

*New Evidence on 1953, 1956 Crises:*  
**CONFERENCES IN BUDAPEST, POTSDAM  
 SPOTLIGHT COLD WAR FLASHPOINTS**

In the autumn of 1996, the Cold War International History Project and the National Security Archive, along with European partner institutions, co-sponsored and jointly organized two major international scholarly conferences at which scholars presented and debated new evidence from both Eastern and Western archives and sources concerning two major Cold War episodes in Europe: the 1953 East German Uprising (and the post-Stalin succession struggle in Moscow), and the 1956 Polish and Hungarian crises.

The conference, "Hungary and the World, 1956: The New Archival Evidence," took place in Budapest on 26-

**THE SOVIET UNION AND THE  
 HUNGARIAN CRISIS OF 1956:  
 THE DOCUMENTARY ANTHOLOGY**

A group of Russian and Hungarian scholars and archivists has cooperated to prepare for publication a Russian-language anthology of archival documents—many of them never previously published—on Soviet policy and the events in Hungary in 1956. *The Soviet Union and the Hungarian Crisis of 1956: The Documentary Collection* is scheduled for publication in 1997. Among the Russian academic and archival institutions collaborating to produce the volume are the Institute for Slavonic and Balkan Studies (Russian Academy of Sciences) and the Institute of History (Russian Academy of Sciences); the Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation; the Archive of the President, Russian Federation; and the Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation. Co-editors include: V.Y. Afiani, B. Zhelizki, T. Islamov, S. Melchin, I. Morozov, V. Sereda, A. Stykalin, I. Vash, I. Vida, E. Dorken, T. Haidu. Financial support for the publication was provided by the National Security Archive and the Cold War International History Project and East European Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center. For ordering and publication information, please contact the editors.

29 September 1996, and was hosted by the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The international symposium on "The Crisis Year 1953 and The Cold War in Europe" convened in Potsdam, Germany, on 10-12 November 1996, and was hosted by the Center for Contemporary History Research (Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung).

Both conferences grew out of the "Cold War Flashpoints" Project of the National Security Archive, a non-governmental research institute and declassified documents repository based at George Washington University. Previous activities of the Project, undertaken by the Archive in close cooperation with CWIHP and Czech and Polish partners, included the holding of a major international conference in Prague in April 1994 on new evidence on the 1968 Prague Spring and the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and a scholarly workshop in Warsaw in August 1995 on new sources on the 1980-81 Polish Crisis, as well as meetings with scholars in Bucharest and Sofia in October 1996 on possibilities for collaborative research in Romanian and Bulgarian archives on Cold War topics.

Future meetings are also scheduled. In June 1997, the "Flashpoints" Project plans to hold an oral history conference in Poland on the 1980-81 crisis, gathering key participants, scholars, and sources from Poland, Russia, the United States, and elsewhere, and the Project is also working with various scholars, archives, and scholarly institutions and projects toward the holding of a series of meetings to present new evidence on the End of the Cold War, including the 1989 revolutions in Europe, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the transfor-

mation in U.S.-Soviet relations.

The Budapest and Potsdam conferences, like others in the "Flashpoints" series, offered a venue for dozens of American, Russian, Central-East European, and other scholars to present new evidence from Western and Eastern archives, and in some cases for former participants in the events to recall their experiences. Key topics covered at Budapest included the Polish upheavals, which immediately preceded the Hungary invasion; Soviet policy toward

**MORE ON THE MALIN NOTES**

The publication in this issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin* of the full translation of the Malin Notes on the 1956 Polish and Hungarian Crises marks their first complete appearance in English. However, versions of them were published in 1996 in Russian and Hungarian by the Russian scholar Vyacheslav Sereda and the Hungarian scholar Janos M. Rainer: in a two-part series presented by Vyacheslav Sereda in Nos. 2 and 3 (1996) of the Russian journal *Istoricheski Arkhiv* [Historical Archives], and in a book entitled *Dontes a Kremloben, 1956: A szovjet partelnokseg vitai Magyarorszagrol* [Crisis in the Kremlin, 1956: The Debates of the Soviet Party Presidium on Hungary] (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1996), published by the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian revolution. In addition, two important analyses of the notes have appeared in English: Janos M. Rainer's two-part series, "The Road to Budapest, 1956: New Documentation of the Kremlin's Decision To Intervene," in *The Hungarian Quarterly* 37:142 (Summer 1996), 24-41, and 37:143 (Autumn 1996), 16-31; and Mark Kramer, "New Light Shed on 1956 Soviet Decision to Invade Hungary," *Transition* 2:23 (15 November 1996), 35-40.

both crises; the impact of the invasion on Eastern Europe; the Western response; China's shifting position on the crises; and Radio Free Europe's controversial role. A number of participants in the uprising itself spoke either as panelists or as members of the audience, and several witnesses to the revolution led a "walking tour of revolutionary Budapest" to scenes of the street battles 40 years earlier.

Among the most noteworthy findings of the Hungary Conference were presentations and analyses of notes from Soviet Presidium meetings in fall 1956 taken by V.N. Malin, head of the CPSU General Department. These notes constitute the only known contemporaneous record of the key sessions of late October and early November at which Kremlin leaders went back and forth over whether to pull out from Hungary or reintroduce new troops. A comprehensive analysis of the significance of the Malin Notes and other recent evidence on Soviet policy toward the 1956 Poland and Hungary crises, along with a translation and annotation of the Malin Notes themselves, has been prepared for the *Bulletin* by Mark

Kramer of Harvard University; it appears immediately following this article.

In Potsdam, sessions examined the origins and consequences of the June 1953 East German uprising; the "Beria Affair" and post-Stalin succession struggle in Moscow; Soviet policy toward Germany before and after June 17; Stalin's death and East Central Europe; and the West's position and actions in 1953. Both conferences ended with roundtables on the long-term significance of the abortive revolts of 1953 and 1956, particularly for the 1989 collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and for contemporary Germany and Hungary.

Both conferences generated considerable public as well as scholarly attention. As might be expected, local interest in the Budapest gathering, coming on the eve of the revolution's 40th anniversary, was intense. The main hall of the elegant Academy of Sciences building on the banks of the Danube was filled on the conference's opening day, and Hungarian media coverage throughout was extensive. Overseas interest was evidenced by three articles

and an editorial in *The New York Times*, as well as pieces in *The Washington Post* and numerous European publications. Timothy Garton Ash, who delivered the concluding remarks for the conference, wrote up his reflections in the 14 November 1996 edition of *The New York Review of Books*.

The Potsdam Conference, for its part, resulted in an Associated Press report, carried in many major newspapers, on newly declassified U.S. documents obtained by the National Security Archive on the Eisenhower Administration's reactions to the events, including a 29 June 1953 report approved by the National Security Council (NSC 158) which, among other actions, declared that one official policy objective was to "Encourage elimination of key puppet officials."

CWIHP is pleased to note the efforts of major contributors to the success of both conferences: Christian F. Ostermann, a scholar based at the National Security Archive and the new Associate Director of CWIHP; the Director of the 1956 Institute, Dr. Gyorgy Litvan, and its Research Director, Csaba Bekes; at the ZZF in Potsdam, Director Prof. Dr. Christoph Klessman, and Anke Wappler; at the National Security Archive, Malcolm Byrne, Pete Voth, and Vlad Zubok; and at the Wilson Center, Jim Hershberg and Michele Carus-Christian. Many scholars assisted in obtaining key documents and in other ways for the conferences. Principal financial supporters for both meetings included the Open Society Institute; the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; and the Smith Richardson Foundation. Additional support for the Budapest meeting came from the Committee for Research on Contemporary History, Hungarian Academy of Sciences; Europa Institute, Institute of History, Central European University, and Open Society Archives, all in Budapest; and the Stalin Era Research and Archives Project, University of Toronto; additional backers of the Potsdam symposium included the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk (Hannover) and the Brandenburg Center for Political Education (Potsdam).

Since one key purpose of the "Cold

#### OSTERMANN WINS GERMAN STUDIES AWARD FOR ARTICLE ON 1953 EAST GERMAN UPRISING

The Cold War International History Project is pleased to note that Christian F. Ostermann, a doctoral candidate at Hamburg University currently based at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C. (and CWIHP's new Associate Director), has received an award from the German Studies Association for best article published in *German Studies Review* in History and the Social Sciences for the period 1994-1996. Drawing on newly-opened East German sources as well as declassified U.S. government documents obtained by the author through the Freedom of Information Act, the article—"Keeping the Pot Simmering": The United States and the East German Uprising of 1953," which appeared in *German Studies Review*, vol. XIX, no. 1, February 1996, pp. 61-89—was originally published, in slightly different form, in December 1994 as Working Paper No. 11 of the Cold War International History Project; the author had presented an earlier draft at CWIHP's conference on "New Evidence on the Cold War in Germany" at the University of Essen in June 1994.

The award is supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst). The award citation notes that Ostermann's article "contributes significantly to our understanding of a crucial moment in the Cold War. On the basis of thorough research in recently opened archival sources of the former German Democratic Republic and the United States, Ostermann subjects conventional ideological interpretations to sustained and critical scrutiny. His analysis of complicated episodes, for example, the American food program, sheds light on the development of Cold War policies as a whole. Ostermann's clear prose, deliberate form of expression, and balanced judgments on highly controversial issues are qualities that make this an article of outstanding scholarly merit."

War Flashpoints” Project is to gather new archival materials from all sides of the events, the conference organizers prepared “briefing books” of recently declassified U.S., Russian, and European documents for both conferences: Christian F. Ostermann, ed., *The Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and the 17 June 1953 Uprising in East Germany: The Hidden History—Declassified Documents from U.S., Russian, and Other European Archives* (Washington, D.C.: CWIHP/National Security Archive); and Csaba Bekes, Malcolm Byrne, and Christian F. Ostermann, ed. and comp., *The Hidden History of Hungary 1956: A Compendium of Declassified Documents* (Washington, D.C.:

National Security Archive, 1996).

These briefing books, in turn, accelerated the process toward the ultimate preparation and publication by the conference organizers of edited volumes of papers and documents emerging from both the Potsdam and Budapest meetings. In addition, the Cold War International History Project, which has previously published East-bloc documents on all of the major “Flashpoint” crises, plans to publish selected materials from both the Potsdam and Budapest gatherings in forthcoming *Bulletins*, Working Papers, and in electronic form.

For more information on the Budapest or Potsdam meetings, contact Malcolm Byrne or Christian F.

Ostermann at the National Security Archive in Washington, D.C., tel.: (202) 994-7000, fax: (202) 994-7005, or by e-mail: nsarchive@gwis2.circ.gwu.edu; on the Budapest Conference, information can also be obtained from Csaba Bekes at the 1956 Institute in Budapest: (36-1) 322-5228; e-mail: h11339bek@ella.hu. More information on the programs and papers for the Budapest and Potsdam meetings is also available via the National Security Archive/CWIHP home page on the World Wide Web at <http://www.seas.gwu.edu/nsarchive>

—Malcolm Byrne, Jim Hershberg, and Christian F. Ostermann

### TOGLIATTI ON NAGY, 30 OCTOBER 1956: MISSING CABLE FOUND

In the midst of the deliberations on 31 October 1956 leading to a decision to invade Hungary to crush the revolution and the government led by Imre Nagy, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Central Committee (CPSU CC) Presidium approved a secret message to Italian Communist Party Secretary Palmiro Togliatti. Clearly responding to an earlier communication, the Soviet leadership expressed agreement with Togliatti that events in Hungary was heading in a “reactionary” direction and that Imre Nagy was “occupying a two-faced position” and “falling more and more under the influence of the reactionary forces. This cable, a revealing indication of the hardening stand being taken inside the Soviet leadership at this critical juncture, was declassified by Russian authorities in 1992 in conjunction with President Yeltsin’s visit to Hungary and presentation of a collection of documents on the 1956 events; an English translation of the message to Togliatti appeared in the *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), p. 33.

However, only recently has the earlier communication from the Italian CP leader to the Soviets giving the negative assessment of Nagy emerged; although scholars had been unable to locate it in the archives of the Italian Communist Party, a copy of Togliatti’s message, dated 30 October 1956, was located in the Archive

of the President of the Russian Federation (APRF) in Moscow. It was first published in the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* on 11 September 1996, and presented by Prof. Federigo Argentieri (Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale Studi sull’Europa Centro-Orientale, Rome) to the conference on “Hungary and the World, 1956” in Budapest, 26-29 September 1996, organized by the National Security Archive, the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and the Cold War International History Project.

Togliatti’s cable, translated from the Italian original by Doc and Claudia Rossi, appears below:

Hungarian events have created a heavy situation inside the Italian labor movement, and in our Party, too.

The gap between [Secretary General of the Italian Socialist Party Pietro] Nenni and ourselves that seemed to be closing after our initiatives is now rudely and suddenly acute. Nenni’s position on Polish events coincides with that of the Social Democrats. In our Party, one can see two polarized and inappropriate positions. On one extreme there are those who declare that the responsibility for what happened in Hungary is due to the abandoning of Stalinist methodology. At the other extreme are those groups who are accusing the Party leadership of not taking a position in favour of the insurrection in Budapest and who claim that the insurrection was justly motivated and should

have been fully supported. These groups firmly insist that the entire leadership of our Party be replaced, and they believe [Italian trade union leader Giuseppe] Di Vittorio should become the new Party leader. They are based on a declaration of Di Vittorio that did not correspond to the Party line and was not approved by us. We are going to fight against these two opposing positions and the Party will not give up the battle.

Although I assure you that Hungarian events have developed in a way that render our clarifying action in the Party very difficult, it also makes it difficult to obtain consensus in favour of the leadership. When we defined the revolt as counter-revolutionary, we had to face the fact that our position was different from that of the Hungarian Party and of the Hungarian Government, and now it is the same Hungarian Government that is celebrating the insurrection. I think this is wrong. My opinion is that the Hungarian Government—whether Imre Nagy remains its leader or not—is going irreversibly in a reactionary direction. I would like to know if you are of the same opinion or if you are more optimistic. I would like to add that among the leaders of our Party there are worries that Polish and Hungarian events could damage the unity of the leadership of your Party Presidium, as was defined by the 20th [CPSU] Congress.

We are all thinking if this occurs, the consequences could be very serious for the entire movement.

# *SPECIAL FEATURE:*

## NEW EVIDENCE ON SOVIET DECISION-MAKING AND THE 1956 POLISH AND HUNGARIAN CRISES

*by Mark Kramer*

The overlapping crises in Hungary and Poland in the autumn of 1956 posed a severe challenge for the leaders of the Soviet Communist Party (CPSU). After a tense standoff with Poland, the CPSU Presidium (as the Politburo was then called) decided to refrain from military intervention and to seek a political compromise. The crisis in Hungary was far less easily defused. For a brief moment it appeared that Hungary might be able to break away from the Communist bloc, but the Soviet Army put an end to all such hopes. Soviet troops crushed the Hungarian revolution, and a degree of order returned to the Soviet camp.

Newly released documents from Russia and Eastern Europe shed valuable light on the events of 1956, permitting a much clearer and more nuanced understanding of Soviet reactions. This article will begin by discussing the way official versions of the 1956 invasion changed—and formerly secret documents became available—during the late Soviet period and after the Soviet Union disintegrated. It will then highlight some of the most important findings from new archival sources and memoirs. The article relies especially heavily on the so-called Malin notes, which are provided in annotated translation below, and on new materials from Eastern Europe. Both the article and the documents will show that far-reaching modifications are needed in existing Western accounts of the 1956 crises.

### OFFICIAL REASSESSMENTS BEFORE AND AFTER 1991

The advent of glasnost and “new

political thinking” in the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev led to sweeping reassessments of postwar Soviet ties with Eastern Europe. As early as 1987, an unofficial reappraisal began in Moscow of the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968. Initially, these reassessments of the 1968 crisis did not have Gorbachev’s overt endorsement, but the process gained an official stamp in late 1989 once Communism had dissolved in Eastern Europe. Soon after the “velvet revolution” engulfed Czechoslovakia in November 1989, the five states that took part in the 1968 invasion—the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, East Germany, and Bulgaria—issued a collective statement denouncing the invasion and repudiating the Brezhnev Doctrine. In addition, the Soviet Union released its own declaration of regret over the “erroneous” decision to intervene in 1968.<sup>1</sup>

Curiously, though, Gorbachev was much less willing to proceed with a reevaluation of the Soviet invasion of Hungary in November 1956. Not until October 1991, two months after the aborted coup in Moscow had severely weakened the Soviet regime, did Gorbachev finally provide an official apology for the 1956 invasion.<sup>2</sup> Until that time, official judgments about Soviet actions in 1956 had been left primarily to Soviet military officers, who routinely glorified the invasion of Hungary as an example of “the international defense of socialist gains” and of “transforming socialist internationalism into action.”<sup>3</sup> A senior officer on the Soviet General Staff argued in 1987 that the “suppression of counterrevolutionary rebellion,” as in Hungary in 1956, should still be among the chief military

missions of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>4</sup> The same theme was expressed the following year in a Soviet book about the “Military Policy of the CPSU,” which received admiring reviews in Soviet military journals and newspapers.<sup>5</sup>

When political reforms began to sweep through Hungary and Poland in late 1988 and 1989, signs of unease soon cropped up in Soviet military writings. In September 1989, a prominent article by one of the top Soviet commanders in Hungary in October-November 1956, Army-General Pyotr Lashchenko, offered extravagant praise for the Soviet invasion.<sup>6</sup> Very few articles devoted solely to the Hungarian crisis had ever appeared in Soviet military journals (particularly after “normalization” began in Hungary in the late 1950s), so there was no doubt that the publication of Lashchenko’s analysis had been carefully timed. Several months before the article went to press, Imre Pozsgay and other top officials in the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party had publicly declared that the events of 1956 were a “popular uprising against an oligarchical regime that was humiliating the nation.”<sup>7</sup> By contrast, Lashchenko still insisted that the events of 1956 were merely a “counterrevolutionary rebellion that was actively supported by the most reactionary forces of international imperialism.” This harsh assessment was clearly intended to help prevent the political changes in Hungary from endangering the *raison d’être* of Soviet military deployments in Eastern Europe.

Unease within the Soviet military regarding the 1956 invasion continued even after the upheavals of late 1989. In contrast to the official Soviet state-

ment condemning the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, no such statement was issued about the intervention in Hungary. Although numerous Soviet officials, such as deputy foreign minister Anatolii Kovalev, later denounced the invasion of Hungary, the Soviet High Command apparently blocked efforts to release a statement about 1956 comparable to the one about 1968. Moreover, in August 1990, the same journal that had published Lashchenko's 1989 article featured another essay, by a Hungarian lieutenant-colonel, that was even more scathing in its assessment of the "counterrevolution" of 1956; the journal's editors highly recommended the article to their readers. Although senior officials on the CPSU Central Committee staff were secretly ordered in November 1990 to begin studying archival materials from 1956 and preparing an assessment for the CPSU leadership, this effort was intended mainly to find ways of deflecting pressure from the Hungarian government, and no public Soviet statements resulted.<sup>8</sup> Even when the last Soviet troops were pulled out of Hungary in June 1991, Gorbachev still declined to condemn the 1956 intervention.

The Soviet leader's belated apology in October 1991 was soon overtaken by the collapse of the Soviet regime. The new government in Russia under President Boris Yeltsin proved far more willing to reevaluate and condemn controversial episodes in Soviet relations with Eastern Europe. As a result, a large quantity of Soviet documentation about the 1956 Hungarian crisis and Moscow's response has recently become available. Yeltsin turned over a preliminary collection of declassified materials to the Hungarian government in November 1992, which are now stored at the Institute for the Study of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution in Budapest. These documents were all published in Hungarian translation in 1993 as a two-volume collection.<sup>9</sup> A few of the items had appeared earlier in the original Russian,<sup>10</sup> and in 1993 most of the others were published in Russian with detailed annotations in a three-part series.<sup>11</sup> Subsequently, a few additional Soviet documents were re-

leased, most of which are now available in Fond 89 (the declassified collection) of the Center for Storage of Contemporary Documentation in Moscow, the former archive of the CPSU Central Committee. As valuable as these initial items were, they provided only a few tantalizing details about Soviet decision-making in 1956. Some aspects of Soviet decision-making had been revealed in memoirs by Nikita Khrushchev and other former officials, but in the absence of primary documentation it was difficult to know how accurate the memoirs were.<sup>12</sup>

Fortunately, that gap in the historical record has now been at least partly closed. In mid-1995, the Russian archival service finally released the "Malin notes" from the October-November 1956 crisis. Verbatim transcripts of CPSU Presidium meetings were not kept in the 1950s, but Vladimir Malin, the head of the CPSU CC General Department during the entire Khrushchev period, took extensive notes of all Presidium meetings. His handwritten notes, stored in the former

#### THE MALIN NOTES: AN ELECTRONIC SYMPOSIUM

Readers interested in further analyses and commentary on the notes by V. Malin on Kremlin decision-making on the 1956 Polish and Hungarian crises can find them on the Internet: the Cold War International History Project and the National Security Archive, U.S. co-sponsors and organizers of the September 1996 Budapest Conference on "Hungary and the World, 1956: The New Archival Evidence," plan to present commentaries on the significance of the Malin Notes, as well as other materials on the 1956 events, via CWIHP's website on the Archive's home page on the World Wide Web: <http://www.nsarchive.com>.

Commentators will include Russian and Hungarian scholars such as Vladislav Zubok, Janos Rainer, Vyacheslav Sereda, and Vitaly Afiani. Articles on China's position on the 1956 crises in Eastern Europe by Chen Jian and L.W. Gluchowski will also be available.

Politburo archive (which is now under Yeltsin's direct control), were all supposed to be declassified by the end of 1996, but regrettably only the ones pertaining to the Hungarian and Polish crises of 1956 have been released so far.<sup>13</sup> The initial batch of Malin notes were provided to a Russian historian, Vyacheslav Sereda, and to researchers at the 1956 Institute in Budapest, who had exclusive access to the materials until the spring of 1996, when the full set were published in Hungarian translation.<sup>14</sup> Since then, other scholars—both Russians and foreigners—have been permitted to study the original documents. Malin's notes about the Hungarian crisis were published in Russian in the summer and fall of 1996, and the notes about the October 1956 crisis in Poland were published in Moscow at the end of 1996.<sup>15</sup> (The portions about Poland had already appeared in the Hungarian translation.)

For an understanding of Soviet policy during the crises in Hungary and Poland, the Malin notes are by far the most valuable items that have surfaced. Although other important documents about the events of 1956 may eventually be released from the Russian Presidential Archive, the former KGB archives, and the Russian military archives, the Malin notes are enough to shed extremely interesting light on Soviet decision-making during the crisis. Moreover, the Malin notes can be supplemented with a vast number of recently declassified materials from the East European archives as well as new first-hand accounts. Of the East European documents, an especially noteworthy item is the handwritten Czech notes from a Soviet Presidium meeting on 24 October 1956, as the crisis in Hungary was getting under way.<sup>16</sup> Of the new memoirs, perhaps the most valuable is an account published in serial form in late 1993 and early 1994 by a high-ranking Soviet military officer, Evgenii Malashenko, who helped command the operation in Hungary in 1956.<sup>17</sup> Together, all these materials permit a much better understanding of why and how the Soviet Union responded with military force in one case but not in the other.

## NEW FINDINGS

One of the intriguing things about the new evidence is that it tends to bear out much of Khrushchev's brief accounts of the Hungarian and Polish crises. Khrushchev's reminiscences were tendentious (as most memoirs are) and he was confused about a number of points, but overall his account, including many of the details, holds up remarkably well. At the same time, the new documentation provides insight about many items that Khrushchev failed to discuss, and it also allows numerous mistakes in the record to be set right. Although it is impossible in a brief article to provide a comprehensive review of the latest findings, it is worth highlighting several points that cast new light not only on the events of 1956, but on the whole nature of Soviet-East European relations.

### Soviet Responses to the Polish Crisis

New evidence from the Russian and East-Central European archives helps explain why the Soviet Union decided to accept a peaceful solution in Poland but not in Hungary. Poland was the initial focus of Soviet concerns. A series of events starting in June 1956 had provoked unease in Moscow about growing instability and rebellion. The Poznan riots, on 28-29 June, came as a particular shock. Workers from the ZISPO locomotive factory and other heavy industrial plants in Poznan staged a large protest rally on 28 June, which soon turned violent. The Polish army and security forces managed to subdue the protests, but the two days of clashes left 53 dead and many hundreds wounded. It is now known that some Polish officers tried to resist the decision to open fire, but their opposition proved futile because the security forces were willing to carry out the orders and because Soviet commanders (and their Polish allies) still dominated the Polish military establishment.<sup>18</sup> Soviet leaders were taken aback by the events in Poznan, fearing that the unrest would flare up again and spread elsewhere unless strict ideological controls were

reimposed. At a CPSU Presidium meeting shortly after the riots, Khrushchev claimed that the violence had been provoked by the "subversive activities of the imperialists" and was aimed at "fomenting disunity" with the Soviet bloc and "destroying [the socialist countries] one by one."<sup>19</sup> These assertions echoed the public commentaries that Soviet leaders issued right after the riots.<sup>20</sup>

The measures adopted by Polish officials to alleviate public discontent and prevent further disorders had only a limited and transitory effect. By the late summer and early fall of 1956 a new crisis was gathering pace, which soon led to a tense standoff with the Soviet Union.<sup>21</sup> In early October, one of the most prominent victims of the Stalinist purges in Poland in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Wladyslaw Gomulka, triumphantly regained his membership in the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) and was on the verge of reclaiming his position as party leader. The Soviet authorities feared that if Gomulka took control in Warsaw, he would remove the most orthodox (and pro-Soviet) members of the Polish leadership and steer Poland along an independent course in foreign policy. Soviet concerns were heightened by Gomulka's demand that Soviet military officers serving in the Polish army, including Marshal Konstantin Rokossowski, the Polish-born Soviet officer who had been installed as Polish defense minister and commander-in-chief in November 1949, be withdrawn. This demand came after the PZPR Politburo had already (in September 1956) requested the pull-out of all Soviet state security (KGB) "advisers" from Poland.

To compel Gomulka and his colleagues to back down, Soviet leaders applied both military and political pressure. On 19 October, as the 8th Plenum of the PZPR Central Committee was about to convene to elect Gomulka as party leader and remove Rokossowski from the PZPR Politburo, Khrushchev ordered Soviet army units in northern and western Poland to advance slowly toward Warsaw. Shortly thereafter, a delegation of top Soviet officials, including Khrushchev,

Vyacheslav Molotov, Nikolai Bulganin, Lazar Kaganovich, and Anastas Mikoyan, accompanied by the commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Ivan Konev, and 11 other high-ranking Soviet military officers, paid a surprise visit to Warsaw. In a hastily arranged meeting with Gomulka and other Polish leaders, the CPSU delegates expressed anxiety about upcoming personnel changes in the PZPR and urged the Poles to strengthen their political, economic, and military ties with the Soviet Union.<sup>22</sup> Gomulka, for his part, sought clarification of the status of Soviet troops in Poland and demanded that the Soviet Union pledge not to interfere in Poland's internal affairs. Although he reaffirmed his intention of staying in the Warsaw Pact, he emphasized that Poland "will not permit its independence to be taken away."<sup>23</sup> Gomulka also renewed his call for the withdrawal of all or most of the Soviet Union's 50 "advisers" in Poland, and again insisted that Rokossowski and other top Soviet officers be removed from the Polish army. The Soviet delegation responded by accusing the Poles of seeking to get rid of "old, trustworthy revolutionaries who are loyal to the cause of socialism" and of "turning toward the West against the Soviet Union."<sup>24</sup>

During these tense exchanges, Gomulka was suddenly informed by one of his aides that Soviet tank and infantry units were advancing toward Warsaw. This large-scale mobilization of Soviet troops, though intended as a form of coercive diplomacy rather than to provoke an immediate confrontation, gave the crisis a new edge. Rokossowski and dozens of other Soviet commanders (and their Polish allies) who were still entrenched in the Polish officer corps were able to keep the Polish army from preparing to defend Gomulka against incoming Soviet forces.<sup>25</sup> Rokossowski's influence, however, did not extend to many of the Polish troops from the Internal Security Corps (KBW) and other combat personnel under the aegis of the Polish Internal Affairs Ministry (MSW), who were fully willing to fight on behalf of the new Polish regime. These units took

up strategic positions all around Warsaw and called in reinforcements as Soviet columns were reported to be moving in.<sup>26</sup> In this game of political-military brinkmanship, a clash seemed to be looming between the KBW troops and Soviet forces, and an even more explosive situation emerged *within* the Polish military establishment, pitting KBW units against troops from the National Defense Ministry under Rokossowski's command. Thus, for a brief while, Poland appeared to be on the verge of civil war as well as a conflict with the Soviet Union.

The latent danger of a clash between Soviet forces and the KBW—a danger that loomed large even though neither side wanted a direct confrontation—spurred Khrushchev and Gomulka to make a renewed effort to find a peaceful solution. After being informed about the troop movements, the Polish leader requested that the Soviet units be pulled back; and Khrushchev, after some hesitation, complied with the request, ordering Konev to halt all troop movements.<sup>27</sup> Although Khrushchev assured Gomulka that the deployments had simply been in preparation for upcoming military exercises, the intended message was plain enough, especially in light of other recent developments. The existence of Soviet “plans to protect the most important state facilities” in Poland, including military garrisons and lines of communication, had been deliberately leaked to Polish officials earlier in the day; and Soviet naval vessels had begun holding conspicuous maneuvers in waters near Gdansk, keeping the Polish Navy at bay.<sup>28</sup> Despite these various forms of pressure, the Polish authorities stood their ground, and the meeting ended without any firm agreement. The official communique merely indicated that talks had taken place and that Polish leaders would be visiting Moscow sometime “in the near future.”<sup>29</sup> In most respects, then, the negotiations proved less than satisfactory from the Soviet standpoint.

Shortly after the Soviet delegates returned to Moscow on 20 October, they briefed the other members of the CPSU Presidium on the results of the trip.<sup>30</sup>

By this point they knew that the PZPR Central Committee had reconvened early on the 20th and had elected Gomulka first secretary and dropped Rokossowski and several neo-Stalinist officials from the PZPR Politburo. Khrushchev made no attempt to conceal his disappointment, arguing that “there’s only one way out—by putting an end to what is in Poland.” He indicated that the situation would get much worse if Rokossowski were not permitted to stay as Poland’s defense minister. Khrushchev lay a good deal of the blame for the crisis on the Soviet ambassador in Poland, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, who, according to Khrushchev, had been “grossly mistaken in his assessment of [Edward] Ochab and Gomulka.” (Khrushchev declined to mention that he himself—and the rest of the Soviet leadership—had “grossly” misjudged the situation in Poland over the previous few months.<sup>31</sup>)

The Presidium adopted Khrushchev’s suggestion that a meeting be held soon in Moscow with leading representatives from Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, East Germany, and Bulgaria. Khrushchev also proposed that they consider sending a few senior officials to China “for informational purposes.” In the meantime, the Presidium resolved to “think carefully” about additional measures, including new military exercises and the formation of a “provisional revolutionary committee” that would displace Gomulka. In addition, Khrushchev authorized a new campaign in the press, building on an editorial in the 20 October issue of *Pravda*, which had accused the Polish media of waging a “filthy anti-Soviet campaign” and of trying to “undermine socialism in Poland.”<sup>32</sup> These charges, and subsequent accusations, prompted vigorous rebuttals from Polish commentators.

Strains between Poland and the Soviet Union remained high over the next few days as tens of thousands of Poles took part in pro-Gomulka rallies in Gdansk, Szczecin, and other cities on 22 October. Even larger demonstrations, each involving up to 100,000 people, were organized the following

day in Poznan, Lublin, Lodz, Bydgoszcz, Kielce, and elsewhere. In the meantime, joint meetings of workers and students were being held all around Poland, culminating in a vast rally in Warsaw on 24 October attended by some 500,000 people. Although these events were intended mainly as a display of unified national support for the new Polish leadership in the face of external pressure, some of the speakers, particularly at a rally in Wroclaw on the 23rd, expressed open hostility toward the Soviet Union.

As tensions mounted on 20 and 21 October, Soviet leaders reexamined a variety of economic sanctions and military options, but again they found that none of these options seemed the least bit attractive. At a meeting on the 21st, the CPSU Presidium unanimously decided to “refrain from military intervention” and to “display patience” for the time being.<sup>33</sup> The rationale for this decision remained just as compelling in subsequent days, as Khrushchev emphasized to his colleagues and to other East European leaders during an expanded Presidium meeting on the evening of 24 October: “Finding a reason for an armed conflict [with Poland] now would be very easy, but finding a way to put an end to such a conflict later on would be very hard.”<sup>34</sup> The stand-off on 19 October had demonstrated to the Soviet leadership that most of the Polish troops who were not under Rokossowski’s command, especially in the KBW, were ready to put up stiff resistance against outside intervention. Khrushchev and his colleagues also seem to have feared that Polish leaders would begin distributing firearms to “workers’ militia” units who could help defend the capital. (Gomulka later claimed that arms were in fact disseminated, but the evidence generally does not bear out these assertions.<sup>35</sup> The important thing, however, is that Soviet officials *assumed* that Gomulka would proceed with this step.)

Khrushchev’s reluctance to pursue a military solution under such unfavorable circumstances induced him to seek a *modus vivendi* with Gomulka whereby Poland would have greater leeway to follow its own “road to socialism.”

Gomulka reciprocated by again assuring Khrushchev that Poland would remain a loyal ally and member of the Warsaw Pact. The Polish leader demonstrated the credibility of his promises by ordering Polish officers to cease considering the prospect of a complete withdrawal of the Soviet Northern Group of Forces from Poland.<sup>36</sup> (On 21 October, as the crisis with Moscow began to abate, a number of Polish commanders, led by General Waclaw Komar of the Internal Army and General Wlodzimierz Mus of the KBW, had thought it was the right moment to press for a total Soviet withdrawal, and they started drafting plans to that effect. Gomulka put an immediate end to their activities.) Gomulka also adopted a far more conciliatory line in public, as reflected in his keynote speech at the rally in Warsaw on 24 October.<sup>37</sup> The Polish leader not only called for stronger political and military ties with the Soviet Union and condemned those who were trying to steer Poland away from the Warsaw Pact, but also urged his fellow Poles to return to their daily work and to refrain from holding any additional rallies or demonstrations.

Over the next few days, Soviet leaders became annoyed when Gomulka insisted that Rokossowski be removed from the national defense ministry (as well as from the PZPR Politburo), a demand that perplexed even Chinese officials, who overall were staunchly supportive of Gomulka.<sup>38</sup> Had the crisis in Hungary not intervened on 23 October, Soviet leaders might well have been inclined to take a firmer stand against Rokossowski's dismissal from the ministry. But by the time Gomulka began pressing this demand on 26 October, the deteriorating situation in Hungary gave Khrushchev a strong incentive to prevent renewed difficulties with Poland. Having been reassured that Gomulka would keep Poland in the Warsaw Pact and retain Soviet troops on Polish soil, Khrushchev reluctantly acquiesced in Rokossowski's ouster. In mid-November, Rokossowski was recalled to Moscow, where he was appointed a deputy defense minister.

Early in the crisis, some members

of the Soviet Presidium, especially Vyacheslav Molotov and Kliment Voroshilov, had strongly opposed the leeway granted to the Poles, but by the time the Presidium met on 21 October, as noted above, all members agreed that it was best to eschew military intervention and to "display patience," at least for a while.<sup>39</sup> Nor were any major signs of dissent evident at the Presidium meeting on 23 October.<sup>40</sup> Participants in the meeting emphasized the "fundamental difference" between the situation in Poland and the emerging crisis in Hungary. Gomulka's speech on 24 October and his follow-up discussions with Khrushchev further convinced the Soviet leader that Poland would remain a loyal member of the "socialist commonwealth" and Warsaw Pact.<sup>41</sup>

This did not mean that all tensions with Poland were instantly dissipated. In addition to continued bickering over Rokossowski's status, Khrushchev remained concerned about the "unacceptable" views espoused by certain PZPR officials, including some who allegedly wanted to assert territorial claims against the USSR.<sup>42</sup> Soviet leaders also were disturbed by reports that an influential PZPR Secretary, Wladyslaw Matwin, had given a speech in Poznan on 10 November in which he condemned recent "abnormalities in Polish-Soviet relations" that had "raised doubts about the sovereignty of our country."<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, these frictions did not detract from the basic assurances that Gomulka had provided to Khrushchev. By late October and early November 1956 the two sides had reached a broad accommodation that was able to withstand occasional disruptions.

Gomulka's determination to preserve a Communist system in Poland and to remain within the Warsaw Pact had a strong bearing on Soviet policy during the Hungarian revolution. The outcome of the Polish crisis demonstrated that some Soviet flexibility would continue and that a return to full-fledged Stalinism was not in the offing, but it also set a precedent of what would be tolerated. Had Gomulka not been willing to keep Poland firmly within the Soviet bloc, a military confrontation

might well have ensued. The contrast with Hungary was telling. Early on, Soviet leaders may have hoped that they could rely on Imre Nagy to do in Hungary what Gomulka had done in Poland, but the Soviet Presidium soon concluded that there was "no comparison with Poland" and that "Nagy is in fact turning against us."<sup>44</sup>

### The Onset of the Hungarian Crisis

Social pressures had been building in Hungary since the spring of 1955, when the reformist prime minister Imre Nagy was dislodged by the old-line Stalinist leader Matyas Rakosi, who had been forced to cede that post to Nagy in mid-1953. The earlier transfer of power from Rakosi to Nagy, and the shift back to Rakosi, were both effected under Moscow's auspices. In June 1953 the Soviet authorities, led by Georgii Malenkov and Lavrentii Beria, had summoned Rakosi and other Hungarian officials to Moscow for a secret meeting. During three days of talks, Malenkov and his colleagues stressed that they were "deeply appalled" by Rakosi's "high-handed and domineering style" in office, which had led to countless "mistakes and crimes" and had "driven [Hungary] to the brink of a catastrophe."<sup>45</sup> They ordered Rakosi to relinquish his prime ministerial duties to Nagy. Although Rakosi was allowed to remain First Secretary of the Hungarian Workers' Party (HWP), the office of prime minister at the time was seen as more important than the top party position.

