Tomášek's written statement entitled "To all the People of Czechoslovakia," reproduced in *The People's Democracy*⁶ on 22 November, is of a confrontational character. The statement, prepared by the former cleric Malý who is the leading proponent of illegal organizations, is the sharpest criticism of the political development of the last forty years to date.

On the other hand Cardinal Tomášek expressed his constructive position in a personal conversation with the Head Secretary of the MC CPCz, comrade Štěpán, on 22 November 1989, in Prague, where he stated the following: "The situation surprised me, I can not yet express myself. I would like to get acquainted with the situation in order to openly express myself. I am convinced that there is good will on both sides." This conversation, broadcast on the television news on 22 November, should be used as an argument against the articles in *The People's Democracy*.

The planned so-called Thanksgiving service, which is supposed to take place on 25 November 1989, in the St. Vitus Cathedral in the Prague castle on the occasion of the elevation to sainthood of Anežka Přemyslovna, is in serious danger of being misused. Although the event was announced as early as two months ago, the current level of preparation, whose purpose is to attract the largest possible number of believers, has intensified. To this end a circular was recently sent to all the dioceses in the CSR. Apart from this, a group of believers, who have prepared pilgrimages to Rome, is planning a significant activity, namely the mass would be preceded by a procession of believers through Prague beginning at the buildings of the former convent on František and ending at the castle.

From the letters and resolutions arriving at the CC CPCz it is clear that the opinion within society and within the ranks of the strikers are differentiating. They mostly express support for the policies of the party and request acceptance of measures to ensure a renewal of peace and to create normal conditions for work.

Václav Havel made an appearance on Wenceslas Square on 22 November, which also was shown on the Czechoslovak television program "Contact." He spoke about the tactical approaches of the opposition forces at the current time. He greeted all the workers who are supporting the demands of the artists, students and

intelligentsia, and who are founding civic forums and strike committees. After twenty years, history is returning to our country. For that we have to thank the free-thinking students and young people in general, to whom the future of our country belongs. He thanked theater and other artists, who rebelled after many years of degradation. He said that the Civic Forum is becoming a real representative of critical thinkers, and is beginning to be taken seriously through the power of freedom. Within the next few hours the Forum will try to unify the introduced demands into a single list. He expressed his faith in the support for the demands, in the form of a general strike. He informed [the people] that Civic Forum had written a letter to Bush and Gorbachev, who were supposed to discuss the developments in Eastern Europe, which requested support for democratization efforts in Czechoslovakia. He announced that telegrams were sent to Solidarity [the independent Polish labor union] and to the People's Fronts in the USSR and Hungary.

Analysis of the broadcasts of Western radio stations during the course of the last year has revealed that they are intensifying their attacks against the authorities with the aim:

- of gradually creating in the minds of the populace the opinion that, considering the "illegality" and "brutality" of [the authorities'] actions against the "peace-loving" demonstrators and citizens, it is possible and humanly justified to use the "same" means against them,
- of creating pressure to change the laws dealing with the actions of security and the judicial organs, to limit their numbers and completely restructure them, and especially to limit the [powers of] State Security,
- of creating a separation between the police units (especially with Public Security⁷ on one side and State Security⁸ and Emergency Units on the other) and a separation between the Investigative apparatus of the State Security and judicial organs,
- of more deeply discrediting the state and, especially, the party leadership through attacks on the authorities, and introducing the idea that it is possible to resolve the growing problems of ineffective leadership without recourse to the methods seen in the fifties'.

It is possible to conclude that the attacks against the state power apparatus will have a tendency to rise. This was fully proven in the period starting 17 November.

x x x

Since the situation is changing very fast it is essential to act constructively and accurately.

Party organs at all levels must stop being on the defensive. The Central Committee of the CPCz will deal with the current political situation at its meeting on 24 November 1989, and discuss the role of the party.

Regional and district CPCz organs and basic party organizations must mount pressure against the opposition independently of the preparations of the Plenum. We are fighting for public opinion. The future of the country and its citizens is at stake. Every act, day and hour is decisive.

We must show the harmfulness of pressure tactics, which prevent real dialogue, and from which new political demands are constantly being introduced that go far beyond the boundaries of the previous spontaneous student reaction.

We must demonstrate to the workers and students on the basis of concrete facts what the losses caused by strike actions are, in relation to businesses, districts and individuals. No long words, but concrete numbers.

We must show the moral damage of continuous strikes in high schools upon the psyche and discipline of the students, on their future development and on their education. We have to call on the parents at the same time and show them how children are drawn into confrontational acts by those who present themselves as "fighters for humanity."

Our tactical agenda must rest on plans to divide the until now united front of participants in the protest. It is essential to differentiate between those who participate in strikes and those who go to protest gatherings, and the organizers of these acts and those who go to open confrontation and take advantage of the inexperience of young people.

It is necessary to prevent the entry of emissaries from the opposing forces into factories, their demagogic influence on the workers and their inflammatory speeches against socialism and the Communist Party.

It is necessary to concentrate all of our forces on stopping the general strike. We must talk with young people and other citizens about how the original student demands—investigation of the events of 17 November 1989—together with the call for a general strike is being realized. Added to that we must mobilize the entire apparatus and party caucus, communists in national committees, representatives and activists from national committees. It is necessary to make an impact on the members of strike committees. They are not united in the question of the aim of the general strike. It is necessary to take maximum advantage of each different opinion in the strike committee to ensure the main goal—preventing the general strike.

In connection with the dramatic developments in the internal political situation, the activity of non-communist political parties (in particular the Czechoslovak People's Party) is intensifying. This is resulting in their orientation in the wrong direction, even though these parties are members of the National Front.

Directly after the CC CPCz meeting it is necessary to acquaint the functionaries and the party caucus with its conclusions, establish a concrete plan, unify the communists behind the fulfillment of the decisions, explain them and seek a wide public for them.

Jozef Lenárt [in his own hand]
Secretary of the CC CPCz

[Source: *SÚA, ÚV, KSČ - teleprints and letters, ÚV-0133/89. Obtained by Oldřich Tůma.*]



DOCUMENT No. 4
Teleprint, "Summary of the Demands Made
by Opposition Groups Represented
by the Civic Forum,"
23 November 1989

ÚV-0144/89

FOR INFORMATION

SECRET

For addressee's information only

Summary of the demands of the opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum

We are providing a summary of the most frequent demands of the opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum. The demands are divided into three areas: the judicial system, the political system and the economy. In all three areas the demands blend together and complement each other. Even when a few of them did not appear in the slogans they disseminated at the demonstrations, it can be counted on that they may appear in public or in a dialogue with several groups in the following days.

A. The Legal System

An unequivocal demand is the full realization of human and civic rights and freedoms in the spirit of the accepted international agreements and commitments, especially the modification of the legal regulations (separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers, especially the constitution, criminal code, the law on the conditions of detention, amnesty for so-called political prisoners, abolition of the so-called undemocratic laws and statutes, establishment of public inspections of security organs and a decrease in their numbers, amendment of the freedom of association and assembly law, the legalization of opposition groups and the facilitation of their free practice, the elimination of so-called persecutions and discriminations of citizens on the basis of their convictions).

B. The Political System

Respect for the right of historical truth, that is the reevaluation of the crisis years 1968/1969, the rehabilitation of the protagonists of the "Prague Spring," and the condemnation of international aid.

The demand to activate the society and the information system (develop an intense dialogue with all the social and ethnic groups in the CSSR and even the émigrés in foreign countries in such a way that the population would become a political nation with a pluralist society, the legalization of independent periodicals, the creation of objective information networks, to enable plurality of opinion in education, liquidation of the state monopoly on schools, the launching of broadcasts of radio and television programs for believers).

Political changes stemming from the revocation of the Lessons from the Crisis Development, [the resignation of] all so-called compromised functionaries of normalization, the removal of Soviet army units in the CSSR in the course of abandoning the security component within the framework of the Warsaw Pact agreements, the removal of paramilitary and police elements from civilian life, the abolition of the People's Militia, an end to political and cadre privileges. The extension of the separation between church and state, freedom of activity for male and female religious orders, the retraction of state control over the church. The pluralization of union life, the independence of unions from the state and the employers, the right to establish "free" union organizations.

Further, changes in the Czechoslovak Constitution, especially the retraction of Article 4, which establishes the leading role of the CPCz, and elimination from the constitution of so-called ideological concepts and constructs such as "the working people, Marxist scientific world interpretation, socialistic social and state leadership, the leading role, *et al.*," removal of the "indefinite state sovereignty over one or another political alliance" (basically a veiled demand for neutrality), constitutional "demand for the right for national self-determination up to an eventual split" within the federation, the new delimitation of Moravia, and the return of the traditional state symbols (emblem, flag, hymn).

The opposition further demands that the constitution be expanded to include recognition of the Gypsies and the Jews as nationalities, and to allow the free contact "of minority nationalities with their people, the supplementation of the system of constitutional court and the system of administrative courts, the election of judges and their complete independence, the leadership of jury trials and the institution of investigating judges, the possibility of private law suits against state organs and their members, the institution of the rule that no one can be forced into "military service" and the "establishment of service of a non-military character" for conscientious objectors. The shortening of the basic military service, the introduction of a civil substitution service, a decrease in the army budget and its publication, the humanization of the military service, and the demilitarization of education.

C. The Economy

They demand radical reform of economic aid, the introduction of autonomous forums of collective owner-

ship, plurality of different types of ownership, full renewal of private enterprise in the sphere of trade, craft, small and medium businesses, parts of agriculture and culture. The introduction of family forums and long-term lease of land, provision of long-term loans and material aid to private owners, reconstruction of heavy industry with the removal of false employment and preferences stemming from adverse international economic relations.

In the last hours the following demands are emphasized (the minimal program for the next few days):

- the recognition of the leadership of the Civic Forum as a partner of the Presidium of the CC CPCz and an immediate round-table negotiation;
- the creation of a new government of the so-called Great Coalition coalition with the participation of the representatives of the Civic Forum (i.e. all opposition groups), revived National Front parties and individuals having informal authority;
- the call for free elections with the participation of the established forces;
- the legalization of the activity of opposition groups and the procurement of material means for their activity (offices, *etc.*).

The research done by the Institute for Public Opinion Research at the Federal Statistical Office in May 1989, shows that a group of the people who were asked, endorsed the following demands of opposition groups represented by the Civic Forum. The demands in question are:

- removal of the leading role of the CPCz – 32% were in favor;
- change in the way the leading role of the CPCz is implemented – 49% were in favor;
- pluralization of the union movement – 35% were in favor;
- cadre changes in the leadership – 77% were in favor;
- changes in the laws limiting freedom of expression, assembly and information – 59% were in favor;
- changes in the system of elections – 60% were in favor;
- changes in the evaluation of the year 1968 – 59% were in favor;
- reprivatization of the means of production – 32% were in favor.

In the research conducted from 22-24 November 1989, 88% (and 93% in Prague) were in favor of cadre changes in the leadership, and 81% (and 88% in Prague) were in favor of official negotiations with the opposition (meaning its legalization).

A significant number of individuals questioned also

think that the next development of the CSSR (its political system and economy) should head towards a system that is somewhere between socialism and capitalism (47%). An almost identical number of people think that it should go the socialist route. In the polls conducted, the difference of opinion between CPCz members and those not affiliated with the party was not ascertained.

From the information of the CC CPCz from 26 November 1989, at 12:00 p.m., it is noticeable that the series of demands found among party members is identical to the demands of the opposition. Emphasis is placed upon:

- further cadre changes in the leadership of the party (with more emphasis on the resignations of Štěpán, [and] Zavadil, and less emphasis the resignations of Lenárt, Knotek, Hořený);
- a thorough analysis of the past with the assignment of personal responsibility for the state of society;
- engaging in discussion with the opposition;
- an accelerated elaboration and introduction of a proposal for a new constitution of the CSSR, a law on the freedom of association and a law on the freedom of assembly.

In comparison with the information from the RC CPCz from 25 November 1989, a shift has taken place in the demands of the party members to benefit the demands of the opposition (on 25 November only 3 of the 11 demands included in the information were in agreement with the demands of the opposition; on 26 November, 5 of the 10 demands were in agreement with those of the opposition). It is obvious at the same time that in the workers' collectives the level of opposition to the general strike called by the Civic Forum for 27 November is diminishing.

Conclusion

In public opinion, but also among CPCz members, there is a noticeable growth of negative tendencies and an inclination toward the demands of the opposition. The situation reveals that in the last few days a significant weakening of the role and prestige of the CPCz in society has occurred as a result of the belated reaction to the developments and the ineffectively accepted decision.

The opposition took the initiative because of the developments in the party. The decisive question will be the correct formulation of the leading role and position of the party in the social system, which must correspond to the opinion and demands of the people. It is clear that the Party will have to be a partner both in the National Front as well as in its relations to the opposition (Civic Forum). Should the corresponding measures and clearly formulated party lines fail to be adopted, there is danger that the party may disintegrate and will have diminished hopes of gaining a significant portion of the vote in the next elections.

It is necessary to immediately publish the accepted measures and conclusions from the dialogue, because the

opposition today can use the legal media (radio, television, the National Front press). In the information for the RC and DC CPCz it is necessary to on the one hand to accelerate their flow, inform [everyone] without any delays on all events and decisions about the demands of the opposition and their escalation, but, on the other hand, especially to inform [everyone] about our positions and arguments, through which it would be possible to react to the demands. The RC and DC CPCz themselves must ensure a political evaluation of the situation in the regions, including the developments of local branches of opposition groups and their demands.

(Illegible name)

We are sending information on the conclusions of the nation-wide party caucus which took place in Prague on 28 November of this year.

(Illegible signature)

(Illegible title)

r.77 28.11.89 11:40 (Illegible signature)

[Source: *SÚA, ÚV, KSČ - teletypes and letters, ÚV-144/89. Obtained by Oldřich Tůma.*]



DOCUMENT No. 5

Teleprint, Information on the Conclusions of Nation-wide Party Congress held in Prague, 28 November 1989

FOR INFORMATION OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

125 11 Praha 1, Nábřeží Ludvíka Svobody 12
Telephone 2199
Telegram address: UVKOMSTRANY

Praha, November 1989

Refer to in answer:

#ÚV-145/89

Issue:

The Central Committee of the CPS, the regional committees of the CPS, CPCz municipal committees in Prague and Bratislava district (provincial) committees of the CPS, CPCz

The nation-wide party caucus which took place in Prague on 28 November 1989 reached the following

conclusions:

1. The political directive for the plan of action of the entire party over the next few days is laid out in the speech of the Secretary General at the Nation-wide Party Caucus. The program of the party will be prepared by the Presidium of the CC CPCz and introduced for discussion in the party.

2. To acquaint every communist with the discussions of the Caucus, and explain the conclusions of its discussion and seek their fulfillment by communists and other workers. To strengthen the unity of the party behind the principles of socialism. Trust in the party must be supported by well thought-out cadre decisions and not by lack of control and certainly not by pressure.

3. It gives total support and trust to our leadership of the Central Committee and its Secretary General, comrade Karel Urbánek, during the discussion of the current problems.

4. The CC CPCz proposes to begin an analysis of the entire forty-year period of the construction of socialism, especially the years 1968-1969.

5. Engage in an active dialogue and cooperate with all who want to build a socialist Czechoslovakia. This [includes] those individuals and groups who are concentrated in the Civic Forum and uphold these positions. To show at the same time the true side of those who, in the name of the citizens, try to break up the socialist leadership of our CPCz.

6. To enable the members of the CPCz expelled from of the party in connection with the developments of the years 1968-1969 to return to the CPCz, as long as they are in favor of socialism.

7. The date for the [next] Party Congress was approved by the session of the CC CPCz for 26 January 1989. If the situation demands it, call the congress earlier. The CC CPCz will decide these questions. It is necessary, however, to immediately initiate the preparations and to responsibly choose delegates who will carry the responsibility for the ensuing fate of our party and this country.

8. We refuse the demands for the liquidation of the People's Militia, basic organizations in the workplace and the transfer of party property. The People's Militia are not aimed against our nation, but are necessary to prevent sabotage and revolutionary attempts.

9. The main goal at the present is to secure the fulfillment of all the tasks in the national economy. To ensure the continuation of production, supply, operation of services and healthcare. The communists must lead by example in these activities.

10. The caucus repudiated the random attacks of the Civic Forum against the president of the republic, for this function must be protected in accordance with our Constitution.

11. The reminders which were introduced at the nation-wide party caucus will be used by the Central Committee of the Party in preparation for the emergency congress and during the elaboration of the platform of the CPCz.

[Source: *SÚA, ÚV, KSČ - teleprints and letters, ÚV-145/89. Obtained by Oldřich Tůma.*]



DOCUMENT No. 6
Proclamation on the Establishment of
Civic Forum
19 November 1989

PROCLAMATION

At the meeting in the Prague Theater Club on 19 November at 10:00 a.m. the Civic Forum was established as the mouthpiece of that part of the Czechoslovak public which is ever more critical toward the policies of the current Czechoslovak leadership and which was recently deeply shaken by the brutal massacre of students who were peacefully demonstrating. Charter 77, The Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee, The Circle of Independent Intelligence, The Movement for Civic Freedom, Artforum, Renewal, independent students, The Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative, VONS, The Independent World Coalition, The Open Dialogue, The Czechoslovak PEN Club Center, several member of the Czechoslovak Socialist Party, The Czechoslovak People's Parties, religious parties, creative and other associations, several former and current members of the CPCz and other democratically minded citizens will take part in the work of this forum. The Civic Forum feels itself competent to negotiate immediately with the government about the critical situation in our country, to express the actual demands of the public and to discuss the solutions.

The Civic Forum wishes to begin such negotiations, which should be the beginning of a universal discussion on the future of Czechoslovakia, by a negotiation of these urgent and ever more openly formulated demands:

1. That those members of the Presidium of the CC CPCz who are directly connected with the preparation of the intervention by the five members of the Warsaw Pact in the year 1968 and who are responsible for the years long devastation of all areas of our society, immediately step

down. These are, namely, Gustav Husák, Miloš Jakeš, Jan Fojtík, Miloslav Zavadil, Karel Hofman and Alois Indra. The pernicious politics of people, who for years refused any kind of democratic dialog with the society, completely legally resulted in the terrible events of the last days.

2. That the First Secretary of the Municipal Committee (MC) CPCz in Prague Miroslav Štěpán and the Federal Minister of the Interior, František Kincl, who are responsible for all of the measures which the police have carried out over the last few months against the peaceful demonstrations of citizens, immediately step down.

3. That a committee be set up which would concretely investigate these measures, find the culprits and propose punishments for them. Civic Forum representatives must be included in this committee.

4. That all the criminals of conscience, including those who have been detained in connection with the last demonstration, be immediately released.

The Civic Forum demands that this proclamation be published in the official Czechoslovak media.

The Civic Forum stakes its authority behind the plan for a general strike on 27 November from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m., called by Prague university students, and understands it to be an expression of support for the demands which it wants to discuss with the state leadership.

The Civic Forum believes that its creation and task corresponds with the will of the 40,000 current signatories of the petition *Several Sentences*, and is open to all the constituents and forces of society whose concern is that our country should begin peacefully finding the way to a democratic social order, and through it to economic prosperity.

On behalf of the Civic Forum:

Eng. Rudolf Battěk, Petr Čepeck, Václav Havel, Milan Hruška, Prof. Dr. Milan Jelínek, Milan Kňážko, Dr. Lubomír Kopecký CSc., Jiří Křížan, Václav Malý, Martin Mejstřík, Petr Oslzlý, Dr. Libor Pátý CSc., Jana Petrová, Jan Ruml, Prof. Dr. Věnek Šilhán, Ondřej Trojan, Eng. Josef Vavroušek CSc., Saša Vondra.

Prague, 19 November 1989.

[Source: *Ústav pro sodobé dějiny (ÚSD), Akademie věd České republiky (AV ČR), Koordinační centrum Občanského fóra (KC OF) Archive, file Dokumenty OF.]*

DOCUMENT No. 7

List of Goals by the Civic Forum, 26 November 1989

What We Want

Programatic directives of the Civic Forum

Our country finds itself in a deep moral, spiritual, ecological, social, economic and political crisis. This crisis is the result of the inactivity of the current political and economic system. Almost all the mechanisms necessary for society to properly react to the changing internal and external conditions have been eliminated. For interminable decades the self-evident principle has not been respected: who has the power must also carry the responsibility. All three fundamental powers in the state—legislative, executive and judicial power—have landed in the hands of a narrow ruling group, composed almost exclusively of CPCz members. Thus the principles of a legitimate state were overturned.

The CPCz monopoly on the occupation of all important positions creates an unfair vassal system, which cripples the entire society. The people are thus sentenced to play the role of mere executors of the orders of the powerful. A slew of fundamental human, civic and political rights are denied to them.

The directive system of the central leadership of the national economy has plainly failed. The promised reconstruction of the economic mechanism is slow, ineffective and is not carried out by the necessary political changes.

These problems will not be resolved by a substitution of persons in positions of power or by the departure of a few politicians from public life.

The Civic Forum is therefore pressing for these program goals:

1. Rights

The Czechoslovak Republic must be a legal, democratic state in the spirit of the traditions of Czechoslovak statehood and in the spirit of the internationally accepted principles, expressed above all in the Universal General Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Pact on Civic and Political Rights.

A new constitution must be worked out in this spirit, in which the relationship between the citizens and the state in particular will be revised in detail. This constitution must, of course, be only accepted by a newly elected constitutional assembly. The enforcement of civic rights and freedoms will be reliably ensured by a developed system of legal guarantees. An independent judiciary must also constitute a constitutional and fair judiciary.

It will be necessary to gradually make the whole Czechoslovak legal establishment consistent with these principles, and ensure that it will be committed not only to the citizens, but also to the organs and functionaries of the

state.

We insist on righting the wrongs done in the past as a result of politically motivated persecutions.

2. The Political System

We demand fundamental, effective and lasting changes in the political system of our society. We must create anew or renew the democratic institutions and mechanisms, which will enable the real participation of all citizens in public affairs and at the same time will become an instrumental barrier against the abuse of political and economic power. All existing and newly created political parties and other political and social groups must have the same opportunities to partake in the free elections of all the representational bodies. It is assumed, however, that the CPCz, will relinquish its constitutionally ensured leading role in our society and its monopoly over the media. Nothing stands in its way of carrying this out as early as tomorrow.

Czechoslovakia will be an equal union of both nations and all nationalities, observing the principles of a federative state order.

3. Foreign Policy

We are striving for our country to once again occupy a worthy place in Europe and in the world. We are a part of Central Europe and we want to therefore maintain good relations with all of our neighbors.

We are counting on inclusion into European integration. We want to subordinate our policy toward our partners in the Warsaw Pact and COMECON to the idea of the "Common European home." We respect our international legal obligations while fully reserving our state sovereignty. Meanwhile, we want to revise the agreements motivated by the excessive ambitions of the leading representatives of the state.

4. The National Economy

We must abandon the current economic system. It takes away the desire to work and wastes its results, plunders the natural resources, destroys the environment and increases the total backwardness of Czechoslovakia. We are convinced that this economic system is impossible to improve through partial improvements.

We want to create a developed market, not deformed by bureaucratic interference. Its successful functioning is contingent on the breaking of the monopoly on the positions in today's big businesses, and the creation of true competition. The latter can only be created on the basis of a parallel, equal existence of different types of ownership and the gradual opening of our economy to the world.

The state will, of course, retain in the future a series of irreplaceable functions. It will ensure universal economic conditions equal for all, and undertake macro-economic regulatory policies with the intent to contain inflation, the growth of foreign debt and impending unemployment. Only

the state can guarantee the indispensable minimum of public and social services and the protection of the environment.

5. Social Justice

Decisive for us, is that conditions be created in the society for the development and the assertion of everyone's ability. The same conditions and the same opportunities should be provided for all.

Czechoslovakia must be a socially just country in which people receive aid in old age, sickness and difficult situations. An important precondition for such a society, however, is a prosperous national economy.

Churches, communities, businesses and various state volunteer organizations can contribute to the creation of a vivid network of social services. Thus the possibilities for the assertion of a rare sense of human solidarity, responsibility and love for one's neighbor will be expanded. These humanist principles are necessary for the cementing of our society.

6. The Environment

We must all look for a way to renew the harmony between the people and the environment. We will strive for a progressive repair of the damages which we have inflicted upon nature for the last several decades. We will try to restore our countryside and our dwellings to their original beauty, to ensure better protection of nature and natural resources. We will accomplish in the shortest possible time a significant amelioration in the basic conditions of human life: we will try to ensure quality drinking water, clean air and uncontaminated food. We will press for a fundamental amelioration in the system of environmental care which will be aimed not only at liquidating the current sources of pollution, but first of all at preventing further damages.

We will, at the same time, change the composition and objective of the national economy, and thus decrease in particular the consumption of energy and raw materials. We are aware that this will lead to sacrifices that will touch every one of us. All this requires a change in the hierarchy of values and in our lifestyle.

7. Culture

Culture can not be only something for the artists, scholars and teachers, but a way of life for the entire civic society. It must be extricated from the chains of any ideology and must overcome the artificial separation from world culture. Art and literature can not be limited and must be provided many opportunities for publication and contact with the public.

We will put science and scientific work in the place where it belongs in society. We will rule out its naive and demagogic overestimation, as well as its degraded position which makes it a tool of the ruling party.

A democratic school system should be organized on humanist principles, without a state monopoly on education.

Society must respect teachers in any type of school and must provide them with a space where they can assert their personality. It is necessary to return to the universities the rights, which ensure their independence and the freedom of the academic soil, and this for professors and students alike.

We consider the education of society to be the most valuable national asset. Upbringing and education must lead to independent thought and morally responsible discussion.

This is what we want. Our program today is concise, we are working, however, on making it more concrete. The Civic Forum is an open coalition of citizens. We therefore call on all who can contribute to this task to do so.

In Prague on 26 November 1989—6:00 p.m..

[Source: *Ústav pro sodobé dějiny (ÚSD), Akademie věd České republiky (AV ČR), Koordinační centrum Občanského fóra (KC OF) Archive, file Dokumenty OF.]*

Dr. Oldřich Tůma is the director of the Institute of Contemporary History in Prague.

¹ On 18-19 November a rumor swept Prague (the origin and source of which is still not satisfactorily explained) about the death of one participant in the 17 November demonstration. Admittedly, the news was never confirmed. Nonetheless, it played a huge role in mobilizing society.

² JZD - Jednotná zemědělská družstva (Standard Farming Cooperatives) - a name for a basic form of

collectivized agricultural farms in communist Czechoslovakia.

³ SNB - Sbor národní bezpečnosti, policie (Public Security, i.e. Police).

⁴ ČTK - Československá tisková kancelář (Czechoslovak Press Agency).

⁵ SSM - Svaz socialistické mládeže (Socialist Youth Organization) - a large youth organization controlled by the Communist party; its central leadership, and even more so its lower ranks and bodies, emancipated themselves partly from the influence of the CPCz leadership.

