

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.

Some particular items in the Special Committee's documentary collections deserve special mention. Besides the Committee's meeting protocols, these are protocols and related materials of meetings of the Technical (Scientific and Technical) and Engineering and Technical Councils which were active in 1945-1946 within the Special Committee and then within the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers; resolutions and orders of the USSR Council of People's Commissars Council of Ministers on the atomic issues; correspondence with First Main Directorate organizations and enterprises and other Ministries and agencies; and important documents of the First Main Directorate. Among the Special Committee's materials are unique documents signed by Stalin and Beria, and manuscripts by leading scientists and administrators in the Soviet atomic project, including its leader, physicist I. V. Kurchatov.

For more than 40 years since the Special Committee's abolishment, its documents have been practically inaccessible for research. But an important step toward the opening of these materials, as well as relevant documents of other agencies, was taken on 17 February 1995 with the issuance of Russian Federation Presidential Decree No.160, "On the Preparation and Publication of an Official Compilation of Archival Documents Pertaining to the History of the Development of Nuclear Weapons in the USSR."<sup>2</sup> To produce an objective account of domestic atomic-energy industry growth and USSR nuclear weapons development, this Decree provides for the preparation and publication of archival documents pertaining to the history of nuclear weapons development in the USSR up to 1954. To fulfill the decree's requirements, to study and compile the archival documents and develop proposals for their declassification, in accordance with Russian Federation Government's Direction No. 728-r of 24 May 1995, a Working Group chaired by Russian Deputy Federation Minister for Atomic Energy, was set up. The Working Group included representatives of the Ministry of Atomic Energy (L.D. Ryabev,

Minatom), the Russian archives, the Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Defense, Federal Security Service, Foreign Intelligence Service, and State Technology Commission of Russia.

Since its establishment, the Working Group has carried out a great amount of work. It has specified subjects of the collection sections and decided to focus initial efforts on two basic areas to complete the compilation sections as quickly as possible:

- on the history of the development of the first atomic bomb and improved atomic bomb designs (during the period through 1954) in the USSR;
- on Soviet efforts to develop the hydrogen bomb (during the period through 1954).

The compilation section devoted to documents pertaining to the early period of works on the Soviet atomic project (1942-1945) is being prepared for publication.

To prepare the compilation, documents are being studied and selected in various Russian archives. In addition to the Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), great attention is paid to the archives of R. F. Minatom and Russian Federal Nuclear Center—All-Russian Scientific Research Institute of Experimental Physics (RFNC-VNIIEF). Valuable materials are also located in the files of the Russia Foreign Intelligence Service which has indicated its readiness to present a large amount of intelligence materials for the commission.

In its activities the commission intends to be guided by the principle of maximum possible openness. The basic restriction remains only the provisions of the 1968 Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty, which bars the disclosure of information which would facilitate the spread of nuclear weapons. These provisions hamper the commission's work as most documents are of a technical character and contain data whose review for publication requires thorough analysis.

Another difficulty is that thus far there is no special funding for the commission's activities. However, in

August 1996 the Russian Federation Government decided to approve some funding for preparing the compilations. Though the funding amount is not large, this decision will allow us to assure a more effective continuation of the commission's activities. By now the commission has reviewed the protocols of the Special Committee's meetings and basic resolutions and orders by State Defense Committee and USSR Government from 1943 to 1948.

Anticipating the publication of the historical documents pertaining to the Soviet atomic project history in the compilation, we present below the full texts of the two most important governmental resolutions of 1946 from the APRF: USSR Council of Ministers (CM) Resolution No. 805-327 of 9 April 1946 ("Issues of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No.2"), and USSR Council of Ministers Resolution No. 1286-525 of 21 June 1946 ("On the Plan of the Works for Design Bureau No.11 of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No.2"). The latter resolution is published with annexes No.1 and No.4 (annexes No. 2 and 3, of a narrow economic character, are omitted).

USSR CM Resolution No. 805-327 of 9 April 1946 is a historic act which established Design Bureau No.11 (KB-11), the Soviet analog of the secret wartime American nuclear weapons laboratory at Los Alamos, New Mexico. (Design Bureau No. 11 later became RFNC-VNIIEF.) USSR CM Resolution No. 1286-525 of 21 June 1946 specified the early missions of KB-11, i.e. development of atomic bombs, which were referred to in the resolution as "jet engines S," in two versions, S-1 and S-2 (abbreviated as RDS-1 and RDS-2). RDS-1 meant the analog of the first U.S. plutonium-239 implosion type atomic bomb tested on 16 July 1945 in New Mexico (and of the U.S. atomic bomb exploded over Nagasaki on 9 August 1945). This bomb was successfully tested in the USSR on 29 August 1949. RDS-2 signified the analog of the uranium-235 gun type bomb exploded over Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. This bomb passed a design verification in the USSR, but was not tested. Later the abbreviation RDS-2 was used