By early 1955, however, the political calculus in both Moscow and Budapest had changed. The First Secretary of the CPSU, Khrushchev, had gradually eclipsed prime minister Malenkov, enabling the CPSU to regain its predominant status in Soviet politics. Khrushchev sought to reinforce his victory by prodding the East European countries to halt their New Courses (i.e., the reforms they had adopted when Malenkov was the top figure in Moscow) and to give renewed emphasis to the "leading role" of their Communist parties. This political reconfiguration came at the same time that Soviet lead-



ers were concerned (or claimed to be concerned) that Nagy's policies were giving impetus to "rightist deviationists" and "opportunists" in Hungary who were seeking to realign their country with Yugoslavia or the West. As a result, in March 1955 the CPSU Presidium again summoned top Hungarian officials, including Nagy and Rakosi, to Moscow for secret talks; and a high-level Soviet delegation then traveled to Hungary to oversee the reversal of Nagy's New Course and the elevation of Rakosi's protege, Andras Hegedus, to the post of prime minister. This "friendly interference in [Hungary's] internal affairs," according to a senior CPSU Presidium member, Kliment Voroshilov, provided "a model for our relations with all the People's Democracies."<sup>46</sup>

Nevertheless, these fluctuations were bound to spark social unrest in Hungary. The appointment of Nagy as prime minister in 1953 had helped stave off further disorders of the sort that occurred in Csepel, Ozd, and Diosgyor in the spring of 1953; but the reascendance of Rakosi in 1955-56 brought all those earlier grievances back to the surface. In the past, Rakosi had been able to rely on mass repression to stifle popular discontent, but by 1956 his options were far more limited because of the post-Stalin "thaw" and de-Stalinization campaign that Khrushchev had launched at the 20th Soviet Party Congress. Those developments created greater leeway for the expression of pent-up grievances in Hungary; and they also helped transform the Petofi Circle, an entity set up by Rakosi in March 1956 as a debating forum for Party youth, into a prominent organ of the anti-Rakosi opposition. In late April 1956, the Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yurii Andropov, informed the CPSU Presidium about the "far-reaching impact" of the Soviet Party Congress on the public mood in Hungary and about the Hungarian regime's lackluster response:

Through demagoguery and provocations, the right-wing opportunists and hostile elements have managed to create an impression [among ordinary Hungarians] that the Hungarian Workers'

Party leadership, in its current form, is not doing what is needed in Hungary to carry out the decisions of the XX CPSU Congress because some of the old members of the [Hungarian] Politburo are putting up resistance against these decisions and the younger comrades are too inexperienced to proceed with the required work. This impression is doing great damage to the authority of the [Hungarian] Politburo in the eyes of the party *aktiv* and a large segment of the workers.<sup>47</sup>

Andropov urged the Soviet Presidium to give greater support and assistance to Rakosi to prevent the anti-Rakosi forces from extracting further "major concessions to rightist and demagogic elements."<sup>48</sup>

This cable stirred apprehension in Moscow, and the CPSU Presidium decided in early May to send one of its members, Mikhail Suslov, to Budapest for discussions with Andropov and with leaders of the HWP.<sup>49</sup> It took several weeks, however, before Suslov actually left for Budapest. Despite the growing turbulence in Hungary, high-level attention in Moscow was distracted by other matters. When Suslov finally arrived in Budapest on 7 June, his weeklong visit did little to help the situation. In contrast to Andropov's more alarming reports, Suslov assured the CPSU Presidium that there was no real disaffection in Hungary with the HWP leadership. The opposition to Rakosi, he argued, was confined to the HWP Central Committee (formally known as the Central Leadership), where a group supporting Imre Nagy had joined forces with "politically immature and unprincipled officials."<sup>50</sup> Suslov claimed that the problem could be eliminated if "real Hungarian cadres" were "promoted more vigorously" to diminish the "hugely abnormal" representation of "Jewish comrades" in the HWP Central Leadership. He took a number of steps to bolster Rakosi's position and to forestall any potential challenges to Rakosi at a crucial plenum of the HWP Central Leadership scheduled for mid-July. Suslov's strong backing for Rakosi at this point was in line with the views of the entire CPSU Presidium. Later on, Khrushchev privately ac-

knowledged that it had been a "great mistake" to "rely on that idiot Rakosi," but in the first half of 1956 no one on the Soviet Presidium seriously questioned the policy.<sup>51</sup>

The assurance of strong, visible support from Moscow (and from Andropov) enabled Rakosi to counter his rivals within the HWP by depicting their criticism as "directed also against the Soviet comrades."<sup>52</sup> Ordinarily, this might have been enough to keep Rakosi in power for another several years, but two unforeseen events in late June 1956 changed the political balance of forces in Hungary. The first development, on 27 June, was a highly publicized meeting of the Petofi Circle, which featured sweeping criticisms of the regime's policies, condemnations of Rakosi for his role in the Stalinist repressions of the late 1940s and early 1950s, and renewed calls for "full freedom of the press." In response, Rakosi persuaded the HWP Central Leadership to adopt a resolution on 30 June that banned the Petofi Circle and explicitly denounced "anti-party elements" and the "anti-party views" of "a certain group which has formed around Imre Nagy."<sup>53</sup> The HWP Central Leadership also reprimanded HWP members who had shown "insufficient vigilance" against "hostile, demagogic attacks," rescinded the party membership of two prominent writers (Tibor Dery and Tibor Tardos) who had "espoused bourgeois and counterrevolutionary views," criticized the HWP newspaper *Szabad Nep* for its "misleading and unprincipled" coverage of the meeting, and prohibited any further gatherings of opposition forces.

This resolution was adopted only hours after another event occurred that had profound implications for Hungary: the outbreak of riots in Poznan, Poland on 28-29 June. Many Hungarians, particularly university students, intellectuals, and a substantial number of HWP members, came to see the Petofi Circle meeting and the Poznan riots as indications that neo-Stalinist regimes throughout the Soviet bloc were suddenly vulnerable. Rakosi hoped to dispel any impression of weakness by returning to his earlier policy of "stern measures"

against “hostile” and “anti-socialist” forces. This marked a reversal of his approach over the previous few months, when he had grudgingly put up with a limited thaw in the wake of the 20th CPSU Congress. At a meeting of the Budapest party *aktiv* on 18 May, Rakosi had even reluctantly acknowledged his part in the “unjust repressions” of the Stalin era. These concessions, limited though they were, raised public expectations in Hungary; but the increased defiance of the Petofi Circle and the riots in Poznan spurred Rakosi to try to reassert an “iron hand.” Within the HWP, however, this move was far from universally welcomed. A large number of officials, especially in the HWP Central Leadership, concluded that the real problem in Hungary was not the opposition forces or the Petofi Circle, but Rakosi himself.

The mounting disaffection with Rakosi was duly noted by Andropov in a cable to the CPSU Presidium on 9 July.<sup>54</sup> Andropov reported that “hostile elements and the intra-HWP opposition have embarked on an open and intensive struggle” against Rakosi. He emphasized that some prominent opposition figures had begun calling for an “independent national policy” and a “national Communist movement,” which would “permit the Hungarians to resolve their own affairs independently, ‘rather than on the basis of Soviet interference.’” Andropov also noted that Gero saw “few ways, unfortunately, to overcome the situation that has emerged.” Although Gero believed that the HWP Central Leadership plenum on 18 July might “restore solid unity” at the top levels of the party, he was concerned that “severe complications could emerge unexpectedly” at the plenum. In this connection, Andropov reported that the former head of state security in Hungary, Gabor Peter, had written a letter from prison accusing Rakosi of direct personal complicity in the Rajk trial. Andropov warned that “if this letter is read out at the plenum, Cde. Rakosi’s plight will be enormously aggravated.” Andropov underscored Gero’s hope of receiving “concrete advice from the CPSU CC,” and he added that “Cde. Gero’s alarm about the situ-

ation is fully understandable.” The ambassador expressed misgivings of his own about the “indecisiveness, feeble actions, and inadequate vigilance of the Hungarian comrades in the struggle against hostile influences within the party and among workers,” and he recommended that the CPSU leadership issue a clear-cut endorsement of the HWP resolution of 30 June “as well as of all the measures needed to strengthen the [Hungarian] party’s unity and to intensify the struggle against hostile forces.”

Andropov’s cable served as the basis for a CPSU Presidium meeting on 12 July 1956, which focused on the latest events in both Hungary and Poland. Malin’s notes from the meeting show that Khrushchev and his colleagues still did not want to come to grips with the underlying sources of political unrest in Hungary.<sup>55</sup> To be sure, the events in Poznan had provoked “alarm [in Moscow] about the fate of Hungary” as well as of Poland: “After the lessons of Poznan we wouldn’t want something similar to happen in Hungary.”<sup>56</sup> Soviet leaders went so far as to characterize the discussions of the Petofi Circle on 27 June as “an ideological Poznan, without the gunshots.”<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, they displayed little understanding of the pressures that had given rise to such incidents. Khrushchev attributed the recent turmoil in Hungary (and Poland) exclusively to “the subversive activities of the imperialists,” who, he claimed, “want to foment disunity” within the socialist camp and “destroy the socialist countries one by one.”<sup>58</sup> The Presidium ordered that a lengthy editorial be published in *Pravda* reaffirming Moscow’s “internationalist solidarity with efforts to rebuff the enemy.”<sup>59</sup> The appearance of this article on 16 July was intended as a warning that the CPSU leadership would “not permit the dissolution of the unity of the socialist camp under the pretext of respect for national particularities or the extension of democracy.”<sup>60</sup>

The Soviet Presidium also designated one of its members, Anastas Mikoyan, to visit Hungary for a first-hand assessment of the disarray within the Hungarian leadership and the grow-

ing ferment in Hungarian society. Upon his arrival in Budapest on 13 July, Mikoyan met with Rakosi and three other senior Hungarian officials (Erno Gero, Andras Hegedus, and Bela Veg). These preliminary talks convinced Mikoyan that the situation would improve only if Rakosi stepped down. Having been authorized by the CPSU Presidium to do whatever was necessary to “restore unity in the HWP leadership,” Mikoyan bluntly informed Rakosi that it would be best if someone else took over as HWP First Secretary.<sup>61</sup> Rakosi had been hoping to gain Soviet backing for his proposal to “smash the Nagy conspiracy” once and for all—a proposal that envisaged the arrest of Nagy and several hundred other “conspirators,” as well as a broader crackdown—and thus he was stunned by Mikoyan’s recommendation. Nevertheless, Rakosi had little choice but to accept the Soviet “advice.” Mikoyan then turned to the question of a successor. He proposed Erno Gero as a replacement for Rakosi, but Gero initially claimed that it would be better if a “Hungarian official” (i.e., a non-Jew) took over. These demurrals were not entirely sincere, as Mikoyan soon realized, and the matter was settled over the next few days at two emergency sessions of the HWP Politburo. Mikoyan took part in the first session on 13 July and was kept closely informed about the second, on 16 July.<sup>62</sup> As he had proposed, the HWP Politburo endorsed Gero as the new First Secretary. The transition to a post-Rakosi regime was formally approved by the HWP Central Leadership plenum on 18 July, in which Mikoyan played a crucial role.<sup>63</sup>

Mikoyan’s efforts to promote greater political stability in Hungary came at the same time that a group of high-ranking Soviet officers were visiting Hungary to inspect Soviet forces based there (the so-called Special Corps).<sup>64</sup> The officers, led by General Mikhail Malinin, a first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff, discovered that the command staff of the Special Corps had not yet worked out a secret plan to prepare for large-scale internal disturbances in Hungary. (In the wake of the 1953 East German uprising, the com-

manders of all Soviet forces in Eastern Europe had been ordered by the CPSU leadership to devise appropriate plans for anti-riot and counterinsurgency operations.) When this omission was reported to Soviet defense minister Marshal Georgii Zhukov, he ordered that the requisite documents be compiled immediately. The visiting Soviet generals helped the commander of Soviet forces in Hungary, General Lashchenko, put together a "Plan of Operations for the Special Corps to Restore Public Order on the Territory of Hungary," which was signed on 20 July.<sup>65</sup> This plan, codenamed "Volna" (Wave), envisaged the use of tens of thousands of Soviet troops at very short notice (within three to six hours) to "uphold and restore public order" in Hungary. The plan required a special signal (known as "Kompas") to be put into effect, but the formulation of "Volna" at this stage indicates that Soviet leaders wanted a reliable fall-back option in case their attempts to bolster political stability in Hungary did not pan out.

The growing reservations in Moscow about Hungary's political future turned out to be far more justified than Soviet leaders had hoped. Although the ouster of Rakosi eliminated the most exigent problem in Hungary, it was hardly sufficient to put more than a temporary check on the growth of social discontent. Gero was widely perceived to be of the same mold as Rakosi. Nor was the situation helped any by the "comradely advice" that Gero received from his Soviet counterparts when he took office:

The relaxation of international tensions and the slogan of coexistence [as proclaimed at the 20th CPSU Congress] do not presuppose but, on the contrary, exclude ideological concessions and any accommodation to hostile views. That is why you must eliminate all factors responsible for the collapse of party conduct in Hungary, restore discipline among CC members and the party's rank-and-file, and launch a fierce struggle on the ideological front.<sup>66</sup>

These suggestions were of little relevance to the turbulent political scene in Hungary. By early September, Gero

privately acknowledged that he was still finding it "enormously difficult to foster unity within the party's leadership" and to overcome "sharp disagreements about certain fundamental issues."<sup>67</sup> The lack of "a unified position among the members of the Politburo," Gero believed, was exacerbating the "dangerous and unstable situation in the country as a whole."

Gero's awareness of these problems makes it especially difficult to understand why he was willing to be absent from Hungary over the next several weeks. During most of September and the first week of October, he was on vacation in the Soviet Union (mainly in the Crimea). According to Andropov, "Gero openly acknowledged, when he was setting off on his trip, that he was not at all sure whether 'things would be okay' while he was gone."<sup>68</sup> When Gero finally returned to Budapest in October, he met again with Andropov and told him that "unfortunately, now that I'm back in Hungary, I can see that the situation in the country has become much worse and more turbulent than I had imagined while I was in the USSR."<sup>69</sup> Problems within the HWP, according to Gero, had "gravely deteriorated," and "acute discontent [had] spread throughout the country."

Even Gero's efforts to allay public unrest were widely construed as little more than admissions of weakness. On 6 October, while Gero was still in Moscow, the remains of Laszlo Rajk and three other high-ranking victims of the Stalinist purges were reinterred in Budapest as a crowd of several hundred thousand looked on. Rajk had been sentenced to death on trumped-up charges in October 1949 and was then posthumously rehabilitated in March 1956, despite Rakosi's initial objections. When Rakosi announced the rehabilitation on 28 March, he made no mention of his own culpability and tried to gloss over the whole affair; but Gero was not as closely identified with the Rajk trial, and therefore was willing to permit the reburial. Gero viewed the measure as a convenient way to ingratiate himself with Tito (whom he had met in the Crimea at the beginning of October) as well as a means of defus-

ing internal tensions, but he failed to anticipate what a profound effect the ceremony would have. As soon as Gero returned to Hungary, he realized the implications of what he had done. On 12 October, he confided to Andropov that "the reburial of Rajk's remains has dealt a massive blow to the party leadership, whose authority was not all that high to begin with."<sup>70</sup> Gero also conceded that the ceremony was likely to provoke "even greater insolence" on the part of opposition forces, who will now "openly demand the return of Imre Nagy to the Politburo."

Gero's misgivings proved well-founded. A rapid sequence of events in the second and third weeks of October gave rise to a full-fledged crisis. The HWP Politburo had tried to curb popular ferment by readmitting Imre Nagy into the party on 13 October, but that step, if anything, merely emboldened the regime's opponents. To make matters worse, Gero decided once again to travel abroad at a critical moment. From 15 to 22 October he was in Yugoslavia. Although the main purpose of his trip was to hold negotiations with Tito and other senior officials, he extended his stay to take a vacation on the Yugoslav coast. While he was away, the situation in Hungary grew ever more turbulent, spurred on in part by the concurrent events in Poland.

The surge of discontent in Hungary reached the breaking point on 23 October (just hours after Gero had returned from Yugoslavia), when a huge demonstration was organized in downtown Budapest by students from a local polytechnical university who wanted to express approval of the recent developments in Poland and to demand similar changes in their own country.<sup>71</sup> The HWP authorities initially tried to prevent the demonstration, but their efforts proved futile, as several hundred thousand people gathered in the capital. After a preliminary march to the statue of Josef Bem (a hero from the Polish revolution of 1830 and the Hungarian revolution of 1848), the demonstrators split into several large groups and moved to key points in the city, where they voiced demands for "national independence and democracy." A huge

statue of Stalin in the center of Budapest was torn down. Similar rallies were held in other Hungarian cities, where thousands of protesters called on the government to resign. Faced by this growing wave of unrest, Gero desperately tried to regain control of the situation, but the protests continued to mount.

Gero's plight was made immeasurably worse later in the evening when Hungarian state security (AVH) forces, acting without authorization, opened fire on unarmed demonstrators outside the main radio station in Budapest who were seeking to enter the building to broadcast their demands. The shootings precipitated a chaotic rebellion, which was much too large for the Hungarian state security organs to handle on their own. Soviet "advisers" and military commanders in Hungary had been trying since early October to convince Hungarian officials that stringent security precautions were needed to cope with growing unrest; but, as one of the top Soviet officers later reported, "the leaders of the [Hungarian] party and members of the [Hungarian] government did not adopt the measures called for by the urgency of the situation. Many of them were simply incapable of evaluating the state of things realistically."<sup>72</sup> As a result, the violent upheavals on the evening of 23 October quickly overwhelmed the Hungarian police and security forces and caused widespread panic and near-paralysis among senior Hungarian officials.

### **The Initial Soviet Intervention in Hungary**

Until very recently, nothing was known about decision-making in Moscow on the evening of 23 October 1956, when the first reports came in about the Hungarian revolution. Some gaps in the story persist, but a reasonable account can be pieced together on the basis of new sources, including the Malin notes.<sup>73</sup> It is now known that despite the growing turmoil in Budapest, Gero did not even mention what was going on when he spoke by phone with Khrushchev on the evening of the 23rd. Gero's evasiveness during that conver-

sation is hard to explain. By that point he had already transmitted an appeal for urgent military assistance to the military attache at the Soviet embassy, so it is unclear why he would not want to raise the matter directly with Khrushchev. Gero's behavior in the two months prior to the revolution, when he chose to be out of the country at critical moments, was odd in itself; but his reaction on 23 October seems even more peculiar.

Despite this strange twist, information about the rebellion quickly made its way to Moscow. When the Soviet attache received Gero's request, he immediately passed it on to Andropov, who telephoned the commander of Soviet troops in Hungary, General Lashchenko. Lashchenko responded that he could not comply with the request without explicit authorization from political leaders. Andropov then cabled Gero's appeal directly to Moscow, which prompted Khrushchev to contact Gero by phone for the second time that evening. Khrushchev urged Gero to send a written request for help to the CPSU Presidium, but the Soviet leader soon realized, after the brief conversation ended, that events in Budapest were moving too fast for him to wait until he received a formal Hungarian request (which, incidentally, did not arrive until five days later).<sup>74</sup> A Soviet Presidium meeting had already been scheduled for the 23rd to discuss other matters, and Khrushchev abruptly changed the agenda to focus on the situation in Hungary.

The newly declassified notes from the 23 October meeting show that the CPSU Presidium could not reach a unanimous decision on whether to send in troops.<sup>75</sup> Khrushchev and all but one of the other participants strongly supported the introduction of Soviet forces, but a key Presidium member, Anastas Mikoyan, opposed the decision, arguing that "the Hungarians themselves will restore order on their own. We should try political measures, and only then send in troops." Despite the pro-intervention consensus among all the other participants, Mikoyan held firm in his opposition. The Presidium therefore had to adopt its decision without

unanimity, an unprecedented step for such an important matter. The Presidium also decided to send Mikoyan and Suslov to Budapest along with the KGB chief, Ivan Serov, to provide on-the-scene reports, following up on the tasks they had accomplished in Hungary earlier in the year (see above). In the meantime, Khrushchev authorized Soviet defense minister Zhukov to "redeploy Soviet units into Budapest to assist Hungarian troops and state security forces in the restoration of public order."<sup>76</sup> Khrushchev's directive was promptly transmitted to Lashchenko by the chief of the Soviet General Staff, Marshal Vasili Sokolovskii, who specified that the bulk of the Soviet troops in Hungary were to be used in "establishing control over the most important sites in the capital and in restoring order," while others were to "seal off Hungary's border with Austria."<sup>77</sup>

Having finally received due authorization, Lashchenko was able to set to work almost immediately. The troops under his command had been preparing since late July to undertake large-scale operations aimed at "upholding and restoring public order" in Hungary (see above). In accordance with the "Volna" plan, Soviet forces in Hungary had been placed on increased alert in mid-October, and were brought to full combat alert on 19-21 October at the behest of the Soviet General Staff.<sup>78</sup> Hence, when the mobilization orders arrived from Moscow on the night of the 23rd, the response on the ground was swift, despite dense fog that hampered troop movements. By the early morning hours of the 24th, thousands of soldiers from the USSR's two mechanized divisions in Hungary (the Special Corps) had entered Budapest, where they established a command center at the main building of the Hungarian National Defense Ministry. They were soon joined by thousands of additional Soviet troops from a mechanized division based in Romania and two divisions (one mechanized, one rifle) from the Transcarpathian Military District in Ukraine.<sup>79</sup> The combined interventionary forces were placed under the command of General Malinin, who maintained constant liaison with an

“emergency operational group” of some 80 high-ranking officers from the Soviet General Staff and the main staffs of the Soviet ground and air forces. All told, some 31,500 Soviet troops, 1,130 tanks and self-propelled artillery, 380 armored personnel carriers, 185 air defense guns, and numerous other weapons were redeployed at short notice to Budapest and other major cities as well as along the Austrian-Hungarian border. Two Soviet fighter divisions, totaling 159 planes, were ordered to perform close air-support missions for the ground forces; and two Soviet bomber divisions, with a total of 122 aircraft, were placed on full alert at airfields in Hungary and the Transcarpathian Military District.

For the task at hand, however, this massive array of firepower was largely irrelevant. The intervention of the Soviet Army proved almost wholly ineffectual and even counterproductive. Gero himself acknowledged, in a phone conversation with Soviet leaders on 24 October, that “the arrival of Soviet troops into the city has had a negative effect on the mood of the residents.”<sup>80</sup> Soviet armored vehicles and artillery were sent into the clogged streets of Budapest without adequate infantry protection, and thus became easy targets for youths wielding grenades and Molotov cocktails. Although Hungarian soldiers were supposed to operate alongside Soviet units, troops from the Hungarian state security forces, police, and army proved incapable of offering necessary support, and some defected to the side of the rebels.<sup>81</sup> As a result, the fighting merely escalated. By mid-afternoon on the 24th, at least 25 protesters had been killed and more than 200 had been wounded. The mounting violence, as Mikoyan and Suslov reported back to Moscow, “caused further panic among senior Hungarian officials, many of whom fled into underground bunkers that were unsuitable for any work.”<sup>82</sup>

### Early Rifts Within the Soviet Leadership

The Malin notes confirm that the post-Stalin succession struggle in Mos-

cow, which was not decisively resolved until June 1957, had a strong effect on Soviet policy toward Hungary. As the Hungarian crisis escalated, splits within the Soviet leadership came to the surface. Mikoyan and Suslov, who were both close to Khrushchev, had been sending a flurry of emergency cables and reports back to Moscow from the time they arrived in Budapest on 24 October.<sup>83</sup> These messages were discussed at length by the other members of the CPSU Presidium. At a session on the evening of 26 October, numerous members of the Presidium voiced complaints about Mikoyan, arguing that he “is acting improperly and is pushing us toward capitulation.”<sup>84</sup> The hardline opponents of Khrushchev—notably Vyacheslav Molotov, Kliment Voroshilov, and Lazar Kaganovich—clearly were hoping to use these criticisms against Khrushchev himself. Khrushchev responded by defending his colleague: “Mikoyan is acting just as he said he would. Cde. Mikoyan supported a position of non-intervention” on 23 October. Although Khrushchev strongly disagreed with Mikoyan’s non-interventionist stance, he was not about to let the verbal attacks go unanswered.

At the next session of the Presidium on 28 October, Molotov and Voroshilov stepped up their campaign.<sup>85</sup> Voroshilov charged that Mikoyan and Suslov were “poorly informed” and were “unable to carry out [their] work properly.” Molotov alleged that Mikoyan and Suslov were providing “calm reassurances” while “the situation deteriorates and is gradually moving toward capitulation.” Other officials, including Zhukov and Georgii Malenkov, defended Mikoyan and Suslov, arguing that “we shouldn’t lay blame for the situation on our comrades” and that it was “unfair to condemn [Mikoyan] right now.” These arguments, however, failed to deter Voroshilov from voicing even harsher complaints: “The American secret services are more active in Hungary than Cdes. Suslov and Mikoyan are. We sent [Suslov and Mikoyan] there for nothing.” Khrushchev and numerous other officials, including Nikolai Bulganin (who initially was critical of Mikoyan),

reproached Voroshilov for his remarks, and they urged that the Presidium focus on what to do next, rather than simply engaging in recriminations. An uneasy lull thus ensued. Later that evening, when Suslov returned temporarily from Budapest to give a detailed briefing to the Presidium, Voroshilov and Molotov refrained from any explicit criticisms.

The emergence of pronounced rifts within the Soviet leadership, at a time when the Presidium needed to reach a unified position, clearly hindered Moscow’s response to the crisis. One of the reasons that Soviet officials wavered so much during the crucial days of 30-31 October (see below) is that they were aware of the domestic political repercussions of their actions.

### Zig-Zags in Decision-Making

The Malin notes reveal that as the situation in Hungary deteriorated in late October, the CPSU Presidium had great difficulty in deciding how to respond. On 28 October, senior Hungarian officials began insisting that all Soviet troops would have to be withdrawn from Hungary, a demand that caused alarm in Moscow. At a lengthy meeting of the Presidium on 28 October, all the participants agreed that “we must not withdraw troops” and must instead “act decisively against the centers of resistance.”<sup>86</sup> They voiced dismay that “Nagy is speaking against us,” and they expected that Nagy’s call for the withdrawal of Soviet troops would soon be followed by “a demand for [Soviet] capitulation.” The Hungarian government’s announcement on 28 October that the recent events had been a “national-democratic uprising” rather than a “counterrevolution” sparked particular consternation among Soviet Presidium members, who insisted that “we cannot and will not retreat.”

At the same time, Khrushchev and his colleagues recognized that Soviet options were limited by the sheer pace of events, which had already resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Soviet soldiers and Hungarian civilians. The current Hungarian leaders, Nagy and Janos Kadar, were being challenged by more

radical elements in Hungary, who wanted to overthrow the existing regime. Although Soviet leaders were determined to adhere to a “firm line” and put an end to Nagy’s and Kadar’s “flip-flops,” they reluctantly agreed that they had little choice but to support the current government and to be prepared to withdraw troops from Budapest (though not from Hungary as a whole).

By 30 October, however, the mood within the Soviet Presidium had taken a surprising turn. All the members, including Molotov and Voroshilov, had reached a consensus—ephemeral though it may have been—that the Soviet Union should forgo large-scale military intervention in Hungary.<sup>87</sup> Marshal Zhukov conceded that the Soviet Union had to be ready, if necessary, to withdraw all Soviet troops from Hungary, viewing this as “a lesson for us in the military-political sphere.” Others reluctantly concurred. Khrushchev and his colleagues were well aware that the situation in Hungary had continued to deteriorate, and had taken on distinctly anti-Soviet overtones. Even so, they unanimously agreed to adopt what Khrushchev described as “the peaceful path—the path of troop withdrawals and negotiations”—rather than “the military path, the path of occupation.”<sup>88</sup>

This decision seems to have been predicated on an unrealistic expectation of what could be achieved by the Soviet government’s “Declaration on the Principles of Development and Further Strengthening of Friendship and Cooperation Between the USSR and Other Socialist Countries,” issued on 30 October.<sup>89</sup> A draft of the statement, prepared by high-ranking CPSU Central Committee officials, was reviewed at length and edited by the CPSU Presidium just before it was released. The declaration acknowledged that Soviet-East European relations had been plagued by “egregious mistakes” in the past, and that Moscow had committed rampant “violations of the principle of equality in relations between socialist countries.” It pledged that in the future the Soviet Union would scrupulously “observe the full sovereignty of each socialist state” and reexamine the basis

for its continued troop presence in the Warsaw Pact countries (other than East Germany), leaving open the possibility of a partial or total withdrawal. Most of the Presidium members seemed to view the declaration as a viable way of “extracting us from an onerous position” and of “putting an end to the bloodshed.”<sup>90</sup> Any hopes they may have had, however, were quickly dashed. Had the declaration been issued several months earlier, it might have prevented all the subsequent turmoil, but by the time the statement was broadcast over Hungarian radio on 30 October, events in Hungary had already eluded Soviet control. Moscow’s verbal promises were no longer sufficient to contain either the wave of popular unrest or the actions of Nagy’s government. Although the declaration caused a stir in most of the East-bloc countries, its effect in Hungary was limited. Many of the insurgents were determined to achieve their goals immediately, rather than settling for ill-defined negotiations that, once under way, would be subject to delay or derailment.

Nevertheless, even if Soviet hopes about the declaration were misplaced, the decision to forgo intervention was still remarkable at this late stage. It suggests that for a brief while—a very brief while—the Soviet Presidium actually may have been willing to accept the collapse of Communism in Hungary.

The unanimity of the Presidium’s decision to eschew military force belied the inherent fragility of that position, especially after Khrushchev and his colleagues realized that the 30 October declaration would not have the desired effect. Ominous reports from Hungary, including cables and secure phone messages from Mikoyan and Suslov that were much more pessimistic than their previous dispatches, continued to flow in. Earlier in the crisis, Mikoyan and Suslov had hoped that they could induce Nagy to restore order and achieve a satisfactory political solution, but by the end of October they had markedly changed their tone. In a phone message to Moscow on 30 October, they warned that the uprising could be ended only through the use of

force and that the Hungarian army probably was not up to the task:

The political situation in the country, rather than improving, is getting worse. . . . The peaceful liquidation of the remaining centers [of resistance] can effectively be excluded. We will try to liquidate them using the armed forces of the Hungarians. But there is a great danger in this: The Hungarian army has adopted a “wait-and-see” position. Our military advisers say that the attitude of Hungarian officers and generals toward Soviet officers has deteriorated in recent days, and that there is no longer the trust which existed earlier. It may well be that if Hungarian units are used against the uprising, they will go over to the side of the insurgents, and it will then be necessary for the Soviet armed forces to resume military operations.<sup>91</sup>

Subsequent messages from Mikoyan and Suslov were gloomier still, in part because they sensed that their worst fears were coming true. Within hours after their initial message on the 30th, they learned that an angry mob had launched a bloody attack on the Budapest party committee’s headquarters in Republic Square. The grisly reprisals that some of the attackers carried out against disarmed AVH troops came as a shock not only to Mikoyan and Suslov, but to most Hungarians (including many rebel leaders, who strongly criticized the actions and appealed for calm). The attack caused even greater alarm in Moscow, where scenes of the violence were being featured on newsreels when the CPSU Presidium met on 31 October. Equally disconcerting was the very fact that the mob had been able to seize the building. Three Hungarian army tanks, which had been sent to help the defenders of the site, ended up defecting to the insurgents, just as Mikoyan and Suslov had feared. The siege in Republic Square proved to be an isolated case (and actually helped stabilize the situation a good deal by spurring both the government and the rebels into seeking a peaceful settlement), but amid the general turmoil in Budapest at the time, it initially seemed—at least from Moscow’s perspective—to portend the “deterioration” that Mikoyan and

Suslov had been predicting.

Concerns about the internal situation in Hungary were reinforced by the latest news about international developments, particularly the start of French and British military operations in the Middle East and the increasing signs that unrest in Hungary was spilling over into other Warsaw Pact countries. Each of these factors is important enough to warrant a separate discussion below. Not only were the Suez Crisis and the fears of a spillover crucial in their own right; they also magnified the importance of Hungary's status in the Warsaw Pact. The prospect of an "imperialist" victory in the Middle East and of growing ferment within the bloc made it all the more essential to keep Hungary within the Soviet camp; but on this score, too, there seemed increasing grounds for pessimism. By late October it was clear that momentum for Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact was rapidly building. One of the members of Nagy's new "inner cabinet," Bela Kovacs, explicitly called for a "neutral Hungary" and the end of Hungary's "ties to military blocs" in a speech he delivered on 30 October.<sup>92</sup> That same day, Nagy himself endorsed the goal of leaving the Warsaw Pact, and he opened talks about the matter (and about the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary) with Mikoyan and Suslov, who promptly informed their colleagues in Moscow about the discussions.<sup>93</sup> It seems likely that Nagy's expressed desire to renounce Hungarian membership in the Warsaw Pact was one of the factors that induced the CPSU Presidium on 31 October to reverse its decision of the previous day. To be sure, Nagy had spoken many times in earlier years (especially after he was abruptly removed from power in 1955) about the desirability of Hungarian neutrality, but his decision to raise the issue with Mikoyan and Suslov at this delicate stage must have come as a jolt in Moscow.<sup>94</sup> Once Soviet leaders were confronted by the stark prospect of Hungary's departure from the Warsaw Pact, they realized how much their influence in Hungary had waned.

The confluence of all these circum-

stances was bound to spur a reassessment of Moscow's non-interventionist stance. Khrushchev later recalled that he regretted the 30 October decision almost as soon as the Presidium adopted it.<sup>95</sup> At short notice on 31 October, he convened another emergency meeting of the Presidium to reconsider the whole matter.<sup>96</sup> The notes from the meeting reveal that Khrushchev was not the only one who had misgivings about the previous day's decision. With one exception, all the participants strongly endorsed Khrushchev's view that "we must revise our assessment and must not withdraw our troops from Hungary and Budapest. We must take the initiative in restoring order in Hungary." The only dissenting voice was Maksim Saburov, who argued that "after yesterday's session this discussion is all pointless. [Full-scale intervention] will merely vindicate NATO." His assertions were disputed by Molotov and numerous others, who insisted (not entirely convincingly) that the previous day's decision had been "only a compromise." After further persuasion, Saburov finally came around to support the interventionist position.

With that, the Presidium unanimously approved the full-scale use of military force "to help the working class in Hungary rebuff the counterrevolution."<sup>97</sup> This action brought an end to the long period of indecision and wavering in Soviet policy.

Even so, the reversal on 31 October should not detract from the importance of the consensus on the 30th. The Malin notes suggest there was a chance, if only a very slender one, that the events of 1989 could actually have occurred 33 years earlier.

### The Effect of the Suez Crisis

On 26 July 1956 the new Egyptian leader, Gamel Abdel Nasser, announced that he was nationalizing the Suez Canal Company. Over the next few months the British, French, and U.S. governments tried to persuade (and then compel) Nasser to reverse his decision, but these diplomatic efforts were of no avail. In late October, Israel began mobilizing its army, and on the 29th

Israeli troops moved into Egyptian territory, an action that was broadly coordinated with France and Great Britain. On 30 October the French and British governments sent an ultimatum to Nasser — which the Egyptian leader promptly rejected — and early the next day they joined the Israeli incursions by launching air raids against Egyptian cities and imposing a naval blockade.<sup>98</sup> Western analysts have long speculated about the role of the Suez Crisis in Soviet decision-making *vis-a-vis* Hungary, but until recently there was no real way to know. The new evidence, particularly the Malin notes, does not resolve all the ambiguities, but it does shed a good deal of light on the matter.

On the whole, the Malin notes and other new materials indicate that the Suez Crisis gave Soviet leaders a powerful incentive to resolve the situation in Hungary as soon and as decisively as possible. For one thing, the prolonged diplomatic wrangling over Suez induced the Soviet Presidium to be wary of becoming embroiled in lengthy political disputes the way the French and the British had. Khrushchev raised this point at the Presidium's meeting on 28 October, the day before military action began in the Middle East: "The English and French are in a real mess [*zavarivayut kashu*] in Egypt. We shouldn't get caught in the same company."<sup>99</sup> By this, he evidently meant that if the Presidium allowed the Hungarian crisis to drag on indefinitely, things would only get worse and the Soviet Union would be left facing the same intractable dilemma that the French and British were encountering in Suez.

The start of fighting in the Middle East on 29-31 October, which left Moscow's political ally Egypt in a precarious state, caused even greater complications for Soviet leaders. They worried that a failure to act decisively in Hungary would compound the damage to Soviet foreign policy. This fear was particularly acute after the French and British launched their military operations in the early morning hours of 31 October. When the Soviet Presidium met later that day to reach a final decision about Hungary, reports were al-

ready flooding into Moscow about the spectacular “successes” that the French, British, and Israeli forces were supposedly achieving. It soon turned out that their joint military efforts got bogged down (for want of U.S. support) and a stalemate ensued, but Khrushchev and his colleagues could not have foreseen that when they met on 31 October because they automatically assumed—in a classic case of misperception—that the United States would back the allied incursions. Khrushchev himself expressed the dominant sentiment at the Presidium meeting:

If we depart from Hungary, it will give a great boost to the Americans, English, and French—the imperialists. They will perceive it as weakness on our part and will go onto the offensive. We would then be exposing the weakness of our positions. Our party will not accept it if we do this. To Egypt [the imperialists] will then add Hungary.<sup>100</sup>

Khrushchev’s subsequent comments about Suez, especially at a Presidium meeting on 4 November, show that he believed the decision to intervene in Hungary would help, rather than hurt, Moscow’s policy *vis-a-vis* Suez. The distraction posed by Hungary, he implied, had prevented an effective response in the Middle East. Now that a firm decision to suppress the uprising had been adopted, the Soviet Union would be able to “take a more active part in the assistance to Egypt.”<sup>101</sup>

In another respect as well, Soviet policy in Hungary was linked—if only inadvertently—to the Suez Crisis. The sudden conflict diverted international attention from Poland and Hungary to the Middle East. Because the United States refused to support the Israeli and French-British military operations, the crisis generated a deep split among the Western powers at the very moment when they needed to show unity in response to the events in Hungary. The intra-NATO rift engendered by the Suez Crisis was not a critical factor in Moscow’s response to the Hungarian uprising—after all, the rift was not yet fully evident when the Soviet Presidium met for its fateful session on 31 October—but it did, as Khrushchev pointed

out at the time, provide a “favorable moment” for the Soviet Union to undertake a large-scale military operation in Hungary.<sup>102</sup> The French and British governments, he noted on 2 November, “are bogged down in Suez, and we are stuck in Hungary.”<sup>103</sup>

The invasion of Hungary undoubtedly would have been approved even if there had been no Suez Crisis, but Soviet fears of “imperialist” successes in the Middle East and the sudden emergence of a divisive row within NATO clearly expedited Moscow’s decision.

### Fears of a Spillover

New evidence confirms that Soviet leaders feared the Hungarian revolution might spread into other East European countries and possibly into the USSR itself, causing the whole Communist bloc to unravel. Warnings to that effect had been pouring in throughout the crisis from the Soviet embassy in Budapest, from KGB representatives in Hungary, and from three former Hungarian leaders (Rakosi, Andras Hegedus, and Istvan Bata) who had fled to Moscow after being ousted. Concerns that the Hungarian revolution would spill into other Warsaw Pact countries were heightened by a series of intelligence reports from neighboring Romania and Czechoslovakia. Khrushchev later recalled he had learned from KGB sources that “the residents of the border areas in Hungary had begun seeking contacts with [residents in] the border areas of Czechoslovakia and Romania to gain direct backing from them.”<sup>104</sup> Archival materials fully bear out his recollections.

From Romania, Soviet leaders received word that students in Bucharest and in a large number of Transylvanian cities (Cluj, Tirgu Mures, Timisoara, Baia Mare, and Oradea, among others) were holding demonstrations in support of the Hungarian revolution, and that disturbances were spreading around the country. As early as 24 October, the Politburo of the Romanian Workers’ Party (RWP) felt the need to impose emergency security measures and visa regulations along the border with Hungary, effectively sealing it off to all traf-

fic.<sup>105</sup> The Romanian authorities also established rigorous, comprehensive screening of mail and publications arriving from and going to Hungary. As a further precaution, the RWP Politburo ordered the state security forces (*Securitate*) to reinforce their defenses around key buildings, including transport stations, communications and broadcasting facilities, university complexes, and Communist party and government offices. Leaves and furloughs for soldiers and state security troops were cancelled.<sup>106</sup> Over the next few days, Romanian leaders also took steps to alleviate economic grievances and boost living standards, but overall Romania’s efforts to prevent a spillover from Hungary were geared predominantly toward increased vigilance and preparations for a large-scale crackdown.<sup>107</sup>

Despite these precautions, the Romanian authorities were soon confronted by renewed “agitation and demonstrations by student groups and hostile elements” in many parts of the country, especially Transylvania and Bucharest.<sup>108</sup> Officials who were dispatched to Cluj reported scenes of “mass confusion and unrest.”<sup>109</sup> An unofficial student movement, formed at Bolyai University on 25 October, attracted hundreds of members and gained support from much of the faculty, including many who belonged to the RWP. Romanian officials in the area emphasized that “party members of Hungarian origin” were especially likely to succumb to “hostile” elements, and that ethnic Hungarian students throughout Transylvania were “singing Horthyite and chauvinistic songs.”<sup>110</sup> Most worrisome of all were reports that young people in Baia Mare and Carei were “intent on joining the Hungarian army,” and that Romanian army troops and security forces in the border region were being swayed by the demonstrators’ “tendentious” and “inimical” propaganda.<sup>111</sup> To combat the growing unrest, the RWP Politburo on 30 October set up a “general command staff,” consisting of four senior Politburo members (Emil Bodnaras, Nicolae Ceausescu, Alexandru Draghici, and Leontin Salajan), who were given ex-



traordinary powers, including the right to issue shoot-to-kill orders and to declare a state of emergency.<sup>112</sup> The command staff was successful in its task, but the very fact that this sort of measure was needed was a disconcerting reminder to Soviet leaders that the events in Hungary, if left unchecked, could prove contagious.