⁶ *People's Democracy (Lidova demokracie)* - a daily newspaper issued by the Czechoslovak Populist Party, one of two political parties (together with the Czechoslovak Socialist Party), that from 1948-1989 played a role in the "democratic pageantry" of the Communist regime. Both parties and the paper worked as quite dependent, puppet organizations of the CPCz. However, in the key days of November 1989 they emancipated themselves. It is true that the news they issued played an important role in informing and mobilizing of the public.

⁷ VB - Veřejná bezpečnost (Public Security) - uniformed police.

⁸ StB - Státní tajná bezpečnost (State Security) - secret political police.

⁹ Karel Urbánek became General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPCz on 24 November, in place of Milouš Jakeš. He did not remain in his position for even a full month.

¹⁰ Lidová milice (People's Militia) - paramilitary organization, a "private army" of the CPCz, it originated with the Communist take-over in February 1948.

(continued from page 29)

the immutability of this principle simply through good motives. We have been led to it through impartial analysis of the objective processes of our time. The increasing varieties of social development in different countries are becoming in ever more perceptible feature of these processes. This relates to both the capitalist and socialist systems. The variety of sociopolitical structures which has grown over the last decades from national liberation movements also demonstrates this. This objective fact presupposes respect for other people's views and stands, tolerance, a preparedness to see phenomena that are different as not necessarily bad or hostile, and an ability to learn to live side by side while remaining different and not agreeing with one another on every issue.

The de-ideologization of interstate relations has become a demand of the new stage. We are not giving up our convictions, philosophy, or traditions. Neither are we calling on anyone else to give up theirs. Yet we are not going to shut ourselves up within the range of our values. That would lead to spiritual impoverishment, for it would mean renouncing so powerful a source of development as sharing all the original things created independently by each nation. In the course of such sharing, each should prove the advantages of his own system, his own way of life and values, but not through words or propaganda alone, but through real deeds as well. That is, indeed, an honest struggle of ideology, but it must not be carried over into mutual relations between states. Otherwise we simply will not be able to solve a single world problem; arrange broad, mutually advantageous and equitable cooperation between peoples; manage rationally the achievements of the scientific and technical revolution; transform world economic relations; protect the environment; overcome underdevelopment; or put an end to hunger, disease, illiteracy, and other mass ills. Finally, in that case, we will not manage to eliminate the nuclear threat and militarism. [...]

(continued on page 307)

**Boundaries To Freedom:
The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe 1945-1960**

18-19 October 2001

*Roosevelt Study Center in cooperation with the Netherlands Institute of War
Documentation Middelburg, The Netherlands*

A broad agreement about the essence of the Cold War as a propaganda contest in a great variety of social activities, and not primarily a military conflict, has led to a re-evaluation of the relations between cultural activities and political agendas in the early Cold War era. This has led to a renewed interest in the manufacturing of consent and the role of covert action in the promotion of ideas on social and political organization and freedom of expression. This conference aims at a multi-disciplinary evaluation of the lasting significance and consequences of the cultural activities of the Cold War in Western Europe as a battle-ground for the shaping of democratic societies. It also seeks to reassess the critical interpretations of the Cold War that were developed in the 1960s and 1970s and take a fresh look at the complex mix of public and private organizations that were engaged in this struggle.

The journal *Intelligence and National Security* is keen to publish the conference papers with the idea of bringing out a Special Issue. In connection with this, the material is also likely to appear as both a hard-back and soft-back book.

Themes:

- 1) Scripting the Cold War: The Discourse of Peace and Freedom. In what terms was the Cold War perceived in the western world? What can discourse analysis reveal about the conditions of the Cold War mood? How did memories of and traditions of resistance in the Second World War affect the conceptualization of the Cold War? What role did gender play as a category in the perception of the Cold War?
- 2) Organizing the Cold War: How did a combination of private and public organizations fight the Cold War? Which initiatives were taken on both sides and how did these trigger reactions?
- 3) The Politics of Productivity. How were labor and business relations shaped under the influence of Cold War thinking, and what were the consequences for democratic society?
- 4) Opinion Makers and Covert Action. What use was made of intellectuals and their ideas in the (covert) politics of the cultural cold war? How does one assess the linkages between intellectual activities and clandestine networks?
- 5) Cold War and the Popular Imagination. How did various forms of popular culture (sports, arts, film, religion, etc.) reflect the Cold War mood and how did political and civil institutions use them to direct public opinion?

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Czechoslovak Regime Documents on the Velvet Revolution

DOCUMENT No. 1

Czechoslovak Secret Police (StB) Memorandum, "Information on the Security Situation and Further Tasks in the Struggle Against the Internal Enemy" in the Period Preceding 21 August 1989

Information

On the security situation and further tasks in the struggle against the internal enemy

In the period from the end of July to the present day, information has established increased activity of the internal and external enemy in the preparations of provocative and confrontational acts on the occasion of the anniversary of 21 August 1968. The evident goal is to compromise the leading position on the events of 21 August years ago and the politics of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, and through a public demonstration of [the enemy's] own strength to manifest themselves as an essential socio-political factor. The enemy's actions demonstrate increasingly pronounced tendencies toward a transition from criticism to political activity aimed against the principles of a socialist state. The actions of the 20-21 August should, according to the expectations of the adversary, accelerate the fall and development of events in the country with the aim of achieving their purpose.

One of the chief means of fulfilling [the opposition's] plan is the campaign centered around the pamphlet "A Few Sentences," which is being spread over the territory of the entire country and which 16,500 citizens are supposed to have signed.¹ The activity of the adversary necessitated undertaking extensive measures. Legal proceedings were taken against the criminal act of sedition according to paragraph 100 of the criminal code. With the agreement of the municipal prosecutor in Prague, house searches of the main organizers S. DEVÁTY, A. VONDRA, J. URBAN and J. KŘIŽAN were conducted.² It was proven that Václav Havel was the chief organizer and author of the pamphlets. Documentation was obtained on the criminal activity of the main organizers of the enemy campaign. Prosecution of these individuals can be successfully carried out only in the event that all of the organizers, including Václav HAVEL, about whom there is also incriminating material, be tried. It is necessary to consider the leveling of accusations and imprisonment through the perspective of the developing security situation and decide whether to proceed to trial immediately on the 21 August 1989. Measures taken against the distributors confirm that in

most cases these individuals do not have any ties to the organizers and that they gather signatures at the instigation of Western media (RADIO FREE EUROPE, VOICE OF AMERICA).

Measures were undertaken on the entire territory of the CSSR with respect to the distribution of pamphlets and preparation for anti-socialist actions. In total 211 interrogations were carried out, 10 people were charged with crimes according to paragraph 100 of the criminal code, 76 people were charged with felonies according to paragraph 6 of law #150/69 Sb., 13 were charged with misdemeanors, and 15 were given a warning.

An analogous action, which was supposed to intensify the atmosphere and bring about a split in the ranks of the CPCz, was in the form of a letter from the leadership of the so-called RENEWAL (*OBRODA*) to all members of the party. The plan of the antagonist was nipped in the bud and its spread was successfully stopped. The original letter along with copying equipment was confiscated and house searches of main organizers M. HÁJKA, V. ŠILHAN and V. KOLMISTR were conducted after the opening criminal prosecutions for the criminal act of dishonoring the Republic and its representatives. A warning was given to all those named by the municipal prosecutor in Prague.³

On the territory of the Slovak Socialist Republic (SSR), ČARNOGURSKÝ, KUSÝ, SELECKÝ, PONIKÁ and MAŇÁK in particular are perpetrating enemy acts, consisting of organizing anti-social appearances, instigating citizens to participate in them, and distribution of materials abroad for enemy purposes, where they are used in anti-Czechoslovak campaigns. Criminal prosecution for crimes of sedition, specifically injuring the interests of the Republic abroad, was initiated by an investigator of the SNB (National Security Force) on 14 August 1989, and the above-mentioned individuals were indicted. A proposal was brought forth for the imprisonment of ČARNOGURSKÝ and KUSÝ. This measure was approved by the general prosecutor of the SSR.⁴

Within the framework of the preparations for the August gathering, the so-called Independent Peaceful Coalition began to organize a so-called silent march in pedestrian zones daily, starting on 1 August 1989. Several dozen people are participating in these marches, and their numbers increase daily. Besides provoking the state powers, the antagonist wants to activate the public, confirm his own ability to act and disclose eventual counter-measures.

The fundamental issue in the activity of the opponent is the preparation for public appearances on 20-21 August, 1989. As the result of security measures carried out (for example, prevention of a meeting of the Coordinating

Committee of Independent Initiatives—*OBRODA*, HOS, CH-77, NMS, Ecological Section of CH-77⁵—on 2/2, during which forms of protest and the publication of a common declaration were supposed to be discussed; prevention of a meeting of the members of an HOS branch in Prague 4, during which the concrete events for the anniversary in August were supposed to be discussed; impairment of the public acts of NMS, etc.), the opponents' opinions about the character of these acts significantly differ and are divided. From the marginal (demonstrations on Wenceslas Square with a clash with police—asserted for example by the speaker of Charter-77 HRADLIK) through the “restrained” to the opinion not to hold any public events (for example Jan Urban advises instead to concentrate on the establishment of independent committees and penetrate into enterprises and territories). A group of former communists united in the so-called RENEWAL [group] who refuse to take part in eventual public appearances, likewise endorses this last opinion, under the influence of undertaken measures.

At the present time, the “silent march” variation of demonstrating in the pedestrian zone in Prague on 20- 21 August 1989, dominates in the enemy camp. CH-77 together with other initiatives are inclined toward this.

Analogous acts are to take place in other towns, such as Brno, Plzeň, Tábor, Ústí nad Labem, Litoměřice, Olomouc, Chomutov, Hradec Králové, Zilin, Bratislava and Košice. It is possible to envision provocative demonstrations also in other parts of the Republic. We are dealing with the tactics of an opponent who does not call directly for open enemy manifestations, but tries to create the appearance of a peaceful gathering of citizens. The opponent is counting on the creation of a tense situation during a greater gathering of people, which will then easily lead to a demonstration of spontaneous protest against the politics of the CPCz.

Several other forms of provocative acts are also being assessed, such as the distribution of the declaration by Charter 77 and [the laying of] flowers to honor the memory of those who fell at the embassy of the USSR in Prague, the laying of a bouquet on 20 August at the statue of St. Wenceslas, the laying of flowers where Czech citizens died during the Warsaw Pact army invasion, the hoisting of a red flag on Pradedá in Jeseníky⁶ and the ringing of the bells of St. Tomas in Brno.

The internationalization of the acts of the internal enemy and the cooperation with its counterparts from PLR (People's Republic of Poland) and MLR (People's Republic of Hungary) is clearly increasing, and is constantly acquiring more concrete shapes, from instruction and consultation to organizing common concrete acts. From the experience of MICHNIK⁷, BUJAK and others' impact on the representatives of opposing forces during their stay in the CSSR in the beginning of August 1989, measures will be taken to prevent their announced arrival in CSSR and the prevention of their participation in provocative acts. Analogous measures are also being taken against the

representatives of Hungarian opposition groups. Polish Solidarity is preparing provocative acts on the borders with the CSSR in support of acts in the CSSR.

In recent times the danger of the impact of the so-called Democratic Initiative (MANDLER and co.) is growing, and unlike CH-77, is principally oriented towards penetrating into working-class youth and into the countryside in order to try and create so-called alternative organizations.

The so-called Czechoslovak Helsinki Committee sent a letter to the Prime Minister and the general prosecutor of the CSSR on 12 August 1989, in which it completely [and] unequivocally accused the government of the CSSR and the Ministry of the Interior of trying to incite a confrontation with citizens demanding democratic renewal. They allege that for example the campaign against the appeal “A Few Sentences” developed into a direct “criminalization” of this legal petitional act.

They further accuse the organs of state power of trying to fabricate proof of a connection between a group of saboteurs who commit arson in northern Bohemia and “independent initiatives,” of which there supposedly is no proof. Hitherto investigations unequivocally prove, through witness statements and house searches, a connection between one of the main defendants Jan GRĚGOŘ and representatives UHL⁸ and CIBULKA of CH-77. Witnesses have proven that GRĚGOŘ also visited the representative of CH-77 Václav BENDA⁹ many times in Prague. In his established correspondence GRĚGOŘ expresses his resolve to fight by any means against the rising socialist leadership and the CPCz, and his decision to influence youth in this spirit. Despite the defendants' denial of the charges against them and their refusal to testify, there is further proof of their criminal act of sabotage, especially concerning the four main defendants.

From the contents of the above-mentioned letter it is evident that it is the endeavor of anti-socialist forces to shift the blame for the confrontational nature of the acts and for the eventual decisive intervention of the power apparatus against them, onto the Czechoslovak departments Public Security (VB) and Peoples' Militia (LM).¹⁰ Through this they wish to show the “illegitimacy” of the present leadership of the CSSR on the August platform and to create an atmosphere which they expect will result in the resignation of the political and state leadership and in the installment of “temporary state organs.” The foremost exponents of illegal structures have decided to establish the so-called Czechoslovak civic forum for coordination and [to create a] unified plan of action, as a guarantee for the “creation of a democratic and legal state.” Proposals are being prepared detailing the nature of the activity of a “united” opposition aimed at the factual assumption of power, in which they anticipate the dissolution of the Federal Assembly and the establishment in its place of a “temporary legislative assembly” which will prepare and negotiate a new constitution for the CSSR. According to the expectations of the antagonist, a new

government would subsequently be created, which would consequently realize their idea of a legal state. Parallel to this a plan is being worked out to create a new "independent youth union," in which independent unions would be brought together, for example university youth, working youth, etc.

A set of complex measures in preventive and repressive areas is being carried out to frustrate the plans and goals of the opponent.

Technical measures were carried out to prevent the communication of news abroad by telephone by known informers of the editorial staff of Radio Free Europe and Voice of America. All meetings of the so-called initiatives are being stopped with the aim of not allowing them to unite.

In order to strengthen the effectiveness of security measures carried out on the territory of the CSSR, the FMZV [Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs]¹¹ took steps toward the prevention of the arrival of visa-holding foreigners who are presumed to partake in enemy activities and for the prevention of the arrival of individuals with enemy intentions from ZSS [Socialist Countries] (specifically from Poland and Hungary). On the border crossings measures [are being implemented] to prevent the arrival of known exponents of Solidarity and the so-called independent initiative from Hungary, who have come to the CSSR in the past.

In the area of counter-propaganda, materials are being distributed which document the enemy activity of the main organizers, in order to discredit them to the public-at-large.

The chief exponents of the so-called independent initiatives and known individuals from the enemy environment will be under the control of the organs of the SNB [National Security Force] so that they will not be able to participate in enemy activities.

The course of action of the security organs in collaboration with the LM [People's Militia] in the event of organized antisocial appearances is being elaborated in several variations.

In the event that the so-called "silent march" takes place, documents will be checked and individuals actively participating in the organization of the SNB [National Security Force] will be summoned. If petitions, verbal attacks or spontaneous declarations of opposition against the party and state leadership and the police of the CSSR should come to pass, security units will be called in to force out and disperse the crowd from the area.

If, despite these measures, a massive antisocial demonstration takes place, disciplinary powers will be brought in to carry out necessary decisive intervention and restore peace and order through the use of technical equipment.

The Emergency Regiment VB CSR [Public Security of the Czech Socialist Republic] (1,200 informers and 400 members of the permanent establishment) and the Emergency Department VB SSR [Public Security of the Slovak Socialist Republic] in Bratislava (565 informers and

190 members of the permanent establishment) are the decisive force of the SNB to be dispatched in the event of mass anti-social gatherings in Prague. The technical equipment of these organizations includes armored carriers, water-cannons and other emergency instruments.

Emergency units of the VB are being created and prepared according to the possibilities and needs of any given section in every SNB organization at the county and district level. Within the framework of the CSR, the leaders of KS SNB (including the administration of SNB Prague) have at their disposal school emergency departments which function as their reserves to be brought in as a compact unit. All the mentioned emergency units are thoroughly prepared to perform tasks and their preparedness is good. During their preparation they collaborated with the units of the LM in their exercises.

From the Border Guards a reserve of 720 soldiers from the basic service and career soldiers with the necessary technology has been created, of these 460 members of the Border Guards are intended for Prague.

In individual counties and districts, [possible] locations for anticipated mass anti-social gatherings are being identified and intervention plans are being practiced there.

Extraordinary attention in the preparation for the protection of law and order is devoted to the capital, Prague. Mass anti-social gatherings are anticipated specifically within the confines of Wenceslas Square, Peace Square, Old Town Square, on Letna [plain], Stromovka [park] and Kampa [island]. Intervention actions are practiced in these locations, but forces are ready to strike in other places as well.

The operational staff of the FMV [Federal Interior Ministry] was created for the leadership and coordination of security measures. The responsibility for the preparation and completion of tasks to protect the peace from attempts to stage anti-social gatherings has been to the responsible deputies of MV ZP CSR and SSR. Emphasis was placed on the universal preparedness of the security forces and technologies, preparations of individual variations and placement and leadership.

The head of the administration of LM CSSR announced extraordinary measures for the days of 17-22 August 1989. The focus of the tasks lies in the acquisition of information and assurance of uninterrupted activity in the factories. Heightened attention is being given to the protection of stockpiles of weapons and ammunition.

Regional LM staffs have cooperated with SNB organizations and are prepared for combined security patrols during the above-mentioned period and incorporation into security units with forces and equipment determined in the plans for cooperation.

For the capital Prague, 10 troops will be prepared specifically on bases destined for the local SNB administrations, and 1 LM company for MS VB Prague. In addition to this, 300 members of the LM will be prepared as reserves.

The chief of the General Staff of the MNO [Ministry of

National Defense] released a “guideline” for securing the tasks in which he ordered the troops to prepare and detail forces and equipment for the SNB in the calculations determined in the agreement between the FMV and ČSLA [Czechoslovak People’s Army] before the redeployment of the army.

The third degree of extraordinary security measures [which has been] announced [MBO],¹² does not yet presuppose the deployment of forces and equipment of the ČSLA. Their usage is possible only under higher degrees of MBO. Under the fourth degree, MBO soldiers are brought in for combined patrols and part of the technology is used. Under the fifth degree of the MBO, the guarding of designated objects is added and the ČSLA arranges the planned security forces and special technology, which will be brought in during the sixth degree (MBO). The law #40/74 Sb. makes it possible for ČSLA troops to be brought in, according to which the minister of the interior of the CSSR has the authority to enlist the members of the ČSLA to fulfill the tasks of the SNB after an agreement with the minister of national defense.

The detailed technology of the ČSLA include trucks, connecting appliances, armored transports for infantry and water canons.

For the capital Prague, 2,300 soldiers of the basic service and career soldiers with the necessary technology [already] have been prepared for service in the combined security patrols and the security units. Furthermore a regiment of tanks of the minister of national defense is prepared to serve as a reserve (1,160 members of the ČSLA with necessary technology).

Conclusion:

It has been proven that the internal and external enemy considers the anniversary of 21 August as an opportunity to confront the state powers and to discredit the present leadership of the party and the state.

The western media provides the necessary framework for this. They try to draw a picture in the public’s mind of a deepening crisis in our society which, according to their prognosis, should result in its end, and, at the latest by next year’s end, develop into a struggle for political power, the removal of the CPCz from the leading role in society and a complete dismantling of the principles of socialism.

They clearly, at the same time, count on developments in neighboring socialist countries, especially in Poland and Hungary to influence the minds of our people. They concentrate primarily on the support and propagation of the activity of illegal organizations and their members, and simultaneously strive to prove that the party is not able to lead the society and secure its progress any longer.

The activity of internal and external enemies is aimed at bringing about the legalization of the operation of opposing groups and their assertion as real political powers in the societies, which, following the Polish model forced the state leadership to a round-table dialogue. At the same time one must not underestimate the influence

and long-term plans of the Roman Catholic Church. Its political ambition was explicitly expressed by Cardinal Tomášek in an open letter to the government functionaries and citizens of the CSSR.

The existence and activity of illegal organizations and the prolonged and increasing influence of the western media, especially the broadcast stations RADIO FREE EUROPE and VOICE OF AMERICA, impacts in a negative way on a segment of our population. Cases of anonymous threats addressed to functionaries of party and state organs and the National Front organization, of disrespect for the SNB, ČSLA and LM, and of verbal attacks on their members are on the rise.

With regard to these realities it is impossible to rule out the possibility that during the so-called silent demonstration on the 20-21 August 1989, an atmosphere will be created among the participants that could grow into an open display of enmity toward the state and the party as a start of a series of further acts planned during the course of this year and the beginning of the next, aimed at destabilizing the society.

This is the reason for the preparation of necessary security measures for the frustration of their confrontational plans.

[Source: A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79-84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in Czech in Organizace a Řízení, Represe v ČSSR: Operační Štáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989, Edice Dokumentů Vol. 4/II (Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetřování Zločinů Komunistu 1998). Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 2
Czechoslovak Secret Police (StB)
Memorandum, “Information Regarding the
Situation in the CSSR up to 20 August 1989,”
20 August 1989

Information regarding the security situation in the ČSSR up to 20 August 1989

In recent days (Friday and Saturday) the so-called protest marches, organized by the so-called Independent Peace Association, have continued in the pedestrian zones in Prague. Approximately 100 individuals attended these activities. Saturday’s marches were video-recorded by accredited employees of the British and Austrian television company “V.”

Internally, “Charter-77” has been somewhat divided over questions of policy and tactics in preparation for a confrontational rally. The older “charter-77” signatories are

determined to stop any activities on 21 August while the more radically oriented youth groups are contemplating an open clash with state authority, even at the cost of provocation. They have declared they are even willing to allow themselves to be shot for their cause. Within the internal enemy groups, a strong moderate center exists which has been pushing for a peaceful demonstration in the form of a procession around the pedestrian zone.

There are confirmed efforts by employees of Western media organizations to incite [Charter 77 activists and other to give] a confrontational character to the anti-socialist rally of 21 August. To this end, they have been spending time with and emphatically [trying to] convince individual prominent "Charter-77" activists. The editors of the BBC are particularly active in doing this.

Further, information has been confirmed regarding preparations for the anti-socialist rally on 21 August, organized by activists of the so-called Independent Initiatives in certain cities in the western Bohemian, southern Bohemian, southern Moravian, northern Moravian, central Slovakian, and eastern Slovakian regions. From the perspective of the internal enemy, this has the effect of enlisting additional supporters for demonstrations in Prague and in other cities. Their common goal, among other things, is to aggravate as much as possible [attempts by] security to intervene—for instance, by organizing a scattered march through Prague. The effort of the enemy will be to draw the attention of security services away from Prague to other regions or, as the case may be, district cities.

Appreciable activity in support of the so-called Czechoslovak Independent Initiatives is being generated by Polish and Hungarian opposition groups, which are encouraging large-scale participation at the anti-socialist rally, particularly in Prague. Their intentions have been confirmed by the arrival of Polish opposition groups in Prague on 15 August, which ensures that the activated Polish groups can remain through 21 August. The delegation even visited J. HÁJEK¹³ who familiarized them with the "Charter-77" provision requiring signatories to distance themselves from open confrontational acts and reminded them that if they chose to remain until 21 August, they were under no circumstances to portray themselves as guests invited by "Charter-77."

The Hungarian contingent has similarly organized the arrival of their members in Prague to participate in the anti-socialist rallies of the FIDESZ (Young Democrats' League) organization, whose activists are preparing a demonstration on August 21 in front of the Czechoslovak embassy in Budapest, where they intend to hold the protest. On 19 August, Hungarian radio broadcast an interview with a FIDESZ representative who indicated that a large number of members of the organization would be leaving for the CSSR to support activities through 21 August.

In an effort to prevent the arrival of individuals with such intentions from Poland and Hungary, the necessary

precautions have been put in place at the state borders. Thus far, 15 suspicious individuals have been turned back at the rail station on the Hungarian border, of whom 14 were Hungarians and one was French. At the Polish border crossings there has thus far been a total of 13 Solidarity activists and [other] suspicious Polish citizens turned back.

In order to expose the aims of the Hungarian opposition groups to organize specific unfriendly acts on Czechoslovak territory, cooperation has been established with Consul TABA at the Hungarian embassy.

In connection with 21 August, the Polish Solidarity movement is making preparations at certain Polish-Czechoslovak border crossings, for instance, at Vyšný Komárník (district of Svidník), Palota (district of Humenný), for a so-called quiet, passive sit-in demonstration using banners and signs with slogans. Participants are to sign a written declaration calling for mutual cooperation with the Independent Initiatives, the denouncement of international aid from Warsaw Pact troops, and a declaration of support for the anti-socialist forces in the CSSR. On 21 August at 4:00 p.m., on the town square of the Polish border town of Cieszyna, a protest demonstration has been planned, at which time a declaration from the Polish [Sejm] is to be read denouncing the entry of Polish troops into Czechoslovakia (according to Polish border guard intelligence organs, security will be intensified in the above stated areas to prevent Polish citizens from crossing illegally into Czechoslovakia).

According to routinely gathered intelligence, one may assume, as a consequence of the anti-Czechoslovak campaign in the West and the anti-government demonstrations announced in Prague, that there will be an influx of tourists from the West. Within only the past few days there has been an enormous volume of visas granted to Italian citizens (totaling more than 440), at a time when there was no reason to deny their applications.

According to intelligence gathered, members of the Italian Radical Party plan to arrive soon in Prague with the typical aim, as has been the case in the past, to elicit anti-socialist provocation through the use of banners and leaflets. This intention was even confirmed by the president of this party, STANCERI, at their rally.

In the effort to thwart these aims, the appropriate measures have been taken at border crossings as well as general security measures for the territory of Czechoslovakia. Each case of provocation by Italian or other foreigners [who have been] granted visas will be documented and will incur the appropriate legal measures.

Currently there are noteworthy efforts by certain individuals to obtain weapons and bomb-making materials. Nine cases with a total of 250 CZ parabellum 9 mm semi-automatic pistols were distributed through PZO Merkurgia to Britain V. Upon carrying out an inspection of the contents of the shipment it was discovered that a total of 30 pistols had been stolen prior to distribution to Britain V. On 12 August, there was a break-in at the ČSPA

[Czechoslovak People's Army] ammunition depot in the community of Cakov (district of České Budejovice), from which a significant amount of plastic explosives, charges, detonators, and other bomb-making materials was taken. The perpetrators were discovered to be basic service recruits L[...] Michal (born 1969) and N[...] Milan (born 1968), both from Military Unit 4445 of České Budejovice[,] and a civilian named K[...] Radek (born 1971) from České Budejovice. The motive behind the act is under investigation.

Within the last two days on state territory there have been more than 150 leaflets discovered, which have made a particular call for participation in the protest rally on 21 August and the denouncement of the international assistance provided in 1968; the majority were discovered in the cities of Prague (33), Brno (26), Český Krumlov (20) and Gottwaldov (19). This involves only those cases discovered by NSC [National Security Committee] organs and informers; the actual number is likely much higher. During the same period, 15 opprobrious signs were discovered at public locations and promptly removed. In Brno, an unknown perpetrator made a telephone call threatening the destruction of the MC CPCz building (Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia).