to denote the improved plutonium-239 implosion type atomic bomb tested in 1951. During the period through 1954 the USSR verified and tested three more types of improved atomic bombs: RDS-3, RDS-4, and RDS-5. The documents reflecting the development of the RDS-1, RDS-2, RDS-3, RDS-4 and RDS-5 atomic bombs that will constitute the first part of the compilation being prepared by the commission. The second part will be composed of documents reflecting the Soviet work on the hydrogen bomb, whose first version (referred to as RDS-6s) was successfully tested on 12 August 1953.

Returning to the USSR CM resolution of 21 June 1946, readers should note the extremely short duration of the work phases set by that resolution. Thus the technical task orders for the RDS-1 and RDS-2 designs had to be developed by 1 July 1946, the main unit designs by 1 July 1947. The work on the design development had to be conducted in parallel with the establishment of special laboratories at KB-11 and arrangement of the works of these laboratories (the first phase laboratories had to start functions in the period from September to December 1946, the second phase laboratories in the period from January to June 1947).

The short duration and arrangement of the parallel works became possible thanks to availability in the USSR of intelligence materials about the designs of the U.S. atomic bombs "Fat Man" and "Little Boy," prototypes of RDS-1 and RDS-2, Soviet atomic bombs, which the leaders of the USSR atomic project decided in 1946 should be copied as closely as possible from the American designs.

It should be emphasized that the availability of the intelligence materials could not substitute for independent experimental, theoretical, and design verification of the Soviet atomic bombs which were being prepared for testing. Owing to the extraordinary responsibility of the leaders of and participants in the Soviet atomic project, RDS-1 was tested only after thorough confirmation of the available information and a full cycle of experimental, theoretical, and design studies whose level corre-

sponded to the maximum capabilities of that time.

The 21 June 1946 resolution set stringent control over the KB-11 works. I. V. Kurchatov, the scientific leader of the Soviet atomic project, and P.M. Zernov and Yu. B. Khariton, leaders of KB-11, had to report to the Special Committee on the progress of KB-11 works on a monthly basis.

The annexes to the 21 June 1946 resolution contain detailed description of the measures on preparation, arrangement, and support of the KB-11 works. According to Annex No.1, for KB-11 construction in the Mordovia State reserve zone and Gorky (now Nizhni Novgorod) region a territory of roughly 100 square kilometers was taken from the settlement of Sarov. KB-11 was transferred to Plant No. 550 in Sarov which heretofore belonged to Ministry of Agricultural Machine Engineering. The plant's buildings and equipment became the base of the KB-11 production zone. When the USSR CM Resolutions of 9 April and 21 June 1946 were adopted, the settlement of Sarov disappeared from all geographic maps published in the USSR.

The KB-11 laboratory received special dispensations and privileges of many varieties. It was permitted to construct new buildings and facilities without previously approved projects and estimated costs and make payments for the works according to actual expenditures. Special attention was paid to social issues. KB-11 workers received high wages, and enhanced food-stuff norms given in Annex No.4\* (note that the ration card system existed in the USSR up until the end of 1947), and reserved high-quality residences. A library was created which automatically received copies of important literature on physics, chemistry, mathematics and fiction published in the USSR, and special allocations of additional funding in foreign currency to obtain foreign books and journals. Aircraft were allotted to KB-11, permitting regular aerial transport links with Moscow.

Under the hard post-war conditions, including severe shortages of resources, a great amount of materials and necessary equipment was directed for

KB-11 construction and arrangement of works.

The measures taken for KB-11's creation and development, alongside the huge complex of the measures to create an interconnected network of atomic-energy industry scientific research institutes and enterprises, allowed the USSR to solve the historic problem of domestic nuclear weapons development within a short time period.

Naturally, even a multi-volume compilation cannot contain all significant historical documents reflecting the immense work on the USSR atomic project, which was indeed a major exploit of Soviet science and industry. The document sets, such as a complete collection of protocols of the Special Committee, and of the Technical and Engineering and Technical Councils of the Special Committee, voluminous reports about the work of the First Main Directorate from 1945 to 1946 signed by B. L. Vannikov, A. P. Zavenyagin and I. V. Kurchatov, compilation of atomic intelligence materials, etc. are worthy of special attention and might be published individually. The obvious interest of Russia and the international public in such historical materials allows us to expect that eventually the problem of financial support of such publications can find a positive resolution.

