

CONFERENCE REPORTS, RESEARCH NOTES AND ARCHIVE UPDATES

Cold War in the Caucasus: Notes and Documents from a Conference

By Svetlana Savranskaya and Vladislav Zubok

In the summer of 1999 the National Security Archive at the George Washington University, in cooperation with the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), launched a new initiative, “Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in the Cold War.” The main goal of the project was to explore the archives in Tbilisi, Yerevan, and Baku to determine to what extent Cold War era documents, including materials still classified in the central archives in Moscow, would be accessible there. The Caucasus Initiative also aimed at bringing scholars from these three republics into the larger international network of Cold War scholars and at incorporating the results of the regional scholars’ research into the wider canvas of historiography of Cold War and Soviet history. The first meeting of scholars from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and the United States took place in Tbilisi in October 2000.¹ The workshop was one of the first meetings between Armenian and Azeri historians after the years of war and alienation that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. It demonstrated that scholars from the three countries were greatly interested in exchanging research results and archival information among themselves and with their Western colleagues. After some discussion, the participants agreed on the agenda for a future conference.

This next meeting took place on 8-9 July 2002 in the Tsinandali Conference Center at the foot of the Big Caucasus Range in the Kakhety Valley in Georgia. Seventeen scholars participated in the conference, including *Laura Abbasova* (Baku State University), *Levan Avalishvili* (Tbilisi State University), *Jamil Hasanli* (Baku State University), *Eldar Ismailov* (Baku State University), *Georgi Kldiashvili* (Tbilisi State University), *Marziya Mammadova* (Baku State University), *Georgy Mamulia* (Black Sea University), *Eduard Melkonian* (Institute of General History, Armenia), *Karen Khachatryan* (Institute of General History of Armenia), *Ketevan Rostiashvili* (Tbilisi University), *Ronald G. Suny* (University of Chicago), *Francoise Thom* (Sorbonne University), *Amatun Virabian* (Archival Department of the Republic of Armenia), and *Andrei Zubov* (Institute of International Relations, Moscow).

The most archive-intensive and potentially significant part of the conference focused on the relationship between local nationalist aspirations and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin’s plans at the end of World War II. *Jamil Hasanli* presented a paper based on his extensive research on Soviet policies in

Iranian Azerbaijan in 1945-1946. The archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan contain a detailed and apparently complete set of documentation on the implementation of Stalin’s plans to extend Soviet influence and to acquire oil in northern Iran. The documents demonstrate how Stalin worked to achieve his expansionist goals by exploiting the nationalist feelings of Azeris living on both sides of the Soviet-Iranian border.²

Throughout the Soviet occupation of Iran (1941-1946), as *Hasanli*’s research shows, there was an unresolved ambiguity, perhaps even tension, between Stalin’s strategic goals in Iran and the Azeris’ nationalist agenda. First Secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan Mir Jafar Bagirov said in his instructions to a team of Soviet officials leaving for northern Iran in 1941: “By fulfilling your task, you will do a great service to the people of Azerbaijan. By implementing this honorable task, you will satisfy the desire of brothers divided for centuries.” Most Soviet officials thought that support for the Iranian Azeri minority had to be placed at the center of Soviet policies. Stalin, however, equivocated. Instead of 2,500 to 3,000 officials, only 600 men were commandeered from Soviet Azerbaijan into Iran in 1941-1942. Soviet occupation authorities also sought support from much smaller Kurdish, Armenian, and even Georgian minorities in northern Iran, possibly to counterbalance Azeri influence there.

After he proclaimed the reunification of Ukraine and Belarus in May 1945, Stalin found it expedient to respond positively to national expectations in the Southern Caucasus. Moscow urgently instructed the commissar of foreign affairs of Soviet Azerbaijan to prepare a memorandum about northern (Soviet) and southern (Iranian) Azerbaijan, demonstrating that they were historically and culturally identical. The memorandum was to emphasize that it was an opportune moment for the “liberation” of southern Azerbaijan. On 21 June and 6 July 1945 Stalin’s Politburo secretly ordered the exploration of oil fields in northern Iran and, simultaneously, the creation of separatist regimes in that area based on the Kurdish and Azeri nationalist movements. In Moscow, the troika of Vyacheslav Molotov, Lavrenty Beria, and Georgi Malenkov was responsible for the implementation of these plans. Stalin met with Bagirov, a close friend and protégé of Beria, and personally instructed him to take charge of both operations.³

By December 1945, the newly founded Democratic Party

of Azerbaijan (ADP) claimed political control over the ethnically Azeri territories in northern Iran. In combination with Stalin's refusal to withdraw Soviet troops from Iran, this effort unleashed one of the first international crises of the Cold War. Pressed by the United States and the United Nations, Stalin pulled his troops out of Iran in 1946. Subsequent events showed that the Soviet leader coldly sacrificed ADP leaders, Kurdish separatists, and other nationalist activists had cast their lot in with the Soviets. While *Hasanli* persuasively argued that Soviet goals in Iran were a combination of economic (oil) and security interests, the importance of regional nationalist aims during the crisis should not be discounted. Even today some scholars in Azerbaijan see the outcome of the Iranian crisis as a setback for their republic.

In her paper *Laura Abbasova* looked at another crisis that contributed to the rise of the Cold War: Soviet territorial claims on Turkey in 1945-1946, which eventually jolted Washington into action. Relying on archival evidence from Baku, as well as documents provided by other participants at the October 2000 workshop, *Abbasova* found, much to her surprise, that, behind the edifice of Soviet foreign policy, another "cold war" was being fought among the leaderships of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia. Soviet demands on Turkey revived the aspirations of Armenians, who remembered vividly their forced exodus from Turkish territories where they had lived for centuries. But the Soviet claims also intersected with the demands of the Georgian leadership to 'reclaim the historic lands' populated by the Laz in Trabzon along the south-eastern coast of the Black Sea. Authorized by Moscow (where Georgians were prominently represented in the Soviet leadership), Georgian historians *Dzhanashia* and *N. Berdzenishvili* published an article in December 1945 providing the historical and cultural justification for annexation of Trabzon. Their main rivals were the Armenians who argued that, out of 26,000 square kilometers (sq. km.) of the claimed Turkish territories, 20,500 sq.km. should be incorporated into the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. In response, Georgian Commissar of Foreign Affairs *Kiknadze* sent a memorandum to Moscow with a proposal to re-distribute the Turkish territories differently: while Armenia would receive only 12,760 sq.km., Georgia's share would grow to 13,190 sq.km. *Abbasova* wondered how such conflicting demands could emerge in Stalin's "totalitarian regime," and to what extent they were the product of local nationalism or inspired by Moscow.

Karen Khachatrian presented new archival material on the Turkish crisis of 1945-1946 from an Armenian perspective. Earlier in Soviet history, *Khachatrian* stressed, the Soviet government had neglected Armenian national interests and made territorial concessions to Turkey and to the pro-Bolshevik forces in Azerbaijan. Moscow's denunciation of the Soviet-Turkish Treaty on 19 March 1945 produced great enthusiasm among Armenians all over the world. The files of the Foreign Ministry of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic in Yerevan contain appeals and letters from the Armenian émigré communities around the world, including those in the United States, appealing to "great Stalin" and demand-

ing "justice." *Khachatrian* found that the leadership of Soviet Armenia became an intermediary between the voices of the Armenian diaspora and the central government in Moscow. The secretary of the Armenian Communist Party, *Gregory Arutyunyan*, repeatedly wrote to Stalin and Soviet Foreign Minister *Molotov* encouraging them to include the issue of returning the "Armenian historical lands" in the negotiations with the allies about the post-war settlement. Stalin seemed sympathetic, and, in connection with his plans for Turkey, authorized a global campaign for the repatriation of Armenians émigrés to Soviet Armenia. The number of repatriates quickly exceeded Soviet expectations and Armenia's modest resources. Very soon the republic was flooded with hundreds of thousands of people; the authorities needed additional resources to house, feed, and "re-educate" the newly-arrived.

As *Khachatrian's* research shows, by 1948 the problem of Armenian repatriates caught Stalin's attention. Soviet pressure on Turkey had failed to produce any territorial concessions and led Ankara to seek US protection. Many repatriates languished in Soviet Armenia in the less-than-comfortable conditions and began to think of returning home. Gradually, the repatriates turned from a diplomatic asset in Stalin's game into an economic burden and, for the paranoid Soviet leader, a growing security threat. There were signals to Stalin from both Azerbaijani and Georgian leaders warning that "a greater Armenia" might develop separatist plans and that Armenians should not be trusted. Soon the repatriates were resettled away from the state borders (see *Document No. 1*). On 14 September 1948, Stalin, then at his dacha on the Black Sea, sent a cable to *Georgy Malenkov*, instructing him to look into the case of a fire on board a Soviet ship bringing a group of Armenian repatriates to the Georgian port of *Batumi*. Stalin's suspicions that British-American agents were among the repatriates triggered snowballing investigations and repressions that resulted in the halt of Armenian repatriation and the exiling of thousands of repatriates into settlements and camps in Kazakhstan.

In his paper, *Eduard Melkonian* looked at the Armenian repatriation and demands in 1945-48 from the perspective of the "Spyurk," the Armenian diaspora. Based largely on Western archival sources, *Melkonian's* presentation traced the sources of the split among the Armenians abroad between the anti-Communist *Dashnaktsutyun* faction and the *Rankavar* faction, which had reconciled itself to the incorporation of Armenia into the Soviet Union. During the 1920s and early 1930s the *Rankavar* Armenians and the network of charity organizations, one of which was chaired by *Kallust Gulbenkyan*, helped Soviet Armenia, but the repression of the 1930s ended this assistance. After the end of World War II the Armenian community in the United States began to lobby for the revival of the Treaty of Trianon (1920) that had granted a considerable part of Anatolia to the Armenian state. As the Truman administration adopted the policy of containment, Armenian demands clashed with American strategic interests. At a crucial meeting with representatives of the Armenian community, Under Secretary of State *Dean Acheson*

asked whether they realized they were in effect supporting annexation of Turkish lands by the Soviet Union.⁴ The Armenians left the meeting in dismay, realizing that their hopes were not to be fulfilled. As the rivalry between the United States and the USSR grew, both great powers used the Armenian Diaspora as a tool to promote their influence in the Middle East.

Georgy Mamulia presented Georgian findings and perspectives on the thorny issue of territorial claims and ethnic

and hatred between troops in the Trans-Caucasian military district and the local population as well as incidents of anti-Russian and anti-Soviet outbursts. According to *Francoise Thom*, Stalin's expansionist policies further stimulated ethnic passions and rivalries. As a result, the Soviet leadership faced considerable internal problems as it sought to expand Soviet influence abroad.

Other presentations and discussions at the conference dealt with the domestic politics, ideology, culture and per-

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politics behind the façade of the Turkish and Iranian crises. He described how a small Georgian minority in Iran, the Fereidans, were caught in the pressures and counter-pressures of the rising Cold War. In 1945 this compact ethnic community, along with other ethnic minorities that populated northern Iran, came to Moscow's attention as a possible instrument for fomenting unrest in Iranian domestic politics. *Mamulia* discovered differences between Tbilisi and Moscow in their position towards the Fereidans; while the Georgian leadership wanted to repatriate the Fereidans to Georgia, Moscow clearly preferred to keep them in Iran. The future of the Fereidan Georgians was sealed only after Stalin realized that his plans to obtain influence in northern Iran were foiled by both Iranian intransigence and US pressure.

Mamulia's paper also focused on other pawns of the rising Cold War tensions—the Meskhety Turks and other minorities that moved to Georgia after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Turkey's drift to the West resulted in a campaign against potential “Turkish agents” and massive ethnic cleansing of Turkic elements in the Soviet borderlands (*Document No. 2*). On orders from Stalin, the Georgian Interior Ministry carried out “Operation Volna” (Wave) in 1949: 36,705 Meskhety Turks, Greeks, and repatriated Armenians were exiled into Kazakhstan and other Central Asian republics.

In the discussion of these findings, the participants, many for the first time, were able to transcend the boundaries of narrow “national projects” that have dominated historiography in Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan for decades. In his comments *Ronald Suny* pointed out that, in a broader historical perspective, the Armenian territorial demands were more serious and far-reaching than Azeri and Georgian demands which seemed to be inspired largely by Moscow and by educated, local elites. The Armenian repatriation offered more potential, but also greater risks for the Soviet regime. Other participants pointed to the Soviet secret police documents from the Georgian, Armenian, and Azeri archives that reflect the strong inter-ethnic tensions in South Caucasus at the end of World War II, which extended into later periods (*Document No. 3*). Contrary to the myths about “one Soviet people,” these documents capture many cases of conflict

personalities in the republics of the Southern Caucasus during the Cold War. *Thom* presented a richly researched paper on the role of Lavrenty Beria and the significance of the “Mingrelian Affair” (1951-1953). In addition to archival research in Moscow, Tbilisi and Paris, she also interviewed veterans of the Menshevik Georgian émigré community in France. Traditionally, the “Mingrelian Affair” was held to be primarily about rampant corruption in Georgia involving Mingrelians, an economically active minority in Georgia, many of them connected to Beria. But, as *Thom's* paper demonstrated, the “Mingrelian Affair” was a multi-layered phenomenon, and the fight against corruption was not its most important dimension. The “Mingrelian Affair” gained prominence due to Stalin's growing mistrust of several of his lieutenants (Beria, Vyacheslav Molotov, Georgy Malenkov, Anastas Mikoyan), who had come to power after the purges and had consolidated their positions during the World War II. To his immense irritation, Stalin found that they had developed solidarity and collective survival tactics that fended off Stalin's attempts to eliminate any one of them. Most ambitious and influential within this group was Beria, an ethnic Mingrelian.

Thom discovered heretofore unknown facets of the “Mingrelian Affair.” One was the “Gegechkori case.” E. P. Gegechkori was a prominent leader of the Menshevik Georgian government-in-exile based in Paris, which was heavily penetrated by Soviet intelligence. He was also father of Beria's wife, Nina Gegechkori. Stalin knew and tolerated these circumstances, considering them a political vulnerability that could be used against Beria, if need be, in the future. With Stalin's consent and permission, Beria ran all contacts with the Menshevik exiles in Paris through his personal intelligence network. But when international tensions mounted after the beginning of the Korean War, Stalin grew suspicions of Beria's special ties to the Georgian exiles and decided to cut them. The affair contributed, as *Thom* demonstrated, to Stalin's growing irritation at his powerful lieutenant.

Eldar Ismailov provided a political profile of a crucial player in the southern Caucasus, Mir Jafar Bagirov of

Azerbaijan. Considering his central role in 1945-46, it was fascinating to learn how Bagirov managed to survive the failure of Stalin's gamble in northern Iran. Besides his friendship with Beria, the key to Bagirov's survival was the fact that he was the first ethnic Azeri to hold the post of first secretary of the Communist Party of Azerbaijan. Historically and culturally, the population of Azerbaijan was a potentially explosive ethnic mix. Moreover, because of its oil, the republic was also of special strategic significance to the Soviet Union. *Ismailov* portrayed Bagirov as a man of limited education, but with great acumen and political instincts. New tensions over Iran and Turkey could have presented a threat to Bagirov's position. Stalin's ever suspicious plot-seeking mind could have conceivably turned against leaders of Turkic ethnic origins, as Turkey came to be seen as a possible base for infiltration of Azerbaijan. Bagirov understood this danger well and pre-emptively decided to lead the campaign to denounce pan-Turkic tendencies. In 1949 he launched a campaign to denounce Imam Shamil, the leader of the anti-Russian independence movement in the Caucasus in 1840s and 1850s. According to documents found by *Ismailov* in the Baku archives, during the Azeri leader's meetings with Stalin, Bagirov proposed that the history of Islamic peoples living on Soviet territory be rewritten. Subsequently, Bagirov moved to eradicate Turkic cultural ties among Azeri educated elites and stressed an "Azerbaijani identity" quite distinct from a pan-Turkic identity. In the context of the propagandist preparations of the early Cold War, Stalin could not have but appreciated Bagirov's efforts to create anti-Turkish sentiments in Azerbaijan.

To pre-empt Stalin's potential suspicions, Bagirov also unleashed massive repression against those party members who had any connections with Iran or Turkey—having relatives in those countries or even having visited them was considered sufficient grounds for a person to be forcibly relocated away from the border areas to other regions of the country. Finally, Bagirov proposed to Stalin that veterans of the ADP and other separatist movements, who after 1946 had found refuge in Baku, should be relocated to Siberia or Kazakhstan.

Georgy Kldiashvili and *Levan Avalishvili*, two young historians from Georgia, examined Georgia's role in the USSR's military preparations during the Cold War. Chronologically this paper was broad, covering the period from 1946 through the 1970s. During the early phase of the Cold War, particularly when tensions between the USSR and Turkey remained high, military installations were constructed in Georgia on a significant scale. The paper did not provide any conclusive evidence on war preparations against Turkey. Much more significant was the material on the readiness of Georgia for a possible aerial attack and atomic warfare. As Georgian archival documents show, the republic did not have a functioning civil defense system in 1950. A spate of measures intended to correct this situation were planned for 1951-1952. But the Georgian authorities failed to implement the plans for aerial and atomic defense after Stalin's death, and the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis caught them totally unprepared. Beginning in

1963 new allocations of funds and prodding from Moscow forced Georgian leaders to address their previous slacking and neglect. For instance, construction of a communication center for "special conditions" (i.e., war), planned as early as 1958, finally began in 1963. This haphazard approach, as the available documents suggest, continued until the end of the Soviet Union.

What happened to a considerable part of the military construction allocations in Georgia can be deduced from the paper of *Ketevan Rostiashvili* on the growing corruption in the republic. By the end of the 1960s, the Georgian economy was choked by corruption. *Rostiashvili* estimated that 50-60 percent, perhaps as much as 70 percent of the Georgian economy moved into the "gray" or black market. Official reports of the Union ministries (including the USSR Ministry of Finance) acknowledged, for example, that 72 million kilowatts of electric power had been stolen. But efforts to check corruption, most significantly the campaign spearheaded by the head of the Georgian KGB, Eduard Shevardnadze, only led to a mushrooming of the controlling agencies. The number of "people's controllers" in Georgia reached the grotesque figure of two hundred thousand people. There were 10,000 to 12,000 "inspections" annually that achieved no results and only kept increasing the amount of paperwork. *Rostiashvili* concluded that corruption and inefficiency seriously undermined mobilization and military-construction efforts in this strategically-exposed republic. These conclusions remain relevant, as the independent Republic of Georgia remains mired in all-pervasive corruption, until recently ironically under the leadership of the same Eduard Shevardnadze.

Another highlight of the conference was the discussion on the state of the archives and prospects for new archival discoveries. Participants emphasized the special significance of the personal "funds" (collections) of M.J. Bagirov in Azerbaijan as well as "special dossiers" in the Armenian State Archives. The head of the Armenian Archival Service, *Amatun Virabian*, presented a brief analysis of the "special dossiers" and their content.

Finally, the participants became engaged in a discussion of the international and national contexts of contemporary history of the southern Caucasus. It was stressed that the Cold War remains a potentially fruitful context for re-integrating disparate historiographic projects developed in Tbilisi, Yerevan and Baku. *Andrei Zubov* proposed a comparative analysis of imperial policies in the southern Caucasus, implemented by Tsarist Russia, the early Soviet state in the 1920s, and the late Soviet Union during the Cold War era. *Suny* shared his experience of debates among American historians on Stalin's state-building and Soviet social and cultural developments with the participants.

The Tsinandali conference demonstrated a great potential of cooperation between Western historians and the scholars from the republics in the southern Caucasus. Starting from scratch, the project "Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in the Cold War" is developing into a productive international network of scholars working on topics of contempo-

rary Soviet history. Within two years the project's participants studied and analyzed an impressive amount of archival information in the state and party archives of Tbilisi, Yerevan, and Baku. Their papers provide the first drafts of what will eventually become the contemporary history of the region during Soviet rule. Preliminary results and conclusions demonstrate that scholars from Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan greatly benefited from international cooperation, as well as from personal interaction with leading Western scholars. At the same time the detailed regional research makes an important contribution to the new Cold War history as it begins to abandon its traditional focus on the "two towers" of super-power confrontation and deal with a more diverse set of topics, among them the role of satellites and clients, their "subaltern strategies" to make their voices heard in the great power game, the spill-over effect of Cold War crises, and the national, cultural, and social developments inside the Cold War "home fronts."

We plan to develop and support this research network with all available means, promote close ties with archivists in all three republics, and organize periodic workshops. We also intend to bring the results of this project to the attention of Cold War scholars and a broader Western scholarly community. For further information, contact Svetlana Savranskaya at Svetlana@gwu.edu or CWIHP at coldwar1@wwic.si.edu.

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DOCUMENT No. 1

Memorandum, "About the Mood of a Part of the Armenians Repatriated From Foreign Countries," from Armenian Communist Party Central Committee Secretary Grigory Arutinov to Soviet Leader Josef Stalin, 22 May 1947

[Source: National Armenian Archives. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.]

SECRETARY CC VCP/b/

Comrade STALIN I. V.

ABOUT THE MOOD OF A PART OF THE ARMENIANS REPATRIATED FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Out of 50,945 Armenians, who arrived from foreign countries, 20,900 are able to work; they all were given employment at industrial enterprises, construction, in the teams of craft cooperation, and the peasants—in the collective and state farms.

The main mass of repatriated Armenians adjusted to

their jobs and takes an active part in productive activities. A significant part participates in the socialist competition—for early fulfillment of the plans, and many of those exhibit high standards in their work.

There is a small part of the repatriated, who initially switched from one job to another and subsequently engaged in trade and speculation on the markets. The number of [those individuals] reaches 600 to 700 people.

Among the members of this group exists a sentiment in favor of re-emigration. According to our information, 21 persons crossed the state border into Turkey at various times. 110 people were detained in the border zone for violations of the border regulations, and they are charged with attempting to cross the border [illegally]. In addition to that, we know of up to 300 people who are inclined to re-emigrate. Usually, under interrogation, the detained persons explain their motivation to flee the Soviet Union as due to economic factors.

The analysis of their situation on the part of the CC CP(b) of Armenia shows that all of them were given employment upon their arrival, were provided with housing, and received assistance at their workplaces both in food and money. All this notwithstanding, they have not settled into their jobs, but engaged in sales on the market.

The majority of these persons are between 18 and 27 years of age. According to the statements of their parents and family members, they did not work anywhere before their arrival in Armenia and were "separated" from their families.

The repatriated almost unanimously condemn the behavior of this group of repatriates and call them traitors.

Taking into account the material difficulties of the first years after relocation, the government of Armenia provides systematic assistance to the needy.

Besides the provision of bread on the ration card system for all relocated Armenians and members of their families, they are periodically given [other] food products—flour, cereals, sugar—and other goods—kerosene, soap, footwear etc.—above the usual provision.

The government of Armenia provided 2,300 thousand rubles from the financial assistance fund to those repatriates who have large families and are needy.

Up to 30 million rubles was provided already for construction of individual houses from state credit. The repatriated persons are building 3,890 houses, and further selection of plots for such construction is in progress.

The CC CP(b) of Armenia and the Council of Ministers of the Armenian SSR outlined measures to strengthen the border regime in order to prevent border crossings. Among those measures in the relocation of the repatriates, who settled in the villages adjacent to the line of the state border, to deeper regions of the republic.

Those people who express re-emigration sentiments are being relocated from the border regions and the city of Leninakan to the deep regions of the republic.

It was decided not to settle arriving Armenians in the villages located in the 5-kilometer border zone in the future.

Joint measures for increasing the number of border posts and checkpoints, as well as the number of border personnel,

were outlined to the USSR Ministry of Interior.

We are undertaking measures for strengthening political work among the repatriated Armenians.

SECRETARY OF CC CP(B) OF ARMENIA

(ARUTINOV Gr.)

22/V-1947

N 513/c



DOCUMENT No. 2

Memorandum from Lt. Gen. Zhelesnikov, Head of the Special Department of the KGB at the USSR Council of Ministers for Transcaucasus Military District, to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, Comrade P.V. Kovanov, 19 September 1956

[Source: Georgian Presidential Archive Fond 14, opis (finding aid) 31, delo (file) 297. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.]

SPECIAL DEPARTMENT FOR THE TRANSCAUCASIAN
MILITARY DISTRICT OF THE COMMITTEE OF STATE
SECURITY AT THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

19 September 1956

No. 2/8098

Tbilisi

Top Secret

Copy No. 2

To the SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF GEORGIA

Comrade Kovanov P. V.

I report that the last months of 1956 were characterized by an increase in infiltrations by Western agents from Turkey across the land border into the areas of deployment of the troops of the Transcaucasus Military District, and by an increase in [the number of] visits to the Transcaucasus, and mainly the areas of troop deployment, by foreign tourists and officials of capitalist diplomatic missions among whom persons engaged in intelligence work were noted.

Over the course of June, July and August, two Turkish agents and two American intelligence agents were dispatched from the Turkish side across the state border. All of them received meeting quarters on the territory of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

In addition, on 11 August of this year, an unimpeded crossing of the border from Turkey by four unknown criminals took place in the area of Akhaltsikhe in the Georgian ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]. On 22 August they crossed back into Turkey approximately in the same

area. In the exchange of fire, which occurred when they were returning from the USSR, one violator was killed. Fake documents, with which agents of foreign intelligence [services] are usually equipped, were found on him.

Military identity card number series GD No. 694861 issued by the Leninakan City Military Committee and passport series U-OF No. 676430 issued by the First Police Department of Kutaisi were confiscated from the body.

This attests to the fact that the Turkish intelligence [service] knows well the procedures of preparation and issuing of documents in the area.

The analysis of the instructions received by the above-mentioned three agents from the Turkish and the American intelligence [services] shows that the intelligence [services] exhibit serious interest in obtaining detailed information about the location, number and equipment of the military units, and also pay attention not only to the general information, such as in what area a certain group [of forces] is located, but to detailed reports on the location of particular units.

For example, agent "VOLGIN," who arrived from Turkey in July of this year, pointed out that the Turkish intelligence [service], which had information about the location of the 4th army battalions, instructed him to find out precisely in which settlements the units of those battalions were quartered and with what weapons they were equipped with.

Agent Sochlyan, who arrived from Turkey at approximately the same time, was instructed to carry out reconnaissance of the units of the Yerevan garrison.

The [Western] intelligence [services] devote great attention to the collection of information about the air force units and to the changes in their equipment, which are taking place at the present time.

For example, the same Turkish agent "C" received an assignment to find out whether new secret airports were being built in the neighborhood of Yerevan.

The American agent Moroz, who was deployed in the area of Leninakan in July of this year, had orders to find the airport near the settlement Saganlugi (Tbilisi region), and to find out what kind of aviation was based at that airport, and to what extent this airport was equipped to handle modern aviation. He was also ordered to obtain by any means (to steal or to pressure the servicemen to sell to him) a catalog with the description of the front section of the MIG-17 airplane.

Regarding the issue of the [Soviet] Navy, these agents received the following instructions: agent "M" was instructed to go to Baku and collect information about submarines, and in particular, about missile and radar equipment on them.

Turkish intelligence instructed agent "B," mentioned above, to establish the location of the Navy headquarters in Baku, and as well as the types of ships based in the port of Baku.

It was recommended to the agents that they collect that information both by means of personal observation and from conversations with people who possess the relevant information.

For example, it was suggested to agent "B" that while he

collected information about the number [of troops in] a certain unit, quartered in the winter accommodations, he should also determine the length and width of the barracks, the number of floors, the number of windows, and how many guards were on duty. If [the troops] were quartered in camp conditions—to count the number of tents.

It was recommended to determine the types of naval vessels by means of visual observation. For this purpose, the agent was shown pictures of various types of Soviet ships at the intelligence [service] offices, including several types of our submarines.

As was mentioned above, it was suggested to the American agent “M” that he should not hesitate to use violence or bribery of servicemen in order to obtain the catalog description of the MIG-17 plane.