Today, during the hours between 9:15 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., Mass was held at St. Vitus Cathedral. It was officiated by cleric KORÍNEK and was not misused for anti-socialist provocation. The departure of members of the congregation was recorded by the staffs of ARD [television] (German Federal Republic) and ABC [television] (United States of America), with the above mentioned staffs conducting no interviews with our citizens. Attendance at the first Mass celebration fluctuated around 1,300 individuals and the second around 2,000 individuals.

[Source: A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79-84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in *Czech in Organizace a Řízení, Represe v ČSSR: Operační Štáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989*, Edice Dokumentů Vol. 4/II (*Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetřování Zločinů Komunistu 1998*). Translated for CWIHP by Vance Whitby.]



DOCUMENT No. 3
Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior
Memorandum, "Information on the Security
Situation in the CSSR,"
17 October 1989

THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (FMV)
 #OV-0115/A-89

In Prague, 17 October 1989

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For a meeting of the government of the CSSR

Matter: Information on the security situation in the CSSR

The information is rendered according to a proposal by the Minister of the Interior

Contents: Information on the security interior of the CSSR situation in the CSSR

[...]⁶

Composed by:

František Kincl

Minister of the Interior of the CSSR

Designated as personal information for member of the government of the CSSR, to be returned upon acquaintance with the material!

Information on the security situation in the CSSR

After the unsuccessful acts of the internal enemies for the 21 August anniversary, pressure in the enemy camp was stepped up to perfect the organizational structures of individual enemy groups and to elaborate a common platform.

At the same time the opponent is concentrating his energies, besides the coordinated distribution of various declarations, on the elaboration of a common strategic plan of the opposition in the CSSR and the preparation of a joint political party—the so-called Party of the United Opposition. This was also established at the meeting of the consultative group of the independent initiatives (the representatives of the Movement for Civic Freedom (HOS), the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiatives and KSP Renewal) on 2 October 1989 in Prague. The aim of the opponent to form a so-called Civic Committee also persists. The purpose of these efforts is the creation of a representative organ of the opposition and to bring the state and party organs to a "round-table" discussion following the Polish and Hungarian models.

Besides the efforts for integration, the tendency of the internal enemy to engage official organizations in their activity, with the intent of gaining their own legalization and achieving a dialog between official and so-called independent organizations, is becoming more pronounced. It is possible to introduce as an example the efforts of the "Independent World Association—initiatives for the demilitarization of society" to engage the Czechoslovak World Organization in the preparation of the so-called Helsinki Assembly for Peace and Democracy with a seat in Prague (the origin of which is prepared in the first half 1990) and the efforts of the preparatory committee "Society for the study of democratic socialism" to organize an international seminar on Socialist Internationales in cooperation with Committee of the Czechoslovak Public for

Human Rights and Humanitarian Cooperation in November of this year.

The internal enemy is also trying to penetrate into the superstructures of the society. This can especially be seen in the areas of scientific and cultural intelligence, and not only in forced petition signings, but also in the creation of other so-called independent initiatives. An example of this is the establishment of the initiative "MOST",¹⁴ made up of cultural workers which should also become the mediator of dialog between the enemy environment and official organizations, and also establish the so-called Circle of the Independent Intelligence (KNI), whose goal is to create a platform uniting scientific workers who are opposed to the politics of the CPCz. Its efforts are concentrated on the discrediting and disbanding of the SSM [youth union], and the creation of a series of independent youth initiatives. The evidence for this is the creation of the new "politically independent youth union" in the central Bohemian region and other places.

A dangerous phenomenon related to the coming anniversary of the origin of the CSR and the effort to activate high school youth, is the distribution of anonymous anti-communist letters from Prague addressed to high schools. For now, this has been proven in eastern, southern and northern regions. They summon the directors, pedagogical counsels and SSM groups [youth unions] to "a dignified celebration of the 28 October" and to the elevation of the work of T. G. Masaryk. They condemn the document "Lesson from the crisis development..." and rate positively the intentions of the so-called Prague spring 1968. It is possible to assume that they will be gradually distributed on the entire territory of the CSSR and broadcast in the transmissions of the inflammatory stations Radio Free Europe and Voice of America, with the aim of sending out their message to the widest Czechoslovak society.

The internal structure of individual initiatives is also gradually being strengthened with the aim of increasing their ability to act on the entire territory. For example, during the so-called conference of Democratic Initiatives on 10-16 September 1989, the group was further politicized, reflected in the newly approved title "Czechoslovak Democratic Initiative, Political and Social Movement" (CSDI), the organizational policies and program contents. The immediate goal was the expansion of the member base, the strengthening of the organizational structure, the establishing of local and provincial groups, and the development of activity in thematic units and consumer clubs. The realization of these goals is tied to the creation of satellite organizations, working as sections of CSDI (e.g. the student, ecological and others) with their own program, making possible for them the future transition to their own political organization. Proof of this are the intentions to change, for example, the so-called ecological section into the Green Party.

Several negative political manifestations in the activity of non-communist parties in the CSSR are multiplying.

Right-wing and religious-oriented functionaries in centers and regions are trying to bring about changes in the positions of these parties in the political system independent of the CPCz line and establish political pluralism. These tendencies are especially marked in the functionaries and member bases of ČSL and ČSS.¹⁵

During the realization of his goals, the internal enemy is also counting on increased support for his activity from the Polish Solidarity party as government and parliamentary powers and the Hungarian Democratic Forum and the youth organization FIDESZ as an organization directly connected to the politics of the state with a decisive influence in parliament, but also with the support of the official institutions and personages of Hungary. The contacts with several individuals and groups from the USSR, especially journalistic and historic-theoretical circles, with the representatives of so-called independent initiatives are becoming especially important for the moral support of the enemy.

The cooperation of the internal enemy with Western political structures and official institutions is on a qualitatively higher level. The official actors of the Austrian SPÖ and the West German SPD are expressing their support for the activity of the so-called Society for the Study of Democratic Socialism, which should gradually change into assistance during the organizing of a party of the social democratic type. Honorable awards from various Western foundations have been given to the head representatives of the so-called independent initiatives in the CSSR, as an expression of appreciation of their "fight" for human rights. An example of this is the award of "German Publishers" with a grant of 25,000 DM given to Václav Havel, which is supposed to be used for the founding and anti-social activity of the so-called publishing cooperative ATLANTIS.

Besides the activity of the internal enemy, Western ideological centers and emigrant groups are trying to influence the Czechoslovak public and organize provocative acts even on the territory of socialist countries. Polish Solidarity together with the Czechoslovak emigration is organizing a seminar in the beginning of November this year in Bratislava¹⁶ devoted to the problems of culture in Central Europe, a part of which will be an overview of "Czechoslovak independent and emigre literature." Underground concerts of Czechoslovak emigrants and meetings with the representatives of so-called independent initiatives are organized in Hungary by ideological centers.

The simultaneous activity of the internal enemy nevertheless does not fulfill the expectations of the Western ideological centers about the ability of the opposing forces in the CSSR to act. There is pressure from abroad on the Charter-77 and other initiatives to present themselves in public more conspicuously and to "come out of illegality" and politicize their activity, under threat of ending their financial support. The nearest convenient occasion for this is the anniversary of the origin of the CSR [Czechoslovak Republic]. A concrete example is the

pressure on the representatives of CSDI to announce their formation of a political party at the above-mentioned anniversary.

The meeting of the speakers of Charter-77 on 23 September 1989 was supposed to prepare concrete acts, but it was prevented. Vaclav Havel prepared the so-called pronouncement for the 28 October¹⁷ for this occasion, in which the conditions of the first republic are idealized and the legalization of the opposition, the end of the applicability of the temporary agreement on the stay of Soviet troops in CSSR, and the destruction of barricades on the borders are demanded. Other groups are to prepare analogous pronouncements. The endeavor of the opponent is to establish from these declarations a common position of the so-called independent initiatives for the anniversary of the origin of the CSSR.

A meeting of the representatives of illegal organizations The Independent World Coalition, The Movement for Civic Freedom and the Czechoslovak Independent Initiatives on 3 October 1989 in Prague had the same purpose. Among other things, it was agreed that if they were not allowed to use any spaces for their "celebrations", they would arrange a gathering in the pedestrian zone in Prague.

The speakers of "Charter-77" sent a letter on 26 September 1989 to the National Committee of the capital Prague, in which they proposed allowing "Charter-77" to organize their own "independent reminder of this state holiday", and for its implementation they recommended the lease of a hall of the Radio Palace or Lucerna type.

The coordinating committee, made up of representatives of from HOS, CSDI and Renewal, are organizing the demonstration. On 2 October 1989 Rudolf Battěk and Ladislav Lis met with Dr. Martin Houska of the National Committee of Prague, and they requested in the name of HOS, CSDI and Renewal a permit for a demonstration on 28 October 1989 at 3 p.m. or 6 p.m. on an open space (Letná plain, Hvězda park, in front of the park of culture and the vacation house of Julius Fučík or the memorial at Vitkov). In connection with this request, during a meeting at the department of internal affairs of the ONV Prague 7 on 3 October 1989, they probed the possibility of obtaining a permit for a demonstration on Letná plain. This program is proposed at the gathering: after the opening ceremony, several main Czechoslovak actors will read quotations from Čapek,¹⁸ followed by the main declaration probably by V. Havel with a demand for a dialog with the opposition and free elections.

It is evident from the context of the activity of the opposition, that through these requests it is trying to rid itself of responsibility for eventual consequences of the anti-social gathering, which they are striving for, and blame the state and party organs.

The climax of the acts motivated by the anniversary of the origin of the CSR is supposed to be a common demonstration of so-called independent initiatives in the center of Prague on 28 October 1989. For now there are various

opinions as to its concrete shape.

Just as in August of last year the enemy environment is counting on the presence of representatives of Solidarity and the Hungarian opposition at the demonstration. A meeting of the delegates of CSDI, "Charter-77", Renewal and HOS with the delegates of the Hungarian Democratic Forum is also planned for this day to establish a common committee.

Despite the efforts of the radical part of the opposition, represented by T. Hradlik, to concentrate enemy powers in Prague, it can be expected that the acts of 28 October 1989 will cross over to other parts of the republic. Evidence has been ascertained of the efforts of the representatives of HOS and the T. G. Masaryk society to organize a demonstration in Brno on Victory Boulevard and Place of Peace for the renaming of Victory Boulevard to Masaryk street.

As evidenced from the above-mentioned facts, despite the organizational measures and the continuing efforts for integration, diversity of opinion and disunity on how to organize the anti-social gathering persists in the enemy camp. Especially prevalent are the fears of counter measures by state organs and the subsequent "crash" of the prepared acts, as was in August. The moderate wing of the opposition is apprehensive of the radicalization of a growing part of the group, especially young members and adherents, which could lead them to a direct clash with the state powers and even impede the long-term goals and plans of the opposition.

On the other hand they are well aware that the current international and internal political conditions provide them with a suitable space for such a gathering, and to not take advantage of them could result in isolation and loss of support not only from abroad, but also from the politicized part of their followers, especially the young.

For these reasons with 28 August nearing, it is possible to expect increased activity on the part of the internal enemy trying to correct the "bad impression" from August of this year.

The situation regarding the safe-guarding of the state border of the CSSR was to some extent complicated by the decisions of the Hungarian government on 11 September 1989 to enable citizens from the GDR to travel to any country. As a result of this, the CSSR has practically become a transit stop for them before emigrating to capitalist countries. In total 3,288 trespassers were caught on state borders in September 1989, 3,082 of them were citizens from GDR. In September there were 9 [incidents of] violent border crossings at passport control booths from the CSSR to Hungary. In this period the attitude of the Hungarian passport and border organs toward cooperation with Czechoslovakia has worsened, since they refuse to extradite the citizens from the GDR who illegally crossed the border between the CSSR and Hungary.

After the state organs of the GDR decided on 3 October 1989, to put an end to GDR citizens' [ability to] travel without a visa or passport to the CSSR, the number

of individuals arriving from the GDR dramatically decreased. At the same time, however, the number of attempts to illegally cross the borders into the CSSR have risen abruptly. For example, just between 3 and 5 of October 1989, 726 GDR citizens who had penetrated into the CSSR in order to emigrate were detained. The situation calmed down after measures were implemented by the organs of the CSSR and GDR.

A difficult situation came about at the end of September and beginning of August 1989, on the border with Poland, where it was not possible to secure safe transit for overfull international trains from Poland. The delays frequently exceeded 10 hours. There were also problems in clearing Polish citizens at the Czechoslovak-Austrian border, where the waiting period exceeded 8 hours. The reason for this was the unusually high number of traveling Polish nationals and their strict clearance by Austrian customs officials. More attention is being paid to the situation on the state borders with Poland, Hungary and the GDR, and necessary measures will be taken according to its concrete development.

There is unrest among Czechoslovak citizens because citizens of Poland, Hungary and in part the USSR buy up consumer goods during their stay, especially the ones imported from capitalist countries, mostly foodstuffs of all kinds, but also clothes, footwear, sporting goods, installation and building materials, *etc.* Purchases of foodstuffs reaching 1,500 Kcs are not exceptional. In some areas, especially those close to the borders, it is becoming more difficult to maintain fuel supplies and even certain essential foods. As a result, our citizens are criticizing party and state organs.

The public security situation in the CSSR in 1989 was basically stabilized, and peace and order were secured. Disciplinary units were dispatched only in the event of provocative gatherings of anti-socialist forces in January, May and August in Prague. Decisive cooperative measures between other units of the security apparatus and the People's Militias brought the gatherings under control. Several instances of disturbing the peace also arose during sporting and cultural events. These, however, never went beyond the city limits and did not require special forces or measures.

Since the beginning of the year (especially in the first quarter and before 21 August), a significant increase in anonymous phone calls and letters was noted (in the end of September the number exceeded 520), in which the culprits threatened terrorist acts. There is a clear shift in their intentions. In the beginning of the year in almost all cases the destruction of objects or means of transportation was threatened. Recently there have been a growing number of individual death threats, above all [aimed at] those who publicly denounced the enemy acts of anti-socialist elements.

The anonymous threats were proven to be false through effected measures. Finding the culprits has not been successful, with only around 15% of cases closed.

More than 2.5 thousand flyers and 500 harmful letters were recorded. They were largely aimed at party and state functionaries.

The number of recorded criminal acts and felonies increased slightly to a total of 135,234, with a constant level of 80% of cases closed. Damages due to by the crime rate rose by more than 64 million Kcs and exceeded 511 million Kcs. The slight increase in the crime rate was caused by the greater number of general criminal acts (2.3% more). The biggest gain in the crime rate was noted in property crimes, rising by 3.2%, with 62% of all such cases closed. Property crime represented about half of all crimes committed in the CSSR. Breaking and entering sustained the most striking growth, climbing by 8%. Breaking and entering into apartments is increasing ominously, the number of incidents up by 1,641 from last year, while the rate of cases closed remains at 55%.

The number of violent acts remains at the same level of the previous period, with 95% of cases closed. The number of the most serious violent crimes has gone up, 2 murders added to a total of 89 cases (with 96.6% of them closed), and 54 cases of burglary added to 651 (with 87.6% of them closed).

Out of the specific and key problems in the fight against crime, the criminal relapse and violent crime committed by Gypsies are rising, constituting almost two thirds of all crime and more than one third of white-collar crime. The slight increase in crime among young people continues. They commit 16% of all crimes in general and one third of all white-collar crime. Most disturbing is the high rate of criminality among young Gypsies, representing 25% of crimes committed by young people, exceeding 40% in Slovakia.

There is a very negative situation in the area of non-alcoholic addiction. The number of addicts recorded by the organs of the VB (Public Security) is close to 7,000. About half are individuals 18-25 years of age, and some addicts are even children 15 and younger, with 200 such cases recorded. As a result of abuse of dangerous substances 21 people have died in an estimated period.

In total 21,877 cases of white-collar crimes and felonies have been solved, but the documented damages grew by 79 million Kcs. and exceeded 250 million Kcs. The investigative organs and economic organizations share slightly less than 9% of crimes solved, although for the most part they are infractions in the work-place. The most frequent white-collar crime remains burglary of property in socialist possession. The growing delinquency of work bosses in the economic sector is evidenced in the uncovering of 1,924 crimes against economic order (a growth of 829).

The numerous extraordinary events are causing not insignificant damage to the national economy. They outweighed fires, traffic break-downs and accidents, and mishaps of public rail transportation. The most frequent cause of the extraordinary events is still the disturbance of work procedures, not respecting technical safety, gross

violation of policies and regulations on work safety.

The number of traffic accidents have also increased. There have been 48,912 traffic accidents, which is basically at the same level as last year. The consequences are in all indications the most dire. In all 589 people have died (up by 50), 2,619 were heavily injured (up by 401), and serious damages have also increased. There have occurred 3,122 accidents induced by alcohol, an increase of 111.

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Preventive and destructive measures are undertaken in order to suppress the enemy's activity, frustrate the efforts to unite individual groups and impede the enemy's ability to act, especially that of the organizers of enemy acts.

In the places of the assumed origin of mass anti-social gatherings and in places with a concentration of enemy individuals, especially in Prague, Brno and Bratislava, the patrol units of the VB will be strengthened, with the aim of preventing the distribution of flyers and stopping enemy elements from participating in anti-social gatherings.

In all regions of the CSSR measure have been taken to prevent the participation of the main enemies at anti-social gatherings, especially in Prague. Analogous measures are also undertaken with respect to enemies from abroad.

In the event of mass anti-social gatherings VB and LM units will be ready to intervene for the use of more peaceful means.

[Source: A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79-84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in *Czech in Organizace a Řízení, Represe v ČSSR: Operační Štáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989, Edice Dokumentů Vol. 4/III (Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetřování Zločinů Komunistů 1998)*. Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 4
Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior
Memorandum, "The Security Situation in
the CSSR in the Period Before 28 October,"
25 October 1989

Supplement #1 to #OV-00138/S-89

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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The Security Situation in the CSSR in the period before 28 October

Characteristic of the developments of the security situation in the CSSR are the increasing tendencies of the internal enemy to bring out anti-socialist moods in the public by means of anonymous letters and flyers, particularly in Bohemia, in connection with the 71st

anniversary of the CSR. The organizers wish to ensure the widest participation of citizens (most of all youth) in prepared provocative gatherings during which the celebration of 28 October will be used to glorify T. G. Masaryk and the bourgeois state.

The evidence for this lies in the continuing distribution of anonymous letters in high schools in which authors summon the people to the "dignified celebration of 28 October" and give prominence to the work of T. G. Masaryk. Letters are gradually being distributed on the majority of the territory of the CSR. In northern, western, southern and eastern Bohemia and Prague flyers of the coordinating board of the so-called Movement for Civic Freedom (HOS) and the Czechoslovak Democratic Initiatives (CSDI) are being circulated. They call for participation in the "celebrations" on 28 October for example in Chomutov (on K. Gottwald Square), in Plzeň (on the Square of the Republic), in Karlovy Vary (at the main post office), in Sušice (at the monument to T.G.M.), in Rumburk (in the park of the Rumburk Revolt) and in Červený Kostelec (in the park at the square). The organizers of the acts sent letters to the National Committees in Sušice, Náchod and Chomutov with a request for permission for a "ceremonial gathering," referring to article 28 of the constitution of the CSSR. The "Declaration of the Charter 77 on 28 October", signed by its speakers and Havel, is being distributed at the same time (this has been proven, for example, in Kladno).⁷

On 18 October R. Battěk and L. Lis introduced in the name of the illegal organizations CSDI, HOS and Renewal a "communication on the event of a public gathering" in the ONV in Praha 7. In it they inform [people] that on 28 October at 3:00 p.m. they are arranging a "ceremonial gathering of their members and followers for the anniversary of the origin the CSR" on the Letná plain. After the commencement Čapek's "Prayer for Truth" will be recited, followed by the "ceremonial address" and finally the national anthem will be sung. Afterwards, when the stations Radio Free Europe (from 23 October 1989) and Voice of America (from 24 October 1989) were broadcasting announcements of the event the "independent gathering" on the anniversary of the origin of the CSR on Wenceslas Square in Prague from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., they revoked their announcement for alleged technical difficulties connected with such a public gathering under the "given social situation."

The exponents of illegal organizations in Brno M. Jelinek (HOS and TGM Society member), J. Mezník (prepared for the function of speaker of CH-77) and D. Slavík (TGM Society member) are developing an analogous action. They sent a letter to the department of internal affairs of the MNV in Brno, in which they announce that they intend to call a public gathering in front of the Janacek theater in Brno on 28 October. Serving not only as a reminder of the anniversary of the origin of the CSR, the gathering is also supposed to vote on a resolution which would change the name of the Place of Peace to Masaryk

Place and to begin preparations for the erection of a monument to T.G. Masaryk.

Even the activist Milan Vlk of the illegal group Peace Club of J. Lennon called on his fellow activists for a “silent demonstrations” in Děčín on 28 October. He is simultaneously organizing the distribution of a protest petition against the imprisonment of “political prisoners.”

The plans of the anti-socialist forces from Hungary—the Hungarian Democratic Forum which is in contact with CSDI since last year—to take part in the “celebrations” of 28 October have been proven. On this day they plan to effectuate a meeting of the “Commission for Hungarian-Czechoslovak Cooperation” (established on 26 August 1989 in Prague by representatives of both organizations), which will devote itself to questions of Czechoslovak-Hungarian “reconciliation and cooperation.”

An anti-Czechoslovak activity aimed at discrediting the CSSR for the disrespect of the plans of the CSCE is the conclusion of an informal agreement between Hungarian television and the American television company ABC. At its core is their collaboration during the reporting of the actions of the so-called independent initiatives in Prague on various opportune occasions. The first act of collaboration of both television companies is supposed to be the participation in the anticipated demonstration on 28 October 1989, in Prague.

The leadership of the Hungarian Federation of Young Citizens (FIDESZ) is pushing its members to “help” the Czechoslovak independent initiatives on 28 October during the organization of a gathering of citizens in Prague and other cities. During a meeting of FIDESZ on 16 October, it was decided to send their members to Prague as tourists in the same number as on 21 August of this year. A group of about 12 people is supposed to be created which would join up with several prominent representatives of “Charter-77.” They plan to organize a swift and conspiratorial courier service between Prague and Budapest to secure prompt information about the course of the “celebrations” for Hungarian media. Analogous activity should be anticipated from anti-socialist forces in Poland.

In relation to the up-coming anniversary of the origin of the CSR and the internal enemies’ preparations of its misuse, even the staffs of foreign broadcast stations are being reinforced. The arrivals of other categorized individuals are being registered, for example employees of Swedish, French and West German television, journalists from Great Britain, USA, Austria, West Germany and others, with intent to gain information on the anticipated anti-social gatherings in CSSR in connection to the 28 October anniversary.

In the above-mentioned period two American television companies CBS NEWS and NBC NEWS will be working in Prague. They want to capture the events around 28 October and inform the American public about the “troubles” in CSSR with the aim of presenting them as the continuation of the disintegration of the eastern bloc and the unwillingness of the Czechoslovak leadership to agree to a dialog with the opposition. They also plan to interview

the representatives of illegal structures. The West German television company ZDF has identical plans.

Through effected security measures, a meeting of the delegates of the so-called independent initiatives (Renewal, Movement for Civic Freedom, Czechoslovak Democratic Initiatives and NMS) on 12 October was successfully impeded. The meeting was supposed to prepare a common declaration of illegal organizations on the 28 October anniversary. During the measures for the prevention of a nation-wide meeting of CSDI activists on 14 October 1989, a declaration drawn up by the illegal “T. G. Masaryk Association” and “DTSV – the southern Czech group of the CSDI” for the 28 Oct. anniversary was uncovered.

Furthermore, in order to prevent the enemy’s ability to plan acts before the 71st anniversary of the CSR, security measures were carried out to:

- prevented a meeting of the leadership of the so-called Organization of Eastern Czech Opposition, whereby the founding of a regional organization of the “CS public organization” as a basis for a new opposition party was to have been discussed,
- prevented the plenary session of the “CS Helsinki organization” (CSHV) in Prague,
- impeded the meeting of more than 50 people from the Southern Czech region inclined to various illegal groups,
- prevented the mass distribution of the flyers “HOS Manifesto” (five distributors were prosecuted with respect to this),
- prevented the arrival into CSSR of Polish nationals connected with the so-called Polish-Czechoslovak Solidarity – J. Janas, W. Maziarski, Jasinski and Borusewitz on 19 October,
- impeded the protest gathering of “young radicals” from so-called independent groups against the issue of a new 100-crown bill with a portrait of Klement Gottwald in the pedestrian zone in Prague on 25 October 1989, and assured peace and order in this area. The gathering was filmed by the television crews of ARD and ZDF.

In the effected security measures, in total 43 exponents of illegal organizations were detained and brought in, several of them repeatedly. Out of this number 23 individuals were given a warning by the organs of the SNB, 3 were given a warning by the head of HS KR and 5 a warning by the investigative organs of the StB.

In cooperation with the prosecutor’s office warnings will also be given to other main organizers of enemy acts and activists of illegal organizations (planned for 23 people). In the period directly before the anniversary these individuals will be under the control of the organs of the SNB with the aim of preventing their participation and contribution in the organization and coordination of

confrontational acts.

For the prevention of wider distribution of flyers and the recurrence of anti-socialist signs, an operational investigation will be organized and the output of disciplinary services will be strengthened.

In the future any meetings of the so-called independent initiatives will be stopped to prevent their unification. In order to prevent the transmission of tendentious reports by telephone, technical measures will be carried out against the known informers of the editorial board of RFE and VA.¹⁹

Necessary measures will be taken to prevent the participation of known organizers and participants of anti-Czechoslovak campaigns in the West, active members of anti-socialist movements and groups from socialist countries in acts prepared by Czechoslovak illegal organizations. In view of the anticipated arrival of a larger number of these individuals, they will be searched at the border crossings and will not be admitted onto our territory. The individuals who, despite the measures, penetrate onto the Czechoslovak territory with intent to participate in enemy acts, will have their stay shortened by administrative means. In the event that the individuals' participation in anti-social acts in the CSSR is proven, charges will be brought against them in accordance with valid Czechoslovak laws.

In cooperation with Czechoslovak media, particularly those operating nation-wide, evidence of their resolute offensive propagandist influence is prepared with intent to discourage adherents and those sympathizing with illegal organizations from engaging in anti-socialist acts.

In the event of a so-called "silent march" papers will be checked and actively participating individuals will be brought in to SNB departments. If it should come to petitions, verbal attacks or spontaneous demonstrations of opposition to the party and state leadership and politics of the CPCz, disciplinary units will be called in to drive the crowd out of the area and disperse it.