**Document I: USSR Council of Ministers Resolution of 9 April 1946 Establishing Design Bureau No. 11**

Top Secret  
(Special dossier)

USSR Council of Ministers  
Order No. 805-327ss/op of 9 April 1946.  
Kremlin, Moscow

Issues of Laboratory No.2

1. Reorganize Sector No. 6 of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 to Design Bureau of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No.2 for jet engine [atomic weapon] design development and prototype manufacture.

2. Hereupon refer to the above Design Bureau as Design Bureau No. 11 (KB-11) of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2.

3. Designate: C[omra]de Zernov P.M., Transport Machine Building Deputy Minister, as KB-11 Chief with release from his current Ministry duties;

Professor Khariton Yu. B. as KB-11 Chief Designer on jet engine prototype designing and manufacture.

4. Adopt the proposal by Commission composed of Vannikov, Yakovlev, Zavenyagin, Goremykin, Meshik and Khariton on location of KB-11 on the base of Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building Plant No. 550 and adjoining territory.

5. Assume the following as necessary:  
a) involve USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics (Director Academician Semenov N. N.) in computations on orders by Laboratory No. 2 (Academician Kurchatov) relating to designing of jet engines, measurements of needed constants, and preparation and conduct of principal jet engine tests;

b) arrange at USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics development of theoretical issues for nuclear explosion and combustion and their application in engineering.

In this connection transfer all main forces of USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics to accomplishment of the above tasks.

6. Charge the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers (Mr. Vannikov) with [responsibility for] material and technical support of KB-11 and USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics.

7. Entrust Mr. Vannikov with consideration and solution in conjunction with Mr. Zernov of all the issues relating to adjustment of Plant No. 550 for KB-11.

8. Entrust Messrs. Vannikov (convocation), Zernov, Kurchatov, Khariton, Semenov, Pervukhin, Ustinov, and Zavenyagin with consideration of Academician Semenov's proposals on the measures to support the works with which the Institute of Chemical Physics is charged and within 5 days to develop and submit the draft decision on this issue.

Stamp: USSR Council of Ministers General Office Management of USSR Council of Ministers Affairs.

[Source: Archive of the President, Russian

*Federation (APRF), Fond 3, Opis 47, Delo 29, Listy 105-106].*

**Document II: USSR Council of Ministers Resolution of 21 June 1946 on Development of Soviet Atomic Weapons**

Keep in cipher

Top Secret  
(Special dossier)

USSR Council of Ministers Resolution  
No. 1286-525ss/op of 21 June 1946.  
Kremlin, Moscow

On the plan of promoting the works of Design Bureau No. 11 (KB-11) of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No.2

USSR Council of Ministers ORDERS:  
Accept the following proposals submitted by Cdes. Kurchatov, Khariton, Vannikov, Pervukhin, and Zernov on the Orders for Design Bureau No. 11 of USSR Academy of Sciences and the plan of promoting the works of the above Bureau:

1. That Design Bureau No. 11 (Messrs. Khariton, Zernov) be charged with:

a) development of two versions of "Jet engine [atomic bomb] S" ("RDS" in abbreviated form) under the scientific leadership of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No.2 (Academician Kurchatov): with heavy fuel utilization (version S-1) and with light fuel utilization (version S-2);

b) submission of the first verified and manufactured S-1 and S-2 versions of RDS, 1 copy of each version, to state tests in stationary conditions: for the version S-1 by 1 January 1948, for the version S-2 by 1 June 1948;

c) submission of the first verified and manufactured S-1 and S-2 aerial design versions of RDS, 1 copy of each version, to state flight tests: for the version S-1 by 1 March 1948, for the version S-2 by 1 January 1949.

2. That to secure accomplishment of the tasks stated in item 1, entrust Design Bureau No. 11 (Cdes. Khariton and Zernov) to be empowered to carry out the following works: a) development of the tactical and technical task orders for versions S-1 and S-2 of the RDS design by 1 July 1946; b) development of the design of the main RDS units in versions S-1 and S-2 by 1 July 1947; c) manufacture of RDS prototypes without

fueling stated in item 1a in versions S-1 and S-2, 5 copies for each version, and submit them for testing by 1 September 1947.