All of the above-mentioned agents received the assignment to identify morally unstable people and individuals dissatisfied with the Soviet regime to encourage them to cross into Turkish territory, or to use them for intelligence purposes on our territory.

For example, Turkish agent “C” received an assignment to select such people from among those previously tried for various crimes, to collect biographical and personal information from them, to report it to Turkish intelligence, to encourage the most adversarially inclined of them to cross into Turkey, and to supply them with a pretext for that.

Agent “B” was assigned to escort one person to Turkey, to collect information about two residents of Baku, including one officer of the 4th Army, and to prepare one other person for subsequent relocation to the Crimea with an assignment from Turkish intelligence. It is characteristic that it was recommended to the agent that he should arrange his first meeting with the person under consideration [in order] to get to know him in a restaurant with some drinking, but to follow him beforehand by the means of outside surveillance. The same agent had the assignment to study the public mood of the population in connection with the struggle against the Stalin’s personality cult and condemnation of Bagirov.

The efforts of Turkish intelligence to encourage Soviet citizens to betray their Motherland is expressed in other ways as well.

In 1955, and especially in the summer of 1956, numerous incidents were registered in which Turkish servicemen, and in some cases civilians as well, struck up conversations with soldiers of our border forces soldiers, and in the course of such conversations conducted anti-Soviet propaganda and encouraged them to cross over into Turkish territory, promising them safety and guarantees that these people would not be transferred back to the USSR.

Those facts were most often noted with regard to border troops units 38 and 39 on the section [between] Akhaltsikhe and Leninakan. Similar incidents were also noted on the section of the border with Iran. In certain cases those actions succeed, which was proven by the escape to Iran of three servicemen of the Azerbaijan border troop district between May and August, 1956. As interrogations of the traitors of the Motherland ROTANOV, BONDAREV, and

GORBUNOV have shown, all of them were subjected to intelligence interrogations in Turkey, and they have given the foreign intelligence [services] sensitive information about the troops of the Transcaucasus Military District. It is characteristic that all these persons were encouraged to cooperate with Turkish, American, and British intelligence [agencies].

Some unstable elements and adversarially inclined persons from among the Soviet citizenry also show an interest in the Soviet-Turkish border—they arrive at the villages located close to the border, including the areas of troop deployments, with treacherous designs and search for ways to cross into Turkey or Iran. Such incidents are most often, registered in the regions of Batumi, Akhaltsikhe, Leninakan, Yerevan, Nakhichevan, and Lenkoran.

During the eight months of 1956, 22 people who attempted to betray their Motherland were detained in those areas.

In 1955, and especially 1956, the influx of various foreign tourist and other groups and of official representatives of capitalist diplomatic missions, who systematically visit various regions of the Transcaucasus, has increased.

Most often, such foreigners are representatives of the United States, France, England, Turkey, and some other countries. These individuals, and especially diplomatic personnel, make visits to mainly strategically important regions of Sukhumi-Tbilisi, Kutaisi-Yerevan-Baku, and Leninakan-Batumi. Groups of troops are stationed in those regions and along the highways leading to those [regions].

Observation of foreigners has registered their intention to collect information about the troops by means of visual observation, photography, and use of other technology. The foreigners devote great attention to investigation of highways important from the military point of view, such as the Georgian military road, the road through the Suram and other mountain ridges.

There were some noted incidents of meetings between the foreigners and re-émigrés, and people who moved to establish permanent residency in the Transcaucasus republics from countries in the Middle East, from France, and other countries, and who mainly settled in the Armenian territory.

A large number of tourists visit the region of the Black Sea Coast, where in August of this year packages with NLF (National Labor Front) anti-Soviet literature were discovered, addressed to the population and servicemen of the Soviet Army.

The circumstances described above were pointed out to all KGB Special Departments in the region. They were instructed to conduct counterintelligence work taking into account the information presented above.

Head of Special Department of the KGB
At the USSR Council of Ministers for Transcaucasus
Military district
Lieutenant General

(ZHELEZNIKOV)

DOCUMENT No. 3**Report by the Chairman of the Committee for State Security of the Armenian Socialist Soviet Republic A. Yuzbashyan, 14 March 1979**

[Source: Armenian National Archives. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.]

Top secret
Copy No. 1

REPORT

(presented at the session of the Bureau of the CC CP of Armenia on 6 March 1979)

Under the influence of the most aggressive forces of imperialism, the foreign policy course of the United States government and its allies clearly exhibits a tendency toward returning to a policy “from the position of strength” and to the “cold war.” The current leadership of the PRC [People’s Republic of China], who unleashed undisguised aggression against socialist Vietnam in February of this year, has practically merged with the forces of imperialism in its anti-Soviet aspirations. Therefore there clearly exists an attempt by our enemies to create a united anti-Communist front.

In the implementation of the aggressive course against the countries of the socialist commonwealth, and mainly against the Soviet Union, an important role is given to the special services and the anti-Soviet foreign centers, the subversive activity of which has acquired a global character.

One would like to especially emphasize the fact that the enemy, without giving up its final strategic goals, has adjusted its tactics [and] focused on conducting ideological subversion which has as its goal “exploding” socialism from within. A powerful, multi-branch apparatus has been put in service for ideological subversion. And the imperialist countries long ago raised this line of subversive activity to the level of state policy.

By acting in skillful and diverse ways, and by actively using specific features of different regions of the USSR all the channels through which people travel in and out [of the Soviet Union], and the mass media, the enemy often achieves his dirty goals. Under the influence of hostile Western propaganda, negatively inclined individuals inside the country, including those in the Armenian SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic], still commit anti-state, and anti-Soviet crimes.

Notwithstanding the absence of a social base in the country for anti-Soviet activity there are certain marginalized individuals who choose the criminal way [of life]. This kind of person also exists in our republic.

Protecting Soviet society from the overtures of the reactionary imperialist forces is the main task of the organs of state security, which they successfully fulfill under the unwavering control and daily leadership of our Party.

All the people, the widest strata of our society, take part in fulfilling that noble task. And it is precisely in this connection that we should consider the CC CPSU Resolution of 23

May 1977, “About Raising the Vigilance of the Soviet People.”

Even taking into account the obvious exceptional character of this crime, it appears that the case of the “Bombers,” which was presented today to the Bureau of the CC CP of Armenia bears clear traces of all these processes and phenomena, so to speak, of the external and internal order, which were mentioned above.

Brief summary of the case:

During the evening of 8 January, in various public places in the city of Moscow, criminal elements carried out explosions of hand-made bombs, resulting in human casualties, destruction and damage to state property. The explosions occurred in the metro train, in grocery store No. 15, and next to the window of grocery store No. 5. As a result of the explosions, 7 people were killed, and 37 people were injured to varying degrees.

At the end of October 1977, criminals were preparing to detonate new explosives, this time at the Kursky Railway Terminal. However, the measures for ensuring safety in public places, undertaken jointly by the organs of the KGB and MVD, scared the criminals, and they fled hurriedly leaving behind a bag with the explosives.

As a result of the additional measures which were undertaken the operative group of the Armenian SSR KGB, working in coordination with the USSR KGB, succeeded in capturing the criminals at the beginning of November 1977. They turned out to be: S[tepan] S. Zatikyan, head of the group, born in 1946 in Yerevan, and resident of Yerevan, non-affiliated, married, did not complete higher education; A. V. Stepanyan, born 1947 in Yerevan, resident of Yerevan, with a secondary education; Z. M. Bagdasaryan, born 1954 in the village of Kanachut in the Artashatsky region, and resident of Kanachut, with a secondary education.

From 16 to 24 January 1979, the Collegium for Criminal Offenses of the USSR Supreme Soviet held an open trial session to consider the criminal case charging S. S. Zatikyan and his two accomplices with anti-Soviet activities and committing a subversive act.

During the course of the trial the information received earlier by the KGB organs was fully confirmed with regard to the fact that Zatikyan, having served a four-year sentence for anti-Soviet activities, did not disarm ideologically, and, moreover, chose the road of extremist methods of struggle against the Soviet state. After being indoctrinated in a hostile spirit, he involved his accomplices in the preparation and implementation of the subversive acts.

In the course of the investigation and trial in this case, a large amount of material and other evidence was collected. Approximately 750 victims and witnesses were questioned, 140 expert tests were made, and over 100 searches were conducted; persuasive evidence was collected in the residences of the criminals, linking them to the explosions.

This gave [the investigation] the opportunity fully to reveal Zatikyan’s and his accomplices’ roles in the crimes they prepared and committed, even during the preliminary investigation. In particular, Zatikyan stated during the pre-

liminary investigation the following: “I did not testify against my own will, I told the truth that I built the explosive devices ... that my actions ... represent just one method of struggle against the regime that exists in the Soviet Union.” Later, during the trial, Zatikyan refused to give testimony. However, his accomplices gave extensive testimony about the circumstances of preparing and carrying out the new subversive acts. Zatikyan was fully implicated by his accomplices and other witnesses, by the conclusions of the experts, as the main ideological and practical organizer of the subversive acts and the main actor in building the explosive devices.

Taking into account the exceptional danger and the grave consequences of the crimes committed by him, the court sentenced Zatikyan and his accomplices to the ultimate measure of punishment—the death sentence. The verdict was received with approval by the numerous representatives of the Soviet public who were present in the courtroom, including representatives from our republic. By the way, one of the jurors and all three defense lawyers were also from our republic. The sentence was carried out.

Using the Zatikyan case as an example it would be instructive to trace how he came to his evil design and who and what helped him in that.

Brief background:

Over the last 12 years, the Armenian KGB has uncovered and liquidated more than 20 illegal anti-Soviet nationalist groups created under the influence of hostile Western propaganda. Altogether, about 1,400 people were engaged in anti-Soviet activities in some form or another.

In accordance with the Party’s principles, the organs of state security have given and continue to give preference to preventive and prophylactic measures, and consider arrest an extreme measure only. Those arrested represented only 4.3% of the individuals who were proven to have engaged in anti-Soviet activities. Zatikyan was one of them—he was a member of one of the anti-Soviet nationalist groups, which pompously named itself NUP (National United Party). It was created by the unaffiliated artist Khachatryan Aikaz, born in 1918 (in 1978 he was sentenced to 1.5 years of prison for a common crime), who, upon learning about Zatikyan’s role in the explosions in Moscow, called himself his “spiritual father.”

In 1968, Zatikyan was arrested and sentenced, as was already mentioned, to four years in prison. At his arrest, they confiscated a document written by Zatikyan—“Terror and Terrorists”—in which he made an effort to justify the methods of extremism and means of struggle against the Soviet state.

During his stay at the correctional labor colony, and then in prison (where he was transferred because he systematically violated the regime, and negatively influenced other inmates, who chose the road of improvement), Zatikyan not only did not change his ways, but, on the contrary, nursed thoughts about even more extreme methods of hostile activity.

One should also note that Zatikyan admired the Dashnaks [Armenian Revolutionary Federation, an ultra-nationalist movement whose territorial ambitions include the Karabakh region and those parts of “Greater Armenia” currently within the borders of Turkey and Georgia]. In the course of the investigation, and during his trial, he called the Dashnaks a “sacred party.”

One of Zatikyan’s accomplices—Stepanyan—participated in an anti-Soviet nationalist gathering. For that, in 1974, he was served an official warning in accordance with the Decree of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 25 December 1972. However, that official warning did not bring Stepanyan to his senses, did not stop him from committing the crime.

The USSR KGB gave a positive assessment to the investigative and trial measures undertaken by the organs of state security of the USSR. The Armenian KGB also took an active part in that work.

However, all this took place after the first series of explosions had occurred in Moscow. And the second series of explosions had already been prepared. There should have been no explosions at all. In any case, after the explosions, the criminals should have been quickly discovered and arrested. However, that did not happen. We realize that we have obviously made some mistakes here. The republican KGB drew the following lessons from the “Bombers” case.

One can name the following reasons [as those] that contributed to the emergence of the “Bombers:”

1. Enemy influence from the abroad in the framework of the ideological subversion carried out by the adversary.
2. Negative influence by some hostile individuals on the young people.
3. As was already mentioned, mistakes in our work, in the work of the Armenian KGB.
4. Loss of sharpness of political vigilance among some categories of the population, as a consequence of a certain weakening of the ideological work.

In addition to that, there is some concern about persons who are not involved in productive labor, as well as such aliens to our social regime [who practice] phenomena such as bribery, theft of socialist property, petty crime, and vicious systematic libel against honest Soviet people in the form of anonymous letters and statements.

All this not only darkens the general moral and political climate in the republic, but also represents potential fertile grounds for marginalized elements, who then slide toward anti-Soviet activities.

Foreign Armenian colonies represent a special concern for us. Let us dwell on just one question out of the whole system of issues related to this situation. The processes and developments occurring in the colonies, taking into account their various connections with the republic, influence the situation here. The enemy, primarily the United States, actively works with the foreign Armenian colonies—they use

all means to encourage persons of Armenian nationality to move and establish permanent residency in their country. Today already 600,000 Armenians reside in the United States.

An Armenian Bureau was created and is now functioning in the State Department, and Columbia University is planning to create an Armenian Cultural Center.

All these events unquestionably serve the same anti-Soviet goals.

There are plans to increase the Armenian diaspora in the United States to one million people. This could have serious consequences for us. The best organized force in the foreign Armenian colonies is the anti-Soviet nationalist party Dashnaktsutyun. It is the most dangerous for us due to a number of circumstances (experience, knowledge of the situation, absence of language barrier, etc.).

That is why the CPSU CC resolution of 27 December 1978 about strengthening our work with the Armenians residing abroad has a great significance in trying to interfere with the efforts of the American administration to extend its influence on the foreign Armenian colony.

The KGB of the Armenian SSR reports its suggestions regarding the realization of the above-mentioned CPSU CC resolution to the Armenian CP CC separately.

Dashnak propaganda is being skillfully and inventively carried out, and it reaches its addressees more often than other kinds of propaganda. We have to give them credit—they choose topics for ideological attacks against us in a fine and clever manner.

Take for example slogans like “Great and united and independent Armenia.” Or the way they threw in the so-called “land issues” (both internal and external). It is natural that the Dashnaks did not pass by Sero Khanzadyan’s letter, did not miss the clearly non-scholarly polemics between Z. Buniatov and some of our scholars. They did not shy away from the case of Zatikyan and his accomplices either. In addition, every time the Dashnaks choose the most skillful and at the same time innocent forms for their propaganda (for example about the “purity” of the Armenian language, about creation of genuinely Armenian families, etc.), which represents nothing other than acts of ideological subversion.

Of course, the current situation, the growing might of the socialist forces, and, first of all, of our country, could not but affect the Dashnak strategy, but their essence, their strategic designs remained unchanged, and we should start from that assumption in our work. Naturally, we should also work against the Dashnaks—to try to limit, decrease their practical anti-Soviet activity.

It is necessary to point out that lately the enemy has been devoting more attention to the socio-political sphere in his intelligence endeavors. In our republic, they are interested in such issues as the attitude of the local people to the Russians, Azerbaijani, and other peoples of the Soviet Union, to the “land” problem (both internal and external), to Turkey, and to the United States. [They are interested in] how the genocide is taught in schools, what kind of nationalist outbursts happen in the republic, and how the nationalities issue is being resolved, and how the authorities treat the so-

called dissidents, etc.

It is not hard to notice where the enemy is aiming—this is not just an expression of idle interest! The enemy is trying to weaken, and if possible to undermine, the friendship of the peoples of the Soviet Union—the basis of our power.

In our republic, to some extent, the acts of ideological subversion, which are conducted now within the framework of the campaign for the so-called “defense of human rights” have made their impact. There emerged the so-called “Group of Assistance for the Helsinki Accords” (the group was dissolved, its leader—Nazaryan—was sentenced to 5 years in prison at the end of 1978). There also emerged an all-Union “leader” of the so-called “Free Labor Unions”—some Oganesyanyan [in our republic]. As a result of the prophylactic work, he renounced his unbecoming activity.

The actions named above did not bring success to the enemy. They are not that dangerous for our republic. The Dashnak propaganda, and everything that originates in the Armenian foreign colonies is a different issue. The Dashnaks exploit the nationalist feelings of the people, speculate on them. The Armenian KGB constantly takes that fact into account in its work.

Information in the Soviet press and on the radio about the trial and the sentence in the case of the “terrorists” caused sharp indignation against the criminal actions taken by Zatikyan and his accomplices in the entire Soviet Union, in all the strata of population of the republic. The people throughout the republic condemned those actions and approved the sentence of the USSR Supreme Soviet, emphasizing that those criminals have nothing in common with the Armenian people, which owes all its accomplishments, and its very existence in the Soviet state, to the great Russian people.

At the same time, we should not close our eyes to the fact that there are some hostile individuals with anti-Soviet and anti-Russian sentiments, who are nursing thoughts about separating Soviet Armenia from the USSR, express extremist sentiments (read excerpts).

For example, an unidentified person called the USSR KGB in Moscow after Zatikyan and his accomplices’ sentence was carried out, and expressed a threat to “avenge” the sentenced.

The KGB of Armenia sees this main task as follows: to prevent and to interdict in a timely manner all extremist and other adversarial expressions on the part of the negative elements.

In this, we are starting from the assumption that in the current conditions, only politically well-prepared Communist members of the security organs can carry out the demanding tasks of ensuring state security, of protecting Soviet society from the subversive actions of the enemy’s special services, from the foreign anti-Soviet centers, and from some hostile individuals inside the country. We believe that no Communist can have any kind of neutral, or passive position in issues of ideology.

The issues of ideological and political preparation and internationalist education of the personnel have been and will remain at the center of attention of the Collegium, the Party Committee of the KGB of the republic, and the party

organizations of the [KGB] units.

The Armenian KGB works under the direct control of and direction of the CP CC of Armenia, and it constantly feels the assistance and support of the Central Committee and the government of the republic.

Officers of the Armenian KGB assure the CC CP of Armenia that they will apply all their skills and power to fulfill the tasks entrusted to them.

Chairman of the Committee for State Security
Of the Armenian SSR

[signature]
M. A. Yuzbashyan

14 March 1979

NOTES

¹ See *Bulletin* 12/13 (Fall/Winter 2001), CWIHP, p. 309.

² See the documents provided by Hasanli, printed in *CWIHP Bulletin* 12/13, pp. 310-314.

³ See *CWIHP Bulletin* 12/13 (Fall/Winter 2001), pp. 310-312.

⁴ Eduard Melkonian, "The Armenian Diaspora and its Coexistence with the Outside World: Processes of Political Adaptation (the 1920s-1950s)," paper presented at the Conference, "Cold War in the Caucasus," 8-9 July 2002.



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The Cold War History Research Center in Budapest was established in December 1998 as the first scholarly institution founded as a non-profit organization in East Central Europe. Its main goal is to become a clearinghouse center for Cold War research in East Central Europe. The Center plans to develop its web site, established in 2000, into a central provider of English language materials on contemporary history of the region.

Recently the Center has initiated the establishment of a Cold War History Library that would serve as a central depository of publications on Cold War history to be available for all interested researchers in East Central Europe. Since funding for the library has not yet been secured, the Center encourages regional and international scholars and institutions to send copies of their books and articles (published in any language) to the Center's library at the address above.

A Cold War Odyssey: The Oswald Files

By Max Holland

On 20 June 1999, Russian president Boris Yeltsin unexpectedly handed US President Bill Clinton more than 80 pages of “declassified” Soviet-era documents pertaining to the shocking murder of President John F. Kennedy.¹ In doing so, Yeltsin added yet another chapter to the already convoluted saga of Moscow’s archival response to the November 1963 assassination.

There have been 10 authorized and significant disclosures in the nearly four decades since 22 November by the Soviet Union and its successor states.² Primary information has become available via three routes: the transfer of actual documents; the release of summaries based on authorized access to documents; and the publication of books based on privileged or unusual (to say the least) access to key archival files.

This piecemeal release of documentation began within days of the assassination, in recognition of the gravity of questions about Lee Harvey Oswald’s sojourn in the Soviet Union from October 1959 to May 1962.

- On 25 November 1963, Anastas Mikoyan, deputy chairman of the Soviet Council of Ministers, presented an expurgated version to the US State Department of the KGB’s 23 November summary report about Oswald, hurriedly compiled for the CPSU Central Committee after Oswald’s arrest.³
- On 30 November 1963, Anatoly Dobrynin, the Soviet ambassador to Washington, gave Secretary of State Dean Rusk photocopies from the embassy’s consular file on the Oswalds. The documents included a letter from Oswald dated as recently as 9 November.⁴
- In May 1964, after a request from the presidential Commission on the assassination, chaired by Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren, transmitted via the State Department, the Soviet government provided additional routine documents (such as Oswald’s application for an exit visa) generated during the American’s 2½-year stay in Moscow and Minsk, Belarus (then Belorussia).⁵

This May 1964 release would be the last disclosure for nearly 30 years, although US interest in Soviet records never flagged during the remaining decades of the Cold War. Most notably, in the late 1970s the House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) conducted another investigation into President Kennedy’s death and reopened the issue formally. Meetings were held between HSCA representatives and officials at the Soviet embassy in Washington. At one such encounter, a senior Soviet official explained that the request presented Moscow with “serious problems.” If Soviet agencies answered some questions, “they might find themselves having to answer other questions and, in the final analysis, no one would be satisfied with their responses anyway.”

Ultimately, the Soviet response to HSCA was that “all relevant documents concerning Oswald had already been transmitted” to the Warren Commission and that “no further documents could be made available.”⁶

The end of the Cold War opened new opportunities and so the pace of releases picked up again, although disclosure to deepen historical understanding was seldom the guiding principle. The release of Soviet-era, assassination-related documents remained highly erratic and often influenced by other considerations.⁷

- In November 1991, ABC News “Nightline” broadcast a program devoted to summarizing information contained in Oswald’s 6-volume, 4-foot thick KGB case file, then on deposit in the central KGB archives in Moscow.⁸
- In August 1992, *Izvestiya*, a Moscow newspaper, published a 5-part series based upon Oswald’s KGB case file, No. 31451.⁹ The file itself was now in the possession of the Belarusian KGB (BKGB) after having become the object of a tug-of-war between Russia and Belarus. The latter claimed ownership on the grounds that the bulk of the dossier had been compiled by BKGB counterintelligence agents.¹⁰
- In 1993, Oleg Nechiporenko, a retired KGB colonel, published a memoir in which he recounted, among other things, Oswald’s September 1963 visit to the Soviet embassy in Mexico City, where Nechiporenko was posted at the time.¹¹ Nechiporenko’s account was partially based on access to archival documents from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, CPSU Central Committee, KGB/BKGB, and the author reproduced parts of several documents verbatim in his text.
- In 1994, Yeltsin’s journal for the tumultuous period August 1991 to October 1993 was published in the West as *Boris Yeltsin: The Struggle for Russia*.¹² Without much explication Yeltsin’s gratuitously included (in an appendix) portions of four KGB memos to the Central Committee CPSU from 1963, all of which pertained to the assassination.
- In 1995, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs turned over five KGB memoranda (a total of 17 pages) in response to a query from the Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB), the first official US entity to reopen the matter since the end of the Cold War.¹³ This very limited response did not even include the four KGB documents Yeltsin cited in his 1994 memoir.
- Also in 1995, Norman Mailer published a book most notable for its narrative about Oswald’s years in Minsk. This portion of Mailer’s book was based upon privileged access to Oswald’s case file and BKGB officers who had been directly involved. Mailer quoted actual

transcripts from the electronic surveillance of the Oswalds' apartment, as well as from reports written by the BKGB officers who had tailed Oswald in Minsk.¹⁴

• In 1997, Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali published *'One Hell of a Gamble.'* Though mostly devoted to the Cuban Missile Crisis, the book contained a chapter on the assassination and its aftermath which drew upon select documents from KGB, GRU, and Foreign Ministry archives.¹⁵

Yeltsin's 1999 gift thus fit squarely into a pattern of disclosure by installment. As the State Department prepared translations of this latest tease, Russian officials involved in gathering the records cautioned against expecting too much from the once-classified documents. "They don't contain any new revelations," Vladimir Sokolov, a Foreign Ministry archivist, told *Moscow Times* in late June. "There's nothing new or sensational there."¹⁶ Sokolov's assessment seemed accurate once the National Archives released the translations in August 1999. Though interesting (one of the items was Oswald's handwritten 16 October 1959 letter to the Supreme Soviet requesting immediate asylum and citizenship), the documents did not alter Washington's conclusion regarding KGB recruitment of Oswald, nor did they even shed much new light on what was already known about Oswald's time in the Soviet Union.

Indeed, once the translations became available, it seemed as if there was even less to Yeltsin's gift than initially met the eye. Mixed in among genuinely "TOP SECRET" documents were such innocuous items as a news commentary published by TASS in November 1963. The release also contained Khrushchev's long-available letter of condolence to President Johnson, along with several other routine condolence letters.¹⁷ Moreover, some of the documents that Yeltsin made available so ostentatiously had already been quoted from at length in Nechiporenko's 1993 memoir, and one CPSU Central Committee document had been previously released to the ARRB in 1995.

Nonetheless, there were a few truly novel documents mixed in among the Yeltsin papers, and these shed archival light on the past and ongoing reluctance to open relevant Soviet files. It has long been understood that Moscow faced an enormous problem after a self-styled Marxist, who had actually lived in the Soviet Union, was arrested in connection with President Kennedy's assassination. The preternaturally secretive Soviet leadership was agonizingly caught between a rock and a hard place: damned if it wasn't forthcoming and likely to be damned if it was (or so the Communist leaders thought). What had never been previously documented, however, is the torturous internal wrangling that occurred before Soviet leaders released the handful of records made available in 1963-1964.

The single most revealing episode involves two familiar figures—Anatoly Dobrynin and Anastas Mikoyan—who apparently played the key roles in bringing about the second Soviet release, that of documents from the Washington embassy's consular files. Working together, they managed

to bridge the gap between what reason suggested and what caution and ideology dictated. Dobrynin's actions, in particular, illustrate why he was so invaluable to both sides during the cold war. Few if any envoys had Dobrynin's suppleness of mind and ability to square the circle between two systems that could barely comprehend each other's logic. Little wonder that Dobrynin was Moscow's ambassador to six cold war American presidents, as the subtitle of his memoir, *In Confidence*, points out.¹⁸

The idea to make the consular records available apparently originated with ambassador Dobrynin not long after Oswald's arrest on the afternoon of 22 November. A prompt search of the embassy's consular files had revealed several pieces of correspondence, including a letter from Oswald dated 9 November. Because of its proximity to the assassination, Dobrynin immediately realized this letter was bound to be especially sensitive, regardless of its contents. In a TOP SECRET/HIGHEST PRIORITY cable to Moscow, Dobrynin reported that US authorities were undoubtedly aware of both the consular file and the latest letter because all mail routed via the US Post Office was routinely opened by the FBI. Although the US government knew that the Soviets knew about the mail-opening operation, Dobrynin anticipated that "U.S. authorities may ask us to familiarize them with the correspondence in our possession." The Soviet ambassador then proposed sharing the letter if not the entire file once internal Foreign Ministry documents had been removed, "inasmuch as there is nothing that compromises us in this correspondence."¹⁹

While Dobrynin's proposal was conditional—the documents were to be offered "as a last resort," as if to underscore the favor—it nonetheless qualified as a remarkable suggestion. Consular records were considered highly privileged and rarely exchanged, even between governments with the best of diplomatic relations.²⁰ In addition, the notion of agreeing to yield these documents at any point was all the more remarkable given the highly-charged atmosphere that was rapidly developing. As Dobrynin observed in the last line of his 22 November cable, the pervasive radio and TV coverage of the assassination was "alluding more and more often to the fact that the assassin was evidently connected with 'extreme leftist elements.'"²¹

Dobrynin heard nothing back about his proposal for two days. Finally, on Monday, 25 November, the CPSU Central Committee approved the draft response proposed by Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko and KGB chief Vladimir Semichastny. The answer to Dobrynin was almost predictable, or at least in keeping with familiar Soviet behavior. "In the event that the U.S. authorities request you to provide information," began the instructions, "you can give them the following information on this matter." The balance of the cable was the most limited recitation of bare facts imaginable—nothing, indeed, that the US government did not already know from its own files on Oswald, consular and otherwise.²²

Moscow's rigidity was understandable to a degree. While still reeling from the assassination, the Communist

leadership (along with the rest of the world) had had to absorb a second shock on 24 November, namely, the murder of the accused assassin. To Soviet leaders already prone to believe in conspiracies, Oswald's murder *while in police custody* was incomprehensible—unless of course there was a conspiracy. In all likelihood the self-proclaimed Marxist (who had already been slandered by Moscow as a “Trotskyite”) had been silenced before the real perpetrators could be identified.²³ Given this unnerving situation it was not surprising for Moscow to hew to the most conservative approach imaginable. Despite Oswald's murder by a nightclub owner named Jack Ruby—or perhaps because of it—the effort to link Oswald's stay in the Soviet Union to probable contact with the KGB—and possible recruitment—was unabated among some elements of the US news media.