If despite the effected measures it should come to a mass anti-social gathering, disciplinary forces will be called in to carry out necessary decisive intervention and to restore order through technical means.²⁰

[Source: A. Lorenc et al., T8/91 vol. XIX., envelope 1, #79-84 (also vol. XXI, #2242-2247). Published in Czech in Organizace a Řízení, Represe v ČSSR: Operační Štáby Generála Lorence 1988-1989, Edice Dokumentů Vol. 4/II (Úřad Dokumentace a Vyšetřování Zločinů Komunistu 1998). Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]

DOCUMENT No. 5
Czechoslovak Ministry of Interior
Memorandum, "Information Regarding the
Development of the Security Situation During
the Period of the 17 November Anniversary,"
20 November 1989²¹

The Secretariat of the FMI (Federal Ministry of the Interior) operation staff

TOPSECRET

OV-00156/S-89

Information regarding the development of the security situation during the period of the 17 November anniversary

Internal and external enemy forces, with the aim of eliciting unrest, emotion, chaos, and mass protests in order to destabilize the internal political situation, have recently been growing in intensity and peaked between 17-19 November in Prague. Most notable has been the misuse of a student gathering on 17 November during the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the burial of Jan Opletal.²² Western media, including broadcasters from Radio Free Europe and Voice of America, generated wide publicity for both the demonstration preparations as well as the demonstration itself. The goal was to provoke a mass showing patterned after the demonstrations in the GDR and thereby create strenuous pressure on Party and State organs.

In connection with the preparations for the commemoration of Jan Opletal's death, there has been a notably significant radicalization of some of the university students in Prague. At the center of the political activation of students has been the Theatrical Academy of Performing Arts (TAPA) whose supporters, in collaboration with the Cultural Front, have orchestrated the main role in the organization of pressure tactics. The TAPA student rally, held on 15 November, cancelled, as part of its conclusion, the activities of the Socialist Youth League (SSM) with the justification that it does not have the right to represent the youth as a whole. In addition, there were demands to entertain questions regarding the role of CPCz leaders in society. An analogous situation presented itself at a gathering of University of Industrial Arts students in Prague on 16 November. Additional student gatherings, planned for this week, are intended to utilize the situation to establish a new student organization—the Independent Student Association, which is to generate activities along the lines of the National Front.

Additional sources of the student political activation are the so-called Independent Youth Society, headed by Tomáš VODICKA and Matouš RAJMONT (both are

secondary school students), and the so-called Independent Student Society, centered on university students, headed by Milan RUŽICKA (Technical University, VUT Brno), Radek VÁNA (Faculty of Philosophy, Charles's University, Prague) and Petr FIALA (Faculty of Pedagogy, Charles's University, Prague). Both initiatives, in terms of subject matter, began with a policy-statement, from an appeal for a "few sentences," and proposed preparations to misuse the commemoration of Jan Opletal's death as an opportunity to denounce the role of the CPCz, as well as the activities of the SSM, and the political system of the CSSR.

In order to thwart this design, associative and academic organs took measures to divert crowds from the original rout from the Albertov Pedagogical Institute via Charles's bridge, Štěpánská (St.), Opletalova (St.), to the Main Train Station and the J. Opletal monument, to a rout from Albertov to Vyšehrad and made a public announcement that the crowd was the result of a joint activity between the SSM and unorganized students. In consideration of the situation, the associative organs brokered a compromise to the effect that the executive member of the so-called Circle of Independent Intellectuals, an academic named KATETOV, would make an appearance on behalf of the independent initiatives. His address at Albertov did not go beyond a policy-statement and was not an openly aimed attack against the socialist structure in the CSSR.

The official program was effectively disrupted by whistling and the chanting of unfriendly slogans such as "Destroy the CPCz monopoly," "We want a different government," "String up all the communists," "Destroy the army, State Security, and the Peoples' Militia", "We don't want Jakeš," "We don't want Štěpán," "We want a charter," etc. Organizers, in light of the development of the situation, did not have the opportunity to establish order and secure the proper course of the demonstration. After the rally at Albertov ended, the participants broke up and reassembled at Slavín²³ [cemetery in Vyšehrad], where the official mourning portion of the commemoration concluded. Afterwards, approximately 5,000 individuals continued in a procession into the center of Prague along the B. Engels embankment, up Národní třída (St.) to Wenceslas Square. In response, Národní třída and the neighboring streets were closed by IS (Internal Security) peace-keeping units.²⁴

By around 10:00 p.m., approximately 3,000 people had assembled within the confines of Národní třída, of which only about 1,000 acknowledged the call to disperse and leave the area. Those remaining lingered in the area and began sitting down on the pavement in demonstration fashion and continued to chant unfriendly slogans. Over 15 calls to disperse went unheeded and the participants of the demonstration had over an hour to restore order to the area. After the calls went unheeded, measures were taken to suppress the crowd. During the course of those measures, a skirmish ensued with some of the more aggressive participants in the demonstration. After

intervening, 179 individuals were detained, of whom approximately 145 were held for aggressive behavior directed at the IS department. Shortly after 11:00 p.m., public order was restored. During intervention a total of 38 individuals were injured including one member of the SNB (National Security Committee) and one US citizen.

On Saturday, 11 November 1989, a group of students, primarily from TAPA and [VŠE]²⁵ Prague, issued a declaration condemning the intervention of peace-keeping units and proposed a weekly strike consisting of university students and pedagogues to push for the creation of a special government commission to investigate the intervention as well as other demands. In the effort to call on students to implement a general strike at all theaters in the ČSSR on 11 November, in excess of 400 individuals gathered at a production at the Realistický Theater in Prague.

In response to the call to theater performers, actress Milena DVORSKÁ walked out at the E.F. Burian theater on Wenceslas Square on the afternoon of 11 November 1989. All Prague theaters and a few elsewhere in the CSSR (in Liberec and Datec) responded by suspending their performances and reading the invitation to the audience.

During the afternoon hours on Saturday 18 November 1989 a gathering of around 700 people gradually formed on Národní třída, which had been closed. After calls to disperse, the crowd broke-up prior to 6:00 p.m., with intervention being carried out by peace-keeping units. Ninety-six individuals were detained, of whom nine made displays against the SNB department.

Elsewhere around the CSSR there have been no reports of peace disturbances or public disorder.

In the effort to incite emotion, particularly among young people, and to elicit additional protests, information has been distributed by means of internal antagonists and Western communications regarding the death of Martin ŠMÍD, of the Charles's University Mathematics Faculty, from injuries sustained as a result of a confrontation with peace-keeping units. This information was disclosed by "Charter 77" signatory Petr UHL to Radio Free Europe which repeatedly aired the information on Sunday, 19 November 1989. Leaflets were then subsequently distributed providing information about the death with a call for a general strike on 27 November 1989. Similar leaflets were discovered in the northern Bohemian, eastern Bohemian, and southern Bohemian regions.

A further attempt to instigate anti-socialist protests and provoke the intervention of peace-keeping units came to a head on Sunday, 11 November 1989 during the afternoon and evening hours in downtown Prague. In implementing the security measures, only the accessibility and safety of the highway thoroughfare was secured; peace-keeping units were not attacked.

On 19 November 1989, National Theater play-actor Boris RÖSNER and head actor Milan LUKEŠ instigated the reading of a resolution to the audience during the afternoon performance on the new stage at the

National Theater in Prague, in which they expressed their disagreement with the Security intervention on 17 November 1989. At the urging of LUKÉŠ, the theater choir and those in attendance sang a theater hymn. Afterwards they promptly dispersed. National Theater director Jiří PAUER responded by closing the premises of the historical building and the new stage of the National Theater and cancelled evening performances with the justification that the National Theater would not serve to organize illegal gatherings. After director PAUER's decision, actors from the National Theater began to assemble in the National Theater club where they decided to strike.

During the evening hours, CSSR cultural minister Milan KYMLIČKA visited the National Theater. In an interview with the National Theater employees, he indicated that the CST (Czechoslovak Television) news would address the establishment of a government commission to investigate the SNB intervention on 17 November 1989. Those present promised that as long as the commission was established, the National Theater actors' club would rescind their decision to strike. At 7:30 p.m. all closely followed the CST television broadcast. Because no announcement was made about the creation of a government commission, National Theater actors, at the urging of Boris RÖSNER, undertook additional initiatives. RÖSNER, as the spokesman for the National Theater actors, along with three other individuals, proceeded to the front of the theater building where, after only a short time, he was able to organize a crowd of approximately 500 people. RÖSNER announced that the National Theater would strike continuously until it was called off, the crowd chanted the slogan "OUT WITH PAUER."

On 19 November 1989, shortly after 10:00 p.m., at the Jiří Wolker Theater, at the location originally determined for the performance, theater employees read a declaration to the audience explaining that the theater had joined the protest strike as an expression of their disagreement with the Security intervention on 17 November 1989. 17 December was determined as a substitute date for the original performance. Patrons then quietly dispersed.

A petition denouncing the SNB intervention was also read at the Komorní Theater in Plzeň, where [OBRODA] branch members Stanislav NEDVĚD and František JUŘIČKA were seated in the auditorium. Similarly, the planned performance did not materialize.

During the evening hours of the same day, a "public discussion forum" took place in the actors' club in Prague involving the most important opposition group supporters, representatives of the Cultural Front, and university students. The actors' club was filled to capacity, including the vestibule, where others followed the course of the forum on a video display monitor. Included among the viewers in the vestibule were well-known actors such as HANZLÍK, BREJCHOVÁ, KANYZA, Josef DVOŘÁK, and others.

The goal of this forum was to unify the independent initiatives and compose joint declarations, which are to be

presented to the government of the CSSR by 10 representatives on 20 November 1989. The forum was conducted by Václav HAVEL who addressed the declaration and put the various alternatives to a vote, and he then read and spoke favorably of the outcome. During the course of the discussion, appearances were also made by well-known independent group advocates including BATTĚK, KANTUREK, HRADÍLEK, VONDRA, and others.

Similarly, an unidentified TAPA student emerged to read a declaration from the TAPA students. The declaration amounted to an ultimatum for the removal of the CSSR minister of the interior, the investigation and prosecution of subordinates who were involved in the intervention of 17 November 1989, the abolition of stipulations regarding the leadership role of the Party in the system, and the resignation of the current representatives of the Party and State. On 20 November 1989 a coordinating student body is to be created at the TAPA faculty, which is supposed to guarantee the distribution of this declaration and thereby aid in the actualization of the general strike on 27 November.

Václav HAVEL supported the student declaration by suggesting that the coordinating committee supporting the forum should meet daily in some of the Prague theaters in order to direct and organize the student strikes; theaters, which are to similarly strike, would be open, however, discussion clubs would be held in place of the performances.

The aim of university students in the next few days is to travel around to various locations around the CSSR to publicize and popularize the stated declaration in the effort to convert the youth in secondary and vocational schools.

The forum was essentially divided by two differing opinions. A significantly smaller camp asserted the opinion that in essence a dialogue with the current government could be entertained provided certain changes were made, the most important of which they considered to be the resignation of comrades Jakeš, Štěpán, Zavadil, Hoffmann, Indra, and Fojtík. A notably stronger group represented by HAVEL, BATTĚK, and KANTUREK and the university student representatives, was against dialogue in any form and supported an open confrontation with the powers of the State. Both groups decided on the unconditional abolition of the principle of a leading role of the Party, anchored in the institution.

The forum culminated with a declaration read and submitted for approval by Václav HAVEL. This declaration, filled with comments from the discussion forum, will be submitted to the State organs. After singing a state hymn the participants of the forum dispersed.

Conclusion

The development of events proves that internal enemies, with foreign support, have crossed-over to a frontal, and from their perspective, decisive attack in the effort to further their own political goals after the pattern exhibited by Poland and Hungary. To this end, it has been decided to actualize and utilize all reasonable means,

primarily abusing the youth for pressure tactics. These events, according to the plans of the enemy, together with the expected economic difficulties and foreign pressure for political change, should be the beginning of a quick series of successive events resulting in principle political change in the CSSR.

Václav NOVOTNÝ

Chief of the Secretariat of the FMI Operation Staff

To be obtained by:

RA (Regional Administration) SNB Chiefs – České Budejovice, Plzeň, Ústí nad Labem, Hradec Králové, Brno, Ostrava, Banská Bystrica, Košice;
S (Slovak) SNB Chief main m. Bratislava, XII. S SNB; (Ministry of the Interior and Environment CSR, SSR. [...])

[Source: ÚDV Archive. Documentation in connection with DMM (Defense Mobilization Measures) announcements at the occasion of the 17 November 1989 celebrations. Collection list corresponding to OV-00174/S-89.—Type-written copy. Translation for CWIHP by Vance Whitby.]

¹ 16,516 citizens signed the petition “A Few Sentences” of 8 August 1989.

² Alexandr Vondra—Signator and Spokesperson for Charter 77, organized demonstrations in January 1989 and was imprisoned for his participation in the “A Few Sentences” campaign. Co-founder and leading member of Civic Forum. From 1990-92, foreign policy advisor to President Vacláv Havel, 1996 negotiator of the Czech-German Accords, Ambassador to the United States, Spring 1997-present.

Jan Urban—Signator of Charter 77, founder of underground publication *Lidove Noviny* and active leader in Civic Forum.

³ Jan Čarnogursky—A trial lawyer who defended dissidents until 1981, when the authorities forbid him trial work. Čarnogursky organized independent Catholic activists, became a leader of Slovak dissidents, was arrested in 1989, and was released after the events of 17 November. He became First Vice Premier of an independent Czechoslovakia and in 1991 became Prime Minister of the Slovak government. Čarnogursky was defeated by Meciar.

⁴ M. Kusý was released from prison on 10 June 1989, J. Čarnogursky only in November 1989.

⁵ HOS—Hnutí za Občanskou Svobodu (Movement for Civic Freedom)

NMS—Nezávislé mírové sdružení (Independent Peace Action)

⁶ Pradeda in Jeseníky—The Pradeda is the name of one of the peaks in the Jeseníky mountains, located in northern Moravia.

⁷ Adam Michnik—A founder of the Polish dissident group KOR (the Worker’s Defense Committee) in 1976, a lecturer at the “Flying University” and advisor to Solidarity trade union during the 1980s, Michnik was frequently imprisoned (1981-84 and 1985-86). A negotiator for Solidarity at the Roundtable talks with the Polish government in 1989, Michnik served in the first non-communist Sejm (1989-91) and co-founded one of the first free Polish newspapers *Gazeta Wyborcza*.

⁸ Petr Uhl—After the Prague Spring, Uhl became the leader of the illegal “Movement of Revolutionary Youth” and was jailed from 1969-73 for his activities. One of the first signatories of the Charter 77, Uhl helped found VONS—Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted—one of the first significant dissident groups. Arrested with Havel, Dienstbier and Benda, he was jailed again from 1979-84, from 1984-89 he worked as a dissident journalist.

⁹ Vacláv Benda—A devout Catholic layman, active in VONS and served twice as spokesman of Charter 77, he was imprisoned and served a manual labor sentence. His writings focused on Catholicism and politics, and the sphere of morality in politics. After 1989, a founder and chairman of the Christian Democratic Party in the independent Czechoslovakia which in 1995 merged into Vacláv Klaus Civic Democratic Party. He later served as a Senator of the Czech Republic.

¹⁰ VB—Veřejná Bezpečnost (Public Security, the regular police like traffic, criminal, etc. under control of SNB).

LM—Lidová Milice (the People’s Militia, party-controlled para-military “worker’s” police).

¹¹ FMVZ—Federalní Ministerstvo Zahraničních Vecí (Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

¹² MBO—Mimořádní Bezpečnostní Opatření (Extraordinary Security Measures).

¹³ Jiří Hájek—A leading figure in the Communist Party from 1948 through the 1950’s and Minister of Foreign Affairs under Dubček, Hájek was dismissed from the party in 1969. A dedicated socialist even after the Prague Spring, he was one of the first three spokesmen of Charter 77.

¹⁴ Editor’s Note—in Czech, the word “most” means bridge. This organization was clearly to serve a bridging function between groups.

¹⁵ Československá Strana Socialistická (Czechoslovak Socialist Party) and Československá Strana Lidová (Czechoslovak People’s Party)—two of the smaller political parties that were part of the official “National Front.”

¹⁶ Wrocław—a city in Poland near the border with Czechoslovakia.

¹⁷ The first Czechoslovak Republic was founded in Prague by official declaration of the Czech National Council on 28 October 1989. This day was subsequently celebrated as the national independence day until the Communist takeover in 1948.

¹⁸ Karel Čapek, well-known author of numerous short stories, political observer, journalist, friend of President T.G. Masaryk (1890-1938).

¹⁹ By “technical measures” is meant disconnection of phone service.

²⁰ Conclusions from the meeting of the operational staff of the FMV from 25 October 1989 and accompanying information “The Security Situation in the CSSR in the period before 28 October” were again sent out to the interested parties by teleprinter.

²¹ On the right-hand side is a stamp as is the case with Doc. 45; index number 10937, received at 10:40 AM and sent at 3:30 PM with entries stamped with the date “20 November 1989.”

²² Jan Opletal was a university student killed during anti-Nazi demonstrations in 1939. His funeral on 15

November was attended by thousands and ended in a large demonstration. As a result, Nazi officials closed all universities on 17 November and executed leaders of the student movement.

²³ An honorary national cemetery and resting place for important Czech national figures.

²⁴ Peace-keeping units on the basis of DMM (Defense Mobilization Measures) [code-named] “bridges” also closed bridges crossing the Vltava.

²⁵ Vysoká Škola Ekonomická—Economic University.

Tiananmen Spill-Over?

[In the volatile situation in East Germany in the summer of 1989, the bloody suppression of the peaceful student demonstrations in Beijing¹ on 3-4 June fueled the unrest within the G[erman] D[emocratic] R[epublic], much to the concern of the ruling Socialist Unity Party (SED). Fearing a spill-over from the events in Beijing, news of which quickly reached the GDR population through reports in Western media, secret police chief Erich Mielke sounded the alarm and put his organization on alert, hoping to forestall any visible unrest within the country. In his instructions to the MfS network throughout the GDR, published below, Mielke approvingly notes the Chinese government measures—raising the specter of a “Chinese solution” to the growing unrest in the GDR.—Christian F. Ostermann]

Secret Instructions by State Security (MfS) Chief Erich Mielke to Heads of all State Security Units, 10 June 1989

Mielke to Heads of Service Units
VVS [Vertrauliche Verschlusssache]-Nr. 0008,
MfS-No.45/89

Berlin, 10 June 1989

The denunciation campaign of Western media in connection with the recent developments in the P[eo]ple’s R[epublic] of C[hina], in particular the resolute measures in suppression of the counterrevolutionary unrest in Beijing have led to an increase in provocative and pointed actions of negative enemy forces against the measures of the Chinese party and state leadership as well as against PRC institutions and citizens in the GDR. In particular, provocative gatherings, the spreading of appeals and propagandistic writings as well as anonymous phone calls threatening provocations have occurred. Mindful of the further developments of the political situation in the PRC, increased vigilance is necessary.

The heads of responsible service units have to assure that:

- all signs of such negative enemy activities and their instigators are immediately checked and clarified;
- any provocative actions against the PR China, in particular its embassy in the GDR, its privileged personnel, other official representations and their staff as well as all other PRC citizens are preempted and, respectively, effectively suppressed;
- above all any form of spreading of appeals to such activities and of propagandistic writings against the policy of the PR [of] China are prevented by appropriate means;
- persons who intend to undertake such activities are prevented from reaching the GDR capital by appropriate means;
- the responsible agencies in line with the determination of my 9 June 1989 communication (VVS 44/89) are informed about the participants in such activities, their behavior, and the measures introduced against them;
- all indications of such planned activities as well as the political-operative measures designed to prevent them preemptively are communicated without delay to the responsible service units. Information on operationally particularly significant measures are to be passed to me immediately.

Mielke
Army General

[Source: State Security archives; reprinted in German in Armin Mitter/Stefan Woll, Ich liebe Euch doch alle! Orders and Situation Reports of the MfS, January to November 1989 (Berlin: BasisDruck, 1990), p. 78.

Translated by Christian F. Ostermann]

¹ See Zhang Liang, comp., Andrew Nathan and Perry Link, eds., *The Tiananmen Papers. The Chinese leadership’s decision to use force against their own people* (New York: Public Affairs, 2001).

“We Are the Opponents of Violence ... We Want to Live as Dignified and Free People”

**Civic Forum Documents,
1989**

DOCUMENT No. 1

The Civic Forum’s Exposition of its Position in Public Life with a Call for Nonviolence, Tolerance and Dialogue, Prague, 20 November 1989

The Civic Forum is not a political party, nor an organization which accepts members. It is an absolutely open society of people who feel themselves responsible for the positive resolution of the untenable political situation, wanting to unite the forces of all the honest and democratically-minded citizens—artists, students, workers and all people of good will. It was established spontaneously in the presence of all the groups which on Sunday, 11 November, took part in an independent social activity. We consider this representation of the people to be competent to negotiate with responsible political authorities. We are, therefore, after an objective plan of action, not violence. We do not want crudeness. We appeal to the members of the police, the army, the militia, to refuse brutality and repression of the will of the people. As long as in reality nobody was killed during the harsh intervention of uniformed units, we are all happy, but this does not mean that there did not occur massacres, injuries and bloodshed. Various wild rumors and willfully disseminated misinformation are multiplying. Let us not succumb to them! We ask all citizens to act responsibly, humanely, tolerantly and democratically. Let us lead our common goal, as much as it is in our power, to a good conclusion. Let us persist and let us not give up!

[Source: Informational Service #2, 21 November 1989, p.1. Published in Czech in Jiří Suk. Občanské Fórum. Institute for Contemporary History, Prague, 1989. Translated for CWIHP by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 2

The Civic Forum’s Position on the Negotiations of its Representatives with Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec, Prague, 21 November 1989

Part of today’s declaration of the government of the CSSR also [contained] information on the meeting of

Prime Minister [Ladislav] Adamec¹ with the representatives of the Civic Forum [CF].

The government understood the negotiations to be the beginning of a dialogue and interpreted them in the sense that even this event is testimony to the government’s effort to decisively resolve the rising crisis situation. According to the government, this dismisses the reasons for the organization of strikes and demonstrations.

We proclaim: The meeting between the CF’s representatives and L. Adamec was merely of an informational character, and therefore could not in any way influence our positions. The CF unequivocally supports the strikes of the students, theater artists, sculptors and painters, and supports the call for a general strike on 27 November as well.

We want to contribute to the eventual dialogue by sharing the responsibility of establishing committees which would represent the broadest public and would initiate negotiations on four of the demands of the fundamental declaration of the Civic Forum.²

Prague, 21 November 1989.

[Source: Ústav pro sodobé dějiny (ÚSD), Akademie věd České republiky (AV ČR), Koordinační centrum Občanského fóra (KC OF) Archive, file Dokumenty OF—copy of the computer print. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 3

Letter from the Civic Forum to US President George Bush and USSR General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, 21 November 1989

Dear Sirs!

On 19 November 1989, the Civic Forum, which feels itself responsible to act as the mouthpiece of the Czechoslovak public, was established in Prague. In a demonstration by the Prague populace, attended by hundreds of thousands of people on Wenceslas Square, the Civic Forum gained a consensus of opinion and therefore is turning to you also in the name of these people.

The Soviet government has announced a policy of non-involvement in connection with the democratic

movements in Eastern Europe. We must warn you that in the case of Czechoslovakia, this policy in reality means support for the political leadership which was installed in the year 1968 by forceful intervention, and which, during the course of twenty years of rule, has absolutely discredited itself. One of the demands of the mass demonstration on 21 November was precisely the removal of these politicians from the political scene.

Dear Sirs, we are of the opinion that the past intervention into Czechoslovak internal events in the year 1968 should be condemned and decried as an unlawful encroachment. The silence surrounding the intervention in August de facto means entanglement into Czechoslovak internal conditions. We besiege you to pay attention to this question during your negotiations; it is not only important for Czechoslovakia these days, but also for all of Europe.

The Civic Forum
In Prague on 21 November 1989

[Source: Informational Service #2, 21 November 1989, p.1. Published in Czech in Jiří Suk. Občanské Fórum. Institute for Contemporary History, Prague, 1989. Translated for CWHIP by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 4
The Declaration of Civic Forum
Representative Václav Havel on
Wenceslas Square, Prague,
23 November 1989, 4 p.m.

The Declaration of The Civic Forum

After twenty years Czechoslovakia once again finds itself at a historical intersection thanks to the people's movement, to which all generations and segments of the population and the majority of the still existing social organizations are quickly adding themselves. This movement is a movement of both of our nations. Its mouthpiece has spontaneously become the Civic Forum, which today is the real representative of the will of the people. Its natural component has become the well-organized student movement, which, through its protest demonstration, gave us the impulse for dramatic social movement. Within it work all the current independent initiatives, artistic unions headed by the theater—the first to be in solidarity with the students—and the renewed currents in the National Front, including many former and current members of the CPCz. The Catholic Church supported the Civic Forum through the words of the cardinal, and other churches in Czechoslovakia. Anyone who agrees with its demands is joining, and may join, the Civic Forum.

The Civic Forum is prepared to secure a dialogue between the public and the present leadership immediately and has at its disposal qualified forces [from] all areas of society, capable of carrying out a free and objective dialogue about real paths toward a change in the political and economic conditions in our country.

The situation is open now, there are many opportunities before us, and we have only two certainties.

The first is the certainty that there is no return to the previous totalitarian system of government, which led our country to the brink of an absolute spiritual, moral, political, economic and ecological crisis.

Our second certainty is that we want to live in a free, democratic and prosperous Czechoslovakia, which must return to Europe, and that we will never abandon this ideal, no matter what transpires in these next few days.

The Civic Forum calls on all citizens of Czechoslovakia to support its fundamental demands by the demonstration of a general strike declared for Monday, 27 November 1989, at noon. Whether our country sets out in a peaceful way on the road to a democratic social order, or whether an isolated group of Stalinists, who want at any price to preserve their power and their privileges disguised as empty phrases about reconstruction will conquer, may depend upon the success of this strike.

We challenge the leadership of this country to grasp the gravity of this situation, rid themselves of compromised individuals and prevent all eventual efforts for a violent revolution.

We call on all the members of the ruling party to join the citizenry and respect its will.

We challenge all the members of the People's Militias to not come out violently against their comrade workers and thus spit upon all the traditions of worker solidarity.

We challenge all the members of the Police to realize that they are first and foremost human beings and citizens of this country and only second subordinate to their superiors.

We challenge the Czechoslovak People's Army to stand on the side of the people and, if necessary, to come out in its defense for the first time.

We call on the public and the governments of all countries to realize that our homeland is from time immemorial the place where European and world confrontations have begun and ended, and that in our country it is not only its fate which is at stake, but the future of all of Europe. We therefore demand that they support in every way the people's movement and the Civic Forum.

We are opponents of violence; we do not want revenge; we want to live as dignified and free people, who have the right to speak for the fate of their homeland and who also think of future generations.