3. That the following proposals of Cdes. Kurchatov, Khariton, Vannikov, Pervukhin, and Zernov to conduct the following preparatory works for RDS versions S-1 and S-2 according to the task orders of KB-11, at Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building NII-6, NII-504, KB-47, USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2, Ministry of Armaments KB-88, Ministry of Transport Machine Building Kirov Plant KB (Chelyabinsk) and USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics be accepted:

a) at the Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building Research Institute No. 6 (leader of the works Cde. Zakoshchikov, NII-6 chief):

- development of synchronous spark plug operation principles and design—by 1 October 1946;

- refinement of diesel fuel compound charge elements—by 1 October 1946;

- development basing on small-scale models of a technique for studying maximum compression of fuel mixture—by 1 January 1947;

- study basing on small-scale models of the compression rate—by 1 January 1947;

- development of the power supply system—by 1 March 1947.

b) at the Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building Research Institute NO.504 (leader of the works Cde. Rassushin, Chief Designer):

- development of the automatic height controller—by 1 January 1947;

- development of the spark plug power supply system—by 1 October 1946;

c) at the Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building Design Bureau No.47 (leader of the works Cde. Kulakov, Chief Designer):

- development of the RDS fairing and fastening case—by 1 October 1946;

d) at the Ministry of Transport Machine Building Kirov Plant Design, Chelyabinsk (leader of the works Cde. Dukhov, Chief Designer):

- development of the diesel fuel compound charge, fueling technique and automated system devices—by 1 October 1946;

e) at USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 (leader of the works Academician Kurchatov):

- development of the power supply sys-

tem—by 1 March 1947;

- refinement of the timing issues as applied to the version S-2—by 1 January 1947;

f) at the Ministry of Armaments Plant No. 38 Design Bureau (leader of the works Cde. Kostin, Chief Designer):

- development of the “gun” design—by 1 January 1947;

- refinement of the timing issues—by 1 January 1947;

g) at USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics Special Sector (the leader of the works Academician Semenov):

- carrying out the theoretical and computational works on the task orders of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2.

That Ministers: of Agricultural Machine Building Cde. Vannikov, of Armaments Cde. Ustinov, of Transport Machine Building Cde. Malyshev, Director of USSR Academy of Sciences Institute of Chemical Physics Academician Semenov, [and] Chief of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 Academician Kurchatov be empowered to accomplish the works listed in item 3 within the stated dates and monthly report about the progress of works to the Special Committee of USSR Council of Ministers.

4. That Design Bureau No. 11 be authorized to establish the following laboratories within the Design Bureau (on the base of Plant No. 550 of the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers):

-primarily: Laboratory No. 1 (for fuel), Laboratory No. 2 (X-ray metering), Laboratory No. 3 (for studying strains), Laboratory No. 4 (for studying performance);

-secondarily: Laboratory No. 5 (for physics), Laboratory No. 6 (for plugs), Laboratory No. 7 (for metallurgy and treatment), Laboratory No. 8 (for studying physical and mechanical properties of fuel), Laboratory No. 9 (for quality control of initial materials), Laboratory No. 10 (for prevention of accidents).

That the dates be fixed for spreading the works of the primary laboratories from September to December 1946 and the secondary laboratories from January to June 1947.

5. That the measures be approved on preparation and organization of the works of KB-11 and measures for USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Building Directorate No.

88 in conformity with Annexes Nos. 1 and 2.

6. That Messrs. Kurchatov, Zernov and Khariton be entrusted with monthly reporting about the progress of works of Design Bureau No. 11 to the Special Committee of USSR Council of Ministers.

Stamp: USSR Council of Ministers General Office Management of USSR Council of Ministers Affairs..

[annexes:]

Top Secret  
(Special dossier)

USSR Council of Ministers Resolution  
No. 1286-525ss of 21 June 1946.  
Kremlin, Moscow

#### Annex No. 1

##### Measures

on preparation and arrangement of KB-11 works

USSR Council of Ministers ORDERS:

1. That USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (Cdes. Kruglov and Komarovskiy) be empowered to carry out the construction and assembling operations for Design Bureau No. 11 and that be USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs be empowered to complete by forces of Glavpromstroy the construction and assembling operations of the first series by 1 October 1946 and of the second series (all of the operations) by 1 May 1947.

That USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (Cde. Kruglov) be authorized to establish Building Directorate No. 880 within the Glavpromstroy system to accomplish the above task.

2. That the first series building amount for Design Bureau No. 11 proposed by Cdes. Vannikov, Pervukhin, Kurchatov, Zavenyagin, Khariton, and Zernov, a total of 30 million rubles, and the list of building over the facilities, according to Annex No. 3, be approved and that Cdes. Zernov and Komarovskiy be empowered to approve the priorities for building and restoration of the first phase facilities within the above list.

3. That Cde. Volkov V.V. be placed in charge of Deputy Chief of Design Bureau No. 11 of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 in building and Chief of USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs Building Direc-

torate No. 880 and that he be relieved of other work for Ministry of Military and Navy Building.

4. That GSPI-11 of the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers carry out the design operations on building for Design Bureau No. 11.

