

POLISH CRISIS

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

Overview of New Sources

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

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

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

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

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

**DECLASSIFIED SOVIET
DOCUMENTS ON THE POLISH
CRISIS**

Translated and annotated
by Mark Kramer

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

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET

No. P210/P

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

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

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

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

2. To establish a CC Politburo Commission composed of:
Comrades M. A. Suslov (chairman), A. A. Gromyko, Yu. V. Andropov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, M. V. Zimyanin, I. V. Arkhipov, L. M. Zamyatin, O. B. Rakhmanin.

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

CPSU CC POLITBURO

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

began in September 1992, and six sessions were convened in 1992 and the first half of 1993. The transcripts of these initial hearings were published, along with supporting documentation, in *Sad nad autorami stanu wojennego przed Komisja Odpowiedzialności Konstytucyjnej* (Warsaw: BGW, 1993), Vol. 1: *Oskarżenia wyjasnienia obrona*. Additional volumes cover the subsequent hearings, which for the most part went over similar ground. Especially valuable are the documents collected and released by the Commission.

Important interviews with, and articles by, high-ranking Soviet and East European military officers who were involved in the preparations for an invasion of Poland include "Juz siedzielismy w czolgach: Z generalem majorem Stanislawem Prochazka rozmawia Leszek Mazan," *Polityka* 37 (15 September 1990), 13; "Generalmajor S. Prochazka z wojske obrody rika: 'Meli jsme okupovat Polsko,'" *Zemedske noviny* (Prague), 16 August 1990, 1; "Misja skonczona: Wywiad z generalem Wiktorem Dubyninem, dowodca wojsk bylego ZSRR w Polsce," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 14-15 March 1992, 8-9; Maj.-General Vladimir Dudnik,

"Tainy 'temnoi komnaty,'" *Moskovskie novosti* 14 (5 April 1992), 17; and "Vladislav Achalov: Takoe vpechatlenie, chto nikto nikogdanikogo nichemu ne uchil," *Segodnya* (Moscow), 7 February 1995, 7. References to other items of this sort can be found in my forthcoming CWIHP Working Paper.

Of the vast number of Soviet and East European documents that have been released, including many transcripts of CPSU Politburo meetings during the crisis, only a relatively small number have been published, but these have been of great importance. Two of the most valuable sets of documents, including selected transcripts of CPSU Politburo meetings, top-secret communications between Brezhnev and Jaruzelski, internal CPSU CC documents, and other items, were published in Polish in 1992 and 1993: "Dokumenty 'Komisji Suslowa,'" *Rzeczpospolita*, 26 August 1993, 1, 19-20; and "Scisle tajne: KPZR o Polsce 1980-81," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 12-13 December 1992, 10-11.¹ Another source of comparable significance is the 660-page collection of transcripts of all the relevant Polish Politburo meetings during the crisis: Zbigniew Wlodek, ed., *Tajne dokumenty Biura*

Politycznego: PZPRa "Solidarnosc," 1980-1981 (London: Aneks, 1992). Yet another invaluable source is a multi-volume collection of documents culled from the former East German Communist party and Stasi archives, which is being put out by a team led by Manfred Wilke at the Free University of Berlin under the title *SED-Politburo und polnische Krise 1980/1982*. The first volume, *Band 1: 1980*, Working Paper No. 3 (Berlin: Forschungsverbund SED-Staat, 1993) covers events through the end of 1980.² Another extremely useful volume, *Die SED contra Polen: Die Planung der SED-Führung zur Vorbereitung einer Invasion in Polen 1980/81*, was published by Akademie Verlag for the same research institute in 1994. Valuable citations from Bulgarian documents can be found in "Eventualna interventsia sreshchu Polsha e mozhela da stane 'vtori kurvav Afganistan,'" *Duma* (Sofia), 20 November 1990, 3.

Unpublished Soviet and East European documents pertaining to the 1980-81 crisis vastly outnumber the ones that have been published. In Warsaw, some of the most valuable unpublished materials are readily available in the main Archive of Modern Records (*Archiwum Akt Nowych*), which contains both Party and governmental documents. Many other items, however, are still in the possession of the Commission to Investigate Documents Pertaining to Martial Law (*Komisja resortowej badajacej dokumentacje zwiazana ze stanem wojennym*). Unfortunately, almost all the files of the Polish Defense Ministry and Internal Affairs Ministry from 1980-81 are still sealed off. In Moscow, many vital unpublished items, including numerous CPSU Politburo transcripts that were not published in either of the two Polish-language collections cited above, are available in Fond 89 at the Center for Storage of Contemporary Documentation (*Tsentr Khraneniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii*, or TsKhSD). Many of these transcripts are cited below. Other items at TsKhSD, in *Fond 5, Opis' 84*, as well as at the Presidential Archive (*Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii*, or APRF), the foreign intelligence archive, and the military archives, are now off-limits. The documents in the Presidential Archive, foreign intelligence archive, and military archives have never been accessible to the public, but at TsKhSD I did have an opportunity to pore through many items

Polish leadership," 3 September 1980

To be returned within 3 days to the CPSU CC (General Department, 1st sector)

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET

SPECIAL DOSSIER
EYES ONLY

No. P/213/38

To: Comrades Brezhnev, Andropov, Gromyko, Rakhmanin

Extract from Protocol No. 213 of the session of the CPSU CC Politburo on 3 September 1980

On theses for the discussion with representatives of the Polish leadership.

To endorse the theses for the discussion with representatives of the Polish leadership (see attached).

CC SECRETARY

Regarding point 38 of Prot. No. 213

To be transmitted by the KGB in encrypted form to the designated point.

1. To give a precise evaluation of and take a clear position on the agreement with the so-called "United Strike Committees" (ZKS) in Gdansk and Szczecin.

The agreement concluded by the PPR government, and endorsed by the plenum of the PZPR CC, exacts a high political and economic price for the "regulation" it achieves. We, of course, understand the circumstances in which you had to make this onerous decision. The agreement, in essence, signifies the legalization of the anti-socialist opposition. An organization has emerged that aims to spread its political influence through the entire

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

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

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

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

The Crisis and the Soviet Response

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

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

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

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

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

assurances about Poland in 1980-81.

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

Even more worrisome from Moscow's perspective was the growing evidence that turmoil in Poland was spilling over into the union republics of the USSR, especially the three Baltic states and Ukraine, where protests and demonstrations in support of Solidarity had begun as early as August 1980.¹² In the Russian Republic, too, there were disturbing indications of a surge of labor unrest inspired—directly or indirectly—by the crisis in Poland. The KGB had harshly suppressed three separate attempts by labor activists to set up an independent trade union in Russia in the late 1970s, and ever since then the CPSU leadership had been inordinately sensitive and hostile to anything that might give renewed impetus to an unofficial workers' movement.¹³ For that reason, the members of the CPSU Secretariat expressed "utter dismay" when they received a top-secret report in late 1980 which found that

"work stoppages and other negative incidents" had "substantially increased" since August both in frequency and in size at factories all around the Soviet Union, presumably as a direct result of the Polish events.¹⁴ Similar reports continued flowing into Moscow throughout 1981. The implications of this spill-over from Poland seemed all the more dire after Solidarity publicly declared its support in September 1981 for other "working people of Eastern Europe" and "all the nations of the Soviet Union" who were seeking to establish their own independent trade unions.¹⁵ Thus, it comes as little surprise that long before martial law was imposed on 13 December 1981, top Soviet officials were referring to the events in Poland both publicly and privately as "counterrevolution and anarchy" that not only "threatened the destruction of the country's socialist order and alliance obligations," but also posed "a direct threat to the security of the USSR and its allies."¹⁶

By stirring Soviet anxieties about the potential loss of a key member of the Warsaw Pact and about the spread of political instability throughout Eastern Europe, the Polish crisis demonstrated, as the events of 1953, 1956, and 1968 had previously, the degree of "acceptable" change in the Soviet bloc. The crisis in Poland was more protracted than those earlier upheavals, but the leeway for genuine change was, if anything, narrower than before. Plans for the imposition of martial law began almost from the very first day of the crisis.¹⁷ Although the plans were drafted by the Polish General Staff, the whole process was supervised and moved along by the Soviet Union. The constant pressure that Soviet political and military leaders exerted on top Polish officials thwarted any hope that Stanislaw Kania, the PZPR first secretary until October 1981, might have had of reaching a genuine compromise with Solidarity and the Catholic church.¹⁸ From the Soviet Politburo's perspective, any such compromise would have been, at best, a useless diversion or, at worst, a form of outright capitulation to "hostile" forces and a "sell-out to the enemies of socialism."¹⁹ As Brezhnev emphasized to Kania's successor, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, in November 1981, the only thing the Soviet leadership wanted was for "decisive measures" to be implemented as soon as possible against the "blatantly anti-socialist and counterrevolutionary opposition" in

Poland:

It is now absolutely clear that without a vigorous struggle against the class enemy, it will be impossible to save socialism in Poland. The question is not whether there will be a confrontation, but who will start it, what means will be used to wage it, and who will gain the initiative. . . . The leaders of the anti-socialist forces, who long ago emerged from underground into full public view and are now openly preparing to launch a decisive onslaught, are hoping to delay their final push until they have achieved overwhelming preponderance. . . . This means that if you fail to take tough measures right away against the counterrevolution, you will lose the only opportunity you still have.²⁰

The extent of the Soviet Union's determination to crush Solidarity via the imposition of martial law is clearly evident from the newly released transcripts of nearly two dozen CPSU Politburo meetings in 1980-81. At those sessions, Brezhnev and his colleagues repeatedly complained that Kania and Jaruzelski were proving to be "weak," "indecisive," "insufficiently bold," "untrustworthy," and "unwilling to resort to extraordinary measures despite our recommendations."²¹ The same theme emerges from other recently opened Soviet documents, in which Soviet officials castigated the Polish authorities for their "unconscionable vacillation and indecisiveness" in the face of "an open struggle for power by forces hostile to the PZPR."²² Soviet officials were convinced that "the backers of Solidarity simply do not believe that the PZPR leadership will adopt harsh measures to put an end to their anti-socialist activity," and that this was enabling "the counterrevolutionary forces to operate with impunity in their plans to liquidate socialism in Poland." It comes as little surprise, then, that in private meetings with Polish leaders, Brezhnev and other top CPSU officials demanded that the Poles "put an end to the strikes and disorder once and for all" and "rebuff the counterrevolutionary elements with deeds, not just with words."²³

Although the Soviet Union's overwhelming preference was to resolve the crisis through an "internal solution" rather than through direct Soviet military intervention,

the option of invading Poland was necessarily on the agenda in Moscow and most of the East European capitals. Elaborate plans for a large-scale military intervention were drafted by the Soviet General Staff, with input from Soviet officers on the Main Staff of the Warsaw Pact Joint Command. The operation was to be spearheaded by an initial contingent of fifteen Soviet tank and motorized-infantry divisions moving in from the GDR, Czechoslovakia, and the Baltic, Carpathian, and Belorussian Military Districts.²⁴ These troops were to be accompanied by three Czechoslovak and East German divisions, with at least another dozen Soviet divisions as reinforcements. The Soviet Union wanted to provide a veneer of multilateralism for any prospective intervention in Poland, as was done with the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. The participation of two divisions from Czechoslovakia and one from East Germany was deemed sufficient for that purpose. The political complexities of involving troops from either Romania or Hungary would have been too great. Despite the harsh criticism that Romanian and Hungarian leaders had been expressing about Solidarity, neither country was likely to be enthusiastic about an invasion. In the case of Bulgaria, the difficulty was logistical rather than political. The authorities in Sofia strongly endorsed the plans for an invasion, but were not asked to contribute troops because “the northward movement [of Bulgarian forces] would have been too conspicuous,” tipping off both the Poles and the West.²⁵

The plans for an invasion soon gave rise to a number of concrete military preparations. As early as August 1980 the Soviet Army was ordered to “requisition up to 100,000 military reservists and 15,000 vehicles from the civilian economy” and to place all regular units in military districts and Groups of Forces adjoining Poland on “full combat alert.”²⁶ Some units were taken off alert in February 1981, but most remained fully mobilized until the crisis was over. They were linked together by a vast communications network, which was secretly put into place during the “Comrade-in-Arms-80” and “Soyuz-81” exercises.²⁷ The exercises also permitted Soviet commanders and military intelligence officers to acquire detailed information about the routes and targets in Poland that would

be most suitable for invading forces, especially for the Soviet airborne units that would have to seize major buildings, transportation networks, and communications facilities in Warsaw.²⁸ The reconnaissance they gathered proved crucial when the Soviet General Staff modified its plans in late 1980 and 1981. Most of the revisions began just after the “Soyuz-81” maneuvers in April 1981, when a comprehensive new “action plan” was drafted. The final adjustments were made by mid-November. From that point on, the Soviet, Czechoslovak, and East German forces simply “waited for a signal from Moscow to move in”—a signal that never arrived.²⁹

The revised planning and preparations were thoroughly tested in fourteen joint military exercises held during the crisis, including seven bilateral maneuvers of Soviet and Polish troops. The maneuvers were designed in part to exert pressure on the Polish leadership and population and to divert Solidarity’s attention from the buildup of the ZOMO security forces, but they also enabled Soviet commanders to gauge how quickly the Polish army could be “neutralized” by incoming Warsaw Pact troops.³⁰ The large number of bilateral exercises and meetings in 1980-81 was a notable contrast to 1968, when the Soviet Union tended to emphasize multilateral negotiations and maneuvers. This disparity was attributable in part to the greater confidence that Soviet leaders had when dealing with Jaruzelski than they ever had in their dealings with Alexander Dubcek. The “joint” leverage that was deemed necessary in 1968 was of much less relevance in 1980-81. Furthermore, in 1968 the Soviet Union did not yet have a permanent “Group of Soviet Forces” stationed on Czechoslovak territory, whereas in Poland in 1980-81 the Soviet Union already had a long-standing troop presence. The USSR’s Northern Group of Forces in Poland provided a convenient focus during the crisis for both military planning and coercive diplomacy.

The Soviet Union’s efforts to maintain close bilateral ties with the Polish army went only so far, however. Despite Jaruzelski’s persistent requests that Polish troops be included as an integral part of an invading force (and that East German forces be excluded, for obvious historical reasons), officials in Moscow decided early on that the Polish army as a whole was too unpredictable to be used in a “joint” Warsaw Pact

crackdown.³¹ Soviet military planners took for granted that Soviet/Warsaw Pact forces would have to intervene *against* the Polish army. Although Brezhnev and his colleagues trusted the highest-ranking Polish officers and were willing to rely on certain elite units of the Polish army, they were under no illusions that Polish conscripts would obey orders to shoot at their fellow citizens. The dominant view in Moscow was that Polish soldiers who had been drafted in 1980 or 1981 were already “under Solidarity’s sway” and would “refuse to carry out their duties and even go over to the side of the anti-socialist forces if the situation deteriorates.”³² Soviet officials also assumed that the reliability of the Polish officer corps might itself be problematic:

Some of the younger commanders and officers [in Poland] have discussed whether they should obey all combat orders, even those calling for mass actions, or should instead refuse to carry out orders that would “betray the whole Polish nation.” In connection with this, it is clear that none of the members of the [Polish] command staff with whom we spoke can confidently say on whose side the [Polish] army and navy will be if tensions reach a climax.³³

It is not surprising, then, that Soviet commanders regarded the Polish army as one of the first targets to be “neutralized” if an invasion proved necessary. Nor is it surprising that Soviet leaders wanted to minimize the Polish army’s role in the imposition of martial law. Although top-ranking Polish officers were responsible for planning the martial-law operation, and although some elite units from the Polish army helped carry it out, most of the implementation was left to the ZOMO and other security units. The concerns that prompted Soviet leaders to exclude Polish troops from a prospective invading force also meant that the army was given only a very limited role in the martial-law crackdown.

Internal Versus External Options

The fact that detailed plans for an invasion existed does not conclusively mean that Soviet troops would have intervened if the Polish authorities had been unable or unwilling to impose martial law, but the evidence

suggests that at least some top officials in Moscow were willing to resort to force if necessary. As early as November 1980, Soviet Defense Minister Dmitrii Ustinov had become so disenchanted that he openly questioned whether “constant pressure on the Polish leadership” would ever be sufficient, and he urged that military exercises be increased “to make clear that we have forces ready” to move in at short notice.³⁴ Avid support of a military solution also came from Soviet allies in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. Documents from the former East German and Czechoslovak archives attest to the vigorous efforts that hard-line East European leaders made to convince the Soviet Politburo of the necessity of military intervention in Poland. In particular, the East German Communist party leader, Erich Honecker, repeatedly drew parallels with the crises of 1953, 1956, and 1968, arguing that “the situation in Poland is much worse and more dangerous” than those earlier episodes.³⁵ Shortly before an emergency meeting in Moscow of Warsaw Pact leaders in early December 1980, he joined with his Czechoslovak and Bulgarian coun-

terparts, Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov, in emphasizing that a failure to undertake decisive military action against the “counterrevolutionary forces in People’s Poland” would lead to “the death of socialism in Poland” and pose a burgeoning threat to the whole socialist commonwealth.³⁶ At the meeting itself, Honecker offered further denunciations of the events in Poland, and Husak repeatedly likened the situation to the “counterrevolutionary intrigues” in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Although these warnings had little effect on the Soviet participants—who still believed that the Polish authorities should be given more time “to rectify the situation on their own and to normalize it”—Honecker and Husak were hardly about to give in.³⁷ In February 1981 they persuaded the Cuban leader, Fidel Castro, to support their calls for a joint military operation to “thwart the Polish counterrevolution once and for all,” and they issued many similar appeals over the next several months.³⁸

Despite this aggressive campaign by the East European proponents of military intervention, Brezhnev and the other members of the CPSU Politburo were well aware

of how difficult and costly a prospective invasion would be. When the issue came up at a Soviet Politburo meeting in late October 1981, even hard-liners such as Ustinov and the KGB chairman, Yuri Andropov, had to concede that “it would be impossible now for us to send troops into Poland.” They and their colleagues agreed that the Soviet Union “must steadfastly adhere to [its] line not to send in troops.”³⁹ The same position was expressed by all the members of the Soviet Politburo on 10 December 1981, according to the available transcript of the meeting, just three days before martial law was imposed. Although Andropov and Ustinov affirmed that the Soviet Union “must fortify [its] military garrisons in Poland” and “do something to protect the lines of communication between the USSR and the GDR” if circumstances so warranted, no one at the meeting dissented from Mikhail Suslov’s view that “there can be no consideration at all of sending in troops” because such a step “would be a catastrophe.”⁴⁰ Suslov’s position on this matter carried particular weight because he was the head of a special Politburo commission set up in late August 1980

**THE SED POLITBURO
AND THE POLISH CRISIS**
by the SED-State Research Group
(translated by Mark Kramer)

Manfred Wilke, Peter Erier, Martin Goerner, Michael Kubina, Horst Laude, and Hans-Peter Muller, *The SED Politburo and the Polish Crisis, 1980/1982*, Volume I: 1980. SED-State Research Group Working Paper No. 3/1993. Berlin, 1993.

During a state visit by the president of the Republic of Poland, Lech Walesa, to the Federal Republic of Germany in early 1992, federal [German] president Richard von Weizsacker lauded the gains that the Polish people and the Polish head-of-state had made for the cause of freedom in Europe. “As the head of a trade union you overcame despotism, regained freedom for your own people, and made a decisive contribution to the European revolution of freedom.” (Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, Bulletin No. 34, Bonn, 2 April 1992, p. 325.) In retrospect, the Polish crisis at the beginning of

the 1980s can be regarded as a prelude to the end of the whole Soviet empire. SED officials recognized this danger and did everything in their power to forestall such a development. *Moreover, they pushed for intervention by the Warsaw Pact states in the same way that step was taken during the Prague crisis of 1968.*

With the publication of “The SED Politburo and the Polish Crisis, 1980/1982, Volume I: 1980,” which Prof. Dr. Manfred Wilke, Peter Erier, Martin Goerner, Michael Kubina, Horst Laude, and Dr. Hans-Peter Muller compiled in 1992 at the Free University of Berlin under the auspices of the “SED-State Research Group,” documents are now available showing how the SED Politburo wanted to suppress the Polish people’s struggle for national self-determination and democratization. The materials, which have never been released before, come for the most part from holdings of the “Politburo” collection in the formerly secret archives of the SED Central Committee (CC).