Equally disturbing reports flowed into Moscow from Czechoslovakia about student demonstrations in Bratislava and other cities amidst growing "hostility and mistrust toward the Soviet Union."<sup>113</sup> The Czechoslovak authorities denied most of these reports, but they acknowledged that the events in Hungary were having "deleterious psychological effects" and creating a "hostile, anti-socialist mood" among some of the Czechoslovak troops who had been sent to reinforce the 560-km border with Hungary.<sup>114</sup> Senior Czechoslovak military officials warned that the confusion might even "tempt the counterrevolutionary forces [in Hungary] to penetrate into our country and stir up a rebellion in Slovak territory," especially in the southern areas inhabited mainly by ethnic Hungarians.<sup>115</sup> They also warned that the danger would increase "if Soviet and Hungarian units are withdrawn" from northern Hungary, since "it is unlikely that [Czechoslovakia's] existing combat forces will be enough to prevent incursions by counterrevolutionary groups."<sup>116</sup> The risk of a spillover into Czechoslovakia was explicitly cited by Soviet leaders when they approved a full-scale invasion: "If we don't embark on a decisive path, things in Czechoslovakia will collapse."<sup>117</sup> It is unclear whether the actual danger was as great as they feared, but the important thing at the time was the perception in both Moscow and Prague that a failure to act would have ominous consequences.

The growing concerns about a spillover were shared in East European countries further away from Hungary, notably East Germany. Initially, the East German leader, Walter Ulbricht, mainly feared that the return of Nagy might presage a similar turn of events in the GDR.<sup>118</sup> Once the Hungarian

revolution broke out, apprehension in East Berlin rapidly increased. A top East German official, Otto Grotewohl, warned that "the events in Hungary and Poland show that the enemy looks for weak spots in the socialist camp, seeking to break it apart."<sup>119</sup> He and other East German leaders were acutely aware that the GDR itself was one of these "weak spots." Soviet officials, too, were worried that developments in Hungary could undermine their position in East Germany, which by this point was closely tied to Ulbricht. Soviet foreign minister Dmitrii Shepilov warned that certain elements in East Germany might exploit the crisis to launch a campaign against the "Ulbricht clique."<sup>120</sup>

Quite apart from the threat of a spillover into Eastern Europe, Soviet leaders were aware of serious problems in the USSR itself. The inception of de-Stalinization had spawned numerous instances of public disorder and unrest. Mass disturbances erupted in Tbilisi and other Georgian cities in early March 1956, as students, workers, and intellectuals joined together to protest the growing criticism of "our great leader Stalin."<sup>121</sup> These demonstrations marked the first time that "anti-Soviet activities" had occurred in Georgia since Communist rule was established, and Soviet leaders responded by imposing martial law.<sup>122</sup> Very different challenges arose elsewhere in the Soviet Union, where intellectuals and some other groups took advantage of the opportunity to voice long-suppressed grievances. Criticism of Stalin and of the "cult of personality" opened the way for broader complaints about the nature of the Soviet regime itself. Soviet leaders tried to regain control of the de-Stalinization campaign by issuing a decree that specified what was permissible and what was not, but this document failed to put an end to dissidents' activities.<sup>123</sup> Thus, when the revolution began in Hungary, Khrushchev and his colleagues were concerned that intellectuals in the Soviet Union might try to provoke similar disturbances at home. The Soviet authorities saw disturbing parallels between the burgeoning dissidents' movement in the Soviet Union and the activities earlier in the

year of the Petofi Circle in Hungary. They feared that the use of repressive measures might not be enough to restore tight discipline, just as Rakosi's and Gero's efforts had failed in Hungary.<sup>124</sup>

These concerns seemed to gain credence when protests cropped up both before and after 4 November at higher educational institutions in the USSR, including Moscow State University (MGU). State Security (KGB) troops were dispatched to MGU to arrest students and faculty who had staged rallies "denouncing the Soviet military intervention" and had put up "anti-Soviet slogans and posters."<sup>125</sup> The KGB also cracked down harshly on demonstrations in Yaroslavl and other cities where students organized demonstrations and carried banners demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.<sup>126</sup> These incidents underlined the concerns that had prompted the CPSU Presidium's decision on 4 November to "purge all higher educational institutions of unsavory elements."<sup>127</sup> To deter further protests, the authorities ordered the arrests of other presumed dissidents in late 1956 and 1957, but some senior party officials wanted to undertake much more drastic action, launching a crackdown reminiscent of the Stalin era.<sup>128</sup> Their proposals were never formally adopted, but the disturbances in 1956 were enough for Soviet leaders to feel that the invasion of Hungary had narrowly averted a much worse spillover into the USSR.

A number of Western analysts, such as Charles Gati, had long suspected that concerns about a spillover from Hungary were one of the major factors in Soviet decision-making during the 1956 crisis.<sup>129</sup> The new evidence has amply corroborated that view.

### **Mikoyan's Continued Objections**

The pro-intervention consensus on 31 October was formed without the participation of Mikoyan and Suslov, who were still in Budapest. When the two officials returned to Moscow on the evening of the 31st to present their conclusions, they discovered that the matter had already been settled without them. Suslov evidently agreed with the

decision, but Mikoyan was dismayed by it, opposing it just as strongly as he had resisted the original decision on 23 October. Mikoyan pleaded with Khrushchev to call another meeting of the CPSU Presidium to reconsider the matter, but Khrushchev refused. According to Khrushchev's memoirs—which seem eminently plausible on this point—Mikoyan even threatened to commit suicide if Khrushchev did not reconvene the Presidium.<sup>130</sup> Khrushchev responded that it would be the “height of stupidity” to behave so “irrationally,” and he set off to take care of the final political and military preparations for the invasion. Had it not taken the CPSU Presidium so long and been so politically costly to reach a final decision about Hungary, Khrushchev might have been willing to comply with Mikoyan's request; but Khrushchev explained to Mikoyan that he was loath to “resume fruitless discussions” and “destroy our whole plan” now that “everything has been decided and a timetable has finally been laid out.”<sup>131</sup>

Despite these explanations, Mikoyan remained deeply upset by the decision, as he indicated at the Presidium meeting on 1 November (when Khrushchev had already headed off to Brest to inform the Polish leadership of the decision).<sup>132</sup> Mikoyan insisted that “the use of force now will not help anything,” and that “we should enter into negotiations instead.” Although he agreed that “we cannot let Hungary escape from our camp,” he argued that it was still possible to wait 10-15 days to see how the situation would unfold: “If things stabilize by then, we can decide whether to pull out our troops.” The other participants disagreed with Mikoyan, but he held his ground, arguing that an invasion was “inappropriate in the current circumstances.” In public, however, Mikoyan did not display any qualms. The first time that Mikoyan's objections were revealed was in Khrushchev's memoirs, and the Malin notes fully bear out Khrushchev's account.

Interestingly enough, in later years Mikoyan tried to gloss over his anti-interventionist stance in October 1956, arguing that the decision to send in

troops was unanimous.<sup>133</sup> Technically, this assertion was correct because the participants in the 31 October meeting did indeed approve the decision unanimously. What Mikoyan failed to point out is that if he had been present, the decision would not have been unanimous, just as he dissented from the original decision to send in troops on the night of 23-24 October. In spite of this subsequent backtracking, Mikoyan's position in October-November 1956 was in fact both courageous and consistent.

### Janos Kadar's Trip to Moscow

It had previously been known that Janos Kadar and Ferenc Munnich were spirited to Moscow aboard a Soviet military aircraft on the evening of 1 November, and were brought back with Soviet troops after 4 November to be installed as the prime minister and deputy prime minister of a “Provisional Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government.” Nothing was known, however, about what Kadar was doing in Moscow on 2 and 3 November. Almost all Western accounts of the Hungarian crisis have assumed that Kadar was duplicitous and supportive of Soviet military intervention from the outset. The Malin notes provide a more complex picture, offering the first solid evidence of Kadar's and Munnich's roles in the establishment of a post-invasion regime.

Both Kadar and Munnich took part in sessions of the CPSU Presidium on 2 and 3 November, though Kadar did most of the talking.<sup>134</sup> (On the 2nd they were joined by another Hungarian official, Istvan Bata, one of four senior figures who had been transported to Moscow several days earlier, on the evening of 28 October. On the 3rd, they were joined by Imre Horvath, who took detailed notes of the session.) On 2 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov were still away conferring with the leaders of other Warsaw Pact countries and with Tito, but the rest of the Presidium members met at length with Kadar and Munnich. On 3 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov joined in as well.

The notes from the two sessions

indicate that even though Kadar had been willing to travel surreptitiously to Moscow at a critical moment, he did not favor large-scale Soviet military intervention in Hungary. Nor did he arrive in Moscow intent on becoming the head of a new, post-invasion government. At the session on 2 November, Kadar warned that “the use of military force will be destructive and lead to bloodshed.” Such an outcome, he added, would “erode the authority of the socialist countries” and cause “the morale of the Communists [in Hungary] to be reduced to zero.”<sup>135</sup> The next day, Kadar's tone had changed somewhat, though not drastically. He highlighted the existing government's failure to prevent the “killing of Communists,” and said he “agreed with [Soviet officials]” that “you cannot surrender a socialist country to counterrevolution.” Kadar also asserted that “the correct course of action [in Hungary] is to form a revolutionary government.” But even then, he implied that a Soviet invasion would only make things worse—“The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary will be of great significance”—and warned that “the [revolutionary] government must not be puppetlike; there must be a [popular] base for its activities and support among workers.”<sup>136</sup> In this respect, his views differed sharply from those of Bata, who insisted that “order must be restored through a military dictatorship” imposed by the Soviet Army.<sup>137</sup>

It is also interesting that even on the 3rd, Kadar did not portray the recent events in Hungary in a uniformly negative light. Although he claimed that “Nagy's policy has counterrevolutionary aspects” and that “hour by hour the situation [in Hungary] is moving rightward,” he urged the Soviet leadership to recognize that the uprising had stemmed from genuine popular discontent and that “the HWP has been compromised in the eyes of the overwhelming masses.” He argued that “the entire nation took part in the movement” to “get rid of the Rakosi clique.”<sup>138</sup> Kadar's perspective at this time was far more nuanced and insightful than the rigid formulas adopted by his government in December 1956, which char-

acterized the whole uprising as no more than a “counterrevolution” instigated and supported by the West.

One other surprising aspect of Kadar’s remarks is that he made little effort to gloss over his own actions or to downplay the negative influence of Soviet policy. He gave a detailed account of the meetings of the Hungarian “inner cabinet” on 1 November, noting that he “was a supporter of the view that no sorts of steps should be taken without having spoken with Andropov.” This position, however, did not really distinguish Kadar from Nagy, who himself had summoned Andropov to the evening session for urgent consultations about Soviet troop movements.<sup>139</sup> Moreover, Kadar acknowledged that when the consultations were over, he joined the other members of Nagy’s cabinet in voting for the declaration of neutrality, the appeal to the United Nations, and the resolution demanding an immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary. On both the 2nd and 3rd of November, Kadar spoke harshly about past Soviet “mistakes” in Hungary, and was far more critical about Rakosi than about Nagy. His comments on this topic were echoed by Munnich, who argued that the fundamental “source of anti-Soviet sentiments” in Hungary was the population’s “certainty that the [Communist] regime exists and is preserved only through the support of the USSR.”

None of this is to imply that Kadar’s stance in early November was greatly beneficial to Hungary. Kadar was hardly naive, and the fact that he was willing to come to Moscow suggests that he advocated more forceful Soviet action. Nevertheless, the Malin notes do not bear out the notion that Kadar was a quisling from the very start. He took on that function after 4 November, but it was not the role he wanted or envisaged when he arrived in Moscow.

### The Invasion

The CPSU Presidium’s abrupt shift in favor of all-out intervention on 31 October, after more than a week of vacillation, left many political and military tasks to be carried out. Shortly before

the Presidium meeting, Khrushchev had spoken by phone with Gomulka, and the two men had arranged to meet the next day (1 November) in Brest, along the Soviet-Polish border. The Presidium designated Malenkov and Molotov to accompany Khrushchev to Brest. The Presidium also authorized Khrushchev and Malenkov to hold negotiations with Tito so they could try to gain at least tacit support from the Yugoslav leader. In addition, the Presidium approved Khrushchev’s suggestion that they “inform the Chinese comrades, the Czechs, the Romanians, and the Bulgarians” about the upcoming invasion.<sup>140</sup>

When the Presidium meeting adjourned, Khrushchev first contacted Liu Shaoqi and other senior Chinese officials who had been in Moscow for consultations since 23 October. The members of the Chinese delegation, who had kept in close touch with Mao Zedong during their visit, were getting set to return to Beijing on the 31st. Khrushchev wanted to inform them immediately about the new decision, rather than having them find out about it second-hand back in China. The entire CPSU Presidium traveled to Vnukovo Airport on the 31st to meet with the departing Chinese officials and smooth over any ruffled feathers.<sup>141</sup> Khrushchev was concerned that Liu Shaoqi might be upset when he learned about the sudden change in Soviet policy. During consultations with the Soviet leadership over the previous week, Liu Shaoqi had consistently expressed Mao’s view that the “working class of Hungary” must be permitted to “regain control of the situation and put down the uprising on its own,” without further Soviet interference. As late as 30 October, the Chinese delegates had called for Soviet relations with all other socialist states, including Hungary, to be based on the five principles of Pancha Shila: mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; non-aggression; non-interference in internal affairs; equality and mutual benefit; and peaceful coexistence.<sup>142</sup> The Soviet decision on 30 October seemed to be in full conformity with these principles, but the *volte-face* on 31 October raised doubts about Chinese reactions.

It turned out, however, that the talks with Liu Shaoqi were much less onerous than expected. After Khrushchev explained why the Soviet leadership had reversed its position, the Chinese delegates condoned the change and promised to go over the matter carefully with Mao. Even before the delegation returned to China, Mao’s own view of the situation was gradually changing as a result of intelligence reports and diplomatic cables flowing into Beijing. It is unclear precisely when Mao shifted unambiguously in favor of the invasion, but the last-minute consultations at Vnukovo Airport may well have been decisive in allowing the Soviet Union to gain strong Chinese backing.<sup>143</sup>

With that task accomplished, Khrushchev and Malenkov were able to set off a few hours later for their rapid series of top-secret meetings with leaders of the other Warsaw Pact countries.<sup>144</sup> At the first such meeting, in Brest, Khrushchev and Malenkov were joined by Molotov for talks with a Polish delegation consisting of Gomulka, Jozef Cyrankiewicz, and Edward Ochab. This meeting was regarded as particularly sensitive and unpredictable because the political situation in Poland was still so turbulent. The three Soviet negotiators hoped to defuse most of Gomulka’s objections, but their efforts in this regard were largely unsuccessful. Although the Polish leader agreed that the “counterrevolution” in Hungary had to be suppressed, he strongly objected to the use of Soviet military force. Khrushchev soon realized that he would not be able to convince Gomulka that direct intervention was necessary, and the Soviet leader was not even sure by the end of the meeting whether Gomulka would refrain from publicly criticizing the action.<sup>145</sup>

Khrushchev’s concerns were not entirely unfounded. Shortly after Gomulka and his colleagues returned to Warsaw, they convened an emergency session of the PZPR Politburo, which “expressed opposition to the USSR’s armed intervention in Hungary.”<sup>146</sup> The Polish Politburo also endorsed the publication of a statement affirming that the crisis should be resolved “by the

Hungarian people alone and not by foreign intervention.” This statement appeared (in slightly modified form) in the PZPR newspaper *Trybuna Ludu* the following day.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, on 2 November, Gomulka publicly offered Warsaw as a forum for Soviet-Hungarian negotiations, which he (and Imre Nagy) hoped would “lead to the settlement of problems in bilateral relations.”<sup>148</sup> When Gomulka’s last-ditch efforts proved futile and the invasion began as scheduled on 4 November, the Polish leader briefly considered voicing his objections openly. After further thought, however, Gomulka decided that he should maintain a discreet public stance to avoid undue antagonism with Moscow.<sup>149</sup> At his behest, the PZPR Politburo instructed the Polish envoy at the United Nations to vote against a U.S.-sponsored resolution condemning the Soviet invasion.<sup>150</sup> Gomulka remained distinctly uneasy about the whole matter, but he kept his reservations out of public view. To that extent, the Soviet consultations with Polish officials in Brest on 1 November were a qualified success. Had Gomulka not been informed at all about the invasion beforehand, he might well have been inclined to adopt a much less accommodating position when Soviet troops moved in.

The Soviet consultations after the Brest meeting went far more smoothly. Molotov returned to Moscow on the 1st so that he could inform the other members of the CPSU Presidium about Gomulka’s reaction. In the meantime, Khrushchev and Malenkov traveled to Bucharest, where they spoke with top Romanian, Czechoslovak, and Bulgarian officials. Not surprisingly, the delegations from all three East European countries vehemently endorsed the Soviet decision. The Czechoslovak leader, Antonin Novotny, and the Romanian leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, reemphasized the concerns they had been expressing over the past several days about the growing spillover from the revolution. They were joined by the Bulgarian leader, Todor Zhivkov, in arguing that “it is essential to adopt every appropriate measure, including military intervention, as soon as possible”

to combat “imperialist intrigues” and “preserve the system of people’s democracy in Hungary.”<sup>151</sup>

On 2 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov flew to Yugoslavia, where they met with Tito at his villa on the Adriatic island of Brioni from 7 p.m. until 5 a.m. the following day.<sup>152</sup> When the two Soviet leaders were *en route* to Brioni, they were apprehensive—particularly after the recent session in Brest with Gomulka—that Tito, too, would strongly oppose the Soviet decision; but their concerns proved to be unwarranted. During the ten hours of talks, Khrushchev declined to provide Tito with a precise timetable for the invasion, but he made clear that Soviet troops would soon be intervening in Hungary to “defend socialism” and “halt the killing of honest Communists.” The Yugoslav leader, for his part, left no doubt that he agreed with the Soviet decision, if only because it was the sole remaining way to “crush the counterrevolution” and “prevent the restoration of capitalism in Hungary.” Tito’s earlier support for Nagy had essentially disappeared by this point.<sup>153</sup>

When the question came up of who should be brought in to replace Nagy, Khrushchev mentioned that Janos Kadar and Ferenc Munnich were the leading candidates, with a decided preference for the latter. Tito and other Yugoslav officials at the talks (Edvard Kardelj, Aleksander Rankovic, and the Yugoslav ambassador to Moscow, Veljko Micunovic) argued that it would be better to go with Kadar because of his credentials as a prisoner during the Stalin-era purges, and the Soviet leaders readily agreed. Tito also urged Khrushchev and Malenkov to be sure that the new “Provisional Workers’ and Peasants’ Government” would condemn the Rakosi era and adopt reforms needed to win popular support. Khrushchev assented to these proposals (except for Tito’s suggestion that the newly-formed workers’ councils in Hungary be preserved), and in return Tito pledged to use his special contacts with Geza Losonczy (a close aide to Nagy) to try to persuade Nagy to step down immediately, before Soviet troops entered. That way, the existing Hun-

garian government would collapse, and the Soviet intervention would not appear to be directed against a specific leader.<sup>154</sup> It turned out that Tito was unable or unwilling to fulfill his promise—a failure that caused great irritation in Moscow later on—but Khrushchev did not foresee that when he left Brioni.<sup>155</sup> Even if he had foreseen it, the very fact that Tito was so firmly supportive of the upcoming invasion was enough for Khrushchev to regard the talks as a “pleasant surprise.”<sup>156</sup>

On the morning of 3 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov returned to Moscow having largely accomplished their task of overcoming any reservations that allied Communist states (with the exception of Poland) might have about the impending military action. Khrushchev had ample reason to be pleased when he briefly presented the results of the talks at a CPSU Presidium meeting later that day.<sup>157</sup>

The military side of the invasion proceeded just as rapidly as the political consultations. On 1 November, Marshal Konev was appointed the supreme commander of Soviet forces in Hungary. That same day, tens of thousands of Soviet troops, who had supposedly been withdrawing from Hungary, instead received orders to move back into Budapest to quell the uprising. They were reinforced by many tens of thousands of additional Soviet troops who had been congregating in Romania and the Transcarpathian Military District, along Hungary’s southern and eastern borders.<sup>158</sup> Some consideration was given to having Romanian and Bulgarian soldiers take part alongside the Soviet forces and to having Czechoslovak troops move in simultaneously from the north.<sup>159</sup> Romanian and Bulgarian leaders had told Khrushchev that “they wanted to have their own military units participate in . . . the struggle against the Hungarian counterrevolution,” and the Czechoslovak Politburo likewise expressed its “readiness not only to support intervention, but also to take an active part in it.”<sup>160</sup> In the end, however, Khrushchev and his colleagues decided that the invasion should be carried out

exclusively by Soviet troops. Although one might have thought that Marshal Konev, as commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, would have preferred a joint operation with the East European armies, he in fact was among those who recommended that the task be left to the Soviet Union alone.

To ensure that mistakes made during the initial Soviet intervention in late October would not be repeated, Konev met with General Lashchenko and other Soviet officers who had been in Hungary from the outset.<sup>161</sup> For a variety of reasons, as one of Lashchenko's aides later explained, the Soviet Union's chances of success were much greater during the second intervention:

In November our combat operations took place under more auspicious circumstances than at the end of October. Budapest was already under martial law; armed groups were less successful in carrying out sudden attacks; and our troops controlled the situation on the city streets. We also had a lot more forces and equipment at our disposal than in October. In addition, our troops were no longer hampered by contradictory directives issued by the Hungarian government (whether and when to open fire, etc.), which had seriously impeded our troops' actions and resulted in needless casualties. . . . The considerable experience acquired by our units in October also contributed to the greater success of our subsequent operations.<sup>162</sup>

In addition to helping out with the final military plans, Lashchenko retained a key command role in Budapest. Responsibility for operations elsewhere in Hungary was assigned to General Mikhail Kazakov and General Mikhail Malinin, both of whom had played a key part in the earlier intervention.

One of Kazakov's first tasks was to ensure that enough Soviet troops were deployed along the border with Austria to forestall any prospect of Western intervention. Soviet leaders decided to err on the side of caution in this regard, not least because Nagy and his colleagues had made a last-ditch attempt on 1 November to obtain military support from either the United Nations or NATO by combining Hungary's formal withdrawal from the Warsaw

Pact and its declaration of neutrality with an appeal to the UN General Assembly.<sup>163</sup> Any hopes of receiving outside support, however, were quickly dashed. The United States expressly prohibited NATO forces from taking any actions that might be deemed at all provocative.<sup>164</sup> Once it was clear that the "imperialist" armies would not be intervening, Konev and his subordinates were able to concentrate their planning and resources on Budapest and other cities where the revolution was at its height.

The West's failure to intervene left Nagy's government in a hopeless situation. Although Hungarian army units had been fighting mainly on the side of the rebels since 28 October (when a ceasefire was declared and a National Guard was formed), the military overall could no longer function as a cohesive whole.<sup>165</sup> In early November, Hungarian defense minister Pal Maleter began preparing as best he could to defend against a Soviet attack, but in the absence of Western military support Nagy was reluctant to order large-scale armed resistance, for fear of precipitating mass bloodshed without any possibility of victory.<sup>166</sup> Among other things, Nagy was well aware that the Soviet Union had systematically penetrated the Hungarian military establishment from the late 1940s on. He feared that dozens of Soviet agents who were still entrenched in the Hungarian officer corps and national defense ministry, as well as a "field staff for Soviet troops in Budapest that operated in direct contact with the Hungarians" from the outset of the crisis, would prevent most of the Hungarian army from being used to support the government.<sup>167</sup> As a result, the majority of Hungarian troops remained confined to their barracks on 4 November and were systematically disarmed by Soviet forces that reentered Budapest.<sup>168</sup> Although some middle- and lower-ranking Hungarian officers, conscripts, and reservists, under the leadership of General Bela Kiraly, took up arms in a last-ditch defense of the uprising, their efforts could not make up for the inaction of most Hungarian soldiers.

Early in the morning of 4 Novem-

ber, a final signal was given for Operation "Whirlwind" (*Vikhr*—the code-name of the invasion) to commence. The fighting in Budapest and many other cities on 4, 5, and 6 November was intense, and even in a small town like Dunapetele the defenders managed to hold out for four days despite being hopelessly outnumbered.<sup>169</sup> Eventually, though, Soviet forces crushed the resistance and installed a pro-Soviet government under Kadar and Munnich. Officials in Moscow were able to maintain direct contact with the new Hungarian government via Leonid Brezhnev and Anastas Mikoyan, who had been sent to Budapest on 3 November for precisely that reason.<sup>170</sup> Some limited fighting continued in Hungary until 11 November, especially in areas well outside Budapest (notably in Pecs, where some 200 fighters held out until the 14th), but the revolution was effectively over by the 8th. Marshal Konev had promised Khrushchev on 31 October that it would take Soviet troops three to four days to "destroy the counterrevolutionary forces and restore order in Hungary," and his forecast was largely borne out.<sup>171</sup>

### Further Rifts Within the Soviet Leadership

Even after the final decision to intervene on a massive scale was adopted on 31 October, the leadership struggle continued to buffet Soviet deliberations about Hungary. This was evident not only at the Presidium meeting on 1 November, when Mikoyan (having just returned to Moscow) tried to undo the decision to invade, but also at the meetings held during the first few days of the invasion, on 4-6 November.<sup>172</sup> Molotov and Kaganovich disagreed with the others about the best way to handle the post-invasion regime in Hungary. Initially, Molotov had wanted the former prime minister Andras Hegedus, who had escaped to Moscow on 28 October, to be made the head of a new "Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government." Such a step, Molotov claimed, would simply amount to the reinstatement of Hegedus's government as the legitimate authority in Hungary.

(Hegedus had been prime minister in the government that immediately preceded Nagy's return to power in October 1956.) Molotov averred that Janos Kadar was still a furtive supporter of Nagy and should not be given any top post. Although Molotov eventually backed down on this issue, he continued to insist that it was improper for Kadar's new government to condemn the "Rakosi-Gero clique" and to give a new name to the revived Hungarian Communist party. These differences produced a number of acerbic exchanges with Khrushchev and other Presidium members. On 4 November, Khrushchev declared that he "simply cannot understand Cde. Molotov; he always comes up with the most pernicious [*vredneishie*] ideas." Molotov responded by telling Khrushchev that he "should keep quiet and stop being so overbearing."<sup>173</sup>

The exchanges became even more acrimonious at the session on 6 November, where Molotov brought a flood of criticism upon himself by declaring his "vehement objection" to Khrushchev's ideas about the regime that Janos Kadar was establishing in Hungary. Maksim Saburov accused Molotov and Kaganovich of being "rigid and dogmatic," and Mikoyan insisted that "Cde. Molotov is completely ignoring the concrete situation and is dragging us backward." Averki Aristov noted that "Cdes. Molotov and Kaganovich were always transfixed by Stalin's cult, and they are still transfixed by it." Severest of all were the criticisms that Khrushchev himself expressed, accusing Molotov and Kaganovich of wanting to indulge in "screeching and face-slapping." He expressed particular disdain for Kaganovich, asking him "when are you finally going to mend your ways and stop all this toadying [to Molotov]?"

In June 1957, when the leadership struggle reached its peak, the Hungarian crisis resurfaced. One of the accusations leveled by Molotov and other members of the "Anti-Party Group" against Khrushchev was what they described as his mismanagement of intrabloc affairs. Molotov argued that Khrushchev had committed "dangerous zigzags" vis-a-vis Eastern Europe and

had "ignored the impact of [the Soviet Union's] actions on other socialist countries"—charges that were not entirely without merit.<sup>174</sup> Khrushchev managed to deflect those allegations and to oust his opponents, but the events in both Hungary and Poland in 1956 had highlighted the risks of allowing de-Stalinization in Eastern Europe to move too fast. Although Khrushchev cemented his status as the top leader in 1957, he pursued a much more cautious policy in Eastern Europe from then on.

### Consequences and Costs

By reestablishing military control over Hungary and by exposing—more dramatically than in 1953—the emptiness of the "roll-back" and "liberation" rhetoric in the West, the Soviet invasion in November 1956 stemmed any further loss of Soviet power in Eastern Europe. Shortly after the invasion, Khrushchev acknowledged that U.S.-Soviet relations were likely to deteriorate for a considerable time, but he indicated that he was ready to pay that price because the Soviet Union "had proved to the West that [it is] strong and resolute" while "the West is weak and divided."<sup>175</sup> U.S. officials, for their part, were even more aware than they had been in 1953 of how limited their options were in Eastern Europe. Senior members of the Eisenhower administration conceded that the most they could do in the future was "to encourage peaceful evolutionary changes" in the region, and they warned that the United States must avoid conveying any impression "either directly or by implication . . . that American military help will be forthcoming" to anti-Communist forces.<sup>176</sup> Any lingering U.S. hopes of directly challenging Moscow's sphere of influence in Eastern Europe thus effectively ended.

Despite these obvious benefits for Soviet policy, the revolts in both Poland and Hungary in 1956 had demonstrated serious weaknesses in the region that would continue to endanger Soviet control. The bloodiness of the three-day conflict in Hungary, in which roughly 22,000 Hungarians and nearly 2,300 Soviet soldiers died or were wounded,

underscored the extent of popular opposition both to the Communist regime and to the Soviet role in Eastern Europe.<sup>177</sup> Two years of intensive "normalization," including wholesale purges, arrests, deportations, and executions, culminating in the executions (by hanging) of Nagy and Pal Maleter in June 1958, were carried out to eliminate the most active opposition to Kadar's regime. By the time the process was completed, more than 100,000 people had been arrested, 35,000 had been tried for "counterrevolutionary acts," nearly 26,000 had been sentenced to prison, and as many as 600 had been executed.<sup>178</sup> Similarly, in Poland the Poznan riots and the mass protest rallies that preceded and accompanied Gomulka's return to power were indicative of widespread disaffection with the extant political system. That discontent merely festered in subsequent years, as Gomulka gradually abandoned the reformist mantle and reverted to an orthodox Communist approach. Ironically, it was Kadar, not Gomulka, who ended up pursuing a more relaxed political and economic line once he had consolidated his hold on power; and as a result, Hungary experienced no further instances of violent upheaval and mass disorder. By contrast, Gomulka's eschewal of genuine reform left Poland as politically unstable as ever by the time he was forced out in December 1970.

The events of 1956 also made Soviet leaders aware of the urgent need for improved economic conditions in Eastern Europe, insofar as the unrest in both Poland and Hungary—and in East Germany three years earlier—had stemmed, at least initially, from economic discontent. The danger of allowing "basic economic and social problems to go unresolved" was one of the main lessons that Khrushchev emphasized to his colleagues from the very start: "Ideological work alone will be of no avail if we do not ensure that living standards rise. It is no accident that Hungary and Poland are the countries in which unrest has occurred."<sup>179</sup> Khrushchev also concluded that the rectification of "certain inequalities in our economic relations with the fraternal

countries” would be “crucial to the process of normalization” in both Poland and Hungary.<sup>180</sup> Although Kadar was eventually able to redress some of the most acute economic grievances in Hungary through the adoption of a New Economic Mechanism in 1968 and other reforms in subsequent years, his retention of state ownership and centralized economic management thwarted any hope of genuine prosperity. This was even more the case in Poland, where, despite some leeway granted for private activity (especially in agriculture, retail trade, and light industry), the economic policies under Gomulka and his successors spawned periodic outbreaks of widespread public unrest. No matter how often the Polish authorities claimed that they would pursue drastic economic improvements, they always proved unwilling to accept the political price that such improvements would have necessitated.

From a purely military standpoint, the invasion in November 1956 achieved its immediate goals, but in the longer term it exacted significant costs. When the revolution was crushed by Soviet troops, the morale and fighting elan of the Hungarian armed forces were bound to dissolve as well. The remains of the Hungarian army were regarded by Soviet commanders (and by Kadar) as politically and militarily unreliable. More than 8,000 officers, including a large number who had attended Soviet military colleges and academies, were forced out of the Hungarian armed forces in late 1956 and 1957.<sup>181</sup> The country’s army thus essentially disintegrated and had to be rebuilt almost from scratch, leaving a gap in Warsaw Pact military planning and combat preparations for many years thereafter.

From a diplomatic standpoint as well, the invasion entailed significant costs, at least in the short term. The large-scale use of force in Hungary alienated numerous Third World countries that had been sedulously courted by the Soviet Union. A top-secret memorandum prepared in December 1956 by Igor Tugarinov, a senior official at the Soviet Foreign Ministry, acknowledged that there had been a “sig-

nificant increase in hostile statements about the Soviet Union” in key South Asian countries, including India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and Indonesia.<sup>182</sup> Tugarinov noted that the governments in these countries, and even many leftist commentators there, were publicly “drawing an analogy between the English-French-Israeli aggression in Egypt and the participation of Soviet troops in the suppression of the counterrevolutionary uprising in Hungary.” The report cited an official protest from the Indian government in mid-December which declared that “the events in Hungary have shattered the beliefs of millions who had begun to look upon the USSR as the defender of peace and of the rights of the weakest people.” What was even more disturbing, according to Tugarinov, was the “increased prestige that the United States had derived from recent events in Hungary and the Near East.” While Asian officials were condemning Soviet “aggression” in Hungary as “a direct violation of the spirit and letter of the Bandung Conference declaration,” they were making “extremely favorable” references to the “U.S. position in both Hungary and Suez.” Tugarinov reported that some Indian officials had even begun insisting that “it makes sense for India to reorient its foreign policy more closely toward the United States.” This raised the “distinct possibility,” in Tugarinov’s view, that “there will be a major improvement in Indo-American relations, with a detrimental impact on India’s relations with the USSR.” Although the adverse effects of the 1956 invasion on Soviet-Third World relations proved, for the most part, to be relatively ephemeral, the suppression of the uprising did cause at least temporary disruption in Khrushchev’s strategy vis-a-vis the Non-Aligned Movement.

Finally, the fact that an invasion had been necessary at all underscored the dangers of Moscow’s incoherent and drifting policy in Eastern Europe following Stalin’s death. Khrushchev was well aware of the potential for recriminations, as he indicated during his conversation with Tito in early November:

[If we had failed to take action], there are people in the Soviet Union who would say that as long as Stalin was in command, everyone obeyed and there were no great shocks, but now that [these new bastards] have come to power, Russia has suffered the defeat and loss of Hungary.<sup>183</sup>

This point was further highlighted by the acrimonious exchanges during the CPSU Presidium meetings in early November (see the previous section) and by the accusations which the Anti-Party Group lodged against Khrushchev in June 1957, as cited above. Ultimately, Khrushchev was able to overcome the political fallout from the two crises, but the events of 1956 clearly took their toll on the process of de-Stalinization in Eastern Europe. Even though Khrushchev suspected that the Warsaw Pact countries would remain vulnerable to recurrent crises unless the indigenous regimes became more “viable” and the Soviet Union forged a more equitable relationship, he was determined to proceed far more cautiously in the future.<sup>184</sup> Repressive leaders in Eastern Europe, such as Walter Ulbricht in East Germany, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej in Romania, Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria, and Antonin Novotny in Czechoslovakia, were able to win even stronger backing from Khrushchev because they convinced him that their presence was the only safeguard against “unexpected developments” of the sort that occurred in Hungary and Poland. When faced with a tradeoff between the “viability” of the East European regimes and the “cohesion” of the Eastern bloc after 1956, Khrushchev consistently chose to emphasize cohesion, thus forestalling any real movement toward a more durable political order.<sup>185</sup>

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This brief review of some of the latest findings about the 1956 crises leaves numerous topics unaddressed, but it should be enough to indicate that the new archival evidence does not just confirm what everyone knew all along. More often than not, the new evidence undercuts long-established views and

reveals unknown events. Disagreements about how to interpret the past will persist even if all the archives are someday open, but the new documentation is enabling scholars to achieve a far more accurate and complete understanding not only of specific episodes (e.g., the Soviet Union's responses to the Polish and Hungarian crises) but of the entire course of the Cold War.

<sup>1</sup> "Zayavlenie rukovoditelei Bolgarii, Vengrii, GDR, Pol'shi, i Sovetskogo Soyuza" and "Zayavlenie Sovetskogo Soyuza," both in *Pravda* (Moscow), 5 December 1989, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> F. Luk'yanov, "Vengriya privetsvuet zayavlenie Moskvu," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 24 October 1991, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Army-General A.D. Lizichev, "Oktyabr' i Leninskoe uchenie o zashchite revolyutsii," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 3 (February 1987), p. 96; Admiral A. I. Sorokin, ed., *Sovetskie vooruzhenye sily na strazhe mira i sotsializma* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), p. 254; V. V. Semin, ed., *Voенно-politicheskoe sotrudnichestvo sotsialisticheskikh stran* (Moscow: Nauka, 1988), esp. pp. 127-141, 181-220; and the interview with Army-General V.N. Lobov in "I tol'ko pravda ko dvoru," *Izvestiya* (Moscow), 8 May 1989, pp. 1, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Colonel I.A. Klimov, "KPSS ob ukreplenii edinstva i boevogo sotrudnichestva vooruzhenykh sil sotsialisticheskikh stran," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 5 (May 1987), p. 80.

<sup>5</sup> V.F. Khalipov, *Voennaya politika KPSS* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1988), esp. pp. 256-257.

<sup>6</sup> Army-General P. I. Lashchenko, "Vengriya, 1956 god," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 9 (September 1989), pp. 42-50.

<sup>7</sup> Budapest Domestic Service, 28 January 1989.

<sup>8</sup> "TsK KPSS: Ob izuchenii arkhivov TsK KPSS, kasayushchikhsya sobytii 1956 g. v Vengrii," Report No. 06/2-513 (Secret), from R. Fedorov and P. Laptev, deputy heads of the CPSU CC International Department and CPSU CC General Department, respectively, 23 November 1990, in Tsentr Khraneniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii (TsKhSD), Moscow, Fond (F.) 89, Opis' (Op.) 11, Delo (D.) 23, List (L.) 1. The memorandum warned that the "new Hungarian authorities" were "clearly intending to use this question [i.e., the 1956 invasion] as a means of pressure against us." For the article praising the invasion, see Lieut.-Colonel Jozsef Forigy, "O kontrrevolyutsii v Vengrii 1956 goda," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 8 (August 1990), pp. 39-46. This article was explicitly intended to counter the "trai-

torous revisionists" in Hungary who had claimed that the events of 1956 were a "popular uprising" and who in 1989-90 were carrying out a second "counterrevolution." The article was unstinting in its denunciation of the "traitors" led by Imre Nagy and of the "new counterrevolutionaries in our midst today who regard themselves as the heirs of 1956." The chief editor of the Soviet journal, Major-General Viktor Filatov, endorsed the Hungarian author's arguments and warmly recommended the article to his readers. Filatov added that "upon reading the article, one cannot help but notice features of that [earlier] counter-revolutionary period that are similar to the changes occurring in the East European countries at the present time."

<sup>9</sup> *Jelcin-dosszje Szoviet dokumentumok 1956 rol*. Budapest: Dohany, 1993; and *Hianyzo Lapok: 1956 tortenetebol: Dokumentumok a volt SZKP KP Leveltarabol* (Budapest: Zenit Konyvek, 1993).

<sup>10</sup> "O sobytiyakh 1956 goda v Vengrii," *Diplomaticeskii vestnik* (Moscow), Nos. 19-20 (15-31 October 1992), pp. 52-56.

<sup>11</sup> "Vengriya, aprel'-oktyabr' 1956 goda: Informatsiya Yu. V. Andropova, A. I. Mikoyana i M. A. Suslova iz Budapeshta"; "Vengriya, oktyabr'-noyabr' 1956 goda: Iz arkhiva TsK KPSS"; and "Vengriya, noyabr' 1956-avgust 1957 g.," all in *Istoricheskii arkhiv* (Moscow), Nos. 4, 5, and 6 (1993), pp. 103-142, 132-160, and 131-144, respectively.

<sup>12</sup> See, in particular, the segment of Khrushchev's memoirs published in "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," *Voprosy istorii* (Moscow), No. 4 (1995), pp. 68-84. Another extremely useful account is available in the memoir by the former Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow, Veljko Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, trans. by David Floyd (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980). Because of his fluency in Russian and close ties with Tito, Micunovic regularly had direct contacts with Khrushchev and other senior figures. Less reliable, but potentially illuminating (if used with caution), are the relevant portions of the memoir by the police chief in Budapest during the revolution, Sandor Kopacsi, *Au nom de la classe ouvriere* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1979), which is also available in English translation under the same title (*In the Name of the Working Class*). Kopacsi ended up siding with the insurgents and was arrested in November 1956. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in June 1958, but was granted amnesty in 1963. In 1974 he was permitted to emigrate to Canada.