5. That the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs be empowered to occupy the area up to 100 square kilometers for Building Directorate No. 880 in the Mordovia State reserve and up to 10 square kilometers of land south of the Balykovo village, Gorky region.

That Cde. Rodionov, Chairman of RSFSR Council of Ministers, by agreement with Cdes. Zernov and Komarovskiy, be entrusted with determination of the alienation borders of the above lands within ten days.

6. That USSR Minister of Internal Affairs be empowered to carry out the construction and assembly operations for Building No. 880 without approved project and estimated costs. Payment due should be made on the basis of actual expenditures.

7. That Plant No. 550 be transferred to the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers from the Ministry of Agricultural Machine Building under Statement of assets and liabilities as of 1 May 1946.

8. That Cdes. Abakumov (convocation), Kruglov, Vannikov, and Zernov be obligated to develop within 2 weeks and approve the safeguard and security system for facility No. 550.

That their direction be reported to Special Committee.

9. That Cdes. Vannikov, Kurchatov, and Zernov be obligated to approve KB-11 staff.

That Cdes. Vannikov, Kurchatov, Zernov, and Komarovskiy be charged with submission of the amount of construction and schedule of the construction and assembly operations of the first phase for KB-11 for 1946: no later than on 15 August 1946 to be approved by USSR Council of Ministers.

10. That KB-11 be released from recording the staff in financial agencies.

That a total of 25 million rubles of advance allocations be approved for KB-11 for quarters II and III, 1946 for preparatory and building operations, materials, equipment and economy expenditures, including 200 thousand rubles as the person-free fund and 100 thousand rubles for special expendi-

tures.

That the USSR Ministry of Finance (Mr. Zernov) be charged with allocation of the above funds to the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers.

11. That the wages, salaries, and all types of food-stuffs and goods provision established for USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 be extended to KB-11.

12. That the following be determined:

a) salary rates for the workers assigned to work at facility No. 550 should be increased during their stay at facility No. 550 from 75 to 100% and the persons performing multiple tasks of KB-11 should be paid additional salary amounting from 50 to 75% of relevant salary established for workers of KB-11 of Laboratory No. 2;

b) all leading, scientific, engineering, technical, administrative and economic workers of facility No. 550 should be provided on site with three meals a day in norms according to Annex No. 4 and ration according to the letter "A" limit for leading and scientific workers and to the letter "B" limit for other workers.

13. That the USSR Ministry of Trade (Cde. Lyubimov) be charged with:

a) allocation by request of Cde. Zernov of all needed foodstuffs for arrangement of three meals a day for all leading, scientific, engineering-technical, and administrative-technical workers of facility No. 550 in norms according to Annex No.4 and ration of letter "A" for leading and scientific workers, of letter "B" for other workers;

b) allocation to facility No. 550 beginning from June 1946 of 50 food-stuffs limits 300 rubles each monthly and 50 goods limits 750 each quarterly in addition to those allocated for scientific workers.

14. That 50 personal payments up to 3000 rubles for KB-11 be established.

15. That the following mechanism of provision and funding of KB-11 of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 be established:

a) all KB-11 provision and funding should be through the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers by requests of Cde. Zernov;

b) funding of all KB-11 works should be through the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers. The financial accounting for KB-11 should be submitted only personally to Chief of the First Main Directorate. The same person is authorized

to approve estimated costs and actual expenditures for KB-11;

c) authorize Chief of the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers and Chief of KB-11 to have a group of workers up to 5 persons at the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers for preparation of requests and realization of KB-11 material supply funds.

16. That KB-11 (Cde. Zernov) be empowered to arrange their library at Design bureau which should be later on referred to as Library No. 11.

In order to provide this:

a) charge RSFSR OGIZ (Cde. Yudin) with inclusion of Library No. 11 into the list for receiving of an obligatory paid copy of literature on physics, chemistry, mathematics, and fiction;

b) charge Committee on Cultural and Educational Establishments Affairs of USSR Council of Ministers (Mr. Zuyev) with allocation by 1 August 1946 of literature from the State Stock for Library No. 11 composed of up to 5000 books on physics, chemistry, engineering, and mathematics and organization of a movable technical and fiction library by request of Mr. Zernov;

c) allocate 5000 dollars additionally for years 1946-1947 to the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers for subscription of books, journals, and magazines for Library No. 11.

17. That Cdes. Kuznetsov A. A. (convocation), Vannikov, Zernov be entrusted with selection of staff for Design Bureau No. 11 within one month.

18. That in July 1946 by direction of the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers equipment, instruments and devices according to Annex No. 5 be allocated and shipped, the delivery being in the order established by Resolution of USSR Council of Ministers of 9 April 1946 No. 806-328ss.