For the SED, the drama of the “Polish crisis” began with the signing of the Gdansk Accords between the heads of the Inter-Factory Strike Committee and the Polish

government on 30 August 1980. This agreement was regarded by the SED Politburo to be a product of counterrevolution. As seen by Honecker and his closest associates, the leadership of the PZPR had capitulated to the striking workers. The SED leaders began to question whether and to what extent the PZPR could enforce its leading role in Poland (cf.: Central Party Archives [ZPA] J IV 2/2 A - 2346.) The decision to allow freer trade unions and the right to strike was unacceptable to the Politburo of the SED CC: “*To construe strikes as an expression of ‘workers’ genuine interests’ is impermissible in our view. No one other than the Party itself, with the aid of scientific socialism, can express and realize the class interests of the Party.*” (ZPA J IV 2/2 A-2368.)

At the end of September 1980, the International Department of the SED CC carried out a detailed analysis of the situation in Poland, which included, among other things, a “comparative assessment of the programs and stated demands of the anti-socialist forces in the

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

a military guarantee. Because serious doubts persisted about Jaruzelski's resolve, Soviet leaders might have tried to spur him into action by providing a guarantee. The fact that they declined to do so suggests that they did not yet want to consider how they should respond in a worst-case scenario. It also suggests that they had a fall-back option in case Jaruzelski let them down and failed to pursue "Operation X." The exact nature of this fall-back option was not specified at the meeting on December 10, but a top aide to Jaruzelski in 1980-81, Colonel Ryszard Kuklinski, and the Polish defense minister at the time, Army-General Florian Siwicki, have both revealed that Soviet officials intended, if necessary, to remove Jaruzelski (just as they earlier removed Kania) and to replace him with Army-General Eugeniusz Molczyk, Army-General Włodzimierz Sawczuk, a civilian like Tadeusz Grabski, or some other ultra-hardline figure who would have been willing to implement a full-scale crackdown.⁵² Soviet leaders still preferred to rely on Jaruzelski, for it would have been very difficult to replace him, and a new regime under a hardline successor would probably have come under severe challenge at home. Gromyko, Suslov, and Andropov all expressed serious reservations about "forcing [the Poles] to adopt one course or another" or "pushing them too hard to adopt decisive measures."⁵³ Nevertheless, if Jaruzelski had continued to "vacillate and lose his nerve" indefinitely (as Gromyko put it), the Soviet authorities planned to bring in someone else who would implement "Operation X" once and for all.

The Soviet leadership's pursuit of an "internal solution" to the Polish crisis was by no means a departure from its responses to previous crises in Eastern Europe. In Hungary and Poland in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Soviet Union applied pressures short of direct intervention and sought to work out an "internal solution" that would preclude the need for an invasion. In each case, Soviet officials viewed military action as a last-ditch option, to be used only after all other measures had failed. In Poland in 1956 an internal solution that left Gomulka in power did prove feasible, whereas in Hungary and later in Czechoslovakia all attempts to reassert Soviet control "from within" proved futile, leading in the end to direct Soviet military intervention. During the 1980-81 Polish crisis, Soviet

officials drew up plans for a full-scale invasion (as discussed above), but these plans were to be implemented only if the Polish authorities failed to restore order on their own. Preparations for the imposition of martial law began well before Soviet military officials started laying the groundwork for an invasion, and the "internal" option was deemed throughout to be vastly preferable to direct "fraternal assistance" from outside. Only in a worst-case scenario, in which the martial law operation collapsed and full-scale civil war erupted in Poland, does it seem at all likely that the Soviet Union would have shifted toward the "external" option.

In most respects, then, the Soviet Union's response to the 1980-81 Polish crisis was very much in line with its responses to previous East European crises. In each case Soviet leaders sought to effect an "internal solution" before taking the extreme step of ordering an invasion. What was *different* about the 1980-81 case is that the "internal" option proved successful and, moreover, that this success was so crucial to Soviet policy. After all, the resort to military force against Hungary and Czechoslovakia, though undertaken as a last-ditch measure after other options had failed, did permit the reestablishment and consolidation of Soviet control over those countries, paving the way for intensive periods of "normalization." By contrast, a Soviet invasion of Poland in December 1981 would most likely have exacerbated, rather than resolved, the crisis. Unlike in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, where Soviet troops intervened primarily against wayward Communist party leaders, the top levels of the PZPR and the highest-ranking Polish military commanders remained loyal to Moscow throughout the 18-month crisis.⁵⁴ An invasion in 1981 would therefore have had to be directed against the whole Polish population, and not merely against a well-defined target at the top. The prospect of encountering armed resistance among the populace and among lower- and middle-ranking segments of the Polish military (*a la* Hungary in 1956) would have severely complicated any Soviet invasion plans. Poland's population in 1981 was four times the size of Hungary's in 1956 and 2.5 times the size of Czechoslovakia's in 1968; and the Poles, unlike the Czechs, had a long tradition of taking up arms against foreign invaders. Poland's ability to put up formi-

dable resistance against Soviet troops had been enough to deter Khrushchev in 1956, and the same calculation would have bedeviled Soviet military commanders in 1981.

Furthermore, even if Soviet forces could have subdued the country and overcome all resistance, they would have been faced with the daunting task of reviving the Polish economy and political system. In the wake of a bloody invasion, it is inconceivable that the Polish population would have assisted or complied with attempts at "normalization." The likely result, instead, would have been an outright collapse of the formal Polish economy, with Soviet troops left to manage factories virtually on their own. The Soviet Union would have been forced to embark on a long-term military occupation of Poland, with no guarantee that stability would be restored in the end.

Nevertheless, despite all these problems and the overwhelming reluctance of Soviet leaders to undertake a costly invasion at a time when they were already bogged down in Afghanistan, it still seems hard to believe that the CPSU Politburo would have refrained from sending in troops if the Polish authorities had been unwilling or unable to sustain martial law.⁵⁵ Although Andropov claimed at the Politburo's meeting on 10 December 1981 that the Soviet Union would "not send in troops . . . even if Poland falls under the control of Solidarity," this statement was clearly an anomaly (and it is not apparent what Andropov's motivations were in making it).⁵⁶ At no other point during the crisis did Brezhnev or any top Soviet official display the slightest inclination to accept the permanent "loss" of Poland or to stand by if the martial-law operation collapsed and civil war broke out.⁵⁷ On the contrary, the statement by Gromyko cited above—that the Soviet Union must hold onto Poland no matter what the cost—summed up the prevailing mood in Moscow very well. As one of the other members of the CPSU Politburo in 1980-81 later recalled, "the Soviet leadership [during the crisis] believed that under no circumstances must Poland be allowed to leave the Warsaw Pact."⁵⁸ Brezhnev and his colleagues repeatedly affirmed that they would "not leave fraternal socialist Poland in the lurch" and that "the socialist commonwealth is indissoluble and its defense is a matter not only for individual states but for the socialist coalition as a whole."⁵⁹ The exact same phrases were used about Czecho-

**THE WARSAW PACT AND THE
POLISH CRISIS OF 1980-81:
Honecker's Call for Military Intervention**

**Translated and Introduced by Mark
Kramer**

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

The letter below was sent by Erich Honecker, the SED General Secretary, to the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Leonid Brezhnev, during a tense phase of the 17-month crisis in Poland. At the time, the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), Stanisaw Kania, was coming under intense pressure both at home and abroad as strikes escalated and the unofficial trade union Solidarity posed an ever greater political challenge to the PZPR. For the previous three months, Brezhnev and his colleagues had been urging the Polish authorities to take "extraordinary measures" against the "anti-socialist opposition forces," but Kania gave little indication that he could resort to such steps anytime soon. As the crisis deepened and the Polish authorities failed to act, frustration and alarm in Moscow and the other East-bloc capitals, especially East Berlin and Prague, steadily increased.

The extent of East Germany's concern about the situation in Poland is immediately apparent from both the tone and the content of Honecker's letter. The letter expresses "extraordinary fear" about the situation in Poland and urges the Soviet Union to convene an emergency meeting of Warsaw Pact leaders to consider the possibility of "fraternal" military intervention. Honecker de-

clared that "counterrevolutionary" forces would gain an ever greater hold in Poland unless the "healthy" Polish comrades received "collective assistance" from their Warsaw Pact allies. Any delay in acting, he warned, would mean "the death of socialist Poland." Honecker indicated that his plea for an urgent meeting was supported by the Czechoslovak and Bulgarian Communist party leaders, Gustav Husak and Todor Zhivkov. Although Honecker expressed a willingness to intervene in support of Kania, he also seemed to have in mind the formation of an alternative group of Polish leaders who would be willing to carry out the harsh crackdown that Soviet officials had been demanding. No doubt, Honecker was aware that the Soviet Union had already begun encouraging the formation of just such an alternative, hard-line regime in Warsaw.

The sentiments expressed in the letter hardly come as a surprise. East German officials had been denouncing Solidarity from the moment it was formed, and Honecker had never tried to conceal his desire to see the PZPR reassert its authority by any means necessary. When the Polish authorities deferred taking harsh action against Solidarity, the East German leader resorted to conspicuous measures of his own to spur Kania into action and prevent a "spill-over" of the turmoil into the DDR. The East German media launched vehement attacks against Solidarity throughout the fall of 1980, and in late October the DDR imposed tight restrictions on travel to and from Poland. By the time Honecker sent his letter to Brezhnev in late November, he had ordered the whole East German border with Poland to be sealed off, a process that was completed by November 30. In addition, he had ordered East German army units and border guards to be put on high combat alert so they would be ready to take part in any "joint" actions that the Warsaw Pact might pursue. Honecker's unrelenting campaign to persuade the Soviet Union to lend "fraternal assistance" to Poland was reminiscent of the efforts that his predecessor, Walter Ulbricht, had made in 1968 to promote armed intervention in Czechoslovakia. Unlike in 1968, however, an "internal solution" ultimately proved feasible in Poland and thus eliminated the need for external military action.

Enclosure # 2 to Protocol #49 from 28.11.1980

26 November 1980

To the General Secretary of the CPSU CC
Comrade Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev

Esteemed Comrade Leonid Ilyich!

In the Politburo of the SED CC we have discussed the current situation in the People's Republic of Poland, and have unanimously concluded that there is an urgent necessity to convene a meeting of the General and First Secretaries of the Communist Parties of our community of states. We believe that the situation developing in the People's Republic of Poland should be discussed with Comrade S. Kania in order to work out collective measures to assist the Polish friends in overcoming the crisis, which, as you know, has been intensifying day after day.

Unfortunately, one can already say that the Polish comrades' stopover in Moscow, and the timely counsel that you gave, had no decisive influence on the situation in Poland, which we had all been hoping for.

According to information we have received through various channels, counterrevolutionary forces in the People's Republic of Poland are on the constant offensive, and any delay in acting against them would mean death — the death of socialist Poland. Yesterday our collective efforts may perhaps have been premature; today they are essential; and tomorrow they would already be too late.

It would obviously be appropriate if we meet together in Moscow for a day right after the plenum of the PZPR CC, the decisions of which, in our view, will not be able to change the course of events in Poland in any fundamental way.

So far as I know, Comrades Husak and Zhivkov also have been expressing their desire for us to convene on an urgent basis to discuss this question. It would be best to do so next week. We believe that offering collective advice and possible assistance from the fraternal countries to Comrade Kania would only be to his benefit.

We ask you, esteemed Leonid Ilyich, to understand our extraordinary fears about the situation in Poland. We know that you also share these fears.

With Communist greetings,

E. Honecker
General Secretary of the SED CC

slovakia in August 1968.

No one can ever be truly certain, however, what would have happened if “Operation X” had collapsed amid widespread violence and the Soviet Politburo had been forced to decide whether to send in troops. The difficulty of carrying out an invasion of Poland and of coping with its aftermath would have been so great that it would have changed the course of Soviet policy in Eastern Europe for many years to come. As it was, the success of Jaruzelski’s “internal solution” precluded any test of Moscow’s restraint and restored conformity to the Soviet bloc at relatively low cost. The surprisingly smooth imposition of martial law (“*stan wojenny*”) in Poland also helped prevent any further disruption in Soviet-East European relations during the last year of Brezhnev’s rule and the next two-and-a-half years under Andropov and Chernenko.

The lack of any major political turmoil in Eastern Europe between 1982 and 1985 seems especially surprising at first glance, for this was a period of great uncertainty not only because of the post-Brezhnev succession in Moscow, but also because of the impending successions in most of the other Warsaw Pact countries. The last time the Soviet Union had experienced a prolonged leadership transition, between 1953 and 1957, numerous crises arose in the Eastern bloc: in Plzen, Czechoslovakia and in East Germany in June 1953, in Poznan in June 1956, and in Poland and Hungary in October-November 1956. Moreover, during the 1953-56 period, all the East European countries underwent one or more changes in their Communist party leadership, just as the Soviet Union did. By contrast, no such upheavals or leadership changes occurred in Eastern Europe between 1982 and 1985. This unusual placidity cannot be attributed to any single factor, but the martial law crackdown of December 1981 and the invasions of 1956 and 1968 are probably a large part of the explanation. After Stalin’s death in 1953, the limits of what could be changed in Eastern Europe were still unknown, but by the early 1980s the Soviet Union had evinced its willingness and ability to use extreme measures, when necessary, to prevent or reverse “deviations from socialism.”

1. See my translations of these documents in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*. I have translated other published and unpublished documents for the appendices

in my forthcoming Working Paper.

2. See my translation of a key November 1980 Honecker-to-Brezhnev letter and highlights from other East German documents gathered by the Free University group in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

3. “O prazdnovanii pervogo maya i godovshchiny so dnya prinyatiya konstitutsii 3 maya (Politicheskaya zapiska),” Cable No. 68 (SECRET), 4 May 1981, from N. P. Ponomarev, Soviet consul-general in Szczecin, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 597, Ll. 6-12; “Vneshnyaya politika PNR na nyneshnem etape (Politpis’ mo),” 9 July 1981, Cable No. 595 (TOP SECRET) from B. I. Aristov, Soviet ambassador in Poland, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 596, Ll. 21-34; and “Obideino-politicheskikh kontseptsiyakh ‘reformatorskogo kryla’ v PORP (Spravka),” Cable No. 531 (SECRET) 22 June 1981, from V. Mutskii, first secretary at the Soviet embassy in Poland, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 598, Ll. 116-121.

4. “Polozhenie v PORP posle IX S’ezda,” Cable No. 596 (TOP SECRET), 4 November 1981, from B. I. Aristov, Soviet ambassador in Poland, to Konstantin Rusakov, head of the CPSU CC Department for intra-bloc affairs, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 596, Ll. 35-53.

5. “Vypiska iz protokola No. 37 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 21 noyabrya 1981 goda: O prieme v SSSR partiino-gosudarstvennoi delegatsii PNR i ustnom poslanii t. Brezhneva L. I. t. V. Yaruzel’skomu,” No. P37/21 (TOP SECRET), 21 November 1981, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 27, L. 3.

6. “Vneshnyaya politika PNR na nyneshnem etape (Politpis’ mo),” Cable No. 595 (TOP SECRET), 9 July 1981, from B. I. Aristov, Soviet ambassador in Poland, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 596, Ll. 21-34.

7. *Ibid.*, l. 27. See also “Voprosy vneshnei politiki na IX S’ezde PORP (Informatsiya),” Cable No. 652 (SECRET), 10 August 1981, from Yu. Ivanov, counselor at the Soviet embassy in Poland, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 598, Ll. 170-176.

8. “Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 29 oktyabrya 1980 goda: Materialy k druzhestvennomu rabochemu vizitu v SSSR pol’skikh rukovoditelei,” 29 October 1980 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 31, L. 3.

9. Vladimir Lomeiko, “Kto zhe dolbit dyry v pol’skoi lodke,” *Literaturnaya gazeta* (Moscow) 3 (21 January 1981), 14.

10. “Rech’ tovarishcha M. A. Suslova,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 13 April 1981, 4.

11. “Vypiska iz protokola No. 242/61gs Sekretariata TsK: O nekotorykh dopolnitel’nykh merakh po kontrolyu za rasprostraneniem pol’skoi pečhati v SSSR,” No. St-242/61gs (TOP SECRET), 22 December 1980, with attached reports, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 81, Ll. 1-26. Quoted passages are from ll. 1 and 6.

12. V. Stanley Vardys, “Polish Echoes in the Baltic,” *Problems of Communism* 33:4 (July-August 1983), 21-34, and Jean Pennar, “Demonstrations and Dissent in Estonia,” *Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty* 384/80 (17 October 1980).

13. “K voprosu o t.n. ‘nezavisimom profsoyuzhe,’” Report No. 655-L (SECRET), 5 April 1978, from Yu. V. Andropov, chairman of the KGB, to the CPSU CC Politburo, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 18, D. 73, L. 1. The first attempt, in January 1978, was made by a long-time activist and mining engineer, Vladimir Klebanov, whose “Association of Free Trade Unions of Workers” was forcefully disbanded less than two weeks after it was founded. The second attempt, in April 1978, was by Vsevolod Kuvakin, who set up a short-lived “Independent Trade Union of Workers.” The third attempt, by a group known as the “Free Interprofessional Amalgam-

ation of Workers,” lasted longer than the other two, from October 1978 until it was crushed in the spring of 1980. For further details, see Betty Gidwitz, “Labor Unrest in the Soviet Union,” *Problems of Communism*, 31:6 (November-December 1982), 25-42; “The Independent Trade-Union Movement in the Soviet Union,” *Radio Liberty Research*, RL 304/79 (11 October 1979); and Karl Schogel, *Opposition sowjetischer Arbeiter heute* (Köln: Bundesinstitut für ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, 1981).

14. “Postanovlenie Sekretariata TsK Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuzha: O nekotorykh negativnykh proyavleniyakh, svyazannykh s nedostatkami v organizatsii v oplate truda rabochikh i sluzhashchikh,” St-233/8s (TOP SECRET), 24 October 1980, with attached documents, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 13, D. 37, Ll. 1-12. Quoted passages are from ll. 4 and 9.

15. “Poslanie do ludzi pracy w Europie Wschodniej,” *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* (Warsaw) 25 (18 September 1981), 6.

16. See, e.g., Dmitrii Ustinov, “Protiv gonki vooruzhenii i ugrozy voiny,” *Pravda*, 25 July 1981, p. 4; “Soveshchanie sekretarei tsentral’nykh komitetov kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii sotsialisticheskikh stran,” *Pravda*, 5 November 1981, 4; and “Vysokoe prizvanie i otvetsvennost’: Rech’ tovarishcha M. A. Suslova,” *Pravda*, 15 October 1981, 2.

17. Kuklinski, “Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka,” 6-7, 17-19.

18. For ample first-hand evidence of this pressure, see “Dokumenty ‘Komisji Suslova,’” 19-20; “Scisle tajne: KPZR o Polsce 1980-81,” 10-11; “O nekotorykh momentakh po vnutripoliticheskoi i ekonomicheskoi obstanovke v Pil’skom voevodstve (Politicheskaya zapiska),” Cable No. 18 (TOP SECRET), 20 January 1981, from N. P. Ponomarev, Soviet consul-general in Szczecin, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 597, Ll. 1-5; Gribkov, “Doktrina Brezhneva’ i pol’skii krizis nachala 80-kh godov,” 53-55; Wlodek, ed., *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego*, 102-107, 317-318, 451-454, and 497-511; and Kania, *Zatrzymac konfrontacje*, esp. 73-118, 231-243.

19. “Vypiska iz protokola No. 37 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 21 noyabrya 1981 goda,” L. 5.

20. *Ibid.*, Ll. 5-6.

21. “Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 9 aprelya 1981 goda: 3. Ob itogakh vstrechi t.t. Andropova Yu. V. i Ustinova, D. F. s pol’skimi druz’yami,” 9 April 1981 (TOP SECRET), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 40, Ll. 2-9. See also a number of other transcripts in “Scisle tajne: KPZR o Polsce 1980-81,” 11.

22. “Polozhenie v PORP posle IX S’ezda,” Cable No. 857 (TOP SECRET), 4 November 1981, from B. I. Aristov, Soviet ambassador in Poland, to Konstantin Rusakov of the CPSU Secretariat, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 596, Ll. 35-53.

23. “Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 16 aprelya 1981 goda: 2. O besede tov. Brezhneva L. I. s Pervym sekretarem TsK PORP tov. S. Kanei (po telefonu),” 16 April 1981 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 41, Ll. 2-3.

24. Kuklinski, “Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka,” 21-22.

25. “Eventualna interventsia sreshchu Polsha e mozghela da stane ‘vtori kurvav Afganistan,’” *Duma* (Sofia), 20 November 1990, 3.