<sup>13</sup> A few well-connected Russians have had privileged access to Malin's notes from the Presidium

meetings dealing with Khrushchev's secret speech at the 20th CPSU Congress, but these notes have not been made more widely available. See V. P. Naumov, "K istorii sekretnogo doklada N. S. Khrushcheva na XX s'ezde KPSS," *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya* (Moscow), No. 4 (July-August 1996), pp. 147-168; Vladimir Naumov, "'Utverdit' dokladchikom tovarishcha,'" *Moskovskie Novosti*, No. 5 (4-11 February 1996), p. 34; and Aleksei Bogomolov, "K 40-letiyu XX s'ezda: Taina zakrytogo doklada," *Sovershenno sekretno* (Moscow), No. 1 (1996), pp. 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> Vyacheslav Sereda and Janos M. Rainer, eds., *Dontes a Kremben, 1956: A szovjet partelnokseg vitai Magyarorszagrol* (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1996).

<sup>15</sup> The notes about Hungary appeared in two parts under the title "Kak reshalis' 'voprosy Vengrii': Rabochie zapisi zasedanii Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, iyul'-noyabr' 1956 g.," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* (Moscow), Nos. 2 and 3 (1996), pp. 73-104 and 87-121, respectively. The notes about Poland appeared in Issue No. 5 of the same journal.

<sup>16</sup> See the assessment of this meeting and the annotated translation of the Czech notes by Mark Kramer, "Hungary and Poland, 1956: Khrushchev's CPSU CC Presidium Meeting on East European Crises, 24 October 1956," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue No. 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 1, 50-56. The Czech document, "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956 k situaci v Polsku a Mad'arsku," 25 October 1956, in Statni Ustredni Archiv (Praha), Archiv Ustredniho Vyboru Komunisticke Strany Ceskoslovenska (Arch. UV KSC), Fond (F.) 07/16 — A. Novotny, Svazek (Sv.) 3, was compiled by Jan Svoboda, a senior aide to the then-leader of Czechoslovakia, Antonin Novotny, who attended the CPSU Presidium meeting.

<sup>17</sup> Lieut.-General E. I. Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta," *Voенно-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), Nos. 10, 11, and 12 (October, November, and December 1993) and No. 1 (January 1994), pp. 22-30; 44-51, 33-37, and 30-36, respectively.

<sup>18</sup> See the analysis and valuable collection of declassified documents in Edward Jan Nalepa, *Pacyfikacja zbuntowanego miasta: Wojsko Polskie w Czerwcu 1956 r. w Poznaniu w swietle dokumentow wojskowych* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Bellona, 1992). For broader overviews of the crisis, see Jan Ptasinski, *Wydarzenia poznanskie czerwiec 1956* (Warsaw: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1986); Jaroslaw Maciejewski and Zofia Trojanowicz, eds., *Poznanski Czerwiec 1956* (Poznan: Wydawnictwo Poznanskie, 1990); and Maciej



Roman Bombicki, *Poznan '56* (Poznan: Lawica, 1992).

19 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 9 i 12 iyulya 1956 g.," 12 July 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 2-2ob.

20 "Pol'skii narod kleimit organizatorov provokatsii," *Pravda* (Moscow), 1 July 1956, p. 6.

21 The best overview of the events in Poland in 1956 is Pawel Machcewicz, *Polski rok 1956* (Warsaw: Oficyna Wydawnicza, 1993). Leszek Gluchowski has done excellent work on the Soviet-Polish crisis; see, for example, his "Poland, 1956: Khrushchev, Gomulka, and the 'Polish October'," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue No. 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 1, 38-49. See also Jerzy Pokinski, "Wojsko Polskie w 1956 r. — problemy polityczne (1) i (2)," *Wojsko i Wychowanie* (Warsaw), Nos. 1-2 (1992), pp. 40-78; and Robert Los, *Pazdziernik 1956 roku w perspektywie stosunkow polsko-radzieckich*, Ph.D. Diss., University of Lodz, 1993. For a sample of other perspectives on the 1956 Polish crisis, see Zbyslaw Rykowski and Wieslaw Wladyka, *Polska proba Pazdziernik '56* (Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1989), pp. 232-234; *Sprawozdanie z prac Komisii KC PZPR powolanej dla wyjasnienia przyczyn i przebiegu konfliktow spolecznuch w dziejach Polski Ludowej*, special issue of *Nowe Drogi* (Warsaw), September 1983, see esp. pp. 21-32; Benon Dymek, ed., *Pazdziernik 1956: Szkice historyczne* (Warsaw: Akademia Nauk Spolecznych, 1989); Bogdan Hillebrandt, ed., *Ideowopolityczne kontrowersje i konflikty lat 1956-1970* (Warsaw: Akademia Nauk Spolecznych, 1986); Grzegorz Matuszak, *Kryzysy spoleczno-polityczne w procesie budowy socjalizmu w Polsce Ludowej* (Warsaw: Akademia Nauk Spolecznych PZPR, 1986); and Antoni Czubinski, "Kryzys polityczny 1956 roku w Polsce," in Antoni Czubinski, ed., *Kryzysy spoleczno-polityczne w Polsce Ludowej* (Warsaw: Instytut Podstawowych Problemow Marksizmu-Leninizmu, 1983), pp. 80-114.

22 "Zapis' besedy N. S. Khrushcheva v Varshave," No. 233 (Special Dossier — Strictly Secret), notes by A. Mikoyan, 19-20 October 1956, in Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (APRF), F. 3, Op. 65, D. 2, Ll. 1-14. Further details about this meeting are contained in "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956," Ll. 1-4.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.* and "Zapis' besedy N. S. Khrushcheva v Varshave," L. 4.

25 At the time, there were still 79 Soviet officers, including 28 generals, serving in the Polish army. See Edward Jan Nalepa, *Oficerowie Radziecky w Wojsku Polskim w latach 1943-1968: Studium historyczno-wojskowe* (Warsaw: Wojskowy Instytut Historyczny, 1992), p. 43. For a valuable discussion of the military confrontation, see "Wojskowe aspekty pazdziernika 1956 r.," *Polska Zbrojna* (Warsaw), 18-20 October 1991, p. 3.

26 This account is based on documents recently declassified at the Internal Military Service Archive (*Archiwum Wojskowej Sluzby Wewnetrznej*, or AWSW) and the Central Military Archive (*Centralne Archiwum Wojskowe*, or CAW) in Warsaw, which were provided to the author by Leszek Gluchowski. See, in particular, the two reports compiled by Major Witold Osinski, deputy chief of the 2nd Section of the KBW's Military Counterintelligence Directorate, in AWSW, sygn. 2859/20/K and CAW, sygn. 1812/92/8. See also the invaluable first-hand account by Wlodzimierz Mus, the KBW commander at the time, "Spor generalow o Pazdziernik 1956: Czy grozila interwencja zbrojna?" *Polityka* (Warsaw), No. 42 (20 October 1990), p. 14.

27 "Zapis' besedy N. S. Khrushcheve v Varshave," L. 4.

28 Comments by Stefan Staszewski, former PZPR CC Secretary, in Teresa Toranska, ed., *Oni* (London: Aneks, 1985), p. 148.

29 "Komunikat o naradach Biura Politycznego KC PZPR i delegacji KC KPZR w Warszawie," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 20 October 1956, p. 1.

30 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 20 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 20 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 49-50.

31 This was evident, for example, when Ochab stopped in Moscow in September 1956 on his way back from Beijing. See "Priem Posla Pol'skoi Narodnoi Respubliki v SSSR tov. V. Levikovskogo, 10 sentyabrya 1956 g.," 11 September 1956 (Secret), memorandum from N. Patolichev, Soviet deputy foreign minister, in Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. Referentura po Pol'she, Op. 38, Por. 9, Papka, 126, D. 031, L. 1.

32 "Antisovetskaya kompaniya v pol'skoi presse," *Pravda* (Moscow), 20 October 1956, p. 1.

33 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 21 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 21 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 2.

34 "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956," L. 8.

35 Jacek Kuron, *Wiara i wina: Do i od*

*komunizmu* (Warsaw: BGW, 1990), p. 119.

36 Mus, "Czy grozila interwencja zbrojna?" p. 14.

37 "Przemowienie towarzysza Wladyslawa Gomulki," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 25 October 1956, p. 1, which appeared under the banner headline "Ponad 300 tysiecy warszawiakow na spotkaniu z nowym kierownictwem partii."

38 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 26 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 26 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, L. 53.

39 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 21 oktyabrya 1956 g.," L. 2.

40 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 23 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 23 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 4-4ob.

41 Compare Khrushchev's account in "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva" with Molotov's less favorable reminiscences in Feliks Chuev, ed., *Sto sorok besed s Molotovym* (Moscow: Terra, 1991), p. 113.

42 Khrushchev's comments, as recorded in Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, p. 139.

43 "Telefogramma po VCh," 15 November 1956 (Top Secret), from I. Maslennikov of the Soviet embassy in Warsaw, in AVPRF, F. Referentura po Pol'she, Op. 38, Por. 20, Pap. 127, D. 178, Ll. 32-33.

44 Quotations are from "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 23 oktyabrya 1956 g.," L. 4; and "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 28 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 28 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, L. 58.

45 For the full transcript of these sessions, see "Jegyzokonyv a Szovjet es a Magyar part-es allami vezetok targyalasairol," 13-16 June 1953 (Top Secret), in Magyar Orszagos Leveltar, 276, F. 102/65, oe. The document was declassified in 1991 and published the following year in the Hungarian journal *Multunk*. A preliminary translation by Monika Borbely was included in Christian F. Ostermann, ed., *The Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and the 17 June Uprising in East Germany: The Hidden History*, a compendium of documents prepared by the Cold War International History Project (CWIHP) and the National Security Archive for a November 1996 international conference (hosted by the Center for Contemporary History Research in Potsdam) on "The Crisis Year 1953 and the Cold War in Europe."

46 "Plenum TsK KPSS — XIX Sozyv: Stenogramma chetyrnadsatogo zasedaniya 12 iyulya 1955 g. (utrennego)," July 1955 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 2, Op. 1, D. 176, L. 143.

47 "Shifrtelgramma," Special Nos. 316-319/No. 16595 (Strictly Secret), from Yu. V. Andropov to the CPSU Presidium and CPSU Secretariat, 30 April 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 45, D. 1, L. 2. 48 *Ibid.*, L. 5.

49 "Vypiska iz protokola zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 3 maya 1956 g.," No. P13/XXIII (Strictly Secret), 3 May 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, L. 133.

50 "Telefonogramma iz Budapeshta v TsK KPSS," 13 June 1956 (Top Secret), from M. A. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium and Secretariat, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 146-149.

51 "Zapis' besedy N. S. Khrushcheva s kitaiskimi tovarishchami 2 oktyabrya 1959 g. v Pekine," 2 October 1959 (Top Secret/Special Dossier), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 65, D. 331, L. 12. For other disparaging remarks by Khrushchev about Rakosi, see Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, pp. 135-136, 140.

52 See Janos Kadar's remarks to this effect in "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 3 noyabrya 1956 g.," 3 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 31-33ob.

53 The resolution was broadcast on Hungarian domestic radio on 30 June and published in *Szabad Nep* the following day. For an English translation, see Paul E. Zinner, ed., *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe: A Selection of Documents on Events in Poland and Hungary, February-November 1956* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), pp. 328-331.

54 "Shifrtelgramma," from Yu. V. Andropov to the CPSU Presidium and Secretariat, 9 July 1956 (Special Dossier — Strictly Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 151-162. All quotations in this paragraph are from Andropov's cable.

55 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 9 i 12 iyulya 1956 g.," Ll. 2-2ob.

56 "TsK KPSS," 18 July 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent), Osobaya papka, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, L. 231.

57 *Ibid.*, L. 232.

58 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 9 i 12 iyulya 1956 g.," L. 2.

59 "Vypiska iz Protokola No. 28 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 12 iyulya 1956 g.," 12 July 1956 (Strictly Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 14, D. 41, Ll. 1-2.

60 "Rastut i krepnut mezhdunarodnye sily mira, demokratii i sotsializma," *Pravda* (Moscow), 16 July 1956, pp. 2-3.

61 "Zapis' besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Matyashem Rakoshi, Andrashem Hegedushem, Erne Gere i Beloi Vegom, 13 iyulya 1956 g.," 17 July 1956

(Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 186-190.

62 "Zapis' vystuplenii na zasedaniya Politbyuro TsR VPT, 13 iyulya 1956 g.," 17 July 1956 (Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 191-205; and "TsK KPSS," 16 July 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent), Osobaya Papka, APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 183-185. See also "Zapis' besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Yanoshem Kadarom, 14 iyulya 1956 g.," 17 July 1956 (Top Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 206-215.

63 "TsK KPSS," 18 July 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent), Osobaya papka, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 225-236. On the eve of the plenum, Mikoyan also held talks with key members of the HWP Central Leadership to ensure that Gero's candidacy would be supported.

64 Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 1), pp. 23-24.

65 "Plan deistvii Osobogo korpusa po vosstanovleniyu obshchestvennogo poriyadka na territorii Vengrii," 20 July 1956 (Strictly Secret), as recorded in Tsentral'nyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony (TsAMO), F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 15, Ll. 130-131.

66 "TsK KPSS" (cited in Note 63 *supra*), L. 231.

67 "Zapis' besedy s Erno Gere, 2 sentyabrya 1956 g.," 27 September 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 28, D. 394, Ll. 254-256.

68 *Ibid.*, L. 256.

69 "Shifrtelgramma," 12 October 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent — Special Dossier), from Yu. V. Andropov to the CPSU Presidium, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 64-75.

70 *Ibid.*, L. 71.

71 Countless books and articles about the Hungarian revolution have been published since 1956. For a vivid and well-researched account of the events of 23-24 October, see Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* (London: Allison & Busby, 1976), esp. pp. 106-123. For other useful perspectives, see Ferenc A. Vali, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary: Nationalism versus Communism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961); Paul Kecskemeti, *The Unexpected Revolution: Social Forces in the Hungarian Uprising* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961); Charles Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986); and Paul E. Zinner, *Revolution in Hungary* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962). Until recently, reliable Hungarian-language accounts were relatively few in number, but that has changed dramatically since Communism ended. The large number of publications put out in Budapest by the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution are

a particularly rich source, as are some of the monographs sponsored by the Institute of History at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Reassessments of the 1956 crises, based on newly declassified materials and new memoirs, were presented at a landmark international "Conference on Hungary and the World, 1956: The New Archival Evidence," which was organized in Budapest on 26-29 September 1996 by the National Security Archive, the CWIHP, and the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

72 Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 1), pp. 24-25.

73 Other key sources are "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956," Ll. 8-14; Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 1), pp. 22-30; and "TsK KPSS," Memorandum from Marshal Georgii Zhukov, Soviet minister of defense, and Marshal Vasilii Sokolovskii, chief of the Soviet General Staff, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret — Special Dossier) to the CPSU Presidium, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 85-87.

74 The written request, dated 24 October 1956 and signed by then-prime minister Andras Hegedus, was transmitted by Andropov in a ciphered telegram on 28 October. See "Shifrtelgramma" (Strictly Secret — Urgent), 28 October 1956, from Yu. V. Andropov, in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, L. 12. [Ed. note: For an English translation, see *CWIHP Bulletin 5* (Spring 1995), p. 30.]

75 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 23 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 4-4ob.

76 "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956," L. 9.

77 Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 1), p. 27.

78 The preliminary directives are recorded in TsAMO, F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 15, Ll. 130-131.

79 "TsK KPSS," Memorandum from Marshal Georgii Zhukov, Soviet minister of defense, and Marshal Vasilii Sokolovskii, chief of the Soviet General Staff, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret — Special Dossier) to the CPSU Presidium, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 85-87. This memorandum lays out in detail the complexion and assignments of the Soviet ground and air forces.

80 "Shifrtelgramma iz Budapeshta," Cable from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, Pap. 6, D. 5, L. 2. [Ed. note: For an English translation, see *CWIHP Bulletin 5* (Spring 1995), pp. 22-23, 29.]

81 The Soviet defense ministry's complete list of Hungarian army units that defected to the insur-

gents was recently declassified at the main Russian military archive, TsAMO, F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 17, Ll. 33-48.

82 "Shifrtelogramma iz Budapeshta," Cable from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, 25 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, Pap. 6, D. 5, L. 8.

83 Important samples of these messages, declassified in 1992, are available in "Vengriya, oktyabr'-noyabr' 1956 goda: Iz arkhiva TsK KPSS," *Istoricheskii arkhiv* (Moscow), No. 5 (1993), pp. 132-141.

84 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 26 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 62-62ob.

85 Citations here are from "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 28 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 54-63.

86 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 28 oktyabrya 1956," 28 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 54-63.

87 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 30 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 6-14.

88 *Ibid.*, L. 14.

89 "Deklaratsiya o printsipakh razvitiya i dal'neishem ukreplenii druzhby i sotrudnichestva mezhdru SSSR i drugimi sotsialisticheskimi stranami," *Pravda* (Moscow), 31 October 1956, p. 1. For the CPSU Presidium decision to issue the declaration, see "Vypiska iz Protokola No. 49 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.: O polozhenii v Vengrii," No. P49/1 (Strictly Secret), 30 October 1956, in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 25-30.

90 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 9, 10.

91 "TsK KPSS," High-Frequency Transmission, 30 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 45, D. 12, L. 2.

92 Kovacs's remarks, at a meeting of the Independent Smallholders Party in Pecs, were reported in the first issue of the revived party newspaper *Kis Ujsag* (Budapest), 1 November 1956, p. 2.

93 See the first-hand comments by Gyorgy G. Heltai, the Hungarian deputy foreign minister under Nagy's government, "International Aspects," in Bela K. Kiraly and Paul Jonas, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in Retrospect*, East European Monograph No. XL (Boulder, Col.: East European Quarterly, 1978), esp. pp. 52-53. The negotiations are also briefly recounted in Tibor Meray, *Thirteen Days That Shook the Kremlin: Imre Nagy and the Hungarian Revolution*, trans. by Howard L. Katzander (London: Thames and Hudson, 1959), pp. 163-165; and "Szemtol-

szembe Mikojannal es Szuszloval," *Igazsag* (Budapest), 1 November 1956, p. 1.

94 The theme of Hungarian neutrality was emphasized in several of Nagy's essays in *On Communism: In Defense of the New Course* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1957). The Soviet Union's backing for Rakosi against Nagy in March-April 1955 was clearly one of the factors that prompted Nagy to consider the prospect of neutrality.

95 Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 73-74.

96 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 31 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 15-18ob.

97 "Vypiska iz protokola No. 49 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 31 oktyabrya 1956 g.: O polozhenii v Vengrii," No. P49/VI (Strictly Secret), 31 October 1956, in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 41.

98 For a detailed survey of the crisis as recorded in declassified U.S. documents, see U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*, Vol. XVI: *Suez Crisis, July 26-December 31, 1956* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990).

99 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 28 oktyabrya 1956 g.," L. 61.

100 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 31 oktyabrya 1956 g.," 31 October 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 15-18ob. If Khrushchev had been privy to secret U.S. deliberations, he would have realized that the United States had no intention of directly supporting the French-British-Israeli operation, either militarily or diplomatically. See, for example, "Memorandum of a Conference with the President, White House, Washington, 30 October 1956, 10:06-10:55 am," in *FRUS, 1955-57*, Vol. XVI, pp. 851-855.

101 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 4 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 34. On this same point, Sandor Kopasci recounts a very intriguing comment that Ivan Serov, the head of the Soviet KGB, allegedly made when he was arresting Kopasci just after the invasion: "Suez caught us [in Moscow] by surprise. We were compelled to resort to military measures in the Danube Basin because of that area's strategic importance to any operations we might conduct in the Near East." See Kopasci, *Au nom de la classe ouvriere*, p. 201. If Kopasci recorded Serov's statement accurately, and if—assuming the statement is accurate—Serov was being sincere, this passage sheds valuable light on Khrushchev's remarks.

102 Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, p. 136.

103 *Ibid.*

104 Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha

Khrushcheva," p. 73.

105 "Protocol No. 54 al sedintei Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 24 oct. 1956," 24 October 1956 (Top Secret), in Arhiva Comitetului Central al Partidului Comunist Roman (Arh. CCPCR), Bucharest, F. Biroul Politic, Dosar (Do.) 354/56, ff. 1-5. This document is included in the valuable new collection edited by Corneliu Mihai Lungu and Mihai Retegan, *1956 Explozia: Perceptii romane, iugoslave si sovietice asupra evenimentelor din Polonia si Ungaria* (Bucharest: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1996).

106 *Ibid.*

107 "Protocol No. 55 al sedintei Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 26 oct. 1956," 26 October 1956 (Top Secret), in Arh. CCPCR, F. Biroul Politic, Do. 355/56, ff. 1-5.

108 "Protocol Nr. 58 al sedintei Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 30 oct. 1956," 30 October 1956 (Top Secret), in Arh. CCPCR, F. Biroul Politic, Do. 358/56, ff. 3-5.

109 "Stenograma conferintei organizatiei regionale al CC al PMR," 23 November 1956 (Top Secret), in Arh. CCPCR, F. 85, Do. 84/56, Ff. 1-8. This report is not included in the Lungu/Retegan volume. I am grateful to Mihai Retegan for providing me with a copy of the document.

110 *Ibid.*

111 *Ibid.* See also Constantin Botoran, "National Interest in Romanian Politics During the Cold War" (Bucharest: Institute for Military Theory and History, Romanian Ministry of Defense, March 1994), pp. 7-8.

112 "Protocol Nr. 58 al sedintei Biroului Politic al CC al PMR din 30 oct. 1956," ff. 3-5.

113 "Stenograficky zapis ze zasedani UV KSC," 5-6 December 1956 (Top Secret), in SUA, Arch. UV KSC, F. 07, Sv. 14, Archivna jednotka (A.J.) 14.

114 "Zabezpeceni klidu na uzemi CSR a statnich hranic s Mad'arskem," Report from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, and Lieut.-General Jaroslav Dockal, chief of operations, 29 October 1956 (Top Secret), in Vojensky historicky archiv (VHA) Praha, Fond Ministra narodni obrany (MNO) CSR, 1956, Operacni sprava Generalniho stabu cs. armady (GS/OS), 2/8-39b.

115 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

116 "Souhrn hlaseni operacniho dustojnika Generalniho stabu cs. armady," Notes from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, to the KSC Central Committee (Top Secret), 27 October 1956, in VHA Praha, F. MNO, 1956, GS/OS, 2/8-49b.

117 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 1 noyabrya 1956 g.," 1 November

1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 22.

118 Wilfried Otto, ed., "Ernst Wollweber: Aus Erinnerungen — Ein Portraet Walter Ulbrichts," *Beitraege zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung* (Berlin), No. 3 (1990), pp. 365-367.

119 Speech by Grotewohl to the CC plenum of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), 13 November 1956, in Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen im Bundesarchiv, Zentrales Parteiarchiv (Berlin), DY 30/IV 2/1/166, p. 247.

120 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 4 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 35ob. For illuminating analyses of the impact of the 1956 events on the East German authorities, see Hope M. Harrison, "The Effect of the 1956 Hungarian Uprising on the East German Leadership," and Christian F. Ostermann, "East Germany and the Hungarian Revolution, 1956," both presented at the "Conference on Hungary and the World, 1956."

121 For a detailed, top-secret account of the disorders, see "Zakrytoe pis'mo," 12 March 1956 (Top Secret), from S. Statnikov, Tbilisi correspondent for *Trud*, to the CPSU Central Committee, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 30, D. 140, Ll. 53-67.

122 "Prikaz No. 14 Nachal'nika Tbilisskogo garnizona," from Major-General Gladkov, commander of the Tbilisi garrison, 9 March 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 30, D. 140, L. 68.

123 "O kul'te lichnosti i preodolenii ego posledstvii," in *KPSS v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh s'ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK*, 8th ed. (Moscow: Politizdat, 1978), Vol. 7, p. 212.

124 For a cogent analysis of this matter based on newly declassified materials, see M. R. Zezina, "Shokovaya terapiya: Ot 1953-go k 1956 godu," *Otechestvennaya istoriya* (Moscow), No. 2 (1995), esp. pp. 129-133.

125 See the first-hand account by the former KGB deputy director, Filipp Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'* (Moscow: Veteran MP, 1995), pp. 144-145.

126 "TsK KPSS: Informatsiya," 7 November 1956 (Top Secret), from regional KGB stations to the CPSU Presidium, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 30, D. 141, L. 67.

127 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 4 noyabrya 1956 g.," 4 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 36ob.

128 Bobkov, *KGB i vlast'*, p. 145. On the new arrests, see Zezina, "Shokovaya terapiya," p. 130.

129 Gati, *Hungary and the Soviet Bloc*, p. 153.

130 Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," p. 76.

131 *Ibid.*

132 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 1 noyabrya 1956 g.," 1 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 19-22.

133 See, for example, Mikoyan's comments during the secret proceedings of the June 1957 CPSU CC plenum (which removed the Anti-Party Group), in "Plenum TsK KPSS, iyun' 1957 goda: Stenograficheskii otchet," No. P2500 (Strictly Secret), 22-29 June 1957, in TsKhSD, F. 2, Op. 1, D. 259, Ll. 27ob-28ob.

134 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," 2 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 23-29; and "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 3 noyabrya 1956 g.," 3 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 31-33ob.

135 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 24ob.

136 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 3 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 32.

137 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 29.

138 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 3 noyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 31-33.

139 In addition to Kadar's account in "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," see the cable sent to Moscow by Andropov on 1 November—"Shifrtelgramma," 1 November 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, Ll. 17-19—which provides valuable corroboration of Kadar's remarks.

140 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 31 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 15-18ob.

141 Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 74-75.

142 "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.," in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 6-14. The principles of Pancha Shila were endorsed in a joint statement by Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai and Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi on 28 June 1954. The five principles were intended to "guide relations between the two countries" as well as "relations with other countries in Asia and in other parts of the world." For the full text of the statement, see G. V. Ambekar and V. D. Divekar, eds., *Documents on China's Relations with South and South-East Asia (1949-1962)* (New York: Allied Publishers, 1964), pp. 7-8.

143 In addition to Khrushchev's account of the airport meeting, see the contemporary observations recorded by Micunovic in *Moscow Diary*, pp. 132 and 138, which fully bear out Khrushchev's version. Unfortunately, all Chinese archives that might shed greater light on China's role in the 1956 events are still closed. For an assessment based on Chinese-language evidence that has surfaced to date—largely memoirs (whose reliability is questionable) and published compilations of documents selected and edited by Chinese authorities—see Chen Jian, "Beijing and the Hungarian Crisis of 1956," presented at the "Conference on Hungary and the World, 1956." Chen Jian and other scholars are seeking additional evidence on this matter, and their findings will appear in future CWIHP publications.

144 First-hand accounts of the meetings are available in Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 75-77, which have been well corroborated by other sources, including Khrushchev's observations at the time, as recorded in Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, pp. 135, 138-139. Newly declassified documents pertaining to the meetings are cited below.

145 See "Zapis' telefonogrammy," c. 1 November 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, L. 66.

146 "Protokol Nr. 135 posiedzenia Biura Politycznego w dn. 1.XI.1956 r.," 1 November 1956 (Top Secret), in Archiwum Akt Nowych (AAN), Warsaw, Archiwum Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej (Arch. KC PZPR), Paczka (Pa.) 15, Tom (T.) 58, Dokument (Dok.) 134. This protocol is included in the valuable collection of declassified Polish documents edited by Janos Tischler, *Rewolucja węgierska 1956 w polskich dokumentach*, Dokumenty do dziejow PRL No. 8 (Warsaw: Instytut Studiow Politycznych, 1995).

147 "Odezwa Komitetu Centralnego Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej do klasy robotniczej, do narodu polskiego," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 2 November 1956, p. 1.

148 "Rozmowy radziecko-węgierskie," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 3 November 1956, p. 1.

149 Gomulka's conflicting thoughts about the matter can be seen in "Stenogram Krajowej Narady Aktywu Partyjnego odbutego w dn. 4 listopada 1956 r.: Wystapenia W. Gomulki," 4 November 1956 (Top Secret), in AAN, Arch. KC PZPR, 237/V-241.

150 "Protokol Nr. 136 posiedzenia Biura Politycznego w dniu 4 listopada 1956 r.," 4 November 1956 (Top Secret), in AAN, Arch. KC PZPR, Pa. 15, T. 58, Dok. 135.

151 "Usneseni 151 schuze politickeho byra UV KSC k bodu 1: Udalosti v Mad'arsku," 2 November 1956 (Top Secret), in SUA Praha, Arch.

UV KSC, F. 02/2—Politické byro UV KSC 1954-1962, Sv. 120, A.j. 151.

<sup>152</sup> Khrushchev's account of this meeting tallies well with the much more detailed first-hand account in Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, pp. 131-141. Micunovic's account is based on notes he compiled right after the negotiations, but unfortunately those notes have not yet turned up in the Yugoslav archives. (Another document in the former Yugoslav Central Committee archive refers to the notes, so it is possible that they still exist somewhere; but the location has not yet been pinpointed.) Newly declassified correspondence between Tito and Khrushchev in early 1957, now stored in the former CPSU Central Committee archive, bears out Khrushchev's and Micunovic's memoirs very well, but it also shows that the memoirs omit a few key details, which are mentioned below. See "Pis'mo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza ot 10 yanvarya 1957 goda Tsentral'nomu Komitetu Soyuza Kommunistov Yugoslavii/Pis'mo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Soyuza Kommunistov Yugoslavii ot 7 fevralya 1957 goda Tsentral'nomu Komitetu Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza," No. P295 (Top Secret), February 1957, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 45, D. 83, Ll. 1-12 and D. 84, Ll. 1-18. John Lampe, the director of the East European Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, reported at the "Conference on Hungary and the World, 1956," that he had recently obtained an official summary of the Brioni meeting from a colleague who had found it in the papers of Tito's biographer, the late Vladimir Dedijer, among materials evidently intended for a fourth, never-completed volume. An English translation of this Yugoslav record of the Brioni talks, with Lampe's commentary, is slated for publication in the next issue of the *CWIHP Bulletin*.

<sup>153</sup> For a very useful collection of newly declassified materials tracing Yugoslav-Hungarian relations in late October and early November 1956, see Jozsef Kiss, Zoltan Ripp, and Istvan Vida, eds., *Magyar-Jugoszlav Kapcsolatok 1956: Dokumentumok* (Budapest: MTA Jelenkor-kutato Bizottsag, 1995), esp. pp. 125 ff.

<sup>154</sup> Until recently, this arrangement had not been disclosed, apart from a few vague references in Micunovic's memoirs (*Moscow Diary*, pp. 137-138). The first direct revelation of the deal came in the early 1990s when the top-secret correspondence between Tito and Khrushchev from early 1957 was declassified. See "Pis'mo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza ot 10 yanvarya 1957 goda Tsentral'nomu Komitetu Soyuza

Kommunistov Yugoslavii," L. 4.

<sup>155</sup> For Tito's explanation of why the promise could not be fulfilled, see "Pis'mo Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Soyuza Kommunistov Yugoslavii ot 7 fevralya 1957 goda Tsentral'nomu Komitetu Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza," Ll. 17-18.

<sup>156</sup> Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," p. 75.

<sup>157</sup> See Imre Horvath's handwritten summary (in Hungarian) of Khrushchev's remarks, in Magyar Orszagos Leveltar, XIX J-1-K Horvath Imre kulugyminiszter iratai, 55, doboz. For some reason, Malin did not record Khrushchev's speech in the notes from the full session ("Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 3 noyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 31-33ob.

<sup>158</sup> A detailed first-hand account of the military operations can be found in Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 3), pp. 33-37 and (Part 4), pp. 30-36.

<sup>159</sup> See, e.g., "Zprava o opatrenich k zesileni bojove pohotovosti vojsk," Report from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, and Lieut.-General Evzen Chlad, chief of the Main Logistical Directorate, to the MNO Collegium (Top Secret), 31 October 1956, in VHA Praha, F. MNO, 1956, GS/OS 2/8-49b. See also "Rozkaz k provedeni vojenskykh opatreni na hranicich s Mad'arskem," from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, to the 2nd Military District in Trencin (Strictly Secret), 28 October 1956, in VHA Praha, F. MNO, 1956, GS/OS, 2/8-2b.

<sup>160</sup> "Usneseni 151 schuze politickeho byra UV KSC k bodu 1," pt. 1.

<sup>161</sup> Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshte" (Part 3), p. 33.

<sup>162</sup> Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 4), pp. 32-33.

<sup>163</sup> Nagy's cable to UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold can be found in UN Doc. A/3251. The appeal and declaration of neutrality were broadcast on Budapest radio on the evening of 1 November. According to Kadar's detailed explanation at a CPSU Presidium meeting on 2 November, Zoltan Tildy was the one who came up with the idea of a declaration of neutrality. All the members of the Hungarian cabinet ultimately voted in favor of it. See "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," Ll. 23-29.

<sup>164</sup> Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, p. 156.

<sup>165</sup> "Stav Mad'arske lidove armady a priciny jejih rozkladu," Report compiled by KSC CC Department No. 14 for the KSC CC Politburo, 9 April 1957, in SUA, Arch. UV KSC, F. 100/3 —

Mezinarodni oddeleni UV KSC 1954-1962, Sv. 110, Ar. Jed. 371. For a thorough survey of the role of the Hungarian army in 1956, see Imre Okvath, "Magyar tiszttakar a hideghaboru idoszakaban, 1945-1956," Uj Honvedsegi szemle (Budapest), No. 1 (1994), pp. 14-27, which is based on documents from the 1956 collection (1956-os Gyujtemeny) of the Military History Archives of the Hungarian National Defense Ministry (*Hadtortenelmi Leveltar, Honvedelmi Miniszterium*). A recent volume by Miklos Horvath, *1956 katonai kronologiaja* (Budapest: Magyar Honvedseg Oktatasi es Kulturális Anyagellato Kozpont, 1993), also draws on these documents. For a useful first-hand account, see Bela Kiraly, "Hungary's Army: Its Part in the Revolt," *East Europe*, Vol. 7, No. 6 (June 1958), pp. 3-16. Kiraly, as commander of Hungarian troops in Budapest at the time, led the armed resistance against the invasion.

<sup>166</sup> On the preparations by Maleter, see Miklos Horvath, *Pal Maleter* (Budapest: Osiris/Szazadveg/1956-os Intezet, 1995), esp. pp. 223-228.

<sup>167</sup> "Stav Mad'arske lidove armady a priciny jejih rozkladu," Ll. 4-5. The quoted phrase is from "Shifrtelogramma iz Budapeshta," Cable from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, Pap. 6, D. 5, L. 2.

<sup>168</sup> On the disarming operations, see "Informatsiya o polozhenii v Vengrii po sostoyaniyu na 21.00 4 noyabrya 1956 goda," Report No. 31613 (Top Secret), from Soviet defense minister G. Zhukov to the CPSU Presidium, and "Informatsiya o polozhenii v Vengrii po sostoyaniyu na 9.00 5 noyabrya 1956 goda," Report No. 31614 (Top Secret), from Soviet defense minister G. Zhukov to the CPSU Presidium, both in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, Ll. 102 and 103-104, respectively. See also Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 3), pp. 34, 37.

<sup>169</sup> "Informatsiya o polozhenii v Vengrii po sostoyaniyu na 21.00 6 noyabrya 1956 goda," Report No. 31618 (Top Secret), from Soviet defense minister G. K. Zhukov to the CPSU Presidium, in AVPRF, F. 0536, Op. 1, P. 5, D. 65, L. 63. Among the other cities in which Soviet troops encountered fierce resistance were Budaorsi, Csepel, Jaszberenyi, Kaposvar, Kecskemet, Kobanya, Komlo, Mezokovesd, Miskolc, Obuda, Pecs, Soroksar, Szolnok, Szombathely, Thokoly, Ulloi, and Veszprem.

<sup>170</sup> "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 2 noyabrya 1956 g.," L. 30.

<sup>171</sup> Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 77-78.

<sup>172</sup> Quotations here and in the following paragraph are from "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 4 noyabrya 1956 g.," LI. 34-36ob; and "Rabochaya zapis' zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS, 6 noyabrya 1956 g.," 6 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, LI. 41-45ob. This bickering was first described by Khrushchev in his memoirs ("Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 77-78), and a few additional details (not mentioned in Malin's notes) came to light in the recently declassified transcript of the June 1957 CPSU Central Committee plenum ("Plenum TsK KPSS, iyun' 1957 goda," LI. 27ob-28ob). The Malin notes confirm and add a great deal to these earlier sources.

<sup>173</sup> The Russian phrase that Molotov used (*odernut' nado, chtobyne komandoval*) is slightly awkward in the original, but it can be roughly translated as it is here.

<sup>174</sup> See "Plenum TsK KPSS, iyun' 1957 goda," LI. 2, 25. The charge of "dangerous zigzags" was leveled by Molotov at a CPSU Presidium meet-

ing a few days before the Central Committee plenum.

<sup>175</sup> Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, p. 156.

<sup>176</sup> "Memorandum from the Director of Central Intelligence to the President," 20 November 1956 (Secret), in U.S. Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955-1957*, Vol. XXV: *Eastern Europe* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. 473, 475. This *FRUS* volume contains a large number of documents essential for understanding the U.S. government's response to the events in Poland and Hungary in 1956, although many other materials have since been declassified through the Freedom of Information Act. A collection of newly declassified materials is available to researchers at the National Security Archive in the Gelman Library of the George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

<sup>177</sup> Data on Hungarian and Soviet casualties come, respectively, from Peter Gosztonyi, "Az 1956-os forradalom szamokban," *Nepszabadsag* (Budapest), 3 November 1990, p. 3; and

"Sobytiya v Vengrii 1956 g.," in Col.-General G. A. Krivosheev, ed., *Grif sekretnosti snyat: Poteri vooruzhenykh sil SSSR v voynakh, boevykh deistviyakh i voennykh konfliktakh: Statisticheskoe issledovanie* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1993), p. 397. The number of Soviet deaths was 720, the number of Soviet wounded was 1,540. The number of Hungarian deaths was 2,502, and the number of Hungarian wounded was 19,226.

<sup>178</sup> Attila Szokolczai, "A forradalmat koveto megtorlas soran kivegzettekrol," in *Evkonyv*, Vol. 3 (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1994), pp. 237-256. Szokolczai provides a considerably lower figure (229) for the number of executions. The figure of 600 comes from Maria Ormos, "A konszolidacio problemai 1956 es 1958 kozott," *Tarsadalmi Szemle*, Vol. 44, Nos. 8-9 (1989), pp. 48-65. See also Janos Balassa et al., eds., *Halottaink*, 2 vols. (Budapest: Katalizator, 1989).

<sup>179</sup> "Zprava o jednani na UV KSSS 24. rijna 1956," L. 12.

<sup>180</sup> Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," p. 81.

<sup>181</sup> Testimony of former national defense minister Lajos Czinege in Magyar Orszaggyules, *A Honvedelmi Bizottsag 1989 oktoberi ulesszakan letrhozott vizsgalobizottsag 1989 december 11-i, 1990 januar 3-i, 1990 januar 15-i, 1990 februar 6-i ulese jegyzokonyvenek nyilt reszlete*, 5 vols. (1994), Vol. 1, p. 261.

<sup>182</sup> "Tov. Orlovu A.L.," Memorandum No. 1869/2 (Top Secret), 28 December 1956, transmitting a report prepared by I. Tugarinov, deputy head of the Foreign Ministry's Information Committee, in AVPRF, F. Referentura po Vengrii, Op.36, Por.9, Pap.47a, D.110, LI.11-18. An English translation of this document, as well as an insightful commentary by James Hershberg, can be found in the *Cold War International History Bulletin*, Issue No.4 (Fall 1994), pp.61-64.

<sup>183</sup> Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, p. 134.

<sup>184</sup> Khrushchev, "Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva," pp. 80-82.

<sup>185</sup> The notion of a tradeoff between "cohesion" and "viability" is well presented in James F. Brown, *Relations Between the Soviet Union and Its East European Allies: A Survey*, R-1742-PR (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1975).

*Mark Kramer, a scholar based at the Davis Center for Russian Studies at Harvard University, is a frequent contributor to the CWIHP Bulletin.*

### FUNDS SOUGHT TO PROCESS RADIO FREE EUROPE TAPES ON 1956 HUNGARIAN EVENTS

For forty years, various politicians, historians, and public figures have debated the existence of Radio Free Europe's tapes of broadcasts made during the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. In the summer of 1995, Mr. Gyorgy Vamos, Director of Documentation for Hungarian National Radio, and Judy Katona, M.A., A.B.D., researcher and journalist, found the recordings in Germany—over 500 hours of tape, which reveal what was broadcast and raise serious questions concerning policy and intent.