The day before Dobrynin received the Central Committee's instructions on 25 November, Anastas Mikoyan, deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, arrived for the state funeral bearing a redacted KGB report about Oswald's Soviet sojourn. The two officials clearly discussed the matter, because on Tuesday, 26 November, Dobrynin sent another TOP SECRET/HIGHEST PRIORITY cable to Moscow. In this second cable, in which Mikoyan concurred, Dobrynin presented an entirely different rationale for yielding the consular records. Rather than basing his argument again on straightforward pragmatic grounds—namely, that Moscow had nothing to hide—this time Dobrynin appealed directly to the conspiratorial mind-set that pervaded the Central Committee.

Like all the other correspondence in the consular file, Oswald's 9 November letter was genuine, differing only in that it was typed rather than handwritten. Yet, and without any real evidence backing him up, Dobrynin now insisted that Oswald's 9 November letter was “clearly a provocation . . . [designed to give] the impression we had close ties with Oswald and were using him for some purposes of our own.” The letter, wrote Dobrynin, was probably a forgery, and “one gets the definite impression that [it] was concocted by those who . . . are involved in the President's assassination.” Or if Oswald himself wrote it, Dobrynin asserted, it was probably dictated to him and then he was “simply bumped off after his usefulness had ended.” In essence, the Soviet ambassador now argued that disclosure was necessary to expose and pre-empt the “organizers of this entire provocation” before they used the letter “to try casting suspicion on us.”²⁴ It was a shrewd way of evoking the objectively correct (and self-interested) decision from the Central Committee, but the reasoning was Byzantine. If Dobrynin truly believed the 9 November letter was a forgery, Soviet interests would arguably be better served if this devastating trump card were held in reserve, to be played, if necessary, once the US government officially committed itself as to the identity of the assassin(s).

When Mikoyan returned to Moscow later in the week, in all likelihood he played a significant role in shaping the Central Committee's response. The deputy chairman had come back with a firm impression about how the US government intended to proceed in the assassination's wake, as evinced

by a 25 November cable Mikoyan dispatched while still in Washington. In this cable Mikoyan had reported on his conversations with US officials, most notably, Llewellyn “Tommy” Thompson, the State Department's leading Soviet expert and the US ambassador in Moscow who had permitted Oswald's return in 1962. “Judging from everything,” Mikoyan had concluded, “the U.S. government does not want to involve us in this matter, but neither does it want to get into a fight with the extreme rightists; it clearly prefers to consign the whole business to oblivion as soon as possible.”²⁵

Mikoyan obviously confused the State Department's desire not to roil US-Soviet relations unnecessarily with a supposed government-wide inclination not to apprehend alleged co-conspirators. Thompson and other Soviet hands had concluded that Oswald's sojourn in the Soviet Union was an unfortunate coincidence and that Moscow had nothing to do with President Kennedy's assassination. Therefore, insofar as possible, they wanted the controversy over Oswald to be treated as a matter separate from the pursuit of improved relations between the superpowers. Still, there was no actual basis for Mikoyan's assertion that the US government was uninterested in bringing other supposed perpetrators to justice. Mikoyan's point of view was primarily a reflection of his and/or Soviet ideology regarding the assassination, rather than an accurate judgment.

Notwithstanding Mikoyan's misreading of Washington's intentions, his perspective, combined with the logic of Dobrynin's second cable, apparently evoked a dramatic change in the Central Committee's position.²⁶ Three days after sending his 26 November cable, Dobrynin finally received an answer and it was more than the Soviet envoy had dared ask for. In a complete about-face, the Central Committee now instructed Dobrynin to provide photocopies of all consular correspondence with the Oswalds, including the especially sensitive 9 November letter, and *without waiting for a request from U.S. authorities.*²⁷

As if to act before Moscow could possibly change its mind, Dobrynin arranged to see Rusk the very next afternoon, even though it was the Saturday of the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. In a subsequent cable describing the meeting, Dobrynin reported that the US Secretary of State thanked him *twice* for the photocopies. “It was evident that Rusk was quite unprepared for this step on our part,” Dobrynin wrote, “while at the same time (judging from his general behavior) he was pleased with this development.” Rusk asked Dobrynin if he could make the correspondence available to the newly-formed Warren Commission. Dobrynin replied that it was left “totally to [Rusk's] discretion whether to present this material to anyone, as we were sure he would properly appreciate our step and would act appropriately.”²⁸ Most interestingly, in his report to Moscow, Dobrynin made no mention of the *other* part of his instructions. Upon presenting the photocopies to Rusk, Dobrynin was supposed to assert that from the moment the 9 November letter arrived, the Soviet embassy suspected it was “either a forgery or . . . a deliberate provocation.”²⁹

Some 32 years later, Dobrynin recounted this episode in his 1995 memoir, but stripped it of all its drama and complexity. According to the former Soviet ambassador, following Oswald's arrest officials immediately checked embassy files.

The consular department had kept all of its correspondence with the Oswalds, and it contained nothing blameworthy. I suggested to our government that this correspondence be made available to the Americans, and Moscow quickly approved. We immediately handed over copies to Rusk . . . [who] was clearly unprepared for our unusual act and did not conceal his satisfaction.³⁰

Dobrynin either intentionally smoothed out this episode, or gave it short shrift because this was the way he actually remembered it. At the time, however, this unprecedented act by the Soviet Union was a dramatic development. Since Dobrynin had imposed no conditions on how Rusk could use the consular documents, the Secretary of State saw no reason to keep the file-sharing secret; indeed, he was eager to publicize every shred of Soviet goodwill in the wake of the assassination. The State Department told the Washington press corps about the file-sharing as soon as it occurred, and the disclosure made headlines in every major American newspaper.

While it may be just as misleading to invest this episode with great meaning as it was for Dobrynin to gloss over it, it does seem to explain why even the most innocuous documents from Soviet files have had to travel such laborious routes before being disclosed. Admittedly, some relevant documents, such as Oswald's case file, remain too sensitive simply to hand over. Despite the passage of time, they undoubtedly reveal intelligence sources and methods, and the means of surveillance in the former Soviet states may not have changed all that much.³¹ Yet if there were an inclination to disclose as much as possible, even the case file could be redacted to protect sources and methods. Much more revealing is the fact that many records of interest, such as those that reflect high-level decision-making after the assassination, do not involve intelligence sources and methods at all and yet remain closed.³²

The political regimes may have changed, but a culture of suspicion persists in the successor states to the USSR, especially with respect to President Kennedy's assassination. Soviet propaganda/disinformation about the "real forces" responsible for the assassination exert such a grip on the Russian imagination that these states cannot bring themselves to disclose all but a handful assassination-related records.³³ That the records are exculpatory is irrelevant.

Max Holland is a research fellow at the Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia. He is writing a history of the Warren Commission for Alfred A. Knopf, and received the J. Anthony Lukas Work in Progress Award in 2001 from Columbia and Harvard Universities. The author is indebted to Vladislav Zubok, Raymond Garthoff, and Anna

Nelson, a member of the Assassination Records Review Board, for their comments and suggestions regarding this article.

NOTES

¹ William Drozdiak, "Affable but Ailing Yeltsin Gives JFK Files to Clinton," *Washington Post*, 21 June 1999 and Jane Perlez, "U.S. and Russians Strive to Repair Frayed Relations," *New York Times*, 21 June 1999. Though the presentation of the documents directly to President Clinton came as a surprise, elements of the U.S. government had been requesting access to Soviet-era, assassination-related documents for several years. Vice President Al Gore raised the matter, for example, with Russian Prime Minister Chernomyrdin in March 1998. See Assassination Records Review Board (ARRB), *Final Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998), p. 141.

² When KGB officer Yuri Nosenko defected to the United States in February 1964, he carried with him some first-hand knowledge of the Oswald case; the Nosenko episode is outside the scope of this article, which is limited to authorized disclosures of documents.

³ Walter Pincus & George Lardner, "Warren Commission Born Out of Fear: Washington Wanted to Stop Speculation," *Washington Post*, 14 November 1993. Although the Warren Commission had access to this KGB summary document, unlike other records provided by the Soviet government, it was not included among the Commission's exhibits. The Commission did not want to create the impression that it had relied on such a document.

⁴ Murrey Marder, "Russia's File on Oswald Is Handed Over to U.S.," *Washington Post*, 1 December 1963; the entire file, translated by the FBI, became Warren Commission Exhibit 986. See *Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy: Exhibits 885 to 1053*, Volume XVIII (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 480-539.

⁵ *Hearings Before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy: Exhibits 885 to 1053*, Volume XVIII (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office). The Warren Commission's request is Exhibit 984, pp. 399-402. A State Department translation of all the Soviet documents submitted in response is Exhibit 985, pp. 403-479.

⁶ Memorandum to Jeremy Gunn, 24 January 1996, Box 16, David Marwell Files, RG 541, JFK Assassination Records, NARA. See also *Report of the Select Committee on Assassinations*, U.S. House of Representatives, 95th Congress, 2d session (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979), p. 103.

⁷ As noted below, author Norman Mailer achieved better access than an official agency of the U.S. government.

⁸ ABC News Nightline, *The KGB Oswald Files*, Broadcast 22 November 1991.

⁹ Sergei Mostovshchikov, "Agent Development Case No. 31451," *Izvestiya*, 6, 7, 10-12 August 1992.

¹⁰ *Izvestiya*, 7 August 1992. According to a 1999 *Washington Post* account, all relevant files were consolidated in Moscow after the assassination. These included records on Oswald's 1959 defection, his sojourn in Minsk and 1962 repatriation; the assassination itself; Oswald's September 1963 visit to the Soviet embassy in Mexico City; and Soviet investigations of the assassination. The records reclaimed by the BKGB pertained only to records generated in Minsk; it is more than likely, however, that the Russian

KGB made a copy of the case file before letting the records go. See George Lardner, "Papers Shed New Light on Soviets, Oswald," *Washington Post*, 6 August 1999.

¹¹ Oleg Nechiporenko, *Passport to Assassination: The Never-Before-Told Story of Lee Harvey Oswald by the KGB Colonel Who Knew Him* (New York: Birch Lane Press, 1993).

¹² Boris Yeltsin, *The Struggle for Russia* (New York: Times Books, 1994), pp. 305-309.

¹³ *Washington Post*, 6 August 1999, and ARRB *Final Report*, p. 141. English translations of the documents, prepared by the State Department, can be found in Box 34, Jeremy Gunn Files, RG 541, JFK Assassination Records, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD (NARA). The ARRB was established under U.S. law in 1992, after public complaints about the large number of U.S. government documents about the assassination that remained classified. Under the legislation, the ARRB was instructed to gather assassination-related documents into an omnibus collection at the National Archives, one that would include records generated by private parties and foreign governments.

¹⁴ Norman Mailer, *Oswald's Tale: An American Mystery* (New York: Random House, 1995), pp. xx-xxi, and *Washington Post*, 6 August 1999. Mailer's access was negotiated by his long-time collaborator Lawrence Schiller.

¹⁵ Aleksandr Fursenko & Timothy Naftali, *'One Hell of a Gamble': Khrushchev, Castro, Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis 1958-1964* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997). Two of the KGB documents cited in *Gamble* were among the documents Yeltsin presented in his 1994 memoir.

¹⁶ "Sarah Karush & Brian Whitmore, "JFK Files May Yield Clues Into . . . Yeltsin?" *Moscow Times*, 25 June 1999; see also David Hoffman, "Oswald Letter Is Among Documents From Russia," *Washington Post*, 23 June 1999.

¹⁷ The condolence letter to LBJ was published in the 1996 *Foreign Relations of the United States* volume on Kennedy-Khrushchev exchanges, and was published in the Soviet press in 1963, along with several other similar letters.

¹⁸ Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents* (New York: Times Books, 1995).

¹⁹ Special Telegram No. 1967-1968, 22 November 1963, Documents Provided by Russian President Boris Yeltsin on 20 June 1999 (hereafter Yeltsin Documents).

²⁰ *Washington Post*, 1 December 1963.

²¹ Special Telegram No. 1967-1968, 22 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents.

²² Resolution of the CC CPSU, "On Measures (to be Taken) to Discredit the Slandorous Fabrications in the American Press Regarding Lee Harvey Oswald's 'Connections' with the Soviet Union," 25 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents. It's not absolutely clear this instruction was sent to Dobrynin, since the document is labeled as a "Draft." If so, Dobrynin's 26 November cable was sent after he had not received any response to his 22 November suggestion re the consular files.

²³ Victor Riesel, "Soviet Insinuations Call for Query on Oswald," *Dallas Morning News*, 6 December 1963. Labeling Oswald in this manner was not altogether inaccurate; Oswald was an avid reader of Trotskyite periodicals in addition to literature that was more to Moscow's liking.

²⁴ Telegram Special No. 2005, 26 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents.

²⁵ Telegram Special No. 2002-2004, 25 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents.

²⁶ Recently published Presidium minutes are silent on this

matter; see footnote 31.

²⁷ Central Committee CPSU, "Excerpt from Protocol No. 126," 29 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents.

²⁸ Telegram Special No. 2054-2056, 30 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents.

²⁹ "Excerpt from Protocol No. 126," 29 November 1963, Yeltsin Documents. Rusk's notes on the conversation also indicate that Dobrynin did not carry out this part of his instructions.

³⁰ Dobrynin, *In Confidence*, p. 108.

³¹ The BKGB chief, Eduard Shirkovskiy, made precisely this argument in 1992. See State Department Cable re Oswald Files, 4 November 1992, Box 16, David Marwell Files, RG 541, JFK Assassinations Records, NARA.

³² In addition to keeping the Oswald's case file under lock and key, there are yawning gaps in the KGB, Central Committee, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents that have been released haphazardly. For example, almost none of what must have been substantial communications between Moscow and the Soviet embassy and/or KGB *rezidentura* in Mexico City have seen the light of day. And according to Dr. Vlad Zubok, in the recently published minutes of the Central Committee Presidium (Politburo), "there is a conspicuous absence of any discussion and/or mention of the Kennedy/ Oswald matter." See Protocol no. 125, Session 26 November 1963, in: A.A. Fursenko, i.a. (eds.), *Prezidium TsK KPSS 1954-1964 Chernoviie protokolnie zapisi zasedanii. Stenogrammi. Postanovlenia*, vol. 1 (Moscow: ROSSPEN, 2003).

³³ Though outdated, the best work on Soviet exploitation of the assassination remains Armand Moss, *Disinformation, Misinformation, and the 'Conspiracy' to Kill JFK Exposed* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1987). See also Max Holland, "The Power of Disinformation: The Lie That Linked CIA to the Kennedy Assassination," *Studies in Intelligence*, No. 11, Fall-Winter 2001, pp. 5-17.



Document No. 1
Cipher Telegram from Soviet Ambassador Anatoly
Dobrynin to CPSU Central Committee,
22 November 1963

[Source: Yeltsin Documents, US National Archives and Records Administration]

[handwritten: 1279 [?] 146121 3

TOP SECRET

CIPHER TELEGRAM

WASHINGTON 53927 07 30 23 XI 63

_____53928

Special no. 1967-1968

HIGHEST PRIORITY

At 16 hours 00 minutes, the US telegraph agency reported that police in Dallas, Texas, had arrested US national Lee H. Oswald, 24 years old, chairman of the local branch of the Fair Play for Cuba Committee, on suspicion that he had

assassinated Kennedy.

It is also reported that Oswald was in the USSR some time ago and is married to a Russian woman.

It was ascertained by checking at the consular section of the embassy that Oswald really did spend several years in Minsk, where he married Soviet citizen Marina Nikolayevna Prusakova (b. 1941). In June 1962, they returned to the US. In March 1963, Prusakova applied to return with her daughter to the USSR for permanent residency.

The KU [?] of the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] of the USSR (letter no. KU-USA-540058-24518 of 7 October 1963) reported that her application was rejected.

The consular section of the embassy has the correspondence between Prusakova and Oswald regarding her return to the USSR. The last letter from Lee Oswald was dated 9 November (the text was transmitted on the line [sic] of nearby neighbors).

It is possible that the US authorities may ask us to familiarize them with the correspondence in our possession.

The US authorities are aware of the existence of this final correspondence, since it was conducted through official mail.

Inasmuch as there is nothing that compromises us in this correspondence, we might agree to do this as a last resort (after removing our internal correspondence with the MFA).

Please give instructions on this matter.

Radio and television, which have interrupted all other programming and are broadcasting only reports relating to the murder of the President, *are alluding more and more often to the fact that the assassin was evidently connected with "extreme leftist elements."*

22 November 1963

A.Dobrynin



Document No. 2

Top Secret Cipher Telegram from Anastas Mikoyan to CPSU Central Committee, 25 November 1963

[Source: Yeltsin Documents, US National Archives and Records Administration.]

[handwritten: 1088/48121 [?] 11/26/1963

TOPSECRET 46
CIPHERTELEGRAM

Copy no. 12

WASHINGTON 54416 11 30 26 XI 63 54419 54417
Special no. 2002-2004

HIGHEST PRIORITY
CC CPSU

Today, during the President's reception, I had a number of brief conversations with US officials.

In the remarks of these persons, two things are worth noting:

1. All of them ([Secretary of State Dean] Rusk, [US Ambassador to Moscow Llewellyn] Thompson, disarmament agency director Foster, high-ranking officials from the State Department), in addition to expressing their deep appreciation for the Soviet government's decision to send its special representative to Kennedy's funeral, made a point of saying from the outset they were sure that President Kennedy's policy on Soviet-US relations, as well as US foreign policy in general, would be kept [the same] under the new president—Lyndon Johnson.
2. In his conversation with me, Thompson pointedly touched on an issue he had discussed yesterday with comrade [Soviet ambassador] Dobrynin – the commentaries in the Soviet press concerning the assassination of President Kennedy, particularly the circumstances surrounding the investigation of this entire matter.

The gist of Thompson's comments was that the emphasis given in the Soviet press to the involvement of extreme right-wing circles in Kennedy's assassination (and then in Oswald's murder) complicates the situation of those in the US who favor improvement of Soviet-US relations, because the US press immediately counters such statement with assertions of Oswald's "communist and Cuban connections."

I told Thompson we did not want to make any complications; however, neither could we ignore a situation where the US government had not yet investigated all the circumstances surrounding the assassination, but the U.S. media were senselessly reproaching us and Cuba in connection with Kennedy's murder.

Thompson replied he was aware of that, but asked me to understand his remarks. The government is now investigating all the particulars of the case, Thompson said, and it is in our common interest to see that the Soviet press confine itself to setting forth the facts and refrain from "premature conclusions" until the end of the investigation, since this was only playing into the hands of right-wingers who were using this to fan anti-Soviet and anti-Cuban hysteria.

Judging from everything, the US government does now want to involve us in this matter, but neither does it want to get into a fight with the extreme rightists; it clearly prefers to consign the whole business to oblivion as soon as possible. Our reaction to these murders has already played its role. The President stated today publicly that a thorough investigation would be carried out.

I believe that in further statements by our press, this point should be taken into account. This will help weaken attempts to foment an anti-Soviet and anti-Cuban campaign.

A.Mikoyan
25 November 1963

Document No. 3
Cipher Telegram from Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin to CPSU Central Committee, 26 November 1963

[Source: Yeltsin Documents, US National Archives and Records Administration.]

LS no.0692061-26
 JS/BL
 Russian

[handwritten: 1077/4367[?]] [illegible]

TOP SECRET [illegible] 46 CIPHER TELEGRAM

[handwritten: 136 37 Copy no. WASHINGTON 54607 9
 40 27 XI 63

54419 54417

Special no. 2005

HIGHEST PRIORITY

Please note [Lee Harvey] Oswald's letter of 9 November, the text of which was transmitted to Moscow over the line [?] of nearby neighbors.

This letter was clearly a provocation: it gives the impression we had close ties with Oswald and were using him for some purposes of our own. It was totally unlike any other letters the embassy had previously received from Oswald. Nor had he ever visited our embassy himself. The suspicion that the letter is a forgery is heightened by the fact that it was typed, whereas the other letters the embassy had received from Oswald before were handwritten.

One gets the definite impression that the letter was concocted by those who, judging from everything, are involved in the President's assassination. It is possible that Oswald himself wrote the letter as it was dictated to him, in return for some promises, and then, as we know, he was simply bumped off after his usefulness had ended.

The competent US authorities are undoubtedly aware of this letter, since the embassy's correspondence is under constant surveillance. However, they are not making use of it for the time being. Nor are they asking the embassy for any information about Oswald himself; perhaps they are waiting for another moment.

The question also arises as to whether there is any connection now between the wait-and-see attitude of the US authorities and the ideas conveyed by [US ambassador Llewellyn] Thompson (though he himself may not be aware of this connection) on the desirability of some restraint on the part of the Soviet press and gradually hushing up the entire matter of Kennedy's assassination. Perhaps that is exactly what the federal authorities were inclined to do when

they learned all the facts and realized the danger of serious international complications if the interested US groups, including the local authorities in Dallas, continued to fan the hysteria over the "leftist" affiliations of Kennedy's assassin and the exposés we would have to issue in this case.

The main question now is: should we give the US authorities Oswald's last letter if they ask for our consular correspondence with him (there is nothing else in it that could be used to compromise us). After weighing all the pros and cons, we are inclined to pass on this letter as well to the authorities if they request all the correspondence, because if we don't pass it on, the organizers of this entire provocation could use this fact to try casting suspicion on us.

Please confirm [receipt].
 Agreed upon with A.I. Mikoyan.

26 November 1963
 A.Dobrynin



Document No. 4
Top Secret Cipher Telegram from Anatoly Dobrynin to CPSU Central Committee, 30 November 1963

[Source: Yeltsin Documents, US National Archives and Records Administration.]

LS no.0692061-29
 JS/PH
 Russian

[handwritten number: 113]
 [handwritten: 1062/15124 ciph/12-1-63

TOP SECRET [illegible] 46

[handwritten: 126 116] Copy no. 12
 WASHINGTON 55380 8 50 1 XII 63
 55381 55382

Special no. 2054-2056
 URGENT

Today I met Rusk and handed him photocopies of the embassy's correspondence with Oswald, commenting appropriately on his final letter of 9 November (your special no. 1328).

Rusk thanked me for turning over these documents, saying he greatly appreciated the Soviet side's initiative in this matter. In addition, Rusk inquired if he could make this correspondence available to the newly formed presidential special commission chaired by *Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren*. I replied that we left it totally to his discretion whether to present this material to anyone, as we were sure he would

properly appreciate our step and would act appropriately.

Rusk thanked me again for the photocopies. It was evident that Rusk was quite unprepared for this step on our part, while at the same time (judging from his general behavior) he was pleased with this development.

Rusk asked me, if I could, to find out in Moscow the reasons why the Soviet authorities had refused to grant Soviet citizenship to Oswald when he was still living in the Soviet Union. *I promised to forward his request. Please instruct me how to answer Rusk.*

Rusk noted in conclusion that he hoped for the Soviet side's cooperation if the Warren Commission had any requests or queries relating to its investigation. He, Rusk, would then want to turn to me confidentially.

Rusk also said he wanted to use our meeting to touch on certain other matters unofficially.

1. *Rusk informed me* that yesterday President Johnson had received FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] director [Najeeb E.] Halaby and instructed him to meet with Soviet representatives for a final settlement of technical issues related to a future agreement on the establishment of a New York-Moscow air route. The US embassy in Moscow has been instructed to consult the MFA on the USSR on this matter. Halaby would be ready to come to Moscow 10-11 December.

Rusk then noted that this entire idea belonged to him, since, apart from the issue itself, he thought it important to show that business was continuing under the new president in the same manner as under J. Kennedy. President Johnson agreed with this, according to Rusk.

2. *Rusk then mentioned his meetings with [Soviet Foreign Minister] A.A. Gromyko in New York and Washington at which he raised the issue of the military budget. "I think," he told me, "that soon, in about 10-15 days, I will be able to tell you [the ambassador] in strict confidence the amount the US government plans to appropriate for the military in next year's fiscal budget. It will not be larger than the present amount and might even be less."* Rusk then wondered when we would be considering the budget. He did not pose the question directly, but one could gather that he would also like to get some information on this subject from us as well.

Rusk emphasized several times that his remarks did not mean the US government was now concluding some agreement with the Soviet government on this matter. It could not do this for the reasons that had already been set forth in talks with A.A. Gromyko. Nor could it guarantee that the figures Rusk intends to provide us soon in a strictly unofficial form would not be changed later in some way by the US Congress itself, which constitutionally and traditionally has its rights. But he, Rusk, is continuing to think about the usefulness of such an unofficial exchange of opinions "on mutual intentions."

3. Having mentioned his remarks in the talks with A.A. Gromyko "on the subversive activities of [Cuban leader Fidel] Castro's government," Rusk asked me to convey to him in this connection, in a strictly personal, unofficial form, that

it had been precisely determined that the three tons of weapons seized the other day in Venezuela had come from Cuba. (Rusk said: "We checked out in particular the numbers of the rifles purchased by Castro some time ago in Belgium and seized now in Venezuela.")

"I am saying this," Rusk noted, "not as any representation or comment. Nor can this be the subject of an official talk between us, since Castro's government exercises authority in its own country and it is unlikely that it consults with anyone when it decides to send weapons to one Latin American country or another, although the Chinese (Rusk added parenthetically, as it were) might be mixed up in this." Rusk said in conclusion: "I by no means wish to exaggerate the significance of this incident in Venezuela, it's not that great, but I would simply like to bring this last example to the attention of Mr. Gromyko, with whom I spoke about this matter before. Of course, *I do not expect any answer in this matter, and please don't mention in official conversations and talks what I said today.*"

I told Rusk that the latest events in Venezuela were well known, and if one were to speak frankly, they clearly showed the world once more that the Betancourt regime had no popular support, especially now, on the eve of elections; therefore, would it not be logical to expect (and judging from everything, this is indeed the case) that this regime is prepared to stage any provocation, even an international one, just to remain in power?

Rusk smiled but said nothing more.

A fair amount of time was devoted to discussing the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, Rusk did not say anything new compared to his previous statements on this subject. I reiterated our position.

Rusk noted in the course of the conversation that the upcoming NATO meeting in December of this year would be "routine in nature" and, judging from everything, issues relating to the establishment of NATO nuclear forces would basically not be discussed there (Rusk interjected that these issues "are generally discussed through other channels," but did not amplify on this theme).

Rusk said there were no plans yet for a trip to the upcoming NATO meeting by the new president, Johnson, but it has not been ruled out completely. "Evidently," Rusk said as though thinking out loud, "Johnson may instead travel to Europe this spring to meet with a number of heads of states that are US allies. But for the time being, no meetings have been planned specifically between the new president and other heads of state, although there is agreement in principle about such meetings with some of them."

In conclusion, Rusk asked me again to consider our meeting unofficial, as if held "in a family atmosphere." The entire conversation was between the two of us; nobody else was in the office.