26. “TsK KPSS,” Memorandum No. 682-OP (SPECIAL DOSSIER—TOP SECRET), 28 August 1980, from M. A. Suslov, A. A. Gromyko, Yu. V. Andropov,

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

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

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

29. Maj.-General Vladimir Dudnik, "Tainy 'temnoi komnaty,'" *Moskovskie novosti* 14 (5 April 1992), 17; and "Juz siedzielismy w czolgach: Z generalem majorem Stanislawem Prochazka, rozmawia Leszek Mazan," *Polityka* (Warsaw) 37 (15 September 1990), 13. See also "Generalmajor S. Prochazka z wojsneke obrodyrika: 'Melij sme okupovat Polsko,'" *Zemedelske noviny* (Prague), 16 August 1990, 1.

30. "O nastroeniakh sredi soldatov i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e," Cable No. 183 (TOP SECRET), 14 June 1981, from V. Zelenov, Soviet consul-general in Gdansk, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 611, Ll. 17-19.

31. Kuklinski, "Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," 22-24.

32. "Vypiska iz protokola No. 37 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 21 noyabrya 1981 goda," L. 6; and "O nastroeniakh sredi soldatov i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e," L. 18.

33. "O nastroeniakh sredi soldatov i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e," L. 19.

34. "Scisle tajne: KPZR o Polsce 1980-81," 10.

35. See, e.g., "Vermerk uber ein Gesprach des Generalsekretars des ZK der SED und Vorsitzendes des Staatsrates der DDR, Erich Honecker, mit Genossen Stefan Olszowski, Mitglied des Politburos und Sekretar des ZK der Polnischen Vereinigten Arbeiterpartei," 20 November 1980, in SAPMDB, ZPA, J, IV 2/2 A/2363.

36. "Anlage Nr. 2 zum Protokoll Nr. 48 vom 28.11.1980," in SAPMDB, ZPA, J, IV 2/2-1868, Bl. 5.

37. For the Soviet Politburo's assessment of the meeting, see "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 11 dekabrya 1980 goda: 1. Ob itogakh vstrechi rukovodyashchikh deyateli gosudarstv-uchastnikov Varshavskogo Dogovora, sostoyavsheisya v Moskve 5 dekabrya 1980 goda," 11 December 1980, Rabochaya zapis' (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 59, Ll. 1-3.

38. "Wir Bruderlander stehen fest,'" *Der Spiegel* (Hamburg) 42 (19 October 1992), 95, 97, 99.

39. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 29 oktyabrya 1981 goda: 2. Ob itogakh poezdki t. Rusakova K. V. v GDR, ChSSR, VNR i NRB," 22 October 1981 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 48, esp. L. 5.

40. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 10 dekabrya 1981 goda: K voprosu o polozhenii v Pol'she," 10 December 1981 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 66, D. 6, Ll. 1-11.

41. "Vypiska iz protokola No. 210 zasedaniya Politbyuro TsK KPSS ot 25 avgusta 1980 goda: K voprosu o polozhenii v Pol'skoi Narodnoi Respublike," No. P210/P (TOP SECRET), 25 August 1980, in TsKhSD, F. 89, F. 42, D. 22.

42. E. K. Ligachev, *Zagadka Gorbacheva* (Novosibirsk: Interbuk, 1992), 215; N. V. Ryzhkov, *Perestroika i istoriya predatel'stv* (Moscow: Novosti, 1992), 78-79; V. A. Medvedev, *V komande Gorbacheva: Vzglyad iznutri* (Moscow: Bylina, 1994), 107-108; and V. A. Medvedev, *Raspad: Kak on nazreval v "mirovoi sisteme sotsializma"* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye

otnosheniya, 1994), 175, 312. In a typical comment on this matter, Ligachev reported (p. 215) that "it was a normal working practice of the highest Party leadership to hold special [ekstremnye] working meetings for the members of the Politburo and the CC Secretaries on different contentious matters that came up. Usually such meetings were convened by the General Secretary himself or by someone whom he authorized to do so. In the absence of the General Secretary, the meetings were led by whoever had been designated to 'mind the store.' Such meetings differed from official sessions of the Politburo in that they were not empowered to adopt decrees, but would only work out recommendations that would be affirmed later on. This practice began decades ago."

43. Kuklinski, "Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," 31.

44. "O nekotorykh aspektakh raboty Pol'skikh organov gosbezopasnosti po presecheniyu podryvnoi deyatel'nosti opozitsii (Informatsiya na osnovе besed s rabotnikami gosbezopasnosti PNR)," Cable No. 931 (TOP SECRET), 30 November 1981, from A. Kovalev, first secretary at the Soviet embassy in Warsaw, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 611, Ll. 29-31; "O nastroeniakh sredi soldatov i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e," Ll. 17-19; "O politicheskoi situatsii i nastroeniakh v voevodstvakh yuzhnogo regiona PNR (Politpis'mo)," Cable No. 179 (TOP SECRET), 12 November 1981, from G. Rudov, Soviet consul-general in Krakow, to the CPSU Secretariat, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 597, Ll. 13-22; and "O trevozhnykh faktakh dal'neishego davleniya na organy Narodnoi militsii (MO)," Cable No. 94 (SECRET), 27 May 1981, from G. Rudov, Soviet consul-general in Krakow, to the CPSU Secretariat, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 611, Ll. 2-3.

45. Komisja resortowej badajacej dokumentacje zwiazana ze stanem wojennym, "O planach wprowadzenia stanu wojennego," (Warsaw: unpublished report, December 1990), pp. 15-47.

46. For a general discussion of Soviet decision-making during the Brezhnev era, see Harry Gelman, *The Brezhnev Politburo and the Decline of Detente* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984).

47. On the contingency plans, see the comments of senior officers involved in the planning: Gribkov, "Doktrina Brezhneva' i pol'skii krizis nachala 80-kh godov," 54-55; Dudnik, "Tainy 'temnoi komnaty,'" 17; and "Misja skonczone: Wywiad z generalem Wiktoorem Dubyninem, dowodca wojsk bylego ZSRR w Polsce," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 14-15 March 1992, 8-9. Dubynin offered similar, though less detailed, comments in a subsequent interview with *Novoe vremya* 27 (July 1992), 26-27.

48. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 10 dekabrya 1981 goda: K voprosu o polozhenii v Pol'she," 10 December 1981 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 66, D. 6, Ll. 1-11.

49. The highly controversial question of whether Jaruzelski sought a military guarantee in December 1981 is discussed in much greater detail in my forthcoming CWIHP Working Paper.

50. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 10 dekabrya 1981 goda," L. 5.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Kuklinski, "Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," 4-5; and Wojciech Zaluska, "Strach generalow: Siwicki przed Komisja Odpowiedzialnosci Konstytucyjnej," *Gazeta wyborcza*, 13 May 1994, 2. Jaruzelski, too, has argued this point; see his *Stan wojenny*, 252.

53. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 10 dekabrya 1981 goda," Ll. 5-7.

54. Jan B. de Weydenthal, "Martial Law and the Reliability of the Polish Military," in Daniel N. Nelson, ed., *Soviet Allies: The Warsaw Pact and the Issue of Reliability* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1984), 239-240. See also Jan B. de Weydenthal, Bruce D. Porter, and Kevin Devlin, *The Polish Drama: 1980-1982* (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1983), esp. 109, 112-13, and 138-39.

55. Kuklinski is adamant on this point ("Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," 4), but it should be emphasized that he was no longer in Warsaw in December 1981, when Soviet leaders would have had to decide whether to intervene if martial law failed. Moreover, Kuklinski also believes that Jaruzelski (or some other leader) could have deterred a Soviet invasion by mobilizing the army and population as Gomulka did in 1956. The question of whether the Soviet Union would have invaded has been a source of intense controversy both inside and outside Poland; for sharply conflicting views, see the items cited in the first part of this essay pertaining to Jaruzelski, Kania, Rakowski, Pudlov, Gribkov, Dubynin, Prochazka, Gorbachev, Dudnik, and Achalov.

56. "Zasedanie Politbyuro TsK KPSS 10 dekabrya 1981 goda," L. 4.

57. The emphasis here is on the permanency of the "loss." Even Andropov's statement suggests no more than a willingness to accept a temporary "loss."

58. Interview with Mikhail Gorbachev, in "Gorbaczow o stanie wojennym w Polsce: General Jaruzelski postapil prawidlowo," *Trybuna*, 9 November 1992, 2.

59. "Sovetsko-pol'skaya vstrecha," *Pravda*, 5 March 1981, 1.

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SED EVIDENCE

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

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

The Polish Supreme Court's decision on 11 November 1980 to accept the existence of the trade union "Solidarity" in Warsaw without requiring the "PZPR's leading role" to be upheld within the trade union was, for the SED leadership, the point at which the "capitulation" of the PZPR leadership had gone so far that intervention from outside could no longer be avoided. On 20 November Honecker expressed his disappointment regarding the weak behavior of the PZPR leadership to the acting Polish ambassador in the GDR, Olszowski, in the following way: "*Without a doubt this compromise was an immense setback for everyone who was still hoping that you could resolve your problems on your own.*" (ZPA J IV 2/2 A/2363.) From the SED Politburo's point of view, the situation in Poland in the fall of 1980 was already more dire than in the CSSR in 1968 under Dubcek. When speaking with Olszowski, Honecker left no doubt about the aggressive stance of the SED: "*We do not favor bloodshed. That is only a last resort. But even this last resort must be applied at certain times. . . . That was our experience in 1953, and it was also the case during the 1956 crisis in Hungary and again in 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Our point of departure is that . . . we cannot be indifferent to the fate of the People's Republic of Poland. We will act accordingly. You can*

count on us, on our aid, on every form of assistance." (*Ibid.*)

On 25 November [1980] the SED Politburo decided to distribute "internal party materials" on the Polish crisis. This "information" for the district and county party leaders and for the heads of the SED CC departments was clearly intended to provide guidelines for agitation and propaganda in case intervention was decided upon. (ZPA J IV 2/2/1867, Bl. 6-16.) On 26 November, Honecker finally appealed to Brezhnev with the urgent request "*. . . to devise measures of collective assistance for the Polish friends to permit them to surmount the crisis.*" (ZPA J IV 2/2-1868, Bl. 5.) In the process, Honecker pleaded with Brezhnev for a solution to the Polish crisis from outside via the Warsaw Pact states: "*According to information we have received through various channels, counterrevolutionary forces in the People's Republic of Poland are on the constant offensive, and any delay in acting against them would mean death — the death of socialist Poland. Yesterday our collective efforts may perhaps have been premature; today they are essential; and tomorrow they would already be too late. It would obviously be appropriate if we meet together in Moscow for a day right after the plenum of the PZPR CC, the decisions of which, in our view, will not be able to change the course of events in Poland in any fundamental way.*" (*Ibid.*)

After Brezhnev reacted positively to Honecker's proposal, the SED Politburo met on 28 November in a special session in Strausberg—the site of the GDR Defense Ministry—and authorized the sending of the letter and, hence, Honecker's suggestions. In a session on 2 December the same body decided on the composition of the SED delegation for the meeting: Erich Honecker, Willi Stoph, Hermann Axen, Heinz Hoffmann, and Erich Mielke. In addition, the outline of the General Secretary's speech was approved at this session, and Honecker was given general plenipotentiary authority. (ZPA J IV 2/2/1896, Bl. 2.)

Before the meeting of the leaders of the Warsaw Pact states on 5 December in Moscow, the situation in and around Poland had come to a dramatic head. Western observers expected that an intervention by the Soviet Union or by the whole Warsaw Pact would take place on 8 December 1980. Massive troop movements and concentrations could be observed all around Poland. U.S. Presi-

dent Carter warned Brezhnev, in a personal letter on 3 December, to avoid "forcing a solution from outside on the Polish nation." Similar warnings came from other NATO governments and from the European Community. Even so, the press secretary for the PZPR CC, Josef Klasa, explained on 4 December that the ". . . Polish communists have the right and the duty to ask the Soviet Union and other countries for help in combatting counterrevolution." (Europa-Archiv. Series 1981, p. Z6.)

On 5 December the party and state leaders of the Eastern military coalition gathered for their conference in Moscow. They voted against intervention in Poland at that time. The Polish leadership's willingness to resort to martial law to overcome the "counterrevolution" played a crucial role in the avoidance of a military attack from outside. *The Polish party leader Kania suggested the imposition of a "state of war" as a solution to the Polish crisis:* ". . . a staff set up by the Politburo is working under the supervision of the premier, and this staff is preparing a full range of different measures. These include, among other things, the question of introducing a state of war in Poland. . . . Preparations are also under way for an operation to arrest the most active supporters of the counterrevolution. . . . We will set up special groups of the most reliable party members who will, if necessary, be equipped with firearms. We have already selected 19,000 such party members, and we believe that by the end of December there will be around 30,000. . . ." (ZPA J IV 2/2 A-2368.)

Even though the assembled party leaders agreed to pursue an internal Polish solution, the threat of intervention remained in place. As Bulgarian party leader [Todor] Zhivkov explained: ". . . Poland must act decisively and must rely on both peaceful and non-peaceful measures. . . . If that does not happen, . . . then the Polish comrades will have no alternative but to appeal for help from their allies. We, too, will have no alternative, neither they nor we. . . ." (*Ibid.*)

In his Moscow speech Erich Honecker reaffirmed the SED's willingness to cooperate in crushing the independent trade union and democratic movement in Poland: ". . . We also have a responsibility to our own people and to our friends all over the world. They count on us to give help to the Polish comrades in prevailing over the counterrevolution." (*Ibid.*) *In addition, he recom-*

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

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

The decision of the Warsaw Pact states not to intervene in Poland in December 1980 was of course accepted by the SED leadership, but this decision did not correspond with the SED’s appraisal of the situation in Poland. As is evident from documents that have been uncovered, the SED Politburo mistrusted the Polish communists and no longer believed the Polish leaders were capable of a forcible solution to the Polish crisis. The SED leaders favored a solution analogous to what was done in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and they did everything they could to gain support for that option in the CPSU, which retained final decision-making authority on whether to pursue such a step. *The option of having the Warsaw Pact states violently suppress the Polish opposition was what appealed to the SED leadership, who kept the option alive.*

Along with materials on the SED Politburo’s position vis-a-vis the “Polish crisis,” the documentation also contains extensive archives on intra-German relations, on the SED’s policy toward the church, and on the mounting economic problems in the GDR.

The publication of corresponding documents from the years 1981/82 is currently being prepared by scholars from the “SED-State Research Group.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Among some concrete recommendations, one might list the following:

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

—Convene a plenum of the Central Com-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

strengthening of the socialist legal order.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Using the mass media, show that the events in Poland have been caused not by any shortcomings of the socialist system per se, but by mistakes and oversights, and also by some objective factors (natural calamities, etc.). Through the mass media, actively and broadly counteract the anti-Polish and anti-Soviet attacks of hostile propaganda.

Objectively depict the economic advantages Poland derives from broad cooperation with the USSR and other fraternal countries. Refute the widely circulated slander that one of the reasons for the current difficulties in supplying the population of the PPR with consumer goods is the shipment of such goods to the countries of socialism.

* * * * *

After expressing a number of points about the critical situation that has emerged in the PPR, we would like once again to draw the attention of our Polish friends to the recommendations and suggestions that were offered by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev during the discussions in the Crimea with E. Gierek both in 1979 and especially on 31 July 1980, as well as to the letter of 21 August 1980 addressed to the PZPR CC.

Of particular importance in today's situation are the following suggestions offered by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev on 31 July 1980:

—carry out, along a wide front, work aimed at fostering socialist internationalism, while de-

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

—launch relentless counterpropaganda against the efforts to water down the class content of socialist patriotism under the slogan of “All Poles in the world are brothers,” as well as the efforts to idealize the pre-revolutionary past of Poland; and

—in the political struggle against anti-socialist elements, carry out the appropriate attacks against them, rather than merely going on the defensive.

3 September 1980

* * * * *

CPSU CC Politburo Protocol (extract), 23 April 1981; CPSU CC Politburo Commission Report, “On the Development of the Situation in Poland and Certain Steps on Our Part,” 16 April 1981; and CPSU CC-Approved Plan of “Measures to Assist the PZPR [Polish United Workers’ Party] in the Organization and Ideological Strengthening of the Party”

To be returned within 3 days to the CPSU CC (General Department, 1st sector)

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET
SPECIAL DOSSIER

No. P7/VII

To: Comrades Brezhnev, Tikhonov, Andropov, Gromyko, Suslov, Ustinov, Chernenko, Ponomarev, Zimyanin, Kapitonov, Rusakov, Arkhipov, Zamyatin, and Rakhmanin — whole package; Afanas’ev, V., Lapin, Losev, Pastukhov, Shibaev, Pegov, Tyazhel’nikov, and Shauro — pt. 2

Extract from Protocol No. 7 of the session of the CPSU CC Politburo on 23 April 1981

On the development of the situation in Poland and certain steps on our part.

1. To approve the ideas put forth in the note of the CPSU CC Politburo Commission on the Polish question (see attached).

2. To affirm a plan of measures to lend assistance to the PZPR leadership in the organi-

zational and ideological strengthening of the party (see attached).

CC SECRETARY

On point VII of Prot. No. 7

Top Secret
SPECIAL DOSSIER

To the CPSU CC

On the Development of the Situation in Poland and Certain Steps on Our Part

The internal political crisis in Poland is of a prolonged nature. To a significant degree the PZPR has lost control over the processes under way in society. At the same time, “Solidarity” has been transformed into an organized political force, which is able to paralyze the activity of the party and state organs and take *de facto* power into its own hands. If the opposition has not yet done that, then that is primarily because of its fear that Soviet troops would be introduced and because of its hopes that it can achieve its aims without bloodshed and by means of a creeping counterrevolution.¹

At the session of the Sejm [Parliament—ed.] on 10 April, the Polish leadership did not dare to raise the matter of decisive actions against the anti-socialist forces. The leadership clearly is unable and does not want to depart from the line adopted to overcome the crisis with the aid of political means.

True, in the report to the Sejm by Comrade Jaruzelski there were a number of provisions in the spirit of the recommendations continually expressed to the Polish comrades by our side. However, they were put forth not in the form of orders, but merely as appeals and suggestions. The compromise nature of the report is also abundantly evident from the fact that it was received calmly and did not provoke a confrontation of the sort that our friends had feared.

Looking upon the results of the Sejm as a modest but initial success, Comrade Kania and his colleagues now are somewhat stepping up their actions to bolster the authority of the party. They have given speeches at a number of large industrial enterprises and have held a meeting with workers and peasants and members of the PZPR CC. On 25 April a regular plenum of the CC is to be held. The preparation of documents is under way for the IX Congress of the PZPR, which must be held by 20 July of this year. Certain steps are being taken by the government with the aim of somehow rectifying the situation in the economy.

Despite this it is obvious to everyone that the lull following the session of the Sejm is ephemeral. The opponent has gone along with it purely out of tactical considerations, while continuing to mount his forces for the infliction of new strikes against the party.

“Solidarity” as a whole and its separate links are preparing their next attempt to blackmail the authorities by setting forth various demands of an overwhelmingly political nature. Signs of a stratification in the leadership of this trade union organization do not yet provide any basis for expecting fundamental changes in its general orientation. Even if there were to be a schism between Walesa and the extremists from KOR-KOS, Walesa himself and the Catholic clergy who back him have not the slightest intention of easing the pressure on the PZPR. One also cannot exclude the possibility that the extremists will seize control over “Solidarity,” with all the consequences that would ensue.

Recently, a new tactical arrangement has been emerging ever more clearly, around which the diverse opposition forces are uniting. Despite realizing that Poland’s geopolitical situation deprives them of the opportunity to obstruct the country’s participation in the Warsaw Treaty Organization or to encroach on the principle of the leading role of the Communist party, these forces have clearly decided to undermine the PZPR from within, to bring about the party’s rebirth, and thus to seize power “on a legal basis.”

As the work of the IX plenum of the PZPR CC showed, the opportunistic elements have already succeeded in taking control of local party organizations of the PZPR and, with their help, beginning to apply pressure on the leadership of the party. They will undoubtedly be continuing this subversive work, having sought to transform the upcoming IX Congress into a central arena for their struggle for power.

In these circumstances, the need has arisen once again to assess our view of the Polish leadership’s policy and to determine more precisely which forces we can rely on in the end to safeguard the gains of socialism in Poland.

On the right flank in the PZPR CC are officials of a revisionist bent: Fiszbach, Werblan, Rakowski, Jablonski, etc. Ideologically, they are close to some of the leaders of “Solidarity” in their support for a transformation of the socioeconomic structure of Poland along the lines of the Yugoslav model. In the political sphere they support a “partnership” of various political forces, a position coinciding with the “Eurocommunists” and the social-democratic ideas of pluralism.