19. That materials and equipment to the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers, according to Annex No. 6, be allocated at the expense of the First Main Directorate Mobilization Reserve provided for pursuant to USSR Council of Ministers Order of 23 March 1946 No. 3881-rs.

20. That Chief of the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers (Cde. Vannikov) be charged with:

a) forwarding the equipment, instruments, materials and devices stated in An-

nexes Nos. 5 and 6 to secure spreading the first phase works of KB-11;

b) allocation of needed materials and equipment additionally to KB-11 in June-July 1946 from the First Main Directorate resources.

21. That Cde. Akopov, Minister of Automobile Industry, be charged with shipment of 25 motor vehicles in June 1946 in accordance with the distribution list of Cde. Zernov P.M. from the Mobilization Reserve of the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers provided for the Mobilization Reserve pursuant to Order of the USSR Council of Ministers of 23 March 1946 No. 3881-rs, including:

8 motor vehicles ZIS-58 motor vehicles GAZ-AA2 motor vehicles GAZ-517 motor vehicles GAZ-67 and

in July 1946 8 motor vehicles at the expense of the funds "for special expenditures" for the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers, including:

2 motor vehicles ZIS-52 motor vehicles ZIS-421 motor vehicle "sanitary"

3 motor vehicles M-11-73.

22. That the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers be empowered to have additional fuel expenditures beginning from June 1946: limit-free for three cars; for 12 M-11-73 make cars 800 liters each; for four cars 600 liters each; and for four cars 400 liters each, of these three limit-free cars, four cars 800 liters each and three cars 600 liters each should be at disposal of Cde. Zernov P.M.

23. That the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs (Cde. Kruglov) be obligated to establish telephone communication "HF" with Building No. 860 and KB-11.

24. That the USSR Ministry of Textile Industry (Cde. Sedin) be obligated to deliver the following by the distribution list of Cde. Zernov P.M. in July 1946: 1.2 thousand meters of strips of carpet, 1000 meters of silk cloth; 1000 meters of chevron; 150 meters of woolen cloth at the expense of the funds of the First Main Directorate of USSR Council of Ministers for quarter III, 1946.

25. That Main Directorate of Civil Air Fleet (Mr. Astakhov) be obligated to allot the aircraft SI-47 and two aircraft PO-2 to Cde. Zernov P.M. to make missions by direction of Zernov P.M.

26. That Ministry of Transport (Cde. Kovalev) be obligated to allot one special car to USSR Academy of Sciences Labora-

tory No. 2 with the right of coupling to fast, passenger and other trains by requests of Cde. Zernov; the allotment duration should be agreed upon by Cde. Zernov.

27. That the USSR Ministry of Forest Industry (Mr. Saltykov) be obligated to fill the order for furniture at the expense of the market fund for the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers by the specification and distribution list of Cde. Zernov P.M. in quarters II and III, 1946, the sum total amounting to 800 thousand rubles, including 400 thousand rubles for individual suites, with delivery amount being 100 thousand rubles in the 2nd quarter and 700 thousand rubles in the 3d quarter.

28. That for the workers of Design Bureau No. 11 and Building No. 880 the dwelling space occupied by them and their families by the time of their going to work at Building No. 880 and KB-11 of USSR Academy of Sciences Laboratory No. 2 be reserved for them.

29. That the USSR Ministry of Foreign Trade (Cde. Mikoyan) be obligated to search for the possibility to deliver one precision drilling machine No. 3 or No. 4 (for KB-11), irrespective of its primary purpose, as a part of previous orders to the First Main Directorate of the USSR Council of Ministers in 1946.

Stamp: I. Stalin, Chairman of USSR Council of Ministers.

Protocol Division Ya. Chadayev, Manager of USSR Council of Office Ministers Affairs.

[Source: APRF, F. 3, Op. 47, D. 29, Ll. 169-178.]

[\* Annex 4 of the USSR Council of Ministers Resolution of 21 June 1946 is not printed due to space limitations, but is available from CWIHP—ed.]

<sup>1</sup> The full text of the State Defense Committee resolution on the establishment of the Special Committee is published in *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6/7 (Winter 1995/1996), 269-70.

<sup>2</sup> For an English translation of this decree, see *CWIHP Bulletin* 5 (Spring 1995), 57.

## KHRUSHCHEV'S 1960 TROOP CUT: NEW RUSSIAN EVIDENCE

by Vladislav M. Zubok

On 12 January 1960, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Nikita S. Khrushchev, announced the most radical reduction in the level of Soviet military troops since 1924: the army was to be reduced by one-third in three years; several branches of military aviation and navy were to be drastically cut or even altogether abolished; and instead, the strategic missile forces were to become the backbone of the armed forces.