Rusk looks very tired; his eyes are red from sleeplessness ("I'm sleeping 3-4 hours a day right now," he remarked), but he himself is animated, in an obviously good mood, and gives the appearance of a person secure about his present position in spite of the change in presidents.

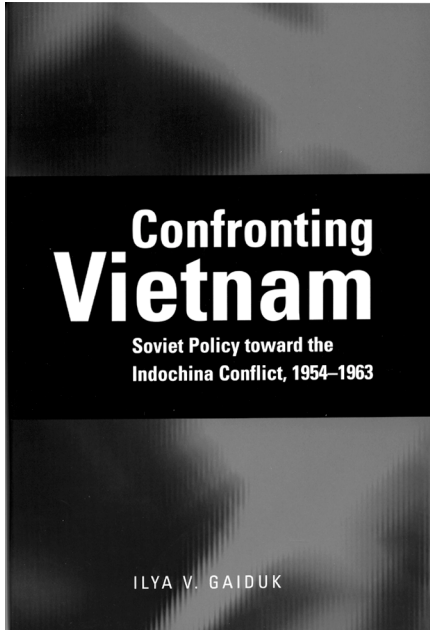
30 November 1963

A. Dobrynin

REPORT: No. 1328 (outgoing no. 33600) of 29 November 1963.

Comrade Gromyko said the embassy could give Rusk photocopies of the embassy's correspondence with Oswald, including his letter of 9 November, but without waiting for a request by the U.S. authorities.

Confronting Vietnam: Soviet Policy Toward the Indochina Conflict, 1954-1963



By Ilya V. Gaiduk

Based on extensive research in the Russian archives, this book examines the Soviet approach to the Vietnam conflict between the 1954 Geneva conference on Indochina and late 1963, when the overthrow of the South Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem and the assassination of John F. Kennedy radically transformed the conflict.

The author finds that the USSR attributed no geostrategic importance to Indochina and did not want the crisis there to disrupt détente. Initially, the Russians had high hopes that the Geneva accords would bring years of peace in the region. Gradually disillusioned, they tried to strengthen North Vietnam, but would not support unification of North and South. By the early 1960s, however, they felt obliged to counter the American embrace of an aggressively anti-Communist regime in South Vietnam and the hostility of its former ally, the People's Republic of China. Finally, Moscow decided to disengage from Vietnam, disappointed that its efforts to avert an international crisis there had failed.

CWIHP hosted the book launch for *Confronting Vietnam* at the Wilson Center on 28 April 2004. More information about that event can be found at <http://cwihp.si.edu>

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Comments on this book

"The subject is intrinsically important. The best features of the book are Gaiduk's utilization of archival documents. I found the materials on Geneva and Laos to be truly fascinating—I was learning as I turned each page."—Larry Berman, University of California, Davis, and author of *No Peace, No Honor: Nixon, Kissinger, and Betrayal in Vietnam*. "From the time of the war itself, journalists and scholars have attempted to decipher Soviet policy toward the conflicts in Vietnam and Laos from printed sources, mostly the Soviet press and speeches of top Soviet leaders. This is the first work solidly grounded in Soviet archival material. It will immediately supplant all prior studies on the subject."—**George Herring**, University of Kentucky

Mongolian Archives

By Sergej Radchenko

In the spring 2003 issue of *Cold War History* I authored an essay on the Mongolian archives, lamenting the lack of access to historical documents, and incredible red tape suffered by rare researchers, and the fear and trembling of the archivists themselves when it comes to openness and freedom of information in Mongolia. In the six months that followed, in countless meetings with government authorities—faceless bureaucrats, enthusiastic listeners, and powerless sympathizers—I argued, persuaded, promised, threatened, appealed to democratic principles and quoted from Marx and Lenin to break through the ice of fear and indifference and open up Mongolian archives to research. But the archival ice proved to be firmer than the winter ice on the Tuul river that flows through Ulaanbaatar. On the other hand, I learned more about the Mongolian archives than I ever wanted to know.

The Khaan of the Mongolian archives is the National Archives Directorate (in Mongolian, *Undesni Arkhivyn Gazar* or UAG), which in reality exercises much less power than its promising name would indicate. The UAG officially oversees 34 archives, including all of the ministerial archives, the government archive and the provincial (or *aimag*) archives. But the lines of authority in this arrangement are severely compromised, because ministerial archives take instructions from their respective ministries and not from the UAG.

The only archive subordinate to the Directorate is the Central National Archive (*Undesni Tuv Gazar*), a vast depository of some 700,000 folders. The Central National Archive itself has 6 branches, including the general historical department, the audio and visual archive and the historical archive of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). The general historical department would excite a Mongolia specialist; it holds, for instance, a large collection of ancient undecipherable documents, such as the 1675 border agreement between the Mongolian and the Manchurian khans. From more recent history, the department offers copies of documents on the Soviet-Mongolian relations from the 1920s-early 1950s, obtained from Russia's RGASPI. There is little of interest to a Cold War historian in these collections. The audio and visual archive has a blockbuster collection of official films, celebrating the Soviet-Mongolian friendship. By far the most important place for Cold War research is the party archive. The MPRP, still in power, passed its old papers (everything up to 1990) to the Central National Archive in 1998. These materials include Central Committee plenums, documents from party departments, records of the Politburo discussions and the Mongolian leaders' personal papers. Some of these documents, for instance, Yumjagin Tsendenbal's personal papers, are stored without any order, still to be catalogued. Other materials, however, are distributed across fonds, subdivided into registers (*tov'yogs*) and folders (*khadgalakh negj* or *kh/n*).

Researchers who managed to gain access to this archive are generally allowed to see materials from the Central Committee departments, records of plenum discussions, and politburo resolutions. Of these, plenum materials are of particular importance for Cold War historians, as MPRP plenums were often used as a podium for attack against Tsendenbal and the unbreakable Soviet-Mongolian friendship. Fonds 1 and 4 are also very useful, as they contain a large collection of Tsendenbal's memoranda of conversations with foreign ambassadors and politicians (for instance, Tsendenbal's meetings with the Soviet, Chinese and the North Korean ambassadors). Politburo transcripts and Tsendenbal's personal papers (including his personal diary and most important memcons) are all off limits to researchers. Yet, even access to "open documents" is highly problematic and depends more than anything on researcher's own connections.

The Mongolian Foreign Ministry Archive, only on paper connected with the UAG, is a treasure trove for Cold War historians; it holds extensive day-to-day records of Mongolia's foreign relations from the early 20th century until our day. The archive's 30,000 folders (*kh/n*), spread across some 145 fonds contain valuable evidence on Mongolia's relations with its closest neighbors, China and the Soviet Union, accounts of landmark events (such as the 1971 Lin Biao incident), countless records of conversations between Mongolian and foreign leaders and all diplomatic correspondence. Following the Russian usage, secret materials are marked by a zero in front of the fond number—for instance, "02" stands for the secret Soviet-related materials, and "05" for Chinese-related materials. Distinction between "secret" and "open" materials is purely philosophical. Access to any documents is difficult at best. Declassification is governed both by the 1998 Mongolian Law on Archives (with its thirty year rule) and internal directives, which prescribe much tighter secrecy, no less than 60 years for documents of any importance. One way or another, declassification in the Foreign Ministry Archive, as in many other Mongolian archives, works only on paper. After enduring considerable red tape, this author was allowed to look at some of the open materials—mundane diplomatic correspondence mingled with a few noteworthy items (for instance, Vyacheslav Molotov's original diplomatic credentials and hand-written records of Klement Voroshilov's talks with the Mongolian leaders in 1957). At the same time, several Mongolian scholars have benefited from a much better access to this archive.

Another interesting archive for Cold War research is the Government Archive, located in the magnificent main government headquarters, built (I am told) by the Japanese prisoners of war in the 1940s. As I mentioned in my earlier piece in *Cold War History*, the Government Archive is the central depository of the Mongolian Council of Ministers records, and its holdings mainly cover economic issues. However, the

archive also has a large number of Deputy Prime Minister's memoranda of conversations with foreign leaders and ambassadors, some of which touch on political issues. The Government Archive reportedly has an interesting collection of classified documents from the Cold War period, but this author has not yet been able to get access to them.

To mention a few other useful archives: the Defense Ministry Archive is halfway open to some researchers. It holds immensely interesting documents on Mongolia's relations with the Warsaw Pact countries and records of joint Soviet-Mongolian military exercises in 1979, in response to the Sino-Vietnamese War. More curious documents are found in the Central Intelligence Archive, including intelligence and reports on the Lin Biao incident (with many photographs). Access to this archive is utterly impossible, all the more so after recent scandals with unauthorized release of materials related to repressions in Mongolia in the 1930s, but experience suggests possible workarounds.

Since access to the archives in Mongolia remains difficult and frustrating, I frequently found it much easier to work with private document collections, eagerly shared by retired Mongolian policy-makers who also offered valuable commentaries to these documents, over a bottle or two of Mongolian *arkhi*. Some Mongolian historians have also collected important materials over the years and published them openly. The most interesting example is Tsedenbal's personal diary, published in abridged form in 1991 by B. Sumya.¹ Some records of conversations between Tsedenbal, Choibalsan, and Stalin were published in the early 1990s in the central newspapers, at the high tide of the Mongolian *glasnost*.²

Overall, Mongolian archives contain very important evidence on the Cold War, especially on the Sino-Soviet split. For decades Ulaanbaatar had been the Soviet voice in Asia. The Mongolians sided with Moscow in the quarrel with Beijing despite Chinese political and economic pressure. Indeed, Mongolian leaders were often more explicitly anti-Chinese than their Soviet comrades. This fact alone shows the tremendous role of cultural differences and antagonisms between neighboring Asian nations. Mongolian elites, however, were in disagreement over the country's future. Whereas some leading figures insisted on ever closer relations with the Soviet Union, to the point of accession, others urged caution and even suggested to play on the Sino-Soviet differences to chart an independent course. These disagreements were often at the center of power struggles in Ulaanbaatar, indicating a much more complex political landscape of Moscow's relations with its closest allies than previously thought. Mongolian archives also reflect on Soviet foreign policy, evidenced in dozens of records of conversations between the Soviet leaders and Tsedenbal, for he had seemingly closer relations with Moscow than any other leader of the socialist commonwealth. Last but not least, Mongolia's unique geographic position at the heart of Asia allowed Mongolian leaders frequent meetings with Asian powerbrokers—Mao Zedong, Kim Il Sung, Ho Chi Minh and others. Mongolian archives therefore hold valuable evidence on foreign relations of Asian countries at the time when many

Asian archives remain completely inaccessible to scholars.

In partnership with the Civic Education Project and the Mongolian Institute for Internal Studies, the Cold War International History Project and its partners, including the George Washington University Cold War Group, London Cold War Study Centre, National Security Archive, and the Parallel History Project, held an exploratory workshop on "Mongolia and the Cold War" in Ulaanbaatar, on 19-20 March 2004. The workshop will provide a forum for discussing Mongolia's evidence on the Cold War, exchanging views on freedom of information and access to historical documents in a democratic society, and for considering possibilities for future collaboration between Mongolian and Western scholars and historians. The workshop's local co-sponsors are the American Centre for Mongolian Studies, Civic Education Project - Mongolia, National University of Mongolia, Open Society Institute, and the United States Embassy. Organizers hope that the workshop and the subsequent publication of selected Mongolian documents will contribute to the international Cold War scholarship, encourage research in the Mongolian archives, and advance the cause of freedom of information in Mongolia. For more information, please visit the workshop's website: <http://serrad.by.ru/mongolia-workshop.shtm> or contact CWIHP Associate Sergey Radchenko at S.S.Radchenko@lse.ac.uk. Further information is also available at the CWIHP website at <http://cwihip.si.edu> where translated documents obtained for the conference are slated to be published.

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NOTES

¹ B. Sumya (ed.), *Gerel Suuder: Yu. Tsedenbalyn Huviin Temdeglel* [Light and Shadow: Yu. Tsedenbal's Personal Diary], Ulaanbaatar, 1991.

² For instance, "Conversation between Joseph Stalin and Yumjagin Tsedenbal" (5 September 1952), *Unen* N9 (23 January 1992), p. 2.

Todor Zhivkov and the Cold War: Revelations from His Personal Papers

In cooperation with the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), the Cold War Research Group-Bulgaria gained access to the personal papers of longtime Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov in 2002. A first result of the research on the private papers of one of the longest-serving Communist leaders is a new CD-ROM on “Bulgaria and the Cold War. Documents from Todor Zhivkov’s Personal Records,” published by the Group in 2003. The collection covers the entire period of Zhivkov’s reign from his election as Communist party leader in 1954 through the collapse of communism in Bulgaria in 1989.

The CD-ROM contains more than 700 pages of previously unknown stenographic notes of Todor Zhivkov’s conversations and correspondence with over thirty foreign state and political leaders from all five continents spanning more than three decades. The documents contain new evidence on a key political and military conflicts throughout the world during the Cold War years.

The documents presented in a sampling below include a diverse array of conversations between the Bulgarian leader and foreign counterparts, including Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (24 January 1969), Italian Foreign Minister Aldo Moro (27 April 1970), Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat (22 April 1980), US Undersecretary of State John Whitehead (4 February 1987), Chinese leaders Zhao Ziyang and Deng Xiaoping (6-7 May 1987), and Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou (22 April 1989).

Future document samplers from this collection to be published by CWIHP online (<http://cwihp.si.edu>) will focus on events in the Middle East and in the Third World. Included in that collection will be conversations with Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi, Syrian president Hafiz al-Assad, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, and many leaders of the leftist guerilla movements from the countries in Central America and Africa. Also among the documents in the collection are several classified government decisions to make arms deliveries to Third World countries. The documents give new evidence for the role Bulgaria played in regional conflicts throughout the period, in particular in the 1967 and 1973 Arab-Israeli Wars, and the Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974.

Additional publications from the collection will scrutinize Bulgaria’s relationship with the Soviet Union. While frequently seen as the “yes-man” in the bloc, Zhivkov’s conversations and correspondence with Brezhnev in 1973 and 1978/79 as well as with Konstantin Chernenko in 1984 will highlight some of Zhivkov’s internal and privately aired disagreements with the Soviets. The documents also reveal some of the methods he used to try to obtain from the Soviet leadership the concessions he most wanted.

The CD-ROM collection was prepared by a group of Bulgarian scholars and archivists (Jordan Baev, Boyko Mladenov, Kostadin Grozev, Mariana Lecheva) in coopera-

tion with the Central State Archive – Sofia and the Cold War International History Project. The collection’s English language translations were edited largely by Nancy L. Meyers (CWIHP).

The CD-ROM was introduced to the Bulgarian public during a visit to Sofia by CWIHP director Christian Ostermann in the fall of 2002 and has received widespread media coverage in all major Bulgarian newspapers and several radio and TV shows. For further information, contact Dr. Jordan Baev at baevj@mail.orbitel.bg.



DOCUMENT No. 1

Memorandum of Conversation between Bulgarian Prime Minister Todor Zhivkov and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Delhi, 24 January 1969

[Source: Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 378-B, File 249; translated by Dr. Rositza Ishpekova, edited by Dr. Jordan Baev.]

Stenographic Report

Official talks

Between the President of the Council of Ministers of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria Todor Zhivkov and the Prime Minister of India Indira Gandhi
Delhi, 24 January 1969
11.30 A. M.

The talks attended:

From Bulgarian side – Ivan Bashev, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marii Ivanov, Minister of Machinery construction, Yanko Markov, Vice-President of the National Assembly, Milko Balev, Chief of the Prime-Minister’s office, Ognyan Tihomirov, Deputy-Minister of Foreign Trade, Hristo Dimitrov, Bulgarian Ambassador in Delhi;

By Indian side – Fahrudin Ahmed, Minister of Industry, Mohamed Kureshi, Deputy-Minister of Trade, Surendra Singh, Deputy-Minister of Foreign Affairs, etc.

INDIRA GANDHI: I would like once again to greet you and the attending people and to say how happy I am that you spared some time to come to our country.

As I already told you the other day we attribute great significance to our friendship with Bulgaria.

When I was in Bulgaria I acquainted you with some

aspects of the situation in our country.¹ Now I would like to acquaint you with some difficulties we have in leading our people ahead. [...]

Regarding the international situation.

Vietnam has advanced a small step ahead. Hopefully, this will lead to improving the situation there. Yet in spite of the negotiations the situation there is still very tense, full of explosions. Whatever happens – no matter whether the negotiations succeed or not – the situation in Southeast Asia remains equally difficult.

We back up peace in Vietnam. Changing the situation always creates certain difficulties. The countries from this region are receiving help from the USA at this moment, but I consider it an artificial force. Settling the problems via peaceful means would mean that the problems could be settled without an artificial force.

Recently I was in London at the conference of the British Commonwealth countries.² There I met the prime ministers of many countries – Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and Singapore. They said they would like to have some defenses or some agreement in this respect, since they didn't feel safe enough. These countries had a meeting last year, but since nothing came out, they suggested having a new meeting.³

We think that each group would actually increase the tension in this part of the world.

As far as Western Asia /the Middle East/ is concerned we share common views and hence I have nothing to say. We are in close contact with Nasser and we see that he has gone significantly ahead in acknowledging some of Israel's demands – for instance the one regarding acknowledging the country Israel etc. Maybe the internal conflicts in Israel are an obstacle to and make the settling of the conflict there even more difficult.

After visiting Eastern Europe, I visited Latin America last year as well.⁴ I am of the impression that the Latin American countries, although being in the USA's sphere of influence and strongly dependent on them, are trying to free themselves from that influence. And we would have to help them, so that an opposition could be created. Of course, posing the question for all Latin-American countries should not be considered right, since some of them have different stances.

Our relationships with all countries are good, with the exception of two of our neighbors.

We are doing our best to find ways to relieve the tension, since it's not good to have neighbors with which we are in a state of hostility. Actually nothing in particular has been done in this respect. We must mention here the latest declarations of [Pakistani President] Ayub Khan. We will do our best to use every possible gesture in order to normalize the relationships between our two countries.

This is all I would say for the time being. You would probably want us to clarify some of the major issues.

We would readily hear your information and more specifically we would like to hear something about the attitude of Yugoslavia and Romania towards the Warsaw Treaty countries and about the situation in China and Albania.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I would above all like to thank you for the information. I would once again like to express our cordial gratitude for the invitation to visit your country and for the cordial and friendly hospitality you are showing us. We will tell our people about this hospitality and attention. We are deeply convinced that this will be highly appreciated in Bulgaria. We wish to develop a multilateral cooperation with India.

I would like to inform you in the same order you informed us.

You were in Bulgaria and you are aware of the problems we have to solve. That is why I will be brief. [...]

I will elaborate on some issues concerning the international situation.

We are worried by the war in Vietnam. We help the Vietnamese people as far as our abilities allow us to. Of course, the major help is offered by the Soviet Union, since Vietnam is fighting with Soviet arms. We will hardly imagine the struggling Vietnam's success without the Soviet Union's help. In spite of the Vietnamese people's heroism, the Americans could defeat it, since the USA's economy is 900 times stronger than that of Vietnam. But the Vietnamese people are heroically fighting with the help of the socialist countries and we are simply astonished by its heroism under such conditions.

We appreciate that the Vietnamese issue has now entered the phase of political resolution. Of course, there might be surprises. As you said, there might be explosions as well. But now things are going in the direction of political regulation. [US President Richard] Nixon will hardly take another course of action. But the negotiations will be extremely difficult. Contradictory interests are meeting. The issue could be solved on the basis of a compromise. But what kind of compromise? That is the problem. The fact that the Americans now are undertaking actions to conquer the villages in South Vietnam, which are now in the Vietcong's hands, must be stressed. Obviously their aim is to ensure a government working in their favor. The final result is difficult to predict. A lot depends on the progressive [segments of] mankind, on the struggle of the peaceful forces. The Vietnamese comrades are convinced that a political solution of the issue should be sought. There was a time when they were under Chinese influence. But now they back up a political solution of the issue. At present this already depends on the Americans. But they will probably withdraw their army from Vietnam when they are able to provide for them economically.

You correctly noticed that our positions regarding the Middle East are similar. We are in favor of a political solution of the issues there. The [Egypt], which is the major, decisive force among the Arab countries, got far ahead in terms of its conception and suggestions. After the UN's decision in 1967 they made their positions more concrete in the spirit of the UN's decision. There are countries, of course, such as Syria and others, which have more peculiar views. But this fact is not decisive. The major force is [Egypt], supported by the majority of Arab countries. We must admit that [Egyptian

president Gamal Abdel] Nasser shows political wisdom in this case. Nowadays, in our opinion, tension is created by the extremist forces in Israel. But, to be honest, we must admit that the Americans back them up. If the Americans move in the direction of a political solution of the issue, it will be solved very quickly, the same way the war was ceased. After the Americans told the Israelis to put an end to the war, they stopped their military actions. This is absolutely clear. I have been following the development of the problem concerning the war. After the Americans had been told they were going too far in the war, [US President Lyndon B.] Johnson issued a command and in a couple of hours an end was put to the war. The Americans should obviously not be allowed to take advantage of their military success. Otherwise a precedent will be created and the political solution of the issue in the interest of all countries from this region, in the interest of all other countries and of strengthening the peace throughout the world, will be inhibited.

I would like briefly to discuss the problems in Europe, since we live in this region.

Last year was a very dramatic year for Europe. I would say that a dangerous situation was created. As you know, enormous NATO and Warsaw Pact military forces are concentrated in Europe. If a Third World War breaks out, its outcome will be determined precisely in Europe. Any complication of the situation in Europe now or change of any kind of the ratio between the forces will turn out to be disastrous. Hence we conduct a policy of oppressing these forces that contribute to the international situation's complication. These forces are concentrated above all in Western Germany. They are revanchist forces.

I will not go into details in this question. Yet I would once again like to emphasize that what happened in Czechoslovakia [i.e. the Prague Spring and the Soviet invasion in August] and in Europe and what is happening now—the conduction of big maneuvers, the concentration of new military units on the borders with the socialist countries—is extremely dangerous.

Regarding the Balkans. Fortunately or unfortunately Bulgaria is situated in the center of the Balkan Peninsula. They say that all of its neighbors took something from Bulgaria in the past, that they cut off living parts of it. But we do not raise such issues. We aim at making life for the people within the present boundaries of Bulgaria better. In spite of the fact of it being a small country, Bulgaria is a peace factor in this region. Not even a single Balkan issue can be solved without Bulgaria. The transportation links pass through our country, the Danube River also passes through Bulgaria, the major rivers in Turkey and Greece come from Bulgaria. Thus as a result of a lot of historical and geographical conditions, Bulgaria has become a country that can both complicate and improve the situation on the Balkans. We can turn the rivers for Turkey and Greece back, but don't do that, of course. On the contrary, we suggest undertaking measures for utilizing their water together.

Recently there has been an easing up of the political atmosphere on the Balkans. Whatever happens, this process

could not be reversed. For instance, a military junta has assumed power in Greece [in April 1967] that has no social support in the country. But it is forced to talk of good neighborly relations, of peace on the Balkans. Now they even make more declarations than us.

Our relations with Turkey are developing well. This holds true of our relations with Yugoslavia and Romania as well. After the military junta came into power in Greece there has been certain stagnation in the development of our relations, yet recently there has been some improvement. The different events that take place, the fuss that has been made on the Balkans, should be considered and estimated as a state of affair events. Of course, there are a lot of forces and contradictions on the Balkan peninsula. But we see no serious reasons to complicate the situation. Of course, a major role is played by the international situation.

Regarding your question about Yugoslavia and Romania.

In the last couple of years our mutual cooperation with Yugoslavia has advanced significantly. We are in constant contact. We have had meetings with Tito a couple of times. But sometimes there are certain questions, which vex our relations. One of them is the so-called Macedonian question. Some nationalist circles in Yugoslavia have taken advantage of this question. We uphold the view that the Macedonian question has been historically inherited. Raising this issue and aggravating the situation is not beneficial to our countries and peoples. On the contrary, we must use it to strengthen the friendship and cooperation between the two countries and peoples. The question should be left to the scholars, to the historians to discuss. But we must not tackle this problem from a historical perspective. This has been one of the issues we have reached an agreement on with Tito.

The second issue we have reached an agreement on concerns the formation of a Macedonian national consciousness that should not be done on an anti-Bulgarian basis, as it is now. All previous statistics—Turkish, Serbian, etc.—spoke of 1,200,000 Bulgarians. We do not raise this question, but they sometimes do. They make a lot of fuss. We show patience, because if we start answering the situation will become worse. We agree with Tito's recent declarations that there could be no peace and good relations on the Balkans without good relations between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. We support this view and our efforts have been directed towards overcoming some difficulties that have cropped up as a result of the Macedonian issue and the events in Czechoslovakia.

Our bilateral relations with Romania are marvelous. Our economic cooperation is extending. There is a cultural exchange between us. Their delegations constantly visit our country and our delegations—their country; that is we constantly exchange experience. Yet we have diverging opinions on some issues related to the international situation. We openly discuss these issues with comrade [Romanian president Nicolae] Ceausescu. But neither have I influenced him in any respect, nor has he influenced me, although we frequently go hunting together. [...]

The major thing that our relations both with Yugoslavia and Romania should be based on is the constant extension of our contacts and links. We are doing our best in this respect.

We are not well acquainted with the issues regarding Asia. As far as the attempts at creating a military group in this region are concerned, I completely share your view.

You are acquainted with our views regarding China. It's a pity that the things are the way they are in the country, which has the largest population in the world. Our relations with China are not well developed. The same goes for trade with [China]. Of course, we prize our friendship with the Chinese people and in the future we'll do our best to restore the old friendship and cooperation with the great country of China.

We might discuss with you some question regarding the bilateral cooperation.

INDIRA GANDHI: Our cultural relations with you are good, but our economic relations must be improved.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Yes, I agree with you.

INDIRA GANDHI: I would once again like to thank you for you responding to our invitation and coming to India. What you said about your country and Europe was very interesting for us. I am sure your stay here will be interesting and pleasant.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: It is already very pleasant. We feel in India as we would in a friendly country.

(1:00 p.m.)



DOCUMENT No. 2

Memorandum of Conversation between Bulgarian Prime Minister Todor Zhivkov and Italian Foreign Minister Aldo Moro, 27 April 1970

[Source: Central State Archive, Sofia, fond 378-B, file 269. Document obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Rositza Ishpekova.]

TALKS

Between Comrade Todor Zhivkov and Aldo Moro, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Italy
27 April 1970

[Stenographic Notes]

Today, the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, comrade Todor Zhivkov, received Mr. Aldo Moro, Italian Foreign Minister, who is making an official visit to our

country. The meeting was attended by:

Ivan Bashev – Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs;
Lambo Teolov – Bulgarian Ambassador in Italy;
Parvan Chernev – Head of Fourth Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
Giuseppe Purini – Italian Ambassador in Bulgaria

TODOR ZHIVKOV: This is your first visit to Bulgaria. We greatly appreciate your coming to our country.
[...]

ALDO MORO: Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to thank you for the invitation to visit your country and for your courtesy now. I would also like to say that this visit is an expression of our good attitude to and interest in your country. What we greatly value in your country, among other things, is the obvious development of all sectors of your economic life. That is what made me accept your invitation to visit your country. After the long government crisis, this is my first visit abroad. I am grateful that you invited me and gave me the opportunity to make this visit at a time convenient for me. I would also like to admit that our relations are good in all spheres of life, but I also think there are great opportunities for further development. Making a survey of our relations in all spheres of life, I came to the conclusions that there isn't even a single sphere in which there is no cooperation between our countries. But as I already said, there are even greater opportunities that we will continue to discuss in our talks with Mr. Bashev. Later we will continue to discuss these opportunities via our ambassadors, who have done quite a lot for the development of our relations. A couple of days ago I visited your pavilion at the fair in Milan, where I tasted your wine and cheese for the first time. I had the chance to speak to your representative and was assured that our exchanges are developing [well] and there are additional opportunities. So that we must now do more to help realize these new opportunities. There are projects for further cooperation. I would like to say that as far as we are concerned, we shall discuss these opportunities in great detail. We have signed a trade agreement, which ensures the development of our relations.