These officials rely on the support of the party organizations that have fallen under the influence of “Solidarity.” One cannot exclude the possibility that under present conditions they will be able to bring many of their supporters into the PZPR Congress and exert fundamental influence on the formation of the leading organs of the party. They, apparently, are trying to achieve conspicuous changes in the PZPR leadership even as soon as the PZPR CC plenum.

The left flank is represented by such Communists as Grabski, Zabinski, Olszowski, Kociolek, and others. The positions adopted by

these comrades in the ideological sphere are closest to our own. They express the sentiments of the members of the party who consistently support socialism and friendship with the Soviet Union, and who oppose revisionist excesses and demand resolute action against "Solidarity." Overall they are backed by the old members of the party, who were brought up in the school of war and in the class struggle that marked the first stages of the establishment of People's Poland.

Unfortunately, representatives of this point of view are now far from a majority. One gets the impression that they believe the solution to the crisis will come only through a frontal attack on "Solidarity," without taking account of the current correlation of forces. In espousing this view, they do not believe there is a possibility of rectifying the situation without the introduction of Soviet troops. Such a position is objectively leading them to become more and more isolated in both the party and the country. Substantial efforts will be required (if indeed they are still possible) to get them elected to the Congress and have them join the leading organs.

In effect, Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski occupy a centrist position. In the difficult situation that emerged after August of last year, they turned out to be proponents of the sentiments that gained sway in the party and the country in favor of resolving the ongoing acute problems by means of dialogue and an agreement with "Solidarity." The subsequent period showed that Kania and Jaruzelski, while referring to the necessity of protecting the gains of socialism in Poland, pursued this course passively and hesitantly, making numerous concessions in favor of "Solidarity." They have displayed insufficient firmness and steadfastness in the struggle against the counterrevolutionary forces. In their view, devotion to socialism is compatible with the nationalist idea that was circulated during Gierek's time, namely, that "a Pole can always reach agreement with other Poles." This has led not only to an unjustified policy of concessions to the demands of "Solidarity," but also to a panic-ridden fear of confronting "Solidarity" and a deep-rooted anxiety that Soviet troops will be sent in.

At the same time, Kania and Jaruzelski want to maintain friendship with the Soviet Union and to uphold Poland's obligations to the Warsaw Pact. Both of them, especially Jaruzelski, enjoy authority in the country. At present, there are in fact no other officials who might take over the party and state leadership.

In light of all that has just been said, it is imperative to pursue the following course of action in the immediate future:

—Continue to offer political support to Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski, who, despite their well-known waffling, are in favor of defending socialism. At the same time, constantly demand that they pursue more significant and

decisive actions to overcome the crisis and preserve Poland as a socialist country friendly to the Soviet Union.

—Strongly recommend to our friends that in the first instance they must achieve unity and stability in the leadership of the PZPR, defending the comrades who have become the main targets of attack by the opposition and by the enemies of socialism (Grabski, Zabinski, Olszowski, Kociolek, *et al.*). In turn, help these comrades recognize the necessity of supporting Comrades Kania and Jaruzelski, of behaving more flexibly, and of not openly opposing slogans of "socialist renewal." It is important that they strike at the enemies of socialism without implying that "Solidarity" as a whole is identical to the hostile forces that exist within the organization.

—Direct the attention of Polish leaders to the necessity of carefully preparing for the IX PZPR Congress. Get them to struggle for an ample contingent of healthy forces at the Congress and to take an active role in this regard with the party organizations of large state enterprises.

—Recommend to the Polish comrades that they bind "Solidarity" in every way possible to the resolution of productive matters, while limiting its political activity. To this end, they should accelerate the adoption of laws on economic reform and trade unions.

—Actively exploit the discernible fragmentation among the leaders of "Solidarity," disrupt the anti-socialist and anti-national activity of KOS-KOR and its leaders, and bring about the isolation of these counterrevolutionaries. Adopt decisive measures against attempts to stir up a wave of anti-Sovietism in the country.

Induce the Polish leadership to maintain constant watch over the state of the army and Internal Affairs Ministry organs, including their morale, political stability, and readiness to fulfill their duty in defense of socialism. It is essential to support the Internal Affairs Ministry leadership, and Milewski personally, and to avoid any let-up in the actions carried out by the police to preserve public order.

—As a deterrent to counterrevolution, maximally exploit the fears of internal reactionaries and international imperialism that the Soviet Union might send its troops into Poland. In foreign policy statements, emphasize what was said by Comrade L. I. Brezhnev at the XXVI CPSU Congress about our resolve to stick up for Poland and not to leave it in the lurch.

—Given the exceptionally difficult economic situation in the PPR, continue to extend timely assistance while simultaneously doing everything possible to step up propaganda about this matter so that every Pole will know how much his country depends on Soviet help and support.

Along with these general recommendations, we are, in accordance with our instructions (P1/VIII from 12 March 1981), presenting a plan of

additional measures to assist the PZPR leadership in strengthening the party both organizationally and ideologically.

K. Chernenko
Yu. Andropov
A. Gromyko
D. Ustinov
K. Rusakov
I. Arkhipov
L. Zamyatin

16 April 1981

Regarding point VII of Prot. No. 7

Top Secret

SET OF MEASURES TO ASSIST THE PZPR
LEADERSHIP IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL
AND IDEOLOGICAL STRENGTHENING
OF THE PARTY

Dispatch a working group from the CPSU CC Department for Organizational-Party Work to the PPR in May and June 1981 for consultations on matters concerning preparations for the Extraordinary IX Congress of the PZPR.

The CPSU CC Department, and the departments for organizational-party work, propaganda, and foreign policy propaganda of the CPSU CC, are to analyze the draft theses for the PZPR Congress, the draft PZPR statutes, and the drafts of other documents, as well as the status of organizational preparations for the Congress, and should relay appropriate recommendations to the CPSU CC.

Receive a delegation from the PZPR CC Organizational Department in April-May 1981, as provided for under the plan for interparty ties in 1981.

Prepare invitations to working groups of top officials from PZPR CC departments to come to the USSR for consultations, which the Polish comrades are very interested in holding.

In accordance with the desire of the Polish leadership, party officials representing local party organs will be sent to Poland in May and June 1981. The initial delegations will be sent from the Leningrad, Ivanovo, Smolensk, Donetsk, Zaporozhe, Lvov, Kharkov, Cherkassk, Grodnensk, and Mogilev oblast party committees.

In the event of confirmation of an appropriate request from the PZPR CC, give further consideration to the question of accepting middle- and lower-ranking PZPR officials (up to 500 of them) at the CPSU CC Academy of Social Sciences and also at the Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, and Minsk higher party schools.

The CPSU CC Department for organiza-

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

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

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

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

Taking account of the complex situation in the creative unions of the PPR, the Unions of Writers, Journalists, Composers, Artists, and Filmmakers of the USSR are to carry out exchanges with them via party organizations.

Send a group from the USSR State Committee on Television and Radio (headed by the chairman of the committee, Comrade Lapin) to the PPR in May 1981 for consultations regarding Soviet broadcasts to the PPR and the refinement of plans for cooperation in 1981.

In April-May 1981 the editors of the newspapers "Pravda," "Izvestiya," and "Trud" are to send a group of publicists (1 or more) to Poland to prepare materials, including exposés and denunciations, about the activity of anti-socialist forces.

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**Brezhnev-Jaruzelski Telephone
Conversation, 19 October 1981**

To be returned
to the CPSU CC
(General Depart-
ment, 1st sector)
No. P1942

Distributed to the members
of the CPSU CC Politburo,
members of the CPSU CC
Politburo, and CPSU CC
secretaries

To the CPSU CC

I am conveying notes from a telephone conversation with Comrade W. Jaruzelski on 19

October of this year.

L. BREZHNEV

19 October 1981

Secret

NOTES FROM A TELEPHONE
CONVERSATION

between Comrade L. I. Brezhnev and Comrade
W. Jaruzelski

19 October 1981

The Kremlin

L. I. BREZHNEV. Hello, Wojciech.

W. JARUZELSKI. Hello, my dear, deeply
esteemed Leonid Ilyich.

L. I. BREZHNEV. Dear Wojciech, we already sent you an official greeting, but I wanted to congratulate you personally on your election to the post of First Secretary of the PZPR CC.

It was appropriate of you to give your consent to such a decision. In the PZPR right now there is no other individual whose authority is equal to yours; this is evident from the results of the vote at the plenum. We understand that very difficult tasks now stand before you. But we are convinced that you will cope with them and will do everything to overcome the severe ailments afflicting your country.

I think, right now, as it seems to me, the most important thing is for you to gather around yourself some reliable assistants from the ranks of committed and worthy Communists and to rally them, spurring the whole party into action and instilling it with the spirit of struggle. This, in the literal sense of the word, is the key to success.

And, of course, it is important, without wasting time, to take the decisive measures you intend to use against the counterrevolution. We hope that everyone now, both in Poland and abroad, will sense that things in your country will move along differently.

We wish you good health and success!

W. JARUZELSKI. Thank you very much, dear Leonid Ilyich, for the greeting and above all for the confidence you have in me. I want to tell you frankly that I had some inner misgivings about accepting this post and agreed to do so only because I knew that you support me and that you were in favor of this decision. If this had not been so, I never would have agreed to it. This is a very burdensome and very difficult task in such a complicated situation in the country, in which I now find myself both as prime minister and as minister of defense. But I understand that this is proper and necessary if you personally believe so.

L. I. BREZHNEV. Wojciech, we long ago

believed so. We long ago spoke about this to our friends.

W. JARUZELSKI. And for that reason I consented. I will do all I can, Leonid Ilyich, both as a Communist and as a soldier, to improve things and to achieve a turnaround in the situation in the country and in our party. I understand and fully agree with you that one of the crucial things right now is the selection of leadership both in the party and in the government. And for that reason I deferred any final resolution of personnel matters until the next plenum, which we will be holding within several days. This way, I can think carefully about these matters and consult with others, ending up with a comprehensive decision and not simply scattered personnel changes.

L. I. BREZHNEV. Personnel matters are very important both at the center and in the outlying regions.

W. JARUZELSKI. This issue will be resolved in the outlying regions as well. Of course this must occur in parallel with the strengthening of the party in the spirit of a stepped-up struggle. In the appropriate situation we must apply decisive actions in order to wage battle where we are confident of achieving success.

I'm now heading over to a session of the Military Council of the Armed Forces at the Ministry of Defense. There I will also be putting forth appropriate tasks. We will broadly include the army in all spheres of the life of the country.

Yesterday, after the plenum, I held a meeting with the first secretaries of the provincial committees and said that they should not take umbrage at the fact that we will be including people from the armed forces in the implementation of certain processes and will be expanding meetings between the officer corps and the working class in order to exert direct influence on the workers and shield them from the influence of "Solidarity." Of course, we are not changing our general direction in the sense that we are struggling to win back to our side the healthy forces of the nation who have gone astray and joined "Solidarity," and simultaneously we will be combating the adversary and, of course, doing so in such a way that it will produce results.

Today I am meeting with your ambassador. I will try to go over certain questions with him in greater detail and will be asking for your suggestions on some questions which he, no doubt, will convey to you.²

In keeping you informed of all the decisions we reach, we will simultaneously let you know what has motivated our decision-making in particular cases.

Right now the greatest complications in our country arise from the situation at the market. In connection with this we have been experiencing many strikes and protests, some organized by "Solidarity" and others that are simply elemental. This very much complicates efforts to carry out

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

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

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

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

W. JARUZELSKI. Thank you. Good-bye.

* * * * *

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

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

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET

No. P37/21

To: Comrades Brezhnev, Tikhonov, Andropov, Gromykov, Suslov, Ustinov, Ponomarev, Rusakov, Arkhipov, Baibakov, Zamyatin, and Smirtyukov.

Extract from Protocol No. 37 of the session of the
CPSU CC Politburo
on 21 November 1981

On the reception in the USSR of a party-state
delegation from the PPR and an oral message
from Comrade L. I. Brezhnev to Comrade W.
Jaruzelski.

1. To affirm the text of an oral message from Comrade L. I. Brezhnev, who instructed the Soviet ambassador in Poland to transmit it to Comrade W. Jaruzelski (see attached).

2. To acknowledge the desirability of receiving in the USSR a party-state delegation from the PPR headed by Comrade W. Jaruzelski on 14-15 December 1981.

To affirm the composition of the Soviet delegation at the talks with the Polish delegation: Comrades L. I. Brezhnev (head of the delegation), M. A. Suslov, Yu. V. Andropov, A. A. Gromyko, N. A. Tikhonov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, and K. V. Rusakov.

3. By 1 December the CPSU CC Department, the USSR Foreign Ministry, the Defense Ministry, the USSR KGB, and USSR Gosplan are to prepare all necessary materials for the talks with the Polish party-state delegations, including a draft communiqué for the press.

The CPSU CC Department and the USSR Foreign Ministry are to set forth recommendations concerning organizational measures connected with the reception of a Polish delegation in the USSR.

CC SECRETARY

Regarding point 21 of Prot. No. 37

Secret

WARSAW

SOVIET AMBASSADOR

Pay a visit to Comrade W. Jaruzelski and, citing your instructions, transmit to him the following oral message from Comrade L. I. Brezhnev:

“Esteemed Comrade Jaruzelski!

“We have attentively considered your proposal to visit Moscow at the head of a party-state delegation that would include the heads of the parties allied with the PZPR, and we agree with it. As far as the timeframe is concerned, the visit might take place on 14-15 December, assuming of course that this is suitable for you.

“In the meantime, because several weeks still remain before the meeting, I decided to transmit to you through Comrade Aristov some thoughts about urgent matters pertaining to the situation in Poland, which remains a cause of serious anxiety for us.

“I am revealing no secrets when I say that we greeted your election as PZPR CC First Secretary with great hopes. We were aware that earlier in the struggle against the anti-socialist forces you, as the chairman of the Council of Ministers, were inhibited by the political indecisiveness of the party leadership. Now this obstacle has been eliminated. The 4th plenum of the PZPR CC directly linked the decision to change the First Secretary with the necessity for urgent measures to salvage socialism in Poland.

“When I congratulated you over the phone, I was pleased to hear that one of the reasons you had agreed to take on the responsible post of PZPR leader at such a critical juncture was the confidence you felt we had in you. I mentioned this to my comrades, and our hope strengthened even more that in you we had finally found someone who thinks as we do and who will be an ally in one of the most trying phases of the struggle against imperialism, as is now occurring in Poland.

“You’ll recall that during the phone conversation I expressed my hope that people now, both in Poland and abroad, would sense that things in your country were finally headed on a different course. We spoke then about the essential preconditions for a turnabout in the situation, and

you agreed that you needed to choose reliable assistants from among the ranks of staunch and devoted Communists and to spur the whole party into motion, having instilled it with the spirit of struggle and then, without losing any time, resorting to active measures against the counterrevolution.

“It’s obvious that the fundamental question now is the struggle for the hearts and minds of the masses. However, one gets the impression that a turnaround on this matter has so far not been achieved. The anti-socialist forces not only are gaining sway in many large industrial enterprises, but are also continuing to spread their influence among ever wider segments of the population. Worse yet, the leaders of ‘Solidarity’ and the counterrevolutionaries are still appearing before various audiences and making openly inflammatory speeches aimed at stirring up nationalist passions and directed against the PZPR and against socialism. The direct consequence of this hostile activity is the dangerous growth of anti-Sovietism in Poland.

“It seems to us that you now must mobilize the entire party in the struggle to win the hearts and minds of people by coming forth with a precise and clear program for resolving the crisis, a program that will convince everyone of its appropriateness. In other words, you must seek anew to gain the confidence of ordinary workers, as was done by the Communists during the years of the founding of popular rule. Of great importance in this effort will be regular meetings by leading officials from the PZPR with labor collectives, especially collectives at large state enterprises, which the enemy has succeeded in transforming into its bastions. This is so not just in the capital. And, of course, the struggle for the hearts and minds of the masses will not achieve the necessary results if the current party leadership is not supported by the mass media and if the adversary, as before, is given unhindered opportunity to disseminate his hostile propaganda.

“I’d now like to broach another matter. Recently in Poland a lot has been written about your meeting with Glempl and Walesa. Some call it historic and see in it the beginning of a turn away from chaos toward social tranquility. As we know, the results of the meeting were positively evaluated by the Politburo and the PPR government.³

“We understand, of course, that by proposing at this meeting, in the form of a critical question, the creation of a ‘Front of National Accord,’ you are pursuing a number of tactical objectives, above all the widening of public support for the regime and the fragmentation of the top levels of ‘Solidarity.’ But how far can one really go with such agreements without the threat of losing control over the situation? Indeed, aren’t the class enemies trying to instill the ‘Front of National Accord’ with political content that would bolster their idea of, at a minimum, attain-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

L. BREZHNEV”

Confirm transmittal by telegram.

* * * * *

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

Top Secret
Single Copy
(Working Notes)

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO

10 December 1981

Presided over by Comrade L. I. BREZHNEV.

Also taking part: Comrades Yu. V. Andropov, V. V. Grishin, A. A. Gromyko, A. P. Kirilenko, A. Ya. Pel’she, M. A. Suslov, D. F. Ustinov, K. U. Chernenko, P. N. Demichev, B. N. Ponomarev, M. S. Solomentsev, I. V. Kapitonov, V. I. Dolgikh, K. V. Rusakov.

I. On the question of the situation in Poland

BREZHNEV. This question is not listed on our agenda. But I think that the session of the Politburo should begin with this matter, since we have specially dispatched Comrades [Head of Gosplan Nikolai] Baibakov and [Warsaw Pact Commander-in-Chief Marshal Viktor] Kulikov to Poland to meet with the Polish comrades and go over certain matters of the utmost urgency. On 8 December, Comrade Kulikov provided us with information about the discussions he held in Warsaw, and yesterday, 9 December, Comrade Baibakov communicated from Warsaw that he had held a discussion with Comrade Jaruzelski. From these meetings and subsequent discussions held by Comrade Baibakov, it is apparent that the Polish comrades hope to receive roughly 1.5 billion dollars’ worth of additional supplies and materials from the USSR and other socialist countries in the first quarter of the coming year.⁷ This will include iron ore, non-ferrous metals, fertilizer, oil, tires, grain, etc.

In making this request, as you see, the Polish

comrades have in mind that shipments of goods from the USSR to Poland in 1982 will be maintained at the level of 1981. Comrade Baibakov assured his interlocutors that all their requests would be considered in Moscow.

Perhaps it would behoove us now to instruct Comrades Tikhonov, Kirilenko, Dolgikh, Skachkov, and Arkhipov to continue studying this matter, taking account of the exchange of opinions, but without waiting for a final agreement.

And now let's hear what Comrade Baibakov has to say.

BAIBAKOV. In accordance with the Politburo's instructions, I traveled to Warsaw. I met there with all the comrades whom it was necessary for me to see about the matters specified in my instructions.

First of all I had a discussion with the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, Comrade Obodowski. During this discussion, the Polish comrades raised the question of economic assistance. I sent an encrypted cable back here outlining the Polish request.

One must say that the list of goods included in the assistance from us to the PPR comes to 350 items worth some 1.4 billion rubles. This includes such goods as 2 million tons of grains, 25 thousand tons of meat, 625 thousand tons of iron ore, and many other goods. The requests made by the Polish comrades, combined with what we had already been thinking about giving Poland in 1982, means that the total assistance to the Polish People's Republic will be approximately 4.4 billion rubles.

The time is now approaching when Poland will have to pay for its credits from West European countries. For this, Poland will be required to pay a minimum of 2.8 million rubles' worth of hard currency. When I was told by the Polish comrades that they are requesting the amount that all this assistance comes to, I raised the question of how to establish mutual economic ties on a balanced basis. Moreover, I noticed that Polish industry is not even coming close to fulfilling its plan. The coal industry, which is the country's basic means of earning hard currency, has been severely disrupted, and remedial measures have not been implemented as strikes continue. And even now, when there are no strikes, the mining of coal remains at a very low level.

Or, for example, let's say that production is going on among the peasantry, with grain, meat products, vegetables, etc. But they aren't giving any of it to the state; they're just playing a waiting game. At the private markets the level of agricultural trade is sufficiently high and is being carried out at very inflated prices.