The Civic Forum
23 November 1989

[Source: ÚSD AV ČR, KC OF Archive, file Dokumenty OF—copy of the computer print. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 5
Draft Thesis of the Program of
the Civic Forum,
Prague, 24 November 1989

Program of the Civic Forum
(First draft thesis, 24 November 1989)

Czechoslovak society is going through a deep crisis. This crisis is displayed primarily:

1. In the disregard of several human rights, especially the right of free assembly and association, the right of free expression of opinion, and the right to partake in the decisions of public affairs.
2. In the continuing disillusionment of society, the unsteadiness of moral values, the erosion of the meaning of truth and knowledge, education and rationality, dialogue and tolerance, that is values which have been in European culture for thousands of years; this process is accompanied by actual or internal emigration, corruption, orientation towards consumerism and other undesirable phenomena.
3. In the emptiness of a great part of official culture.
4. In the decrease in the level of culture and education, which is especially pronounced when compared internationally.
5. In the rapidly worsening quality of the environment, connected to the devastation of natural resources, the contamination of drinking water and comestibles by parasitic, harmful substances; through this the most basic human right, the right to life, is violated.
6. In the worsening state of health of the Czechoslovak population and the endangerment of its ability to reproduce.
7. In the backwardness of Czechoslovak science in many scientific fields and applied areas.
8. In the decline of the total innovational activity in the society.
9. In the decreasing effectiveness of the Czechoslovak economy and the growth of foreign and especially internal debt.
10. In the rising alienation between individual and social groups; the alienation between ordinary citizens and the ruling group is reaching Kafkaesque proportions.
11. In the abuse of the means of force against the citizens, which we were reminded of once again with the intervention of “disciplinary forces” on 17

November 1989, in Prague.

12. In the worsening of the overall position of Czechoslovakia in the international community.

All these introduced, deeply disturbing phenomena bear witness to the impairment of the ability of our society to control effectively our development; [they] are testimonies to the unsuitable current political and economic system. In the society almost all corrective feedback, which is essential for effective reaction to the fast-changing internal and external conditions, has been impaired. For long decades, the simple principle of the symmetry between authority and responsibility has not been respected: those in the state who attribute every executive authority to themselves, do not feel themselves to be responsible for the effected and missed decisions and refuse to settle accounts with the nation for their actions. All three fundamental powers of the state: legislative power, executive and judicial (regulatory), have come into the hands of a narrow ruling group, composed almost exclusively of CPCz members. This struck at the very foundations of a lawful state. The ruling group does not respect its own laws and international agreements not only in the area of human rights, but not even in other, wholly non-political spheres—an example of this can be the systematic violation of laws on environmental protection.

The practice of the nomenclature of the CPCz, consisting of the placement of leading workers in all important places, creates a vassal system which cripples the entire society. The citizens were thus degraded to the position of a common mob, who are denied basic political rights.

The directive system of the central leadership of the national economy has reached the limits of its potential. The promised reconstruction of the economic mechanism is without results and proceeds slowly. It is not accompanied by political changes, which undermines its effectiveness. A solution to these problems cannot be the simple exchange of seats in the positions of power or the resignation of several of the most compromised politicians from public life. It is necessary to make fundamental, effective and lasting changes in the political and economic system of our society. The basis of this must be newly created or renewed democratic institutions, which would enable real—not just proclaimed—citizen participation in the management of public affairs and simultaneously establish an effective system to prevent the abuse of political and economic power. A condition for this is the creation of such a climate in the society that would provide equal opportunities to all existing political parties and newly established political groups to prepare and hold free elections with independent candidate lists. A self-evident condition is the resignation of the CPCz from its constitutionally ensured leading role in our society and in its monopoly of the control of public media.

In the national economy we consider it essential to support the activity and productivity of the widest strata of

society through the quick development of a market economy during the demonopolization of our economy, and by a significant increase in the responsibility of the state institutions for the regulation of economic processes, e.g., in the areas of healthcare and social welfare, science, education, culture and care of the environment. A key problem is the reevaluation of proprietary relations in the society.

We are pressing for our country to once again take its honorable place in Europe and in the world. We are not asking for change in Czechoslovakia's current membership status in the COMECON and Warsaw Pact. We are assuming that the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact countries which participated in the military invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 will condemn this intervention, by which the indispensable reform process of socialist countries was pushed back for decades.

[Source: ÚSD AV ČR, KC OF Archive, file OF Documents—copy of the computer print A4, 2 p. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 6
The Position of the Civic Forum
and Public Against Violence Toward
the Negotiations with Czechoslovak
Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec, Prague,
28 November 1989, 4 p.m.

The CF believes that the negotiations with the prime minister of the federal government, Mr. Ladislav Adamec, and his associates authorizes it to provide the public with this information and these proposals:

1. The Prime Minister promised the delegation of the CF and PAV [Public Against Violence] that he would form a new government by 3 December 1989.

2. The Prime Minister announced to the delegation of the CF and PAV that tomorrow the CSSR government will present the Federal Assembly with a proposal for a constitutional law by which the articles legally establishing the leading role of the CPCz and Marxism-Leninism as the state ideology will be expunged.

3. The Prime Minister promised the CF and PAV delegation that he would immediately discuss with the Prague National Committee the issue of allotting the CF rooms, and discuss with other institutions the issue of giving the CF and PAV access to the media, including creating conditions for the publication of their own journals.

4. The Prime Minister informed the CF and PAV delegation that he had already submitted to the President

of the republic a proposal for amnesty for political prisoners, [and] a list that the CF submitted to the Prime Minister during the previous meeting. The CF will challenge the president of the republic to accommodate this proposal at the latest by 10 December 1989, which is Human Right's Day. The Civic Forum is receiving information that this list was not complete and therefore the CF and PAV are reserving the right to complete it.

5. The CF gratefully received the news from Dr. Kučera, the deputy chairman of the Federal Assembly [FA], that tomorrow at the meeting of the FA he will propose the creation of a special committee for the investigation of the brutal intervention against the peaceful demonstration of Prague students on 17 November 1989. CF representatives, especially students, will be invited to work on this committee.

6. The CF and PAV delegation requested that the new government publish the directives of its program declaration as soon as possible, in which it should be obvious that the government is prepared to create legal guarantees for securing free elections, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of speech and press, for the elimination of the state control over the church, for the amendment of the National Defense Act and others. It is further necessary to ensure the liquidation of the People's Militia and consider the question of the future existence of political party organizations in all workplaces. The CF and PAV delegation also requested that the government turn its declaration into visible deeds as soon as possible. The delegation let the federal prime minister know that, should the public not be satisfied with the programmatic declaration of the government and with its implementation, then at the end of the year the CF and PAV will demand that the prime minister resign and that the president of the Republic nominate a new prime minister suggested by the CF and PAV, if the President should deem it necessary.

7. On 29 November 1989, CF and PAV will demand in writing that the President of the Republic, Dr. Gustav Husák, step down by 10 December 1989.

8. The CF and PAV delegation suggested to the Prime Minister that the government of the CSSR submit to the Federal Assembly a proposal for a constitutional law by which the representatives of the Federal Assembly, the Czech National Council and the Slovak National Council and the national committees of all degrees who have broken their oath as representatives and ignored the will and interest of the people, will be recalled from their functions. The CF and PAV will propose a system of supplementary elections in the nearest future.

9. The CF challenges the government and the Federal Assembly to immediately condemn the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops, and the Federal Assembly to request the Highest Soviet of the USSR and the representative organs of the Bulgarian People's Republic and the German Democratic Republic to declare the intervention by the armies of five Warsaw

Pact countries in Czechoslovakia a violation of the norms of international law and the Warsaw Pact itself, because the intervention occurred without the knowledge or agreement of the highest state organs of Czechoslovakia.

10. The CF believes that this outcome justifies it in challenging every citizen to continue working in peace while in a state of readiness to strike. Strike committees can transform themselves into civic forums, but can also work along side of them. Students and theater workers will decide themselves whether they will end their strike today or tomorrow, or whether to continue it. When they decide, however, the CF will support their position. The CF and PAV challenge the public to assess itself the results of these negotiations and to make their opinion known to the CF and PAV by all accessible means.

The Civic Forum and Public Against Violence
28 November 1989 at 4 p.m.

[Source: ÚSD AV ČR, KC OF Archive, file OF Documents—typescript copy A4, 1 p. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 7

Internal Organization of the Civic Forum, 28 November 1989

What We Are

The Civic Forum is a medium for the renewal of genuine civic positions and life, forgotten more than forty years ago. The following text therefore does not contain any statutes, it only wants to be a concise guideline for creating local civic forums.

The internal organization of Civic Forums:

1. The Civic Forum (further only CF) is a spontaneously created citizen movement, which is united by the effort to find positive outcomes from the current crisis in our society. No one is excluded from this movement who agrees with the program directives of the CF, published on 26 November 1989 and who especially refuses the further continuation of a political system consisting of one ruling party. We consider the basic goal of the CF to be the complete opening of an environment for the creation of political pluralism and for the organization of free elections in our country.

2. It is possible to create a local CF anywhere based on regions, professions or interests by citizens, and not institutions. We recommend that membership in the CF be established by signing the charter of the local CF organizations; we further recommend that an informal coordinating group be established to which the citizens

could turn, and that its representatives be elected.

3. Relations between the Coordinating Center and the local CFs:

a) The CF Coordinating Center and the local CF constitute a unit joined solely by the active civic attitude of its members. The Civic Forum does not have a complicated hierarchy, only a horizontal net with every local Civic Forum, connected to one coordinating center;

b) The Coordinating Center is just an informational and organizational center, and it is in no way an administrative center; its task is to collect information from local CFs, exchange it and inform [all local CFs] about past and future activities. All local Civic Forums operate completely independently on the local level;

c) The Coordinating Center represents the Civic Forum in negotiations with central state and international institutions, mostly on the basis of suggestions and recommendations from the local CF.

4. The function of the informational center of the CF:

a) In order to secure informational links, it is necessary to submit in writing to the Coordination Center these basic details about the local CF: business, region or interest group where the CF was created, precise address, telephone number, names of the representatives, number of members (rough estimate at least). These data will be entered on file centrally;

b) Contact with the Coordinating Center—for a period of three weeks starting on 28 November 1989, the record-keeping, collection of information and consulting services of the CF will be located at: Špálova galery, Národní Třída 30, 110 00 Praha 1, tel. 268366, 265132, 267529. The new address and telephone line of the Coordinating Center will be released promptly. The post office box of the CF: 632, pošta 111 21, Praha 1, Politických věz 4, Communications Professional Training Center entrance. CF account 2346-021, SB S branch Praha 2, 110 01 Praha 1, Václavské náměstí 42;

c) Transfer and exchange of information between individual local CFs and the Coordinating Center will be ensured in the form of an informational bulletin, which will be sent out by the Coordinating Center by means of mass communications or exceptionally by telephone.

5. The orientation of the activity of the local CF:

The point of the activity of the local CF is the activation of civic behavior of its own free will and discussion in political and everyday life. Therefore the Coordinating Center can not and does not want to hand down any orders and restrictions, it solely provides suggestions and recommendations.

6. We believe that the local CFs should concern themselves very soon with these areas of activity:

- a) Local CFs should specify and define the opinions of citizens in the broad democratic discussion. The discussion should lead to political differentiation, which is an indispensable prerequisite for a pluralistic democratic political system;
- b) Local Civic Forums can pursue solutions to local problems, which are not satisfactorily dealt with by the current social structures. Local CFs can thus contribute to the creation of civic home rule or to the transformation of the institutional bureaucratic apparatus into a democratic one;
- c) Local CFs can prepare strikes, demonstrations and other activities supporting their demands, even the demands of the whole Civic Forum if it should be necessary. In this sense, the local CFs are a continuation of the strike committees until all the demands of the CF have been met.
- d) Local CFs should support all citizens in all areas where relations with the current undemocratic structures results in violations of civic rights in the broadest sense of the word. Local CFs are therefore the means for civic self-defense.

Supplement solely for consultative workers

Legally the local CF is a free coalition of citizens, it is not a legal subject and in this way does not have any rights or responsibilities. The Civic Forum as a free coalition of citizens has the same rights as an individual citizen. If the local CFs should deal with money, it is useful to keep it in a safe and enter the contributions and withdrawals into the account book and elect a treasurer and auditor. It is useful to provide monetary gifts over 3,000 Kcs in the form of a deposit book.

The Civic Forum

Prague, 28 November 1989

[Source: ÚSD AV ČR, KC OF Archive, file OF Documents—typescript copy A4, 3 p. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]



DOCUMENT No. 8
Instructions of the Coordinating Center
of the Civic Forum for the Local Forums
with a Recommendation for Policy
Toward the Communists,
Prague, 29 November 1989

In the last two days information is coming from individual Civic Forums in the regions and especially in the factories and workplaces about communists becoming members, sometimes with intent to control them. We are

democrats and therefore we can not prohibit our fellow citizens, without regard to their party affiliation, from joining and participating in the new structures of the civic movement. It is necessary, however, for all who work in them to be honest followers of our movement, the basic goal of which is, as introduced in the declaration on the internal organization of the CF from 28 November, “the complete opening of an environment for the creation of political pluralism and for the organization of free elections in our country.” A person whose actions are in blatant contradiction with efforts to create a democratic [society] while fully respecting human rights does not belong here, and it is necessary to expel him from the Civic Forum. This without regard to his party affiliation. Such an expulsion is especially urgent in those instances where there is a larger group of opponents of democracy [than honest members] in the forum. If there is a majority of them anywhere, it is necessary for the followers of the civic movement to leave the forum, found a new forum, and release a statement about their action. The opponents of democracy are in the minority, let us not let them rule and frighten us! In order to avoid such conflicts, we must be careful when accepting new Civic Forum members and in particular members of its committees, commissions *et. al.*, especially in those cases when CPCz members are applying for work. It is unacceptable for any kind of group within the CF (for example, CPCz members, but also others) to assert their so-called party discipline, according to which all the members of this group are bound to a common plan of action, including those who would otherwise disagree with the plan.

The existence of various political and social groups, including communist ones, their activity and their influence over public opinion is, on the contrary, very demanding outside of the framework of the forums and certainly should not develop into discrimination against any group during speeches at public gatherings, in workers’ and local presses etc.

We can only build democracy by democratic means!

In some establishments and places, civic activities are coming up against refusals to negotiate with Forum representatives by the organs of state power, national committees, business managements etc. It usually occurs where the forums have not yet gained greater support from fellow citizens or co-workers. Only one thing will help in this situation: turn to the citizens and factory workers, inform them of your activity and challenge them to take part in it. If you will be many, no chairman of a national committee or factory director will refuse to negotiate with you.

[Source: ÚSD AV ČR, KC OF Archive, file OF Documents—typescript copy A4, 1 p. Translated by Caroline Kovtun.]

¹Ladislav Adamec was a member of the Central Committee, Prime Minister of the Czech Federal government in 1987 and Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia in 1988. A moderate communist economic reformer,

Adamec's proposed (3 December) changes to form a new government were not accepted by the the non-communist opposition. He withdrew from public life in 1990.

COLD WAR HISTORY

*A new international history journal
from Frank Cass Publishers*

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

We are pleased to announce that Cold War History, a new academic journal, will be launched by Frank Cass in 2000. The journal aims at publishing articles that will stimulate new research and new interpretations of the Cold War. With the end of the Cold War in 1989/91, and also with the gradual opening of the archives in the former Soviet Union, East-Central Europe, and in China, studies of the Cold War have now achieved an academic status in their own right.

The new journal is intended to re-examine past interpretations and approaches, and to add new research findings in the field. The aim of the editors is to move away from the view of Cold War studies as centered on the bilateral Soviet-American diplomatic relationship, as this approach is much too narrow to cover the new research which has been undertaken by scholars in the 1990s and which will be undertaken in the new century. The journal will be interested in new perspectives of the Cold War as seen from Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America as well as a critical analysis of the ideologies, alliances, security and intelligence issues, economy and trade, human rights, and cultures and beliefs that affected, or were influenced by the Cold War.

For the initial issues, examinations of how the new evidence from the Eastern bloc has changed our understanding of the Cold War will be particularly welcome. A re-appraisal of major aspects of international history during the Cold War, including nuclear deterrence, disarmament and rearmament, the perception of the Soviet and US threats, the German question, European integration, neutrality, and non-alignment movement in the Third World will be most welcome.

The editors believe that the new journal will serve both as an academic forum for deepening an understanding of the recent past, and as a means of investigating methods of achieving peace in the international community.

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The Last Days of a Dictator

By Mircea Munteanu

To those interested in the history of contemporary Eastern Europe, the past ten years offered a great opportunity to analyze the rise, establishment and fall of communist governments. The ability to study documents from both Western and the former Communist-world archives has allowed for the formation of better theories and a more complete understanding of the history and inner-workings of the dictatorships controlling so many lives for more than half a century.

The following document, excerpted from Șerban Săndulescu's book *December '89: The Coup D'Etat Confiscated the Romanian Revolution*,¹ contains the Romanian minutes of the conversation between Nicolae Ceaușescu and Mikhail Gorbachev on 4 December 1989, only 12 days before the start of the Romanian Revolution and 20 days before the Romanian dictator's execution. The document not only gives historians a glimpse into the last days of what has been called the last Romanian "absolutist monarchy," but also provides a window into the Kremlin's attitude towards the situation in Romania on the eve of the December 1989 events.

The break in the relationship between Ceaușescu and the Kremlin leadership, created purposely by Ceaușescu over the years, by the late 1980s had effectively isolated Romania from the reforms instituted in the Soviet Union by Gorbachev. By December 1989—following the transition from power of the Communist Parties in Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the toppling of Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov—the bankruptcy of the communist ideology in Eastern Europe should have been clear to anyone, including Ceaușescu. The minutes of the conversation between Gorbachev and the Romanian leader, however, make clear is that Ceaușescu was so far removed from reality that he believed it possible to overturn the "velvet revolutions" that had taken place in the previous months. Advocating military intervention across the East Bloc, Ceaușescu, the "defender" of Czechoslovak independence in 1968,² had come full circle by 1989.

But intervention was out of the question. Fortified in his confidence in US President George Bush following the 2-3 December 1989 Malta summit, Gorbachev rejected the idea of military intervention. Later, the Soviet government would outright reject the possibility that Soviet troops be used on the behalf of the Romanian dictator, or the revolutionary forces.³ Following the Romanian coup d'état, Washington made clear that it no longer viewed Soviet actions in Eastern Europe as necessarily a cause of instability. The US-Soviet talks, along with Gorbachev's unwillingness to use force to maintain communist regimes, proved that the Brezhnev Doctrine was dead.⁴

Illustrative of the new international situation, Gorbachev, throughout the conversation with Ceaușescu, never alludes to the meeting with Bush and to any decisions that were taken in Malta regarding the future of Communism in Europe.

It is also interesting to note that throughout the discussions between Gorbachev and Ceaușescu, the later never suggested that he needed either help from Soviet troops or Soviet support for himself. He seemed more concerned about remaining the only communist dictator in power in the region, seemingly unconcerned as to how the wave of revolutions might effect his country. Hence, the revolution in Timișoara, Cluj, Bucharest, and all other major Romanian cities in December 1989 surprised both Ceaușescu and, it seems, the communist reformers that took over power on 22 December without much resistance from the old regime. Events unfolded so fast that even today it is still unclear what exactly happened between 22 and 25 December, from Ceaușescu's flight to his execution.

Romanian archival sources, especially concerning the dictator's last years, days and hours are scarce and documents are only selectively declassified. Despite availability of documents on Romania's involvement in certain Cold War crises, such as the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the 1968 Prague Spring,⁵ and on the early years of the *Securitate* secret police, the bulk of the records of the Romanian Communist Party and Ceaușescu's regime files remain classified. A full opening of the Romanian Archives would allow for a more complete history of the communist regime and a more complete history of the region.⁶



DOCUMENT

Minutes of the Meeting between Nicolae Ceaușescu, and Mikhail S. Gorbachev, Moscow, 4 December 1989

At the meeting were also present comrades Constantin Dăscălescu, Prime Minister of the of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania, and Nikolai I. Ryzhkov, President of the Council of Ministers of USSR.

M.S. Gorbachev:

- Comrade Ceaușescu, first and foremost I would like to congratulate you on behalf of the entire leadership of Soviet Union for the successful finalization of your

Congress.⁷ I believe that you are satisfied with the results of your Congress. Within Romanian society, among the Romanian communists, as our comrades have told me, the reaction to the decisions of the Congress has been a positive one.

From me as well as from the leadership of the Soviet Union, I would like to communicate, to you and to the entire Romanian party leadership, a friendly salute and good luck in bringing the decisions of the Congress to fruition.

N. Ceaușescu:

- I would like to thank you for your good wishes and, in turn, to express to you, in the name of our party leadership and me personally, a cordial salute to you and the Soviet leadership.

Of course, I am happy to have even this short meeting although there is need for a longer meeting.⁸

Gorbachev:

- Of course, we will try to find time for that as well.

Ceaușescu:

- There are a lot of issues to discuss.

Thank you for the good words regarding our Congress. It was a good Congress and there were a lot of good decisions taken during the Congress. Now we need to work on putting them into practice.

Gorbachev:

- Always, after a great event, especially after a Congress, we have to deal with a lot of obligations. This has always been that way.

[Here,] at home, the situation demands a great deal of attention. We already consider it sensitive. Our main preoccupation rests in shedding those elements that have impeded our development. Of course, we are committed to our political choice and we cannot agree with the idea that the path we have taken until now has been a path of mistakes and unfulfilled promises. This is a complex process and a change in the world as our revolution has been can not be appreciated only in "black and white," even if we are to judge it under large, historical criteria and we are not to exaggerate.

I believe that we can not admit, from the perspective of truth and morality, that the accomplishments of the previous generations are under-appreciated. They lived, sacrificed their health and even life, and though there have been dramas, they were happy. That is why we, through our *perestroika*, [hope] to accumulate all that has been good and open up prospects for the renewal and perfecting of our society. Of course, this process is complex. However, we hope for a successful end, though we know it will not be a quick one.

Ceaușescu:

- At our Congress we had a special passage about the Great October Socialist Revolution and about the great realizations of the Soviet people. What the Soviet people have accomplished cannot be forgotten.

Gorbachev:

- This [that there were no realizations] is one of those falsities, even more stupid than those that are usually being told.

Ceaușescu:

- Of course, in such a grandiose activity there have also been mistakes and abuses, but history only records that which assures advance.

I salute your position, Cde. Gorbachev, in regards with the necessity to show, with the backing of facts, what socialism has accomplished, because through that, the Soviet people will be mobilized in support of the new objectives. Yes, we need to constantly perfect the organization of society, the economy, all that stands at the basis of a closer path towards socialist ideals.

Gorbachev:

- I think this is a very consistent remark since we ourselves have been late in solving certain problems though they were ready to be solved.

Ceaușescu:

- I hope you realize that no matter what we shall do now, in ten years it will again be outdated if we do not always keep an eye out for what is new.

Gorbachev:

- Absolutely.

Ceaușescu:

- What is important is that we reach socialism so that we offer the people a better spiritual and material life.

Gorbachev:

- I will ask Comrade Stoica to translate for you the last article I wrote regarding the ideals of socialism and their relationship with *perestroika*. There I have talked about all those issues.

Ceaușescu:

- I have looked over it. I received an executive summary.

Gorbachev:

- It is hard to get the overall idea from summaries.

Ceaușescu:

- I'll think about it [the article] and I'll give you an answer.

Gorbachev:

- Very well.

Ceaușescu:

- This is my idea: two delegations, one from each of our parties—if we could find others it would be great but now it might be harder—to elaborate a declaration regarding socialism and its prospects.

Gorbachev:

- I am not opposed to that.

Ceaușescu:

- I can assure you that a lot of parties are waiting for such a declaration and will certainly salute the fact that the Soviet Union participates in this issue.

Gorbachev:

- Excellent.

Ceaușescu:

- Of course, not the old forms—we have criticized them, you remember—but, let's face it, the entire world pays a great deal of attention to the actions of the Soviet Union. I am, of course, referring to the communist movements and the progressive forces.

Gorbachev:

- Fine, let's give this task to the ideological and international sections [of the Central Committee] and let them begin work, most likely in the scientific field at first and maybe after that in the political field.

Ceaușescu:

- After that we can look at it together.

Since we are discussing such issues, let us begin to discuss the possibility of a congress of the Communist and Workers Parties. Of course, I do not want to take a decision right this minute, but a lot of parties have expressed interest in such an event. As a matter of fact, one of the decisions of the congress has been that [the Romanian Communist Party] will pursue this idea. We could form an exploratory committee.

Gorbachev:

- I have a different idea.

Ceaușescu:

- They should start working on it.

Gorbachev:

- I am inclined to agree more with the idea you proposed in your letter. However, we in the socialist countries should have a debate regarding this issue. How could we establish a larger meeting without first establishing our position regarding the problems we face?

Ceaușescu:

- This will take a long time to prepare for. Even the creation of a group will have a positive influence on the socialist countries. You should know that no one desires a conference where they say this and that. Thus, it would be great if an exploratory group would be formed and if they would start working on this issue. This could be a great help for the socialist countries.

Gorbachev:

- We are of the following opinion: the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party should run an opinion poll since this is not a very good time to have a conference. There was a time when there was a friendly attitude regarding such a debate, but after that a process of renewal about the role of the party began and now there is a different desire taking shape: everybody wants to clean his own house.

Ceaușescu:

- I want to state openly that, for a time, we ourselves have been against such conferences.

Gorbachev:

- Now others are opposed.

Ceaușescu:

- But we have received requests from many parties and, since this is such a dire time for the communist

movement, we have a responsibility to do something even if a small number of parties might show up.

Do you know what Lenin said in 1903?

Gorbachev:

- No, I do not.

Ceaușescu:

- No matter how few we are, we must raise the flag. The people need to see that we are taking action to extend the influence of socialism and the revolutionary movement.

Gorbachev:

- I was under the impression that what we do regarding the renewal of socialism does raise the interest of others in the development of socialism.

Ceaușescu:

- We do not have the time to discuss this. There are some good things, there are a few things that are not as good, and if we are to discuss this right now we would need a great deal of time. There are some good things.

Gorbachev:

- Yes, we only have a short time. But we should think about this.

Ceaușescu:

- I am against creating such an exploratory committee without the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev:

- Maybe it would be better like that.

Ceaușescu:

- I don't think that would be a good idea.

Gorbachev:

- The concept of equal rights [among the parties] suggests that.

Ceaușescu:

- This is so, but I think that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union must not be left out of such a debate. However, as I mentioned before, we need not decide this issue right now. I do hope that you will think about this problem.

Gorbachev:

- We will consider it and give you an answer.

Ceaușescu:

- This is an actual problem and we must have an answer. There are many such problems today and the people feel the need to receive answers. After all, the people think that if the social-democrats, the liberals, the christian-democrats can all meet...