As you said there are problems related to peaceful mutual coexistence and cooperation in Europe. This is an issue we will be discussing in greater detail. We consider bilateral relations very useful in the preparation of a wider European meeting. I think that a new atmosphere has been created in Europe. Of course, not all difficulties have been overcome. But we cannot deny the existence of an attempt among the peoples and governments to come to know each other better. There is a will and hope for the establishment of relations based on trust. Our trust has been increasing and we must support it via concrete acts. We would like to extinguish all dangerous war zones. We also consider a war out of the question. Peace is not something passive. We have taken the appropriate route. We are all involved in a competition and our actions are contributing towards achieving this common goal. I consider the latter to be a contribution to the develop-

ment of our contacts with all countries and above all the ones that favor such a dialogue. This is actually a dialogue about Europe and the world. Hence I am grateful for your invitation. I do hope that this visit will be a step forward along the path of peaceful mutual coexistence that can be very fertile.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: We think that we might cooperate successfully with Italy, we might cooperate to ensure peace in Europe. The issue of European security is an enormous one. We think that a rational solution to this issue might be found, which will be decisive for the development of the world, for avoiding a Third World War which would definitely be a nuclear war. Second, we might cooperate successfully with Italy in the region of the Balkans and the Mediterranean. Bulgaria is not a big country, but fortunately or not, it is situated in the middle of the Balkan Peninsula and no issue can be solved without it. Our country has proved many times that it supports understanding between the Balkan countries. Peace on the Balkan Peninsula can be achieved only if it is connected with peace in the Mediterranean and vice versa—peace in the Mediterranean can be ensured only if there is peace in the Balkans. These two things cannot be separated. And I believe that the talks with our minister of foreign affairs in this respect will be interesting. We are interested in close cooperation with you.

As far as our bilateral relations are concerned, it would be appropriate to discuss the problem of their development on a qualitatively new basis. As state and social figures we have to be realists and to know that the possibilities for the further trade development between our countries have been exhausted. Because the trade is now unilateral to some extent. It is based on the import of machines and equipment from Italy, which we will be much interested in in the future and the export from our country mainly of agricultural products. There obviously exists some kind of a contradiction that must be overcome. How do we see the overcoming of this contradiction? We must direct our efforts towards specialization, especially in the sphere of industry. There should be an exchange of industrial products in both directions, and also of machine-building products. Some Western circles are not well informed and do not have an accurate idea about our country. Bulgaria is viewed as some kind of agricultural country that, in spite of its moving ahead, still remains agricultural. This idea is radically false. I will now illustrate my opinion with a couple of facts. According to some data from the UN Economic Committee, Bulgaria is first in the world according to some criteria and second – after Japan, according to other. What I have in mind is the rate of development. [...]

Let's take as example electronics. We signed agreements in the period 1971-1975 to export electronics to the Soviet Union valued at 700 million rubles. [...] Now we have been working hard to open six electronics plants. This means that by the middle of the year we will have 10 electronics plants.

I'm giving these examples not to praise our country – we are experiencing a lot of difficulties and hardship. We, the present leaders of the state, are ordinary people. What is most important is that Bulgaria is developing at a rapid rate.

[...]

So Bulgaria should not be underestimated. It is not a big country, its population is about 8.5 million, yet we have one ambition – to catch up with the advanced countries. I consider it a noble ambition. It goes without saying that a country that has set forth such ambitions cannot be thinking of war. On the contrary, its foreign policy is directed towards the elimination of war, towards the preservation of peace. To be honest, we must admit that communism will rule in the world not by means of war. It will win without a war. I have no intention to persuade you, I would just like to put forth this thesis. It is peace.

ALDO MORO: Mr. President, I would like to emphasize two things. We first of all consider peace to be a global necessity. Hence there can be no peace in Europe, which is not related to the peaceful conditions in the Mediterranean. Within this framework, we agree with the idea about Bulgaria's role in the center of the Balkan Peninsula. I would like to say that we appreciate Bulgaria's efforts to have good-neighborly relations with the other Balkan countries. We also appreciate its contribution to ensuring peace in the Eastern Mediterranean. But we will be discussing this issue with Mr. Bashev.

The second thing I would like to dwell on is the fact that we appreciate Bulgaria's efforts directed towards its economic development. You said your aim was to reach the advanced countries. I would like to say that Italy is well developed in only one of its parts, in another – the southern part, it has to solve the same problems, as you have to solve. So that there is a mutual interest to exchange experience—and I consider the cooperation between us in this sphere of general interest. We can exchange experience; can come to know each other better. I think that there is still some way to develop our economic relations, there is the possibility to quantitatively and qualitatively balance our exchange. The principle of liberalization that is our guiding principle promotes the development of exchange of goods. [...]

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I absolutely agree with what Mr. Moro said here. We value Italy as a well-developed industrial country. I think that it occupies seventh place in the world according to its industrial potential. We are quickly developing our productive forces now and we are interested in buying plants and equipment from Italy and we do believe that we will find a beneficial solution. I hope your visit will be helpful in this respect. We are confronted with a big question. I think you are confronted with it too. Respectively that we are far behind the Americans in the sphere of technology. We are not well acquainted with the American industry and technology. But we are well aware that what is happening in Japan widely applies American techniques. Let me give you only one example. A couple of years ago an enormous plant for fertilizer production was built in Vratza. A Belgian trade company supplied it. It is already working. There are 400 people working in such a plant in Japan, while in our country their number is 1,500. You are probably also concerned with such problems. [...] This is the essence of the problem that we are confronted

with. Europe is lagging behind America by 1.5 to 2 times. These are problems with which both you and we are confronted. [...] We will be buying machines and equipment from Italy, those we consider good.

ALDO MORO: These problems are ours as well. [...] It is our task to achieve a higher level of technology and to be in step with the times...

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I thank you for your visit and for the talks we had. I would once again like to express our pleasure with your visit. Please send both my and my party government's greetings to your prime minister and to your government. We are convinced we will be going ahead and will cooperate.

ALDO MORO: Thank you for receiving me.



DOCUMENT No. 3

Memorandum of Conversation between Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov and the President of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) Yasser Arafat at Zhivkov's Residence in Damascus, 22 April 1980

[Source: *Central State Archive, Sofia*. Document obtained by *Jordan Baev* and translated by *Rositza Ishpekova*.]

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I am happy to greet you and express my contentment that we are meeting again.

We are visiting your region. You directly observe the events here, you are better aware of the way things are here and the way they are developing. What are we going to do further on?

We consider the relationship between the Bulgarian Communist Party and the PLO to be good. Our present meeting will further enhance the development of this relationship. I would like to assure you that we will do whatever depends on us in this respect.

It so happened that I was the first among the first leaders of the fraternal socialist countries to visit Castro in Cuba, to visit Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, South Yemen, as well as Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos immediately after the Chinese aggression [in February 1979]. This is the way our party has brought us up.

We spoke with [Syrian President] Comrade Hafiz al-Assad both yesterday and today, tomorrow we will continue our conversation, and on Thursday we are going back to Bulgaria. The talks we are having are carried out in an open, friendly atmosphere. We still haven't discussed the Palestinian question. Tomorrow we are continuing our talks.

YASSER ARAFAT: I thank you for this meeting, comrade Zhivkov. I would once again like to express our gratitude for Bulgaria's support for the just struggle of the Arab people of Palestine and the rest of the Arab countries, which are living in a complicated period of their development and which have been exposed to an increasing pressure on the part of the imperialist countries. Your present visit is a reflection of the principled and permanent support that Bulgaria lends to the national liberation movement and to the progressive regimes. It is not by chance that it was you who was the first state leader from the socialist community to officially accept me.

I thank you for coming to Syria at this difficult moment. Syria is being turned into the major target of the imperialist invasion in this region, which necessitates lending support to overcome the difficult situation that was created. It has to bear all the difficulties in the struggle. It is not by chance that the imperialists are directing their efforts against Syria. It is the socialist countries' duty to be alongside it. I am totally convinced that Syria will cope with the difficult situation and come out of the difficult situation. Your visit will exert a favorable influence not only on Syria, but on Lebanon as well.

You are acquainted with the resolutions of the last [12-15 April 1980 Fourth Summit] conference of the countries of the "Steadfastness Front" in Tripoli.⁶ It is true that we did not achieve everything we wanted there. But the resolutions are an important step ahead. I am speaking not only on behalf of the PLO, but also on behalf of all participants. Both PLO and Syria have presented a working draft.

We can definitely state the following: we are taking into account the present situation in the Arab world, so the resolutions of the conference in Tripoli are a positive fact. Many criticisms were directed at the conference, people declared it would be a total failure. They said that the "Steadfastness Front" was born in Tripoli and will die in Tripoli. They relied on the contradictions between the PLO and Libya.

The conference took place thanks to the great efforts made personally by Hafiz al-Assad to create the necessary conditions and to overcome the contradictions between PLO and Libya. At least fifty percent of the major contradictions between us have been successfully solved; the talks on the settlement of the other issues are under way.

What is most important is the victory of the anti-imperialist spirit at the conference in Tripoli. The struggle of the Arab peoples preserved its character and its anti-imperialist orientation. It is this orientation that the conference follows. It will give an impetus to the struggle of the Arab peoples. The conference drew a divide between the friends, on the one hand, and enemies and imperialist agents in the region, on the other. Our friends are the socialist countries, led by the Soviet Union. [Libyan leader Col. Muammar] Qaddafi is going to visit the Soviet Union to present the resolutions of the conference. The aim is to consolidate and deepen even to a greater extent the relations with the socialist community, led by the Soviet Union. The conference's resolutions create even better conditions for the fulfillment of the latter aim.

The remaining resolutions of the conference will also help us to oppose the imperialists' offensive. The USA have

not abandoned their intentions in the region – indicative of this fact are their actions in Oman, Somalia, Kenya and others; the creation of a fast action corps; the Carter doctrine [aimed at the protection of vital US interests in the Persian Gulf region]; the way they take advantage of the Afghanistan problem; the way they take advantage of the contradictions between Iran and Iraq; the way they increase the tension in South Lebanon in order to cause a collision between Israel and the PLO.

Under these circumstances the results of the conference of the countries of the “Steadfastness Front” are successful, its resolutions are positive.

Assad put a lot of efforts in trying to ensure the success of the conference. We hesitated whether to go to Libya. We insisted on its taking place in Damascus since the major struggle is carried out in Syria.

As far as the situation in the Arab/Persian Gulf is concerned – what is important is not how the Gulf will be named, but that there should be no American military bases around it.

Dangerous are also the relations between Iraq and Iran, since they not only concern the relations between the two countries, but they have an impact on the relations between all the countries in this region. Jordan and Saudi Arabia are Iraq’s neighbors, the Gulf countries are also its neighbors. There are difficulties in bringing the Arab countries in closer relations with Iran.

[President Carter’s National Security Adviser Zbigniew] Brzezinski once said that the USA would be free to act when contradictions between Iran and Iraq arise.

The contradictions between Iraq and Iran are dangerous. The conflict may give the USA the opportunity to fulfill their aims in Iran. They have become even closer friends with Iraq, with [Iraqi leader] Saddam Hussein.

I would be glad if you can elaborate on your forthcoming [May-June 1980] visit in Iraq.

The [1978] Camp David agreement [between Egypt and Israel] reached a dead end. This was admitted by the Jews in America and Israel. It has been emphasized in declarations of the Jewish leaders.

[Egyptian President Anwar el-] Sadat has been making new concessions to the USA and Israel, and his actions and behavior are creating new dangers: he has been trying and has managed to loosen the loop around the American diplomacy in the Arab East. There is a dangerous element, consisting of three parts: Jerusalem, Gaza, and the West Bank of the Jordan River.

There has been a new division inside the occupied territories. People are coming out with a new, more flexible platform in the Israeli elections. It will doubtlessly make things difficult for us. The Labor Party, [under Party leader Shimon] Peres might win.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Will the situation change drastically?

YASSER ARAFAT: The Americans will bless it. A change has been noticed in [Israeli President Ezer] Weitzman’s behavior,

who is openly criticizing [Israeli Prime Minister Menachem] Begin’s policy.

What is most dangerous?

There are two points.

First of all, the construction that was under way in the occupied Arab territories has been stopped.

Secondly, a possibility exists that Israel might reach an agreement with Jordan, the spirit of Camp David might be restored, and Jordan might start negotiations again. This will doubtlessly disrupt the equilibrium of forces in the region. We are making efforts to oppose that.

The Iran–Iraq conflict is only beneficial to imperialism. It might cause a polarization in the Islamic world by creating anti-Iran attitudes in the Arab countries supported by Iraq, such as Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Jordan and others.

This could in the long run lead to the Arabs’ losing Iran’s support. Hence we support the settling of the conflict, since the Palestinian cause is the one that suffers losses from it.

We have supported the Soviet Union. Imperialism, and more specifically the USA, have been trying to take advantage of the events in Afghanistan and to instigate a belligerent attitude of the Arab and Muslim people against the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries. The PLO played a significant role at the conferences of the Islamic Foreign Ministers, held in Islamabad [on 26–27 January 1980] and in Morocco [in May 1979]. The PLO delegation raised its voice against the attempts to place the Soviet Union and the USA on an equal footing and against the condemnation of the Soviet interference in Afghanistan there. Moreover, the Palestinian delegation at the conference in Morocco demanded that the USA be condemned for their help for the Israeli occupation of the seized Arab lands and Jerusalem above all, which is one of the most sacred places for the Muslims all over the world. It also demanded that the Soviet Union should be thanked and that the Palestinian question should be considered one of primary importance. As a result of this tactic the attempt to condemn the Soviet Union failed at the very beginning. We were expecting a severe battle at the annual meeting of the conference of the Islamic foreign ministers in Islamabad. We put efforts into trying to make the countries from the “Steadfastness Front” meet before Islamabad and sign an agreement.

We will now have to think over the new Iran initiative regarding Afghanistan. They suggest sending a neutral international commission there, which would investigate the facts concerning the foreign interference in the country. A resolution was adopted to cease diplomatic relations with Afghanistan. If the resolution for creating and sending such a commission to Afghanistan is adopted this will practically mean canceling the present resolution for excluding Afghanistan. Apart from that it would be easy for the Afghan government to gather and reveal the necessary facts, doubtlessly proving the foreign mercenary interference, they would show whether there were actions which necessitated the coming of Soviet troops. We informed the Soviet comrades about this initiative. We ourselves still haven’t made a decision on this

resolution—we haven't refused the Iran comrades, we haven't given a positive answer either. This idea will be put to discussion by Iran at the forthcoming conference of the Islamic foreign ministers.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I thank you for the interesting information, Comrade Arafat.

Recently I visited Libya where I had talks with comrade Qaddafi.⁷ Now I am visiting Syria and I am having friendly and useful talks with comrade [al-]Assad.

I would once again like to assure you now, as I did at our previous meetings, that Bulgaria will invariably support the Palestinian cause. Since the very beginning we have supported both morally and materially the Palestinian cause. I invite you, Comrade Arafat, to come and visit Bulgaria at a convenient time.⁸

The case with Iraq is the following. There was fighting for personal reasons between Iraqi students—communists and Baathists—in Sofia [in December 1979]. Two young people were killed⁹—a Baathist and a communist. Iraq's reaction was nervous, it took a lot of measures, froze all our relations, and withdrew its students—both Baathists and others. We showed tolerance and kept cool. As a result they again sought contact with us. Our foreign minister visited Baghdad in response. Through him I sent a short message to Saddam Hussein. What was observable in the talks was a desire—both on their and our part—to normalize the relationship between our two countries. They have officially invited me to visit Iraq. We haven't discussed this question with our leaders. But obviously my visit there—at least I think so—will be useful for developing the bilateral relations between Bulgaria and Iraq and for the common Arab cause. We followed the same line in Iraq as we did in the other Arab countries, and this is well known.

Without making a detailed analysis of the international situation and of the USA's and Carter's anti-Soviet and anti-socialist campaign, I would like to note some points.

The reasons for this campaign are the events in Afghanistan. I told both Qaddafi during my visit in Libya and my Syrian friends now: the case does not only concern the events in Afghanistan.

Things started before Afghanistan.

What do I have in mind?

I have in mind NATO's decision to deploy intermediate-range missiles in several European countries.¹⁰ In 4-5 minutes these missiles can cover our country, the European part of the Soviet Union, the whole Arab East. They will reach any Arab country in only for 4-5 minutes from Italy. Moreover they fly at a low height and cannot be detected. This sets a new task before us. If this American adventure continues, Western Europe will experience a catastrophe. If these missiles are deployed, we have to take adequate countermeasures. We don't have nuclear missiles in Bulgaria; the Soviet Union has nuclear missiles. Let's take the Federal Republic of Germany as an example. In order to damage the intermediate-range missiles located in Germany, we have to cover each centimeter of its territory with nuclear power. With NATO's

decision to produce and deploy intermediate-range missiles, the whole policy of disarmament, [the June 1979] SALT II [agreement], collapses.

We are fighting also for the peoples in Europe and the Arab East. We cannot put up with these adventurous actions; we cannot allow everything to collapse tomorrow.

Consequently, this is a new moment in the international situation, caused by the American imperialists. The American imperialists have been exerting an enormous and utterly brutal pressure on the Western European countries to make them follow their course.

The second problem concerns the Arab East, the Far East, and the Indian Ocean.

A new situation has been created here as well. The Americans have been setting up their bases in these regions, a new infrastructure is being created, and military units are being sent. Their aim is to interfere in any Arab country, if they consider their interests to be in danger. The American imperialists have been approaching the Soviet Union and our borders.

A new moment is also Sadat's separatist deal. [The September 1979] Camp David [agreements] created a new situation.

There is a new moment in Asia as well. Now the Americans have given this region to the Chinese, but not at random. The USA is concentrating its forces in Europe, the Middle East, the Far East and the Indian Ocean.

We neither dramatize these events, nor are we scared. The Americans are well aware of the fact that they cannot lead a war here in this region. There are millions of armies here. They can frighten us with airplanes, ships etc, but war is won by millions of people. Vietnam's example illustrated that. The Americans do not have millions of people fighting there.

There is still one more new moment. In spite of the American imperialists' efforts they cannot restore the years of the "cold war" in its old variant. It is detrimental to the American people. The people will not allow this situation to continue long. It carries much danger of confrontation which might lead to a world conflict.

You are acquainted with our position regarding your region—it is a principled, consistent one.

You are well aware of the new situation in the region. You have put a lot of efforts into making the just deed of the Arab peoples, Palestine's cause, win. Syria's responsibility is also great but you have also put a lot of efforts as a permanent front country.

The enemy's conspiracy is large-scale. What is important at the moment is to strengthen the unity of the PLO—both militarily and politically. This is something I said to Qaddafi as well. The military and political tactics should be flexibly combined. The problem concerns Palestine—will the long-suffering people of Palestine manage to create its own state? The problem should be solved now. Hence unity is needed, both in the occupied territories and beyond their boundaries.

You are approaching the victory. It is necessary to com-

bine the military and political tasks with extreme socio-economic measures. This is of particular importance to the population in the occupied territories. Any centrifugal force in the Palestine resistance movement is a great danger to the Palestinian and common Arabic cause. The “Steadfastness Front” should be strengthened: it is the heart of the Arab people’s struggle. But at the same time all forces should be mobilized. The other contradictions between the Arab countries should come second in importance. This holds for the disagreement between Syria and Iraq as well. Even a country such as Saudi Arabia takes into consideration your country and the relations you have with it are justifiable. Otherwise it would back American imperialism. Your abilities are big. The socialist countries support you.

What influences the situation in your region and in the world is the fact that presidential elections are due in the USA [in November 1980]. The situation in the region is further complicated by the Camp David agreements. This fact further requires strengthening of the revolutionary forces. [...]

Why do the Iraqi leaders insist on my making an official visit? I don’t want to make guesses. But it is difficult to live in isolation now. I think that if the results of such a visit are even minor, it will be a positive step. [...]

The USA started moving its fleet up toward the region, but the Soviet Union also moved up its units. Otherwise the Americans would strike Iran. They would also strike us, Bulgaria. They will strike us.

Bulgaria is near your region. That is why we are anxiously following what is happening here.

We firmly support the unity of the Palestine resistance, led by you, Comrade Arafat. This is something we stated in Libya as well. They took as a basis our official statement there. Essentially no notes were made. There were only some discussions on the level of the work groups. The full text of the official statement, adopted by both delegations, including the passage about PLO as the only representative of the people of Palestine, has been published in our press. But they have not published this passage in Libya. I declare now in front of you once again that the full text of the official statement has been published in our press.

I would once more like to stress that you should by all means strengthen your unity. If you let them defeat you now, you will give a big present to the imperialists. History would condemn you for this “present.”

YASSER ARAFAT: We have a democratic spirit and we hold firmly to our unity. [...]

DOCUMENT No. 4

Memorandum of Conversation between Todor Zhivkov, Chairman of the State Council of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria, and US Undersecretary of State John Whitehead, 4 February 1982

[Source: Central State Archives, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Record 60, File 392. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova and Baev.]

TALKS

Between Todor Zhivkov, Chairman of the State Council of the PR of Bulgaria, and John Whitehead, US Under Secretary of State, Sofia, 4 February 1987

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Mr. Whitehead, may I take the liberty to welcome you and those accompanying you; I would like to express the government’s satisfaction, as well as my own personal satisfaction, with such a top-level visit of the Under Secretary of State of the USA and note that it is the first of its kind in the whole history of the relations between our countries and our peoples.¹¹ We do appreciate it. I am deeply convinced that your visit, the talks and negotiations we’ve had, will be a step forward in the future development of the relations between our countries and our peoples. Our relations have not been burdened so far, there are no problems between us, apart from problems of a political nature. I think the latter are clear enough and there is no reason for them being tense in the future. Moreover, we have no common border. All problems that seem to burden our relations are of such a nature that can be settled adequately.

Thus, I do not see any problems relating to our bilateral relations that could not be settled, apart from the fact that that we cannot transform our social order; and I do hope that you will not achieve such a change in Bulgaria. We haven’t even considered such a task.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: We do not mind accepting your country as part of our system; moreover we now notice signs indicating that your country is undergoing transformation, particularly in the economic sphere; this transformation seem to be directing your economic development towards our economic model and system. We understand that the economic enterprises in your country are assuming greater independence. Yet taking into consideration the fact that this is a matter of domestic affairs, we would not like to interfere.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Since we already touched upon this issue, let me say a few words in this respect. Every aspect of your economic and social life suits us: the organization of production, etc. We are ready to implement your achievements in Bulgaria, except for the so-called profit centers. Under our economic system the entire profit goes into the state

budget, whereas in your country it goes to the private owner. There is a different mechanism of distributing wealth in your country. Distribution is the only difference between us. All other aspects suit us. In my opinion any functionary that would not adopt your experience is stupid. The sooner we get rid of such fools, the better-developed the economy will be.

In terms of our political structure, and the top-level posts in particular, we do not need a chairman of the Council of Ministers and chairman of the State Council; these should be combined in a single post.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: Noteworthy changes are obviously under way.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: They are noteworthy indeed. It's a pity I do not have much time. I'm fighting time at present.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: I do not agree with you. As far as time is concerned, I think that there are many years before you. You have already set a record in terms of the length of time that you have been in office. I hope you will achieve greater results in this respect in the future.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I am the doyen among the first and general secretaries of the communist parties in the socialist countries.¹² I dare say that I am the vice-doyen head of state in the world. It is only the Japanese emperor [Hirohito] that has had a longer term in office than I do.¹³ I'll paraphrase a Latin American writer so that I can explain to you the nature of my struggle against time:

Time is a river that keeps undermining me,
yet I am a river as well.
Time is a tiger that tears me apart,
yet I am a tiger as well.
Time is a fire that burns me
yet I am a fire as well.

Unfortunately time is a reality, and I am Todor Zhivkov—a servant of God.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: These words were so beautiful. I hope that despite your position of vice-doyen after Hirohito, you will become doyen in terms of your impact on public opinion, since Hirohito is much older than you.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: His power is different in nature from mine. There is a difference, a small one, but yet a difference. Even more so since our church tower is smaller than theirs. Fortunately or unfortunately, we are a small country at the center of the Balkan peninsula. Now we are having the chance to meet a representative of a country with a high church tower; I therefore have the pleasure to give you the floor.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: I thank you for giving me the floor. Let me start with a comment on our first issue, namely the eco-

nomical transformation in your country. This obviously tends towards the economic model of our world. [...]

Please allow me to tell you something about the goal of my visit. I was empowered by President [Ronald] Reagan and State Secretary [George] Shultz to deal with Eastern European countries. The two visits to this part of the world are part of my job. I visited Yugoslavia, Romania, and Hungary in November. Bulgaria was the last country I had left to visit during my tour of Eastern Europe, after Poland and Czechoslovakia.

The goal of my visit is to listen to these countries' official positions, and understand them and get to know them; moreover, I bear in mind the fact that US relations with these countries have been very good recently. My government would like to improve and further develop these relations. It is true that essential differences between our countries and our economic systems exist; these are differences in the economic, political, and social systems. We do not share a common view of what human rights are. Yet these differences should not hinder [us from] maintaining civilized relations with Bulgaria. The latter have been somewhat cool recently.¹⁴

Thus the major goal of my visit is to contribute to breaking the ice in our relations. I hope that my visit will set the stage for a process of improving our relations.

We have already made certain progress in this respect. The talks with your deputy foreign minister and your foreign minister specified other measures that may be taken relating to the improvement of our bilateral relations. Each party in these talks laid down its expectations in terms of what the other should undertake with a view towards taking a step forward in the development of our relations. We call it a "step-by-step" process; we believe that it would eventually result in improving relations between our countries.

During our talks with Mr. [Petr] Mladenov, your foreign minister, we discussed a number of issues relating to international affairs, including the bilateral relations between each of our countries and the Soviet Union; we also discussed the issue of arms control and regional conflicts. We discussed the problems in certain parts of the world, such as Afghanistan, Angola, Central America, Vietnam. We provided information to each other on each party's position regarding these international issues. I listened with great interest to your foreign minister's statement, which actually presented Bulgaria's official position.

I must admit that we are deeply impressed with the processes under way in your country. The transformation you are effecting, and its growing potential, provide favorable ground for the further development of relations between Bulgaria and the USA.

I would also like to hear your evaluation of the processes taking place in the Soviet Union; what is the essence of the changes there and their relevance for the respective countries and the world in general.

How do you view the world within the next 5 or 10 years?

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you, Mr. Under Secretary of State, for what you said.

I would like to start with the relations between our two countries. I would like to point out that these relations should not be considered in the light of their development so far. Their development up to now is not relevant; we should put an end to past relations and view the problems from a different perspective and thus find their adequate solution.

Would we be able to change perspective and solve the problems relating to both bilateral and international affairs from a different position? That is the major question.

The reasons for the different positions are in both parties—I mean on a global scale. This is the opposite stance on various issues and the stereotype on your part.

Will we be able to overcome our prejudiced stereotyping and lay the grounds for the development of a new type of relations based on today's realities in the world?

Which is the dominant reality? The major reality is the following: taking into consideration today's nuclear arms stock, neither our system can do away with yours, nor can your system do away with ours. This is a brand new reality that neither Marx, Engels, nor Lenin had confronted, not to mention any of your presidents.

We are therefore confronting a totally different reality that has not been present in the history of mankind so far. And we must bear this in mind. What is the future road to take, what alternatives are there for further development in the context of this new reality and the coexistence of the socialist community, on the one hand, and the capitalist system, on the other? Should the relations between socialist and Western countries be considered in light of antagonistic regularities, on the basis of antagonism? Our relations should be reformed on the basis of the present realities; they should assume a new character, they should assume a human face. There is no reason why we should not develop mechanisms to foster these relations, to set up rules of the game, and impose these rules and observe them. We have no alternative. This will not be achieved quickly; it will be a gradual process, but we must carry it out. [...]