I said directly to the Polish comrades that they must adopt more decisive measures if such a situation has arisen. Perhaps they can launch something in the nature of a requisitioning of

farm produce.⁸

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

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

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

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

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

RUSAKOV. Comrade Baibakov has cor-

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

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

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

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

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

As far as officials like Olszowski are concerned, they recently have begun to act more decisively; and one might add that at the session of the Politburo where the decision was made to introduce martial law and adopt more resolute measures against extremist figures in "Solidarity," the vote was unanimous and no one expressed a word of opposition.¹¹ At the same time, Jaruzelski intends to keep in close touch about this matter with his allies. He says that if the Polish forces are unable to cope with the resistance put up by "Solidarity," the Polish comrades

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In general, it seems to me that our position on the situation in Poland was formulated by Leonid Ilyich in several of his speeches and in the resolutions adopted earlier. Today, a very thorough exchange of opinions has taken place during the session of the Politburo. All of this must serve as the basis of the policy we must uphold vis-a-vis Poland.

As concerns the lines of communication between the Soviet Union and the GDR that run through Poland, then we of course must do something to provide for their safekeeping.

GROMYKO. Today we've had a very spir-

ited review of the situation in Poland. You might even say this review was more spirited than any we've had before. This is because at the moment we ourselves don't know what direction the events in Poland will take. The Polish leadership itself senses that power is slipping from its grasp. Kania and Jaruzelski, you know, counted on their ability to rely on the neutrals. But now there is no such opportunity, there are no longer any neutrals. The position is defined sufficiently clearly: "Solidarity" has proven to be a patently counterrevolutionary organization which aspires to come to power and which has openly declared its intention to seize power. The Polish leadership must decide the question: Either it relinquishes its positions by failing to adopt decisive measures, or it adopts decisive measures by introducing martial law, isolating the extremists of "Solidarity," and restoring public order. There is no other alternative.

What should our position be toward the Polish events? I fully agree with what was already said here by the comrades. We can say to the Poles that we view the Polish events with understanding. There is no basis whatsoever for us to alter this measured formulation in any way. At the same time we must somehow try to dispel the notions that Jaruzelski and other leaders in Poland have about the introduction of troops. There cannot be any introduction of troops into Poland. I think we can give instructions about this to our ambassador, asking him to visit Jaruzelski and communicate this to him.

Despite the sufficiently unanimous vote of the PZPR CC Politburo with regard to the introduction of martial law, Jaruzelski is now back to his vacillating position. At first he had somewhat stiffened his spine, but now, once again, he's begun to soften. Everything is still in force that was said to them previously. If in the struggle against counterrevolution and afterwards they show any sign of wavering, nothing of socialist Poland will remain. The introduction of martial law, of course, would be the best way to convey the steadfastness of the Polish leadership to the counterrevolutionaries. And if the measures they intend to carry out are indeed implemented, then I think we could expect positive results.

Now, with regard to the creation of a new party, as Jaruzelski proposed, I think we must directly say to Jaruzelski that there is no need to create any sort of new party, since this would merely signal a retreat on the part of the Polish leadership and an acknowledgment that the PZPR is in fact not a militant political organization, but simply an organization that has committed mistakes. It would underscore the very weakness of the party and would play into the hands of the "Solidarity" extremists. Then even the population of Poland, which retains definite sympathy for the PZPR as a guiding force, would be completely disabused of such sentiments.

I believe that we must not now permit any

sort of harsh instructions, which would force them to adopt one course or another. I think we have chosen the correct position here: The restoration of order in Poland is a matter for the Polish United Workers' Party, its Central Committee, and its Politburo. We already said to our Polish friends and will say again in the future that they must pursue a steadfast course without slackening in the least.

Of course, if the Poles deliver a blow to "Solidarity," the West in all likelihood will not give them credits and will not offer any other kind of help. They are aware of this, and this obviously is something that we, too, have to bear in mind. For this reason, Leonid Ilyich was correct in proposing that we instruct a group of comrades to examine this question, taking account of our capabilities to extend substantial economic assistance to the PPR.

USTINOV. The situation in the PPR, of course, is very bad. The situation is worsening day by day. Among the leadership, especially in the Politburo, there is no firmness or unity. And all of this has taken its toll on the state of affairs. Only at the last session of the [Polish] Politburo was a decision unanimously approved to introduce martial law. And now all hopes are riding on Jaruzelski. How will he succeed in carrying out this decision? As yet, no one can openly speak about the actions of Jaruzelski. We just don't know. I had a conversation with Siwicki. He candidly said that even we [the Poles] don't know what the general is thinking. Thus, the man who has been effectively responsible for discharging the duties of the Polish defense minister doesn't know what will happen and what sort of actions will be taken by the chairman of the Council of Ministers and minister.

With regard to what Comrade Kulikov allegedly said about the introduction of troops into Poland, I can say in full responsibility that Kulikov never said this. He simply repeated what was said by us and by Leonid Ilyich that we would not leave Poland in the lurch. And he perfectly well knows that the Poles themselves requested us not to introduce troops.

As far as our garrisons in Poland are concerned, we are fortifying them. I myself am also inclined to think that the Poles will not embark on a confrontation and only if, perhaps, "Solidarity" seizes them by the throat will they come forth.

The problem is that the Polish leaders do not appear resolute. As was rightly said here by the comrades, we must not force them to adopt any specific decisions; we will simply carry out the policy on which we have agreed. For our part, we must be ready ourselves and must not display any sort of actions not provided for by our decisions.

SUSLOV. I believe, as is evident from the other comrades' speeches, we all have the same view of the situation in Poland. During the whole

prolonged stretch of events in Poland, we have displayed steadfastness and composure. Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev spoke about this at the plenum. We said this in public to our people, and our people supported the policy of the Communist Party.

We've done a great deal of work for peace, and it is now impossible for us to change our position. World public opinion will not permit us to do so. We have carried out via the UN such momentous diplomatic actions to consolidate peace. What a great effect we have had from the visit of L. I. Brezhnev to the FRG and from many other peaceful actions we have undertaken. This has enabled all peace-loving countries to understand that the Soviet Union staunchly and consistently upholds a policy of peace. That is why it is now impossible for us to change the position we have adopted vis-a-vis Poland since the very start of the Polish events. Let the Polish comrades themselves determine what actions they must pursue. It would be inappropriate for us to push them toward more decisive actions. But we will, as earlier, tell the Poles that we regard their actions with understanding.

As it seems to me, Jaruzelski is displaying a certain degree of slyness. He wants to make excuses for himself by coming forth with requests, which he presents to the Soviet Union. These requests, naturally, are beyond our physical capacity to fulfill, and Jaruzelski then says: well, look here, I turned to the Soviet Union and requested help, but didn't receive it.

At the same time, the Poles say directly that they are opposed to the introduction of troops. If troops are introduced, that will mean a catastrophe. I think we have reached a unanimous view here on this matter, and there can be no consideration at all of introducing troops.

As far as the provision of assistance to Poland is concerned, we have given that country more than a billion rubles. Not long ago we adopted a decision to ship 30 thousand tons of meat to Poland, of which 16 thousand tons have already been delivered. I don't know whether we'll be able to ship the full 30 thousand tons, but in any event we apparently are obliged by this decision to give a further definite number of tons of meat as assistance.

With regard to the PZPR and the creation of a new party to replace it, I believe it would be inappropriate to disband the PZPR. Those who spoke here were correct in arguing that this would be a completely unhelpful action.

GRISHIN. The situation in Poland is getting steadily worse. The line of our party toward the Polish events is entirely correct. With respect to the proposal by Jaruzelski to disband the PZPR and create a new party, one cannot agree with that. There can be no talk at all of introducing troops. We will have to look at economic questions and at what can be given to the Poles.

SUSLOV. In the press we must expose the intrigues of "Solidarity" and other counterrevolutionary forces.

CHERNENKO. I fully agree with what the comrades have said here. It is clear that the line of our party and of the CC Politburo vis-a-vis the Polish events, as formulated in the speeches of Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev and in the decisions of the Politburo, is entirely correct and in no need of change.

I believe that today we could adopt the following decision:

1. Take under advisement the information provided by Comrade Baibakov.
2. In our relations with the PPR in the future, abide by the general political line on this matter laid down by the CPSU CC, and also abide by the instructions from the CPSU CC Politburo on 8 December 1981 and the exchange of opinions that occurred at the CC Politburo's session on 10 December 1981.
3. Instruct Comrades Tikhonov, Kirilenko, Dolgikh, Arkhipov, and Baibakov to continue studying questions of economic assistance to Poland, taking account of the exchange of opinions at the session of the CC Politburo.

BREZHNEV. How do the comrades feel about this?

EVERYONE. Comrade Chernenko has very properly formulated all the proposals, and now it is time to adopt them.

The decree is adopted.

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**CPSU CC Politburo Protocol (extract),
"On Information about the Polish question
for the leaders of the fraternal countries,"
13 December 1981**

Proletarians of all countries, unite!

Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

TOP SECRET

No. P40/26

TO: Comrades Brezhnev, Tikhonov, Andropov, Gromyko, Suslov, Ustinov, Ponomarev, Rusakov, Zamyatin

Extract from Protocol No. 40 of the session of the CPSU CC Politburo on 13 December 1981

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

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

CC SECRETARY

Regarding point 26 of Prot. No. 40

Secret

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

SOVIET AMBASSADOR

CC: WARSAW — SOVIET AMBASSADOR

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Confirm transmittal by telegram.

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

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO
14 January 1982

Presided over by Comrade L. I. BREZHNEV.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

experience in struggling against counterrevolution.

All of us clearly understand that the decisive precondition for the full stabilization of things in Poland is a revival of the economy. In Czechoslovakia after 1968 political efforts made headway precisely because the counterrevolution had not affected the economic sphere. In Poland just the opposite is true.

In this connection a difficult question stands before us. We already are stretched to the limit in our capacity to help the Poles, and they are making still more requests. Perhaps we can do a bit more, but we certainly can't give a lot more.

Still, we must of course answer Jaruzelski's letter,¹⁵ explaining in a comradely way what we can and cannot do. By all means we must precisely carry out our agreed deliveries in the first quarter, which for the Poles will be the most difficult winter months.

Quite another matter are projects for political prestige, which should not impose great strains on our economy. For example, we can lend assistance in building the Warsaw subway. We should meet this request, having made our participation a matter of public knowledge.

Incidentally, the food situation in Poland is not so bad. There is enough bread in the country, and they must find a way to motivate the peasantry and to get them to work, arranging, as we sometimes say, a merger of the city and village.

The Polish leadership continues to count on help from the West. Well, in principle we can't be against that, although, to be honest, it's doubtful that Western countries are about to start providing material assistance to a military regime. They undoubtedly will try to extract concessions, which means we must be especially vigilant.

Jaruzelski is raising another question, of whether he should accept help from the Chinese. Well, why not? In the process China will be disassociating itself from the USA and its economic sanctions.

In conclusion, one might say that the Polish question will be at the center of international politics for a long time to come. That is why our Polish commission has continued to work as actively as it has been up to now.

* * * * *

CPSU CC Report on Economic Aid to Poland (1980-81), 23 September 1982

SPECIAL DOSSIER

Secret¹⁶

INFORMATION

about Soviet assistance to Poland in freely convertible currency in 1980-1981*

I. Credits Provided	Millions of \$
1. For the purchase of sugar By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 1 August 1980 No. 1518 rs (P207 from 1.8.1980)	30
2. For the settlement of accounts with capitalist countries. By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 23 August 1980, No. 1192-rs (P201/30 from 23.VI.80)	250
3. For the establishment of a consor- tium of banks to help the PPR. Decision of the CPSU CC on 6 June 1980. No. P199/2	70
4. For the settlement of accounts with capitalist countries By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 11 November 1980 No. 1019-247 (P224/70 from 11.XI.1980)	150
5. For the purchase of grain and food stuffs. By order of the USSR Council of Ministers No. 1019-347 (P224/70 from 11.XI.1980)	190
Total	690

II. Deferred Payments

1. Deferral of payments to Soviet banks. Decision of the CPSU CC on 6 June 1980 (P199/II from 6.6.1980)	219
2. Deferral of payments to Soviet banks. By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 11 September 1980 No. 1840 rs (P214/XI from 11.XI.1980)	280
3. Deferral of payments to Soviet banks. By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 11 November 1980 No. 1019-347 (P224/70 from 11.XI.1980)	280
4. Deferral of payments on the basic debt up to 1,000 from all credits extended previously. By order of the USSR Council of Ministers on 16 August 1981. No. 1630 rs (P23/14 from 16.8.81)	
Total	1,779

III. Grant Aid

1. Joint grant aid from the USSR, Hungary, Bulgaria, the GDR, and Czechoslovakia supplied via a reduction of oil deliveries to the	465
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CMEA countries.
Decision of the CPSU CC on
28 November 1980
No. P227/21

Total 2,934

*) According to data from USSR Gosplan

TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

1. Translator's Note: The notion of a "creeping counterrevolution" was first devised by East German and Soviet officials during the 1968 crisis over the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia.

2. Translator's Note: Notes from this meeting are available in both Russian and Polish archives; see, e.g., Fond (F.) No. 5, Opis' (Op.) No. 84, Delo (D.) No. 596, Listy (L.) 33-35, Tsentr khraneniya sovremennoi dokumentatsii (TsKhSD).

3. Translator's Note: Brezhnev presumably refers here to the PZPR Politburo.

4. Translator's Note: A page was missing at this point in the documents originally supplied to the Polish government and published in Rzeczpospolita. Fortunately, the missing page (no. 5 in the document) was included in the copy of the document stored in the Moscow archives.

5. Translator's Note: Misgivings about the influence of Solidarity on the new group of Polish army draftees were expressed frequently in 1981 in top-secret Soviet assessments of the reliability of the Polish army. See, e.g., "O nastroeniyakh sredi soldat i ofitserov podrazdelenii Voiska Pol'skogo i VMF PNR, dislotsiruyushchikhsya na Gdan'skom poberezh'e," Cable No. 183 (Top Secret), 14 June 1981, from V. Zelenov, Soviet consul-general in Gdansk, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 611, Ll. 17-19; and also "O politicheskoi situatsii i nastroeniyakh v voevodstvakh yuzhnogo regiona PNR (Politpis'mo)," Cable No. 179 (TOP SECRET), 12 November 1981, from G. Rudov, Soviet consul-general in Krakow, to the CPSU Secretariat, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 597, Ll. 13-22.

6. Translator's Note: It is not wholly clear what Brezhnev had in mind here, but he may have been alluding to some of the preparations for martial law.

7. Translator's Note: It is curious why in this secret forum Brezhnev used dollars (instead of, say, transferable rubles) as the unit for measuring the size of Poland's request.

8. Translator's Note: The term Baibakov uses here, *prodrazverstka* (a contraction of *prodovol'stvennaya razverstka*), refers to the policy introduced by Lenin during the period of "War Communism" to force peasants to turn over their produce to the state. The policy led to great bloodshed, upheaval, and starvation.

9. Translator's Note: Either because of a mistake by Rusakov or because of a typographical error, the Russian text gives Boris Aristov's

surname as Arestov. The error was corrected in the Polish translation.

10. Translator's Note: Marshal Josef Pilsudski was the military ruler of Poland during the interwar period, presiding over a regime that became increasingly tyrannical.

11. Translator's Note: The Russian word Rusakov uses to describe a unanimous vote, *edinoglasno*, is stronger than another word, *edinodushno*, which also is translated as "unanimous." Rusakov's statement indicates that no abstentions or dissenting votes were cast. It should be noted, however, that most subsequent speakers (Andropov, Gromyko, etc.) used the word *edinodushno* when referring to the PZPR Politburo vote, though Ustinov used *edinoglasno*.

12. Translator's Note: The transcript of "the previous session of the Politburo" (apparently of 8 December) has not yet been released.

13. Translator's Note: This statement is confirmed by the lack of concrete discussion of the matter at PZPR Politburo meetings throughout the crisis; see the transcripts in Zbigniew Wlodek, ed., *Tajne dokumenty Biura Politycznego: PZPR a "Solidarnosc," 1980-1981* (London: Aneks, 1992). The extreme secrecy of the planning also is emphasized in the interview with Ryszard Kuklinski, "Wojna z narodem widziana od srodka," *Kultura* (Paris) 4/475 (April 1987), esp. 11-13, 33-35.

14. Translator's Note: The text of this communication (by most accounts a phone conversation Jaruzelski had with Suslov and/or Brezhnev) reportedly exists in the Russian Presidential Archive, but has not yet been released.

15. Translator's Note: Brezhnev later in the meeting described Jaruzelski's letter of 3 January 1982: "...Jaruzelski expresses deep gratitude for the fraternal help provided by the Soviet Union to the Polish People's Republic. At the same time, he requests that the Soviet side reaffirm the volume of deliveries for 1982 contained in the draft protocol on the coordination of both sides' plans for 1981-1985 for oil, gasoline, and oil products. The volume of oil deliveries in 1982 are being kept at the level of 13 million tons, and oil products at 2.94 million tons; and deliveries of combustibles are being retained at the maximum level in the first quarter of 1982.

"Further on Cde. Jaruzelski informs us that he appealed to the General Secretaries of the Communist Party Central Committees of Hungary, the GDR, Bulgaria, Romania, and Czechoslovakia with a request to provide Poland with basic agricultural and industrial goods."

16. Translator's Note: The classification was upgraded to "top secret" (*sovershenno sekretno*) by a handwritten notation of sov. next to the original *sekretno*. A stamped imprint just under the classification said that this was CPSU CC Document No. 2931, prepared on 23 September 1982, and that it should be returned to the CPSU CC General Department.

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

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

In the effort to support this historical enterprise and to open up new sources, former President Carter has lent his support to the project, as have such prominent former officials as, on the American side, former Sec-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

by Mark Garrison

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

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

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

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

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

A "MISSED OPPORTUNITY"—CARTER, BREZHNEV, SALT II, AND THE VANCE MISSION TO MOSCOW, NOVEMBER 1976-MARCH 1977

by G.M. Korniyenko

The fact that, toward the end of the Ford presidency, Soviet-American relations seemed to have been set back, meant that the Soviet leadership would be particularly interested in his opponent in the 1976 elections, Jimmy Carter. And although he was a political figure who was completely unknown in the USSR, and although his pre-election statements, as Moscow fully realized, did not necessarily reflect his real views, many of his statements favorably influenced the mood of the Soviet leadership. These included his critical view of Ford's refusal to use the term "détente," his criticism of Ford for putting on ice the negotiations to conclude SALT-2 on the basis of the 1974 Vladivostok accords, and his statements in favor of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and a complete ban on testing, and supporting a reductions in nuclear weapons and their abolition. A positive impression on the Soviet leadership was produced by the fact that Carter not only publicly but also privately, through A. Harriman during a visit to Moscow in September 1976,¹ gave assurances that if elected President he would take steps toward the rapid conclusion and signing of the SALT-2 Treaty, and then would be ready to continue negotiations on an agreement on substantial reductions in strategic weapons.

Of course, not everything Carter said in the election campaign pleased Moscow, in particular the stress he put on human rights internationally, first of all regarding the Soviet Union. But with regard to his statements on arms control and disarmament, I repeat, they gave cause for hope.

In any case, there were no regrets in Moscow over Ford's defeat and Carter's victory in the elections on 2 November 1976. In congratulating the latter on his victory, L.I. Brezhnev immediately expressed the hope for an early meeting. Carter was not slow in replying. Already on November 4, Harriman sent through the Soviet Ambassador in Washington an oral communication for Brezhnev from Carter, saying that the newly elected President considered it important to have a personal meeting with Brezhnev "with the aim of preserving and supporting peace throughout the world,"

and also thought it useful to organize in the future such meetings "on a regular basis, perhaps once a year." Carter stipulated that he had also had requests from the leaders of England, the FRG and France, and expressed the hope that it would be understood in Moscow that a Soviet-American summit meeting would take place after his meeting with his allies.²

After a short time, on November 17, Harriman (whom Carter authorized to act as an unofficial channel between him and Brezhnev in the period before he took office), conveyed Carter's readiness for an exchange of views on matters of mutual interest even during the transition period. It was also stated that he could not yet enter into specific discussions. First, because he could not undercut the sitting President, and second, because he did not yet have his staff of advisers and he did not consider it possible to "improvise."³ Nevertheless, the exchange of several oral communications between Brezhnev and Carter before 20 January 1977 promised a constructive development of the Soviet-American dialogue—at least on questions of limitations on strategic weapons—after Carter took office. It is true that we in Moscow were a little put on guard by the remark in Carter's message of 1 December 1976 that he "could not, of course, be bound by previous negotiations on limiting strategic weapons"; this was a bad omen, which was, unfortunately, soon to be more than borne out.⁴ But at that time we wanted to hope for the best.