Gorbachev:

- The conservatives...

Ceaușescu:

- The conservatives, yes... Then why can not the communist parties meet as well?

Gorbachev:

- Because, some time ago, Cdes. Ceaușescu and [Italian Communist leader Enrico] Berlinguer⁹ were against that.

Ceaușescu:

- We were against a certain format... and history proved us right.

Gorbachev:

- I was against it myself, but there was not much I could do at the time.

Ceaușescu:

- Then why don't we work out a common declaration and, if other parties will agree with it, so much the better. I understand you agreed with this point.

Gorbachev:

- We will think about it and we will give you an answer.

Ceaușescu:

- Very well.

Should we start discussing bilateral issues now? Or would you rather finish up the more general problems first. We are very preoccupied about what is going on with a few European socialist countries. We understand the drive to perfect, to renew, but I do not want to discuss this right now. The format of this renewal places in grave danger not just socialism in the respective countries but also the very existence of the communist parties there. If we allow this flow of events, a dire situation will develop.

In any case, one can not say that socialism did not accomplish anything in those countries. I believe that the Soviet Union, and I am referring primarily to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, could have a certain role—not by the force of the military—to help produce a better orientation. You were speaking today about a better orientation for those parties and countries.

Of course, a meeting between the socialist countries and our parties could help, but we have to think hard about the actions taking place in some countries.

Gorbachev:

- Here we need to ask how we all could act and more importantly how they should act.

Who prevented Czechoslovakia and the East Germany—countries that had a high level of economic development and high living standards—from beginning in time the process of modernization and [from] taking into account the changes that began to take shape in the development of society? If they would have done this at the right time, today's events would be different. We too, in the Soviet Union. If we would have taken care of the modernization of the technology and of economic development at the right time, there would be a different approach today. There was a lot of talk at the time, in meetings and during congresses, about the technological and scientific revolutions, about the development of our country. Yet in the end, all was set aside. Right now we have a report in the Central Committee about the technological and scientific revolution from 1973, and, look, 15 years later, we are just beginning to do what needed to be done then. I believe that we have lost a lot of our prestige because we have not taken direct action regarding those problems at the right time.

Ceaușescu:

- This is true.

Gorbachev:

- Whether or not we like the methods employed by Comrade Ceaușescu, we know that a lot has been done in Romania, and, in an objective manner, all are free to chose their own methods to accomplish progress and the construction of socialism. That's about it.

Look at the situation in which our common friend, Comrade [deposed East German leader Erich] Honecker is today. We have a great deal of mutual sympathy, but as of late, he did not want to speak with me, and I did not have a chance to speak with him. After all, I told him: Comrade Honecker, it is your job to decide, we will not decide for you, we do not force you to adhere to our decisions. As a matter of fact, I know that the both of you have criticized me...

Ceaușescu:

- No, we did not criticize you. On the contrary, we decided that we should meet more quickly and discuss what we could do to work better together.

Gorbachev:

- Sincerely speaking, I am very uncertain about the future of Comrade Honecker.

Ceaușescu:

- I am very sorry about this and that is why I even brought it to the attention of the public, something must be done, because this cannot be continued in this manner. That includes, of course, Comrade [deposed Bulgarian leader Todor] Zhivkov.

Gorbachev:

- I believe that [as far as] Cde. Zhivkov is concerned, the situation will be a lot more normal. I do not know what the situation is there [in Bulgaria]. Of course, over the years, a lot of things have accumulated. If there are no grievous abuses, I believe that the situation will come to a positive end. However, politics can not be done this way. We, at the leadership level, try to concentrate on political problems, not to decide who has done what. You know that there are always certain elements of society that will raise such problems. What can we do? You seem concerned about this, tell me, what can we do?

Ceaușescu:

- We could have a meeting and discuss possible solutions.

Gorbachev:

- In East Germany, they [the Communists] have already discussed it and have excluded them [the old leadership] from the party.

Ceaușescu:

- Yes, I saw that, but at this time, in East Germany there are already influences from outside at work, from the Federal Republic of Germany.

Gorbachev:

- [deposed Czechoslovak leader] Milos Jakeš is an old friend of mine. I told him: you have a great country, a well-trained population, well-educated and well-orga-

nized, you need to make the necessary changes faster, faster. Otherwise, you'll end up like us, having to solve your problems under the marching of boots. Jakeš listened to me and said: then we shall wait until others come to power in the Soviet Union. He waited, and this is what happened. Those are two countries with a great economic situation, rich countries, the richest countries, except for us, the richest of them all.

Ceaușescu:

- Beginning with 1968 we said: we need to develop our economy because no one will help us otherwise. We have taken steps in that direction.

Gorbachev:

- You have done a lot.

Ceaușescu:

- Until 1984 we did not import even one liter of gasoline from the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev:

- You had no need for it. You had your own gasoline. This is already clear now.

Ceaușescu:

- I just wanted to remind you.

Gorbachev:

- In any case, you have done a lot.

Ceaușescu:

- We have worked on and succeeded in bringing about the development of society and the economy. What you are doing now we have tried in the past. We created then the so-called private-holders and after a year we saw they are getting rich and we put a stop to the entire situation.

Gorbachev:

- Is this the future you see for us?

Ceaușescu:

- If some get rich by playing the market, that is not a future, you know that I'm sure. We have introduced the idea of economic self-rule, the new economic mechanism, and the leadership councils.

Gorbachev:

- As I listen to you I cannot help but think that in a year you have time to visit every administrative region in your country.

Ceaușescu:

- Maybe not quite all the regions.

Gorbachev:

- Tell me, though, in a country as big as ours, how could we rule in the same manner as you? We need to think of different methods.

Ceaușescu:

- We, too, have autonomy, but there is a difference between the autonomy of republics or even regions and the autonomy of factories. In any case, general direction and control from the center are necessary, even for the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev:

- Comrade Ceaușescu, we too desire a powerful center, but we think of it in a somewhat different manner.

Ceaușescu:

- This must be done. Of course, the republics must have a great deal of autonomy. So must the administrative regions. We are going as far as villages now. Yes, we are a small country...

Gorbachev:

- It's not small, it's medium size...

Ceaușescu:

- In any case, it is mistaken to allow the factories, even at the national level, to be outside central control. A lot of autonomy, a lot of rights, of course, but under a central guidance. About 20 years back, we gave them a lot of rights and, the first thing they did was to take loans and make all kinds of poor economic investments. Then we realized that we needed to control certain things so we took some of their liberties away. For Romania, \$11 billion debt in 1980 was a grave problem. As a matter of fact, I can tell you that in my discussions with Brezhev at the time, he told me: don't go and get yourself in debt. He told me that a number of times, but my mistake was that I gave too much discretion to the factories and all of them decided that if they have discretion then they can take credits from outside.

Gorbachev:

- It is the fault of the government!

Ceaușescu:

- Comrade Dăscălescu was not then prime-minister.

C. Dăscălescu

- I came when we began to pay.

Ceaușescu:

- After that we made some changes and we put a stop to that situation while paying back the debt.

Gorbachev:

- Of course, we do not want to create a bad situation, we want to succeed.

Ceaușescu:

- Everybody wants that. The Soviet Union has countless possibilities to overcome the problems you are experiencing now. You can become a model socialist economy.

Gorbachev:

- This is exactly what we want to do. Maybe those goals are too high, but those are our goals. Maybe our generation will not finish all the changes, but we could do a lot. What is most important now is that we establish the foundation for change, that we determine the future direction in a correct manner.

Ceaușescu:

- In a few years the Soviet Union could surpass its difficulties, mainly because it is an economic force.

Gorbachev:

- This is so.

Ceaușescu:

- You are criticizing research and development but you have a powerful sector in those fields.

Gorbachev:

- Absolutely.

Ceaușescu:

- The mistake was that you have placed too much emphasis on the military side of research and development and you have neglected the other aspects.

Gorbachev:

- I know.

Ceaușescu:

- I understand that the international situation necessitated such behavior. But you do have a powerful research and development sector, very powerful... it could solve easily any problem. And, after all, the other socialist countries, they might be smaller, but we can work together in this field.

Gorbachev:

- If we think about the countries in Europe, with all the problems they are experiencing, they are modern nations.

Ceaușescu:

- The changes that have taken place... they need to be stopped and we need to get under way.

Gorbachev:

- We have considered that as well. Maybe we have different methods, but this is the method employed by all others. What is important is that we strengthen socialism. The rest is the other's concern. There are different rhythms, different methods. Of course, we need to consider the differences between the republics, between their populations, between their economic development.

Ceaușescu:

- But it [the system] must be kept, [must be] improved.

Gorbachev:

- Not just kept, comrade Ceaușescu!

Ceaușescu:

- When I said that it must be kept it was understood that all that is necessary must be kept.

Gorbachev:

- Absolutely. Now, what are the bilateral problems you want to discuss.

Ceaușescu:

- First and foremost economic relations. Of course, the prime ministers have not had a chance to meet.

Gorbachev:

- Then they should meet.

N.I. Ryzhkov:

- We shall meet on 9 January 1990.

C. Dăscălescu:

- This would be a meeting within the confines of COMECON. We desire a bilateral meeting.

Gorbachev:

- You shall be alive on the 9 January. [*Veți mai trăi până la 9 ianuarie!*]

In any case, what are the problems that preoccupy you?

Ceaușescu:

- I am under the impression that we have discussed those problems already. The prime-ministers must meet and resolve the problems already discussed. We need to think about the next five year plan.

Gorbachev:

- I think that they have already discussed those problems.

Dăscălescu:

- Only for 1990.

Ceaușescu:

- Of course, there are topics of discussion. We consider that we could improve our collaboration. This is the foremost issue on our minds.

Of course, I don't think it necessary to get into issues that would require a lot of time. We can not debate now those topics but, if we agree on a time for the prime ministers to meet, that would be a good thing. In Romania, the time is now ripe.

Dăscălescu:

- I have written to comrade Ryzhkov on this topic, this is the forth letter this year.

Ryzhkov:

- The time was not right.

Ceaușescu:

- This might be true, but we need to make time for a meeting. At that time we could look at the issues of collaboration in the fields of production, specialization, even the realization of certain goals.

Why do I bring up those issues? Because, especially in the member countries of COMECON there are many debates and now, bilaterally, we could solve those problems much more easily. Some believe that the Americans will come and invest billions of dollars in their economy. Of course, they will reach certain conclusions. It is their business, but, until we clarify the many problems, we could solve many of them through a bilateral solution.

I don't want to get into it right now, I just wanted to mention this right now.

Gorbachev:

- Maybe the Romanian government could explain what it expects from the Soviet Union. Comrade Dăscălescu could write a letter listing the resources you would need.

Ceaușescu:

- I would like you to note that I do not desire to resolve the problem of raw materials only through the Soviet Union. We have worked closely with the developing countries and we desire to accentuate this trend. We can even give them some credits now. As a matter of fact, we have now to recover 2.7 billion dollars from those countries.

Gorbachev:

- In a year?

Ceaușescu:

- No, those are credits given by Romania to a few developing countries.

Dăscălescu:

- This year Romania has outstanding credits for almost 500 million dollars.

Ceașescu:

- We would like to participate actively in the development of those countries and, in turn, assure our access to raw materials.

Gorbachev:

- Then we should talk about our particular problems.

Ceașescu:

- From the Soviet Union we have imported 5 million tons of petrol, beginning in 1984, and from other countries we have imported 15 million tons. Thus we need not resolve this particular problem only with the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev:

- And how much do you extract from Romania?

Ceașescu:

- Only about 10 million tons since we no longer have reserves.

Gorbachev:

- But there was a time when you were mining about 22 million tons.

Ceașescu:

- It was closer to about 15 million tons, but that was some time ago. We no longer have reserves. We thought about going to 10,000 meters depth.

Gorbachev:

- Our extraction is also falling.

Ceașescu:

- There are a number of fields in which we could collaborate. For example, we could collaborate in the energy field, based on new technology.

Gorbachev:

- I would be interested in discussing the nature of this collaboration rather than simply trading goods.

Ceașescu:

- We, for example, import about 7 million tons of iron ore from the Soviet Union. From other countries we import about 12 million tons. As such, we do not desire to import raw materials only from the Soviet Union. We import coal from the United States..., some time ago we invested 100 million dollars there, so we own property there.

Gorbachev:

- There, the Japanese have a lot of property.

Ceașescu:

- The Japanese invest on a grand scale.

Thus, we want to discuss this collaboration because we want to participate. We were informed a few days ago that you would like to open two new exploratory sites in Lvov and Kharkov. We would like to participate, to collaborate with you in Mongolia. As a matter of fact, we have been discussing this for a long time since the Soviet Union is interested in investing there as well. We have

invested in coal in China. We do not want to ask for anything, we do not want aid from the Soviet Union, we want to collaborate.

Gorbachev:

- There can be no help from us... you need to help us.

Ceașescu:

- We would like to collaborate on economic principles—this is our intention.

Gorbachev:

- Comrade Dăscălescu should think about the proposals we have discussed.

Dăscălescu:

- I shall wait for comrade Ryzhkov in Romania.

Ryzhkov:

- I apologize, comrade Gorbachev. I will meet with comrade Dăscălescu and we shall discuss what problems we need to address in our bilateral relations, including the issues regarding the next five year plan. I am not against [this] and I assume we will talk about specialization and cooperation, in production and every other aspect, but I want to mention that, and this is not targeted at Romania, we will present a report on 15 December regarding our plans for the development of the economy. We have prepared the necessary documents and have distributed them to the deputies for debate.

When we prepared those documents, we began with the idea that we need to move from the exchange of goods, the barter system, towards regular commerce. This is why, on 9 January, when the meeting between the chiefs of governments will take place, we will bring this problem up. We know that many countries agree with us, many have suggested that we move from the barter system to world prices and payments in hard currency.

We understand that this can not be done over night. Maybe we will need to wait 1-2 years until we can switch over to this system. This does not mean however that we can not or will not negotiate long term deals, even in regard to bartering for goods, but we have no other solution in the long term. Neither for us, nor for the other countries, can [we] continue in this [old] system. This is why you should think about this yourself.

Ceașescu:

- I understand what you are saying. After all, we ourselves exchange goods for hard currency. We have chosen the convertible ruble as our currency of choice, but we do not barter. Of course, we seek to reach a balance of payments, but this takes place throughout the world. With the United States for example, we calculate the prices in dollars but exchange goods.

Gorbachev:

- If we think about moving to the world system, then we need to adopt the world's methods. Many countries, Czechoslovakia, Poland and even Bulgaria have brought up the idea that we need to move to world market prices and thus to commerce using hard currency.

Ceaușescu:

- That is very good. We consider that this problem must be discussed with due seriousness. For example, we and the Chinese deal in Swiss Francs.

Ryzhkov:

- So do we.

Ceaușescu:

- We do however make sure that there is a balance of payments—only the calculation of the value of trade is in hard currency. I do not believe that for the Soviet Union it will be acceptable to move from the ruble to the dollar. Of course, this is a problem for the Soviet Union to decide on.

Gorbachev:

- We desire that, in this whole process we also incorporate the redesign of our financial system and the system of prices, to try to quickly reach the convertibility of the ruble. The most important thing is to integrate ourselves in the world market, otherwise we have no basis of comparison.

Ceaușescu:

- This problem will need to be discussed, discussed for a long time.

Gorbachev:

- We will then propose this at the meeting, on 9 January, and we hope that by that time you will also have a position.

Ceaușescu:

- We do not consider this to be the most opportune time to make this move.

Gorbachev:

- Why?

Ryzhkov:

- 1990 will continue the same why but we expect to make this move in 1991.

Ceaușescu:

- It is not about 1990. I am thinking more about the next five years.

Gorbachev:

- Why?

Ceaușescu:

- Because this will not strengthen the economy of the socialist countries nor that of the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev:

- Why?

Ceaușescu:

- For us it is not a big deal to do such a thing. Even now, with China and the other countries we have about a 60 per cent exchange in hard currency.

Gorbachev:

- I will tell you this: this is not a short time plan. We must make this change, maybe we will end up in debt, but we must adopt this system. We must create the opportunity for the energy sector to earn hard currency and make investments. Today this is the least developed part of our economy, but it not only about the energy sector. In general, our industries must compete in the

world market and understand that they must make ends meet. How long can we continue to push them along?

Ceaușescu:

- It is not about pushing them forward, the economic activity must be planned on sound economic principles.

Gorbachev:

- Comrade Ceaușescu, it is easy to talk about it now, but in a few years—Comrade Ryzhkov suggests that it may take about 2 years—we can also use credits to take care of moments of transition. But we need to adopt the system right away.

Ryzhkov:

- We think that we need to get our economists with the Romanian economists and calculate the balance of payments if we are to move to the world system. It will be a complex system in any case.

Gorbachev:

- We have a lot to discuss both with respect to the method of restructuring but also regarding concrete issues.

Dăscălescu:

- What is concrete is that I expect Comrade Ryzhkov in Bucharest. We cannot discuss the balance of payments in Sofia.

Ryzhkov:

- I can not come before the meeting in Sofia. In the first trimester of the next year I could be there.

Dăscălescu:

- Let's say February then?

Ceaușescu:

- That remains to be decided among yourselves.

Gorbachev:

- Then Comrade Ceaușescu, we should continue to keep in touch. I am very glad that we have commenced an exchange of opinions. Sincerely speaking, I appreciate this at its face value.

Dăscălescu:

- I have a request for Comrade Ryzhkov, regarding natural gas.

Ceaușescu:

- The problem of natural gas is not one for the future, it regards the situation at this time.

Dăscălescu:

- For the past few days, something must have happened on your side, we are receiving 7 million cubic meters less a day. We were told that this will only last a few days. Could you please analyze this problem?

Gorbachev:

- This happens every year. Always something more.

Dăscălescu:

- It is not more, it is less.

Ceaușescu:

- What will we say about our bilateral meeting?

Gorbachev:

- You can issue a press release, we will issue a

press release. Here is a short text.

(the news release is read)

Ceaușescu:

- Maybe the part about the bilateral collaboration needs to be better developed. We can say that there has been an exchange of opinions regarding cooperation between our countries. We should make a separate paragraph about this thing.

Gorbachev:

- Very well, let's talk about the situation of our relationship and their prospects.

Ceaușescu:

- Very well.

[Source: Published in Șerban Săndulescu's, December '89. The Coup D'Etat Confiscated the Romanian Revolution (Bucharest: Omega Press Investment, 1996), pp. 283 - 298; Translated by Mircea Munteanu.]

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¹ Șerban Săndulescu, *December '89: The Coup D'Etat Confiscated the Romanian Revolution* (Bucharest: Omega Press Investment, 1996)

² Ceaușescu, (joined by the PCR CC) was the only Warsaw Pact leader that opposed the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia. See *Scrisoare de răspuns adresată Biroului Politic al Comitetului Central al PCUS de către Comitetul Executiv al CC al PCR*, 26 August 1968

[Response letter of the Executive Bureau of the Central Committee of the PCR addressed to the Politburo of the CPSU, 26 August 1968], CC PCR Archives, State Archives, Bucharest, Romania, published in Alexandru Oșca, Teofil Oroian, Gheorghe Nicolescu and Vasile Popa, eds., *Tentația Libertății* (Bucharest: Editura Militară, 1999) pp. 139-41

³ Thomas Blanton, "When did the Cold War End?" *CWIHP Bulletin 10*, pp. 184-187. Blanton sets the end of the Cold War on 25 December 1989, during a meeting between Jack Matlock, US Ambassador to the Soviet Union and I. Aboimov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union to discuss the events in Romania. In the context of the violence in Romania, Ambassador Matlock asked Deputy Minister Aboimov about the possibility of Soviet military intervention in defense of the revolutionary forces in Romania. Aboimov responded "entirely clearly and unequivocally" that "the American side may consider that 'the Brezhnev Doctrine' is now theirs as our gift." See *CWIHP Bulletin 10*, pp. 190.

⁴ Ibid., also see Raymond Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations at the End of the Cold War* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1994), especially pp. 404-408.

⁵ For documents regarding the Prague Spring see Mihai Retegan, *In the Shadow of the Prague Spring* (Iași: Center for Romanian Studies, 2000).

⁶ Dennis Deletant's *Ceaușescu and the Securitate: coercion and dissent in Romania, 1965-89* (Armonk, NY: ME Sharpe, 1995), remains the most important work to date on Romanian Communism and specifically on Ceaușescu.

⁷ The Romanian Party Congress ended on 24 November 1989.

⁸ The meeting took place during a series of consultations between Gorbachev and Communist leaders in Moscow.

⁹ Berlinguer was Secretary-General of the party starting in 1972.

New CWIHP Initiative "Korea in the Cold War"

At its workshop on "New Evidence on the Korean War from Russian, Chinese and European Archives" on 21 June 2000, the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) launched a new initiative on "New Evidence on Korea in the Cold War." The initiative, which will have a particular research emphasis on the North Korea, will be a focus of CWIHP's efforts over the next three years.

Korea's role was central in the making and development of the Cold War. More than any other event, the Korean War (1950-1953) shaped the perceptions, alignments and parameters of the early Cold War. The Western response to the North Korean attack, followed by China's entry into the war, militarized what had until then been largely a political conflict. At the same time, it set limits on superpower military confrontation that remained in place for the duration of the Cold War. Despite the central importance of events in Korea, however, until communist bloc archives began to open in the last few years, scholars and the general public still debated the most basic questions about the war in Korea—who started the war, whether the Soviet Union was involved, who made the important decisions on the communist side during the war, what finally brought the war to an end.

In part due to the efforts by scholars associated with the Cold War International History Project, a large body of documentation has been collected from Moscow and Beijing that has answered many of these basic questions. We now know when, how and by whom the decision was made to attack South Korea. We also know much about when and why the Chinese made the decision to enter the war and about the relative roles of Moscow, Beijing and Pyongyang in conducting the war. We have good evidence suggesting that Stalin's death was the critical factor in bringing the war to an end. The new sources also illuminate the complex interactions among North Koreans, Chinese and Soviets and the interplay of their varying perceptions of the "capitalist" states. CWIHP has made much of this new evidence and analysis available to scholars, policymakers and the general public. In 1993, CWIHP's conference in Moscow highlighted the first documentary proof located in the Russian archives that Stalin had indeed approved North Korea's attack on the South, information which was subsequently published in *CWIHP Bulletin* No. 3. And in 1995 and 1996, subsequent issues of the *CWIHP Bulletin* featured the first ever publication of documents from the Russian Presidential Archives disclosing details of communications among Kim Il Sung, Stalin, and Mao Zedong concerning the origins of the war as well as China's decision to intervene in the conflict. Perhaps most strikingly, the *CWIHP Bulletin's* special issue (No. 6/7) on "The Cold War in Asia" (and a major international conference in Hong Kong on the same theme) in January 1996 attracted front-page headlines as well as scholarly interest with revelations of contradictions between Russian and Chinese documents on the Korean conflict (a controversy that prompted authorities in Beijing for the first time to allow access to top-level materials concerning the Korean conflict; see *Bulletin* No. 8/9). Most recently, CWIHP featured documents and commentaries by scholar Kathryn Weathersby and scientist Milton Leitenberg on the allegations of U.S. bacteriological warfare during the Korean War. These Russian materials call into question the long-standing, never officially revoked allegations that the United States used biological warfare during the conflict in Korea. CWIHP has facilitated scholarly access to its materials by donating all East-bloc documents it obtains—including several thousand pages of Russian documents on the Korean War—to a database collection in Washington, D.C., open to all interested researchers. This collection, located at the National Security Archive (a non-governmental, non-partisan research institute and documents repository located at George Washington University), will also house documents obtained by the Korea initiative and will also be accessible internationally via the CWIHP home page on the World Wide Web.

New questions have emerged, along with new possibilities for studying them. Russian and Chinese archives continue to be important, but we have also discovered that Eastern European archives contain

significant documentation on Korean issues. In addition to political records from Eastern Europe, we now have access to important sources from the military archives of several former DPRK allies-including East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Romania. While most American diplomatic records pertaining to the Korean War have long been available, scholars are only now beginning to gain access to four decades of intelligence reports, estimates, and analyses of all aspects of the North Korean regime and the politico-military situation on the Korean peninsula during the Cold War. Naturally, it is the integration of Eastern and Western documents and sources and their comparison with longstanding and influential previous accounts that will provide the most important and useful historical results.

CWIHP's new Korea initiative will use these archival sources from the former communist bloc and the United States to illuminate key issues in the conflict on the Korean peninsula over the entire post-armistice period. A major focus will be on the external relations that have played a central role in shaping the actions of the DPRK. We will examine Pyongyang's changing relationships with the Soviet Union and China, and also its important but less well-known relations with Eastern European countries. Since Kim Il Sung had especially friendly relations with East German leader Erich Honecker and the Romanian head of state Nicolai Ceaucescu and at times spoke more freely with them than with his Soviet or Chinese patrons, records from those two countries can reveal important information about North Korean attitudes on a broad range of foreign policy issues. What was the rationale behind Pyongyang's several rounds of talks with South Korean representatives since 1972? How did the North Korean leadership view the relationship between its "peace offensive" and its violent provocations against the South? What conditions in the international environment either facilitated or discouraged negotiations and/or violent confrontation between North and South? How have North Korean views of the United States and Japan changed since the late 1950's? What were the limits of outside influence on Kim Il Sung? The record of how Pyongyang explained and justified its actions to its communist allies, and how those allies sought to shape North Korean actions, provides an essential window into these and related questions.

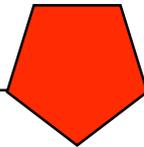
A second major focus of the initiative will be on the military confrontation on the Korean peninsula. From our research on the Korean War, we know that Kim Il Sung and his Soviet backers believed in 1949 that South Korea would soon attack the North, with support from the United States. We also learned that in 1950 the North Korean leadership greatly overestimated the support it enjoyed among the population of the South and underestimated the likelihood of U.S. intervention to defend the ROK. Using American intelligence reports along with the military archives of the former Soviet bloc countries, we will examine North Korean perceptions of South Korean intentions and capabilities in the post-armistice period. How did Pyongyang view the conflicting signals regarding US commitment to South Korea? What were the main influences on DPRK military doctrine? In April 1975, as the Vietnamese communists were entering Saigon, Kim Il Sung delivered a speech in Beijing forecasting the collapse of the ROK and the worldwide victory of Marxism-Leninism. He then visited his East European allies, but did not go to the Soviet Union since Moscow had made it clear it would not support war against the South. What signals did he get in the East European capitals, and how did he describe there the prospects for war on the peninsula? How has North Korea altered its military doctrine since the introduction of American precision weapons in the early 1980's? What has been Pyongyang's view of the capabilities of the combined forces in the South? This list of issues that can be fruitfully investigated through East Bloc archives is, of course, not exhaustive. As new sources are uncovered, new questions arise. Furthermore, changing events on the Korean peninsula may also prompt alterations in the research agenda. The project will lay a foundation for the most effective use of Korean archives, if and when they become available.