These holdings constitute a unique and invaluable record for the study of Hungarian history, the role of the United States and American radio in the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, and in general, the role of U.S. media abroad in promoting ideology, and internal divergencies which led broadcasters to convey messages about American intentions which were at odds with the actual intentions of top policy makers during this tense period of the Cold War.

We are seeking support of US

\$50,000 to finance critical research, involving processing of the tapes that were previously believed lost and/or missing, and acquisition of additional materials from other foreign radios and archives. The sources and the professional contacts are already established.

Processing the collection and complementing it with additional broadcast and recorded materials, will create a basis for a meaningful and objective analysis of the American and Western policies of the time. All materials, of course, would be made freely, equally, and openly available to researchers.

In the future, in a second phase of the research, a major English language source document can be published with content analysis of the broadcasts, footnotes, and detailed references.

In the first phase of the implementation of the project, money would be spent on researchers' stipends, translations, acquisition of materials, transcription, duplications, and travel.

For further information, contact Judy Katona at (703) 913-5824 (telephone) or katjud@mnsinc.com (e-mail).

# THE “MALIN NOTES” ON THE CRISES IN HUNGARY AND POLAND, 1956

*Translated and Annotated by Mark Kramer*

## TRANSLATOR’S NOTE:

The translated items below are in chronological order. They include Vladimir Malin’s notes of CPSU Presidium meetings that dealt with the events in Hungary and Poland in 1956. The notes are supplemented by several other newly released documents that shed direct light on portions of the notes. Most of the documents, including Malin’s notes, were translated from Russian, but two documents (both from the Hungarian National Archive) were translated from Hungarian.

Extensive annotations have been included because of the idiosyncratic style of the notes and the large number of references (to events, individuals, etc.) that may not be familiar to most readers. Rather than putting in separate annotations to identify specific persons, I have compiled an identification list of all individuals mentioned in the notes. This list and a list of abbreviations precede the notes and should be consulted whenever unfamiliar names or abbreviations turn up.

As best as possible, the flavor and style of the original have been preserved in the English translation, but in a few cases I have expanded Russian and Hungarian abbreviations and acronyms to avoid confusion. For example, there is no equivalent in English for the Russian abbreviation “m.b.,” short for *mozhet byt’*, meaning “perhaps” or “maybe.” Hence, in this particular instance the English word has been written out in full. In most cases, the translation seeks to replicate abbreviations and acronyms, but they have been used only when it does not cause confusion.

The English translation is not identical to the published Hungarian and Russian compilations of the Malin notes. Both of these earlier publications contain several errors, including a few that substantially alter the meaning of the original. The fact that mistakes cropped up is mainly a reflection of how difficult it is to work with the handwritten originals, which, aside from problems of legibility, are occasionally out of sequence in the archival folders. In some cases the mispagination is easy to correct, but in a few instances the reordering of pages necessitates very close textual analysis. I have corrected all these mistakes in the English translation, and have included details about the corrections in the annotations.

--Mark Kramer

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APRF = *Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Archive of the President of the Russian Federation), Moscow  
 AVH = *Allam-Vedelmi Hatóság* (State Security Authority; name of Hungarian secret police agency after 1949)  
 AVO = *Allam-Vedelmi Osztály* (State Security Department; name of Hungarian secret police agency until 1949)  
 AVPRF = *Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Archive of Foreign Policy, Russian Federation), Moscow  
 CC = Central Committee  
 Cde. = Comrade  
 CPC = Communist Party of China  
 CPSU = Communist Party of the Soviet Union  
 GS/OS = General Staff/Operational Directorate  
 HCP = Hungarian Communist Party  
 HL/HM = *Hadtortelnelmi Leveltár, Honvedelmi Minisztérium* (Hungarian Mili-

tary History Archive), Budapest  
 HWP = Hungarian Workers’ Party  
 HSWP = Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party  
 KGB = Committee for State Security  
 KSC = *Komunistická strana Československa* (Czechoslovak Communist Party)  
 MVD = Ministry of Internal Affairs  
 PKK = Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact  
 PZPR = *Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza* (Polish United Workers’ Party)  
 SUA = *Statni ustredni archiv* (Central State Archive), Prague  
 TsAMO = *Tsentrāl’nyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense, Russian Federation)  
 TsKhSD = *Tsentr Khraneniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii* (Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation), Moscow  
 UV = Central Committee (of the KSC)  
 VHA = *Vojensky historicky archiv* (Military-Historical Archive), Prague

## INDIVIDUALS MENTIONED IN THE MALIN NOTES

Three points are worth mentioning about this list:

First, unless otherwise indicated, the positions listed for each person are those held during the 1956 crises.

Second, the entries for some Hungarian Communist party officials include as many as three titles for the party. The Communist party in Hungary was called the Hungarian Communist Party (*Magyar Kommunista Part*) until June 1948, when it compelled the Hungarian Social Democratic Party (*Magyar Szocial-Demokrata Part*) to merge with it. The combined party was renamed the Hungarian Workers’ Party (*Magyar Dolgozók Partja*). The Hungarian Workers’ Party was dissolved at the end of October 1956, and a new Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (*Magyar Szocialista Munkaspart*) was formed on 1 November 1956. The acronyms HCP, HWP, and

HSWP will be used in the listings to refer to the successive incarnations of the Hungarian Communist party.

Third, two Hungarian officials who played contrasting roles in 1956 were both named Istvan Kovacs. The identifications and the translator's annotations should prevent any confusion about which was which.

### CPSU CC PRESIDIUIM

**FULL MEMBERS:** Nikolai **BULGANIN** (prime minister), Kliment **VOROSHILOV** (chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet), Lazar' **KAGANOVICH** (first deputy prime minister), Aleksei **KIRICHENKO** (First Secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party), Georgii **MALENKOV** (deputy prime minister), Anastas **MIKOYAN**, Vyacheslav **MOLOTOV** (foreign minister until June 1956), Mikhail **PERVUKHIN**, Maksim **SABUROV** (first deputy prime minister), Mikhail **SUSLOV** (CPSU CC Secretary), and Nikita **KHRUSHCHEV** (CPSU CC First Secretary).

**CANDIDATE MEMBERS:** Leonid **BREZHNEV** (CPSU CC Secretary), Georgii **ZHUKOV** (defense minister), Nurotdin **MUKHITDINOV**, Ekaterina **FURTSEVA** (CPSU CC Secretary), Nikolai **SHVERNIK** (chairman of CPSU Party Control Committee), and Dmitrii **SHEP-ILOV** (foreign minister after June 1956).

### CPSU CC SECRETARIES NOT ON THE CPSU CC PRESIDIUIM

Averki **ARISTOV**, Nikolai **BEL-YAEV**, and Pyotr **POSPELOV**.

### OTHERS MENTIONED IN THE NOTES

**ANDICS**, Erzsebet: chief historian for the HWP until the autumn of 1956; fled to the Soviet Union with her husband, Andor Berei (see below), in late October 1956

**ANDROPOV**, Yurii: Soviet ambassador in Hungary

**APRO**, Antal: member of the HCP/HWP Politburo from 1946 to 1951 and 1953 to 1956; Hungarian deputy prime minister from November 1953 to 3 November 1956; member of the HWP Presidium from 28 October 1956; minister of industry after 4

November 1956; member of the HSWP Provisional Executive Committee; senior Hungarian state official until 1984

**BATA**, Istvan: Hungarian minister of national defense until 24 October 1956; fled to the Soviet Union on 28 October 1956

**BEREI**, Andor: head of the Hungarian state planning bureau from 1954 to 1956; fled to the Soviet Union with his wife, Erszebet Andics (see above), in late October 1956

**BOLDOCZKI**, Janos: Hungarian ambassador in Moscow

**CHERNUKHA**, Vladimir: deputy head of the General Department of the CPSU Central Committee

**CYRANKIEWICZ**, Jozef: Polish prime minister

**DOBI**, Istvan: president of Hungary (a largely figurehead post)

**DOGEI**, Imre: appointed minister of agriculture in the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed on 4 November 1956

**DONATH**, Ferenc: well-known economist; leading supporter of Imre Nagy; appointed a Secretary of the HWP on 23-24 October 1956; appointed a member of the HSWP Executive Committee on 1 November 1956; took refuge in the Yugoslav embassy on 4 November 1956; arrested by Soviet troops on 22 November 1956 and transferred to Romania; sentenced to 12 years imprisonment in June 1958; amnestied in 1960

**DUDAS**, Jozsef: engineer; one of the most radical leaders of the Budapest rebel forces after 23 October 1956; took part in the armed resistance against the Soviet invasion; arrested by Soviet troops on 21 November 1956; executed in January 1957

**DULLES**, John Foster: U.S. Secretary of State

**EGRI**, Gyula: HWP Secretary from 1955 to 1956; fled to the Soviet Union at the beginning of November 1956; returned to Hungary in April 1957

**EISENHOWER**, Dwight: U.S. President

**ELYUTIN**, Vyacheslav: Soviet minister of higher education

**EPISHEV**, Aleksei: Soviet ambassador in Romania

**FARKAS**, Mihaly: Hungarian minister of national defense from 1948 to 1953; notorious organizer of mass repression in Hungary during the Rakosi era; expelled

from the HWP in mid-July 1956; arrested on 12 October 1956; sentenced to 16 years imprisonment in February 1957; amnestied in 1961

**FIRYUBIN**, Nikolai: Soviet ambassador in Yugoslavia

**GERO**, Erno: First Secretary of the HWP from 18 July 1956 to 25 October 1956; fled to the Soviet Union on 28 October 1956

**GHEORGHIU-DEJ**, Gheorghe: First Secretary of the Romanian Workers' Party

**GOMULKA**, Wladyslaw: First Secretary of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) from 20 October 1956 to December 1970

**GROMYKO**, Andrei: Soviet first deputy foreign minister

**GRYAZNOV**, Feodosii: counselor at the Soviet embassy in Yugoslavia

**HEGEDUS**, Andras: Hungarian prime minister from April 1955 to 24 October 1956; first deputy prime minister from 24 to 27 October 1956; fled to Soviet Union on 28 October 1956

**HIDAS**, Istvan: member of the HWP Politburo from June 1953 to 26 October 1956; deputy prime minister from 1954 to 26 October 1956

**HORTHY**, Admiral Nicolas de: final commander-in-chief of the Austro-Hungarian Navy; authoritarian leader (with the title of Regent) in Hungary during the interwar period and most of World War II (1920-1944)

**HORVATH**, Imre: Hungarian foreign minister from 30 July 1956 to 2 November 1956; foreign minister in Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed by Janos Kadar on 4 November 1956

**KADAR**, Janos: victim of Stalin-era purges; member of HWP Politburo after 18 July 1956; elected HWP First Secretary on 25 October 1956; chairman of HWP Presidium from 28 October 1956 until the formation of the HSWP on 1 November; member of the HSWP Executive Committee from 1 November; state minister in Imre Nagy's government from 1 to 4 November 1956; formed a "Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government" on 4 November 1956; top leader in Hungary until 1988

**KARDELJ**, Edvard: vice-president of Yugoslavia; top aide to Tito

**KIRALY**, General Bela: released from prison in September 1956; appointed head of the police and armed forces of the Revolutionary Committee for Public Order on 30



October 1956; appointed to the Revolutionary Defense Committee on 31 October 1956; appointed commander of the National Guard on 3 November 1956; one of the leaders of the armed resistance to the Soviet invasion

**KISS**, Karoly: member of the HWP Presidium from 28 October 1956; member of the HSWP Provisional Executive Committee after 4 November 1956; member of the HSWP Politburo from 1957 to 1962

**KONEV**, Marshal Ivan: commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact Joint Armed Forces; appointed on 1 November as overall commander of Soviet troops that invaded Hungary on 4 November

**KOSSA**, Istvan: finance minister in the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed by Janos Kadar on 4 November 1956

**KOVACS**, Bela: Secretary General of the Independent Smallholders Party until February 1947; imprisoned in the Soviet Union from February 1947 until the autumn of 1955; member of Imre Nagy's cabinet from 27 October 1956 (and a state minister from 3 to 4 November 1956)

**KOVACS**, General Istvan: senior Hungarian army official; appointed chief of the Hungarian General Staff; arrested by Soviet KGB troops on 3 November; sentenced to six years imprisonment in 1958; amnestied in 1960

**KOVACS**, Istvan: senior official in HCP/HWP from 1945 on; member of the HWP Politburo from March 1955; HWP Secretary from November 1955; first secretary of the Budapest party committee from July 1954 to 29 October 1956; fled to the Soviet Union on 31 October 1956

**LIU** Shaoqi: Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee; deputy chairman of the Chinese Communist Party

**LOSONCZY**, Geza: victim of Stalin-era purges; rehabilitated in 1954; candidate member of the HWP Politburo from 23 October 1956; state minister in Imre Nagy's cabinet from 30 October 1956; member of the HSWP Executive Committee from 1 to 4 November 1956; took refuge in Yugoslav embassy on 4 November; arrested on 22 November and transferred to Romania; imprisoned in Hungary in April 1957; died in prison in December 1957 under mysterious circumstances

**MALETER**, Pal: colonel in the Hungarian People's Army who took the side of

the insurgents after the 1956 revolution began; appointed to Revolutionary Defense Committee and a first deputy minister of national defense on 31 October 1956; appointed national defense minister on 3 November 1956 and promoted to the rank of major-general; arrested on the evening of 3 November by Soviet KGB troops; executed by hanging along with Imre Nagy in June 1958

**MALIN**, Vladimir: head of the General Department of the CPSU Central Committee

**MALININ**, General Mikhail: first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff; commanded Soviet forces during the initial intervention in Hungary on 23 October

**MALNASAN**, Aurel: Romanian deputy foreign minister

**MAO** Zedong: Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party

**MAROSAN**, Gyorgy: victim of Stalin-era purges; rehabilitated in 1956; member of the HWP Politburo from July to October 1956; state minister in the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed by Janos Kadar on 4 November 1956

**MICUNOVIC**, Veljko: Yugoslav ambassador in Moscow

**MILOVANOV**, Milenko: employee at the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest; killed by stray Soviet tankfire on 5 November 1956

**MINDSZENTY**, Cardinal Jozsef: Primate of the Hungarian Catholic Church; imprisoned from 1948 to July 1955; under house arrest from July 1955 until 30 October 1956, when he was freed by Hungarian soldiers; took refuge in the U.S. embassy on 4 November 1956 and remained there until 1971, when he was allowed to leave for Austria

**MUNNICH**, Ferenc: Hungarian ambassador in the Soviet Union from September 1954 to July 1956; Hungarian ambassador in Yugoslavia from July 1956 to 25 October 1956; member of the HWP Presidium from 28 to 31 October 1956; minister of internal affairs from 27 October 1956; deputy head of the Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed by Janos Kadar on 4 November 1956

**NAGY**, Ferenc: leader of the Independent Smallholders Party from 1945 to mid-1947 and Hungarian prime minister from February 1946 to June 1947; emigrated to the United States after the Communists forced him to resign from his posts

**NAGY**, Imre: Hungarian prime minister from July 1953 to March 1955 and from 24 October 1956 to 4 November 1956; sought refuge in Yugoslav embassy on 4 November 1956; arrested by Soviet troops on 22 November 1956 and transferred to Romania; executed by hanging in June 1958

**NOVOTNY**, Antonin: First Secretary of Czechoslovak Communist Party

**OCHAB**, Edward: First Secretary of the PZPR from March 1956 to 20 October 1956

**PIROS**, Lajos: Hungarian minister of internal affairs from 1954 to 27 October 1956; fled to the Soviet Union on 28 October 1956

**PONOMARENKO**, Panteleimon: Soviet ambassador in Poland

**PONOMAREV**, Boris: head of the CPSU CC Department for Ties with Foreign Communist Parties

**POPOVIC**, Koca: Yugoslav foreign minister

**RAJK**, Laszlo: top Hungarian Communist official; sentenced to death on trumped-up charges in October 1949; posthumously rehabilitated in March 1956; reburied in October 1956

**RAKOSI**, Matyas: HWP First Secretary from June 1948 to July 1956; served simultaneously as Hungarian prime minister from 1952 to June 1953; fled to the Soviet Union on 26 July 1956, where he spent the rest of his life

**RANKOVIC**, Aleksander: Yugoslav minister of internal affairs; party secretary responsible for cadres; second most powerful figure in Yugoslavia and widely regarded at the time as the heir apparent to Tito

**ROKOSSOWSKI**, Marshal Konstantin: Soviet officer serving as Polish national defense minister, December 1949 to November 1956; removed from PZPR Politburo on 20 October 1956; recalled to the Soviet Union in mid-November 1956

**RONAI**, Sandor: former Social Democrat; member of HWP Politburo until June 1953; appointed minister of commerce in Provisional Workers' and Peasants' Government formed by Janos Kadar on 4 November 1956; chairman of the Hungarian State Assembly (parliament) from 1952 to 1962

**SEROV**, Ivan: chairman of the KGB  
**SOBOLEV**, Arkadii: Soviet permanent representative at the United Nations

**SZANTO**, Zoltan: member of the

HWP Politburo from 24 October 1956 (and of the HWP Presidium from 28 October); member of the HSWP Executive Committee from 1 to 4 November 1956; took refuge along with Imre Nagy in the Yugoslav embassy on 4 November 1956; arrested by Soviet troops when he left the embassy on 18 November 1956; transferred to Romania along with Imre Nagy and other former officials five days later; permitted to return to Hungary in 1958

**TILDY**, Zoltan: one of the leaders of the Independent Smallholders Party until August 1948; under house arrest from August 1948 to April 1956; a state minister in Imre Nagy's government from 27 October 1956 to 4 November 1956; arrested in May 1957 and sentenced to six years in prison in June 1958; amnestied in 1960

**TITO**, Josip Broz: General Secretary of the Yugoslav League of Communists; president of Yugoslavia

**TOGLIATTI**, Palmiro: General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party

**ULBRICHT**, Walter: General Secretary of the (East) German Socialist Unity Party (SED)

**VAS**, Zoltan: top-ranking official in the HCP and HWP from 1945 on; served as chairman of the Government Commission on Consumer Supplies during the 1956 revolution; took refuge in the Yugoslav embassy on 4 November 1956; arrested when he left the embassy on 18 November 1956; transferred along with Nagy and other former officials to Romania five days later; allowed to return to Hungary at the end of 1958

**VEG**, Bela: HWP Secretary from 1953 to October 1956

**ZORIN**, Valerian: Soviet deputy foreign minister

## THE MALIN NOTES

### DOCUMENT No. 1

#### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 9 and 12 July 1956** (Re: Point IV of Protocol No. 28)<sup>1</sup>

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Molotov, Pervukhin, Khrushchev, Shepilov, Belyaev, Pospelov, Brezhnev, Zhukov

#### **Ciph. Teleg. No. . . . from Budapest**<sup>2</sup> (Khrushchev, Voroshilov, Zhukov, Ponomarev)<sup>3</sup>

We should call Cde. Mikoyan so that he'll go take a vacation on Lake Balaton.<sup>4</sup>

An article should be prepared in our press about internationalist solidarity to rebuff the enemy.

The subversive activities of the imperialists—in Poznan and Hungary. They want to weaken internationalist ties; and in the name of independence of paths, they want to foment disunity and destroy [the socialist countries] one by one.

To Cdes. Pospelov, Shepilov, and Ponomarev.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the Italian cdes. could publish something in the press.

Perhaps Cde. Togliatti will write an article.<sup>6</sup>

On the Rajk affair<sup>7</sup>—there must be an easing of the situation  
Rakosi<sup>8</sup>  
(Malenkov, Khrushchev, Voroshilov).<sup>9</sup>

Cde. Mikoyan should confer with Kovacs, and he should speak firmly.<sup>10</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 2-2ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

### DOCUMENT No. 2

#### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 20 October 1956**

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Pervukhin, Saburov, Suslov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Furtseva, Pospelov, Serov.

#### **I. Briefing from the CPSU Delegation about the Trip to Warsaw.**<sup>11</sup> (Khrushchev, Mikoyan, Molotov, Kaganovich, Konev, Zhukov)

1. There's only one way out—put an end to what is in Poland.

If Rokossowski is kept, we won't have to press things for a while.<sup>12</sup>

Maneuvers.

Prepare a document.

Form a committee.<sup>13</sup>

2. The ambassador, Cde. Ponomarenko, was grossly mistaken in his assessment of Ochab and Gomulka.<sup>14</sup>

3. We should invite to Moscow representatives from the Communist parties of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, the GDR, and Bulgaria.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps we should send CC officials to China for informational purposes.<sup>16</sup>

4. Send information. Take notice of information. Think through the questions that have been raised.

### **II. On Hungary.**

We need to think it over, perhaps send Cde. Mikoyan.<sup>17</sup>

Cdes. Mikoyan and Zhukov must consider recalling soldiers to their units.<sup>18</sup>

Cde. Mikoyan is to draft information for the fraternal parties.<sup>19</sup>

Pull out the KGB advisers

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 49-50, compiled by V. N. Malin*]

### DOCUMENT No. 3

#### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 21 October 1956**

#### **On the Situation in Poland**<sup>20</sup>

(Molotov, Serov, Zhukov, Mikoyan, Pervukhin, Saburov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Suslov, Furtseva, Malenkov)

Cde. Khrushchev:

Taking account of the circumstances, we should refrain from military intervention. We need to display patience. (Everyone agrees with this.)

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, unnumbered page. Compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

### DOCUMENT No. 4

#### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 23 October 1956**

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Molotov, Pervukhin, Saburov, Khrushchev, Suslov, Brezhnev, Zhukov,

Furtseva, Shepilov

**On the Situation in Budapest and Overall in Hungary**<sup>21</sup>

(Cdes. Zhukov, Bulganin, Khrushchev)

Information of **Cde. Zhukov**.

A demonstration by 100 thous. in Budapest. The radio station is on fire.<sup>22</sup>

In Debrecen the obkom [provincial party committee—trans.] and MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs—trans.] buildings were occupied.

**Cde. Khrushchev** speaks in favor of sending troops to Budapest.<sup>23</sup>

**Cde. Bulganin** believes Cde. Khrushchev's proposal to send troops is justified.

**Cde. Mikoyan**: Without Nagy they can't get control of the movement, and it's also cheaper for us. Expresses doubt about the sending of troops. What are we losing? The Hungarians themselves will restore order on their own. We should try political measures, and only then send troops.

**Cde. Molotov**—With Nagy left on his own, Hungary is coming apart. Favors the sending of troops.

**Cde. Kaganovich**—The government is being overthrown. There's no comparison with Poland. Favors the sending of troops.

**Cde. Pervukhin**—Troops must be sent.

**Cde. Zhukov**—There is indeed a difference with Poland. Troops must be sent. One of the members of the CC Presidium should travel there. Martial law should be declared in the country, and a curfew introduced.

**Cde. Suslov**—The situation in Poland is different. Troops must be sent.

**Cde. Saburov**—Troops must be sent to uphold order.

**Cde. Shepilov**—Favors the sending of troops

**Cde. Kirichenko**—Favors the sending of troops. Cdes. Malinin and Serov should be dispatched to Budapest.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—We should recruit Nagy for political action. But until then we shouldn't make a chairman of the government. Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov are to fly to Budapest.<sup>24</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 4-4ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 5**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 26 October 1956**

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Molotov, Saburov, Brezhnev, Khrushchev, Zhukov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Pospelov, Yudin.  
From the CPC CC—Cdes. Liu Shaoqi,<sup>25</sup>

**Exchange of Opinions about the Situation in Poland and Hungary**

The point about Rokossowski is the central question.<sup>26</sup>

(Cde. Liu Shaoqi).

Gomulka is taking this to extremes.

Continuation of the session of 26/X at 8:00 p.m.<sup>27</sup>

Review of the information from Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov.<sup>28</sup>

Cdes. Shepilov, Brezhnev, and Furtseva are to study it.

Hungarian party workers (126 cdes.) are studying at the Higher Party School.<sup>29</sup>

We should provide information to them.

Instruct them, carry out work. We mustn't turn them against the Directory and CC, but should say there are vacillations within the CC.<sup>30</sup>

Convene a meeting with them with participation of the Hungarian ambassador and military officers (in the school), and then send them back there (to Hungary).

Hold a meeting with the students and inform them (at the colleges) perhaps with the ambassador present.<sup>31</sup>

Perform the work.

Three copies  
for Cdes. Brezhnev,  
Shepilov,  
Furtseva.<sup>32</sup>

**On the Situation in Hungary**<sup>33</sup>

**Cde. Bulganin**—Cde. Mikoyan is maintaining an improper and ill-defined position, and is not helping the Hungarian leaders put an end to their flip-flops.

A firm line must be maintained.<sup>34</sup>

**Cde. Molotov**—endorses Cde. Bulganin's view.

We must set certain limits and instruct Cde.

Mikoyan how to act.

**Cde. Kaganovich**—the real correlation of forces is such that it does not support the conclusions of Cde. Mikoyan.

We must adopt a firm position.

A Military-Revol. Com'tee must be set up.<sup>35</sup>

**Cde. Malenkov**—we sent in troops, and the adversary began to recover.

We should tell Cde. Mikoyan that he must firmly press Nagy to restore order.

**Cde. Zhukov**—Cde. Mikoyan is acting improperly, he's pushing us toward capitulation.

We must insist on a firm position.

**Cde. Shepilov**—the step was extreme, but correct.

Real power is with the troops.

To make further concessions would be regarded as weakness.

**Cde. Furtseva**—Cde. Mikoyan, apparently, is mistaken about Nagy. They released 1,000 who had been arrested.<sup>36</sup>

**Cde. Khrushchev**—Mikoyan is acting as he said he would.

Cde. Mikoyan supported a position of non-intervention, but our troops are there.

A new stage—we don't agree with the government.

We should send reinforcements—Molotov, Zhukov, Malenkov.

Contact should be established with both Hegedus and the others.<sup>37</sup>

We must write an appeal to our troops.

Prepare a flight.

Reinforce the troops.

Cdes. Molotov, Zhukov, and Malenkov are to fly off.<sup>38</sup>

Later we can say definitively.

Regarding Cde. Mikoyan's trip to Austria—it should be deferred.<sup>39</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 53-53ob, 62-62ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 6**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 28 October 1956**<sup>40</sup>

Those Taking Part: Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Molotov, Saburov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shvernik, Shepilov, Furtseva, Pospelov, Zorin

### **On the Situation in Hungary**

(Khrushchev)

**Cde. Khrushchev**—the matter is becoming more complicated.

They're planning a demonstration.<sup>41</sup> Kadar is leaning toward holding negotiations with the centers of resistance.

We must set Sobolev right at the UN.<sup>42</sup> The workers are supporting the uprising (therefore they want to reclassify it as something other than a "counterrevolutionary uprising").

**Cde. Zhukov** provides information.

They would refrain from stamping out one of the centers of resistance.<sup>43</sup>

An order was given not to permit a demonstration.

They're dismantling the railroad tracks in a number of localities.

In Debrecen power has passed to our troops.<sup>44</sup>

**Cde. Khrushchev** provides information.

The situation is complicated.

Cde. Suslov is to fly back to Moscow.

A Directory has not been declared.

They propose that Hegedus be removed from the Directory (4 in favor, and 6 against).<sup>45</sup>

The plenum is going on now.<sup>46</sup>

**Cde. Voroshilov**—they are poorly informed.

Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov are behaving calmly, but are poorly informed.

We're in a bad situation. We must devise our own line and get a group of Hungarians to embrace it.

Cde. Mikoyan is not able to carry out this work.

What we intended to do (to send a group of comrades) must now be done.

We should not withdraw troops—we must act decisively.

Nagy is a liquidator.

**Cde. Molotov**—things are going badly.

The situation has deteriorated, and it is gradually moving toward capitulation.

Nagy is actually speaking against us.

Our cdes. are behaving diffidently.

It is agreed up to what limit we will permit concessions.

This pertains now to the composition of the government and to the Directory.

They are excluding Hegedus, and this means they're no longer showing regard for us.

The bare minimum is the question of friendship with the USSR and the assistance of our troops.

Cde. Mikoyan is reassuring them.

If they don't agree, we must consider what will happen with the troops.

**Cde. Kaganovich**—a counterrevolution is under way.

Indecisiveness of the Hungarian Communists.

Kadar should make certain concessions to the workers and peasants and thereby neutralize the movement.

Decisive action is needed against the centers of resistance; we cannot retreat.

**Cde. Bulganin**—the HWP is acting ambivalently.

Kadar kept lurching. The main thing is to demand greater decisiveness from Kadar.

We must act as follows—summon Mikoyan to the phone and say: The HWP Politburo must act decisively; otherwise, we will take action without you. Perhaps will have to appoint the gov't directly.<sup>47</sup>

**Cde. Malenkov**—we shouldn't lay blame for the situation on our comrades. They're firmly carrying out a line aimed at suppressing the uprising. Nagy from the government so he can put forth a program [sic—trans].

**Cde. Zhukov**—regarding Cde. Mikoyan's role, it's unfair to condemn him right now. The situation has unfolded quite differently compared to when we decided to send in troops.

We must display political flexibility.

We must organize the CC for more flexible actions.

We must organize armed workers' brigades.

Our troops must be kept in full readiness.

The main center of resistance must be suppressed.<sup>48</sup>

**Cde. Saburov**—agrees with Cde. Zhukov.

They must take up their positions at large enterprises.

A program is needed.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—we will have a lot to answer for.

We must reckon with the facts.

Will we have a gov't that is with us, or will there be a gov't that is not with us and will request the withdrawal of troops?

What then?

Nagy said that if you act he will relinquish his powers.

Then the coalition will collapse.<sup>49</sup>

There is no firm leadership there, neither in the party nor in the government.

The uprising has spread into the provinces. The [Hungarian] troops might go over to the side of the insurgents.<sup>50</sup>

We can't persist on account of Hegedus.

Two options.

The gov't takes action, and we help.

This might soon be completed, or Nagy will turn against us.

He will demand a ceasefire and the withdrawal of troops, followed by capitulation.

What might the alternatives be?

1) The formation of a Committee, which takes power into its hands (this is the worst alternative), when we . . .<sup>51</sup>

2) This gov't is retained, and officials from the gov't are sent into the provinces.

A platform is needed.

Perhaps our Appeal to the population and to workers, peasants, and the intelligentsia should be prepared, or else we're just shooting.

3) Would it not be appropriate if the Chinese, Bulgarians, Poles, Czechs, and Yugoslavs appealed to the Hungarians?

4) Decisively suppress the armed forces of the insurgents.

Cdes. Brezhnev, Pospelov, Shepilov, and Furtseva are to prepare documents.

It is agreed: the fraternal parties should appeal to the Hungarians.

Do we support the present government once the declaration is issued?<sup>52</sup>

Yes, support it. There is no alternative.

**Cde. Bulganin:** . . .<sup>53</sup>

**Cde. Voroshilov:** We acted correctly when we sent in troops. We should be in no hurry to pull them out.

American secret services are more active there than Cdes. Suslov and Mikoyan are. A group of comrades should go there. Arrange to form a gov't and then withdraw the troops. We sent you there for nothing.<sup>54</sup> (Cdes. Khrushchev and Kaganovich object.)

**Cde. Bulganin:** We acted properly when we sent in troops, but I can't agree with the assessment offered by Cde. Voroshilov. We should endorse the actions taken by Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov.

We must draw the right conclusion: In Budapest there are forces that want to get rid of Nagy's and Kadar's government. We should adopt a position of support for the current government.

Otherwise we'll have to undertake an occupation.

This will drag us into a dubious venture.

**Cde. Kaganovich:** Regarding the sending of troops, we acted properly in sending them.

There is no reason to attack Mikoyan and Suslov.

They acted properly. It's unfair to lay the blame on them.

If we don't offer support, there'll be an occupation of the country.

That will take us far afield.

We should do what is needed to support the gov't.

Changes shouldn't be made in the declaration regarding the withdrawal of troops.<sup>55</sup>

So that they speak about friendship.

The question is how to strengthen the party.

We don't need to send additional people there.

**Malenkov:**<sup>56</sup> The actions that were taken were correct.

There is no point at all in condemning Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov.

We should support the new gov't.

We should keep troops there with the approval of the gov't.

**Cde. Malenkov:** So many people were involved there that there'll have to be a guarantee of an amnesty.

**Cde. Molotov:** We acted properly when we sent in troops. The initial messages from Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov were reassuring about their view of the government.

The influence of the party on the masses is weak.

With regard to the new government, we should support it.

But regarding friendship with the USSR, they're talking about the withdrawal of troops. We must act cautiously.

**Cde. Zhukov:** We must support the new gov't.

The question of a troop withdrawal from Hungary—this question must be considered by the entire socialist camp.

The authority of the HWP CC must be raised.

We should appeal to the fraternal parties so that they, in turn, will issue appeals to the Hungarians.

In Budapest, we should pull troops off the streets in certain regions.

Perhaps we should release a statement from the military command.

With regard to the assessment of Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov, it's inappropriate to say the things that Cde. Voroshilov did.

**Cde. Saburov:** We must support this gov't. The authority of the gov't must be increased in the eyes of the people.

We shouldn't protest their assessments of events, and we shouldn't protest about the withdrawal of troops, albeit not an immediate withdrawal.

**Cde. Khrushchev:** Agrees with the cdes.

We must support this gov't.

We must devise our tactics.

We must speak with Kadar and Nagy: We support you; the declaration—you evidently are not able to do more.<sup>57</sup>

We will declare a ceasefire.

We are ready to withdraw troops from Budapest.

We must make this conditional on a ceasefire by the centers of resistance.

**Cde. Molotov:** Second, we must look after the Hungarian Communists.<sup>58</sup>

**Cde. Bulganin**—the regime of people's democracy in the country has collapsed.

The HWP leadership no longer exists.

Power has been gained by . . .<sup>59</sup>

**Cde. Kaganovich**—we're not talking here about concessions, but about a war for the people.

The declaration must be adopted.<sup>60</sup>

A troop withdrawal from Budapest.

**Cde. Voroshilov:** If only a group could be formed there, we could leave our troops in place.

There's no one to rely on.

Otherwise there's war.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—I support the declaration.

Politically this is beneficial for us.<sup>61</sup>

The English and French are in a real mess in Egypt. We shouldn't get caught in the same company.<sup>62</sup>

But we must not foster illusions.

We are saving face.

Fundamentally, the declaration must be adopted.

But adopt it with corrections.<sup>63</sup>

Life in the city must be put right.

An appeal from the fraternal parties.<sup>64</sup>  
A ciphered cable to Yugoslavia.<sup>65</sup>

Cde. Pospelov is to be included in preparations of the report for 6.XI.56

If there is to be a leaflet from the military command, let . . .<sup>66</sup>

Hegedus

Gero

Piros

them to Bulgaria.<sup>67</sup>

### **On the Situation in Hungary**<sup>68</sup>

(Cde. Suslov)

**Cde. Suslov:** The situation is complicated. On 23 Oct. our troops entered.<sup>69</sup>

On 25 Oct. only one pocket of resistance was left; we found out about it on 26 Oct. It was in the "Corvin" cinema, a group headed by a colonel from the Horthyite army.<sup>70</sup>

Single gunshots are heard (often).

They're beating officers.

3,000 wounded, 350 dead (Hungarians).

Our losses are 600 dead.

The popular view of our troops now is bad (and has gotten worse). The reason is the dispersal of the demonstration on 24 Oct.

56.<sup>71</sup> Shooting began. 70 ordinary citizens were killed. Many flags were hung up on the sidewalk.

Workers are leaving their enterprises.

Councils are being formed (spontaneously) at enterprises (around various cities).<sup>72</sup>

There is an anti-Soviet trend in the demonstrations.

How can we regain control of the situation? The establishment of a relatively strong gov't.

Our line is not to protest the inclusion of several democrats in the gov't.

Yesterday a government was formed.

On the morning of 28 Oct., at 5:00, Kadar arrived and pointed out that the trade unions had demanded a reassessment of the insurgents, reclassifying the events as a national-democratic uprising.<sup>73</sup>

They want to classify it according to the example of the Poznan events.

Kadar reported that he had succeeded in agreeing with the trade unions to eliminate the formula of a national-democratic movement and about the organs of state security.

In his address, Nagy inserted a point about the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

They're also insisting on a ceasefire.

Our line now: this time the gov't is recommending a ceasefire, and the military command is devising an order for the withdrawal of troops from Budapest.<sup>74</sup>

Nagy and Szanto raised the question of removing Hegedus from the Directory.<sup>75</sup>

There's no need to hold elections.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 54-63, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### DOCUMENT No. 7

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 30 October 1956**<sup>76</sup>  
(Re: Point 1 of Protocol No. 49)<sup>77</sup>

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Kaganovich, Saburov, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Pospelov

#### On the Situation in Hungary

Information from Cdes. Mikoyan and Serov is read aloud.<sup>78</sup>

**Cde. Zhukov** provides information about the concentration of mil.-transport aircraft in the Vienna region.<sup>79</sup>

Nagy is playing a double game (in Malinin's opinion).

Cde. Konev is to be sent to Budapest.<sup>80</sup>

**On Discussions with the Chinese comrades.**<sup>81</sup>  
(Khrushchev)

We should adopt a declaration today on the withdrawal of troops from the countries of people's democracy (and consider these matters at a session of the Warsaw Pact), taking account of the views of the countries in which our troops are based.

The entire CPC CC Politburo supports this position.

One document for the Hungarians, and another for the participants of the Warsaw Pact.

On Rokossowski—I said to Gomulka that this matter is for you (the Poles) to decide.<sup>82</sup>

**Cde. Bulganin**—The Chinese cdes. have an incorrect impression of our relations with the countries of people's democracy.

On our appeal to the Hungarians—we should prepare it.

A declaration should be prepared.

**Cde. Molotov**—Today an appeal must be written to the Hungarian people so that they promptly enter into negotiations about the withdrawal of troops.

There is the Warsaw Pact.

This must be considered with other countries.

On the view of the Chinese comrades—they suggest that relations with the countries of the socialist camp be built on the principles of Pancha Shila.<sup>83</sup>

Relations along interstate lines are on one basis and interparty relations on another.

**Cde. Voroshilov:** We must look ahead. Declarations must be composed so that we aren't placed into an onerous position. We must criticize ourselves—but justly.

**Cde. Kaganovich**—Pancha Shila, but I don't think they should propose that we build our relations on the principles of Pancha Shila.

Two documents—an appeal to the Hungarians and a Declaration.

In this document we don't need to provide self-criticism.

There's a difference between party and state relations.

**Cde. Shepilov**—The course of events reveals the crisis in our relations with the countries of people's democracy.

Anti-Soviet sentiments are widespread.

The underlying reasons must be revealed.

The foundations remain unshakable.

Eliminate the elements of diktat, not giving play in this situation to a number of measures to be considered in our relations.

The declaration is the first step.

There is no need for an appeal to the Hungarians.

On the armed forces: We support the principles of non-interference.

With the agreement of the government of Hungary, we are ready to withdraw troops.

We'll have to keep up a struggle with national-Communism for a long time.

**Cde. Zhukov**—Agrees with what Cde. Shepilov has said.

The main thing is to decide in Hungary.

Anti-Soviet sentiments are widespread.

We should withdraw troops from Budapest, and if necessary withdraw from Hungary as a whole.

This is a lesson for us in the military-political sphere.

**Cde. Zhukov**—With regard to troops in the GDR and in Poland, the question is more serious.

It must be considered at the Consultative Council.<sup>84</sup>

The Consultative Council is to be convened.

To persist further—it is unclear what will come of this.

A quick decision, the main thing is to declare it today.

**Cde. Furtseva**—We should adopt a general declaration, not an appeal to the Hungarians. Not a cumbersome declaration.

The second thing is important for the internal situation.

We must search for other modes of relations with the countries of people's democracy.

About meetings with leaders of the people's democracies (concerning relations).

We should convene a CC plenum (for informational purposes).<sup>85</sup>

**Cde. Saburov:** Agrees about the need for a Declaration and withdrawal of troops.

At the XX Congress we did the correct thing, but then did not keep control of the unleashed initiative of the masses.

It's impossible to lead against the will of the people.

We failed to stand for genuine Leninist principles of leadership.

We might end up lagging behind events.

Agrees with Cde. Furtseva. The ministers are asking; so are members of the CC.<sup>86</sup>

With regard to Romania—they owe us 5 billion rubles for property created by the people.<sup>87</sup>

We must reexamine our relations.

Relations must be built on an equal basis.

**Cde. Khrushchev:** We are unanimous.

As a first step we will issue a Declaration.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—informs the others about his conversation with Cde. Mikoyan.

Kadar is behaving well.