The Soviet side did not simply hope for the best, but for its part tried to create conditions as favorable as possible for the successful development of a dialogue with President Carter after his taking office. One of the important steps in this regard was the inclusion of a series of important formulations regarding Soviet military policy in a speech in Tula, on the occasion of its designation as Hero-city, given by Brezhnev on 18 January 1977, two days before Carter's inauguration. The essence was the following:

—there is no basis whatsoever for attributing to the Soviet Union a striving for superiority in armaments with the aim of achieving the capability for a

nuclear first strike;

—the aim of the Soviet Union is only the creation of a defensive capability sufficient to deter aggression against it by any potential opponent.

In other words, in Brezhnev's speech at Tula in January 1977 the principle of military sufficiency, which was further developed ten years later, was formulated for the first time.

These positions were formulated by representatives of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs (specifically by me and L.I. Mendelevich) in a group that prepared the draft Brezhnev speech. I cleared them with the then Chief of the General Staff of the USSR armed forces, V.G. Kulikov, without any difficulty, since these positions reflected the actual state of affairs, although the language sounded a little "American." For that reason alone, and not because of disagreement over their content, they evoked doubt, at a certain stage of work on the draft speech, on the part of the party internationalists headed by Boris Ponomarev, but their doubts disappeared after the draft was read to Brezhnev, who accepted them without hesitation. They did not evoke any opposition by other members of the Politburo, including Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov, to whom the draft speech was sent for review in accordance with established procedure.

Since it was important that Washington correctly understand the signal from Moscow contained in Brezhnev's Tula speech, Mendelevich and I supplied TASS and APN in advance with an accurate English translation of the relevant section of the speech.

The first letter from President Carter after assuming office, dated 26 January 1977, was taken in Moscow as reinforcement of the hope for successful development of a Soviet-American dialogue on disarmament issues. [This letter, and the rest of the Carter-Brezhnev correspondence described here, are printed beginning on page 144--ed.] Carter first of all noted as extremely important Brezhnev's speech in Tula and specifically the position that the USSR does not strive for superiority in armaments and that it only needs defenses sufficient to deter any potential opponent. Reaffirming his cam-

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

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

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

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

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

Brezhnev’s response of March 15 was formulated in calmer tones. But the positions of the sides before Vance’s visit to Moscow scheduled for the end of March were basically divergent. While the Soviet side firmly maintained the necessity of completing work on the SALT-2 Treaty on the basis of the Vladivostok accords, the American side was attempting to transform the Vladivostok accords into something completely different, unacceptable to the Soviet leadership from the purely military-strategic as well as the political and psychological point of view. And as the time for the Vance visit approached, it became more and more clear—from Carter’s public statements, from controlled “leaks” in the American press, and then in Vance’s conversations with Soviet Ambassador to Washington Dobrynin—that Vance was coming to Moscow with positions having nothing in common with Vladivostok, but instead with so-called “comprehensive proposals” envisaging “deep cuts” in offensive strategic weapons, with reductions advantageous for the USA. The very fact of publicizing the basic content of the American proposals before Vance presented them to the Soviet leadership was taken in Moscow as an indication that Carter’s intentions were not serious, that he was merely trying to achieve a propaganda victory.

Therefore it could be foreseen that the Vance mission to Moscow at the end of March, as regards the SALT-2 Treaty, was destined for failure. And in fact the new American proposals presented by Vance signaled an obvious retreat from everything achieved in negotiations on SALT-2 under Nixon and Ford and were immediately rejected by the Soviet side without discussion and without putting forward counterproposals; our previous positions, based on the Vladivostok accords, were simply reaffirmed.

It should be noted that, unlike many other occasions, this time there was complete unanimity regarding the new American proposals not only at “the top” in the Soviet leadership, but also among professionals working on these problems. And not because we were all against significant reductions in offensive strategic weapons. Not at all. But we considered it absolutely illogical, lacking any common sense, to throw out the results of five years of joint work in a substantially already finished SALT-2 Treaty, and to begin what amounted to new negotiations requiring new conceptual decisions and prolonged working out of many practical, including technical, questions. The illogic of such a mode of action seemed so obvious that even if Carter’s proposals for “deep cuts” were in their content more balanced and in the final analysis acceptable to the USSR, at that moment I nevertheless think they would not have met a positive response. The operating principle would have been “better a titmouse in hand than a crane in the sky.” If you take into account that the new American proposals were clearly directed at attaining unilateral advantage for the USA, then they could not be accepted by the Soviet leadership as a serious initiative, and called for a sharply negative reaction.

It should be said that for Vance and Paul Warnke, the director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency who accompanied him, such a reaction by the Soviet side likewise appeared to be not unexpected. It was felt that they themselves were not convinced of the reasonableness of those positions with which they arrived in Moscow. This feeling was fully confirmed subsequently, with the appearance of the memoirs of Carter, Vance and Brzezinski and monographs of American scholars of this period, from which it is clear that inside the Administration including between Vance

and Brzezinski, there were noticeable differences regarding the American position on strategic offensive weapons. The transformation of Carter's position—from willingness to conclude the SALT-2 Treaty on the basis of the Vladivostok accords to ambitious “deep cuts”—can be explained by a series of factors. First, a sincere desire of the President himself to move as rapidly as possible to radical reductions in strategic weapons. Second, a desire by the Pentagon, supported by Brzezinski, to utilize this romantic breakthrough by Carter to significantly alter what was done in strategic arms limitations under Nixon and Ford, that is, to alter it for the unilateral advantage of the USA. Third, the influence on the President of Senator Henry Jackson and those who shared his views, who conditioned their support for a possible SALT-2 Treaty with demands regarding its content such that putting such demands forward by the American side could prevent the attainment of a treaty, which in fact is what they wanted. Fourth, although Vance, Warnke and those who shared their views considered it preferable to conclude the SALT-2 Treaty on the basis of the Vladivostok accords, they apparently did not fully realize, and in any case did not succeed in making Carter aware, what a psychological shock for Brezhnev was his [Carter's] rejection of Vladivostok.

Incidentally, knowing well the mood of the Soviet leaders at that time, I can with confidence say that if Carter, as he originally promised, had in March 1977 shown a willingness to conclude the SALT-2 Treaty on the basis of Vladivostok, and his proposal regarding “deep cuts” had been presented as an aim for subsequent negotiations, then the SALT-2 Treaty, with approximately the same content as was signed in 1979, could have been completed at the end of 1977 or beginning of 1978. And it is not excluded that the following SALT-3 Treaty, encompassing significant reductions in strategic weapons, could have been worked out already before the end of Carter's term as President. However, the possibility for such a favorable development of events was lost and the process of preparing the SALT-2 Treaty was much longer and more difficult.

For Carter's March 1977 initiative on “deep cuts” meant not only the loss of two or three months in a mechanical sense. After the propaganda noise accompanying the March initiative, returning to the “Vladivostok track” for Carter himself was a very difficult matter because of prestige and political considerations, since it looked like a defeat and retreat. This caused many additional difficulties in the subsequent negotiations, without which the process of working out the SALT-2 Treaty probably

would have been quicker and simpler. Therefore if you consider that the main motive of Carter in the rash decision in March 1977 was his sincere desire for quicker and more radical steps in disarmament, then this is one of those cases to which applies the Russian saying “the best is the enemy of the good.” A good impulse led to an opposite result.

1. [Ed. note: Documentation of Harriman's 20 September 1976 conversation with Brezhnev can be found in the Harriman Papers, Library of Congress (LC), Washington, D.C.]
2. [Ed. note: For Harriman's version of this meeting, see “Memorandum of Conversation with Ambassador Dobrynin at my House in Washington on the Evening of November 4, 1976,” Harriman Papers, LC.]
3. [Ed. note: See “Memorandum of Telephone Conversation—WAH and President-Elect Jimmy Carter, Tuesday, November 16, 1976,” Harriman, LC].
4. [Ed. note: Additional documentation on Carter-Brezhnev oral communications during the transition period can be found in the Harriman Papers, LC, including Harriman's record of the 1 December 1976 conversation. A translation of Dobrynin's declassified report of the meeting is reprinted below.]
5. [Ed. note: See Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1983), 161.]

Georgiy M. Kornienko was First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union; this article is drawn from a chapter of his Russian-language memoirs, The Cold War: Testimony of a Participant (Moscow: International Relations, 1994).

CLINTON SIGNS FIRST POST-COLD WAR EXECUTIVE ORDER ON DECLASSIFICATION

[Ed. note: On 17 April 1995, after two years of public hearings, private lobbying, interagency wrangling, and several revised (and leaked) drafts, U.S. President Bill Clinton signed the first post-Cold War presidential executive ordering modifying the country's declassification system.

Amid concerns by scholars that the order would be too restrictive and fears in some government quarters that the rules would be too lax, Clinton's order, replacing one signed by Ronald Reagan in April 1982 (E.O. 12356), stretched in an effort to satisfy both constituencies. The order pleased historians by instituting for the first time a system of bulk (rather than expensive and time-consuming page-by-page) declassification of most historical records more than 25 years old, and by mandating a mere ten-year classification status for most newly-created documents. But at the same time, the order responded to the concerns of secrecy-conscious government agencies by including a broad range of exemptions and grace periods through which information can be kept secret.

The full text of Executive Order (EO) 12958, “Classified National Security Information,” runs 39 legal-sized, double-spaced pages. Excerpts from the introduction and some of the sections dealing with de-

classification of historical materials are reprinted below:]

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12958 CLASSIFIED NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

This order prescribes a uniform system for classifying, safeguarding, and declassifying national security information. Our democratic principles require that the American people be informed of the activities of their Government. Also, our Nation's progress depends on the free flow of information. Nevertheless, throughout our history, the national interest has required that certain information be maintained in confidence in order to protect our citizens, our democratic institutions, and our participation within the community of nations. Protecting information critical to our Nation's security remains a priority. In recent years, however, dramatic changes have altered, though not eliminated, the national security threats that we confront. These changes provide a greater opportunity to emphasize our commitment to open Government....

[omitted sections concern legal definitions and procedures for classification and declassification of current and future government-generated materials]

Sec. 3.4. Automatic Declassification. (a) Subject to paragraph (b), below, within 5 years from the date of this order, all classified information contained in records that (1) are more than 25 years old, and (2) have been determined to have permanent historical value under title 44, United States Code, shall be automatically declassified whether or not the records have been reviewed. Subsequently, all classified information in such records shall be automatically declassified no longer than 25 years from the date of its original classification, except as provided in paragraph (b), below.

(b) An agency may exempt from automatic declassification under paragraph (a), above, specific information, the release of which should be expected to:

(1) reveal the identity of a confidential human source, or reveal information about the application of an intelligence source or method, or reveal the identity of a human intelligence source when the unauthorized disclosure of that source would clearly and demonstrably damage the national security interests of the United States;

(2) reveal information that would assist in the development or use of weapons of mass destruction;

(3) reveal information that would impair U.S. cryptologic systems or activities;

(4) reveal information that would impair the appli-

continued on page 160

THE PATH TO DISAGREEMENT: U.S.-SOVIET COMMUNICATIONS LEADING TO VANCE'S MARCH 1977 TRIP TO MOSCOW

Ambassador A.F. Dobrynin's Conversation with Averell Harriman, December 1, 1976

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

Top secret
Copy No. 1

From the Journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with A. HARRIMAN

December 1, 1976

On December 1 Harriman came to visit me.

I. He said that he had met with J. Carter on Monday, November 29, at his (i.e. Carter's) home in the city of Plains (state of Georgia). As had been agreed, he, Harriman, had brought to Carter's attention the messages which had been brought from Moscow on behalf of L.I. Brezhnev,¹ as well as other messages which the Soviet Ambassador had expressed to him, Harriman, in accordance with the instruction to bring this information to Carter's attention.

The "President-elect" (Carter's current title) has authorized Harriman to convey the following answer for transmission to L.I. Brezhnev (Harriman read further from the text which he was holding):

Carter received the message from General Secretary L.I. Brezhnev and was grateful for the sentiments expressed in it. Personally, he highly values the fact that he received an expression of the views of the General Secretary. Although he does not have the possibility to conduct negotiations before assuming his position, he would like to declare that he shares the aspiration of the General Secretary for an improvement in relations between our two countries. He also recognizes the importance of mutual limitations in nuclear weapons and of bringing the arms race to a halt.

Mr. Carter often expressed these sentiments during the recent presidential election campaign, and he thinks that the majority of Americans agree with his desire to limit the nuclear weapons in our two countries and to stop further proliferation of nuclear capability among other countries.

He notes with satisfaction that Mr. Brezhnev shares his point of view on the importance of cooperation between our two countries in the matter of taking measures against the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

President-elect Carter expects as well the establishment of constructive relations in other

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. During the conversation with Harriman, in relation to his comments about J. Carter's attitude about strategic arms limitation negotia-

tions, I inquired of Harriman whether he could not in a more detailed way set forth Carter's position on that question. In particular, I asked him what, concretely, did Carter have in mind when he publicly offered a proposal for a "freeze" in strategic weapons: within what temporal, quantitative, or qualitative framework was he operating.

Harriman said that he had asked that type of question in his conversation with Carter. However, Carter had answered him that for the time being he had on that issue only ideas and convictions of a general character which seemed important to him, but he still had not precisely formulated comprehensive, integrated positions.

He intends to formulate such a position when he names his chosen candidates to the posts of Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Aide to the President for National Security Affairs, whom he would, as one of his highest priorities, instruct to work out this position, which would encompass the complex political and technical aspects of the entire problem.

I directed Harriman's attention to that point in the thoughts of Carter which he had transmitted today where (Carter) had said that he could not be bound by past strategic arms limitation negotiations. I said that an approach like that is incomprehensible, if it is fraught with serious complications for future negotiations. All previous negotiations had been conducted on behalf of the United States, of the country as a whole and the arrival of a new President should not mean breaking off everything positive that had been achieved before him. I reminded Harriman that I had pointed this out to him at our previous meeting, when, in accordance with instructions certain considerations from Moscow had been expounded to him for transmittal to Carter.

Harriman said that he had recalled this when he was speaking to Carter, and had specially directed his attention to that circumstance.

Carter had answered him, Harriman, that he understands this point, and that he had therefore included in his responding thoughts to L.I. Brezhnev the comment that he will take the work that has been done at the SALT negotiations over the last two years fully into account. However, at the same time, he, Carter, would like to reserve for himself the right to express certain possible new thoughts or correctives which might occur to him in the context of finishing up a final agreement, especially if they might promote the resolution of the remaining disputed issues. In principle he wants to reserve for himself such a possibility.

3. During the conversation Harriman underlined that Carter is very interested in the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which

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

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

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA
[signature]

/A. DOBRYNIN/

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

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

Top secret
Copy 1

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

From the diary
of DOBRYNIN A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with the USA Secretary of State

C. VANCE

January 26, 1977

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

"Confidential"

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

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

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

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

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

As I understand your highly important speech in Tula, the Soviet Union will not strive for superiority in arms, it will stand against such a conception, and that it will require only a defense which is strong enough to deter any potential enemy. The United States does not want anything less or more for itself either. Therefore, our two countries, with consistency and wisdom, should be able to avoid a new arms race. I declared to the American people that the elimination of all nuclear weapons is my firm goal.

There are three areas in which progress can be made on the way to this goal. The most important first step must be the urgent achievement of an agreement on the second stage strategic weapons limitation, and also an agreement to move on in the direction of additional limitations and reductions in the sphere of strategic weapons. Moreover, I hope that we will soon be able to conclude a properly verifiable agreement on the universal banning of all nuclear tests, and that we also will strive to achieve more openness regarding the strategic policy of our countries. It is also important to renew the efforts to make progress at the negotiations on balanced reduction of military forces in Central Europe.

We also have a responsibility to carry out a policy directed at preventing explosions, which could lead to dangerous conflicts, in tense regions of the world. The United States will work to support a peaceful settlement in the Near East on the basis of the applicable resolutions of the United Nations. In the same way, in the South of Africa we encourage all sides to start negotiations toward a peaceful settlement which could lead to security and justice for all.

I believe that the USSR can assist in the achievement of progress toward peace in both of these critical regions.

My Administration gives much importance to improving of our bilateral economic relations on the basis of mutual and equal advantage for the peoples of both our two great countries. At the same time we can not be indifferent to the fate of freedom and individual human rights.

We represent different social systems, and our countries differ from each other in their history and experience. A competition in ideals and ideas is inevitable between our societies. Yet this must not interfere with common efforts towards formation of a more peaceful, just and humane world. We live in the world, which to a

greater and greater extent demands collective answers to the main human questions, and I hope that our countries can cooperate more closely in order to promote the development, better diet and more substantive life for less advantaged part of mankind.

I look forward to a meeting with you and to discussing at this meeting both our different and our common interests. In the mean time I suggest both of us should do everything in our power to promote Soviet-American relations. I suggested to Secretary of State Vance to prepare for a meeting with you in the spring, if you wish, for a review of the progress we have made and to discuss the key problems which remain unsolved. Both of us at that time also would like to exchange opinions about the next meeting between you and me.

Any concrete ideas, on these or any other questions, which you might like to relate to me will be very welcomed and thoroughly studied.

With best regards,
Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

January 26, 1977
White House
Washington, D.C. [...]

The Ambassador of the USSR in the USA

[signature] A. Dobrynin

/A. DOBRYNIN/

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

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**Brezhnev's Letter to Carter,
February 4, 1977**

TOP SECRET
Copy No. 1

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

From the journal
of DOBRYNIN A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with the U.S. Secretary of State
C. VANCE

February 4, 1977

I visited Secretary of State Vance and referring to my delegated task, handed him the text of

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

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

Dear Mister President,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

development of Soviet-American relations in general.

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

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

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

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

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

Yet I want to stress once more with all determination that the Soviet Union does not strive for superiority in weapons. We are deeply convinced that genuine security for all countries and for each of them in particular is based not on competition in the sphere of weapons, but in the sphere of disarmament, and in the elimination of the material foundation for war. Our future efforts also will be directed at achieving this goal.

I will touch briefly on some other questions.

An important direction of joint or parallel efforts of our countries, because of their objective role and responsibility in world affairs, is assistance in solution of problems, which cause international tension. In our opinion the task here is to remove the original reasons which cause these problems.

The primary meaning in this respect, as you, Mr. President correctly note too, is the establishment of a strong and just peace in the Near East. Almost 10 years has passed since the war of 1967. This “jubilee” with all its sharpness reminds us not only of the time we have simply lost in the matter of settling the Near East conflict, but also of a possibility of new dangerous explosions—as happened in October 1973 and just recently in Lebanon.

Moreover, we are convinced that if in our approach to the Near East problem we soberly and objectively take into account all the lawful rights and interests of all sides—both Arabs, including the Palestinians, and Israel—then the reliable elimination of this permanent source of international conflicts is quite possible. Finding the necessary understanding between the USA and the USSR on this question, in particular relating to the reconvening of the Geneva conference, will undoubtedly make success possible on the great matter of achieving a political settlement in the Near East.

Cooperation between our two countries would also be vitally important, we believe, on other international questions—whether it is further steps toward strengthening European security on the basis of decisions adopted in Helsinki, strict observance of the Four-Power treaty on Western Berlin, or, say, a settlement on Cyprus.

In your letter you, Mr. President, mention the problem of the south of Africa. Our principled position on this question is very well known: we are united with the struggle of the South African peoples for their freedom and independence. We recognize the right of nobody but these peoples themselves to determine their fate. Despite what is sometimes said about this, the USSR does not look for any benefits for itself in this region, and the rivalry with the United States there does not interest it either.

Noting the great significance, which you, Mr. President, give to improving trade-economic relations, on my own behalf I would like to stress that we did and still do want our relations in this sphere to develop consistently and to acquire a more and more broad-scale character, leading to mutual—I stress, mutual benefit for both sides. But it is necessary for this that they be freed of all kinds of discriminatory limitations and artificially created obstacles. Without this, without rejection of attempts to somehow or other link trade with questions relating to the domestic competence of governments, not only will economic contacts suffer, but overall relations between our countries will also suffer a blow.

I hope, Mr. President, that with good will and sincere readiness for constructive cooperation between us you and I will be able to make a good contribution towards solving the problems that we have. Some of these, including the problem of strategic weapons limitation, apparently will be the subject of an exchange of opinions soon during Mr. Vance’s visit to Moscow.

In conclusion, I want to stress that I, like you, place special emphasis on our personal meeting. I will be ready to consider questions relating to the conduct of such a meeting with Mr. Vance, who you wrote, will be entrusted with this task.

With my best wishes and respect.