CWIHP' new Korea initiative addresses the lack of information concerning North Korea's role in the Cold War. This initiative will be guided by an advisory board consisting of Chen Jian (University of Virginia), Nicholas Eberstadt (American Enterprise Institute), Carter Eckart (Harvard University), Vojtech Mastny (CWIHP Senior Research Scholar), Don Oberdorfer (SAIS), Park Myung-Kim (Seoul) and will be managed on a day-to-day basis by CWIHP's Initiative Coordinator for Korea, Kathryn Weathersby, in consultation with CWIHP Director Christian F. Ostermann.

The Korea Initiative's first step is a detailed preliminary survey of Korea-related materials in former

Communist archives, undertaken by CWIHP's Russian and Eastern European Partners in consultation with the Korea Initiative coordinator. As a second step, selected materials will be xeroxed, translated and published in the Cold War International History Project Bulletin, the CWIHP Working Paper Series and on the CWIHP Website. Hardcopies will be made publicly accessible through the CWIHP's archive (REEAD) at George Washington University. CWIHP also plans organize an international conference in Washington or Seoul facilitating the presentation and exchange, discussion and evaluation of this and other new documentation from Western and former Soviet-bloc archives. The scholarly conference will assess the significance of the new findings and put them into the context of existing scholarship. In addition, the conference will, if possible, be used to undertake critical oral histories of key former policymakers/officials who played a role in North Korea's relations with the Communist bloc countries, in order to add to the documentary record made available through the project. Conference papers are slated to be published in a volume in the CWIHP Book Series (Stanford University Press/WWC Press).

CWIHP welcomes scholarly contributions to and financial support of the Korea Initiative. For further information, contact the Cold War International History Project at coldwar1@wwic.si.edu.



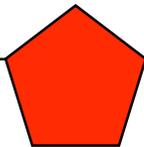
CONGRATULATIONS!

The Cold War International History Project congratulates three long-time CWIHP associates on the publications of their latest books:

Jian Chen, University of Virginia: *Mao's China and the Cold War* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001)

Qiang Zhai, Auburn University: *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975* (University of North Carolina Press, 2000)

Shu Guang Zhang, University of Maryland: *Economic Cold War: America's Embargo against China and the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949-1963* (Stanford UP/WWC Press, 2001)



At Historic Crossroads: Documents on the December 1989 Malta Summit

[On 2-3 December 1989 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev met with US President George Bush. The impetus for the meeting grew out of plans for a summit between the two leaders to be held in mid-1990, announced in September 1989. Spurred by the rapid course of change in Central and Eastern Europe that fall, however, aides to Bush pressed for an earlier, informal "interim" meeting. On 31 October 1989 it was announced in Washington and Moscow that Bush and Gorbachev would meet on board warships of the two countries off the coast of Malta. The meeting proved to be an important step in developing closer American-Soviet relations and came to symbolize the end of the Cold War. While no agreements were concluded, the leaders decided to press ahead in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), as well as in efforts to reduce arsenals of chemical weapons and conventional forces in Europe. Bush also made a number of proposals to advance bilateral relations, including steps to normalize trade relations through the granting of most-favored nation status, efforts to bar Congressional restrictions on credits, and US support for Soviet observer status at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The leaders also discussed regional conflicts, particularly in Central America. Most importantly, however, the meeting afforded both Bush and Gorbachev with an opportunity to establish direct personal contact and rapport with their counterpart. Symbolized by a joint press conference at its end, the meeting proved a success. Gorbachev emphasized to the US president that "we don't consider you an enemy any more," while Bush assured the Soviet leader in turn of his support for perestroika.¹—Christian F. Ostermann.]

M. S. Gorbachev: I welcome you, Mr. President, and also the members of the American delegation, on board the Soviet cruise ship "Maxim Gorky." The initiative to hold this meeting was yours. I would like to start by saying that we view the President's initiative favorably.

G. Bush: Thank you very much.

M. S. Gorbachev: I think what has been occurring in a peaceful evolution prompts the USSR and the US to have such meetings. It has not only taken place but much else is taking place. That's the main thing. Therefore we need a new, extensive dialogue which would be organically connected with those changes and the new conditions with which we have to deal in the international arena. We should do business differently, suitable to the changes. Therefore it is already impossible to restrict ourselves to activities at the foreign ministers' level. Reality dictates the need for more frequent working meetings and contacts between the leaders of our countries.

This meeting is probably a prelude to an official meeting with you. Nevertheless it will have its own significance. Generally, the unofficial meetings which impress me are not accompanied by special formalities. We have been conducting a substantive correspondence. But it is very important to sit at a table and talk. This has not only symbolic significance for the USSR and the US, but for the entire world.

In the Soviet Union and the United States, and yes, in the whole world, people hope that the talks in Malta will become not only a positive symbol of our relations, but bring results.

Let our experts work side by side with their presidents. Opportunities will be created for them to do this.

Again, I sincerely welcome you, Mr. President.

G. Bush: Thank you for your kind words. I indeed suggested this meeting. But I proceeded from the belief that the idea of such talks would also be useful for the Soviet side. Therefore I think that we are prepared to begin a meeting with you. When, on the way from Paris to Washington this summer, I was editing a draft of my letter to you about the issue of this meeting, I realized that I was changing my previous position by 180 degrees. This change in our approach has found understanding among the American people.

Several important events have occurred in the international arena since the idea arose to hold the present summit meeting. I expect that during the upcoming exchange of opinions we can share our evaluations of these events, not only of those in Eastern Europe, but those in other regions as well in order to understand one another's positions better and more deeply. I favor having this exchange of opinions not only between the delegations but in one-on-one talks. I think that we ought to meet more often.

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed. I have the feeling that we have already discussed this, and that this meeting is a continuation of our useful conversations.

G. Bush: Yes, this is right. We have already had productive discussions. I would like for you to allow me to describe some ideas of the American side in summary form.

I completely agree with what you said about the importance of our meeting in Malta. I prepared quite similar points in my notes. Therefore I won't repeat myself.

About our attitude to *perestroika*. I would like to express with all certainty that I completely agree with what you said in New York [during Gorbachev's visit to the UN]: that the world would be better off for *perestroika's* success. Until recently, there were still some doubters on that score in the US. Then in New York you said that there are certain circles which did not want *perestroika* to succeed. I cannot say that there are no such elements in the US. But I can say with all certainty that seriously thinking people in the US do not hold such views.

But the changes in Eastern Europe and the entire process of *perestroika* influence these changes in the American mindset. Of course, there are differing points of view among analysts and experts. But you can be confident that you are dealing with a US administration and also with a Congress that wants your reforms to be successful.

I would now like to describe a number of positive steps which, in our opinion, could define in general terms the direction of our joint work to prepare for an official summit meeting in the US. [...]

Some comments about economic questions. I want to inform you that my administration intends to take steps directed at preventing the Jackson-Vanik amendment², which prohibits granting the Soviet Union most-favored nation status, from going into force ...

I would also like to report that the administration has adopted a policy of repealing the Stevenson and Byrd amendments³ which restrict the possibility of granting credits to the Soviet side. [...]

These measures, which the administration is proposing right now in the area of Soviet-American relations, are restrained [*vyderzhany*] in the appropriate spirit: they are not at all directed at demonstrating American superiority. And in this sense, as we understand it, they correspond with your attitude. We in the US, of course, are deeply confident of the advantages of our way of economic management. But that is not the issue right now. We have been striving to draw up our proposals so as not to create the impression that America "is saving" the Soviet Union. We are not talking about an aid program, but a cooperative program.

After the Jackson-Vanik amendment is repealed, favorable conditions will arise to remove the restrictions on granting credits. The American administration is not

thinking about granting aid but about creating conditions for the development of effective cooperation on economic issues. We have in mind sending the Soviet side our proposals on this matter in the form of a document. It concerns a number of serious projects in the areas of finance, statistics, market operations, etc. [...]

I would like to say a few words to explain our position regarding the Soviet side's desire to gain observer status at GATT.⁴ Previously we had a difference of opinions on the subject, the US was opposed to the USSR joining this organization. This position has now been reexamined. We are [now] in favor of the Soviet side being granted observer status at GATT. In doing so, we are proceeding from the belief that Soviet participation in GATT would help it familiarize itself with the conditions, the functioning, and the development of the world market. [...]

There is one more area to use new approaches in a plan to develop economic cooperation. I have in mind the establishment of ties with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. This would provide a good framework for cooperation on economic questions through East-West channels. The administration is in favor of moving actively in this direction. [...]

G. Bush next switches to regional problems, describing the US position regarding the situation in Central America. Then he suggested moving on to disarmament issues.

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed.

G. Bush: You know that my administration is in favor of ridding mankind of chemical weapons. Today I would like to describe our new proposal which will contain a certain shift [*podvizhka*]. If the Soviet side consents in principle to our proposal about chemical weapons which was described in my speech to the UN General Assembly in September, then, in the framework of this approach, the US could undertake to renounce our program of modernization—that is, the further production of binary weapons, after a comprehensive convention prohibiting chemical weapons goes into force.

On the practical level this means that even in the near future both sides could reach agreement about a considerable reduction of chemical weapon stockpiles, bringing this amount to 20% of the amount of CW [Chemical Warfare] agents the US presently has in its arsenal, and, 8 years after the convention goes into force, to 2%. We propose to pursue work in such a manner that, by the time of the summit in the US in the middle of next year, a draft bilateral agreement will have been prepared which would then be signed.

About conventional weapons. Although serious efforts will be needed for this, including those associated with the need to overcome certain obstacles not only on our side but in other countries, let's say in France, one could count on reaching agreement as early as next year. It appears in this regard that we could put forward such a goal: to orient ourselves toward signing agreements about radical reductions of conventional forces in Europe in 1990, signing such an agreement during a summit of representatives of the countries which participate in the talks in Vienna.⁵

Concerning the issue of a future agreement about reducing strategic offensive weapons. The American side is trying to provide the proper impetus to the talks on this subject. We are in favor of resolving all remaining key questions through joint efforts before the upcoming summit meeting in the US. We also do not exclude the possibility that a draft treaty on reducing strategic offensive weapons, and the documents associated with it, will be completely worked out. The treaty could be signed during the summit in this case.

We proceed from the position that at the upcoming Soviet-American talks at the foreign-minister level, solutions could be found in the near future to such problems as the procedure for counting long-range air-launched cruise missiles, enciphered telemetry, limitations on undeployed missiles, etc. The American side plans to form its own position on these issues just before the foreign ministers' meeting, which could take place at the end of January, and will set them forth at the talks.

We are also planning to send instructions to our delegation at the Geneva talks that the previous American proposal to prohibit mobile ICBMs [Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles] be permanently withdrawn.

I would like to call upon the Soviet side to again return to the question of limitations on the SS-18 ICBMs. We are in favor of prohibiting the modernization of these missiles and of the Soviet side considering the possibility of deeper unilateral reductions in their numbers.

The resolution of the issue of preventing the proliferation of missiles and missile technology is gaining ever greater significance at the present time. In this regard the United States welcomes the accession of the Soviet Union to the regime of limitations which seven Western countries having been observing.

M. S. Gorbachev: This question is already at the discussion stage.

G. Bush: We would like to raise the question about the possibility of the Soviet Union publishing information about their military budget in approximately the same

detail as is done in the United States. It appears that our publications give a quite complete picture of what activity is being carried out in the military field in our country. I am confident that your intelligence agencies can authoritatively testify to this.

M. S. Gorbachev: On the contrary, they report to me that you do not publish everything.

G. Bush: I am confident that the publication of more detailed information about military budgets on a mutual basis would facilitate the growth of [mutual] trust in this entire area.

I would like to touch on several questions which are important for the future...

The issue of protecting the environment is acquiring special urgency at the present time. Now we have to take into account even the economic consequences of the changes in the global climate. In several Western countries, feelings are emerging in favor of preventing such changes to phase out even necessary economic activity as much as possible.

We are trying to approach these issues rationally and avoid extremes. At the present time the USSR and US are actively working in a committee to prepare an international conference on the climate under the aegis of the UN. This is cause for satisfaction. In the future we plan to take two more important steps in this direction. First, after work in the committee is completed by autumn of next year, we plan to host a conference in the US to work out a framework agreement on climate change issues.

Protection of the environment requires the attention of eminent representatives of science. I have instructed White House Science Adviser Dr. [Alan] Bromley [Translator's note: incorrectly rendered as "Romli" in Russian] to convene a conference on ecology in the spring of next year in which the best scientific energies [*sily*] as well as the leaders of the appropriate agencies from many countries of the world could participate. I hope that Soviet representatives will also come to this forum.

The development of cooperation between nations depends in large part on the participation of youth in this process. Student exchanges are called upon to play a great role here. We propose that it be arranged, so that such an exchange in the 1990-1991 school year be increased by 1,000 students from each side. This would mean carrying out such an expansion from young people under age 25. At the same time special attention would be devoted to an exchange of students who are studying humanities and sociology [*sic*]. Such a practice would be quite rewarding with respect to all kinds of programs in the field of agriculture.

M. S. Gorbachev: Thank you for your interesting ideas. It's possible that this is the best evidence that the administration of President Bush has shaped its policy in the Soviet-American direction. I intend to touch on several specific issues later.

But right now I would like to make a number of comments of a philosophical nature. It seems to me that it is very important for us to talk with you about what conclusions can be drawn from past experience, from the "Cold War." What has happened remains in history. Such, if you will, is the privilege of the historical process. However, to try to analyze the course of previous events—this is our direct responsibility. Why is this necessary? Certainly we can say that we have all ended up at historical crossroads. Completely new problems have arisen before humanity which people had not previously anticipated. And what about it—will we decide them using old approaches? Simply nothing would come out of this.

By no means should everything that has happened be considered in a negative light. We have managed to avoid a large-scale war for 45 years. This single fact alone says that not everything was so bad in the past. Nevertheless, one conclusion is obvious—reliance on force, on military superiority, and the associated arms race have not been justified. Our two countries obviously understand this better than others.

And confrontation arising from ideological convictions has not justified itself either; as a result of this we ended up swearing at one another. We reached a dangerous brink and it is good that we managed to stop. It is good that now mutual trust between our countries has emerged.

Yes, and reliance on an unequal exchange between developed and underdeveloped countries has also been a failure. On what terms? The former colonial powers gained much from this exchange. But so many problems arose in the developing world which literally grabbed all of us by the throat. So everything is interconnected.

Cold War methods, methods of confrontation, have suffered defeat in strategic terms. We have recognized this. And ordinary people have possibly understood this even better. I do not want to preach here. People simply meddle in policymaking. Ecological problems, problems of preserving natural resources, and problems connected with the negative consequences of technological progress have arisen. All of this is completely understandable since we are essentially talking about the issue of survival. And this kind of public sentiment is strongly affecting us, the politicians.

Therefore we together—the USSR and the US—can do a lot at this stage to radically change our old ap-

proaches. We had felt this even in our contacts with the Reagan administration. And this process continues right now. Look how we have confided in one another.

We lag behind the mood of the people at the political level. And this is understandable since various forces influence leaders. It is good that [Chief of the General Staff] Marshal Akhromeyev and your [National Security] Adviser, [General Brent] Scowcroft understand the problems which arise in the military field. But there are people in both countries—and there are many of them—who simply scare us. Many people working in the defense sector are used to their profession and for whom it is not easy to change their way of thinking. And all the same, this process has begun.

Why have I begun with this? The thesis is consistently advanced in American political circles that the Soviet Union "has begun its *perestroika* and is changing policy under the influence of the 'Cold War' policy." They say that everything is collapsing in Eastern Europe [that] and this also "confirms the correctness of those who relied on 'Cold War' methods." And if this is so, then nothing needs to be changed in this policy. We need to increase strong-arm pressure and prepare more baskets in order to catch more fruit. Mr. President, this is a dangerous delusion.

I have noticed that you see all this. I know that you have to listen to representatives of different circles. However, your public statements, as well as specific proposals directed at the development of cooperation between the USSR and US which you spoke of today, mean that President Bush has formed a certain idea about the world, and it corresponds to the challenges of the time.

Of course, each side makes their own independent choice. But it is clear that when we talk about relations between the USSR and the US, mistakes and oversights in policy are impermissible. It is impossible to assume that our policy is built on misconceptions, both in relations with one another and in relations with other countries.

Initially, I was even thinking of expressing something of a reproach. To say that the President of the United States has not once expressed his support for *perestroika*, wished it success, and noted that the Soviet Union itself should deal with its own reforms. What we were expecting from the President of the United States was not only statements, but specific steps in accordance with these statements.

Now there are both statements and these steps. I am drawing this conclusion having heard what you have just said. Despite the fact that these are only plans for steps. But this is very important.

Second consideration. A great regrouping of forces is

underway in the world. It is clear that we are going from a bipolar to a multipolar world. Whether we like it or not, we will have to deal with a united, integrated European economy. We could discuss the issue of Western Europe separately. Whether we want it or not, Japan is one more center of world politics. At one time you and I were talking about China. This is one more huge reality which neither we nor you should play against the other. And it is necessary to think about what to do, so that China does not feel excluded from all the processes which are taking place in the world.

All these, I repeat, are huge events typical of a regrouping of forces in the world. I am watching India's policy. This is a dynamic policy. I have talked many times with Rajiv Gandhi.⁶ India has a deliberate approach, striving to establish good relations, both with us and you.

But what is our role in this regrouping? Very serious things ensue from this. We began to discuss this question with [former Secretary of State George P.] Shultz.⁷ Once during the conversations he showed us diagrams describing the changes which would occur by the end of the century in economic relations between the leading countries of the world. And now it is simply necessary to understand the roles of the USSR and US in these huge changes. They cannot always be accompanied by the quiet flow of events.

And now Eastern Europe. Its share of the world economy is not very great. But look how we are all tense. What should our form of actions be, our cooperation?

And what is waiting ahead for us with regard to the economy, the environment, and other problems? We need to think together about this, too.

We in the Soviet leadership have been reflecting about this for a long time and have come to the conclusion that the US and USSR are simply "doomed" to dialogue, coordination, and cooperation. There is no other choice.

But to do this we need to get rid of the view of one another as enemies. Much of this stays in our brains. And we need to keep in mind that it is impossible to view our relations only at the military level.

All this means that we are proposing a Soviet-American condominium. We're talking about realities. And this does not at all cast doubt on our relations with our allies and current cooperation with other countries. An understanding of all this is necessary. I do not think that all this has happened yet. We have only entered into the process of mutual understanding.

You raised the question: what kind of a Soviet Union is in the US interest—a dynamic, stable, solid one, or one

struggling with all kinds of problems. I am informed about the type of advice they give you.

As far as we are concerned, we are interested in the US feeling confident from the point of view of solving its national security problems and making progress. This thought is present in all the conversations with my counterparts in the West. And there have been hundreds of such meetings. I think that any other approach is dangerous. Any reliance on ignoring internal processes, a reluctance to consider the real interests of the US in the world—these are dangerous policies.

But the US, too, has to consider the interests of other countries. In the meantime there is still the desire to teach, to pressure, and to grab by the throat. There is yet more. We know all this. Therefore I would like to hear your opinion on this score since we are talking about how to build a bridge between our countries: across the river or alongside it.

Since the President still has much time to lead such a country as the US, there should be clarity. I think that we will not bring it up after this meeting. But the main issues need to be investigated. I repeat: clarity is necessary. All the rest—the specifics and the frequency—in the final account are organically connected with mutual understanding on these fundamental issues. [...]

G. Bush: You have noted, I hope, that, as changes occur in Eastern Europe, the United States has not come out with arrogant pronouncements directed at causing harm to the Soviet Union. Meanwhile some people in the US accuse me of excessive caution. True, I am a cautious person, but not at all timid, and my administration is trying to do nothing which would lead to undermining your position. But something else has been consistently suggested to me—as they say, climb the Berlin Wall and make high-sounding pronouncements. The administration, however, is not going to resort to such steps and is trying to conduct itself with restraint.

M. S. Gorbachev: [...] I want to react to the ideas expressed by you at the beginning of the conversation. I welcome your words. I find in them a display of political will. This is important to me.

And from my personal experience, and from the experience of cooperation with President Reagan, I know how we have more than once ended up in such a situation on disarmament issues when everything came to a stop and got bogged down. The delegations sat in Geneva and drank coffee, but no business was conducted.

Then I received a letter from President Reagan. I read it carefully and came to the conclusion that it contained no conclusions. Of course, I could have written a formal reply

but I don't care for wordy rehashing. It was necessary to take a decisive step. Thus the idea of a meeting in Reykjavik arose. The results of the Reykjavik talks scared some people. But in reality Reykjavik became a genuine breakthrough on arms control issues. After this, the entire negotiating mechanism started working actively and effectively.

Or take another field—economic relations. There are limited opportunities here to move forward. Political will is needed in order to overcome these restraints. A signal from the President is needed. American businessmen are disciplined people, and they will react to a display of new thinking in economics.

The delegations at the talks in Geneva have squeezed literally everything out of the directives they have. It is necessary to give momentum to all the work. I noted your ideas in this regard. They seem to me to be deserving of attention.

Thank you for putting issues of bilateral cooperation in first place. We are ready to discuss these issues.

This situation often arises: when the question is about our relations with you, they tell us—if you agree with the Americans we will support it. But as soon as we come to an agreement they cry—“a new Yalta.” This is, in general, natural. Much depends on our work with our allies and the non-aligned countries.

We will move to adapt our new economy to the world economy. Therefore we attach significance to participation in the GATT system and other international economic organizations. We think that it will benefit our *perestroika* and allow us to better understand how the world economic mechanism functions.

Earlier the US took a negative position regarding the question of the USSR's participation in world economic organizations. They said that USSR's participation in GATT would politicize the activity of this organization. I think this is a vestige of old attitudes. Actually, there was a time when we put ideological goals first. And, by the way, you [did] too. It is a difficult time now, and there are different criteria, different processes, and these processes will not reverse themselves.

[...] We are permitting various kinds of property to function in our country. We will pursue matters so that the ruble will become convertible. *Perestroika* is taking place in COMECON⁸ in order to bring the operating principles of this organization closer to the generally accepted standards of the world economy.

Now about Central America. [...]

I want to stress again: we do not pursue any goals in Central America. We do not want to seize bridgeheads or strongpoints there. You should be confident of this.

Let us return to the problems of disarmament. We know the US approach to the solution of the problem of chemical weapons. However, earlier an important element was lacking in this approach—the readiness of the US to cease the production of binary weapons after a convention on the prohibition of chemical weapons came into force. Now this element has appeared, and it is quite important. There is movement here.

Thus both of us think that a global prohibition is necessary. We will maintain this goal. But we will get to it through bilateral measures and specific stages. Let us have the foreign ministers discuss this.

G. Bush: The issue of proliferation of chemical weapons is also very urgent. I hope that our experts will touch on this theme [as well].

M. S. Gorbachev: Agreed.

Now about the Vienna talks and the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe. You have spoken in favor of concluding an agreement on this most important problem in 1990 and signing it at a summit. Our approaches coincide here. We are prepared for active and constructive cooperation to achieve the designated goal. There are, of course, difficulties. But I will not get into details.

About the strategic armaments limitation talks. Political will is needed here to give momentum to the work underway. I have been listening to you carefully, and you have specified some elements. But unfortunately I did not hear mention of the problem of sea-launched cruise missiles [SLCM; Russian acronym: KRMB: *krylatye rakety morskogo bazirovaniya*].

Realistic conditions are developing right now to prepare a draft treaty on strategic offensive weapons for signature before our meeting next year. And if a solution to KRMB [SLCM] has not been found by this time, then serious difficulties will arise. You have an enormous advantage here. The American side needs to think this issue over again in the context of what I have said.

G. Bush: This is a problem.

M. S. Gorbachev: We are not trying for mirror symmetry. Each side has its own choice [to reach]. Each country has its own choice, each is in a [unique] situation and has a different armed forces structure.

But it is impossible to ignore KRMB [SLCM] in

conducting affairs toward a reduction of strategic offensive weapons. The US has a substantive advantage in this area. Put yourself in our place. Our Supreme Soviet will not agree to ratify a treaty if the problem of KRMB [SLCM] is passed over.

I very much welcome your suggestions about the environment. You can proceed from the premise that our experts will take an active part in the conference on ecological problems which the White House staff has planned.

I am glad that you touched on the expansion of student exchanges. We began this good work during in the Reagan presidency. It is easier for young people to find a common language. And I am confident that they will make their contribution to the positive development of Soviet-American relations.

In summary, I would like to stress again that the steps that you have described and spoken of here have made me happy. The Soviet-American dialogue has gained a certain dynamic. And new efforts, new steps are necessary to give it a second breath. [...]

* * *

[The talks continued on 3 December 1989.]

M. S. Gorbachev: I will say right away: we are satisfied with the work which was done yesterday but think that there are opportunities to move forward even further. If you do not object then I would like to begin first. After all, today I am your guest[...]

G. Bush: I like "my ship" very much.

Speaking seriously, we would like to express our great thanks for the excellent opportunity to work offered to our delegation on the Soviet liner. Although the press is besieging me right now, tossing out questions about the brevity of our conversation yesterday, I do not think that the changes in the program have substantially influenced the substance of our conversations. For our part, I think our discussion has been very good and productive since we, for instance, have essentially continued the conversation through breakfast.

M. S. Gorbachev: Yes, we have counted and it turns out that the conversations lasted over five hours.

Although we have not yet begun to discuss the main issues, I would like to make one suggestion of an organizational nature to you. Why not hold a joint press conference? I think there would be great positive symbolism in this.

G. Bush: A good idea. I agree in principle. I am only afraid that our American journalists might think that I am avoiding their questions if I decide [not to hold] a separate press conference.

Possibly we will hold a press conference in several parts: at first we will talk together with journalists, and then I will reply to questions from our own people.

M. S. Gorbachev: I have also planned to meet with Soviet television after our joint press conference. So this works for me.

G. Bush: That is fine. So it is agreed.

M. S. Gorbachev: Mr. President, yesterday I reacted very briefly to the ideas you expressed about military-political issues. Today it is our turn. I believe that our position in this area is also of considerable interest to you. I will correct my description considering yesterday's exchange of opinions.

Although this is an informal meeting all the same, we are meeting for the first time in this capacity. And I would like to begin with several statements of principle.

First of all, a new US President should know that the Soviet Union will not start a war under any circumstances. This is so important that I would like to personally repeat this declaration to you. Moreover, the USSR is prepared to no longer consider the US as its enemy and openly say so. We are open to cooperation with America, including cooperation in the military sphere. That is the first thing.

Second point. We are in favor of ensuring mutual security through joint efforts. The Soviet leadership is devoted to a continuation of the process of disarmament in all directions. We consider it necessary and urgent to get past the arms race and prevent the creation of exotic new kinds of weapons.

I note in passing that we welcome the process of cooperation which has begun between our militaries. In particular, we are appreciative of the opportunity afforded to the Soviet minister of defense to become acquainted with the US armed forces.