5 of the 6 are firmly hanging in there.<sup>88</sup>

A struggle is going on inside the [HWP—trans.] Presidium about the withdrawal of troops.

The minister of defense will issue a directive about the suppression of insurgents in the cinema, using the armed forces.

(Malinin, apparently, became nervous and left the session.)

Officers from the state security (Hungarian) are with our troops.<sup>89</sup>

**Consideration of the Draft Declaration**  
(Shepilov, Molotov, Bulganin)

**Cde. Bulganin**—we should say in what connection the question of a Declaration arose.  
Page 2, Par. 2, don't soften the self-criticism. Mistakes were committed.  
Much use should be made of "Leninist principles."

**Cde. Khrushchev**—expresses agreement. We should say we are guided by Leninist principles.  
Page 2, Par. 5—we should say we are making a statement, not an explanation.  
Page 3—we should speak about economic equity, make it the main thing.  
We should say that no troops are stationed in the majority of countries.  
We should say that on the territory of the Polish, Hungarian, and Romanian states the stationing of troops is done with the consent of their governments and in the interests of these gov'ts and peoples.<sup>90</sup>

We should express our view of the government of Hungary.  
Measures to support them.  
About support for the party and HWP CC and for the gov't. We should refer specifically to Nagy and Kadar.

**Cde. Kaganovich, Cde. Molotov, Cde. Zhukov:** We should mention the Potsdam agreement and the treaties with every country.<sup>91</sup>

**Cde. Zhukov**—We should express sympathy with the people. We should call for an end to the bloodshed.

Page 2, Par. 2: We should say the XX Congress condemned the disregard for principles of equality.

**Cde. Zhukov**—we should speak about economics.  
Restructuring was thwarted after the XX Congress.  
(**Cde. Khrushchev**)

We are turning to the member-states of the Warsaw Pact to consider the question of our advisers.<sup>92</sup> We are ready to withdraw them.

Further editing.<sup>93</sup>

Transmitted via high frequency to Cdes. Mikoyan and Suslov.

**Information from Cde. Yudin on Negotiations with the Chinese Comrades.**

What's the situation: Will Hungary leave our camp? Who is Nagy? Can he be trusted? About the advisers.

Those taking part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Saburov, Khrushchev, Zhukov, Brezhnev, Shepilov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Pospelov, Yudin. Chinese comrades.

**On the Situation in Hungary**

(Cde. Khrushchev,  
Cde. Liu Shaoqi)

Cde. Liu Shaoqi indicates on behalf of the CPC CC that troops must remain in Hungary and in Budapest.<sup>94</sup>

**Cde. Khrushchev**—there are two paths. A military path—one of occupation. A peaceful path—the withdrawal of troops, negotiations.

**Cde. Molotov**—the political situation has taken clearer shape. An anti-revol. gov't has been formed, a transitional gov't.<sup>95</sup> We should issue the Declaration and explain our position. We should clarify our relationship with the new gov't. We are entering into negotiations about the withdrawal of troops.

Nagy—the prime minister.  
Kadar—a state minister.

Tildy Zoltan—  
Kovacs Bela—  
Losonczy—a Communist and a supporter of Nagy.<sup>96</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 6-14, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 8**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 31 October 1956<sup>97</sup>**

(**Re: Point VI of Protocol No. 49**)<sup>98</sup>  
**Information about Discussions with Gomulka Regarding the Situation in Poland and Hungary**<sup>99</sup>  
(Khrushchev)

A meeting with Cde. Gomulka (in the Brest region) was proposed.

**On Hungary**

**Cde. Khrushchev** sets forth the various considerations.

We should reexamine our assessment and should not withdraw our troops from Hungary and Budapest.<sup>100</sup> We should take the initiative in restoring order in Hungary. If we depart from Hungary, it will give a great boost to the Americans, English, and French—the imperialists.

They will perceive it as weakness on our part and will go onto the offensive. We would then be exposing the weakness of our positions.

Our party will not accept it if we do this. To Egypt they will then add Hungary.<sup>101</sup>

We have no other choice.

If this point of view is supported and endorsed, let's consider what we should do.

Agreed: **Cdes. Zhukov, Bulganin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, Saburov**<sup>102</sup>

We should say we tried to meet them half-way, but there is not now any government. What line are we now adopting?

We should create a Provisional Revol. Gov't (headed by Kadar).<sup>103</sup>

Best of all—a deputy.

Munnich—as premier and min. of defense and internal affairs.<sup>104</sup>

This government—we should invite them to negotiations about the withdrawal of troops and resolve the matter.

If Nagy agrees, bring him in as dep. premier.<sup>105</sup>

Munnich is appealing to us with a request for assistance. We are lending assistance and restoring order.

We should negotiate with Tito.

We should inform the Chinese comrades, the Czechs, the Romanians, and the Bulgarians.<sup>106</sup>

There will be no large-scale war.

**Cde. Saburov**—after yesterday's session this discussion is all pointless. It will vindicate NATO.

**Cde. Molotov**—yesterday was only a compromise decision.

**Cdes. Zhukov, Voroshilov, Bulganin:** We should reject the view that we are reexamining our position.

**Cde. Furtseva**—What further should be done?

We showed patience, but now things have gone too far. We must act to ensure that

victory goes to our side.

**Cde. Pospelov**—we should use the argument that we will not let socialism in Hungary be strangled.

**Cde. Shvernik**—Cde. Khrushchev's proposal is correct.

**Cde. Molotov**—we should not defer the creation of organs in localities. We should act simultaneously in the center and in the localities.

Cde. Zhukov is instructed to work out a plan and report on it.<sup>107</sup>

Shepilov, Brezhnev, Furtseva, and Pospelov are to handle the propaganda side.<sup>108</sup>

An appeal to the people from the military command or the government.

An appeal to the people from the Prov. Revol. Gov't.

An order from Cde. Konev.<sup>109</sup>

We should send a group to the region of Cde. Konev's headquarters.<sup>110</sup>

Cde. Rakosi—favors Munnich (as premier)<sup>111</sup>

Cde. Hegedus— “

Cde. Gero— “

Apr<sup>112</sup>

Kadar

Kiss Karoly<sup>113</sup>

Boldoczki

Horvath

#### **On Negotiations with Tito**

(Cdes. Khrushchev, Molotov, Bulganin)

Draft a telegram to Tito about the meeting.<sup>114</sup>

To Brest: Khrushchev, Molotov, Malenkov.<sup>115</sup>

To Yugoslavia: Khrushchev, Malenkov.

To discuss with you the situation that has emerged in Hungary. What is your view of it? If you agree, our delegation will visit incognito from

1. XI in the evening to

2. XI in the morning your time.

Confirm the telegram to the Soviet ambassador in Belgrade.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 15-18ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### **DOCUMENT No. 9**

#### **Notes of a Telephone Message from F. N. Gryaznov, a Counselor at the USSR Embassy in Yugoslavia, on 31 October 1956**

The message was transmitted through Kardelj.

Cde. Tito is at Brioni. Kardelj reported that Tito is prepared to meet with Cdes. Khrushchev and Malenkov on 1 November. However, because the doctors have forbidden him to leave his current premises in view of his illness, Tito requests that our delegation, if possible, come to Brioni.

As Kardelj further said, it would be desirable if the aircraft carrying the delegation arrived at the airport in Pula at roughly 5:00 p.m. Belgrade time so they can leave from the airport for Brioni with the approach of darkness.

Instructions about the flight path and the landing in Pula will be given in due course.

Kardelj requested that we let him know the time of departure for the aircraft and the time of arrival in Pula.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 64-65, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### **DOCUMENT No. 10**

#### **Notes of a Telephone Message<sup>116</sup>**

There was a certain common understanding. The position is what we expected. This is an internal affair. There should not be interference.

Reaction is rearing its head.

8-10% at elections.

Arm the workers, let them keep the weapons.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, L. 66, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### **DOCUMENT NO. 11**

#### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 1 November 1956 (Re: Point I of Protocol No. 50)<sup>117</sup>**

Those Taking Part: Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Saburov, Suslov, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Pospelov, Konev, Serov<sup>118</sup>

#### **On the Situation in Hungary.**

(Cdes. Mikoyan)

The demand for the withdrawal of troops became universal.

Anti-Soviet sentiments have intensified.

(Cde. Mikoyan)

In current circumstances it is better now to support the existing gov't.

Right now, the use of force will not help anything.

We should enter into negotiations. For 10-15 days.

If the regime slips away, we'll need to decide what to do. We simply cannot allow Hungary to be removed from our camp.

We shouldn't quarrel right now with the army.

If the situation stabilizes, we should decide at that point whether we'll withdraw the troops.

We should wait another 10-15 days and support this government.

If the situation stabilizes, everything will change for the better.

**Cde. Suslov:** The unstable polit. situation. The danger of a bourgeois restoration has reached its peak.

The situation will be clarified in the next few days.

Events are developing wildly, but without the control of the party.

A schism in the HWP—the intra-party struggle has spilled out onto the streets.

I don't believe that Nagy organized the uprising, but his name is being used.

If we back this gov't—there is no guarantee.

Only by means of an occupation can we have a government that supports us.

**Cde. Serov**—the demonstrations were meticulously prepared. Nagy was connected with the rebels.

We must take decisive measures.

We must occupy the country.

**Cde. Bulganin**—provides information about the decision taken on 31-X-56 and about the discussions with the Chinese comrades.<sup>119</sup>

**Cde. Bulganin:** The international situation has changed.<sup>120</sup>

If we don't take measures—we will lose Hungary.

**Cde. Konev**—Budapest is in the hands of the rebels.



Anarchy is spreading; reaction is triumphing.

The decision: occupation.

**Cde. Kaganovich:** The discussion was complicated.<sup>121</sup>

The Chinese said we should not withdraw troops.

Objectively—a sharp reactionary movement.

The party doesn't exist.

We can't wait long.

The reactionary forces are attacking, and we are attacking.<sup>122</sup>

**Cde. Furtseva**—reactions to the Declaration.

Are worried that we're giving away Hungary.<sup>123</sup>

**Cde. Zhukov**—there is no basis for reconsidering the decision of 31-X-56.

I don't agree with Cde. Mikoyan that we must support the current gov't.

Our actions must be decisive.

Remove all the unsavory elements.

Disarm the counterrevolution.

Delay the parliamentary delegation to France.

To the ambassador in Budapest—send the families.<sup>124</sup>

Reconsider sending a parliamentary delegation to Thailand.

**Cde. Bulganin**—everything is being done in the spirit of the decision of 31 X.

**Cde. Zhukov:** Everything will be restored to order.

We are acting on the basis of the Declaration—the redeployments will bring order.

**Cde. Suslov**—now the situation has become clearer.

Separate out the honest ones.<sup>125</sup>

Zhukov, Suslov, Konev, Serov, Brezhnev (the plan of measures).<sup>126</sup>

Those Taking Part: Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Saburov, Suslov, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Pospelov, Konev, Serov

### On the Situation in Hungary

(Mikoyan)

About our embassy in Hungary.

(Bulganin, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Zhukov, Shepilov)

So far, to keep the embassy.<sup>127</sup>

On the main question.

**Cde. Shepilov:** There were two paths: to reckon with the mass nature of the movement and not to intervene; or second, the military path; it turned out there was a third path: both that we intervened and that reaction triumphed.

The current situation: a counterrev. putsch has been carried out, and the state order has changed; the main trend is anti-Soviet; the chief orientation of forces is being orchestrated from outside.

If we don't embark on a decisive path, things in Czechoslovakia will collapse.<sup>128</sup>

We must establish order by the use of force.

**Cde. Mikoyan:** If Hungary becomes a base for imperialism, that's a different matter.

What we're talking about here is the current situation.

We should not tolerate a pedantic approach.

There are still 3 days to think it over; there'll be advice from the comrades.

The tactic: to maintain contacts with them.<sup>129</sup>

Cdes. Suslov, Brezhnev, + Hungarian comrades—

to prepare measures (on which cadres to rely and what we will do).

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 19-22, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

## DOCUMENT No. 12

### **Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 2 November 1956, with Participation by J. Kadar, F. Munnich, and I. Bata**<sup>130</sup>

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Molotov, Saburov, Suslov, Brezhnev. Cdes. Munnich, Kadar, and Bata

### Exchange of Opinions about the Situation in Hungary

An assessment.<sup>131</sup>

The intelligentsia is taking the lead; the oppositionists are supporters of Nagy; the armed groups are headed by party figures, including Dudas, an engineer.<sup>132</sup>

When the uprising ended, they spoke with the rebels; these were workers, the leaders of the group; they arrived at the coalition government; they didn't want this;

they're seeking the ouster of the Rakosi clique.

They fought for the withdrawal of troops and for the order of people's democracy.<sup>133</sup>

Mass demonstrations are taking place on the periphery; these didn't include any goal—to destroy the order of people's democracy; many demands about democratization, and social demands.

I personally took part in one meeting (of the conference), and no one wanted counter-revolution.

But when we spoke with the leaders of the armed groups, inside these groups—armed groups of a counterrevolutionary nature have emerged.

I have to say that everyone demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

We didn't clarify how the counterrevolutionaries managed to disseminate this counter-revolutionary propaganda.

The strike is a demand for the withdrawal of troops: we'll starve in the process, but the troops must be withdrawn.

Yesterday there was a conference.

They were speaking about the Declaration of the Soviet government and the Declaration of neutrality.<sup>134</sup>

Stated that we will go back to work.

But Soviet troops were being redeployed, and the news quickly spread.

The government will not be considered to have any authority because of the coalition nature of the government.

All forces are seeking the restoration of their parties. Each group wants to take power into its own hands. This undermines the authority of the government even further.

The Soc.-Democrats are especially distinctive in this regard.

In the inner cabinet the Soc.-Dems. were given one spot. But they haven't named a candidate; they don't want to act in solidarity with Nagy.<sup>135</sup>

Nagy's policy has counterrev. aspects to it. The soldiers freed Cardinal Mindszenty.<sup>136</sup>

The Austrians support a fascist organization (in West Germany—a Hungarian organization) 35 thous. people (Horthyites).

The weak link is the HWP; it has ceased to exist: some have been killed (workers), some were saved.

The leaders of 1/3 of the obkoms are taking part in revolutionary committees (for the region and province).  
Local bodies have been destroyed.

On 1 Nov. at noon—the point of view in the government is that it's necessary to hold discussions with the Soviet gov't and to have the troops withdrawn by a certain time. But this isn't accurate.<sup>137</sup>

The coalition parties don't want counterrev. Tildy and other cdes. are afraid of Ferenc Nagy.<sup>138</sup>

Those in the emigre community: they're afraid of them.

Tildy is afraid of Kovacs, but he's better than Tildy and is a smart man.

Kovacs gave a speech in Pecs:<sup>139</sup> we are creating a Smallholders party, but we can't struggle on the basis of the old program. He is against the return of the landowners and capitalists.

But they aren't putting forth demands that are popular in the nation.

Hour by hour the situation is moving rightward.

2 questions:

- 1) the gov't's decision about neutrality,
- 2) the party.

How did the decision about neutrality emerge?

The strong impression is that there's an organized departure of troops.

The Declaration—a good impression and a reassuring gesture.

But the masses are very stirred-up and are reacting harshly.

There were movements of Sov. troops, which alarmed the gov't and masses.<sup>140</sup>

The gov't is doing one thing, and the troops another.

They reported that Soviet troops had crossed the border in transport vehicles. Hungarian formations are entrenched.

What should be done—to shoot or not to shoot?

They summoned Andropov. Andropov said that these are railroad workers.

Hungarians at the border sent back telegrams saying that these definitely are not railroad workers.

Then they reported that Soviet tanks are

moving into Szolnok.

This was at noon. The government has been thrown into a nervous state.

They summoned Andropov. He responded: the withdrawal of wounded soldiers.

Nagy was convinced that a strike against Budapest is being prepared. Tildy requested that Hungarian tanks approach the parliament.

In the army—a Rev. Council, Maleter, Kovacs,<sup>141</sup> and Kiraly are not subordinate to the gov't.

They don't want bad ministers.

The whole gov't was inclined to the view that if the troops move toward Budapest, the city must be defended.

In this atmosphere the idea of neutrality arose.

The initiator of it was Zoltan Tildy.

Everyone supported it.

I was a supporter of the view that no sorts of steps should be taken without having spoken with Andropov.

The whole cabinet, other than Kadar, declared that the Sov. gov't is deceiving the Hungarian gov't.

They deferred it for two hours.

The Sov. gov't's explanation didn't satisfy them. They told Andropov that they'll be taking this step.<sup>142</sup>

When Andropov left, they took their step about neutrality and decided to issue an appeal to the UN.

If these are just maneuvers, they'll withdraw the question from the UN.

When Andropov left, Kadar voted for neutrality, too.

The renaming of the party: the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (a name used back in 1925).

The HWP has been compromised in the view of the overwhelming masses.

The peak of the HWP's authority was in 1948 (the alliance with the Soc.-Dems.).

The Rajk affair shattered its authority.

About the future.

Yesterday I voted for these two decisions of the government.

If they will withdraw Soviet troops in the near future (within two-three months)—the decision on the withdrawal of troops is the important thing—our party and other parties would be able to fight against the counterrev.

But I'm not sure this will be successful.

There's no unity within the coalition.

My point of view is: if the Soc.-Dems. and the Smallholders party are going to operate on the basis of their old programs, they will be deceitful.

The people believe in nationalism and regard it as their affair.<sup>143</sup>

If the Communists declare that they support nationalism, the authority of the other parties will stop increasing.

The looming danger—the counterrevolution wouldn't embolden these coalition parties.

My view is that there's another path.

The armed forces could be deployed to support Hungary.

But then there will be skirmishes.

The use of military force will be destructive and lead to bloodshed.

What will happen then? The morale of the Communists will be reduced to zero.

The socialist countries will suffer losses.

Is there a guarantee that such circumstances will not arise in other countries?

The counterrev. forces are not meager.

But this is a matter of struggle.

If order is restored by force, the authority of the socialist countries will be eroded.

#### **Munnich:**

A gloomy situation.

Why did this situation arise?

The isolation of the leaders from the masses. Certainty that the regime exists and is preserved only through the support of the USSR.<sup>144</sup>

This is the source of anti-Soviet sentiments (facts: soccer, radio broadcasts).<sup>145</sup>

In Hungary: total chaos.

What would be the result if the troops are withdrawn—this would respond to the sentiment of the masses.

Counterrev. elements are receiving reinforcement, and their actions are not being stopped.

We have no more forces left.

On the military nature of the events.

Anti-Soviet sentiments are being spread by counterrev. elements.

**Cde. Kadar**—a concrete request: preserve the party cadres.

#### **Cde. Bata:**

The question is pointedly raised about the withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Everything all of them are doing will lead to a confrontation of Soviet and Hungarian troops.

I was a witness when a Hungarian unit opened fire on Soviet troops. The Soviets didn't respond. Further such restraint couldn't be expected from even the most disciplined army. Whether deliberately or not, the gov't is laying the groundwork for a confrontation of Soviet and Hungarian troops. Order must be restored through a military dictatorship. Change the policy of the government.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 23-29, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### DOCUMENT No. 13

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 2 November 1956 (Re: point IV of Protocol No. 50)**<sup>146</sup>

**On the Plan for Measures Concerning Hungary**<sup>147</sup>  
(Zhukov, Serov, Konev, Molotov, Mikoyan, Kaganovich, Bulganin, Voroshilov)

1) to speak about the threat of fascism posed by the Horthyites;<sup>148</sup>  
the threat to our homeland,  
they want to use it as a base against our country;  
the workers and peasants support us.  
Adopt it with amendments.

2) send Cdes. Mikoyan and Brezhnev<sup>149</sup>  
(decide on 3 XI 56).

Approve the plan.<sup>150</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 30, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### DOCUMENT No. 14

**Notes of a Secure Phone Call from the USSR Ambassador in Romania, A. A. Epishev**<sup>151</sup>

3/XI/56

Bucharest, Cde. Epishev<sup>152</sup>

A message.

Late in the evening of 2 Nov. after a discussion with the Soviet ambassador, Imre Nagy summoned the Romanian ambassador and told him that he, Imre Nagy, has received verified information that Soviet troops are entering the country.

In this connection, he asks the ambas-

sador to transmit to Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej his request for advice on what to do.

This request to the ambassador has been transmitted to Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej.

Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej responded to the ambassador—in a message to be conveyed to Imre Nagy—that he received his appeal and stated, by way of reassurance, that for the life of the Hungarian working class and of the Hungarian Republic it is never too late, and I am sending Cde. Malnasan to you.<sup>153</sup>

The response has not yet been sent to Budapest.

3/XI/56

An LI-2 aircraft (a single one) will fly out of Bucharest at 10:20 Bucharest time for a trip into Budapest city airport. On board the aircraft is Malnasan.<sup>154</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, L. 67-69, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### DOCUMENT No. 15

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 3 November 1956, with Participation by J. Kadar, F. Munnich, and I. Horvath**

Those Taking Part: Voroshilov, Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Kirichenko, Saburov, Suslov, Brezhnev, Pospelov<sup>155</sup>

**On the Preparation of Documents for Use in Hungary**  
(Khrushchev, Mikoyan)

The documents are poorly prepared. Cdes. Suslov, Mikoyan, and Shepilov are to prepare the documents.<sup>156</sup>

**On the Composition of the Hungarian Gov't**  
(Mikoyan)<sup>157</sup>

**Cde. Mikoyan:** At the head of the gov't is Kadar.

**Kadar**—it is worth speaking about mistakes, but for a long while there was no time. About one matter—why in the summer they chose Gero as secretary.

The Soviet comrades always helped, but there was one mistake: only 3-4 Hungarian cdes. enjoyed the full trust of the Soviet cdes.: Rakosi, Gero, Farkas.

But among others there are many orderly people.

3-4 individuals monopolized relations between Hungary and the USSR.

This is the source of many mistakes.

Rakosi would say "this is the view of the Soviet cdes.," and that would put an end to the debate.

On the exclusion of Nagy from the party: Rakosi said that the Soviet cdes. share his view.

**Cde. Kadar**—the decisions of the XX Congress were heartily welcomed.<sup>158</sup>

To criticize Rakosi means speaking out against the Soviet cdes.

The congratulatory telegram in Rakosi's name (caused confusion).<sup>159</sup>

For 12 years: the Soviet comrades were calm with Rakosi at the head and then Gero (they didn't raise objections to them).

What now?

On Nagy's behavior.

They're killing Communists.

The counterrev. are killing them, and premier Nagy provides a cover.

The government lacks the forces to put an end to it.

What must be done?

Surrendering a socialist country to counterrev. is impossible.

I agree with you.

The correct course of action is to form a rev. government.

I'd like to dwell on one point:

the whole nation is taking part in the movement.

The nation does not want to liquidate the peop.-dem. order.

The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary has great significance.

We are being strengthened in our military relationship, and are becoming weaker in the political.

National sentiments are offended (form, title).

**Cde. Kadar:**

This government must not be puppetlike, there must be a base for its activities and support among workers.

There must be an answer to the question of what sort of relationship we must have with

the USSR.

**Cde. Munnich:**

Believes that Cde. Kadar's assessment and conclusions are correct.

**Cde. Kadar**—the center of counterrev. is in the city of Gyor.<sup>160</sup>

If we declare Nagy's gov't counterrev., all parties will fall under this rubric.

The government does not want to struggle against the counterrev.

The position:

on the basis of defending the peop.-dem. order, socialist gains, and friendship with the USSR and with other socialist countries and cooperation with all peaceloving countries.

At the head of the gov't is Kadar.

To send: Malenkov, Mikoyan, Brezhnev.<sup>161</sup>

To fly off: (at 2:00-3:00) at 7:00 to 8:00 in the morning.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 31-33ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 16**

**Imre Horvath's Notes of Khrushchev's Speech at the 3 November Session**<sup>162</sup>

Khrush., Bulg., Vorosh., Malen., Molot., Kagan., Mikoyan, Brezhnev

Khrush.: Organized counterrev.

Events are without letup.

From the north.

Mistakes of Rakosi, Gero, + others  
Miskolc!<sup>163</sup>

We are doing a lot, but not everything!

This is no justification for the fact that there are no Hungarian leaders!

Rakosi was paralyzed, but we didn't actively speak out. We were too late in requesting that he be replaced.

It's my fault and Mikoyan's that we proposed Gero rather than Kadar.<sup>164</sup> We gave in to Gero. Rak. and Gero are honorable and committed Communists. But they did many stupid things.

Rak. is hardline, and Gero hapless.

They criticized I. Nagy and regarded him as an opportunist, but he is also a traitor. The exclusion of I. Nagy from the party was a mistake and a reflection of Rak.'s stupidity. We would have arrested I. Nagy. We were for admitting him back into the party. Some of the rebels are not enemies! They were antagonized by the mistakes of the leadership. We welcome your (Kad.'s)

choice. We cannot regard I. Nagy as a Communist. Dulles needs someone just like I. Nagy. We uphold the Declaration. But with I. Nagy that's impossible!

Eng. + Fr. Egypt.<sup>165</sup> We consulted with other parties. Malen., Khr. Poland.

We can't be observers on the sidelines.

Yug., Rankovic, Kardelj, Micunovic, the ambassador in Mosc. + Malenk., Khrush. Alarm!

Revol. government. The traitors want to use Kadar as a screen. If I. Nagy is not forced into retirement, he'll be working for the enemy.

—Munnich	—Apro	Hidas
deputy,	—Ronai	Berei
internal affairs,	Kiss	Andics
defense	—Marosan	
—Kadar as chairman	Kovacs	
—Kossa at finance	Egri	
	Veg	
	They want to isolate Kadar	
	—Dogei	
	Miskolc  —> Budapest	
	Szolnok	

[Source: *Magyar Orszagos Leveltar, XIX J-1-K Horvath Imre kulugyminiszter iratai, 55, doboz.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 17**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 4 November 1956 (Re: Protocol No. 51)**

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Molotov, Pervukhin, Saburov, Suslov, Khrushchev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Furtseva, Pospelov.

**On the Operations and Situation in Hungary**<sup>166</sup>

Cde. Kaganovich's ciphered cable from Cde. Malinin

at Cde. Khrushchev (4 XI).<sup>167</sup>

1) Bring back Cdes. Mikoyan and Brezhnev.

2) Provide assistance to Hungary.<sup>168</sup>

3) More actively take part in the assistance to Egypt.<sup>169</sup>

Think through a number of measures (perhaps a demonstration at the English embassy).

More widely in the newspapers.

**Cde. Molotov**—think about Hungary.

Exert influence on Kadar so that Hungary does not go the route of Yugoslavia. They made changes in the Declaration—they now condemn the Rakosi-Gero clique—and this

might be dangerous.<sup>170</sup>

We must convince them that they should refrain from this reference to the Rakosi-Gero clique.

Kadar is calling (1 XI) for a condemnation of Stalinism.<sup>171</sup>

The title of Hungarian Workers' Party should be retained.

We should come to agreement with them and prevent them from shifting to Yugoslav positions.

**Cde. Molotov**—reinforce the military victory through political means.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—I don't understand Cde. Molotov. He comes up with the most pernicious ideas.

**Cde. Molotov**—you should keep quiet and stop being so overbearing.

**Cde. Bulganin**—we should condemn the incorrect line of Rakosi-Gero.

**Cde. Khrushchev**: The declaration is good—we must act honorably.

**Cde. Shepilov**—during the editing they added the phrase "the clique of Rakosi and Gero."

We are giving them legal opportunities to denigrate the entire 12-year period of the HWP's work.

**Cde. Shepilov**—is it really necessary to disparage cadres?

Tomorrow it will be the "clique of Ulbricht."<sup>172</sup>

**Cde. Saburov**—if they themselves don't comprehend their mistakes, we will deal at length with the matter.

Reward the military personnel.

Take care of the families of those who perished.<sup>173</sup>

**V. On Purging the Higher Educational Institutions of Unsavory Elements**

(Cdes. Zhukov, Khrushchev, Furtseva, Pervukhin, Voroshilov)

Furtseva, Pospelov, Shepilov, and Elyutin are to come up with recommendations for purging the higher educational institutions of unsavory elements.<sup>174</sup>

**IV. On the Response to Cde. Kardelj and the Telegram About Imre Nagy**

Affirm the text of the response.<sup>175</sup>

**On Instructions to the Soviet Ambassador in Hungary**

**On the Raising of the Question at the General Assembly's Session on Hungary**

Cde. Kadar is to say that he will withdraw the question from the UN.<sup>176</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 34-36ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 18**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 5 November 1956 (Re: Point VIII of Protocol No. 52)**

**On the Party in Hungary**<sup>177</sup>  
(Khrushchev, Zhukov, Molotov)

Today this question need not be considered. The old name (HWP) will not be suitable. The name must be in accord with Marxist-Len. content.

**Cde. Zhukov**—consult with secretaries of the provincial party committees.

**Cde. Molotov**—it would be important to preserve the old name of the HWP.

**Cde. Voroshilov**—through the CC we should hold a conference of the party aktiv and consult about the name of the party.

**Cde. Malenkov**—we don't need to consider it right now.

**Cde. Kaganovich**—consider it organizationally, in essence.

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 40-40ob. Compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

**DOCUMENT No. 19**

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 6 November 1956 (Re: Protocol No. 53)**

Those Taking Part: Bulganin, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Kaganovich, Pervukhin, Saburov, Suslov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Shvernik, Furtseva, Aristov, Belyaev, Pospelov<sup>178</sup>

**I. On the Appeal of the Provisional CC of the Hungarian Socialist (Workers') Party**<sup>179</sup>

(The text is read aloud by Cde. Malenkov.)

**Cde. Mikoyan**—overall it should be adopted.

**Cde. Molotov**—in whose name is the document being issued (from the CC)? The composition of the CC is still unknown. It is unclear what entity is supporting democratization if there is still a CC of the HWP. In actuality, the dissolution of the party is being proposed.

A new party will be created on an unknown basis. Where will it lead?

In April 1956 there was an appeal from the CPSU CC. We sent greetings to the HWP CC (we acknowledged their services).<sup>180</sup>

They're talking about acknowledgment of Marxism-Leninism, but in reality everything can be acknowledged.

So far we have concurred in not resolving the question of the renaming of the party. We should not use the expression "the Rakosi clique."<sup>181</sup>

**Cde. Suslov**—the draft of the appeal is correct—no one is talking about the dissolution of the HWP. The party's basic principles are being preserved. We must support it. On the "clique"—the issue is not the name, but the mistakes that were made. The Hungarian comrades again will have suspicions; let's dispel them.

**Cde. Kaganovich:** This is a step forward. Having discreet influence on Kadar. Overall it should be adopted.

We should try to suggest not changing the name of the party. We should suggest they speak about friendship with the USSR. We should suggest they decline mentioning both the name and the Rakosi clique.

**Cde. Bulganin**—The Declaration is fine. Cde. Mikoyan's changes are correct. As for the statements by Cdes. Molotov and Kaganovich: no one is talking about the dissolution of the HWP. That's a misleading argument.

There is no principled basis for Cde. Molotov to couch the matter that way.

On friendship with the USSR, we shouldn't mention it. Leave it as they propose (spoken about friendship).

**Cde. Pervukhin**—a proper document. The HWP CC collapsed. It's not true that if we call something a "clique," we're condemning the whole party.

**Cde. Malenkov**—without harsh criticism of Rakosi we won't be able to strengthen the [Hungarian] leadership.

They're setting forth their own program. A CC plenum should not be convened (since Nagy is also a member of the CC).<sup>182</sup>

**Cde. Zhukov**—we must decisively support Cde. Kadar. Otherwise they won't understand us. Rakosi conducted an inapprop. policy, which must be condemned.

**Cde. Saburov**—I support Cde. Mikoyan.

**Cde. Molotov**—we must not forget that a change of names is a change of character. What's going on is the creation of a new Yugoslavia. We are responsible for Hungary (without Stalin).

I vehemently object.

**Cde. Furtseva**—raises the question: where were the leaders?

The people fully support them.

**Cde. Brezhnev:** The Declaration is appropriate. It's pointless to theorize about it.

**Cde. Saburov:** Cdes. Molotov and Kaganovich are simplistically and dogmatically approaching the question. The party will be better.

**Cde. Mikoyan**—Cde. Molotov is completely ignoring the concrete situation—Cde. Molotov is dragging us backward. Speak about Nagy.

**Cde. Voroshilov**—Cde. Molotov's statements are fundamentally correct. But in this case it's impossible to adopt.

**Cde. Aristov**—we must endorse and support Cde. Kadar. The statements by Cdes. Molotov and Kaganovich—they clung to the cult of Stalin, and they're still clinging to it.

**Cde. Shvernik**—Cde. Molotov is incorrect. How can we not say something if Rakosi caused a great deal of harm?

**Cde. Shepilov**—the document is appropriate. Say—a condemnation of Nagy. On the "clique": we will leave a stain on the socialist past.

**Cde. Khrushchev**—a good draft. We should make changes. Indicate which group is presenting it. If the CC is convened, it should be said then that we have faith in Kadar.<sup>183</sup> For Cde. Molotov this is logical (Cde. Molotov doesn't come out and say it, but he's thinking of bringing back both

Hegedus and Rakosi).

Rakosi caused enormous damage, and for this he must be held accountable. He must be excluded from the party.<sup>184</sup>

#### Cde. Khrushchev:

Cde. Kaganovich, when will you mend your ways and stop all your toadying? Holding to some sort of hardened position. What Cde. Molotov and Kaganovich are proposing is the line of screeching and face-slapping. Speak about Nagy. About Losonczy and Donath.

Cdes. Mikoyan, Suslov, and Brezhnev are to transmit our changes and requests in a tactful manner.

#### II. Ciph. Tel. No. . . . from . . . . (Zhukov, Shepilov)<sup>185</sup>

Affirm as an unfortunate event.<sup>186</sup>

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, Ll. 41-45ob, compiled by V. N. Malin.*]

#### DOCUMENT No. 20

#### Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 27 November 1956 (Re: Protocol No. 60)<sup>187</sup>

##### I. From Bucharest.

(Khr., Vorosh., Kagan., Mik., Mol., Perv., Bulg., Sab., Zhuk., Grom.)

It's not advisable.<sup>188</sup>

We should inform Dej that this is not to our advantage, and is not to the advantage of Hungary.

Cde. Bulg. is to negotiate with Cde. Dej.<sup>189</sup>

**Zhukov**—we should state our view of the position of the Yugoslavs.

**Khr.**—we don't need to enter into correspondence with Tito about Imre Nagy; that's a matter for Hungary to handle. It was a mistake for our officer to go into the bus.<sup>190</sup>

#### II.<sup>191</sup>

Instructions to:

The Foreign Ministry  
KGB, and

On the discrediting of Imre.<sup>192</sup>  
Konev

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1006, L. 52, compiled by V. N. Chernukha.*]

#### TRANSLATOR'S NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Protocol No. 28 was the formal protocol drafted for this session, which is now stored in *Tsentral'naia Khraneniya Sovremennoi Dokumentatsii* (TsKhSD), Moscow, Fond (F.) 3, Opis' (Op.) 14, Delo (D.) 41, Listy (Ll.) 1-2. The session was held on both 9 and 12 July 1956, but the item covered here (Point IV) was discussed solely on the 12th.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to a ciphered telegram from the Soviet ambassador in Hungary, Yu. V. Andropov, on 9 July 1956. The lengthy telegram, stored in *Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (APRF), F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 151-162, recounts a discussion that Andropov had with the Hungarian leader, Erno Gero, three days earlier. Gero had spoken about the disarray within the Hungarian leadership and the growing ferment in Hungarian society.

<sup>3</sup> Here and elsewhere in Malin's notes, the listing of surnames in parentheses after the title of a session means that these individuals spoke, in the sequence indicated, about the given topic. The formal protocol for this session, as cited in Note 1 *supra*, reveals that Molotov, Kaganovich, and Bulganin also spoke about the subject.

<sup>4</sup> Mikoyan arrived in Budapest the following day (13 July) and was there until 21 July. The most important of the ciphered telegrams, secure phone messages, and reports that he and Andropov sent back from Budapest during this time were declassified in 1992 and published in "Vengriya, aprel'-oktyabr' 1956 goda: Informatsiya Yu. V. Andropova, A. I. Mikoyana i M. A. Suslova iz Budapeshta," *Istoricheskii arkhiv*, No. 4 (1993), pp. 110-128. Lake Balaton, the largest lake in Central Europe, is a popular Hungarian vacation site that was also favored by party and government leaders.

<sup>5</sup> This means that preparation of a lead editorial for *Pravda* was entrusted to Pospelov, Shepilov, and Ponomarev. (The formal protocol for the session, as cited in Note 1 *supra*, explicitly stated: "Instruct Cdes. Pospelov, Shepilov, and Ponomarev to prepare, on the basis of the exchange of opinions at the CPSU CC Presidium session, an article for publication in the press about the internationalist solidarity of workers in the countries of people's democracy and about the intrigues of imperialists who are carrying out their subversive work to weaken ties among the countries of the socialist camp.") The article, published on 16 July, denounced the "intrigues of imperialist agents" who were seeking to exploit the ferment in Eastern Europe after the 20th CPSU Congress. It claimed that members of the Petofi Circle in Hungary had "fallen under the influence of imperialist circles" and were "disseminating their anti-party views under the guise of a discussion club."

<sup>6</sup> Togliatti was indeed contacted by the Hungarian newspaper *Szabad Nep*, at Moscow's behest, on 12 July 1956 about the possibility of giving an interview to explain the "significance of proletarian internationalism" and how to "strengthen the positions of the popular-democratic order in Hungary." Before the interview could be conducted, however, Mikoyan informed the CPSU

Presidium, shortly after his arrival in Budapest on 13 July, that the situation in Hungary would never improve so long as Rakosi remained the leader of the Hungarian Workers' Party (HWP). Acting on behalf of the Soviet Presidium, Mikoyan engineered the dismissal of Rakosi from the HWP leadership and all other posts, a step that Rakosi's colleagues welcomed, but had not dared to pursue on their own in the absence of a direct Soviet initiative. The new information from Mikoyan caused the CPSU leadership to send a new cable to Togliatti on 13 July ("Shifrtelogramma," 13 July 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 14, D. 43/2, L. 2) urging him to be aware, in any interviews he might give about Hungary, that Rakosi would not be in power much longer. Moscow's willingness to rely on Togliatti is somewhat surprising because a recent interview with Togliatti, published in the Italian Communist daily *L'Unita* on 17 June 1956, had provoked dismay in certain quarters of the HWP leadership. The Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yuri Andropov, had noted these misgivings in an important cable he sent to the CPSU Presidium on 9 July. See "Shifrtelogramma," from Yu. V. Andropov, 9 July 1956 (Strictly Secret—Special Dossier), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 151-162. Andropov had recommended that newspapers in East Germany and Czechoslovakia be asked to publish articles in support of Rakosi, but he made no such recommendation about *L'Unita*.

<sup>7</sup> Laszlo Rajk was one of the leaders of the HWP until 1949, when he fell victim to the Stalinist purges. In October 1949 he was sentenced to death on trumped-up charges, a case that Rakosi helped mastermind. Following Stalin's death, rehabilitations of the "unjustly repressed" began in all the East-bloc countries, albeit at varying rates. This process moved rather slowly in Hungary and did not initially extend to Rajk and his associates, but calls for the rehabilitation of Rajk steadily increased. After Rakosi staged a comeback in March-April 1955, he tried, for obvious reasons, to deflect the growing pressure for Rajk's rehabilitation. In early 1956, however, the process of rehabilitation in Hungary gained greater momentum because of the limited "thaw" inspired by the 20th Soviet Party Congress. On 28 March 1956, Rakosi finally gave in and announced the formal rehabilitation of Rajk, though his announcement (published in *Szabad Nep* on 29 March) contained no admission of personal responsibility for the case. On 18 May, Rakosi did acknowledge a degree of personal culpability for the repressions of 1949-1952 (though not for the Rajk case), but this was not enough to curb political unrest in Hungary. Rakosi was dismissed from his posts as HWP First Secretary and an HWP Politburo member by the HWP Central Leadership (i.e., Central Committee) on 18 July 1956. (At Mikoyan's behest, the dismissal had been arranged by the HWP Politburo on 13 July and was then formally endorsed by a plenum of the HWP Central Leadership five days later.) Subsequently, Rakosi was stripped of all his other posts. On 26 July 1956, Rakosi fled to the Soviet Union, where he spent the remaining 25 years of his life in exile. Back in Hungary, Rajk and three other high-level victims of the purge trials in 1949 (Gyorgy Palfy, Tibor Szonyi, and Andras Szalai) were reentered in formal ceremonies on 6 Octo-

ber 1956, an event that contributed to the growing social unrest in Hungary.