L. BREZHNEV

February 4, 1977

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

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA
[signature]

/A.DOBRYNIN/

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

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

TOP SECRET
Copy No. 1

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

From the journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with Assistant to the President
Z. Brzezinski

February 15, 1977

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

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

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

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

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

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I agree that in our exchanges of opinion and in the conversations which Secretary of State Vance will have in Moscow at the end of March we must concentrate mainly on the question of achieving an agreement on the second stage of strategic arms limitation, possibly including some significant reductions of the level of forces. Maybe we could bring these negotiations to a successful conclusion if we agree that this is only the first step in the process which could lead to bigger reductions in our respective nuclear arsenals. Regarding this, I wonder if it wouldn't be useful to study the possibility of separating the ques-

tions on cruise missiles and "Backfire" from the second stage of the SALT negotiations. We could return to these questions right away during the following negotiations. If we have ambitious enough aims and in particular if we want to achieve real disarmament leaving only the minimum level of armaments sufficient to provide security to both sides, then, it evidently would be easier for us to deal with the technical problems, which now seem very significant and complicated, later.

I hope that our additional private exchanges of opinion and the negotiations of Secretary of State Vance in Moscow will cover the broadest possible range of possibilities. I can assure you that in the analysis of our arms control policy which I am carrying out at the present time, all applicable proposals will be considered. As I said during a conversation with your Ambassador, I hope that we can consider not only the question of possible sharp reductions of the total quantity of nuclear weapons, i.e. the question of the minimum number of missiles which would allow every country to feel secure from a first blow, but also the question of restrictions on throw weights, of the possibility of a ban on all mobile missiles, of refusal to take any long-term preparatory measures in the field of civil defense, and also of such additional confidence building measures as preliminary warning of all missile tests and achieving an agreement on the non-arming of satellites and an agreement to reject development of capability to destroy observation satellites. We also have to study practical means to satisfy our mutual desire that our agreements be observed. Such measures as on-site inspection and uninterrupted observation from space must be the subject of incorrect interpretation. These are the means, which can be used to achieve progress, and to win society's support and understanding of our efforts.

In all these areas our final goal must be to do more than that, as our specialists in technology say, which is perhaps expedient now. If we bear this very far-reaching aim in mind, we will be able to change significantly the level of threat for us and for the rest of the world.

An attempt of one side to gain an advantage over the other during negotiations will yield the opposite result. We will be striving to carry out consultations without tricks or unnecessary delays, but also without pressure and unjustifiable haste.

I welcome your readiness to direct your efforts at achieving the agreement on a universal test ban. I realize that problems remain regarding other countries which continue to conduct testing programs and the possible use of peaceful nuclear explosions in mining industry or construction, but I believe that there are satisfactory ways to consider these problems. I intend to ask the Congress to ratify two agreements which have already been concluded between our two govern-

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

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

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

I also welcome your aspiration to move the Vienna negotiations on reduction of armed forces and weapons in Central Europe forward more energetically until they are at the minimum acceptable levels. We are very concerned about what seems to be an extreme increase of your military power in East Europe. At the present time we are reviewing our positions on this issue and at the same time are instructing our delegation to continue to study the data which have been presented by both sides.

These are the questions, which, I hope, Mr. Vance will be able to discuss in more detail after we complete our own analysis. We will, of course, consult with our NATO allies about everything while we conduct this concrete analysis.

I would like to make one observation regarding the four-power agreement. As you know, we think that this agreement applies to all of Berlin, and not just to West Berlin. For us, the observation of both the letter and the spirit of this agreement is very important. We make every effort to avoid sensitive issues, but we must insist that this agreement, which is so vital to our ability to develop peaceful relations in Europe, is observed in full. Recently, it seems, there has been observed a growing inclination to create new aggravations and limits in Berlin, which could upset the delicate political balance which exists there. I hope that you will cooperate in eliminating these tense situations.

We expect cooperation in the realization of further steps toward the fulfillment of the agree-

ments reached in Helsinki relating to human rights. As I said to Ambassador Dobrynin, we hope that all aspects of these agreements can be realized. It is not our intention to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. We do not wish to create problems with the Soviet Union, but it will be necessary for our Administration from time to time to publicly express the sincere and deep feelings which our people and I feel. Our obligation to help promote human rights will not be expressed in an extreme form or by means not proportional to achieving reasonable results. We would also welcome, of course, personal, confidential exchanges of views on these delicate questions.

I noted your response to my previous observations relating to the importance of improving trade and economic relations. Your open remarks on this issue correspond to a spirit of directness which I admire, but we have to do something practical in order to remove barriers. From my side, I intend to do everything that I can to achieve mutually beneficial trade, but you are aware of certain restrictions imposed by Congress, which I must take into account.

Permit me to say a few words about our efforts to improve the situation in other areas, where there exists disagreements and potential conflicts. In the Near East, we intend to begin direct negotiations with the sides in that region, and I hope to energetically develop a process of achieving a fair and solid settlement. Mr. Vance will be happy to have the opportunity in his conversations at the end of March to learn your view on this question, including aspects which reflect our direct interest as co-sponsors of the Geneva conference.

In southern Africa, we believe that the Africans should solve their problems without outside interference. It is with this goal in mind that we support a peaceful solution, which corresponds to the will of the majority, and have limited actions which could increase the potential for violence.

We took steps toward opening a dialogue with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam with the goal of creating the foundation for normal relations with that country. In other regions as well we will be guided by our devotion to genuine freedom, self-determination, and economic progress.

I hope that we can continue these exchanges of letters in order to have a clear statement of our views and to undertake the broadest possible review of issues which have such fundamental importance for our two peoples and for peace on earth. From these candid letters we can build a clear and precise basis for the preparation of our personal meeting, which I anticipate with great hopes.

With the best personal wishes and respect,
Jimmy Carter

White House
Washington
February 14, 1977"

Christopher could not comment on this letter at all, referring to the fact that it was prepared in the White House by the President himself.

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA

(signature)
A. Dobrynin

/A. Dobrynin/

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

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**CPSU Central Committee Politburo
Decision "About the instruction to the Soviet
Ambassador in Washington for his conver-
sation with Vance on the question of 'human
rights'" and text of instruction,
February 18, 1977**

Proletariats of the World unite!

COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET
UNION
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Top secret

No P46/X

To: comrades Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kosygin, Andropov, Gromyko, Kirilenko, Suslov, Ponomarev, Zamiatin.

Extract from protocol No 46 of the meeting of CC CPSU Politburo on February 18, 1977

About the instructions to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington for his conversation with Vance on the question of "human rights".

The draft of the instructions to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington this question is to be approved. (The draft is attached.)

SECRETARY OF THE CC

[Along left-hand margin]
Must be returned within 7 days to the
CC CPSU (General Department, 1st sector)

On the point X of the protocol No 46

Secret

WASHINGTON

TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

FIRST. Meet with Vance and tell him that you have instructions to inform President Carter and his Secretary of State of the following:

Raising by the Americans in Moscow of the question of freeing [Aleksandr] Ginzburg, a Soviet citizen, convicted for his actions punishable by law in accordance with our criminal code, aroused the utmost bewilderment.²

The fact that such an interference into our domestic affairs is being done in the name of concern over "human rights" does not change the essence of the matter.

Obviously, everybody has a right to have one's own view on different issues including the liberties and rights of people in any country. And we too have our own view of these problems and their current situation in the USA.

But it is another matter to bring these views into the sphere of inter-state relations and thereby to complicate them. How else can one see the position of the representatives of the USA administration, when they are trying to make the questions, thoroughly under the jurisdiction of the Soviet state, a matter of discussion? It touches upon the basic principles of our mutual relations. It must be a complete clarity on this problem from the very beginning. Such a position of the USA is categorically unacceptable to us.

You and we are aware that we have different ideologies and social political systems. Certainly, due to this fact we have different approaches to different questions.

We, in the Soviet Union, are proud that the socialist revolution and our system not only proclaimed but also provided in reality the right for work, education, social security, free medical assistance, and retirement to all Soviet citizens. And we really guarantee these rights.

At the same time the Soviet laws guard our people from antisocial tendencies such as the propaganda of war in any form, the dissemination of the ideas of race inequality and national divisiveness or from the attempts of moral corruption of people. In our country nobody has the right to break the law that is equally obligatory to everybody.

We do not try to impose our understanding of rights and liberties of man on anybody, although much of what is going on under the conditions of another social system seems unacceptable to our people.

It is not difficult to imagine what would have happened if we, proceeding from our own

moral principles, had tried to link the development of our inter-state relations with the USA or other capitalist countries with such actually existing problems in these countries as multi-million unemployment, deprivation of rights of ethnic minorities, race discrimination, unequal rights for women, the violation of citizens rights by the state organs, the persecution of people with progressive convictions and so on.

By the way, if one speaks about the concerns regarding human rights, how should one view the systematic support by the USA of dictatorial, anti-populist regimes in some countries, where constantly and violently the most basic human rights and liberties are violated.

If we had begun to raise all these questions as a part of our inter-state relations then, apparently, the result would have been the aggravation of all the relations between ourselves and other countries. It would have detracted us from the solution of those problems, which could and should be the goals of interactions and cooperation of our states. All the efforts for guaranteeing the rights of human beings to live in a world free from wars and burden of arms race, to live in the environment of security and friendly relations between the peoples would also have been jeopardized.

We firmly believe, therefore, that the questions of domestic development that reflect the differences in ideologies and social political systems should not be the subject of inter-state relations.

It is not accidental that precisely this principle, together with other fundamental principles, was clearly expressed in the "Fundamentals of mutual relations between the USSR and the USA" signed in 1972. One also should be reminded that during the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1933 our countries obliged to absolutely respect unquestionable right of each other to build its own life as they see fit and refrain in any way from interference into the domestic affairs of the other partner.

Not always, however, and not in all respects are American statements and actions in agreement with this. In actuality, the statements about "concern" over "human rights in the USSR" serve the purpose of the support and even outright instigation for some persons, who separate themselves from the Soviet society. It is not just a demonstrative approving attitude of the (USA) administration toward the activity in the Soviet Union of some American journalists, whose only interest is to find and publicize the so-called "dissidents." Some people from the USA Embassy personnel in Moscow are directly involved in it. We could specifically name who we have in mind.

(For the Soviet Ambassador: If the interlocutor asks who exactly we are talking about, you could name the First secretary Pressel [sic])

And when, for the violation of the law by the USSR citizen, the Soviet authorities take actions in accordance with the Soviet law, actions which are the prerogative of any state, then this is used by the American side thereby harming our mutual relations.

Besides, it is known that the representatives of the American Embassy in Moscow secretly meet with [Andrej] Sakharov, who knows the state secrets related to the national defence. The last such meeting by the Embassy's initiative took place on February 8. This is an extremely unusual fact and no reference to the human rights cannot hide that this is a direct act of the American intelligence services against the USSR and against the Soviet social system. As for the references to American public opinion, the sentiments in the USA Congress, etc., one should not forget that in the Soviet Union there also is its own public opinion, and it decisively rejects all attempts to impose on us the values which are incongruent with social democracy and legality.

SECOND. After the conversation the following kind of announcement should be sent to Moscow via the TASS channel:

"On February" "the USSR Ambassador in the USA A.F. Dobrynin visited Secretary of State S. Vance and drew his attention to some statements and actions of the American side, which are in disagreement with the goals of positive development of the Soviet-American relations. In this regard it has been emphasized that the Soviet side resolutely rejects all the attempts to interfere in the Soviet domestic affairs, into the problems related to the prerogatives of other governments, using the pretext of "the protection of human rights."

The Soviet side could have also said - and it has firm grounds for it—some things regarding the guarantee of human rights in the USA, like unemployment of millions of people, race discrimination, unequal rights for women, violation of personal liberties of citizens, the rising wave of crimes, etc. It must be clear, however, that all the attempts to impose one's own views upon the other side, to bring such questions into inter-state relations, would only aggravate and make more difficult to resolve those problems which should be the subject of interaction and cooperation of both countries.

The relations of peaceful co-existence and constructive cooperation between the USSR and the USA in the interests of both peoples can fruitfully develop only when they are guided by the mutual respect of principles of sovereignty and non-interference into the domestic affairs of each other, as it is stated in the basic Soviet-American documents."

Telegraph the fulfillment.

[Source: Fond 89, Perechen 25, Dokument 44, Center for the Storage of Contemporary Docu-

mentation (TsKhSD), Moscow; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff.]

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**Brezhnev's Letter to Carter,
February 25, 1977**

Embassy of the USSR in the USA

TOP SECRET

Copy No. 1

Washington, D.C

From the Journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with the USA Secretary of State

C. VANCE

February 26, 1977

I met with Secretary of State Vance and asked him to pass on as directed the letter of L.I. Brezhnev of February 25, 1977 to President Carter.

"Dear Mr. President,

I attentively studied your letter of February 14 of this year. I want to talk sincerely about the impression and the ideas which it provoked here in our country. As I understand, you welcome such direct conversation.

The general remarks in favor of peace and curtailment of the arms race which were contained in the letter, of course, coincide with our own aspirations. We are definitely for the ultimate liquidation of nuclear weapons and, moreover, for universal and total disarmament under effective international control.

However, advancement forward toward these elevated goals will not be accelerated, but, on the contrary, will be slowed down, if we first of all do not value what we already managed to accomplish in this area over the last few years, and, second, if we abandon a responsible, realistic approach to determining further concrete steps in favor of introducing proposals which are known to be unacceptable.

Reviewing the ideas which you expressed from this particular angle, we unfortunately did not find in many of them a desire for a constructive approach, or readiness to look for mutually acceptable solutions to the problems which are the subject of exchanges of opinions between us.

As I already wrote to you, we firmly believe that in the first place it is necessary to complete the drafting of a new agreement on limitation of strategic offensive weapons, on the basis of that

which was agreed in Vladivostok. The basic parameters of the agreement which were fixed there, as well as additional explanatory statements which were agreed on during subsequent negotiations, were the result of tremendous work. In many cases it was necessary to make difficult decisions in order to find mutually acceptable solutions to an apparently deadlocked situation. And to the extent that this agreement has already been worked out, it is all interconnected—you can not withdraw one important element without destroying the whole foundation.

For example, it is enough to recall that—and you, Mr. President should know this from the documents from the negotiations—that the method of counting MIRVed missiles was precisely determined by the achievement of agreement on the whole complex of cruise missiles. The American side not only agreed to this in principle, but in January of last year a concrete formula for counting ALCM (trans. "air to ground") cruise missiles within the ceilings for strategic weapons was practically agreed. All that was left was to agree on concrete formulas for sea- and land-based cruise missiles. True, the American side later tried to propose the removal of the issue of sea- and land-based cruise missiles from the main agreement, [but] we categorically rejected such an attempt to break from an already-achieved agreement.

Now it is proposed to us to withdraw the whole question of cruise missiles from the agreement. How should we understand this return to a stage which we moved beyond long ago, and being forced to face this absolutely hopeless proposal? To agree to this proposal would have meant that blocking one channel of the strategic arms race we open another channel at the same time. And does it really matter to people the type of missile by which they will perish—a cruise or a non-cruise one? Nor are there grounds to believe that it will be easier to solve the question on cruise missiles later, when the sides start to deploy them, than now, while they are still being developed. We know from experience that it is not so.

The aspiration to maintain artificial urgency about the issue of the Soviet intermediate bomber called "Backfire" in the USA (which is still the case as we understand from your letter), is in no way consistent with an agreement. Let there be no doubts in this respect: we firmly reject such an approach as being inconsistent with the subject of the negotiations and having only one goal—to make the conclusion of the agreement more complicated or maybe even impossible.

Does the United States really have less of an interest in this agreement than the Soviet Union? We do not believe so, and if someone has a different opinion—it is a serious mistake.

In connection with the question you raised about the possibility of a significant reduction of the levels of strategic forces, which were agreed

on in Vladivostok, I would like to remind you that we also did and do stand for stopping of the arms race, including the reduction of strategic forces. This can be proved by the agreement achieved in Vladivostok, which implies for the USSR a unilateral reduction of strategic delivery vehicles. This, not only in words but also in fact actually is a striving for arms reduction.

We are in favor of the results which were achieved in Vladivostok being consolidated in an agreement without further delays, and that we want to move further ahead. As already mentioned, we are ready to start negotiations on next steps, including the question of possible future reductions, straight after the current agreement will be concluded.

Yet, we want to make it clear: any steps of this kind must first of all completely satisfy the principle of equality and equal security of the sides. It seems to us, Mr. President, that nobody can argue with our right to pose the question this way.

How does the idea of a dramatic reduction in the nuclear-missile forces of the USA and the USSR look in this light? In your letter it is put forward in isolation from all other aspects of the present situation. At the same time it is evident that in this case the following factors would have immeasurably grown in importance to the unilateral advantage of the USA: the difference in geographic positions of the sides, the presence of American nuclear means of forward basing and missile-carrying aviation near the territory of the USSR, the fact that the USA NATO allies possess nuclear weapons and other circumstances, which can not but be taken into consideration.

The fact that it is impossible to ignore all these facts while considering the question of reduction of nuclear-missile forces of the USSR and the USA is so obvious that we can not but ask a question: what is the real purpose of putting forward such proposals, which may be superficially attractive to uninformed people, but in fact is directed at gaining unilateral advantages. You yourself justly pointed out that attempts of one side to gain advantage over the other can produce only negative results.

The same one-sidedness reveals itself in proposals on banning of all mobile missiles (i.e. including intermediate range missiles, which have nothing to do with the subject of Soviet-American negotiation), limits on throw weights, on-site inspection.

You of course know better why all these questions are put in such an unconstructive manner. We want to conduct the conversation in a business-like manner from the very beginning, to search for mutually acceptable—I stress, mutually acceptable agreements. The Soviet Union will continue to firmly protect its interests; at the same time a constructive and realistic approach of the American side will always find on our side support and readiness to achieve an agreement.

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

This refers to the problem of strategic weapons limitation as well as to other questions, connected with stopping the arms race. We definitely are counting on the American side supporting our proposals, including the proposal to ban creation of new kinds and systems of weapons of mass destruction, to ban chemical weapons, and to conclude a world treaty on non-use of force. Our proposals on this and some other questions, including that of the Indian Ocean, were presented many times and concretely, in particular, in the United Nations. Keeping in mind the interests of international security and strengthening of peace, we could also discuss questions raised in your letter, such as: warning of missile launch tests, reduction of selling and supply of conventional weapons to the "third world" countries, and others.

We give much importance to the agreement on reduction of armed forces and weapons in Central Europe without prejudice to the security of any of the sides.

Yet a one-sided approach is evident as far as your letter and negotiations in Vienna are concerned. This is the only way to treat, for example, the statements that the American side views its positions in regard to the Vienna negotiations with the air of some kind of "concern with excessive increase" of military power in East Europe. Not only is an objective evaluation of the real situation missing here, but also the constructive proposals, which were put forward by the USSR and other countries-participants in the negotiations and directed at achieving progress at the Vienna negotiations, are completely ignored. We are ready now and in the future for a search for solutions and outcomes, a search which does not imply that someone will receive unilateral advantages. But if we are expected to unilaterally reduce our defensive capabilities and thus put ourselves and our allies into an unequal position, such expectations will lead nowhere.

It is impossible to agree with the evaluation of the situation relating to fulfillment of the Four-power agreement which is given in the letter. The USSR never encroached and does not encroach now on the special status of Western Berlin, and the appeal for support in lifting tension in that region is directed to the wrong address. The fact that complications still arise there is connected with the completely definite policy carried out by the FRG with the connivance of three western states, and is which is practically directed at dissolving the Four-powers treaty and its cornerstone resolution—that West Berlin does not belong to the FRG and cannot be governed by it. But the attempts to break this resolution are a very slippery path leading to aggravation of the situation. We

believe that the Four-power treaty should be strictly and faultlessly observed by all interested sides, and we will in every way strive to avoid returning to the period when Western Berlin was a constant source of dangerous friction and conflicts.

Without going into details, I will say that your letter does not indicate any changes in the USA approach to such questions as settlement in the Near East or improvement in the sphere of trade-economic relations between our countries, which could bear witness to an intention to move to their successful settlement.

And finally. In the letter the question of so called "human rights" is raised again. Our qualification of the essence of this matter and of the behavior of American Administration in this respect has just been reported through our Ambassador. This is our principle position. We have no intention to enforce our customs on your country or other countries, but we will not allow interference in our internal affairs, no matter what kind of pseudo-humane pretence is used for the purpose. We will firmly react to any attempts of this kind.

And how should we treat such a situation, when the President of the USA sends a letter to the General Secretary of the CC CPSU and at the same time starts the correspondence with a renegade, who proclaimed himself to be an enemy of the Soviet State and who stands against normal, good relations between the USSR and the USA?³ We would not like our patience to be tested while dealing with any matters of foreign policy, including the questions of Soviet-American relations. The Soviet Union must not be dealt with like that.