One more consideration of principle. We have adopted a defensive doctrine. Many explanations have been given to you that this is so. Our armed forces are already involved in deep changes. The structure of the military grouping in Central Europe is becoming defensive: there are fewer tanks in divisions now, and amphibious crossing equipment is being withdrawn. The deployment of aircraft is also being changed: strike aviation is being assigned to the second echelon, and fighters, which are defensive aircraft, are being moved to the forward

lines.

We are not making a secret of our plans for *perestroika* of the armed forces. The Soviet military is ready at any time to meet their American colleagues, present the necessary information, and discuss issues which arise.

But reciprocal issues arise. At the same time as the Soviet Union has adopted and is implementing a particularly defensive doctrine, the United States continues to be guided by a flexible response strategy adopted more than 20 years ago. Earlier this would have been justified. However, now when it is recognized at the military-political level that a threat from the Warsaw Pact no longer exists, we naturally ask the question: why does the US delay *perestroika* of its own armed forces? I have familiarized myself with the long—about 60 pages—Brussels Declaration.⁹ And, unfortunately, I have noticed that there is as of yet no progress planned on the part of NATO in [its] attitudes at the doctrinal level in this most important area.

The next issue of principle. We have already touched on it in some measure in examining the dynamics of the negotiation process. However, I would like to return to this problem and select one very important point.

The two of us have recognized that, as a result of the arms race, absolutely inconceivable military power was created on both sides. We have come to the common conclusion that such a situation was fraught with catastrophic [dangers]. We have started to act in the right direction and have displayed political will. A most important negotiation process was launched, in which issues of nuclear arms reductions moved to the forefront.

G. Bush: Please forgive me for interrupting you, but I would like in this context to express my thanks for the deeply symbolic gift which you sent me via Ambassador [Anatoly] Dobrynin¹⁰—a souvenir made from scrapped missiles.

M. S. Gorbachev: Yes. The INF [Intermediate Nuclear Forces] Treaty became a historic watershed.

Generally, good prospects are opening up, and your comments yesterday have only convinced me of the idea that a reliable basis for further movement has been created.

But what worries us? Up to now one of the three basic components of military power, the naval forces, has remained beyond negotiations. Both previous administrations, and now the current administration, have reacted emotionally to this issue being raised. Moreover, there is no encroachment on American security here. I want to

declare with all responsibility that we are considering the interests of the US. Your country is a naval power, and its critically important lines of communications pass through seas and oceans. The development of naval forces is both a historic tradition for you and an entire system in science, industry, and deeply integrated economic interests. Therefore it is not so easy to change the attitude here. We well understand this inasmuch as we ourselves are experiencing similar difficulties in other areas of military policy.

But what will come of this? Even from the beginning of the 1950s we were literally ringed by a network of military bases. There were more than 500,000 men, hundreds of combat airplanes, and powerful fleet forces on them. The US has 15 carrier strike formations and about 1,500 combat aircraft. And such enormous forces are either deployed at our shores or can show up there at any moment. I am not talking about strategic submarines—even if they fall under *YaVK*¹¹ negotiations. As a result of the Vienna talks, we will considerably reduce the level of confrontation on the ground. As I have already said, there are good prospects for concluding a treaty about limiting strategic offensive weapons. Under these conditions we have the right to count on the threat to the Soviet Union from the sea also being reduced.

Our ministers have already talked about this. I am taking the initiative myself and officially raising the question of starting talks on the problems of naval forces. When they begin, we should display flexibility here. Let there be confidence-building measures at first, then a general reduction in the scale of naval activity. Then when our positions are clarified at the same time in Geneva and Vienna, the time will come to deal with the question of naval force reductions in earnest.

I will say beforehand that we will take a realistic position. In particular, we realize that the US has other problems besides the Soviet armed forces. But all the same again, it is necessary to stress with all certainty that, however important the security of Europe is to the US and its allies, we are just as interested in security on the seas and oceans.

Now, after describing some of our fundamental approaches I would like to comment on individual negotiation problems. Since we had earlier agreed not to get into detail, I, like you yesterday, will restrict myself to the main things.

It would be desirable if we achieved clarity, at least regarding three important negotiating positions. First, let our ministers and military experts clarify the interrelationship of the future START treaty¹² and the ABM treaty.¹³ Second, we consider it quite important—and [Soviet Foreign Minister] E. A. Shevardnadze's initiatives in

Wyoming are evidence of this—to agree about the rules for counting heavy bombers and air-launched strategic cruise missiles. If we take the present American formula, the US can end up not with 6,000 but with 8,500 warheads. We are not trying to haggle for anything here for ourselves: it is necessary to accept only the factual aspect of the matter as a basis.

The third problem which I have already dwelled on is sea-based strategic cruise missiles.

There are, of course, other issues, but right now I will not talk about them. If I have understood the President correctly then we are setting ourselves general guideposts: at minimum to resolve all the large remaining issues before the summit in Washington, and by the end of next year to sign the START treaty itself.

And one more important point. As I understand, Akhromeyev and Scowcroft have “chased it off.” The Soviet and American navies have nuclear weapons, both strategic-ballistic missile submarines and sea-launched cruise missiles as well as tactical: short-range sea-launched cruise missiles, nuclear torpedoes and mines. The strategic nuclear component of naval forces is a subject of the Geneva talks. That leaves tactical nuclear weapons. Although this is an unofficial conversation, I am proposing to begin official discussions. The Soviet Union is ready to completely liquidate naval tactical nuclear weapons on a mutual basis. Such a radical step would simplify immediately the procedures of monitoring its implementation.

Now some words about Vienna. On the whole, I agree with the evaluation of the talks which the President gave. However, three important problems remain here. First, this is an issue of reducing not only armaments but also personnel of the armed forces. We have been proposing to reduce them to 1,300,000 men on each side, that is by one million on both sides. NATO representatives do not agree but for some reason do not give their own figures. I think that people simply will not understand us if we limit ourselves only to arms reductions since enormous [force] groupings oppose one another in Europe.

Second issue, the reduction of the numbers of troops on foreign soil. We propose to limit them to a ceiling of 300,000 men. But we are being pulled in another direction—to reduce only Soviet and American troops. But there are also British, French, Belgian, Dutch, and Canadian troops. In short, they are proposing a solution unfair to us.

Now about the problem of air forces. We have proposed a level for each alliance of 4,700 tactical frontal aviation aircraft and a separate level for interceptors. But here this matter has been moving slowly so far. We

propose that special attention be paid to this issue at the next meeting of ministers.

Briefly about the President’s “Open Skies” proposal. We support it. We will participate in the Ottawa conference.¹⁴ We favor joint effective work with the US. It seems to us there is substantial leeway [*rezervy*] in this proposal. Let our ministers and military specialists discuss expansion of the status of openness to the oceans and the seas, space, and land. [...]

Summarizing what I have said, I would like to stress again with all my strength that we favor peaceful relations with the US. And proceeding from this very precondition we propose to transform the present military confrontation. This is the main thing.

M. S. Gorbachev: Maybe we will now close the books on the discussion of military issues and talk about Europe, and give some thought to how to regard the processes of cooperation developing there?

G. Bush: An excellent idea. But let me add some words. I am very satisfied with the cooperation of our diplomatic departments both in the military and other areas. I think that these channels for discussing military political problems are now organically supplementing the contacts for which Akhromeyev and [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral William] Crowe have laid the basis. The meetings of military specialists have helped military matters quite a bit and I hope that we will develop this practice.

M. S. Gorbachev: We indeed favor doing just that.

G. Bush: I will say openly: our military has enormous influence on NATO. I have now charged them with doing an analysis of the military expenditures of the US and the West as a whole and presenting appropriate recommendations. I think that in this important period, contacts between our two militaries have special significance.

M. S. Gorbachev: That is why we are telling them to meet more often. Did you want to speak first about European matters?

G. Bush: You are closer to Europe, but I would like to anticipate our conversation with some comments.

First of all, I admit that we were shaken by the rapidity of the unfolding changes. We have a high opinion of your personal reaction and the reaction of the Soviet Union as a whole to these dynamic and at the same time fundamental changes.

Yesterday, when talking eye to eye, we discussed the problem of the reunification of Germany, although without

going into detail. I hope you understand that it is impossible to demand of us that we disapprove of German reunification. At the same time we are aware how much of a delicate, sensitive problem this is. We are trying to act with a certain restraint. I will formulate this thought somewhat differently: neither I nor representatives of my administration want to be in a position which would be viewed as provocative. I am stressing this point.

One more example of our policy with regard to Eastern Europe. We have sent a high-level delegation to Poland. It includes my senior diplomatic advisers, other representatives of the administration, business people, trade union leaders, etc. They have gone there not to create difficulties for you but to explain to the Poles what mechanisms, in our opinion, are effective in the economic sphere.

Without dwelling on each Eastern European country, I will share only the thought that we well understand the significance of the section of the [1975] Helsinki Act about national borders in Europe.

Of course, I am ready to respond to any questions you have. Nothing interests me more than how you view the possibility of moving beyond the *status quo*.

M. S. Gorbachev: I do not agree that we are “closer to Europe.” Both the USSR and the US are integrated into European problems to different degrees. We understand your involvement in Europe very well. To look otherwise at the role of the US in the Old World is unrealistic, mistaken, and finally, not constructive. You should know that this is our fundamental position.

G. Bush: I had something else in mind: we simply were not so close to Eastern Europe historically. Of course, we are close—and will be close—to Europe and vitally interested and involved in NATO. The US is really the leader of NATO.

I want to stress separately that you are catalyzing the changes in Europe in a constructive way.

M. S. Gorbachev: I reaffirmed our principled position about the US role in Europe on purpose. There has been too much speculation on this subject. I feed it [*sic*] both to you and us. But we should be absolutely clear on such important matters.

Now about the changes in Europe. They really are of a fundamental nature. And not only in Eastern Europe—in Western Europe, too. I received representatives of the Trilateral Commission.¹⁵ After one of our conversations, [former French President] Giscard d’Estaing, who was the speaker, addressed me in a very meaningful way: “Be ready to deal with a united federated state of Western

Europe.” By saying that, I think, he wanted to say that when European integration reaches a qualitatively new level in 1992, it would be accompanied by a deep rebuilding of political structures which would also reach the federal level.

Therefore, all of Europe is on the move, and it is moving in the direction of something new. We also consider ourselves Europeans, and we associate the idea of a common European home with this movement. I would like to ask E. A. Shevardnadze and Secretary of State [James] Baker to discuss this idea in depth since it appears that it is in the interests of both, the USSR and the US.

We should act—and interact—in an especially responsible and balanced way in this period when all of Europe is undergoing such dynamic changes.

G. Bush: I agree with you.

For, as it is said, a gun fires itself once every five years. The fewer weapons, the lesser the possibility of an accidental catastrophe.

Thus security of the US and her allies should not be a millimeter less than our personal security.

E. A. Shevardnadze: Yesterday the President introduced some interesting ideas about chemical weapons. The Secretary of State and I have discussed this issue very constructively and in great detail. As you can imagine, it deserves the greatest attention.

M. S. Gorbachev: I have already described my first reaction. As I understand it, there are two areas in which it appears we have agreement: a common goal remains a global prohibition on chemical weapons, but we are moving in stages and thus are abandoning the modernization of binary weapons. This is a good basis for negotiations.

G. Bush: If you will allow me, I would like in this regard to raise the very thorny problem of the proliferation of chemical weapons beyond the borders of our two powers. Libya in particular worries us. Of course, I understand that we are in no position to control the Libyan leader. However, we are convinced, as before, that the plant in Rabta is designed to produce chemical weapons.¹⁶ We would like to work with you not only on this specific problem but also on the entire issue of preventing the proliferation of chemical weapons, which is sometimes called “the poor man’s atomic bomb.” The whole world has already seen the terrible consequences of the proliferation of chemical weapons in the example of the Iraq-Iran conflict. Therefore we propose to achieve an agreement in this area. Personally, this problem concerns me very much.

M. S. Gorbachev: I would like to assure you that our positions on this issue coincide. The Soviet Union is decisively against the proliferation of chemical weapons. I propose that our ministers continue the discussion of this problem in view of the goals we have mentioned.

G. Bush: It is necessary to achieve quick progress in this area. Meanwhile you and we are morally vulnerable: others do not want to move forward or they will move in the opposite direction, pointing out that the Soviet and American chemical arsenals remain untouched.

M. S. Gorbachev: I am convinced: we can successfully cooperate here. If the USSR and the US begin to reduce their chemical arsenals in stages this will give us the moral right to persuade others even more strongly of the need not to spread chemical weapons. [...]

G. Bush: I completely agree with these ideas.

M. S. Gorbachev: Meeting with political leaders from both Eastern and Western Europe, I tell all of them that this is an objective process which is bringing the countries of the continent together. They are searching now for the optimal versions of combining economy, technology, and different standards [...]

The essence of the problem is, is there a consensual approach in practice? We are convinced that we should work to continue and develop the Helsinki process and by no means tear down what has been created on this foundation. From here, there is a need for a Helsinki II where we all should comprehend the new situation and work out common criteria and guideposts. It is understood that all the countries that signed the Helsinki Act should take part in this meeting, including, of course, the US and Canada.

Another important issue—how to deal with institutions in the new situation created in another time? A balanced and responsible approach is also required here. Otherwise our present positive focus on the process of change can become its antithesis and lead to the undermining of stability. We do not need to actually destroy the existing instruments that maintain the balance, but we need to modify them in accordance with the needs of the time in order to use them to strengthen security and stability and improve relations between countries. Let NATO and the Warsaw Pact become political organizations in ever greater measure and not just military organizations, and let them change their confrontational nature. It is good that our generals have already started to catch the spirit of the time, visit one another, and discuss the most complex issues.

I am confident that there are good prospects for cooperation between the Common Market and COMECON.¹⁷ We are planning comprehensive measures

in COMECON to ease its inclusion into the structure of the world economy.

Our legislators are already cooperating—and not badly—and a “people’s diplomacy” is developing. Such a meticulous and positive attitude will protect all of us from unpleasant surprises in the future.

I have gained the impression that the US leadership is how somehow especially actively promoting the concept of overcoming the division of Europe on the basis of “Western values.” If this proposition is not only for propaganda but is intended to lay a foundation for a practical policy, then I will openly say it could be very foolish. At one time alarm was expressed in the West that the Soviet Union was planning to export revolution. But plans to export “Western values” sounds similar.

I would say that right now is a very difficult time and therefore an especially crucial one. At a time when Eastern Europe is changing in the direction of greater openness and democracy and drawing close to universal human values, creating a mechanism of compatibility with world economic progress, all this opens unprecedented opportunities to reach a new level of relations. Reaching it by peaceful and calm means. And it is very dangerous here to artificially force and goad the processes which are taking place, especially to satisfy some unilateral interests.

The variations of European integration—at the cultural and political level—including unknown ones, can be quite diverse. And this will not happen painlessly. In certain places the situation will even become contentious. And this is natural since enormous and diverse social forces are involved in what is taking place.

I can make a judgment about this only as far as the Soviet Union is concerned. Our country is a genuine conglomeration of peoples. But they have differing traditions and historical peculiarities of evolution. We are frantically debating the future of the Soviet economy or, let us say, the issue of what political institutions are needed in conditions of deep democratization. The task of reforming our federation has arisen sharply in a new way. Not long ago we were sharing [our] experience on this issue with the Prime Minister of Canada [Brian Mulroney]. He is concerned about Quebec, which has been pursuing separatist goals for many years. By the way, the thought then came to me: why does the American Congress occupy itself with the Baltic countries and does not help the Canadians deal with Quebec?

Our own experience permits us to predict that the processes in Europe will not always come smoothly. Generally, this has already been confirmed. But as a whole, we look on matters optimistically. When you think on the level of a simple reaction to what is happening then

it actually could send a shiver down your spine and some people will give way to panic. But if you raise it to a political, philosophical level, then everything falls into place. For if the process is deep, affects fundamental matters, and involves millions of people and entire nations, then how could it proceed easily and simply?

It is necessary to proceed from an understanding of the enormous importance of the current changes. It is necessary to avoid possible mistakes and use the historic opportunities which are opening up to bring East and West together. Of course, differences will remain. We talked about this yesterday. Even in the Soviet Union, in one country, the differences between the republics and various regions are evident to the naked eye. I am confident that such differences exist in the US. They should be present in the large continent of Europe all the more.

We favor a common understanding with the US of what is occurring in our country [*u nas*]. I note that there is such a common understanding today. But the process will develop. And I want this understanding not to diminish but, on the contrary, to intensify.

I am in favor of our constant cooperation on the basis of this understanding for this entire difficult transition period. Otherwise this process can break down and we will all end up in a chaotic situation which would give birth to many problems, halt the changes, and throw us back to the times of suspicion and mistrust.

I stress that a special responsibility rests on the Soviet Union and the United States at this historic moment.

G. Bush: I want to clarify one point. You expressed concern about Western values. It would be understandable if our devotion to certain ideals provoked difficulties in the USSR or Eastern Europe and interfered with the progressive processes developing there. But we have never pursued such goals. Any discussion of Western values in NATO or other Western organizations are completely natural and do not have destructive intent. But what are Western values? They are, if you will, *glasnost*, openness, and heated debates. At the economic level—incentives to progress and a free market. These values are not something new or expedient but long-shared by us and the West Europeans, and they unite the West. We greet the changes in the Soviet Union or in Poland but do not at all set Western values against them. Therefore I want to understand your point of view as much as possible in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

M. S. Gorbachev: The main principle which we have adopted and which we follow in our new thinking is the right of each country to free choice, including the right to reexamine and change their original choice. This is very painful, but it is a fundamental right. The right to choose

without outside interference. The US is devoted to a certain social and economic system which the American people have chosen. Let other people decide themselves, figuratively speaking, what God to pray to.

It is important to me that the tendency toward renewal noted in Eastern and Western Europe is proceeding in the direction of drawing closer. The result will not be a copy of the Swedish, British, or Soviet model. No. Something will result which meets the needs of the present stage of development of human and European civilization.

It has been observed now that people have no fear of choosing one system or the other. They are looking for their unique version which provides them with the best living conditions. When this choice proceeds freely then one can say only one thing: go right ahead.

G. Bush: I do not think that we differ here. We approve of self-determination and the attendant debates. I want you to understand our approach on a positive level: Western values do not at all mean imposing our system on Romania, Czechoslovakia, or even the GDR.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is very important for us. Fundamental changes are occurring and peoples are drawing closer together. And this is the main thing. I see that several means of solving problems used by another system are taking root in Eastern Europe—in the fields of economics, technology, etc. This is natural.

If we and you have such a common understanding, then all practical actions in changing conditions will be adequate and will begin to have a positive nature. [...]

J. Baker: I would like to clarify our approach to self-determination. We agree that each country should have the right of choice. But all of this makes sense only when the people in the country are actually in a position to choose freely. This is contained in the concept of “Western values,” and is not at all the right to force their systems on others.

M. S. Gorbachev: If someone lays claim to the truth—expect disaster.

G. Bush: Absolutely right.

J. Baker: I’ve been talking about something else. Let us say, the question of the reunification of Germany, which is causing nervousness in both our countries, and even among Europeans. What do we say here about this? So that reunification takes place according to the principles of openness, pluralism, and a free market. We do not at all want the reunification of Germany done on the model of 1937-1945 which, obviously, concerns you. The Germany of that time had nothing in common with Western values.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is what [longtime Gorbachev aide] A. N. Yakovlev asks: “why are democracy, openness, and a [free] market ‘Western’ values?”

G. Bush: It was not always so. You personally have laid the foundation for these changes, the movement toward democracy and openness. It is actually considerably clearer today that you and we share these values than, say, 20 years ago.

M. S. Gorbachev: We ought not be drawn into propaganda battles.

A. N. Yakovlev: When they insist on “Western values,” then “Eastern” and “Southern” values unavoidably appear. [...]

M. S. Gorbachev: That’s it. And you see that ideological confrontations flare up again...

G. Bush: I understand you and agree. Let us avoid careless words and talk more about the substance of the values themselves. We welcome the changes which are occurring with all our hearts.

M. S. Gorbachev: This is very important since, as I have said, the main thing is that the changes lead to greater openness in our relations with one another. We are beginning to be organically integrated and liberated from everything which divided us. What will this be called in the final account? I think—a new level of relations. Therefore, for my part, I support your suggestion—let us not have a discussion on a theological level. Historically this has always led to religious wars.

J. Baker: Could we possibly say as a compromise that this positive process is proceeding on the basis of “democratic values”? [...]

[Source: *The notes of A. S. Chernyaev, Gorbachev Foundation Archive, Moscow. Published in Gorbachev, Gody trudnykh resheniy [Years of Difficult Decisions] (Moscow: Al’fa-print, 1993). Translated by Gary Goldberg.*]

¹ Quoted in Raymond L. Garthoff, *The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1994), p. 408.

² Section 402 of the 1974 Trade Act. It denies normalized US commercial relations with communist countries who restrict free emigration of their citizens.

³ Limits the credit (to a maximum exposure of \$300 million) that the US Export-Import Bank can lend to the

Soviet Union. Passed in 1974 as an amendment to the Trade Act.

⁴ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was the precursor to the World Trade Organization [WTO] and established as part of the Bretton Woods System. Unlike the WTO, it was not legally binding in international law.

⁵ The talks in Vienna were comprised of several meetings including CSCE meetings (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) with representatives of countries negotiating conventional arms control. Several CSBM (confidence-building measures) agreed upon in 1989 and early 1990 included Bush’s revived “Open Skies” talks and a seminar on military doctrine at the Chiefs-of-staff level. Secretary of State Baker and Foreign Minister Shevardnadze agreed to call an international conference on “Open Skies” scheduled for February 1990 in Ottawa, Canada.

⁶ Prime Minister of India and member of Indian National Congress 1984-1989.

⁷ George P. Shultz was the US Secretary of State from 1982 to 1988.

⁸ Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, trading bloc between Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

⁹ NATO agreement on 11 December 1986 for strengthening the stability and security of Europe through a balance of conventional forces, arms control, and nuclear reduction while continuing to maintain a deterrent posture.

¹⁰ Soviet ambassador to USA 1962-1986, CPSU Central Committee member 1971-1991.

¹¹ Translator’s note: abbreviation unknown, but apparently nuclear-related.

¹² Strategic Arms (Limitation and) Reduction Talks.

¹³ Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, signed in Moscow 26 May 1972 and ratified on 3 August 1972.

¹⁴ See note 5.

¹⁵ Formed in 1973 by private citizens in North America, Japan, and Europe (EU countries) to foster the international system especially through NGOs.

¹⁶ Libya first obtained chemical agents from Iran which were used against Chad in 1987. Subsequently, Libya opened its own production facility in Rabta in 1988. The Rabta facility may have produced as much as 100 tons of blister and nerve agents before a fire closed it down in 1990.

Record of a Meeting in Berlin on 3 September 1989 between Comrade Hermann Axen, Member of the Politburo and Secretary of the Communist Party of the Social Unity Party [SED], and Comrade Raoul Castro Ruz, Second Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba and First Deputy of the State Council and Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba

The meeting took place during a brief stopover the Cuban delegation had en route to the Conference of Non-Aligned Countries.

Comrade Hermann Axen welcomed Comrade Raoul Castro, along with Juan Almeida Bosque and Vilma Espin, the members of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba accompanying him, and Carlos Aldana, member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, on behalf of Comrade Erich Honecker, Secretary General of the Central Committee of the SED and Chairman of the State Council. He expressed the great pleasure he took in being able to welcome to the capital of the GDR such long-standing comrades-in-arms from socialist Cuba. He noted that Cuba's unwavering efforts to advance the causes of peace, disarmament, and détente were followed with great interest in the GDR.

Comrade Raoul Castro expressed his heartfelt thanks for these words of welcome [...] Currently the escalation in imperialist pressure is perceived very clearly in Cuba. The Bush administration's reaction to international events has been increasingly aggressive in the Caribbean sphere. The situation in and around Panama, in particular, has intensified. Washington has not recognized the new government in Panama. The constant military maneuvers conducted by US troops in Panama are extremely provocative. The situation has escalated to the point that any shot could lead to a serious military conflict. Cuba's leadership is very concerned about this situation and is following it closely. A military clash in Panama could also directly impact Cuba and Nicaragua.

Addressing the recent trials of members of the military and Ministry of the Interior, Raoul Castro characterized them as very serious proceedings that led to a "regrettable outcome" of four death sentences and stiff sentences for a large number of officers. The situation in the Ministry of the Interior is particularly complex. Given the trial of Abrantes, the former Minister of the Interior, the Ministry has been completely reorganized. All high-ranking officers at both the Ministry and Province level have been dismissed. Fidel Castro is personally involved in the reorganization. In terms of the trial of General Ochoa, all of the trial materials have actually been published. More reserve was exercised for the trial of Foreign Minister Abrantes. The "Granma" official party organ published a detailed lead article on the trial several days ago. This should be the end of the matter.

Raoul Castro remarked that imperialist propaganda is attempting to exploit these internal problems for intensified subversive action against Cuba. Intensive preparations are currently underway in Cuba to record American television propaganda broadcasts. Given these conditions, it is a great consolation to Cuba that it has dependable allies. "The stability of the GDR is extremely important to us."

Raoul Castro noted that Cuba considers its relations with the GDR and SED to be very good. It was remarked with great satisfaction that the main statements made by Comrade Fidel Castro at the 30th Anniversary of the Victory of the Cuban Revolution, as well as on subsequent occasions, were reported in detail in the GDR press. "We are very proud of how our views are in concordance with those of the SED."

Comrade Hermann Axen expressed his thanks for this candid assessment and told his Cuban counterparts about the basic course of the GDR's domestic and foreign policy. It is evident that development in the GDR is stable and dynamic. The resolutions of the XI Party Congress are being attained on an on-going basis. The stability of the German socialist state is demonstrated by the fact that it has been possible to increase national income by 4 per cent. The local elections held in May 1989 are another affirmation of the SED's policies.

At the western edge of the socialist society, the GDR is fulfilling its obligations with the Warsaw Pact. The GDR is a solid barricade, a solid bulwark at this sensitive border in the heart of Europe. It is increasingly apparent that crises and erosion are occurring in some socialist countries, that is, in our own backyard.

The GDR fundamentally supports and welcomes the changes underway in the Soviet Union. At the same time, however, the GDR rejects any attempts by imperialist propaganda to exploit *perestroika* and *glasnost* for counter-revolutionary purposes in the GDR. Because of its steadfast stance, the GDR is currently a special diversionary target against socialism for the most aggressive imperialist forces.

Comrade Hermann Axen noted that the GDR is satisfied that bilateral cooperation between our two countries and parties is operating at a high level. The SED will do anything it can to continue to enhance this cooperation in solidarity. He asked Comrade Raul to convey to Comrade Fidel brotherly regards from Comrade Honecker.

Comrade Raoul Castro expressed his gratitude for the [GDR's] hospitality and his best wishes for the GDR as it prepared for its 40th anniversary.