Analysts and scholars have long agreed that, unlike previous cuts designed to impress the West with the Soviets' "peace-loving" nature, this move was principally Khrushchev's radical attempt to replace the concept of a huge land army, which was in the foundation of the Soviet military build-up, with a technological force to ensure means of "retaliation." At the core of this idea was Khrushchev's desire to save resources for large-scale social and economic programs. But only recently have documents emerged to show how this remarkable initiative was born.

In autumn 1995, the Moscow archive containing the post-1952 records of the CC CPSU, the Storage Center for Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), released transcripts of CC CPSU Plenums for the period 1941-1966 as well as supplementary material, often analogous to "special files" [*osobaya papki*], batches of highly important secret documents describing the rationale and preparations for crucial Politburo decisions. (CC CPSU Plenums and related materials for the period 1967-1991 have also reportedly been declassified by the Russian declassification commission, but as of late 1996 they had not yet been opened for scholarly research at TsKhSD.)

One document discovered in this newly-available collection at TsKhSD, and printed below, was Khrushchev's secret memorandum of 8 December 1959 to the CC CPSU Presidium (i.e.,

Politburo) proposing the radical and unilateral disarmament measures which would become visible to the world the following month. At the time, the Soviet leader was riding a crest of domestic and international authority achieved as a result of his widely-hailed trip to the United States and summit with U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower in September 1959. Even a testy meeting with Mao Zedong and the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party in Beijing in early October, which indicated a wider than ever split between the leaderships of the two communist giants, could not dampen Khrushchev's optimism and desire to capitalize on what he saw as his political momentum. The disarmament initiative was a hallmark's of Khrushchev authority: as the unchallenged leader of the CPSU (since his victory over the "anti-party" faction in June 1957), he was determined to redefine in breathtaking fashion the parameters of Soviet security doctrine and military make-up.

The memorandum, found the supplementary file to the December 1959 CC CPSU Plenum, is clearly a draft, bearing all the traces of improvisation; probably Khrushchev dictated the text during a holiday on the Black Sea; some corrections and insertions are typed into it, and the phraseology in the Russian original is often awkward and unpolished, replete with colloquial "Khrushchevisms." What is unusual is the absence of a "final" version, which apparently did not exist, perhaps because Khrushchev did not want bureaucratic agencies, including the Ministry of Defense and the KGB, to elaborate or modify his arguments. He must have intended to keep it as it was: exclusively his personal initiative. Was this a case of the late authoritarian Khrushchev paying lip service to "party democracy," but actually taking no heed of his colleagues and party-state structures? Rather, in this case the authoritarianism was enlightened: Khrushchev knew that his proposal had to be imposed from the top and passed quickly, otherwise it would be resisted and bog down.

The documents reproduced below illuminate the process by which Khrushchev's proposal became official

Soviet policy. On 14 December 1959, six days after his memorandum was drafted, it was approved by the Presidium; four days later, on December 18, a conference of the military elite convened to work out practical measures to implement the proposal; and eight days after that, on December 26, the Plenum rubber-stamped it. Despite Khrushchev's strong position, he could not help worrying about the political fallout of such a radical revamping, which constituted a de facto replacing of the Soviet military machine; hence the memorandum's rather long and (for Khrushchev) elaborate argument. It is interesting that Khrushchev regarded his initiative as a direct follow-up to his proposal on General and Complete Disarmament which he made to the U.N. General Assembly on 18 September 1959. He presented his initiative to his colleagues as a means to boost the level of discussion at the specially-appointed United Nations "Committee of Ten" countries, set up to study disarmament questions, which was scheduled to start its deliberations in February 1960.

The memorandum reveals Khrushchev as a convert of the nuclear revolution; he was convinced that no power could threaten a Soviet Union armed with nuclear missiles. In the same breath the Soviet leader poses as an exuberant romantic and bluffer, this time not before the outside world, but in front of his own, much less informed colleagues. Most important, he boldly but falsely claims that "we are in an excellent position with [regard to] missile-building" and that the USSR has already set in motion assembly lines capable of serial production of "an assortment of rockets to serve any military purpose." In fact, as was known to the tiny group of military and missile designers who reported directly to Khrushchev as the head of the Defense Council, the production of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) had not yet begun and there were only four unwieldy R-7s on a launching pad near Plesetsk in northern Russia. The first test of the next-generation ICBM of the Yangel firm was still nine months away.