As for our bilateral relations, the only obstacles to their development are of a political nature. Certain measures taken in Bulgaria, including measures during my term in office, should be exposed to severe criticism, because they were at variance with normal inter-state relations. I have in mind Bulgaria at the time when I have been head of the state and the party. You are aware that many things have undergone changes.

After your visit is over, we will once again look into these issues.

We can assure you that a solution will be found to the questions you raised. Yet, I would request that the Americans for their part undertake the same exercise. For we cannot be sure what the USA will blame us for in the near future.¹⁵ Therefore, every day we anxiously await something new to be blamed on us. That occurs every single day. I will not start a debate on this problem; I am simply analyzing the situation.

Every morning when I get up I pick up the phone to see what your authoritative bodies have blamed on us. We have

been assigned all mortal sins so far. We have not been charged with Christ's crucifixion yet. The CIA and your propaganda have assigned all mortal sins to us. We have even been charged with the attempt to assassinate Christ's deputy—the Pope. We have had trade with the developing countries totaling six or seven billion US dollars and you claim that we have been making a profit from drug trafficking. Good gracious!

Send my best regards to Mr. Reagan and Mr. Shultz. I am of the same age as Mr. Reagan, and as we say there's not much time left for us. We have to undertake measures to improve relations between the USA and Bulgaria.

How would history assess Mr. Reagan's role and my role? I am not going to make any judgment, this is your business and the mission of history; I do hope, though, that he will be given merit for establishing normal relations with Bulgaria and assisting in the development of the socialist order in Bulgaria. This will suffice for his historical mission. So I am asking him to help us. Our achievements in building up socialism will not have a negative impact on US policy, nor will they adversely affect your country, since Bulgaria is a small country, and our church tower is a small one.

As far as our propaganda is concerned, we do not maintain that it is independent. Nothing of the kind. Your propaganda is not independent, nor is ours. There is no such thing as independent propaganda. [...]

JOHN WHITEHEAD: I had been informed that Zhivkov was one of the most conservative leaders of the Eastern bloc. However, the comments you made make me think that you are a proponent of the new thinking. Talking about militarism you formulated a common goal we should all target. And it would be wonderful if you really managed to persuade your Moscow friends that armaments should be cut and completely destroyed. I would like to assure you that the US would immediately adopt such a policy of doing away with militarism.

Now I would like to say a few words about your everyday concerns about America's negative statements about Bulgaria. I must point out that we do not have a negative attitude towards Bulgaria. It is true that there is not much information on Bulgaria available in the US; therefore many statements are made in an environment of an information deficit. Millions of readers have the opportunity to send articles and letters to the US print media, to newspapers and magazines; they have the freedom to speak their minds. There are 90,000 newspapers and magazines in the USA; there are some 535 members of Congress that have to chance to give interviews and express hostile attitudes towards Bulgaria. But that does not mean that the American people and the US government have a negative attitude towards Bulgaria. Therefore you should instead consider such acts of hostility a result of the freedom of press and the freedom of speech. We will try to curb the negative comments about Bulgaria in the US press and the US media in general with a view to lowering the hysteria and the heated debates against Bulgaria. We do hope that you will do your best to curb the negative com-

ments on the US in your press. Since it is diplomacy and good relations that suffer when there is a hostile campaign in the press against either party. [...]

Please let me express my view on an issue; I regard it as the most essential message to bring home to you, the Bulgarian State. This is the issue of human rights and human freedoms. I think that all major differences stem from this issue; it is in this sphere that mutual understanding is most difficult to reach....

TODOR ZHIVKOV: The question of our killing imams and closing down mosques was raised. We asked for more facts. We even showed to the public that the imams who were allegedly killed, were alive. So that means that they have been killed and then they were resurrected. No imam in Bulgaria has been mistreated, neither has any mosque been closed down; all mosques are open to the public instead.

Therefore such an accusation is irrelevant. Another question that has been put forth is the ethnic minority of Turks in Bulgaria.¹⁶ A lot of nationalities have been flowing into the US and Europe, whereas none have come to Bulgaria. Bulgaria had never conquered anyone else's territory. On the contrary—Bulgarian territories have been conquered.

All of the Bulgarian borders have been trimmed, everybody has cut off Bulgarian territories. There exists a certain situation in the US, and a completely different one in Bulgaria. Turks have never flowed into Bulgaria, Turkish troops have invaded our country instead. We deported those that regarded themselves Turks—about 250,000 people. When Mr. [General Kenan] Evren [who had seized power in a bloodless coup in September 1980] came on an official visit to our country, he insisted that the communiqué explicitly state that any deportation whatsoever be ceased, except for 100 cases of separated families. That is how we put it down in writing. I tried to persuade him not to put this text down; I thought there might be more people willing to settle in Turkey and therefore we did not need to shut the doors. However, we did include such a clause. It is well known. When I made my return visit to Turkey later, he raised the same question with regard to an additional 3,000 people. I agreed to this number. Now they are raising the question about 1 million and 500,000 people.

We cannot understand why a problem that should be [only] the concern of Turkey and Bulgaria, has become part of US government policy? You should leave it to us to settle it on our own; you can consult Turkey on this issue since they are your friends, so that we may sit at the table and reach an agreement. [...]

JOHN WHITEHEAD: I can see that this is an emotional topic for you. I have not come to your country to conduct any campaign, nor have I put the blame on you for anything; my goal is not to place any accusations.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I understand you quite well. Thank you. But I had to tell you what the situation actually was.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: The information you provided was very interesting indeed, since it helped us understand your position. Dialogue is an important tool, since it facilitates mutual understanding.

Despite my respect for you, Mr. Zhivkov, I must admit that Bulgaria does not seem ready to discuss human rights issues with us yet.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: We are ready, we are completely ready to discuss all problems. We have no differences with anyone, neither the Pope, nor anybody else. We have absolutely no different views on anything, including the religious issue of Islam. There are no contradictions.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: We are completely ready to discuss all problems of mutual interest. We expect that you would respond and discuss the issue of prime importance to us—that of human rights. We had a dialogue with your minister about human rights. We found out about the documents on reuniting separated families. We are glad they have been given the chance to go to their relatives.

I think that we should thus be having a dialogue on all aspects of the human rights issue. We cannot agree to this issue being removed from the agenda. How can we discuss our economic, political, and ideological differences and at the same time ignore the differences between the two countries in terms of the human rights issue?

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you. I am satisfied with our talks, and I hope they will be only the first of a longer series of talks of this kind, talks between Bulgaria and the US. I am deeply convinced that these talks would further stimulate the development of our relations. There is no reason for our relations not to improve. The US is a powerful country, with a mighty scientific potential, with a vital economy. Bulgaria is a small country; as a Bulgarian saying goes, even smaller stones matter sometimes, for they can overturn a car. I don't have in mind the US. I am talking in general. The historical period we are living in attaches an increasingly greater importance to the role of smaller countries.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: Thank you.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I once again thank you. Send my best regards to your leaders, and Mr. Reagan in particular. Make sure you tell him what I said: I don't know how history will judge his mission; I do know, though, that if he helps Bulgaria construct socialism, he will no doubt have had a mission of historical importance.

JOHN WHITEHEAD: That will be a challenge for him.

DOCUMENT No. 5**Transcript of Conversation between Todor Zhivkov, Chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and Acting Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party Zhao Ziyang, 6 May, 1987 in Beijing**

[Source: Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Record 60, File 395. Document obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova.]

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Top Secret

Meeting of Comrade Todor Zhivkov with Zhao Ziyang, Acting Secretary General of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and President of the State Council of China People's Republic
Beijing, 6 May 1987¹⁷

ZHAO ZIYANG: Let me welcome you, comrade Zhivkov. We attach special importance to your visit.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: This is my first personal visit to China, and the first top-level visit from Bulgaria.

ZHAO ZIYANG: I guess you have not seen as many people in Sofia as there are in Beijing.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: To be honest, I expected far more people than I see now; I thought it would be like an anthill. Nothing of the kind. I guess there are more people in Shanghai? [...]

ZHAO ZIYANG: Thank you for the useful information on Bulgaria, for your evaluations, Comrade Zhivkov. After we listened to your analysis, we now have a more comprehensive view of Bulgaria. For the last 30 years the leadership of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party, with Todor Zhivkov as its head, has achieved significant results in constructing socialism. Your economy has had indeed sustained and high growth rates for an extended period of time. You have gained much useful experience in constructing socialism through reforms.

Your theoretical concept of the *owner* and the *proprietor* of the socialist ownership has provoked much thought on the matter. We have already had your lectures before the professors and academic audience of the Academy of Social Sciences translated and printed.

Generally speaking, we are very happy with your success and wish you even greater results in the future.

Since you began with Bulgaria, let me start my comments with China.

For the last thirty years since establishment of the People's Republic of China, we have made great achieve-

ments. On the other hand, one can learn certain lessons from our errors. There are two major lessons: the first one is too much haste and rashness in our economic development, which resulted in the so-called "Great Leap." Great leaps are normally followed by severe slumps. We have gone through such cycles several times thus far. There hasn't been a sustained level of economic development. On the other hand, we have been conducting a leftist policy, there are too many political movements. After we successfully carried out our nationalization, we focused our attention on construction and housing. The Cultural Revolution was too hasty a measure as well. We are deeply impressed with the stable and normal rate economic development of your country for the last several decades. You have often mentioned the April Policy.¹⁸ I will take the liberty to inform you of the Third Plenum of our Party. The Third Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party was held at the end of 1978; at this Plenum a thorough analysis of our past experience and the lessons we have drawn was made. We developed a program adopting the policy of constructing socialism in a specifically Chinese manner. This program has two major items: the first is our commitment to (and observance of) the four major principles. I think they may be general principles valid for all socialist countries. The central point of these four principles concerns the leadership of the Communist Party and the socialist road of development.

[...]

The proponents of peace outnumber the proponents of war. A world war may break out, but we may [also] witness a prolonged period of world peace. Our foreign policy is a policy of independence and peace.

There are three basic issues in this policy: the protection of peace is a central issue; having adopted the five principles of peaceful co-existence, our goal is to keep and further develop friendly relations with all the countries of the world; to have an independent position in international affairs. We do not enter into alliances with countries or blocs, and we will not establish relations of strategic importance with any country whatsoever. Although China is a less developed country in terms of its economic development, it plays an important role in world affairs because of its size. We believe that the policy we have been conducting favors the protection of world peace.

On disarmament, it is above all the Soviet Union and the USA, possessing over 95 percent of the nuclear arms in the world that should reduce these arms. We are in favor of the dialogue between them. We hope their talks will be frank and open and an agreement will be reached. As for disarmament, we consider it a topic of prime importance since the future development of the world and of mankind are closely related to it. All countries, irrespective of their size, should have equal rights in this process and contribute to its enhancement. The two super powers should respect the stance of the smaller and medium-sized countries and listen to their position on disarmament.

[...]

As for China's relations with other countries, I suppose

that our relations with the Soviet Union are of interest to you. We are pursuing complete normalization of our relations with the Soviet Union. We would like the relations between the two great neighboring socialist countries to be normalized as soon as possible. The whole world would benefit from this.

A central issue in the normalizing of these relations is the so-called Kampuchea [Cambodia] problem.¹⁹ The Soviet Union supports sending Vietnamese troops to Kampuchea, whereas China provides assistance for Kampuchea's resistance movement. This war has been going on for eight years now. Its coming to an end seems unlikely in the foreseeable future. Unless this Kampuchea problem is solved, one can hardly speak of normalizing relations. There is one point of heated debate in the relations between the Soviet Union and China, and that is the Kampuchea problem.

On the other hand, there has been progress in our relations with the Soviet Union in other spheres of life. I think that there will be a step forward in our relations in terms of politics. It all depends on solving the Kampuchea problem.

The factor determining the deterioration of our relations with Vietnam was the occupation of Kampuchea by Vietnamese troops. Regardless of the [Vietnamese] motives, the fact is that a country has openly sent troops to occupy territories of a weaker neighboring country. By no means can this be considered a correct act. Therefore China cannot support Vietnam on this important international issue; that is why Vietnam considers China to be its greatest enemy and has adopted an anti-Chinese policy. Those who have artificially created this problem must find its solution. If the Vietnamese troops withdraw, the relations between Vietnam and China will [again] become normal. I don't think there will be any progress in these relations unless Vietnam changes its policy of aggression towards China.

We rely on Vietnam's new leaders. We hope they will adopt a sensible and reasonable policy. This war appears to be a catastrophe for the Vietnamese people; it should therefore be brought to an end. It is not in line with the people's interests. A lot of problems will be easy to solve once they have withdrawn their troops from Kampuchea. The relations between China and Vietnam on the one hand, and China and the Soviet Union on the other, will improve. Vietnam's relations with the countries of South East Asia will be normalized. Vietnam's national economy can expand only in a peaceful environment. This is what I wanted to tell you on foreign relations.

You informed us about the policy you pursue on the Balkans to do away with all nuclear and chemical weapons. We can well understand the Bulgarian people's striving for constructing socialism under peaceful circumstances. We are impressed with the effort you put into lessening tensions in the region. Turning the Balkans into a region free of nuclear weapons is a task for the peoples living there.

I took too long to make my comments. Thank you for your attention.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you for the interesting information.

As for our government, we follow what you do in the country and all the reforms you undertake. We can [only] follow these at a distance, of course; and we are neither in charge of any of these changes, nor can we contribute in any way. We would like to congratulate you on all reforms and the significant results you have achieved in China's development, its economic development in particular, and raising the people's living standard. I would like to point out that there is no relevant difference between our views of the state's role as owner and the role of the economic agent as proprietor. I am deeply convinced that the economic policy we are pursuing will yield good results both in China and in Bulgaria in the future. We have to share our experience and account for the results achieved. We will readily share our experience with you and study yours.

[...]

I would like to talk now as one of the veterans of the Communist movement, not in the capacity of secretary general of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party. When I was elected first secretary a long time ago, I was of the middle-aged generation; when I met Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping in Moscow later [in November 1957], I was the youngest first secretary. My youth is over now. I most sincerely hope that a way to normalize the relations between China and the Soviet Union will be found. We share common aims and ideals. These relations should be settled and regulated and this should happen within my life span. I know this might sound egoistic, yet I would be most honest and sincere in my satisfaction if these relations [problems] could be settled. A lot of problems have arisen; these were accumulated in the course of our historical development. Certain problems have been created by ourselves. Both sides have made mistakes. There should be a way to stand above these problems that might hinder our relations and get us nowhere, regional problems in particular. Let us find a way to solve the regional problems, so that they will not determine our relations. Settling the regional problems should be considered a prerequisite for regulating our relations. Regional problems should be tackled in the course of a friendly dialogue. We could reach an agreement on all other issues. This is my deepest wish both as a Communist and as a veteran.

On Kampuchea, I don't know whether you're aware of the fact that I am the first general secretary who visited Kampuchea in 1979.²⁰ I was on a one-day visit. I visited Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. Vietnam's new leaders expressed their willingness to take China's interests into consideration. A dialogue and a solution to the problems should be sought. I am not one to make suggestions, yet I know that dialogue is a necessary tool. As far as I can see, there is a willingness on the part of Vietnam's leaders to begin talks.

As for Vietnam's economic situation at the time of my visit, I must say it was extremely severe. I guess you know that better than I do. Let us find a way to eliminate this obstacle, so that it will not hinder the relations between China and the Soviet Union. I know that the problems will be solved when there are talks. There are a lot of outstanding problems that cannot be solved at once; being realists we are aware of

this.

As for the cooperation between China and Bulgaria, we are ready to stimulate its further development. Bulgaria is a small country; however, we are Georgi Dimitrov's party, and, as I already pointed out, we will follow his legacy. If it was not for this conflict, China would be the most popular country in Bulgaria after the Soviet Union. I believe this will happen. We have had close relations with the Soviet Union in the course of our historical development. The second country, gaining such popularity, is China. You can see how a conflict may hinder our relations. I hope we will forget all this. For it is often the case that the dead save the living. Let us not allow what is already dead to pull us downwards. Our relations should be frank and open, sincere and brotherly of a communist type. We are willing to further develop our cooperation. Please come and visit Bulgaria. We are a small, yet dynamically developing country.



DOCUMENT No. 6
Memorandum of Conversation of Bulgarian President Todor Zhivkov with Chinese Leader Deng Xiaoping, Beijing, 7 May 1987

[Source: Central State Archive, Sofia, Fond 1-B, Record 60, File 395. Obtained by Jordan Baev and translated by Kalina Bratanova.]

DENG XIAOPING: You already had talks with comrade Zhao Ziyang and comrade Li Sinyan. They have informed you of the problems we are solving at present. I've been less busy than they have, since they do the everyday routine work.

We are both veterans. Our meeting today can be called the meeting of the veterans. I mean only the two of us, not any of the other of the participants.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: We are veterans of the communist movement in general, not only the one in our countries.

DENG XIAOPING: Veterans are called to do more work for the sake of their people, their countries and the communist movement in general. We have made a lot of mistakes in the past, we have even let conflicts break out. The problems must be solved within our life span. Yugoslavia's former president [Josip Broz] Tito, who visited China in 1977, had talks with me then.²¹ I told him: It is true that we had rows in the past, we made mistakes; yet I cannot claim that we have always been right in our judgments.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I absolutely agree with you: the most important task that is before us, the veterans, is to solve the problems and not leave such a bad legacy to the generations to come.

I am very happy that I have the opportunity to visit

China and meet you. I will never forget you and Pan Dzyan; I have known you since our meeting in Moscow in 1957.²² He came to Bulgaria then.

DENG XIAOPING: We met in 1957.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Yes, we met at the conference in Moscow. There was even a very nice meeting we had; I would like to remind you of it, so that our comrades from Bulgaria hear about it. I'll tell you what happened. We had some problems with our comrades from Poland at one of these conferences. The latter made several statements, which were considered to be generally negative in attitude. All participants that then took the floor exposed [Polish leader W³adys³aw] Gomu³ka to severe criticism, but they would not explicitly say his name. Since I was the youngest first secretary then, I fiercely criticized him. Then you came to our delegation and gave us some Chinese tea. Mao turned to me to congratulate me for my speech. He told me I was very smart and clever. "I completely agree with you," he said, "When socialism is a well-established system on a global scale, I'll propose that you become chairman of the World Socialist Federation." I'm telling you that story because I just want to let my comrades know about Mao's evaluation of my work; while my merits haven't been recognized in Bulgaria yet...

DENG XIAOPING: I feel healthy, however, a man of my age never knows when he will leave forever to meet Marx.

I am glad that under comrade Zhivkov's leadership there reigns an atmosphere of sustained political peace and stability. There has been a sustained economic development as well. Maybe nature favors you, maybe the people have created such a favorable economic environment. Yet we have gone through a lot of up and downs in our development. We can claim that when the People's Republic of China was established in the early 1950's, both countries were at the same level of economic development. China was probably poorer than Bulgaria. There were certain cataclysms in Bulgaria that must be the reason for its sustained economic growth.

We made leftist mistakes. In 1957 we struggled against the rightist elements, in 1958 there was "the Great Leap" in the people's commune. We were rash and reckless to a certain extent both in terms of our economic measures and the political activities; there was a leftist tendency. All this was true for our policy in terms of the international communist movement. It is leftist as well. The "Great Leap" resulted in a severe three-year slump. Other factors related to the sphere of international affairs, of course; I won't dwell on these, since you know them. I have in mind the fact that the Soviet Union declared about a hundred bilateral agreements with us null and void. This brought about serious hardships. Yet the major reason for our hardships was our leftist policy. We managed to cope with the slump and restore our previous level of economic development.

In 1962 a meeting was held with 7,000 participants, including all first secretaries of the regional committees. As a result, our economy grew steadily in the period from 1962 to

1965. In 1966, however, the Cultural Revolution began, which lasted ten years. There were serious drawbacks throughout these ten years, both in political and economic terms. One can say that upon the establishment of the People's Republic of China in the late 1950's, in the period 1958 - 1978, the country's development in social terms was stagnated. The annual income of a peasant was about 60 ioans. The average salary of a worker was also about 60 ioans in this period. There was some development in this period. For example it was then that we produced nuclear missiles, weapons and a satellite, [but] social development was stagnant on the whole. It was as late as 1978, when the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee was held; the experience gained throughout the 29-year period was summarized, conclusions were arrived at; on the basis of these present day policy was developed. [...]

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I have the pleasure to fulfill a task assigned to me by our party leadership and government: I would like to greet you personally and wish you health and great results. Most of our leaders know you and have met you. I would therefore like to send their best regards and wishes for your health.

Let me once again express my deepest gratitude for your invitation to come and visit your country, for the extreme attentiveness and hospitality towards me and those accompanying me.

DENG XIAOPING: Our contacts and relations are of prime importance. Your country is a small one, yet your experience is very important. The reforms in your country started almost 20 years earlier than ours. Bearing in mind the specificity of your own economic environment, you have been carrying out reforms in a secret manner, I would say.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: You are very precise in your judgment. No one has formulated it like this.

DENG XIAOPING: It's not easy to carry out such reforms.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: We have not been hiding. Nothing can be hidden under the sun. I am optimistic and am indeed very glad that our relations of cooperation and fraternity will be restored; we used to enjoy such healthy relations up to the events you just spoke of.

DENG XIAOPING: We must look forward to what's ahead of us.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Yes, it is our future relations that we must consider. Many things took place, some inevitable and objective in nature; others were the result of our own mistakes and weaknesses. Nevertheless we must look ahead.

DENG XIAOPING: That's right.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: We follow the events taking place in your

country and all the deep reforms that have been carried out ever since the historical Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party [in December 1978]. We were deeply impressed with the way you managed to cope with the problem of malnutrition and starvation and provide food for 1 billion and 20 million people within such a short period. It is true that your people have not become wealthy, yet you managed to provide food for them, and there are products in the department stores.

The second thing that draws one's attention is that you made a breakthrough in establishing a free market economy. We were not successful in this respect, although we made an attempt to do that in the early 1960s. Yet we are trying to deal with this problem at present. [...]

Thus our attempts are directed at implementing the resolutions of the latest 13th Congress of our Party that was held last spring. We will be together in our common struggle side by side.

DENG XIAOPING: We share a common aim. We must make efforts together.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Despite all that happened to the relations between our two socialist countries, we are actually following the same path. This is what matters. All other problems can be solved by negotiating in a communist manner.

DENG XIAOPING: That's right. I suggest that we now go and have lunch and continue our talks.



DOCUMENT No. 7

Memorandum of Conversation between the President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Todor Zhivkov, and the Prime Minister of Greece, Andreas Papandreu, in Alexandroupolis [Greece], 22 April 1989

[SOURCE: Central State Archive, Sofia, fond 1-B, record 60, file 414. Translated by Kalina Bratanova and edited by Jordan Baev.]

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU: I once again have the chance to welcome our country's friend Todor Zhivkov and his assistants. I hope that the warmth with which Alexandroupolis's residents welcomed you is indicative of our people's feelings towards you.

I guess that our meetings are of a more specific nature this time; today it is taking place on our territory, the next will be taking place on your territory. I believe that we will have enough time to consider important issues during our talks. It's true that we share a common view of how to preserve world peace, secure understanding on the Balkans and stimulate the development the relations between the Balkan countries.

Mr. Zhivkov, I suggest that tomorrow we organize a meeting with our foreign ministers so that we can discuss the problems concerning our countries, as well as certain global and European issues. [...]

TODOR ZHIVKOV: I think that our present meeting will be fruitful and I am optimistic about it. There are many favorable opportunities so that our delegations can carry out serious work. My and your mission consists of stating our support to and to approval of the results achieved.

I agree to the agenda you offered, I do not mind our delegations starting work today, and our meeting being held tomorrow to discuss certain aspects of our bilateral cooperation, the problems on the Balkans, as well as global and European issues.

We are now meeting as friends and there are no problems between us that might break up our relations. On the contrary: all that has been achieved so far provides solid grounds for our further progress. I believe that we will live up to our wonderful peoples' expectations. Watching your people today and in the past during my previous visits, and, taking into consideration our people, I see that they are very much alike, sharing common views and feelings. And it is often the case that we, heads of state, mislead them; I do not mean you and me in particular, I have in mind heads of state in general.

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU: Mr. Zhivkov, first of all I would like to thank you for the warm words. Talking about our problems, I must point out that PASOK [Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement], during its 8-year term of office, brought about our people's advancement along the road to peace, democracy and progress. PASOK mainly succeeded in balancing the economic development of the urban and the rural areas. It's equally pleasant to live in the countryside and in the big cities of Greece. It's even better to live in the village. This was not the situation even ten years ago. This is what determines our positive attitude towards you, as you yourself defined it. There is indeed a feeling of respect and love that we cherish towards you.

I would like to mention some other simple truths.

Our government contributed to laying the basis of sustainable peace in the Balkans, although the region is only a micrograph of the world. Your government took this mission up several years later, of course. The Balkans present a mixture of various structures and policies, such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the Common Market and non-aligned countries such as Albania and Yugoslavia. Nevertheless we succeeded in organizing a meeting in which all Balkan countries participated for the first time. That is a significant achievement.

Yet another truth is that our bilateral relations can be evaluated as excellent. Our countries are an example of a united duet in the Balkan region with no severe problems between them.

I must admit that there is one fact that worries me. That's the unresolved yet both clear and not so clear problems;

certain unclear problems as those relating to the relations between Turkey and Bulgaria, between Turkey and Greece; other well-known problems as the ones we used to have with Yugoslavia. The events that have been taking place in the Balkans really worry us. These are related to the events taking place within Yugoslavia concerning the Albanian problem. Our friend Romania has also been creating problems. Since both Greece and Bulgaria are positive factors in the region, we keep asking ourselves whether we might [be able to] help normalize the situation in the region by any means. I think that the stable relations between Greece and Bulgaria provide the grounds for establishing good relations between the Balkan countries in general. This is an important and interesting issue we would like to hear your opinion of.

Another problem is East-West relations. The US has a new government [headed by President George H.W. Bush]. There are no indications so far of any change in the US policy towards the Soviet Union, compared to the times when Reagan was president; however, the Americans are more skeptical about its [the USSR's] policy nowadays. The question is for how long the US will be able to sustain its policy in the totally new situation created by Mikhail Gorbachev's taking power. Therefore the US is uncertain about whether it will maintain its policy for a longer period. There have been fears that changes might take place in the Soviet Union. This is the skepticism I had in mind.

Another issue. The US is making painstaking efforts to prevent a euphoric atmosphere from setting over Europe, i.e. raising hopes for peace and disarmament which would weaken NATO's influence and significance. Serious problems have arisen in NATO; an example of such a problem is the upgrading of the short-range nuclear weapons.²³ This issue has been given due attention on the part of the US. Upgrading presupposes producing new types of weapons, much more effective and with a wider range of action within the medium-range missiles. Therefore this upgrading means producing weapons we have already put aside, the weapons of the so called medium-range action, that have been put out of use both by the Soviet Union and the US. West Germany strongly opposes such upgrading; this position is based on both national and political arguments. This is a problem we will further dwell on.

I must admit that there is some hesitation and caution in the process of ice-breaking between the two superpowers; the former might be an obstacle to the progress of the talks between the two superpowers on strategic weapons. A period difficult to predict and foresee is ahead of us. Our view of the situation is the following: we must reinforce the importance of peace and nuclear disarmament; we shall thus contribute to promptly resolving the problem of the decrease in the number of smaller-range action weapons.

I am convinced that our initiatives and statements on peace and disarmament played an important role. At the present moment they may have an even greater relevance. I believe that we will spend enough time on this issue tomorrow at our talks with the foreign ministers.

To wind up I would like to say that we have taken the

right course; the first clouds have appeared, however; we must do something to clear them away so that the sun can once again shine along our path. Many negative qualities may be attributed to Reagan; yet we must admit that he manifested the political courage to move on and give effect to disarmament. I cannot perceive the same courage in the present US administration.

I hope that if we take our time to talk and reach agreements feasible for our two small countries, we will no doubt contribute to strengthening world peace. Apart from that, we shall take advantage of all the favorable opportunities of our small countries to stimulate the further development of our bilateral relations.