These are the thoughts, Mr. President, which my colleagues and I had in connection with your letter. I did not choose smooth phrases, though they might have been more pleasant. The things we talk about are too serious to leave space for any kind of ambiguity or reticence.

My letter is a product of sincere concern about the present and future of our relations, and it is this main idea that I want with all directness and trust to bring to you.

I hope that with an understanding of the elevated responsibility which is placed on the leadership of our two countries we will be able to provide the forward development of Soviet-American relations along the way of peace, in the interests of our and all other people.

With respect,

L. Brezhnev

February 25, 1977"

Vance read the text of the letter attentively twice and then said the following.

"Personally I welcome such direct, plain-

speaking language of the General Secretary. Our President still approaches certain international problems too lightly. For example, I told him several times, referring to the conversation with you (the Soviet Ambassador) and to the history of negotiations on the whole, that the Soviet government gives very much importance to solving of the question on cruise missiles. He doesn't pay much attention, in his striving to conclude an agreement without long negotiations on remaining contradictory questions, thinking that these questions can be put off for "later." I told him that it is not so, but... (Vance waved his hands to indicate that he did not manage to persuade the President that he was right).

I hope that the direct letter from L.I. Brezhnev, Vance went on, will make the President look at the situation in a somewhat different way.

I, of course, do not fully agree with what is written in the letter, but I hope that it is this kind of letter that the President needs to receive now."⁴(...)

The Ambassador of the USSR in the USA
(signature)

/A. Dobrynin/

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

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Carter's Letter to Brezhnev, March 4, 1977

Embassy of the USSR in the USA

Top secret
Copy No. 1

Washington, D.C.

From the Journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with Z. BRZEZINSKI

March 5, 1977

This morning Brzezinski handed me (Vance was away) the text of President Carter's letter to L.I. Brezhnev of March 4, 1977.

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

Dear Mr. General Secretary,

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

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

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

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

Second, the quick conclusion of official agreement between us regarding the problems on which, as it seems, both sides are inclined to agree would facilitate our search for stable mutual understanding. We should use the fact that we have an agreement, or could achieve quick agreement on such questions as:

- a) limiting the number of strategic delivery vehicles to 2400 items (or a mutually acceptable lower level);
- b) limiting the number of launchers equipped with MIRV to the level of 1320 items (or a mutually acceptable lower level);

- c) a resolution on mutually satisfactory verification;
- d) advance warning of missile tests;
- e) a universal test ban, including a temporary resolution regarding the completion of the current peaceful programs;
- f) an agreement not to arm satellites and not to develop a capability to eliminate or damage the satellites;
- g) demilitarization of the Indian ocean;
- h) a limitation on civil defense measures;
- i) mutual restraint in selling weapons to third world countries;
- j) a ban on mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Of course, the above list is not a complete one, and other relatively non-controversial questions could easily be added to it. The main thing is to move forward without delay on those questions on which we can reach an agreement, thus creating the impulse necessary to get down to work on the more intractable issues straight after that.

We are working on these problems with maximum energy, preparing for Secretary of State Vance's talks with you in Moscow.

I hope that you will not base our next correspondence on the mistaken belief that we lack sincerity, honesty or the willpower needed to achieve quick progress towards mutually beneficial agreements. I do not underestimate the difficulties connected with substantive problems or technical details, but I am firmly committed to achieving success in the process of creating a foundation for stable and peaceful relations between our two countries. We do not seek any sort of unilateral advantages.

I do not see our letters as official documents of negotiation, but if we exchange them in private and on a strictly confidential basis, they can very well help us both to gain the necessary understanding of the direction of historic development. It was in this spirit that this correspondence was started and I want you to know that adherence to weapons reduction is the matter of personal faith for me, which at the same time reflects the aspirations of the people of my country. I hope and believe that you and your people are devoted to the same idea.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

White House
Washington, D.C.
March 4, 1977".

Brzezinski said that the letter had been transmitted to Moscow at night over a direct line so that it would be received there during the day.⁵

Brzezinski remarked that they consider the

letter to be "positive." "Is it not?"—he asked.

I answered, speaking for myself, that the first impression after a brief reading of such a letter is that it does not much move us forward towards solving that question, which, as L.I. Brezhnev has written to the President recently, is of primary significance, namely—concluding the working out of a new agreement on strategic offensive weapons limitation on the basis of Vladivostok agreement. In the President's letter, in fact, our positions on "Backfire" and on cruise missiles are left out; as far as the latter are concerned, the impression is that the USA wants to have a free hand in both their production and deployment, instead of making them a part of agreement. At the same time some issues are raised, which, though perhaps important, have no direct connection to the mentioned agreement, which thus acquires—in the President's letter—a vague outline, willfully or not leading away from the essence of the issue which is key at the present stage. I can not but mention also that a number of Soviet proposals in the sphere of disarmament are avoided by silence in the President's answer, as are some other questions which were raised in the letter of the General Secretary of the CC CPSU.

Brzezinski said in this regard that he was not ready at that moment to concretely consider the various proposals in the President's letter. [...]

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA

(signature) A. Dobrynin

/A. DOBRYNIN/

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

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Brzezinski's Letter to Carter, March 15, 1977

Embassy of the USSR in the USA

Washington, D.C.

From the Journal
of DOBRYNIN, A.F.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION

with the USA Secretary of State C. VANCE

March 16, 1977

I. I visited Vance and transmitted through him to President Carter the following letter from

L.I. Brezhnev.

Dear Mr. President,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Ambassador of the USSR in the USA (signature)

/A. DOBRYNIN/

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

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

Top Secret
Copy No. 1

Embassy of the USSR in the USA
Washington

From the Journal of
Dobrynin, A.F.

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

March 21, 1977

I met with Vance on his invitation.

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

underlined several times that the observations which he would make continue to be subject to review by the President, that they are still not set, and that they may be susceptible to certain changes. This applies also to numerical data, which also does not reflect the final position of the USA.

Vance said that in their opinion, two variants of an agreement on the second stage of SALT are possible: one is comprehensive, which they prefer, another is more limited and will be introduced in case the first one is not agreed on.

The first variant—the more complete agreement, according to Vance—could consist of the following parts.

1. The American side believes that it would be good already at this stage to agree on certain reductions from the levels of strategic arms established in Vladivostok. This would reflect the intention of the sides to begin real arms reduction, instead of merely adapting to the approximate actual levels of weapons which [the sides] have or plan to have. In this context, in their opinion, the limitation of the levels could have the following character:

— up to 2000 total strategic delivery vehicles;
— up to 1200 MIRVed launchers.

2. The Soviet side, taking into consideration its advantage in throw weight, must agree to a certain limit on launchers for heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), which it is building or reequipping to accommodate the kind of missiles called “SS-18” in the USA. (He commented in this regard that it would be desirable to have, say, 150 missiles of this kind instead of 300.)

3. Both sides agree to a freeze in the creation and deployment of new types of ICBM, with a corresponding limit on the number of atmospheric tests of missiles.

4. Creation and deployment of mobile ICBMs are prohibited. In this regard the United States would take an obligation to stop development and deployment of its mighty mobile ICBM “M-X”.

5. All cruise missiles with a range of more than 2500 km are banned.

In the event that the Soviet side agrees to this proposal the American side will be ready to accept the Soviet position concerning the “Backfire” bomber, by agreeing not to ascribe intercontinental capability to this plane. The USA will be also ready to take into consideration Soviet data about the radius of operation of this bomber.

This, said Vance, is, in general, the structure of the possible first variant of the agreement.

As an alternative to this agreement (if it is not achieved), Vance continued, President Carter’s already well-known proposal—to conclude a limited Vladivostok agreement, including into it all items on which the sides had reached agreement, but deferring unresolved questions (i.e. first of all

the cruise missiles and “Backfire”) to the next, third stage of SALT negotiations—could serve.

After I heard what Vance had to say, I told him that if I may speak frankly, none of these American proposals give a real basis for achieving a mutually acceptable agreement in Moscow.

I said further that upon first consideration the “comprehensive” variant actually looks even worse than the limited variant, the shortcoming of which was convincingly shown in L.I. Brezhnev’s last letter to the President. The fact that American side is striving, judging by the expressed considerations, toward a one-sided advantage, is completely obvious. I asked Vance, what, in the opinion of the administration, the Soviet Union would get in exchange for all that.

If I may summarize, in the subsequent discussion Vance, justified the American position with the following:

A decrease in the overall level of delivery vehicles from 2400 to 2000 would impact, in his words, not only the Soviet Union, but also the USA, which currently has 2150 strategic delivery vehicles. Although he had to recognize that the reduction would have a stronger impact on the Soviet side, he added that a reduction in MIRVed launchers would have more of an impact on the USA than on the USSR, since the USA had moved far ahead in the MIRVing of rockets.

The inclusion of their suggested limits on our heavy rockets—as a reflection of the problem of the Soviet advantage in throw-weight which has long worried them—Vance argued that the USA, in its turn will be prepared not to develop and not to manufacture M-X, its own new heavy mobile ICBM with increased accuracy. This, in his opinion, would be, from the point of view of the future, sufficient compensation for the Soviet side in the context of a compromise decision on the problem of throw-weight.

Speaking about the elimination of cruise missiles with a range of more than 2500 km, Vance asserted that the remaining missiles (i.e. those with a range of less than 2.5 thousand km) are medium range rather than intercontinental. In this regard, he tried to make an analogy with our Backfire, which has a range of 2200 km and is therefore characterized by the Soviet side as a tactical, rather than strategic type of weapon.

I made points consistent with our proposed agreement on the second stage of SALT, using arguments contained in the communications of L.I. Brezhnev and our position in previous negotiations with the Americans.

In reply to my observation that the preparation of an agreement cannot be accelerated if we set aside issues which had already been jointly worked out, and begin to consider some new questions which hinder the achievement of an agreement, Vance characteristically retorted that

the new administration does not consider itself completely committed to the approach of the former administration and that the Carter government strives toward a real, and not just a superficial reduction in strategic weapons.

I noted in this regard in conducting such important negotiations we start from the fact that we are dealing with the government of the USA, and that the reevaluation by every new administration of agreements reached by its predecessor does not strengthen the basis for international agreements.

Overall, I said, in my personal opinion both of the proposed variants are not only not directed toward achieving a mutually advantageous SALT agreement, but to the contrary significantly weaken the chances for a quick conclusion of the second stage of negotiations. I appealed to Vance to take into account everything that had already been said by the Soviet side, especially the points made in the letters from the General Secretary of the CC CPSU about the possible paths to resolution of the problems of strategic arms limitation, during the final review of their positions.

Vance said that the position he had expressed is not final, but that their position “also must be understood”—the USA cannot consider accepting in full a Soviet approach according to which, in his words, the American side should accept in full the Soviet position on remaining questions instead of a search for mutual compromise.

I repeated to Vance that in my view the considerations he had expressed in no way can serve as a basis for the compromise he had mentioned.

Vance said that most probably the President will convene two more sessions of the National Security Council to work out the final American position for the negotiations in Moscow.

In conclusion, Vance requested that I convey to the Soviet leadership that he is coming to Moscow with a serious task from President Carter to try and come to an agreement on the central issue of his trips, and that if necessary he will be prepared, to stay over for a day or two to finish a detailed consideration of possibilities for the quickest conclusion of a new agreement on the limitation of strategic weapons.

Ambassador of the USSR in the USA

(signature)
/A. Dobrynin/

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

* * * * *

[Ed. note: Despite Dobrynin’s clear warning of the chilly reception it would receive, Vance

continued on page 160

THE SUDOPLATOV CONTROVERSY:

The Authors of *SPECIAL TASKS* Respond to Critics

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

April 21, 1995

TO THE EDITOR:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In his own letter, which will appear in the forthcoming paperback edition of *SPECIAL TASKS*, Pavel Sudoplatov offers more details on Soviet atomic espionage operations. He has requested that the *Bulletin* publish his letter.

Sincerely yours,
Jerrold L. Schecter
Leona P. Schecter

The following letter will appear in the paperback edition of SPECIAL TASKS to be published by Little, Brown and Company on June 1, 1995

Writing memoirs, especially for the unwanted witness, is always risky. The events one describes have already been interpreted by interests in power whose version influences prominent historians and scientists and becomes “history.” I am reminded that Tacitus began his *Annals* by writing that “The histories of Tiberius, Caligula and Nero, while they were in power, were falsified through terror and after their death were written under a fresh hatred.”

The tragic events of the period from the 1930s to 1953 covered in my book *SPECIAL TASKS*, including the beginning of the Cold War and the myth of Klaus Fuchs as the principal figure who passed atomic secrets to Soviet Intelligence, had already been told and established as the framework accepted by all interested parties. In fact, there were many more sources of atomic secrets besides Fuchs.

Harsh attacks on me and my book—without debating the principal facts—were concentrated in one direction: to discredit me by calling me a terrorist and to hide from public knowledge that two independent intelligence centers in which I worked—the Administration of Special Tasks and the Foreign Intelligence Directorate—existed in the Soviet state security system. The public relations office of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service has alleged that there was no direct cooperation between intelligence and senior Soviet scientists in developing our first atomic bomb. This statement is incorrect and was made with the ulterior motive of discrediting my account. Department S of the Special Committee on Problem Number

One, the intelligence arm of the Council of Ministers, which I formally headed from 1945 to 1946, had direct close cooperation with Academicians Kurchatov, Kapitsa, Kikoin, Alikhanov and Ioffe and contributed substantial material to speed up the solution of the atomic problem in the USSR.

Some journalists (Sergei Leskov and Vladimir Nadeine of *Izvestia*) and historians of science in Russia (Yuri Smirnov of the Kurchatov Institute) who, I was told by my former colleagues, rose in their careers through KGB connections, strongly supported those in the Russian scientific and intelligence establishment who found revelations in *SPECIAL TASKS* detrimental to their prestige. They deliberately distorted the material I presented. For example, I never wrote that Oppenheimer, Fermi, Szilard and Bohr were agents of Soviet intelligence. They cooperated, but we never recruited them. It is noteworthy that Klaus Fuchs and Bruno Pontecorvo never signed any formal recruitment obligations despite their regular clandestine contacts with Russian intelligence officers and agents in the USA and Britain.

One has to remember that all scientific giants had a different perspective in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s before the Cold War hardened their views. At the end of the 1930s and from 1940 to 1945, leading scientists of the international scientific community agreed to informally share nuclear secrets among all anti-fascist scientists. Initially they were driven by fear that Nazi Germany would get the bomb first; later they believed that sharing secrets would be the means of controlling nuclear weapons. Our intelligence officers in the United States, Gregory Kheifitz and Elizabeth Zarubin, encouraged this attitude of sharing in their contacts with Oppenheimer; Pontecorvo worked on Fermi.

Reluctantly, the Russian military newspaper, *Red Star*, on April 28, 1994 admitted that “Soviet intelligence agents took advantage of an international plot of scientists to share nuclear secrets with each other.” The Western press, especially the American press, neglected to notice this statement by KGB historian E. Sharapov and R. Mustafin, which for the first time acknowledged the existence of the “atomic team headed by Sudoplatov” and its role in the Soviet Union’s war effort.

Since my memoirs appeared I have met

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Sweden our intelligence officer, Zoya

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

signed/ Pavel A. Sudoplatov

* * * * *

6 February 1995

To the Editor:

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

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

Bohr's providing of information, Sudoplatov was already on record in July 1982. Again, one comment, by Smirnov, faults Sudoplatov for "shoddy research" in getting wrong a highly peripheral detail (on the dates and reasons for Bohr's trip to Russia). But "research" is not the point of such memoirs. Look at, for example, *Khrushchev Remembers*, where the "original material" (Strobe Talbott tells us in his Editor-Translator's note) was "quite disorganized" when it came into his hands; and which is full of misremembered (and uncorrected) detail—muddling up different plenums, confusing Lominadze's suicide with that of Ordzhonikidze three years later, etc., etc., while remaining, in Talbott's words "devastating and authoritative." (As to such discrepancies, we may note them in highly reputable or accepted sources: for example, the very venue of the wartime Bohr-Heisenberg meeting is disputed. And incidentally it seems odd that the Bohr-Terletsky meeting is not referred to all at in Abraham Pais' massive biography of Bohr.)

With all its errors it seems clear that on the substance of the Bohr incident—the fact of and the organization of the physicist's meetings and discourse with a Soviet representative—Sudoplatov's previously much-challenged account has been confirmed by the document. There is more to be said. And, given a reasonably critical attitude, more remains to be discovered in support or refutation of our present imperfect understanding of this and similar matters.

Your "update" (p. 93) is also unsatisfactory, citing some but omitting other letters on the subject in leading U.S. journals, and failing to mention major reviews in *Le Monde*, *The (London) Times*, etc.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Conquest

March 19, 1995

To the Editor:

In the *CWIHP Bulletin*, Issue #4, 1994, one of the Soviet-era documents caught my eye because it appears to be an example of and raises questions about a more general issue that has been suggested in the writings of several former Soviet officials on other

occasions.

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

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

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

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

one had been in operation, and had contributed to the death of a president of a neighboring country.

There is of course no way to reconcile the assessment of the Mozambican Board of Inquiry with Gorbachev's statement to the Soviet Politburo that the aircraft was "...shot down." The latter now appears in an official Soviet *document* and becomes recorded for posterity in that form. If one accepts the conclusion of the Mozambican panel, then Gorbachev's statement in the text of an official Soviet document raises all the problems indicated above, either regarding the nature and accuracy of information that reached the Politburo's staff or its presentation to the Politburo's members, or some combination of both.

Sincerely yours,

Milton Leitenberg

* * * * *

January 9, 1995

To the Editor:

In the Fall 1994 issue of the *Bulletin* there is an exchange of letters between Adam Ulam and Kathryn Weathersby. Ulam's views, as an experienced Cold War Warrior, evince no surprise but Ms. Weathersby's comment, "This distinction does not negate Soviet responsibility for the bloodshed that followed," certainly does. Just whose army was it that napalm bombed the Koreans, or used delayed fused bombs and further, resorted to bombing the dams in order to starve the people? Was Stalin to be held responsible for the atomic bomb threats and plans directed against the Korean people by Truman, MacArthur, Ridgeway, and last but not least by Eisenhower?

Now that the Cold War is over (although one would never know it looking at the current military budget and the plans to *increase* it) it is time we get back to History, not as propaganda, not as political expediency.

Sincerely yours,

Ephraim Schulman

MIKOYAN-CUBAN TALKS

continued from page 109

still a poor country. There will come a time when we will show our enemies. But we do not want to die beautifully. Socialism must live. Excuse the rhetoric. If you are not against it, let us continue our conversation tomorrow.

DORTICOS. We can meet, but we would like to know the opinion of the Soviet government and Comrade Mikoyan about what we will do about the agreement on military assistance.

A.I. MIKOYAN. Let's consider that. Think about a program of future work. I am free. I am prepared to visit you.

DORTICOS. Thank you. Tomorrow we will set the conditions with the ambassador.

A.I. MIKOYAN. I agree.

Ambassador A. Alekseev attended the conversation.

Recorded by: [signature] V. Tikhmenev

Com. Mikoyan A.I. has not looked over the transcript of the conversation.

[Source: Russian Foreign Ministry archives, copy provided by National Security Archive, Washington, D.C.; translation by Mark H. Doctoroff.]

* * * * *

[Ed. note: For an English translation of the meeting between Mikoyan and Castro on 12 November 1962, in which the Soviet envoy conveyed Moscow's decision to acquiesce to Kennedy's demand to withdraw the Soviet IL-28 bombers from Cuba (provoking an angry response from Castro), see the Soviet minutes of the meeting (and Mikoyan's ciphered telegram reporting on it to the CC CPSU) in appendices to Gen. Anatoli I. Gribkov and Gen. William Y. Smith, *OPERATION ANADYR: U.S. and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago: edition q, inc., 1994), 189-99.

Shortly before this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin* went to press, the Cuban government declassified several of its memoranda of the Mikoyan-Cuban negotiations. A report on these materials, and the divergences between them and the Soviet records, will appear in a future issue.]

WARSAW PACT "LESSONS"*continued from page 115*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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CLINTON EXECUTIVE ORDER*continued from page 143*

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Ed. note: For the full text of E.O. 12958, see the *Federal Register*, 20 April 1995 (60 *Federal Register*, pp. 19825-19843).]

CARTER-BREZHNEV*continued from page 154*

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

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

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

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Cold War International History Project Bulletin
Issue 5 (Spring 1995)
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1. [Ed. note: The texts of those messages, as well as Harriman's related records of conversation with Carter, can be found in the Harriman Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.]

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

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

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

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