<sup>8</sup> This passage in Malin's notes is ambiguous because Rakosi's surname, like other foreign surnames that end in vowels other than "a," does not decline in Russian. Most likely, Khrushchev was saying that "we must alleviate Rakosi's situation." It is possible, however, that Khrushchev was saying that "Rakosi must alleviate the situation," which would imply the need for Rakosi to step down. Unfortunately, there is no way to determine which of these two, very different interpretations is correct. The Hungarian edition of the Malin notes fails to take account of this ambiguity. See Vyacheslav Sereda and Janos M. Rainer, eds., *Donies a Kremben, 1956: A szovjet partelnokseg vitai Magyarorszagrol* (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1996), p. 19. Sereda and Rainer opt for the former interpretation ("we must alleviate Rakosi's situation") without even considering the latter.

<sup>9</sup> Here and elsewhere in Malin's notes, the inclusion of surnames in parentheses after a statement or proposal means that these individuals supported the statement or proposal.

<sup>10</sup> The formal protocol for this session (see citation in Note 1 *supra*) contained the following point on this matter: "Instruct Cde. Mikoyan to travel to Hungary for discussions with the leadership of the Hungarian Workers' Party." The reference here is to Istvan Kovacs, a top Hungarian Communist official who fled to Moscow at the end of October 1956, not to Bela Kovacs, the former Secretary General of the Independent Smallholders' Party. Soviet leaders knew that Istvan Kovacs had long been dissatisfied with Rakosi's performance. See "Telefogramma v TsK KPSS," from M. A. Suslov to the CPSU Presidium and Secretariat, 13 June 1956 (Top Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 6, D. 483, Ll. 146-149.

<sup>11</sup> On 19 October 1956, the day before this Presidium meeting, Khrushchev led a top-level Soviet delegation on an unannounced visit to Warsaw. The Soviet delegates held tense negotiations with the Polish leader, Wladyslaw Gomulka, in an effort to prevent the removal of Marshal Konstantin Rokossowski and other officials from the Politburo of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR). The Soviet delegates were unsuccessful in their task, despite exerting strong military and political pressure on Gomulka. For a fuller account of the meeting, see the notes by one of the participants, Anastas Mikoyan, in "Zapis' besedy N. S. Khrushcheva v Varshave," October 1956, No. 233 (Strictly Secret—Special Dossier), in APRF, Osobaya papka, F. 3, Op. 65, D. 2, Ll. 1-14.

<sup>12</sup> Marshal Konstantin Rokossowski, a Polish-born officer who had lived most of his life in the Soviet Union and was a marshal in the Soviet army, was installed as defense minister and commander-in-chief in Poland in December 1949. He also was a full member of the PZPR Politburo. He was one of hundreds of high-ranking Soviet officers who were brought into the Polish army in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Not surprisingly, their presence caused widespread resentment. For a detailed account of this phenomenon, see Edward Jan Nalepa, *Oficerowie Radziecky w Wojsku Polskim w latach 1943-1968: Studium historyczno-wojskowe* (Warsaw: Wojskowy

Instytut Historyczny, 1992). Here and elsewhere in Malin's notes, Rokossowski's surname is misspelled as "Rokkosowski." The spelling has been corrected in the translation.

<sup>13</sup> It is not entirely clear from these brief points what the Soviet Presidium was intending to do. Most evidence suggests, however, that they planned to hold new military exercises in Poland and to form a "provisional revolutionary committee" of pro-Soviet Polish officials, who would then be installed in place of Gomulka. This is roughly what occurred with Hungary in early November, when a "revolutionary workers' and peasants' government" was formed in Moscow, with Janos Kadar and Ferenc Munnich at its head. Kadar's government was installed when Soviet troops moved in on 4 November.

<sup>14</sup> Khrushchev declined to mention that he himself—and the rest of the Soviet leadership—had "grossly" misjudged the situation in Poland over the previous few months. This was evident, for example, when Ochab stopped in Moscow in September 1956 on his way back from Beijing. See "Priem Posla Pol'skoi Narodnoi Respubliki v SSSR tov. V. Levikovskogo, 10 sentyabrya 1956 g.," 11 September 1956 (Secret), memorandum from N. Patolichev, Soviet deputy foreign minister, in Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. Referentura po Pol'she, Op. 38, Por. 9, Papka, 126, D. 031, L. 1.

<sup>15</sup> This session of the CPSU CC Presidium was held on 24 October. See the assessment of the meeting and translation of handwritten Czech notes by Mark Kramer, "Hungary and Poland, 1956: Khrushchev's CPSU CC Presidium Meeting on East European Crises, 24 October 1956," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin*, Issue No. 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 1, 50-56.

<sup>16</sup> As it turned out, Khrushchev phoned Mao, and the Chinese leader decided to send a high-level delegation to Moscow for consultations. The delegation, led by Liu Shaoqi, arrived on 23 October and stayed until the 31st.

<sup>17</sup> Not until three days later would the uprising in Hungary begin, but Andropov's telegrams from Budapest on 12 and 14 October had kept the CPSU leadership apprised of the rapidly mounting crisis within the HWP and Hungarian society. The two telegrams were declassified in 1992 and published in "Vengriya, aprel'-oktyabr' 1956 g.," pp. 110-128.

<sup>18</sup> The reference here is to the large number of Soviet officers who were busy at the time helping out with the harvest. Although the uprising in Hungary had not yet begun, Soviet troops in that country had been preparing since mid-July to undertake large-scale operations aimed at "upholding and restoring public order." A full "Plan of Operations for the Special Corps to Restore Public Order on the Territory of Hungary," which received the codename "Volna" (Wave), was approved on 20 July 1956 by General Pyotr Lashchenko. See "Plan deistvii Osobogo korpusa po vosstanovleniyu obshchestvennogo poryadka na territorii Vengrii," in Tsentral'nyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony Rossiiskoi Federatsii (TsAMO), F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 15, Ll. 130-131. See also the account by Lieut.-General E. I. Malashenko, "Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta" (Part 1), *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*, No 10 (October 1993), pp. 24-25. The proposal to re-

call Soviet troops from their agricultural work was part of the "Volna" plan, which placed Soviet forces on increased alert in mid-October and brought them to full combat alert by 20-21 October at the behest of the Soviet General Staff. The full plan was due to be put into effect when a signal known as "Kompas" was received.

<sup>19</sup> No such informational report had actually been prepared by 21 October, when a meeting of East-bloc leaders was hastily arranged. But by the time the meeting was held on 24 October, the start of the uprising in Hungary on 23 October forced Khrushchev to cover the events in Hungary in some detail. See Kramer, "Hungary and Poland, 1956," pp. 1, 50-56.

<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, only a small fragment of this session has been found. It is possible that missing pages will turn up in other parts of the Malin collection, but for now the brief (but important) section below is all that is available.

<sup>21</sup> The formal protocol for this session (Protocol No. 48) did not list the Hungarian question among the twelve other matters considered here. The most likely reason is that Mikoyan was opposed to the use of Soviet troops in Hungary, preferring instead to rely on political mediation (see below). The Presidium therefore had to adopt its decision without unanimity, an unprecedented step for such an important matter. As a result, no decree on this issue was included as an extract in the formal protocol.

<sup>22</sup> In fact, the radio station was not on fire, but heavy smoke from several nearby cars that had been set alight had created the impression that the building, too, was burning. Zhukov's reference to the storming of the radio building indicates that this CPSU Presidium meeting must have taken place shortly after 10 p.m. Moscow time. The storming of the building was sparked mainly by the broadcast of a headline speech by Erno Gero at precisely 10 p.m. Moscow time (8 p.m. Budapest time). It is clear that the CPSU Presidium meeting was over by around 11 p.m. (Moscow time), when orders were transmitted by Zhukov for the mobilization of five Soviet divisions. See "TsK KPSS," memorandum from Zhukov and Marshal Vasillii Sokolovskii, chief of the Soviet General Staff, to the CPSU Presidium, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret—Special Dossier), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 85-87. Hence, the meeting must have been held between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. It is remarkable that, for a session convened at such short notice, so many Presidium members were able to attend. Although a meeting had already been scheduled to discuss other matters, it was abruptly moved up to take account of the situation in Hungary.

<sup>23</sup> Khrushchev is referring here to the requests for military intervention he had received from Erno Gero. The request came initially via Yurii Andropov (who transmitted Gero's appeal to Moscow and followed up with an emergency phone call) and then was repeated during a phone call that Khrushchev placed to Gero. A written appeal from then-prime minister Andras Hegedus, supposedly delivered on the night of 23-24 October 1956, was transmitted by Andropov in a ciphered telegram on 28 October. See "Shifrtelgramma" (Strictly Secret—Urgent), 28 October 1956, in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, L. 12.

<sup>24</sup> Mikoyan, Suslov, Malinin, and Serov arrived somewhat late in Budapest because inclement weather forced Mikoyan's and Suslov's plane to be diverted to an airport 90 kilometers north of the capital. A Soviet armored personnel carrier, accompanied by tanks, brought the four into Budapest, where they promptly began sending reports back to Moscow. See "Shifrtelgramma" from Mikoyan and Suslov to the CPSU Presidium, 24 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, Ll. 1-7. A retrospective account of Mikoyan's and Suslov's arrival in Budapest, by Vladimir Kryuchkov, who was a senior aide to Andropov in 1956 and who later followed in Andropov's footsteps at the KGB, claims that Mikoyan's and Suslov's plane was diverted northward because it came under fire and was struck by a machine gun. Kryuchkov also asserts that Mikoyan and the others had to walk for more than two hours to reach the embassy. See Vladimir Kryuchkov, *Lichnoe delo*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Olimp, 1996), vol. 1, p. 58. There is no evidence whatsoever to back up Kryuchkov's assertions. On the contrary, Mikoyan's and Suslov's contemporaneous report seems far more reliable than Kryuchkov's tendentious memoir.

<sup>25</sup> The notes provide no further names of members of the Chinese delegation, who were in Moscow for consultations between 23 and 31 October. The delegation, headed by Liu Shaoyi, included the CPC General Secretary, Deng Xiaoping, as well as three lower-ranking officials: Wang Jiaying, Hu Qiaomu, and Shi Zhe. Soviet leaders conferred with them several times about the events in Poland and Hungary.

<sup>26</sup> By this point, Rokossowski already had been removed from the PZPR CC Politburo. The only remaining question was whether he would be kept as Polish national defense minister.

<sup>27</sup> For the continuation of the session, see the portion below and the explanation in Note 33 *infra*.

<sup>28</sup> On 26 October, Mikoyan and Suslov sent four emergency messages via secure telephone to the CPSU Presidium. See the longest and most important of these messages, "Telefonogramma," 26 October 1956 (Top Secret—Deliver Immediately), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 123-129.

<sup>29</sup> The reference here is slightly awry. The number given in parentheses (126) refers to the total number of Hungarians studying in Moscow, including party workers, military officers, state security officials, and others. See "Zapis' besedy s poslom Vengerskoi Narodnoi Respubliki tov. Yanoshem Boldotskim, 26 oktyabrya 1956 g.," Cable No. 597/AR (Secret) from A. A. Gromyko, Soviet deputy foreign minister, to the CPSU Presidium, 26 October 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 116-117. Malin's notes imply that the figure includes only HWP officials studying at the Higher Party School.

<sup>30</sup> A "Directory," which served as the highest HWP organ, had been created by this point under Soviet auspices, but its existence had not yet been officially announced. The existence of the Directory was acknowledged for the first time on 28 October (three days after it had been set up), when it was renamed the HWP Presidium and was formally granted supreme power by the HWP

Central Committee.

<sup>31</sup> The reference here is to young people from Hungary studying in the Soviet Union, who would not have been included in the 126 mentioned above.

<sup>32</sup> This annotation was in the bottom left-hand margin of Malin's notes. It refers to copies of the messages from Mikoyan and Suslov.

<sup>33</sup> According to Khrushchev's remarks above, the session on 26 October was to be reconvened at 8 p.m. to consider the latest information from Mikoyan and Suslov. The double-sided page of handwritten notes pertaining to the continuation of the session, which is provided here, was out of sequence in File 1005. In the earlier published versions of Malin's notes (the Hungarian translation and the original Russian), this fragment is incorrectly placed at the end of the 28 October session. Close analysis of the text reveals that the fragment must have come *before*, not after, the portions on the 28th. The fact that the 26 October session was due to be reconvened suggests that this is precisely what the fragment covers, rather than being part of a separate meeting on the 27th. (There is no evidence that the Presidium met on the 27th to discuss the situation in Hungary.)

<sup>34</sup> Bulganin is complaining about the long telegrams and secure phone messages that Mikoyan and Suslova had been sending to Moscow on 25 and 26 October. See Note 28 *supra*. See also "Shifrtelgramma," 25 October 1956 (Strictly Secret—Special Attention), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, Ll. 8-11.

<sup>35</sup> On 30 October a Revolutionary Military Council was set up within the Hungarian army, but it was not the type of body that Kaganovich had in mind. He was referring to an armed organization that would suppress the uprising, whereas the Revolutionary Military Council did just the opposite, expressing strong support for the resistance and demanding the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Hungary.

<sup>36</sup> Actually, of those who had been detained since the start of the uprising, more than 8,000 had been released by this time.

<sup>37</sup> Khrushchev evidently means that they should confer with the recently ousted prime minister Andras Hegedus and other Hungarian officials who had been removed from high-level party and state positions after 23 October.

<sup>38</sup> This trip never occurred, presumably because of time constraints as events in Hungary gathered pace.

<sup>39</sup> Mikoyan had planned to travel to Austria at the very end of October 1956, but his trip ended up being postponed until April 1957.

<sup>40</sup> Some of the pages from this session were out of sequence in the original file. The order has been corrected in the translation.

<sup>41</sup> Hundreds of demonstrations and meetings had been taking place in Hungary since 23 October, even after a curfew was imposed. Evidently, Khrushchev is referring here to a warning he received on 27 October in an emergency message from Mikoyan and Suslov (APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 131-134). The message noted that posters had gone up in Budapest declaring Imre Nagy a traitor and demanding that Bela Kovacs, the former General Secretary of the Independent Smallholders Party, be instated as the new prime

minister. The posters called for a demonstration in support of Kovacs, who was in Pecs at the time recovering from nine years of imprisonment in the Soviet Union (between 1947 and 1955). When Kovacs was contacted by the Hungarian president, Istvan Dobi, on 27 October over the phone, he tentatively agreed to serve as agriculture minister in Nagy's reorganized government. But Kovacs did not actually participate in any government deliberations until he returned to Budapest on 1 November, by which time the situation had changed a great deal. [Ed. note: An English translation of the Mikoyan-Suslov report of 27 October 1956 cited above appears in *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), pp. 29-30, from a copy of the document in TsKhSD, F. 89, Per. 45, Dok. 9. However, it contains a mistranslation of the passage referring to the posters which had gone up in Budapest declaring Nagy a traitor and supporting Bela Kovacs. The mistranslated portion notes that placards had appeared in Budapest at night, "in which Nagy was declared the chairman and Bela Kovacs was recommended as premier," and that a demonstration was planned "in their honor." It should have read that Nagy was called "a traitor" and that the demonstration was called on "his" (Bela Kovacs') behalf. The *Bulletin* regrets the error.]

<sup>42</sup> An emergency session of the UN Security Council was convened on 28 October in the mid-afternoon (New York time) to discuss the situation in Hungary. The Soviet Foreign Ministry originally had instructed Arkadii Sobolev, the Soviet representative at the Security Council, to depict the events in Hungary as being inspired solely by fascist, anti-democratic elements. See "Shifrtelgramma," 27 October 1956 (Strictly Secret—Special Dossier), in AVPRF, F. 0536, Op. 1, P. 5, D. 65, Ll. 24-28. Khrushchev's statement here suggests that the Presidium must issue new instructions to Sobolev, ordering him to take account of the latest developments in Hungary.

<sup>43</sup> Zhukov is referring here to the strongest center of resistance in the densely populated region around the Corvin film theater in downtown Budapest. Counterinsurgency operations against this area were supposed to commence on the morning of 28 October, but Nagy cancelled those plans because of the risk of heavy civilian casualties.

<sup>44</sup> For an illuminating account of events in Debrecen, where anti-Gero demonstrations preceded those in Budapest on 23 October, see Tibor A. Filep, *A debreceni forradalom, 1956 október: Tizenket nap kronikája* (Debrecen: Mozgaskorlatozottak Egyesulete, 1990).

<sup>45</sup> Here and elsewhere in Malin's notes, Hegedus's surname is mistakenly rendered as Hedegus. The spelling has been corrected in the translation.

<sup>46</sup> Mikoyan and Suslov were taking part in this HWP Central Committee plenum, which adjourned around 5:30 p.m. Budapest time. The HWP Central Committee endorsed the program of Nagy's new government and conferred supreme power on a new HWP Presidium consisting of Janos Kadar (as chair), Antal Apro, Ferenc Munnich, Imre Nagy, Zoltan Szanto, and Karoly Kiss. See the CC resolution in *Szabad Nep* (Budapest), 29 October 1956, p. 1.

<sup>47</sup> This sentence fragment is highly ambiguous



in Russian. The final word in the fragment, translated here as “directly,” is *samim*, which literally means “by itself” or “by himself.” The antecedent might be either the HWP Politburo or Mikoyan, or perhaps something or someone else. The ambiguity cannot be fully conveyed in English (which has separate words for “itself” and “himself”), but the translation tries to do so as best as possible.

<sup>48</sup> Here again, Zhukov is referring to the center of resistance around the Corvin cinema.

<sup>49</sup> Khrushchev is referring here to the coalition government that was formed (or actually reorganized) on 27 October. This government included, on an informal basis, representatives of parties from the pre-Communist era: Bela Kovacs, the former General Secretary of the Smallholders Party; Zoltan Tildy, the former leader of the Smallholders Party; and Ferenc Erdei, the former leader of the National Peasant Party. Not until 30 October, however, did Nagy announce the formal restoration of a multi-party state, with full participation by the Smallholders, the National Peasant Party (renamed the Petofi Party on 1 November), and the Social Democratic Party as well as the Communists. (Other non-Communist parties soon sprang up as well, including the Hungarian Independence Party, the People’s Democratic Party, the Catholic People’s Party, and the Catholic National Association.)

<sup>50</sup> Scattered defections of Hungarian troops to the insurgents had begun on the first day of the uprising, but Khrushchev was concerned that the whole army would switch sides. In later years, official Soviet accounts of the 1956 uprising acknowledged that “during the most trying days,” a substantial number of “soldiers and officers from the Hungarian People’s Army” had joined the insurgents in fighting “against Soviet soldiers who had been called in to help.” See P. A. Zhilin, ed., *Stroitel'stvo armii evropeiskikh stran sotsialisticheskogo soдруzhestva, 1949-1980* (Moscow: Nauka, 1984), p. 93. Formerly secret documents in the main Russian military archive (TsAMO, F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 17, Ll. 33-48) include the Soviet defense ministry’s complete list of Hungarian army units that took the side of the insurgents. Many other valuable documents about the role of the Hungarian army are now available in the 1956 Collection (*1956-os Gyujtemeny*) of the Hungarian Military History Archive, *Hadtortenelmi Leveltar, Honvedelmi Miniszterium* (HL/HM). For a useful volume drawing on these documents, see Miklos Horvath, *1956 katonai kronologiaja* (Budapest: Magyar Honvedseg Oktatasi es Kulturális Anyagellátó Központ, 1993). For an equally valuable survey of the Hungarian army’s role in 1956 based on archival sources, see Imre Okvath, “Magyar tisztkar a hideghaboru idoszakaban, 1945-1956,” *Uj Honvedsegi szemle* (Budapest), No. 1 (1994), pp. 14-27. See also Bela Kiraly, “Hungary’s Army: Its Part in the Revolt,” *East Europe*, Vol. 7, No. 6 (June 1958), pp. 3-16.

<sup>51</sup> This sentence is incomplete in the original.

<sup>52</sup> This refers to the new Hungarian government’s declaration on 28 October, which Nagy would read over the radio at 5:20 p.m. that same afternoon. Among other things, the declaration called for the dissolution of the state security organs, amnesties for those involved in the uprising, the

restoration of the Kossuth emblem as the national emblem, and the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Budapest as well as subsequent negotiations on a full withdrawal from Hungary. The statement also rejected previous characterizations of the uprising as a “counterrevolution,” saying that the events were representative of a “broad national-democratic movement” that was seeking to achieve “national independence and sovereignty” for Hungary. Unfortunately, the draft of this declaration that the CPSU CC Presidium was presumably considering at this meeting has not yet been located by scholars.

<sup>53</sup> Nothing follows Bulganin’s name in the original.

<sup>54</sup> Most likely, the “you” (*Vas*) in this sentence should have been “them” (*ikh*), referring to Mikoyan and Suslov, the former of whom was still in Hungary. If so, Voroshilov was saying that their mission in Hungary had been worthless. It is also remotely possible that Voroshilov was claiming that Mikoyan himself had said these sorts of things about the Soviet troops who were sent to Budapest on the night of 23-24 October. Whatever the case may be, it is clear that Voroshilov was expressing strong disapproval of Mikoyan’s performance in Budapest.

<sup>55</sup> Kaganovich and other speakers are referring to possible changes in the Hungarian government’s draft statement, which was broadcast in final form at 5:20 p.m. on 28 October (see Note 52 *supra*).

<sup>56</sup> Malenkov’s surname appears here without the standard title “Cde.” The full designation “Cde. Malenkov” appears a few lines further down in a continuation of Malenkov’s remarks.

<sup>57</sup> This clearly refers to the Hungarian statement of 28 October (see Note 52 *supra*), not to the Soviet declaration of 30 October. At this point, Khrushchev and the others had seen the Hungarian statement only in draft form.

<sup>58</sup> Most likely, Molotov is referring here to Rakosi, who was already in Moscow, and other hard-line HWP officials who were about to be spirited to the Soviet Union. See below.

<sup>59</sup> This sentence is incomplete in the original.

<sup>60</sup> Kaganovich is referring to the draft Hungarian statement of 28 October, not to the declaration adopted by the Soviet authorities on 30 October (which was considered at the Presidium meeting that day; see Document No. 7 *infra*).

<sup>61</sup> Khrushchev is probably referring here to the benefits they hoped to gain for Soviet-Hungarian relations, and in international opinion generally, by announcing a ceasefire and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Budapest.

<sup>62</sup> Khrushchev is referring to the political, not military, problems that the French and British governments had been encountering. At this point, military action in Suez was imminent, but had not yet begun. On 26 July 1956 the new Egyptian leader, Gamel Abdel Nasser, had nationalized the Suez Canal Company. He stuck by that decision despite coming under vigorous diplomatic pressure from Great Britain, France, and the United States. On 27 and 28 October, Israel mobilized its army for an operation that was broadly coordinated with France and Great Britain. On 29 October, Israeli troops moved rapidly into Egyptian territory. The French and British joined the Israeli incursions on 31 October by

launching air raids against Egyptian cities and imposing a naval blockade.

<sup>63</sup> Here again, Khrushchev is referring to proposed corrections in the draft Hungarian statement. It is doubtful there was enough time for most such changes to be included.

<sup>64</sup> In line with this decision, the CPSU Presidium sent a message to Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz expressing support for Nagy’s new government and for the statement Nagy issued on 28 October. The Polish authorities followed up with an appeal to the HWP and the Hungarian people, published in the PZPR daily *Trybuna Ludu* on 29 October, which expressed “shock,” “pain,” and “deep disquiet” at “the tragic news coming from [Hungary]” and called for “an end to the bloodshed, destruction, and fratricidal struggle.”

<sup>65</sup> As a result of this decision, the CPSU Presidium dispatched a cable to Tito that was very similar to the cable sent to the Polish leadership. On 29 October the Yugoslav authorities published a message to the HWP, in the main Belgrade daily *Politika*, urging “an end to the fratricidal struggle” and warning that “further bloodshed would only harm the interests of the Hungarian working people and socialism, and would only promote the aims of reactionaries and bureaucratic deformation.”

<sup>66</sup> This sentence is incomplete in the original.

<sup>67</sup> This is what appears in the original. Perhaps initially there was some consideration given to bringing these three officials to Bulgaria. As things actually worked out, however, the three men and their families, as well as the former defense minister Istvan Bata and his family, were spirited to Moscow in a Soviet military aircraft on the evening of 28 October. Hegedus and Piros remained in Moscow until September 1958, and Gero stayed there until 1960. Only Rakosi was never able to return to Hungary. For an intriguing article about Rakosi’s many years of exile in the USSR, drawing on recently declassified sources, see V.L. Musatov, “Istoriya odnoi ssylki: ‘Zhitie’ Matiasa Rakoshi v SSSR (1956-1971 gg.),” *Kentavr* (Moscow), No. 6 (November-December 1993), pp. 72-81.

<sup>68</sup> Judging from some of the statements below (e.g., “yesterday a government was formed”) and from Suslov’s presence (after he had flown back from Hungary), this portion of the meeting must have taken place either late in the evening on 28 October or early in the morning on 29 October. In either case, the CPSU Presidium members would already have heard about the statement that Nagy broadcast over the radio on 28 October.

<sup>69</sup> The chronology is slightly awry here. The decision to send in Soviet troops was adopted on the evening of 23 October (see above), but the troops did not actually arrive until the early morning hours of 24 October.

<sup>70</sup> The area around the Corvin cinema, on the corner of Jozsef Boulevard in downtown Pest (Budapest’s 8th District), was the site of intense fighting that led to many casualties, both Soviet and Hungarian. For a useful account, see Bill Lomax, *Hungary 1956* (London: Allison and Busby, 1976), pp. 118-119, 126-127. On 26 October the fighters in the Corvin district elected Gergely Pongracz as their leader. Suslov presumably is referring to Pal Maletér when he mentions “a colonel from the Horthyite army.” Early on

the morning of 24 October, Maleter had been ordered by the then-defense minister Istvan Bata to move with five tanks against the insurgents in Budapest's 8th and 9th Districts, providing relief for the Kilian Barracks in the 9th District. When Maleter and his tank unit arrived on the scene, they decided to support the rebels' cause instead. Maleter then assumed command of insurgent forces in the Kilian barracks.

<sup>71</sup> The original reads the 24th, but this incident actually occurred on the 25th. A peaceful demonstration of some 25,000 people was held on 25 October outside the Parliament Building (where Nagy's office was located, though Nagy was not inside). The precise sequence of events cannot be conclusively determined, but most evidence suggests that Hungarian state security (AVH) forces suddenly opened fire on the unarmed crowd, with additional shots being fired by Soviet tanks deployed around the building. Roughly 200 people were killed and many more were injured. As news of the incident spread around Budapest, the reported scale of the bloodshed quickly became exaggerated and most of the blame for the deaths was attributed—erroneously, it seems—to the Soviet tanks. No Soviet or Hungarian officials were held accountable for the deaths, but Suslov's statement indicates that CPSU leaders were aware that their own troops were believed to be culpable.

<sup>72</sup> The last few parenthetical words of this sentence are ambiguous in Russian. A word has been omitted here for the sake of clarity in English, with no effect at all on the substance of the phrase. Suslov is referring to the formation of workers' councils, which had begun taking shape spontaneously on 26 October in Csepel and other industrial areas. The government formally condoned the establishment of workers' councils in instructions released on the evening of 26 October, which were then published in major Budapest newspapers the following day.

<sup>73</sup> As noted above, this is precisely what the Hungarian government's statement on 28 October did. It described the recent events as a "national-democratic uprising" and condemned those who had depicted the situation as a "counterrevolution."

<sup>74</sup> Nagy issued an order for a "general and immediate ceasefire" before his radio address on 28 October. Hungarian army units were ordered to "fire only if attacked."

<sup>75</sup> Hegedus was excluded from the six-member HWP Presidium that was formed on 28 October, and he was then spirited to Moscow aboard a Soviet military aircraft on the evening of 28 October.

<sup>76</sup> As with the previous session, the pages in the original file were slightly out of sequence. The order has been corrected in the translation.

<sup>77</sup> Protocol No. 49 encompasses both this session and the session on the following day (see Document No. 8) under the rubric "On the Situation in Hungary" (*O polozhenii v Vengrii*). Point 1 (from 30 October) covers the Soviet declaration on ties with socialist countries, whereas Point 6 (from 31 October) covers the decision to invade. The relevant extracts from Protocol No. 49 are now stored in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 25-30 and APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 41, respectively.

<sup>78</sup> Presumably, the reference here is to three docu-

ments: one that arrived on the morning of 30 October, and two that arrived late at night on 29 October. The item that arrived on the morning of 30 October was a secure, high-frequency telephone message from Mikoyan and Suslov, which gave a bleak portrayal of the latest events. See "TsK KPSS," 30 October 1956 (Strictly Secret), in TsKhSD, F.89, Op.45, D.12, Ll.1-3. Of the two documents that arrived late at night on the 29th, one was a ciphered telegram from Mikoyan and Suslov reporting that they had attended a session of the HWP Presidium earlier that evening. They also commented on the takeover of the *Szabad Nep* building by a group of unarmed students and writers. Mikoyan and Suslov asserted that the Hungarian "comrades have failed to win over the masses," and that "the anti-Communist elements are behaving impudently." In addition, they expressed concern about what would happen to former agents of the Hungarian State Security (AVH) forces in the wake of Nagy's decision to disband the AVH. See "Shifrtelogramma: TsK KPSS," 29 October 1956 (Strictly Secret-Urgent), from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov, in AVPRF, F.059a, Op.4, P.6, D.5, Ll.13-14. The other document that arrived late on the 29th was a situation report from Ivan Serov, dated 29 October, which Mikoyan and Suslov ordered to be transmitted to Moscow via secure telephone. Serov's report gave an updated overview of the insurgency and expressed deep concern about the likely repercussions from the dissolution of the AVH. See "Telefonogramma," 29 October 1956, from A. Mikoyan and M. Suslov, relaying I. Serov's memorandum, in APRF, F.3, Op.64, D.484, Ll.158-161.

<sup>79</sup> British military transport aircraft were flying into the Vienna airport with supplies of humanitarian aid, which were then being conveyed to Budapest. It is unclear whether Zhukov knew why these planes were concentrated there. It is possible that he believed the aircraft were ferrying in military supplies or were preparing for a military operation.

<sup>80</sup> As commander-in-chief of the Warsaw Pact, Marshal Ivan Konev assumed direct command of Soviet military operations in Hungary in November 1956. In a telephone message on the morning of 30 October (see Note 78 *supra*), Mikoyan and Suslov had urged that Konev be dispatched to Hungary "immediately" as a precautionary step. One of Konev's top aides during the invasion was General Mikhail Malinin, a first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff, who commanded Soviet troops during the initial intervention on 23 October. As indicated in the previous line, Soviet leaders frequently consulted Malinin in the leadup to the invasion.

<sup>81</sup> The "Chinese comrades" with whom Khrushchev had discussions were the members of the delegation headed by Liu Shaoqi (see Note 25 *supra*). Liu Shaoqi was in direct touch with Mao Zedong several times during the delegation's stay in Moscow, and thus he was able to keep Khrushchev apprised of the Chinese leader's views of the situation in Poland and Hungary.

<sup>82</sup> Rokossowski had been removed from the Polish Politburo on 19 October. On 13 November he was replaced as Polish national defense minister by a Polish officer, Marshal Marian Spychalski. Rokossowski was then recalled to

the Soviet Union, where he was appointed a deputy defense minister. Evidently, Khrushchev had spoken with Gomulka by phone that morning.

<sup>83</sup> The five principles of Pancha Shila—(1) mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, (2) non-aggression, (3) non-interference in internal affairs, (4) equality and mutual benefit, and (5) peaceful coexistence—were endorsed in a joint statement by Chinese prime minister Zhou Enlai and Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi on 28 June 1954. The principles were intended to "guide relations between the two countries" as well as "relations with other countries in Asia and in other parts of the world." For the full text of the statement, see G. V. Ambekar and V. D. Divekar, eds., *Documents on China's Relations with South and South-East Asia (1949-1962)* (New York: Allied Publishers, 1964), pp. 7-8.

<sup>84</sup> Zhukov is referring here to the Political Consultative Committee (PKK) of the recently-created Warsaw Treaty Organization. The PKK convened only seven times between 1955 and 1966, despite its statutory requirement to meet at least twice a year.

<sup>85</sup> During major international crises in the post-Stalin period, the Soviet Presidium/Politburo occasionally would convene a Central Committee plenum to give the CC members a sense of involvement in decision-making and to ensure that the leadership's policies would be firmly obeyed at lower levels.

<sup>86</sup> Saburov is referring here to Furtseva's suggestion that a CPSU CC plenum be convened for informational purposes.

<sup>87</sup> This presumably refers to Soviet property transferred to Romania during World War II, rather than to Romania's war reparations, which by 1956 were no longer of great magnitude.

<sup>88</sup> Khrushchev is referring here to the six-member HWP Presidium. The only holdout was Nagy.

<sup>89</sup> The State Security Department (*Allam-Vedelmi Osztaly*, or AVO), which was reorganized in 1949 and renamed the State Security Authority (*Allam-Vedelmi Hatosag*, or AVH), was reincorporated into the Hungarian Internal Affairs Ministry in the autumn of 1953. Formally, the agency was given back its old name of AVO, but it was still almost always known as the AVH. One of the earliest and most vigorous demands of the protesters in October 1956 was for the dissolution of the AVH. On 28 October, Nagy promised to fulfill this demand, and the Hungarian government approved the dissolution of the state security organs the following day. Because the AVH had been instrumental in carrying out repression and terror in the late 1940s and 1950s, some state security agents became the targets of lynchings and other violent reprisals during the 1956 uprising. Hungarian state security officers would have joined up with Soviet troops mainly to seek protection, not to assist in counterinsurgency operations. On this matter, see the documents transmitted by Suslov and Mikoyan on 29 October, cited in Note 78 *supra*.

<sup>90</sup> It is interesting that, when referring to Soviet troops deployed in Eastern Europe, Khrushchev does not mention the Soviet troops in East Germany, implying that they were not necessarily there "with the consent of the [East German] gov-

ernment and in the interests of the [East German] government and people.”

<sup>91</sup> The final Declaration noted that “Soviet units are in the Hungarian and Romanian republics in accordance with the Warsaw Treaty and governmental agreements. Soviet military units are in the Polish republic on the basis of the Potsdam four-power agreement and the Warsaw Treaty.” The Declaration then claimed that “Soviet military units are not in the other people’s democracies,” omitting any mention of the hundreds of thousands of Soviet troops in East Germany.

<sup>92</sup> Khrushchev presumably is referring here to both the military advisers and the state security (KGB) advisers.

<sup>93</sup> When this editing was completed, the Presidium formally adopted Resolution No. P49/1 (“Vypiska iz protokola No. 49 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK ot 30 oktyabrya 1956 g.: O polozhenii v Vengrii,” 30 October 1956, in APRE, F.3, Op. 64, D.484, Ll. 25-30) stating that it would “approve the text, with changes made at the CPSU CC Presidium session, of a Declaration by the Government of the USSR on the foundations of development and the further strengthening of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.” The resolution ordered that the “text of the Declaration be broadcast on radio on 30 October and published in the press on 31 October 1956.” For the published text, see “Deklaratsiya o printsipakh razvitiya i dal’neishem ukreplenii druzhby i sotrudnichestva mezhdru SSSR i drugimi sotsialisticheskimi stranami,” *Pravda* (Moscow), 31 October 1956, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup> It is unclear precisely when the Chinese changed their position from non-interventionist to pro-intervention. The statement recorded here, if correctly transcribed, would suggest that the change occurred before the final Soviet decision on 31 October, but almost all other evidence (including subsequent Presidium meetings recorded by Malin) suggests that it came *after*, not before, the Soviet decision. In any case, if the change did occur before, it did not have any discernible effect on the Soviet decision at this meeting to eschew intervention.

<sup>95</sup> Molotov is referring here to major developments in Hungary. On 30 October, at 2:30 p.m. Budapest time, Nagy announced the formal restoration of a multi-party state and the establishment of an “inner cabinet” of the national government. The new cabinet consisted of Nagy, Zoltan Tildy, Bela Kovacs, Ferenc Erdei, Janos Kadar, Geza Losonczy, and Anna Kethly (from the Social Democratic Party). That same day, a “revolutionary national defense council” of the Hungarian armed forces was set up, which supported the demands of “the revolutionary councils of the working youth and intellectuals,” and called for the “immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from Budapest and their withdrawal from the entire territory of Hungary within the shortest possible time.” The new Council also promised to disarm all agents from Hungary’s disbanded state security forces (AVH), who had been notorious agents of repression during the Stalin era. A Revolutionary Armed Forces Committee also was formed on 31 October, and it was empowered by the government to create a new army.

<sup>96</sup> These are five of the seven members of Nagy’s

new “inner cabinet.” Anna Kethly’s name is not listed here because she had not yet been appointed. (Nagy mentioned in his speech on 30 October that “a person to be nominated by the Social Democratic Party” would be in the inner cabinet, and Kethly later turned out to be that person.) It is unclear why Malin did not list Ferenc Erdei’s name here.

<sup>97</sup> The pages for this session were in reverse order in the archival file. They have been put into correct order in the translation.

<sup>98</sup> In the formal protocol of this session (cited in Note 77 *supra*), Point VI was given the title of “On the Situation in Hungary” (*O polozhenii v Vengrii*), the same as the previous segment. Malin’s working notes do not provide a list of participants, but the following list is given in the formal protocol: Khrushchev, Zhukov, Bulganin, Molotov, Kaganovich, Voroshilov, and Saburov. It is also clear from Malin’s notes that Furtseva, Pospelov, and Shvernik took part at certain points.

<sup>99</sup> These “discussions with Gomulka” were conducted by Khrushchev over the telephone. The two leaders agreed that Khrushchev, Malenkov, and Molotov would meet the next day (1 November) in Brest with Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz. The formal protocol of the session (cited in Note 77 *supra*) notes that “in accordance with the exchange of opinions at the CPSU Presidium session, Cdes. Khrushchev, Molotov, and Malenkov are empowered to hold negotiations with representatives of the PZPR CC.”

<sup>100</sup> In a speech at a mass rally in front of the Parliament Building on 31 October, Nagy declared that his government had already “opened negotiations for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the country and for the renunciation of our obligations under the Warsaw Treaty.” Clearly, he was referring to the negotiations he had been holding that morning with Mikoyan and Suslov, who had generally seemed receptive to Nagy’s demands. These negotiations are briefly recounted in Tibor Meray, *Thirteen Days That Shook the Kremlin: Imre Nagy and the Hungarian Revolution*, trans. by Howard L. Katzander (London: Thames and Hudson, 1959), pp. 163-165. See also the first-hand comments by Gyorgy G. Heltai, the Hungarian deputy foreign minister under Nagy’s government, “International Aspects,” in Bela K. Kiraly and Paul Jonas, *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in Retrospect*, East European Monograph No. XL (Boulder, Col.: East European Quarterly, 1978), esp. pp. 52-53. It is conceivable that Nagy’s expressed desire to renounce Hungarian membership in the Warsaw Pact, which was promptly transmitted to Moscow by telephone, was one of the factors that led to Khrushchev’s change of heart at this session. Although Nagy had spoken in earlier years (especially after he was ousted by Rakosi in 1955) about the desirability of neutrality for Hungary, his decision to raise the matter with Mikoyan and Suslov at this critical moment must have come as a jolt to Soviet leaders.

<sup>101</sup> Early on the morning of 31 October, the French and British launched bombing raids against Egyptian cities and imposed a naval blockade against Egypt, thus aiding Israeli’s ground incursions. By the time the Presidium met on the 31st, reports of the French and British operations were pouring in, conveying a greater impression

of “success” than later events warranted.

<sup>102</sup> The inclusion of Saburov’s name in this list is odd, as will become clear in his remarks below. Initially, he was disinclined to reverse the Presidium’s non-interventionist stance of the previous day.

<sup>103</sup> It is unclear at what point Soviet officials approached Kadar about becoming the head of a provisional government. Kadar’s statements at the CPSU Presidium meeting on 2 November (see Document No. 12 *infra*) suggest that he was not yet aware he had been chosen to perform this function.

<sup>104</sup> On the evening of 1 November, the day after this Presidium meeting, Kadar and Munnich were secretly flown to Moscow aboard a Soviet military aircraft. They were brought back to Hungary when Soviet troops launched Operation “Whirlwind” three days later.