I am happy with your words, Mr. President, that neither the [18 June 1989 national] elections in Greece, nor my short illness were an obstacle to holding our meeting.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: Thank you for everything you said. We shall obviously carry out a more detailed discussion of these issues tomorrow.

Let me make a brief comment on certain issues as well.

I do share your view of the newly established international situation that causes us concern and results in slowing down disarmament. I don't know whether the major factor in this situation is the new US administration's policy of delaying talks with the Soviet Union. All statements, made prior to the talks, are the cause of our concern. An issue that causes concern is about tactical nuclear weapons. What do these weapons suggest? If our two countries have such weapons deployed, then we can destroy each other within a couple of hours. Conventional weapons have reached the level of nuclear weapons in terms of their destructive power. The question is: will we find the appropriate ways and means to preserve the achievements in disarmament so far, or will we push this disarmament process back? This is indeed a question that cannot but cause our concern. We do hope, however, that there are forces both in Europe and the US that will create a new mode of historical thinking, adequate for the new realities, so as to prevent at any cost a thermonuclear war.

As for the Vienna Forum²⁴ and the final documents adopted there, we do approve of them. Moreover, there is a forthcoming session of our Parliament at which legislation for implementing these documents will be passed. We have no objections to these documents, we approve of them, and we are willing to do our best to adapt them to the new global realities, despite our awareness of the obstacles and difficulties connected with our public life. It is quite clear that we have to live a civilized life. All laws that have been drawn up by us together must be observed, otherwise they will be formal.

Therefore world progress towards the prevention of thermo-nuclear war prevention, as well as on environmental and other global issues has yet to be made. A revolutionary step has not yet been taken yet; there is the danger of delaying the process and even pushing it back. This process undergoes ups and downs in its evolution. But the social en-

ergy created in adopting the new political thinking and action in international affairs under Gorbachev's leadership, and the public capital that is being raised in this process, has captured people's hearts as we are witnessing the establishment of a new world order and a new stage in the progress of mankind. Before reaching the agreements of the Vienna Forum, we held the Helsinki summit [in 1975]; unfortunately its agreements were not implemented to the full extent. I think that the Vienna Forum is taking place in the realities of a new world. The only stronghold of the past that has to be abolished, as it hinders the establishment of a modern civilized life style on our planet, is nuclear arms. Even if there is a five-fold cut in the number of nuclear weapons, what is left will suffice to wipe us out completely. Hence the importance of making progress step by step to prevent a delay of the disarmament process or it being pushed back.

[...]

I completely agree with you that there is a new situation in the Balkans. We are of the same opinion that there will be obstacles and hardships to overcome through our joint efforts along our way, which will by no means be easy. I emphasize once again: the Balkans are a region where the two superpowers have their influence; therefore we must remind them to undertake their political moves bearing in mind the region's willingness to live in peace and understanding.

Although I am thus pessimistic [about the global situation], I am even more optimistic about the future development of the region. An optimistic feeling takes the upper hand. We are still young, there is enough time before us to live and go on with our talks. I mean we're biologically young.

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU: We would not be so active if we were not optimists. I must admit that you look ten years younger than when we last met. You won't reveal the secret of it.

TODOR ZHIVKOV: There is no secret to unveil, one must simply keep working. Man is the product of labor.

As for the situation in our country, great changes have been taking place. Although you have some information available, I would like to tell you that a significant economic transformation has been taking place. We are setting up an economic system based on establishing individual firms. What is the difference between a firm and any other economic agent in the capitalist countries? There is no difference, and if there is, then that means that we have not organized our system well compared to the one in the capitalist countries. The major difference comes at the top of the economic system where there is the state; 50% of the profit goes into the state budget as revenues. There is no other difference. Since our present government is not of a capitalist type. As long ago as primitive society man began free market exchange. He exchanged products; later the market system developed into a feudal and a capitalist one. Since there are commodity-money relations, the market is a necessity. Taking into consideration the objective realities in the world we think that modern technologies and management are the basis of economic devel-

opment and growth. Nowadays the state is the economic agent standing both at the input and output of the economic system. It should not intervene in the middle. These are the imperatives of cybernetics. The state must not intervene in the activities of the firms. Similar reforms are to be carried out in agriculture. An upcoming plenum of our Party on the 4 and 5 May is dedicated to agriculture issues. Our next step will be introducing publishing houses as individual agents in the sphere of culture, etc.

We have set up several hundred firms so far; they will provide the major framework within which our economy will work. Tens of thousands of firms will be established with the respective legal structures: liabilities and responsibilities. The socialist state will stand at the input and output of the economic system. We can thus show you a wealth of companies. Over 100 firms took part in the Hanover Fair, and several hundred representatives of West Germany's firms attended our forum for businessmen.

ANDREAS PAPANDREOU: The EEC [European Economic Community] has been dealing with the issue of firms. What you just said about the economic organization of firms is of interest to us; I would like to add something more to the topic at our meeting tomorrow; it will not be anything new actually, simply an elaboration of what you said.

I suggest that we now end our talks, since we will have the opportunity to go on tomorrow. Let's go and attend the cocktail and have an official lunch.

NOTES

¹ Gandhi visited Bulgaria in October 1967 during a trip through Eastern Europe.

² The meeting of the Commonwealth nations took place in London in January 1969.

³ Likely reference to the 13th annual meeting of Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) in April 1968.

⁴ Gandhi began an extensive tour of Latin America in September 1968.

⁵ "National Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation," set up by the hardline leaders of Algeria, Libya, South Yemen, Syria and the PLO in Tripoli in December 1977 to oppose reconciliation and a peace settlement between Egypt and Israel raised by Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat's November 1977 surprise trip to Jerusalem.

⁶ A summary of the resolutions can be found in the 28 April 1980 letter from the Permanent Representative

of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mansur R. Kikhia, to the United Nations Secretary-General, published in United Nations, GENERAL ASSEMBLY/Thirty-fifth session/Items 24 and 26 of the preliminary list/Question of Palestine/The Situation in the Middle East, A/35/188, S/13912, 29 April 1980.

⁷ Zhivkov visited Libya in late December 1976.

⁸ Following the collapse of talks with Jordan's King Hussein, Arafat unexpectedly would pay an unexpected 48-hour official visit to Bulgaria in April 1983. He had previously visited Bulgaria in February 1973 and July 1979.

⁹ Several students were reportedly injured. *New York Times*, 29 May 1980, p. A15.

¹⁰ In response to the Soviet deployment of SS-20 missiles, a special meeting of NATO Foreign and Defense Ministers on 12 December 1979 adopted a "double-track" decision. NATO would deploy in Europe 572 US Pershing II missiles and ground-launched Cruise missiles, all with single warheads. In addition, a broad set of initiatives would be launched to further the course of arms control and confidence-building so as to improve mutual security and cooperation in Europe as a whole.

¹¹ Whitehead visited Bulgaria as part of a trip through Eastern Europe in January-February 1987. Whitehead's reportedly personal decision to include Bulgaria in his itinerary had been controversial amid continuing suspicion of Bulgaria's complicity in the May 1981 assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II.

¹² Zhivkov had been first secretary of the BCP since 1954.

¹³ Hirohito had been in office since 1926; Zhivkov since 1971.

¹⁴ See footnote 1.

¹⁵ See footnote 1.

¹⁶ Beginning in December 1984, Bulgaria was internationally accused of the forced "Bulgarization of its ethnic Turkish minority in parts of southern and eastern Bulgaria.

¹⁷ Zhao Ziyang paid a return visit to Bulgaria during a five-country 18-day tour to Eastern Europe in June 1987.

¹⁸ Following the Twentieth Party Congress of the CPSU in February 1956, "the April Policy" signified the results of the plenary meeting of the BCP CC in April 1956 during which Todor Zhivkov seized full power within the Communist Party leadership.

¹⁹ A late 1978 Vietnamese invasion drove the ruling Khmer Rouge into the countryside and touched off more than a decade of fighting.

²⁰ Zhivkov visited Cambodia in the fall of 1979 in an effort to demonstrate the Kremlin's diplomatic support for the new rulers in Phnom Penh.

²¹ Tito paid a state visit to the People's Republic of China on 1-10 September 1987.

²² Deng Xiaoping and Todor Zhivkov met at the November 1957 celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution.

²³ West Germany was pressing the United States and NATO for speedy negotiations with Moscow on short-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

New Central and East European Evidence on the Cold War in Asia

Conference Report by Yvette Chin, Gregory Domber, Malgorzata Gnoniska, and Mircea Munteanu

The George Washington Cold War Group (GWCW), the Cold War Research Center in Budapest, and the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) sponsored the international conference on “**New Evidence from Central and East European Archives on the Cold War in Asia**” in Budapest on 30 October–2 November 2003. The conference, held at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, sought to provide a forum for the discussion of new findings on the Cold War in Asia from the archives of the former communist countries of Eastern and Central Europe. Participants included scholars and graduate students from around the world who have recently mined the Central and Eastern European archives, most of which are far more readily accessible than comparable archives in Russia or Asia. The conference was made possible by a generous grant from the Henry Luce Foundation. Additional support was provided by the 1956 Institute, the Harvard Project on Cold War Studies, the National Security Archive, the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact, Temple University’s Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy, the U.C. Santa Barbara Center on Cold War Studies, and the University of Virginia’s Miller Center and History Department.

On Friday, 31 October, after a gracious welcome from both **James Goldgeier** (GWCW) as well as the local hosts of the conference, represented by **Csaba Békés** of the Cold War History Research Center (Budapest), the conference moved quickly into the first task for the morning: two paper panels on new evidence about the relationship between the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and China. The first panel, focusing on the pivotal year 1956 and chaired by **Malcolm Byrne** (National Security Archive), led off with a presentation by **Dr. Sergo Mikoyan**. Utilizing his father’s personal papers, Dr. Mikoyan outlined Anastas Mikoyan’s numerous trips to China, beginning with an intriguing account of Mikoyan’s first meeting with Mao in February 1949 and including tidbits from further contacts with the Chinese in the mid-1950s through the early 1960s. It is clear that these private papers offer a wealth of new information on the intricacies of the Chinese-Soviet relationship during this period. The participants were left hoping that the documents hinted at in Dr. Mikoyan’s paper would be made public in the near future.

The next paper, presented by **Peter Vamos** (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), focused more specifically on China’s influence on events in Hungary during 1956 and in the normalization process following the Hungarian Revolution. Utilizing Hungarian documents from the 1950s and early 1960s, he added new but inconclusive evidence on the Chinese influence on the 1 November 1956 Soviet decision to send

troops back into Budapest, as well as an interesting anecdote about the use of Chinese students in Hungary as a source of reporting to Beijing on the events. Independent, Canada-based scholar **Lezek Gluchowski** presented new findings from the Polish archives on the Chinese-Polish relationship from 1956–1964, focusing particularly on the support given by the Chinese to temper Khrushchev’s rage against the Polish United Workers Party (PZPR) in 1956. Gluchowski also analyzed the initially close relationship between Mao and Gomulka in their shared opposition to the Kremlin. Eventually, Gluchowski concluded, this relationship between the Poles and the Chinese would cool as Poland sided with Moscow in the Sino-Soviet split.

The second panel of the morning, chaired by **James Hershberg** (GWCW), focused on the East European-Chinese relationship through the Sino-Soviet rift. The panel began with a paper presented by **Carmen Rijnoveanu** of the Institute for Political Studies of Defense and Military History in Bucharest (Romanian Ministry of National Defense), which described Romania’s efforts to seek independence from the Soviet Union by attempting to ameliorate the Sino-Soviet schism. **Doug Selvage** of the (U.S. Department of State’s Historian’s Office), presented a paper examining the Polish regime’s efforts to limit the scope of the Sino-Soviet split but also utilize Chinese-Soviet tensions to gain additional leverage in its argument with Moscow on foreign policy issues (the possible admittance of Mongolia into the Warsaw Pact in 1963 and the proposed Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, in particular). The final paper of the morning was presented by **David Wolff**, who added a fresh perspective on the Sino-Soviet split with his study of “Interkit,” the Soviet governmental think-tank set up in 1967 to improve understanding of the Chinese and coordination of China policy within the Socialist bloc.

As both **Odd Arne Westad** (London School of Economics) and **Vladislav Zubok** (Temple University) pointed out in their comments on the first and second panels respectively, these papers added a level of detail to the inter-bloc relationships in the communist world—between the Chinese and the Soviet bloc, between the East Europeans and the Soviets, as well as among the East Europeans themselves. Both commentators also highlighted how interrelated all of the events in the bloc were: both the de-Stalinization efforts begun in 1956 and the Sino-Soviet split cannot be understood simply through the bilateral relations between countries, but need to be seen in the web of relationships between all members of the highly fractured socialist bloc, both East and West. While it remains difficult to understand the Chinese perspective without further access to Chinese archival sources, utilizing

East and Central European sources on these two crisis periods was clearly beneficial for expanding our understanding of the complexity in Cold War intra-bloc relations.

The third panel, chaired by **Csaba Békés**, explored additional new evidence on East-European-Chinese relations during the Cold War. **Jordan Baev** (Cold War Group Bulgaria, Sofia) discussed joint Soviet and Bulgarian efforts to counteract Maoist propaganda. Using fresh documents from the Communist Party, state, diplomatic and security archives in Bulgaria, Baev chronicled Bulgarian policy towards China and Albania at the height of the Sino-Soviet Split. If in the late 1950s the Chinese-Bulgarian relationship could be described as friendly and open, by the early 1960s Bulgaria's relationship with both China and Albania had drastically deteriorated. Bulgarian leader Todor Zhivkov implemented this shift in policy, Baev argued, for both foreign policy and internal party reasons. **Mircea Munteanu** (GWU/CWIHP) presented a paper on the Romanian attempts first to mediate the split in 1964 and later exploit it for its own purposes. Seeking to insulate itself from Moscow's whims, Bucharest chose to effectively lean to one side in the Sino-Soviet split, Munteanu argued. The split offered Bucharest an unexpected but much needed ally in the communist camp in the form of a vociferous CCP. Unable, and, more importantly unwilling, to establish a state-to-state alliance with Beijing, Bucharest did enter into a *de facto* alliance between the two parties directed against the ideological position of the CPSU. In doing so, Bucharest consistently championed policies directed at preventing the Soviets from establishing control over the Socialist countries and thus effectively isolating the CCP within the Communist movement. Polish historian **Wanda Jarzabek** discussed Polish perceptions of China during the later half of the 1960s. After the split became open, Polish-Chinese party relations remained very limited. The Chinese, Jarzabek argued, continuously accused the Poles of betraying them, reminiscing of the times when the PRC had supported Gomulka during the 1956 crisis. It was not until the 1970s, when economic issues took primacy, that relations between the two parties warmed up again.

The fourth panel discussed the origins and the first years of the Sino-Soviet split. Chaired by **Goldgeier**, the panel featured new findings from the Hungarian and East German archives on the CCP's position regarding the Hungarian Revolution. **Hope Harrison** (GWCW) discussed the position of the German Socialist Unity Party (SED) in the emerging Sino-Soviet split. Based on her research in the SED archives in Berlin, the paper showed how the party found itself forced to choose sides in the emerging conflict and attempted to use the conflict between Moscow and Beijing to its own advantage, especially before the conflict burst into the open. **Vámos** continued his morning presentation with additional findings from the Hungarian archives on Sino-Hungarian relations from 1956 to 1972. The documents, he argued, while not providing any smoking guns, flesh out the history and details of the relationship. Romanian historian **Lavinia Betea**, together with British historian **Paul Wingrove**, jointly presented a paper dealing with the psychology of Romanian Communist

party leader Gheorge Gheorghiu-Dej's role. Rather than concentrating on archival study, Lavinia Betea argued, historians should spend more time trying to analyze the psychology and personality of leaders. Their discourse is just as important, Betea argued, as the documents found in the archives. Baev rounded up the panel with comments on both the papers presented and the topic discussed.

The last panel of the day concentrated on the role of the Warsaw Pact in Asia. The panel was chaired by **Gregg Brazinsky** (GWCW); **Hope Harrison** commented on the papers. Romanian historian **Petre Opris** opened the discussion with a presentation of his findings on the Soviet attempts to include Mongolia in the Warsaw Pact in the early 1960s. The role of Poland in stonewalling Mongolia's accession in the Warsaw Pact is better known, he argued. Nevertheless, documents from the Romanian archives show the important role that Romania played in preventing the Warsaw Pact's expansion to the East and its transformation into a Soviet-led tool. **Bernd Schäfer** (German Historical Institute Washington) presented a report on the latest finding of the Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact (PHP). **Hershberg** presented a paper on the Warsaw Pact and the Sino-Soviet split by Mark Kramer (Harvard University, Davis Center) who was unable to attend the conference.

Chaired by **Oldrich Tuma**, the first panel on Saturday, 1 November, centered on East and Central European evidence on the Vietnam War. In particular, the panel presented evidence on East European attempts to mediate the conflict and on Sino-Soviet competition during the war. **Lorenz Luthi** (McGill University) presented "The Collapse of Sino-Soviet Party Relations and Its Influence on the Early Vietnam War, 1963-66." The U.S. escalation of the war in Vietnam after the Gulf of Tonkin incident in early August 1964 was the greatest military challenge to the socialist camp since MacArthur's landing at Inchon, he noted. But the Socialist camp's reaction to US escalation in Vietnam lacked that kind of verve. The emerging Sino-Soviet split, Luthi argued, prevented a forceful reaction that might have deterred a greater American commitment. Ideological differences per se did constitute the major obstacle for aid to the DRV. One explanation to this phenomenon, Luthi continued, lay in concurrent developments in Chinese domestic politics, in the run-up to and early stages of Mao's Cultural Revolution. **Békés** presented an overview of the Hungarian mediation attempt between the US and the North Vietnamese in 1965-66. Using evidence uncovered by the Cold War Research Center-Hungary, it is clear that Hungary was not a negotiator or a mediator as fraternal Poland or Romania. **Békés** went on to debunk rumors that Hungarian Foreign Minister Janos Peter ever went to Vietnam in the fall of 1965 as a secret negotiator. Furthermore, he continued, the Hungarian leadership felt offended by the North Vietnamese when they did not receive any gratitude in return for their support. **Hershberg** (GWU) examined new evidence on Poland's secret Vietnam diplomacy during Lyndon B. Johnson's 37-day bombing "pause," from December 1965 to January 1966. Hershberg came to the conclusions that the Poles, and Foreign Ministry director-general Jerzy

Michalowski in particular, made a good-faith effort to relay and, to a considerable extent, advocate to Hanoi the American proposal for talks. Nevertheless, like his Hungarian counterpart Janos Peter, Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki was not beyond trying to mislead the Americans regarding Hanoi's position in order to prolong the pause. In doing so, Hershberg suggested, Rapacki undermined his own credibility in ways that would rebound against him during a more serious Polish initiative in late 1966 (codenamed "Marigold" by Washington). The Poles, he went on to suggest, like the Hungarians, conducted their initiative not at Soviet instigation but in coordination with Moscow, in a manner carefully designed to fit the Kremlin's known policy preferences. When their efforts failed to convert the temporary bombing pause into a permanent halt and a US-DRV negotiating process, the Poles (like the Soviets and Hungarians) blamed the Chinese for either preventing Hanoi from accepting peace talks or at least reinforcing the belligerent tendencies that precluded a positive response to the pause. Nothing in the new East-bloc evidence has yet emerged to alter the view of most scholars that a "missed opportunity" for peace during the pause did not exist, Hershberg concluded. Preponderant forces on both sides still hoped to achieve mutually incompatible objectives as a result of continued fighting, and tended to view any tendencies toward compromise by the enemy as signs of weakness justifying further military efforts rather than reciprocal concessions as steps toward peace.

Chaired by **Odd Arne Westad** the next panel discussed not only foreign policy but also touched on the much less discussed aspect of internal North Vietnamese policy making and the pressures on the North Vietnamese leaders during the Second Indochina War. **Malgorzata Gnoinska** (GWU), presented a paper titled "Mieczyslaw Maneli and Polish Attempts to Neutralize Vietnam—Rumors Revisited: Poland and Vietnam, 1963." In the fall of 1963, the CIA and the Western press alleged that Mieczyslaw Maneli, the Polish delegate to the International Control Commission (ICC) set up in 1954 by the Geneva Conference, initiated a secret dialogue between Saigon and Hanoi, a claim Maneli denied. Ever since, the episode has remained a matter of controversy and mystery. By using new evidence from the Polish archives, Gnoinska put forth some of the missing pieces to the forty-year-old puzzle. The evidence, she argues, makes it clear that Maneli acted on his own as he was not instructed either by Moscow or Warsaw to act as intermediary. Due to lack of access to Hanoi's archives, Maneli's role remains unclear, however. Nevertheless, she continued, the 1963 rumors were caused by misperceptions that the West had of the communist bloc, and, most importantly, by naiveté, shared by Maneli and the Soviet Ambassador in Hanoi, of their governments' policies towards Vietnam in 1963. Finally, Gnoinska concluded, it is plausible that Maneli's meeting with Ngo Dinh Nhu, and the rumors which stemmed from it, led indirectly to the coup of 1 November 1963 that claimed the lives of Nhu and his brother Diem. Using evidence from the Sofia archives, Bulgarian historian **Boris Stanimirov** discussed Bulgarian aid to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia during the Indochina War, 1963-75.

Hungarian historian **Balázs Szalontai** offered his perspective on "The International Aspects of North Vietnamese Internal Policies, 1954-69." Caught between two competing "masters," Hanoi had to find ways to balance them. To exemplify the point, Szalontai emphasized the North Vietnamese dilemma on what kind of land reform to carry out in 1954: the Soviet or the Chinese model? A mixture of both—perhaps leaning towards a Chinese model—the Vietnamese solution was a compromise. Szalontai also discussed the importance of the North Vietnamese leaders such as Le Duan, Le Duc Tho, Vo Nguyen Giap, and Truong Chinh. The National Liberation Front and the DRV government played, in their relations with the other Communist countries, set roles of "good cop - bad cop." While there was cooperation between the North and the South, Szalontai concluded that the NLF was far from being simply an appendage of Hanoi. The North Vietnamese were more cruel and aggressive than the NLF in their policies, and some within the North Vietnamese leadership were willing to sacrifice the NLF and use them primarily to get "the foot in the door." Commenting on the papers, **Lien-Hang Nguyen** (Yale University) stressed the importance of socialist allies for Vietnam and the ways the North Vietnamese used them for different reasons: they used Poland (and the International Commission of Supervision and Control) and to some extent Hungary, for peace initiatives, while they used Bulgaria for economic aid.

Chaired by **Kathryn Weathersby** (CWIHP), the eight panel dealt with Korea using a variety of approaches, sources, and methods. This attention afforded to North Korea demonstrated how the global Cold War was felt on the national and local levels. **Balazs Szalontai's** "1956—A Challenge to the Leader" showed the complexity of the relationship between the super-power and small powers by focusing on the unique political situation within Korea. Looking at intra-party politics, Szalontai explains how Kim Il Sung could resist Khrushchev's calls for de-stalinization and reform. Similarly, **Sergey Radchenko's** paper "North Korea and Soviet/Japanese Rapprochement in the 1960s" and Bernd Schäfer's "North Korean 'Adventurism' and China's Long Shadow, 1966-1972" emphasized regional interests and perspectives. Both showed the significance of the regional perspective in the decisions made by North Korea and provide insights into North Korea's historical behavior in international politics.

In a somewhat different vein, **Rüdiger Frank's** paper emphasized the institutional aspects of intercultural exchange, by looking at East German architecture in North Korea. "Material on North Korea in the Bauhaus Archive in Dessau" used different kinds of archival materials to bring to illuminate relations between institutions, bureaucrats, and experts, rather than diplomats and heads-of-state. Frank shows how the Cold War literally changed the landscape in North Korea. He highlights issues of modernization and ideology in the Cold War in Asia, issues further elaborated by **Gregg Brazinsky's** comments.

The ninth panel, "The Cold War Elsewhere in Asia," added complexity to the the issue of ideology by suggesting the importance of religion, non-alignment, and nationalism.

Belgrade-based scholar **Ragna Boden's** "The Atheistic and the Muslim State—Islam in the Service of Soviet Policy towards Indonesia (1954-1964)" demonstrated how religious themes and images entered into propaganda about the socialist man in a Muslim state. Boden also showed how religion acted as a category in Soviet foreign policy-making, how in-itself it was a political concern and a factor in shaping party power in Indonesia. Looking at the Non-Aligned Movement, Belgrade scholars **Ljubodrag Dimic's** and **Svetozar Rajak's** "Meeting of the Like-Minded: Tito's first trip to India and Burma" draws connections between the Non-Aligned movement and Yugoslav 'deviationism' that complicated bloc relations and challenged regionalism and geographic constraints. They show how Tito's 1954 visit with Nehru (Indian Prime Minister), in a key step on the path to the Bandung Conference the following spring, established principles that encompassed both European values of activism with Indian methods and approaches that emphasized neutralism and pacifism. It was this synthesis that gave the non-aligned movement strength and allowed it to resonate with developing and newly independent nations.

Finally, **Sergey Radchenko's** paper "The Kremlin's Leash, the Mongolian Nationalism, and the Chinese Connection" brought nationalism and national history to bear on Cold War history. He unearthed the story of a 1964 attempted coup against Mongolian leader Tsedenbal and shows how Mongolian nationalism, with its historic suspiciousness of the Chinese, was used by Tsedenbal against his potential ousters. Using interviews and documents from Mongolia, Radchenko's paper demonstrated the importance of national history in the outcomes and contours of Cold War history.

A sample of the documents declassified and translated for the conference is published here. Additional findings for the Budapest conference, including many other translated documents from Central and East European archives on the Cold War in Asia, will be featured in a special issue of the CWIHP Bulletin, to be jointly produced by CWIHP and GWCW.

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DOCUMENT No. 1

Record of Conversation between Polish Premier J. Cyrankiewicz and Chinese Leader Mao Zedong, 8 April 1957

[Source: AAN, KC PZPR, sygnatura XI A 130, Dept. V China 074/13/58. Obtained by Douglas Selvage; translated by Malgorzata Gnoinska.]

Warsaw 4.15.1957

People's Republic of Poland
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Secretariat [of]
I Secretary of the CC PUWP
Cde. Wl. Gomulka.

Local

Upon the instruction of Comrade Minister Rapacki, the Secretariat is sending [you] the minutes of the conversation with Comrade Mao Zedong along with the attachment which was brought back according to the cable by Comrade Katz-Suchy.

Secretariat
Signature
/W. Lewandowska/

Minutes of the Conversation carried out by the Leader of the Polish Governmental Delegation in China, the PPR Premier J. Cyrankiewicz, with the Leader of the PRC, Mao Zedong, on 4.8.1957 in the Headquarters of Mao Zedong.

First, Premier Cyrankiewicz passed on greetings for Cde. Mao Zedong from the First Secretary of the CC PUWP, Cde. Gomulka, and he passed on a letter from the President of the Council of State, Cde. Zawadzki. At the same time, Premier Cyrankiewicz added that Poland was grateful for the invitation of the Governmental Delegation of the PPR. In reply Chairman Mao Zedong welcomed the delegation fullheartedly and asked about the impression of Canton [Guangzhou].

PREMIER CYRANKIEWICZ: We were one day in Canton. A meeting with Cde. Liu Shaoqi [one of the managerial figures of the People's [Republic] of China, the Vice Chairman of the PRC, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Assembly of People's Representatives, the Secretary General of the CCP] took place. Most of us are in China for the first time; it is a great experience for us.

MAO ZEDONG: This is [your] first trip in the East.

CYRANKIEWICZ: When it comes to China, the leading figures of the Polish People's [Republic] already had the opportunity to speak with Cdes. Zhou Enlai [and] Ho Lung. Once

again, I thank [you] for the invitation. We are grateful to Cde. Mao Zedong for [his] interest in Poland [and] for the demonstrated assistance in a difficult situation. Thanks to this we can build socialism better after the VIII Plenum, even though we still have difficulties. The aim of the transformation, carried out in Poland, is to fight what was bad. We have cleansed the moral atmosphere of our construction of socialism, with our relations with other socialist countries, and with the USSR.

[The issue of] the ties between the party and the masses was brought before the VIII Plenum. We fixed this, thanks to which we can build socialism better. In the course of the VIII Plenum, our leadership, headed by Cde. Gomulka, felt gratitude for the understanding demonstrated by Cde. Mao Zedong and other members of the leadership of the Party and the Chinese nation. The assistance in [our] construction of socialism was demonstrated in this way; this has [an] influence on the unity of socialist countries.

MAO ZEDONG: We are members of one socialist family. We want everything to be well in every socialist country and in our socialist family. The party and the Chinese nation show concern for Polish matters.

Last year there was no such understanding within the international socialist movement for the Polish matter and for the work of the Polish comrades as [there is] now. Some comrades were faced with the issue of whether Poland is advancing on the road to socialism. This is a crucial issue. Some were interested in Poland's attitude towards the USSR [and] to other socialist countries. The best argument for any doubts is time. After a short while, it was understood what was going on in Poland. Now this issue does not exist anymore.

I read the Polish-French statement; it is very good. It makes a positive impact on the international communist movement. We discussed the Polish matter with the Czechoslovak delegation. Cde. Shiroki, while in China, said that he believed that Poland was following the course.

Perhaps there are still a certain number of comrades who have doubts as to the direction of development of Poland. I think that if one of the countries does not understand the Polish issues, there is nothing frightening about this. I think that the best method is a patient explanation. Poland should explain its own way.

Each of the socialist countries has difficulties; China has them too. In principle, the situation in China is good, but there are matters to be solved. We have much to do in the area of ties with the masses. Bureaucratism and sectarianism are a nuisance. We are conducting work among the members of the party in order to strengthen its ties with the masses. We also have large economic difficulties. There is a backwardness in this area. One has to work a lot in order to transform life. Changes for the better do not come at once. What economic difficulties does Poland sense?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Poland is undergoing economic difficulties. We made much progress as far as the Six Year Plan, which was a plan to industrialize the country. But the dispro-

portions between industry and agriculture arose. We did not carry out the plan of raising the standard of living, which caused discontent [displeasure] among the masses. Many errors were made in agriculture. We are currently fixing these mistakes. We paid more attention to agriculture. We are allocating more funds to them, which we are getting, among other things, through decreasing investments in industry.

Distortions of democracy took place inside the party. Law and order were violated.

We began to bring back the Leninist norms; to bring back the Party's ties with the masses.

Serious increases in wages took place already last year as well as this year, but this is not efficient in comparison to the needs of the masses. We are telling them that we cannot carry out further increases, because we will be threatened by inflation. We are on the verge of financing pay increases with [the profits from] the amount of goods. The agricultural production decides, to a great extent, the amount of goods, and therefore we want to increase it. A preliminary program of eliminating disproportions between industry and agriculture was put forward in 1954, but the decisive turn occurred only after the VIII Plenum.

MAO ZEDONG: How does the carrying out of the Six Year Plan present itself in Poland?

CYRANKIEWICZ: The plan has been pretty much carried out in industry, but it varies in different branches of industry – what also goes into it is the burden of military production in the global production; we didn't carry it [the plan] out in agriculture; it was unrealistic. It assumed that in the course of 6 years one could increase the production by 40%. This assumption was not based on realistic premises. In addition, we made a series of mistakes which additionally contributed to the fact that we did not achieve what we could have in agriculture. We have not been delivering investment and construction materials [or] a sufficient amount of fertilizers; we demobilized part of the peasants [who were involved] in production by creating conditions of an uncertain tomorrow.

MAO ZEDONG: China is making use of your positive and negative experiences.

Planning in China is still of an experimental nature. The future will show the prospects of planning. We are making fewer mistakes while making use of your experience. Every country is taking a zigzag path to socialism. China also has serious problems in agriculture. The level of production is low. We have difficulties in the countryside. China is a peasant country. Our peasants want to eat and clothe themselves. We have difficulties with supplying the cities. Does this also occur on your side? I know that half of the population in Poland are peasants.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. The difficulties in our agriculture result partially from the fact that many peasants moved to the city, to industry, and that is why there is a lack of labor [lit: hands to work] here and there in the countryside. The work-

ing class has increased numerically. Besides, we have a large population increase – half a million annually. Our agriculture does not yet satisfy the needs of the country. We are importing around 1.5 million tons of grain annually. This is a significant import. Our import is significantly targeted at accelerating the development of animal farming.

MAO ZEDONG: How does your export look like?

CYRANKIEWICZ: We export coal, metallurgic products, machines, textiles (the latter to the USSR where we are procuring cotton), and entire industrial complexes. Machines and entire industrial complexes are our new exports. It takes place primarily to the countries of Asia, among others, to China.

MAO ZEDONG: How about economic relations with the countries of Africa?

CYRANKIEWICZ: We are trying to develop them. We have relations with Egypt, with Tunisia, and other Arab countries. We help Egypt and Arab nations with armament. We have a large armament industry. We don't know what to do with it.

MAO ZEDONG: China also has an overly developed armament industry. Do you want to reduce the armament industry?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. Some of the armament facilities are working in low gear. Some are providing accessory production for the needs of the people.

MAO ZEDONG: One should have some armament, but not too much.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes, the Polish people understand this. But, one shouldn't have too much [of it]; we built too large an armament industry and there should be cooperation among socialist countries in this area, so we are not all producing the same thing.

MAO ZEDONG: How does economic coordination look in general between socialist countries?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It's looking better [lit: it's getting on a better track]. We brought up certain motions to the Council for Economic Mutual Assistance and the Soviet Union which resulted from previous bad experiences. There was no division of production, but the allocation of tasks [took place], at times, even without asking individual countries. Some tasks were imposed, especially concerning our coal. During our visit in Moscow in 1956, we brought up, along with Cde. Ochab, the matter of correct cooperation. The matter looks better today, but there is still a lack of a positive conception. We want the cooperation to take place on the principle of equality [among] the partners. The matter is looking better.

MAO ZEDONG: How [should we] understand the principle

of equality in cooperation?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It should take place according to the consent of respective countries.

MAO ZEDONG: Is it better now?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Better, but there is still a lack of a positive conception.

MAO ZEDONG: I know that there is also a deficiency of grain and consumer goods in the countries of Eastern Europe, however, there are too many machines.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes, Czechoslovakia and the GDR are importing grain. Both of these countries have a developed machine industry. They also have a large production of industrial consumer goods. That is why the standard of living in both of these countries is higher than in ours. Numerically, roughly speaking, one can say that it is twice as high.

MAO ZEDONG: And what does the standard of living look like in these two countries in comparison with that of the USSR?

CYRANKIEWICZ: It is also higher.

MAO ZEDONG: And what does standard of living of the USSR look like in comparison with Poland?

CYRANKIEWICZ: The goods of industrial consumption are cheaper in the USSR. However, the consumption of meat, butter, in general fats, is higher in Poland. But our consumption in this area is lower than in Western Europe, the GDR, the CSSR [Czechoslovak Republic], and in Hungary.

MAO ZEDONG: The consumption is even lower in China. China cannot be compared with any European country. One can only compare with the level before the war in China. It is currently a little better than before the liberation, but not significantly. The average annual consumption of meat (pork) amounts to 5 kilos per head; grain about 300 kg.

CYRANKIEWICZ: On our end, they compare with the neighboring countries; the comparisons are not advantageous. In comparison with the pre-war level, with the overall increase in population growth and consumption, some categories earn less.

MAO ZEDONG: That's true. Those countries are near. One cannot prohibit comparisons. Propaganda should show, however, a systematic increase year by year.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The socialist countries should demonstrate economic superiority, among others, by raising the standard of living. In our propaganda, we are showing our masses that Western countries grew rich on colonial exploi-

tation and were developing during the period when we were under occupation. Some categories of our workers earn less than before the war. It causes dissatisfaction. Another source of discontent is that we promised more than we could give. People do not want to be cheated. Today we are saying that the improvement of living conditions depends on the working class and the people.

MAO ZEDONG: This is correct. We know that Cde. Gomulka and other comrades from the leadership emphasize in their pronouncements that raising the standard of living depends on the efforts of the working masses. Do all workers understand this?

CYRANKIEWICZ: Now better than before because we are telling them even the bitter truth. The party must be strong in order to have a bond with the working class. The current efforts are aimed in the direction of an ideological strengthening of the Party.

MAO ZEDONG: This is necessary. We are currently working on this as well. It is necessary to strengthen the political work and the ideological leadership among the workers, peasants and the academic youth.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Before we did not use this to convince, but we gave orders. This is a big task of the Party.

MAO ZEDONG: One has to know how to talk to the masses. Some don't know how to do this. They know how to give orders. There is a lack of conviction in their pronouncements. Our party is strengthening the work in this area. We have to treat the nation differently, [we have to treat] differently the class enemy. It is easy to violate the border here. The Party seasoned itself in the class struggle. That is why it has experience in fighting the class enemy. Some, if they only find divergences in the bosom of the nation, accuse for enmity instead of convincing that they are using a method of administrative pressure. We have to differentiate these two kinds of divergences with total clarity. The classicists talked little about these two kinds of divergences. Force must be used against the enemy. As for the nation, a method of clever persuasion must be used.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The distinguishing of these divergences is very important for the construction of socialism.

MAO ZEDONG: In China, numbering hundreds of millions of people, these divergences must be solved especially carefully.

CYRANKIEWICZ: The example of China in this area, the activity and the work of Cde. Mao Zedong, means a lot to us.

MAO ZEDONG: One has to beware, however, of an automatic transfer of experiences.

CYRANKIEWICZ: Yes. But, on the other hand there is much convergence of the development of socialism in individual countries. In Poland, last year, if we were to use your nomenclature, serious divergences appeared in the bosom of the nation, and even in the Party. A critique of the previous state [of affairs] took place; [people] began to look for new ways. But we approached this correctly. We solved our problems on our own. These divergences became solved at the VIII Plenum. Otherwise, the class enemy could exploit this. If the Party did not solve these divergences on its own, then it would leave a base for counterrevolutionary activity. It seems that the situation in Hungary was similar in the beginning. But in Hungary the Party, through the lips of "Geröz", defined the dissatisfaction of the working class as the activity of the enemy. Thus, in Hungary, the situation looked the opposite of Poland in the area of conclusions. As a result, the Party did not follow the process of restoration. The class enemy exploited this. This has given a wide field for counterrevolutionary activity.

MAO ZEDONG: In Poland, the Party was following the process of restoration. The situation in Hungary looked different. The Petöfi Club existed in Hungary. It unleashed an unhealthy campaign. The Party and the Central Committee were passive during that period; it was different in Poland. There were two trends in the Hungarian Party. The people revolted. Nagy represented revisionism and he was tied to the Club of Petöfi. The majority of the Party led the process in Poland. The leadership forces in Poland and Hungary were different. In Hungary, at a certain time, the masses rebelled. The Party and the Government ceased to exist. The Party was not able to lead the process of restoration. A base was formed for the activity of the counterrevolution and revisionism.

CYRANKIEWICZ: If one does not follow the process of restoration, one goes astray, because who is to lead if not the Party?

MAO ZEDONG: The Party led in Poland. The restoration was set as a goal. In Hungary, the goal of the Petöfi Club was to break up the Party and the government. (a very detailed conversation on this topic took place during yet two dinners).

CYRANKIEWICZ: On our end, the goal was improving the construction of socialism, the stabilization of our relations with the USSR as was dictated by our national dignity.

MAO ZEDONG: Shiroki agreed that Poland was on the right path. I spoke with him. One has to explain to other fraternal countries and parties in order for them to understand what the crux of the matter was.

CYRANKIEWICZ: We have been doing this and we will continue to do so. The talks between our Party and the English Party took place recently. [Our] governmental visit

will take place in Czechoslovakia in May, and in the GDR in June.

MAO ZEDONG: This is very good. This will give further opportunity to exchange views. If there are differences in the views, then it doesn't matter. One has to leave the matter up to time. There is no need, however, to drag out the matter outside. To an article, for example, immediately answer with an article.

CYRANKIEWICZ: We also think so. We criticized the pronouncements of [Yugoslav leader Josip Broz] Tito in Pula. We told the Yugoslav comrades about this.

MAO ZEDONG: The pronouncements of Tito [and] Kardelj do not have support.

CYRANKIEWICZ: I would like to bring up yet another matter. The Party, the Government, the Polish people warmly invite Cde. Mao Zedong to Poland.

MAO ZEDONG: Thank you. I have received the invitation.

CYRANKIEWICZ: We invited [you] in November of last year. We believe that you will accept the invitation. Your visit in Poland will be a momentous event for the Polish nation.

MAO ZEDONG: In principle, the visit has been agreed upon. All is left is setting the date.

Prepared by:

/E. Sluczanski/

Shanghai, 12 April 1957



DOCUMENT No. 2

Information from Krem Bosev, Charge d'Affaires of the Bulgarian Embassy in Beijing [1970]

[Source: *Diplomatic Archive, Sofia, Record 26, File 3330. Translated by Borislav Stanimiro.*]

INFORMATION

From Krum Bosev, Charge d'affaires of the Embassy of the People's Republic of Bulgaria in Beijing

Concerning: the Chinese position on the Cambodian events.

The Chinese position on the Cambodian events taken

against the regime of Lon Nol–Matack and in favor of Sihanouk is known to be very cautious and has been developed gradually and continuously in favor of [Prince Norodom] Sihanouk, probably under the pressure of the Vietnamese leadership.

In a talk with comrade Elizavetin, the deputy chief of the department for the East European countries, Li Lian-Xi, has emphasized that the Chinese position had been clearly expressed in the announcement of "Xinhua" on 16 March [1970] about the meeting between [Chinese Premier] Zhou Enlai and the Cambodian ambassador Valentine.

[...]

Another announcement on "Sihanouk" on 30 March is underlined that "the Chinese Government and the Chinese people constantly respect and support the policy of peace, independence and preservation of the territorial unity which is carried out by the state leader of Cambodia, Sihanouk. The Chinese Government has always accepted Sihanouk as a head of the state..."

[...]

In response to a query of a leader of a fraternal embassy (21 March) about the position of China on the Cambodian events, the personal counselor of Sihanouk, Prince Pen Hut had replied quite curtly: "China gives full support to Sihanouk" but in the same time added that more details concerning the Chinese position on that question would be presented by Sihanouk himself during his forthcoming visit in Moscow. Two days later (23 March) the other personal counselor of Sihanouk, General Ngo Hu, in a conversation with Elizavetin underlined a statement of Chinese official person who said: "China can be a larger model for Cambodia."

On the same day (23 March) comrade Elizavetin had a second meeting with General Ngo, requested by the latter, concerning the future intentions of Sihanouk. After the conversation, comrade Elizavetin has gathered the impression that the Chinese leadership showed great caution in connection with the Cambodian events and did not hurry with outlining its position. It became clear that China didn't want the outbreak of new war near its boundaries. At the same time he felt, based on the talk with Gen. Ngo Hu, that the Vietnamese leadership put serious pressure on the Chinese leaders for a more clear and determined position.

At the same time following the personal instructions of Pham Van Dong, the Vietnamese ambassador in Beijing has had an extended conversation with comrade Elizavetin and informed the latter about the Chinese position on the Cambodian events which had been presented in the trilateral meeting of Sihanouk, Zhou Enlai and Pham Van Dong in Beijing (22-23 March). According to the ambassador of Vietnam, Zhou Enlai had promised total political support to Sihanouk and a large propaganda back-up i.e. committing to Chinese press, radio and television all materials – Chinese or foreign – in support of Sihanouk. In the trilateral meeting Zhou Enlai had promised also weapons. Nothing more, however had been promised including direct military interference with the explanation that China is not neighboring country with Cambodia.

In a conversation of mine with the South-Vietnamese

[NLF] ambassador, comrade Nguyen emphasized: “The Chinese leadership completely and definitely supports Sihanouk.”

During a conversation between Sihanouk and comrade Elizavetin, which took place on 5 April at Sihanouk’s request, the Prince has underlined that he had received assurance from the Chinese leadership that in his speech in Pyongyang, Zhou Enlai would stigmatize strongly the new regime of Lon Nol and would proclaim clear and decisive support to Sihanouk. Zhou Enlai’s visit to the Korean People’s Democratic Republic confirmed that promise.

[...]

By the way, in his conversation with comrade Elizavetin, Sihanouk has emphasized that in the near future China would /probably after the meeting of the four countries of Indochina, which will take place in Guangzhou [Canton] on 12 – 13 April/ announce an official declaration.¹

Here appears the question, why China’s position on the events in Indochina and Cambodia has been developed so carefully and gradually? May be it is still early to give a response to that question but what can be said at the moment is that China made it by its own way – waiting and not directly involving... More specifically that means:

1. The Chinese leadership – in theory and in practice – has been and remains the upholder of the armed resistance, of the people’s war, of lighting up wars. But they have always stood aside from these wars, they want them far from their boundaries and if it is possible in other regions and continents and without their direct participation.

2. There is a reason to think that (such opinions have been expressed by some Arab and other ambassadors) the complicating of tightening of the events in Indochina and the larger engagement of the USA in the region give to China new opportunities in their negotiations with the USA in Warsaw.

3. The events in Cambodia [and] the new situation in the region create conditions for organizing a large anti-American and anti-imperialist front, which in the minds of some Chinese leaders can be under Chinese control.

The events in Cambodia and Indochina, after the evaluation of the Vietnamese leaders and probably and of the Chinese leadership, create conditions for the boosting of the revolution in this part of the world.

Beijing, 24 April 1970

Charge d’affaires:

/Kr. Bosev/

DOCUMENT No. 3

Memorandum of Conversation between the Romanian Party and Government Delegation Led by Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev, 27 September 1964

[Source: State Archives, CC RCP files, Chancellery, 55/1964, pp. 2-5. Translated by Mircea Munteanu.]

The party and government delegation led by I. G. Maurer stopped in Moscow for a few hours on its way to Beijing. N. S. Khrushchev invited [the delegation] to lunch.

E[mil] Bondaras and P[aul] Niculescu-Mizil also participated from the Romanian side.

A[natoly] N. Kosygin, V. P. Mdjavanadze, V. V. Kuzhnetsov, L. N. Tolkunov, and E. D. Karpeshchenko (translator) were present from the Soviet side.

T. Sinu and G. Marin (translator) participated on behalf of the Romanian embassy.

The lunch was organized by the Guest House of the CPSU CC and the Council of Ministers at 1500 hours. The lunch was followed by discussions which lasted until 2000 hours.

During the lunch, the following issues were discussed:

1. N. S. Khrushchev made a presentation of situation in agriculture for the current year, citing typical (*characteristic*) statistics for all the union republics and some of the regions.

[Khrushchev] spoke of a very good wheat production this year, stating that this year, taking into account the surface, it was a record production.

In 1964, the Soviet Union will not have to import wheat, and in the next four years it hopes to create a one year reserve.

2. Cde. I. Gh. Maurer informed [the Soviet leadership] of the beginning of construction at the Iron Gates hydroelectric plant. He mentioned that a Romanian delegation of specialists [hydroelectric engineers] will arrive in the Soviet Union in the first half of October of this year to negotiate the purchase of [needed] machines. A. N. Kosygin, interrupted the discussion and said that [the Soviets] are prepared for the beginning of the negotiations.

3. N. S. Khrushchev spoke of his visit to an experimental weapons test site. Without going into details, he spoke of a new defensive weapon developed recently by Soviet specialists.

4. Discussing with Mdjavanadze the vacation he took in Romania, Cde. I. Gh. Maurer—addressing Kuzhnetsov—admonished him that he continues to refuse to come spend his vacation there [as well]. N. S. Khrushchev intervened in the discussion and recommended that Kuzhnetsov respond positively to the Romanian invitation.

5. After lunch N. S. Khrushchev continued the discussion, concentrating on the issue of disagreements with the Chinese over the [Sino-Soviet] border. He stated that before *Pravda* published the discussions between Mao Zedong with the Japanese Socialists and the article regarding the position of the Soviet Union, the Soviet government sent a telegram to the Chinese government attempting to confirm the facts published in the Japanese media.

The answer received [from the Chinese]—Khrushchev continued—let it be understood that what was published in the Japanese press was correct.

Khrushchev presented the issue of the territorial conflict as an issue that reached a climactic point. (N. S. Khrushchev spoke of numerous border crossings and of the concentrations of Chinese armed forces on some parts of the Sino-Soviet border). The Soviet prime minister said that if the Chinese side would look at the situation realistically, renouncing their demand to include in a future [Sino-Soviet] treaty of a statement about the unequal character of the treaties signed by the Tsarist governments, the Soviets would be agreeable to consider negotiating some changes in the current border with the People's Republic of China.

N. S. Khrushchev described the history of some of the Soviet regions on the border with China, mentioning the discussions [he] had with the Chinese leadership over time, including the issue of Mongolia.

Speaking about the discussions Mao Zedong had with the Japanese socialists with regard to East German and Polish territories, N. S. Khrushchev underlined that these issues are not currently of interest. It is important to mention that during the discussions about the possible problems that might arise between the Byelorussians, Ukrainians and Poles on one side and between the Poles and the Germans on the other, the Russian prime minister did not, as in the past, mention anything about the S. S. R. of Moldavia.

Making references to the activity of the Sino-Soviet commission on border issues, N. S. Khrushchev said that, after the discussions broke down, no decision was made as to when they would begin again.

6. Cde. Ion Gheorghe Maurer began to inform [the Soviet leadership] about the Romanian governmental visit in France and the discussions held with De Gaulle. He underlined that the principal object of the discussions was the economic cooperation between the two countries. The issue of peaceful coexistence was also discussed. N. S. Khrushchev interrupted him and said: "You see, when you Romanians speak of peaceful coexistence, the Chinese say nothing; when I say something about it, I am immediately attacked by them. Tell us, what is your secret tactic, how did you manage to get the Chinese in you [back] pocket."

N. S. Khrushchev continued about the Chinese propaganda campaign against the CPSU and Soviet leadership, about the various accusations made [against them] and about the necessity to forcefully respond to these attacks. Within this context [Khrushchev] mentioned that lately the CPSU leadership has been accused of intending to hold negotia-

tions with the FRG to the detriment of GDR's interests. "How is it possible for us not to respond to these accusations," asked N. S. Khrushchev.

Cde. I. Gh. Maurer said that it was necessary to look closely at what accusations were brought and an analysis be made if a response is necessary. "For example—Maurer said—it is not necessary to respond to the accusation that the Soviet Union is restoring capitalism since everybody knows that the USSR is building communism."

Kosygin interjected in the discussion and tried to argue that it is necessary to respond to all issues raised by the Chinese leadership. Among other things, he said: "How would you respond if at Romania's borders certain things would be happening [?]" Cde. I. Gh. Maurer responded: "Of course, we would closely analyze the situation and, if warranted, we would take any necessary measures."

N. S. Khrushchev said that "you can be opposed to the public polemics since the Chinese are not attacking you. I'll tell you what the secret is: the Chinese have a tactical plan which calls for leaving out the P. R. Hungary, P. R. Poland, P. R. Romania, and GDR, and concentrating their fire on the USSR, the CPSU, and especially on me."

7. With regard to the issue of the [World] Workers' and Communist Parties Congress, N. S. Khrushchev underlined the need to hold [the meeting], stating that the [the meeting] is not about excluding any part—that is out of the question—but rather about establishing a programmatic document of the Communist and Workers' movement.

After all, [Khrushchev] said, there is no forum out of which a party could be excluded, and the document that might be produced [at the meeting] would only be the continuation of the 1960 Declaration, which was signed, among [many] others, by the Chinese C. P.

Cdes. I. Gh. Maurer and E. Bondaras represented our Party's point of view, underlining that acting with calm, wisdom, and by manifesting extraordinary care with respect to the issues [at hand], it is their opinion that some changes could be expected on behalf of the CCP. Some new elements [in the Chinese position] have been apparent lately, such as the notion and content of [the idea of] the popular commune, [their] accepting of the principle of peaceful coexistence in some of the communiqués signed by the Chinese leadership with the leadership of certain states in Asia and Africa, the reanalysis of the avenues and methods of socialist industrialization.

Within this context, it was suggested that, even though the invitation of a Soviet delegation to the 15th anniversary of the People's Republic of China—from what N. S. Khrushchev described—was not done in quite an appropriate manner, the CPSU leadership showed political maturity by sending a delegation to Beijing.

8. Suggesting that the R[omanian] W[orkers'] P[arty] and the government of R[omanian] P[eople's] R[epublic] has adopted the Chinese theory of self-help in the construction of a socialist economy, N. S. Khrushchev said he is not against

it, mentioning the times when the USSR was the only socialist country.

He said that he does not understand the [North] Korean position, who in theory have adopted the same position, but practically are demanding [economic] aid, [often] proposing deals that are not mutually advantageous. [Khrushchev] continued, stating that he supports intra-socialist economic relations based on the principle of equality and on mutual advantage, and that the CPSU leadership took numerous steps to rectify the flawed practices of Stalin's regime. He gave the *Sovroms* as examples, which—Khrushchev said—“are driving you Romanians up the wall every time you hear about them.”

9. N. S. Khrushchev said that he will be leaving Moscow for a while, being in Gagra [Crimea] to finish the report he will be giving at the CPSU CC plenary session, scheduled for the second half of November or the beginning December.

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d. T. Sinu
G. Marin (ss)
emp. Unic
ct. N. Radulescu



DOCUMENT No. 4

Note on the Conversation between the Romanian Party and Government Delegation led by Ion Gheorghe Maurer and Soviet Leader Nikita Khrushchev, 27 September 1964

[Source: 55/1964; State Archives, CC RCP, Chancellery, pp. 52-53; Translated by Mircea Munteanu.]

NOTE

During the discussion with Khrushchev, the following additional points were made in addition to those mentioned above.

[Khrushchev] told of his numerous meetings with Mao Zedong. He said that during one of these discussions, [Mao] expressed his dislike for one of Zhukov's declarations, which stated that in case the Americans would attack China, the Soviet Union will come [to China's] aid. Khrushchev said that Zhukov's declaration was made on the basis of the decision of the CC CPSU Presidium. Mao Zedong said that it was not a just [useful] declaration. If the Americans would attack China, they would get stuck. The Chinese will carry out a prolonged war. The Soviet Union must not get involved, it must stay out of it. Thus the Soviet Union will remain untouched and this would also be good for China.

Khrushchev said he does not agree with that point.

Mao Zedong also explained another theory, which Khrushchev described as strange. If the Americans would attack the Soviet Union, the Soviets should not fight them on the western border; rather they should withdraw to the Urals for 1-3 years. In this way they would tire the Americans, and then, together with the Chinese, they would begin their annihilation.

Khrushchev said that Mao Zedong is completely amiss with the concepts of modern warfare.

Khrushchev also told of his discussions with Mao Zedong concerning the popular communes, [and] the issue of foodstuffs. [Khrushchev] told us that, at the time, he told Mao Zedong only that they have been tried in the Soviet Union and that they did not prove to be to useful. That is why the Soviet Union will not apply these reforms.

When he returned to the Soviet Union [from his trip to China] Khrushchev told the CPSU CC Presidium that there is a catastrophe underway in China.

Repeatedly he said that Mao Zedong is sick, crazy, that he should be taken to an asylum, etc.

Among other things, he said that the main cause of this is Chinese nationalism. To augment his point, [Khrushchev] said that throughout the entire Chinese war liberation, Mao Zedong did not even once visit Moscow. This he qualified as proof of Mao Zedong's nationalism. [Underlined in the original; Translator's Note (TN): Corneliu Manescu, wrote on the back of the document: *This cannot be considered as proof of nationalism*].

During the dinner, and before [the delegation's] departure, [Khrushchev] repeatedly sent cordial salutes for Cde. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej and the other members of the party leadership.

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