<sup>105</sup> It is extraordinary that even as Khrushchev was calling for a full-scale invasion, he was still apparently willing to consider including Nagy in the soon-to-be-formed Revolutionary Workers’ and Peasants’ Government.

<sup>106</sup> It is interesting that Soviet leaders were concerned most of all about informing the Poles. As indicated above, a meeting with the Polish leadership had already been set up for the following day in Brest. Informing the leaders of these other countries was important, but not as high a priority. Soviet Presidium members informed the visiting Chinese delegation about the decision on 31 October, just before the Chinese officials flew back to Beijing. After the meetings in Brest on 1 November, Khrushchev and Malenkov continued on to Bucharest, where they met with Romanian, Bulgarian, and Czechoslovak leaders. The two Soviet officials then traveled to Brioni to confer with Tito on 2-3 November. Khrushchev and Malenkov returned to Moscow on the morning of the 3rd.

<sup>107</sup> The formal protocol for this session (cited in Note 77 *supra*) states that “taking account of the exchange of opinions at the CPSU CC Presidium session, Cde. Zhukov is instructed to devise an appropriate plan of measures connected with the events in Hungary, and to report on them to the CPSU CC.”

<sup>108</sup> The formal protocol from this session (cited in Note 77 *supra*) notes that “Cdes. Shepilov, Brezhnev, Furtseva, and Pospelov are instructed, on the basis of the exchange of opinions at the CPSU Presidium session, to prepare all necessary documents and submit them for the consideration of the CPSU CC.” Among the key documents they prepared over the next few days were: an “Appeal of the Hungarian Revolutionary Workers’ and Peasants’ Government to the Hungarian People,” which Kadar announced when he was installed in power on 4 November; an “Appeal by the Command of Soviet Troops in Hungary to the Hungarian People and the Officers and Men of the Hungarian Army,” which was broadcast in translation over Hungarian radio and distributed via leaflets at the outset of the invasion; and Order No. 1 issued by Marshal Konev (the supreme commander of the invasion) to all Soviet officers just before the start of Operation “Whirlwind.” The English-language texts of the first two items and other “propaganda documents” prepared in Moscow can be found in Paul E.

Zinner, ed., *National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe: A Selection of Documents on Events in Poland and Hungary, February–November 1956* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1956), pp. 473–481.

<sup>109</sup> For the final text of this order, see “Prikaz Glavnokomanduyushchego Ob”edinennymi vooruzhennymi silami No. 1, 4 noyabrya 1956 goda,” reproduced in Lieut.-General E. I. Malashenko, “Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta” (Part 3), *Voенno-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 12 (December 1993), p. 86.

<sup>110</sup> It is unclear what “group,” if any, was actually sent. Presumably, the reference here is to a group of Presidium members.

<sup>111</sup> The three former Hungarian officials listed here—Rakosi, Hegedus, and Gero—had fled to the Soviet Union within the past few days. No doubt, Khrushchev had solicited their views beforehand about the proper course to pursue in Hungary. It is also possible that the three were asked to take part in this phase of the CPSU Presidium meeting, and that they offered their views directly.

<sup>112</sup> The five Hungarian officials listed here were among those who were slated to take part in a forthcoming “provisional revolutionary government.” The first three were still in Budapest (though Kadar was spirited out the next evening), Boldoczki was in Moscow (in his ambassadorial post), and Horvath, the foreign minister in Nagy’s government, was on his way to a UN General Assembly session, but was delayed in Prague.

<sup>113</sup> Kiss’s name is incorrectly rendered in Malin’s notes as Kisskar.

<sup>114</sup> The formal protocol for this session (cited in Note 77 *supra*) “affirms the text of the telegram to the Soviet ambassador in Belgrade for Cde. Tito.” A copy of the telegram is attached to the protocol, which further notes that “if the answer [from the Yugoslav side] is positive, Cdes. Khrushchev and Malenkov are authorized to hold negotiations with Cde. Tito.” For the Yugoslav response to the Soviet telegram, see Document No. 9 *infra*.

<sup>115</sup> See Document No. 10 *infra*.

<sup>116</sup> This telephone message is unattributed and undated. Presumably, the message came from Molotov just before he returned to Moscow from Brest on 1 November. It had been arranged beforehand that while Khrushchev and Malenkov would continue on to meet with other East European leaders, Molotov would return to Moscow and brief the CPSU Presidium on Gomulka’s position.

<sup>117</sup> Protocol No. 50 (in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 58) contains directives from the sessions on both 1 and 2 November (see Note 146 *infra*).

<sup>118</sup> On the evening of 31 October–1 November, Mikoyan and Suslov returned to Moscow, presumably accompanied by Serov. This was the first Presidium meeting in which Mikoyan had taken part since 23 October. In Khrushchev’s absence, Bulganin presided over this session.

<sup>119</sup> Other than Mikoyan and Suslov, who were still in Budapest, all the Presidium members took part in the 31 October decision and the subsequent discussions with the Chinese delegation. Hence, Bulganin provided this information for the benefit of Mikoyan and Suslov.

<sup>120</sup> It is not entirely clear what Bulganin is refer-

ring to here, but he probably had in mind one or more of several developments: Hungary’s withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact and demand for the removal of all Soviet troops from Hungary; the commencement of French and British military operations against Egypt (see Note 101 *supra*); China’s sudden decision to support rather than oppose Soviet military intervention in Hungary; new intelligence about the West’s position vis-à-vis Hungary; and the warnings coming in from neighboring East European countries, particularly Czechoslovakia (see below) and Romania.

<sup>121</sup> Kaganovich uses a word here, *obsuzhdenie*, that is normally translated as “discussion,” but it could also mean “deliberations” in this context. Presumably, he is referring to the meeting that Soviet leaders had on 31 October with the Chinese delegation after the CPSU Presidium approved a full-scale invasion of Hungary.

<sup>122</sup> This is how the sentence reads in the text. Presumably, Malin meant to say that “we are *not* attacking.”

<sup>123</sup> It is unclear precisely who was “worried that we’re giving away Hungary.” Furtseva may have been referring to one of several groups: orthodox Hungarian Communists who had sought refuge in Moscow; neighboring East European (especially Czechoslovak and Romanian) leaders; Chinese officials; members of the CPSU Central Committee and the heads of union-republic Communist parties and of regional and local CPSU organizations; and employees of the Soviet embassy in Budapest. By this point in the crisis, all of these groups had expressed concerns very similar to the ones that Furtseva mentions.

<sup>124</sup> Presumably this refers to the decision at the end of October to evacuate the families of Soviet embassy employees to the USSR. For a brief account of the evacuation, see the highly tendentious but occasionally useful memoir by Vladimir Kryuchkov, *Lichnoe delo*, vol. 1, p. 57.

<sup>125</sup> Presumably, Suslov is referring to the plan to bring Janos Kadar and Ferenc Munnich to Moscow.

<sup>126</sup> The formal protocol for the session, “Vypiska iz protokola No. 50 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK ot 2 noyabrya 1956 g.: O polozhenii v Vengrii,” in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 58, states that “taking account of the exchange of views at the CC Presidium, Cdes. Zhukov, Suslov, Konev, Serov, and Brezhnev are to work out the necessary measures in connection with the events in Hungary and report their proposals to the CPSU CC.”

<sup>127</sup> A passage from Kryuchkov’s memoir (*Lichnoe delo*, vol. 1, pp. 57–58) sheds light on what may have been discussed here: “At the end of October and beginning of November . . . the situation around Soviet buildings [in Budapest] deteriorated significantly; the embassy was under siege, and any attempt to exit the building was fraught with danger. The diplomats long ago had essentially shifted over to a barracks-type operation, spending the night in their offices and only rarely—once our troops had returned [to Budapest]—taking a half-hour ride home one by one in armored personnel carriers to see their families, who were holed up in living quarters several blocks from the embassy. . . . Ordinarily, knowledge of Hungarian allowed me to engage in conversations with Hungarians and to receive

fresh information directly from the center of events . . . but [by late October] attempts to strike up a conversation often caused me to have to flee, since they could tell by my accent that I was a Russian. The fulfillment of official instructions, which entailed visits to appropriate buildings and agencies, also was a difficult matter, both in somehow getting there and in then returning to the embassy while holding on to the needed documents. This did not pass off without a number of serious incidents.”

<sup>128</sup> It is unclear precisely what Shelepin is referring to here, but this seems to be an indication of Moscow’s growing concerns about a spillover into the rest of Eastern Europe. Urgent warnings to this effect had been pouring in from the Czechoslovak authorities since late October. See, for example, “Stenograficky zapis ze zasedani UV KSC,” 5–6 December 1956 (Top Secret), in SUA, Arch. UV KSC, F. 07, Sv. 14, Archivna jednotka (A.j.) 14; “Zabezpeceni klidu na uzemi CSR a statnich hranic s Mad’arskem,” Report from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, and Lieut.-General Jaroslav Dockal, chief of operations, 29 October 1956 (Top Secret), in Vojensky historicky archiv (VHA) Praha, Fond Ministra narodni obrany (MNO) CSR, 1956, Operacni sprava Generalniho stabu cs. armady (GS/OS), 2/8–39b; and “Souhrn hlaseni operacniho dustojnika Generalniho stabu cs. armady,” Notes from Col.-General Vaclav Kratochvil, chief of the Czechoslovak General Staff, to the KSC Central Committee (Top Secret), 27 October 1956, in VHA, F. MNO, 1956, GS/OS, 2/8–49b.

<sup>129</sup> Mikoyan’s references here to “comrades” and “them” are to Nagy’s government. His mention of “three days” in the line above indicates that the timetable for the invasion (code-named “Whirlwind”) had already been set. Mikoyan was hoping that some last-ditch attempt could still be made to head off the military operation.

<sup>130</sup> No formal protocol for this session has been found (unlike the other session on 2 November recorded in Document No. 13 *infra*).

<sup>131</sup> These initial comments are not attributed to anyone in Malin’s notes, but it is clear that the speaker was Kadar. The notes of Kadar’s remarks contain a few third-person references to himself, but this is because Malin sometimes jotted down the speaker’s name rather than using the pronoun “I.”

<sup>132</sup> Jozsef Dudas, a former Budapest city official who had been imprisoned during most of the Communist period, was one of the most radical leaders of the October–November uprising. He was in charge of the rebel forces headquartered in the *Szabad Nep* building. Dudas and other rebel leaders insisted that Nagy must meet the protesters’ demands. Dudas was detained by Hungarian police on 1 November. After Soviet troops intervened on 4 November, he took a leading part in the military resistance. He was arrested by Soviet troops on 21 November and was executed two months later. His name is incorrectly rendered as “Dusak” in Malin’s notes; the spelling is corrected in the translation.

<sup>133</sup> Kadar is referring here to negotiations that he, Munnich, and others had held in the parliament with one of the insurgent groups headed by Istvan Angyal. Angyal was not as radical as most

of the other rebel leaders, but he was insistent on the need for far-reaching changes. Angyal was executed in November 1958. See Laszlo Eorsi, ed., "Angyal Istvan sajt kezű vallomása, 1956 december," *Multunk* (Budapest), Vol. 40, No. 4 (1995), pp. 133-182.

<sup>134</sup> The references here are to the Soviet declaration of 30 October and to the declaration of neutrality adopted by the Hungarian government on the evening of 1 November. Nagy announced the declaration in a nationwide radio address.

<sup>135</sup> On 3 November, Anna Kethly was named as the Social Democratic representative in the government. See Note 96 *supra*.

<sup>136</sup> On 31 October the Hungarian government announced that, on the previous evening, Cardinal Jozsef Mindszenty had been freed from house arrest in Felsopeteny. He had been detained there for some 15 months after his release from prison. As the Primate of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Mindszenty had been sentenced to life imprisonment during an anti-religious campaign in February 1949. Mindszenty's statements in the autumn of 1956 were restrained, but clearly supportive of the revolution. When Soviet troops intervened on 4 November, he sought refuge in the U.S. legation in Budapest. Subsequently, Kadar's government prohibited Mindszenty from performing clerical duties of any sort from the legation.

<sup>137</sup> It is unclear precisely what Kadar was saying here. (Malin inadvertently may have omitted some comments just before this line.) At the noontime meeting, the Hungarian government reached no final decision on whether to demand the immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops and whether to issue the declaration of neutrality. Those decisions were not approved until the evening session, as Kadar explains below.

<sup>138</sup> Ferenc Nagy, one of the former leaders of the Independent Smallholders' Party who had been living in exile in the United States, came to Vienna in late October to display solidarity with the insurgents. On 31 October, however, the Austrian authorities forced him to leave the country on the grounds that his presence might be deemed incompatible with Austria's neutral status.

<sup>139</sup> Bela Kovacs had been recuperating in Pecs from his nine years of imprisonment. The government's evening session on 1 November was the first activity in which he took part in Budapest.

<sup>140</sup> On the alarm generated by the Soviet troop movements, see Andropov's ciphered telegrams from 30 October, 1 November, and 2 November in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 5, Ll. 15-16, 17-19, and 20-22, respectively.

<sup>141</sup> The name "Kovacs" here refers to General Istvan Kovacs, not Bela Kovacs. General Kovacs had become chief of the Hungarian General Staff on 31 October and was also a member of the Revolutionary Defense Committee. He was arrested on 3 November along with the other members of the Hungarian delegation that were negotiating the withdrawal of Soviet troops. He was not released from prison until 1960.

<sup>142</sup> Andropov's own account of his attendance at the inner cabinet's evening session, which tallies very well with Kadar's version, is in "Shifrtelogramma," 1 November 1956 (Strictly

Secret), in AVPRF, F. 059a, Op. 4, P. 6, D. 6, Ll. 17-19.

<sup>143</sup> The word used here for "nationalism" is *natsionalizatsiya*, which normally means "nationalization" (i.e., the assertion of state control over property), but Kadar seems to have in mind the notion of reasserting Hungarian national control over Hungary's internal affairs, rather than leaving important matters under Soviet control.

<sup>144</sup> This again is a telling indication that East European and Soviet leaders were fully aware of the popular resentment caused by Soviet preponderance in Eastern Europe.

<sup>145</sup> Presumably, Munnich is referring to nationalistic slogans that had been shouted during Soviet-Hungarian soccer matches and to the influence of Radio Free Europe and other Western broadcasts. The Hungarian scholar Janos M. Rainer adds the following explanation for the reference to "soccer": "It was widely believed at the time that the celebrated Hungarian [soccer] team of the period, the 'Golden Team', which won against nearly every country it played, was not allowed to beat the Soviet Union for political reasons. (Their matches usually ended in a draw.) In actual fact, the first Hungarian win against the Soviet team took place some weeks before the revolution." See Janos M. Rainer, "The Road to Budapest, 1956: New Documentation of the Kremlin's Decision To Intervene," pt. 2, in *The Hungarian Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 143 (Autumn 1996), p. 31 n. 28; readers interested in following the exploits of a fictionalized Hungarian *basketball* team of this era are advised to read Tibor Fischer's novel, *Under the Frog* (Penguin: London, 1993).

<sup>146</sup> The protocol in question is "Vypiska iz protokola No. 50 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK ot 2 noyabrya 1956 g.: O meropriyatiyakh v svyazi s sobytiyami v Vengrii," in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 58. It reads simply: "To approve the plan for measures concerning the events in Hungary."

<sup>147</sup> On 1 November, in accordance with Protocol No. P50/I ("Vypiska iz protokola No. 50 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK ot 1 noyabrya 1956 g.: O polozhenii v Vengrii," in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, L. 47), five Soviet officials (Zhukov, Suslov, Konev, Serov, and Brezhnev) had been instructed to "work out the necessary measures concerning the events in Hungary and present them to the CPSU CC." This session allowed them to complete the task.

<sup>148</sup> All four phrases in this point were incorporated (with modifications) into Order No. 1 issued by Marshal Konev in the name of the Warsaw Pact Joint Command (see Note 109 *supra*).

<sup>149</sup> Those sent to Hungary (at varying intervals) included Suslov, Averki Aristov, Serov, and Zhukov.

<sup>150</sup> The text of the plan has not yet been released from the former Soviet archives, but the directive here presumably refers to the military (as opposed to political and propaganda) steps needed to fulfill the decision of 31 October. On the same day of this meeting, Marshal Konev arrived at his command post in Szolnok and ordered the reinforced Special Corps in Hungary to be ready for full-scale combat operations by the following day.

<sup>151</sup> No source is specified for the information in

this telegram from Soviet ambassador Aleksei Epishev, but the content leaves little doubt that the Romanian embassy in Budapest was relying at the time on the Soviet embassies in Budapest and Bucharest to relay information.

<sup>152</sup> Aleksei Alekseevich Epishev had been a commissar in the Soviet army during World War II. After the war he served in a number of regional party posts, and from 1955 until 1962 he was the Soviet ambassador to Romania and then Yugoslavia. In 1962 he was given the military rank of army-general and appointed the head of the Soviet Army's Main Political Directorate, a post he retained until his death in 1985.

<sup>153</sup> The surname of Aurel Malnasan (who was then a deputy foreign minister in Romania) is correctly spelled in the original Malin notes, but for some reason the published versions of the notes (in both Hungarian and Russian) mistakenly render Malnasan's surname as Malnasanu. The editors of the published versions erroneously claim that Malin's notes misspelled the name.

<sup>154</sup> On 2 November in Bucharest, Khrushchev and Malenkov briefed the Romanian leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej, and his Czechoslovak and Bulgarian counterparts about the forthcoming invasion. On the eve of the invasion, Malnasan held lengthy talks with Nagy. Gheorghiu-Dej's motivation in sending Malnasan to Budapest must have been to keep Nagy occupied and to prevent him from taking any steps to counter the imminent military operation. For brief reports by Malnasan on the talks, see the newly declassified cables from the Romanian Foreign Ministry archive in Corneliu Mihai Lungu and Mihai Retegan, eds., *1956 Explozia: Perceptii romane, iugoslave si sovietice asupra evenimentelor din Polonia si Ungaria* (Bucharest: Editura Univers Enciclopedic, 1996), pp. 181-182.

<sup>155</sup> For some reason, Malin did not list Khrushchev's name among the participants. Also not listed here are Janos Kadar, Ferenc Munnich, and Imre Horvath, who took part in the segment on the formation of a new Hungarian government. This portion of the meeting began at 8:45 p.m., with Khrushchev and Malenkov in attendance after their return from Brioni.

<sup>156</sup> The reference here is to documents issued by the Kadar government after it was installed in power.

<sup>157</sup> A Hungarian scholar, Janos Rainer, recently found a document in the Hungarian National Archive that sheds important light on this part of the CPSU Presidium's deliberations. Notes taken by Imre Horvath, one of the Hungarian officials who were present, reveal that Khrushchev offered an opening statement here, which for some reason was not transcribed by Malin. The notes Horvath took of Khrushchev's speech are translated below (see Document No. 16) as a supplement to the Malin notes, but they may be worth reading at this point before finishing Malin's rendition of the meeting. Although Horvath's notes were written hurriedly in mixed Hungarian and Russian, they provide a good flavor of what Khrushchev said.

<sup>158</sup> A secret report from the Soviet ambassador in Hungary, Yurii Andropov, in May 1956 was much less positive, alleging that "the work of the

Hungarian press in illuminating the results of the XX CPSU Congress has been totally inadequate.” See “I. O. Zaveduyushchego Evropeiskim Otdelom MID SSSR tov. Levychkinu K. D.,” Cable No. 141 (Secret) from Yu. Andropov, 2 May 1956, in AVPRF, F. Referentura o Vengrii, Op. 36, Por. 15, Papka 48, D. 178, Ll. 22-33.

<sup>159</sup>This refers to a telegram published in major Soviet and Hungarian newspapers on 6 April 1956, shortly after the 20th Party Congress. The telegram, sent by Khrushchev (as party leader) and Bulganin (as prime minister) to their Hungarian counterparts, Rakosi and Hegedus, marked the 11th anniversary of the liberation of Hungary from Nazi occupation.

<sup>160</sup>The local authorities in Győr, including the security forces, had been supportive of the revolution from the outset. See *Győr-Sopron megyeiek emlékeznek az 1956-os forradalomra* (Budapest: Zrinyi, 1991).

<sup>161</sup>Judging from Malenkov’s presence at Presidium sessions on 4 and 5 November, only Mikoyan and Brezhnev actually traveled to Budapest.

<sup>162</sup>See Note 157 *supra*. This document, located by Janos Rainer, was published in Hungary in 1996. See Vyacheslav Sereda and Janos M. Rainer, eds., *Dontes a Kremlben, 1956: A Szovjet Partelnokseg Vitai Magyarorszagrol* (Budapest: 1956-os Intezet, 1996), pp. 92-93. The document is in Hungarian interspersed with a few Russian phrases and names. Horvath’s notes show that the deliberations about this matter began at 8:45 p.m. (see Note 155 *supra*).

<sup>163</sup>These three lines appeared in the far left column of Horvath’s notes.

<sup>164</sup>This statement is a candid acknowledgment of the extent to which the Soviet Union still controlled leadership politics and successions in Eastern Europe after Stalin’s death. Khrushchev’s reference to Mikoyan concerns the steps that Mikoyan took when he was in Budapest from 13 to 21 July 1956 (see Document No. 1 *supra*). During a preliminary meeting with Rakosi, Erno Gero, Andras Hegedus, and Bela Veg, Mikoyan took the initiative in bringing about Rakosi’s dismissal. (The other Hungarian officials had long wanted to proceed with this step, but were unwilling to act until the Soviet authorities themselves told Rakosi he would have to go.) Mikoyan then participated in a crucial meeting of the HWP Politburo on 13 July, which voted to remove Rakosi from his posts as HWP First Secretary and a member of the HWP Politburo. At Mikoyan’s behest, the HWP Politburo also chose Gero as the new party leader. See “Zapis’ besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Matyashem Rakoshi, Andrashem Hegedushem, Erne Gere i Beloi Begom, 13 iyulya 1956 g.,” 17 July 1956 (Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov; “Zapis’ vystuplenii na zasedaniya Politbyuro Tsr VPT, 13 iyulya 1956 g.,” 13 July 1956 (Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov; and “Zapis’ besedy A. I. Mikoyana s Yanoshem Kadarom, 14 iyulya 1956 g.,” 17 July 1956 (Top Secret), compiled by Yu. V. Andropov, all in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 186-190, 191-205, and 206-215, respectively. In ciphered telegrams on 16 and 18 July, Mikoyan explained in detail why he ended up supporting Gero to become the new HWP First Secretary. See “TsK KPSS,” 16 July 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent),

Osobaya Papka; and “TsK KPSS,” 18 July 1956 (Strictly Secret — Urgent), Osobaya papka, both in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 483, Ll. 183-185 and 225-236, respectively.

<sup>165</sup>The nature of this statement is unclear (to say the least), but the mention of these countries at a time of escalating hostilities is another interesting indication of the role of the Suez Crisis in Soviet thinking about events in Hungary.

<sup>166</sup>This topic was not included in the formal protocol for the session (“Protokol No. 51 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS,” in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 484, Ll. 60-61).

<sup>167</sup>Most likely, there is a mistake or omission in Malin’s text. These phrases, as given in the original, do not make sense.

<sup>168</sup>The reference here is to financial, not military, assistance. A Soviet economic aid package for Hungary was approved on 5 November and announced the following day.

<sup>169</sup>These points about the Suez Crisis are intriguing in light of what happened the following day (5 November). During the first several days of the Suez Crisis, Moscow’s response was limited to verbal protestations through the media and at the UN. On 5 November, the day before a ceasefire was arranged, Soviet prime minister Nikolai Bulganin sent letters to the U.S., French, British, and Israeli governments. His letter to President Eisenhower warned that “if this war is not halted, it will be fraught with danger and might escalate into a third world war.” Bulganin proposed that the United States and Soviet Union move jointly to “crush the aggressors,” an action he justified on the grounds that the two superpowers had “all modern types of arms, including nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, and bear particular responsibility for stopping the war.” Not surprisingly, Eisenhower immediately rejected Bulganin’s proposal. Bulganin’s letters to France, Great Britain, and Israel were far more minatory, including thinly-veiled threats to use missiles if necessary to prevent Egypt’s destruction. The letters to France and Britain contained identical passages: “In what position would [Britain and France] have found themselves if they had been attacked by more powerful states possessing all types of modern weapons of destruction? These more powerful states, instead of sending naval or air forces to the shores of [Britain or France], could use other means, such as missile technology.” Bulganin’s letter to Israel declared that “Israel is playing with the fate of peace and the fate of its own people in a criminal and irresponsible manner.” This policy, Bulganin warned, “is raising doubts about the very existence of Israel as a state. We expect that the Government of Israel will come to its senses before it is too late and will halt its military operations against Egypt.” For the texts of the letters and other Soviet statements during the crisis, see D. T. Shepilov, ed., *Suetskii krizis* (Moscow: Politizdat, 1956). Although the letters represented a much more forceful and conspicuous Soviet stance against the allied incursions, they came so belatedly that they had only a minor impact at best on efforts to achieve a ceasefire.

<sup>170</sup>This passage refers to the appeal to the nation that Kadar’s government issued when it was installed in power on 4 November.

<sup>171</sup>Molotov is referring to Kadar’s radio address

on 1 November, which was published in *Nepszabads* the following day.

<sup>172</sup>This in fact is precisely what Ulbricht himself feared; see the detailed account by the chief of the East German State Security forces in 1956, Ernst Wollweber, in Wilfriede Otto, ed., “Ernst Wollweber: Aus Erinnerungen — Ein Portrait Walter Ulbrichts,” *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, No. 3 (1990), esp. pp. 361-378. For more on the impact of the 1956 crises on the East German communist leadership, see the papers presented by Hope M. Harrison and Christian F. Ostermann at the “Conference on Hungary and the World, 1956: The New Archival Evidence,” which took place in Budapest on 25-29 September 1996 and was organized by the Institute for the History of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, the National Security Archive, and the Cold War International History Project. Copies of the papers, both of which draw extensively on the archives of the former Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), are available from the conference organizers.

<sup>173</sup>Saburov is referring to the families of Soviet troops who were killed, not to the much larger number of Hungarians who died in the fighting.

<sup>174</sup>This illustrates how concerned CPSU leaders were that the crisis was spilling over into the Soviet Union. Both before and after 4 November, unrest and protests occurred at a number of higher educational institutions in the USSR, including Moscow State University (MGU). At MGU, “protests against Soviet military intervention” were accompanied by “anti-Soviet slogans and posters.” Both students and faculty took part in the actions. The KGB quickly moved in and restored order, but the crackdown was not as vigorous and sweeping as some CPSU officials wanted. See the first-hand account by the long-time deputy director of the KGB, Filipp Bobkov, *KGB i vlast’* (Moscow: Veteran MP, 1995), pp. 144-145. Bobkov claims that Pyotr Pospelov and some other senior party officials, as well as a number of high-ranking personnel in the KGB, wanted to launch “mass repressions” to deter any further unrest, but their proposals were never formally adopted. Subsequently, a commission headed by Brezhnev issued secret orders and guidelines to all party organizations to tighten political controls.

<sup>175</sup>On 4 November, the Soviet ambassador in Yugoslavia, Nikolai Firiyubin, sent a telegram to Moscow with information provided by Kardelj (at Tito’s behest) about the refuge granted to Imre Nagy and his aides in the Yugoslav embassy. The response, as approved by the CPSU Presidium, called on the Yugoslav authorities to turn over the Hungarian officials to Soviet troops. See “Vypiska iz protokola No. P51/IV zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 4 noyabrya 1956 g.,” 4 November 1956 (Strictly Secret), in AVPRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, Ll. 103-104.

<sup>176</sup>Nagy had appealed to UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld on 1 November asking for support of Hungary’s sovereignty and independence. The UN Security Council began considering the matter on 3 November. On 4 November, the UN Security Council took up the question of Soviet military intervention in Hungary, and the UN General Assembly voted to condemn the Soviet invasion. On 5 November, the CPSU

newspaper *Pravda* featured a letter purportedly sent by Kadar and Imre Horvath to Dag Hammarskjöld. The letter claimed that Nagy's submission of the Hungarian question to the UN had been illegal, and requested that all consideration of the issue cease.

<sup>177</sup>This brief session produced few results. The formal protocol for the session (in TsKhSD, F. 3, Op. 14, D. 73, L. 4) simply reads: "Defer consideration of the matter."

<sup>178</sup>Voroshilov's name is not listed among the participants, but the notes below indicate that he actively took part.

<sup>179</sup>Other documents recently declassified by the Russian government shed light on what occurred at this meeting. On 5 November an official from the CPSU CC international department, Vladimir Baikov, who had been sent to Budapest the previous day to maintain liaison with Kadar, sent a secure, high-frequency message back to Moscow along with the draft text of a statement prepared by Kadar. Baikov's message reads as follows: "At the request of Cde. Kadar, I am conveying the translation from Hungarian of an Appeal by the Provisional Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party 'To Hungarian Communists! To Loyal Members of the Hungarian Workers' Party!' Cde. Kadar requested that I transmit the views and observations of the Soviet comrades regarding the text of the Appeal by 10:00 a.m. on 6 November." (See "Po VCh," APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, L. 132.) The draft went to Mikoyan, who prepared a number of changes and suggestions before the Presidium meeting began. The most significant change was the addition of a reference to the "treacherous" activities of a "group of Imre Nagy, Losonczy, and Donath" after the condemnation of the "Rakosi clique." (See the marked-up draft in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, L. 136.) Kadar incorporated this change, though he dropped the mention of Ferenc Donath, referring simply to the "Nagy-Losonczy group," which he claimed had committed "treason" and inspired the "counterrevolution." Other proposed changes also were included. The final text was released as a leaflet in Hungary on 6 November. It was published in the *Szolnok* newspaper *Szabad Nep* on 7 November and in Russian translation in the CPSU daily *Pravda* that same day. On 8 November it was published in *Nepszabadsag*. This was the first major programmatic statement by Kadar's government.

<sup>180</sup>This is the same telegram that Kadar mentioned earlier. See Note 159 *supra*.

<sup>181</sup>The draft statement pledged that the HSWP would "make a decisive break with the harmful policy and criminal methods of the Rakosi clique, which shook the faith of the broad popular masses in our party." This was preserved in the final text along with other condemnations of "past mistakes."

<sup>182</sup>Malenkov obviously is referring to a CC plenum of the HWP, not of the CPSU.

<sup>183</sup>Again, the reference is to a CC plenum of the HWP, not of the CPSU.

<sup>184</sup>From exile in Moscow, Rakosi had made overtures about his possible readmission into the Hungarian Communist party.

<sup>185</sup>The topic discussed here was a telegram received on 5 November 1956 from the Soviet am-

bassador in Yugoslavia, Nikolai Firyubin, transmitting a formal protest by the Yugoslav government about the death of Milenko Milovanov, a Yugoslav embassy employee in Budapest who was struck by shots fired from a Soviet tank. The Yugoslav foreign minister, Koca Popovic, accused the Soviet tank of having deliberately opened fire on the embassy even though the compound was clearly marked and "the Soviet government had been informed by the Yugoslav side of who, other than Yugoslav diplomatic personnel, is in the Yugoslav embassy compound in Budapest." See "Shifrtelgramma," 5 November 1956 (Strictly Secret), in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, Ll. 143-144. To reinforce Popovic's complaint, a similar protest was delivered by the Yugoslav ambassador in Budapest, Dalibor Soldatic, to the Soviet ambassador in Budapest, Yurii Andropov. Soldatic requested that the Soviet military unit alongside the Yugoslav embassy be pulled back. Andropov relayed this message by telephone to the Soviet deputy foreign minister Valerian Zorin, warning that "the demand for the withdrawal of the Soviet military unit from the building of the mission is of a suspicious nature." See "Telefonogramma," 5 November 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, L. 130. These messages were discussed at the Presidium meeting not only by Zhukov and Shepilov (as indicated by Malin), but also by Khrushchev, who presented the draft of a cable intended for the Yugoslav government. Subsequently, the cable was transmitted via Firyubin to Popovic.

<sup>186</sup>The formal protocol for this session ("Vypiska iz Protokola No. 53 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 6 noyabrya 1956 g.," in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 485, L. 141) indicates that the Presidium "affirmed the draft response to the Yugoslavs in connection with the unfortunate case of an employee at the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest." The telegram, signed by foreign minister Dmitrii Shepilov, was sent to the Yugoslav foreign minister, Koca Popovic, via the Yugoslav ambassador in Budapest, Veljko Micunovic. It stated that the Soviet military commander in Hungary had been ordered to make a careful study of how the incident happened. The telegram also conveyed the Soviet government's "deep condolences" regarding the death of Milenko Milovanov, and promised assistance in transporting Milanov's body to Yugoslavia. The telegram said that the Soviet military government would take "all necessary measures" to safeguard the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest, and in a follow-on conversation with Micunovic, Shepilov indicated that the Soviet military command would comply with the Yugoslav request to "pull back the military unit next to the [Yugoslav] embassy compound." See "O besede s poslom Yugoslavii v SSSR Michunovichem," No. 486 (Secret), from D. T. Shepilov to the CPSU Presidium, 7 November 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 45, D. 29, Ll. 1-3. The investigation into the incident was completed by mid-day on 7 November. It concluded that the Soviet tank had come under fire from a house alongside the Yugoslav embassy. When the tank responded by firing back, one of the shots had strayed into the embassy, killing Milovanov. It is unclear whether this version of events is more accurate than the original Yugoslav account, but whatever the case may have been, steps were

taken to prevent further "unfortunate incidents."

<sup>187</sup>These notes were compiled by Malin's deputy, Vladimir Naumovich Chernukha, not by Malin himself. Hence, they are somewhat sketchier than other notes from this period. No list of participants in the session is given, but the formal protocol for the session ("Vypiska iz Protokola No. 60 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 27 noyabrya 1956 g.," in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, L. 181) indicates that, in addition to those listed here, the participants included Brezhnev, Shvernik, Furtseva, Belyaev, and Pospelov. The protocol does not mention Andrei Gromyko.

<sup>188</sup>The Presidium is discussing a telegram that was sent on 26 November by V. F. Nikolaev, an official at the Soviet embassy in Bucharest. The telegram indicated that the Romanian leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej intended to seek top-level negotiations with Yugoslavia as soon as possible to alleviate the dispute that Yugoslavia was having with the Soviet Union and Hungary about the fate of Imre Nagy. During negotiations with the Yugoslavs, Kadar's government had given assurances of safety for Nagy and his aides if they left the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest. When Nagy's group went outside on 22 November, they were immediately arrested by Soviet military personnel. Soon thereafter, they were transported as prisoners to Romania. A senior aide to Gheorghiu-Dej, Emil Bodnarus, told Nikolaev that the Romanians "hadn't expected that the Yugoslavs would raise a fuss about the transfer of Imre Nagy and his group to Romania. However, as you know, they presented a note of protest to the Soviet and Hungarian governments. It's possible that this question might be raised at the UN, etc. We believe that we must be ready for different speeches and discussions regarding Imre Nagy. But first of all we believe it is necessary to discuss this matter with the Yugoslavs." See "Shifrtelgramma," 26 November 1956 (Strictly Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 13-14.

<sup>189</sup>The formal protocol for this session ("Vypiska iz Protokola No. 60 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS," 27 November 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, L. 177) stated that "on the basis of the exchange of opinions at the session of the CPSU CC Presidium, Cde. Bulganin is instructed to hold negotiations with Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej." Later that day, Bulganin had a telephone conversation with Gheorghiu-Dej, which he promptly recounted in writing for the other members of the CPSU Presidium: "I told Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej that, in our opinion, a meeting at the highest level with the Yugoslav leadership about Imre Nagy and his group will not produce a good solution, since the Yugoslavs have a set position on this matter, and such a meeting might complicate the situation. The Yugoslavs might demand a meeting with Imre Nagy and the others, which would hardly be worthwhile. . . . Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej asked that I let the CPSU CC Presidium know that they are working via plenipotentiaries with Imre Nagy and his group. They have set out to persuade Imre Nagy and his group to issue a statement in which they would acknowledge their criminal actions and indicate that the only correct course at present is to support and consolidate the Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government of Kadar, and to strengthen the re-

gime of people's democracy. In this way, said Gheorghiu-Dej, we want to test Imre Nagy." See "Informatsiya," 27 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 16-17.

<sup>190</sup>This refers to the manner in which Imre Nagy and his aides were arrested. A bus had been brought alongside the Yugoslav embassy, supposedly to transport the officials and their families to their apartments. It turned out that the bus was merely part of an elaborate plot devised by Ivan Serov and other senior KGB officials to lure Nagy from the embassy. A Soviet military officer was sitting in the bus, and others quickly approached. Two Yugoslav diplomats who were accompanying the Hungarians were forced out of the bus, and the remaining passengers were placed under arrest, contrary to the assurances that Kadar's government had given to the Yugoslavs. This episode is recounted in detail in the note of protest that Yugoslav foreign minister Koca Popovic sent to the Soviet and Hungarian embassies on 24 November 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 19-26. See also "Telefonogramma," Secure High-Frequency Transmission, from Malenkov, Suslov, and Aristov, 23 November 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, Ll. 95-96.

<sup>191</sup>No title for this section is given, but the formal protocol for the session (No. 60, as cited in Note 187 *supra*) indicates that Point II dealt with "Questions of Hungary." According to the Protocol, "the USSR Foreign Ministry, the KGB, and the USSR Ministry of Defense [were] instructed to prepare materials about Imre Nagy and his group in accordance with the exchange of opinions at the CPSU CC Presidium's session."

<sup>192</sup>Nagy's surname is omitted in this line of Malin's notes.

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## RESEARCH NOTES:

### THE RUSSIAN NUCLEAR DECLASSIFICATION PROJECT: SETTING UP THE A-BOMB EFFORT, 1946

by G. A. Goncharov, N. I. Komov,  
A. S. Stepanov

On 16 July 1945, the USA conducted the world's first test of an atomic bomb, and on 6 and 9 August 1945, it used the new weapon on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The world faced the fact of the USA's monopolistic possession of the new, unprecedentedly powerful device. The atomic bombardments of the Japanese cities, some believed, also constituted a demonstration by America's leaders of their readiness to employ these weapons later on as well.

The events of 1945 forced the Soviet leadership to undertake emergency measures to speed up the creation of the USSR's own nuclear weapons. It was clear that solving the problem of making the atomic bomb as soon as possible would require mobilization of all the country's resources, which had been entirely directed to securing the victory over fascist Germany and its allies.

Focusing all the country's forces on the solution of this complex problem called above all for the establishment of a new state management body endowed with appropriate power. Such a body, which was entrusted with practically unlimited authority, was the Special Committee, headed by L. P. Beria (a member of State Defense Committee and Vice Chairman of the USSR Council of People's Commissars) and was founded by the USSR State Defense Committee's Resolution No. GOKO-9887 of 20 August 1945. The Committee was founded under the State Defense Committee, but after the State Defense Committee was abolished in September 1945, the Special Committee functioned as a body of USSR Council of People's Commissars (and after March 1946 as a body of the USSR Council of Ministers).

In reality, the Special Committee was an independent state control body

directly subordinate to Soviet leader J.V. Stalin. It functioned for almost eight years until it was abolished in accordance with a CC CPSU Presidium Resolution of 26 June 1953—the same tumultuous meeting at which Beria was arrested. Thus, the Special Committee's activities covered a most important, formative period of the Soviet atomic project, that is, the establishment and growth of the USSR atomic-energy industry, the development and testing of the first Soviet atomic bomb (in 1949) and early improved atomic bomb designs, and the development and virtual completion of the first Soviet hydrogen bomb (RDS-6), which was first tested in August 1953.

Considering and resolving all the most basic issues which arose in the course of the early Soviet atomic project, the Special Committee was empowered to supervise

all work on the use of atomic energy of uranium:— the development of scientific research in this sphere;— the broad use of geological surveys and the establishment of a resource base for the USSR to obtain uranium...;— the organization of industry to process uranium and to produce special equipment and materials connected with the use of atomic energy; and the construction of atomic energy facilities, and the development and production of an atomic bomb.<sup>1</sup>

The Special Committee's decisions either were of unilaterally decisive character or were made to support draft resolutions and directions of the USSR Government previously submitted to Stalin for approval. Throughout the lifetime of the Special Committee, more than 140 sittings were held. The approximate volume of the Special Committee's protocols is 1000 typewritten pages. The complete work of the Special Committee fills about 1700 dossiers containing more than 300,000 typewritten pages. These materials are currently stored in the Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF).

These materials, documenting events from 1943 to 1953, constitute an invaluable treasure of early Soviet atomic project history.