At the core of Khrushchev's reasoning was his belief that from then on

the Cold War would be decided by the outcome of economic competition between the United States and Soviet Union. With the great optimism characteristic of the times, he explained to the Politburo members that if the West did not reciprocate to Soviet cuts, so much worse for it, since the burden of military budgets would drag its economies down. And the romantic Khrushchev firmly believed that once "workers, but also peasants, petit bourgeois elements," saw the USSR's determination to disarm, they would shed their anti-Soviet fears and move "to neutral positions, and then would develop sympathies toward our country." Thus, Khrushchev repeated the disarmament dictum of the Soviet diplomacy of the 1920s and early 1930s, but, unlike his predecessors, did not intend to use it merely as a smoke-screen for Soviet build-up, but, on the contrary, as a rationale for a unilateral build-down.

The point where Khrushchev's imagination reached record-breaking heights was in plotting an army of the future. On one hand he was primarily moved by his conviction that the construction of communism would require maximum military demobilization. He was attracted by the reforms of the 1920s carried out by Mikhail Frunze, when more of the Red Army conscripts would be trained not in "the cadre army" but in territorial militia formations; this, in his mind, could keep young manpower in local economies instead of diverting it to unproductive military drills. He even spoke of keeping officers simultaneously in military schools and industrial jobs!

On the other hand, Khrushchev had no patience with or respect for the professional military. He lacked experience with military reform, but specifics did not bother him. Like many crucial turns in Soviet foreign policy in 1958-62, this disarmament initiative sprang full-blown from his mind. This is made clear by his own admission that he still needed to discuss the proposal with the Defense Ministry and General Staff, including how deep the proposed cuts should be ("perhaps a million or a million and half") and how quickly they should be carried out ("no more than

two years"). This perception, incidentally, was disastrously unrealistic and contradicted Khrushchev's avowed concern with the future of demobilized officers. What also catches the eye is Khrushchev's groping for a way to marry somehow the idea of rapid deployment with territorial forces, but without creating what one might call today a "rapid deployment force." He was careful to avoid the worrisome prospect of entrusting the country's security to an elite highly mobile force, a potential carrier of "Bonapartism."

The great disarmament initiative was as bold as it was ill-conceived: It was not part of comprehensive military reform. Khrushchev sacrificed quality for quantity, eager to ram down the throat of the reluctant military his enthusiasm for strategic missiles and determination to have a "no-frills" land army. There is still no available record of the conference with top military officials on December 18; but the signs of sharp disagreement and even protest were visible. Around that time Khrushchev and Defense Minister Rodion Malinovsky authorized a discussion in the new top secret publication *Military Thought* on a new military doctrine, with obvious intention to let off steam. The amount of steam was to be great indeed: in the period of several months after Khrushchev's announcement of the cuts, 250,000 Soviet officers were forced into premature retirement, many without adequate compensation, housing, or retraining. (For more on the tensions between Khrushchev and the Soviet military caused by such actions, see the forthcoming CWIHP Working Paper by Matthew A. Evangelista.)

The military were not the only group "ambushed" by Khrushchev's initiative. So were the party and state elites, many of whom later recalled this episode as "a hare-brained scheme" of Nikita Sergeevich. Also Khrushchev did not bother to ask for advice from other members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization: even the leadership of the GDR, the strategically vital country whose existence totally depended on the support of Soviet troops, was caught by surprise by Khrushchev's disarmament



move and East German leader Walter Ulbricht had to ask Soviet representatives what its implications would be for the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany.

A resurgence of tensions with the West would doom Khrushchev's dalliance with disarmament. Perhaps surprisingly, his proposals outlived the flare-up with the Eisenhower Administration surrounding the Soviet downing of an U.S. U-2 spy plane and the collapse of the East-West summit in Paris in May 1960. But they fell victim to another Khrushchev initiative: his determination to change the status of West Berlin and achieve a German settlement favorable to the Kremlin through an ultimatum to the West. The renewal of the Berlin Crisis in June 1961 (after Khrushchev told President John F. Kennedy in Vienna that Moscow intended to sign within six months a treaty with East Germany, thereby blocking Western access to West Berlin) led to a spiral of mutual hostility and mobilizational measures in Washington and Moscow. On July 25, Kennedy announced a call-up of U.S. reservists in his response to Khrushchev's belligerence. The next month the Soviet Chairman made it clear that the reductions of Soviet army would be "suspended." That ended his quixotic disarmament initiative, and, for almost three decades, the chance, however ephemeral, for the USSR to leave behind the mammoth land army it had inherited from the Second World War.

**Document 1: Khrushchev Memo to CC CPSU Presidium, 8 December 1959**

P. 2909

TO MEMBERS OF THE  
CC CPSU PRESIDUM  
TO ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE  
CC CPSU PRESIDUM

I would like to express some thoughts on our further steps in the struggle for reduction of international tension and on the resolution of the issues of reduction of armaments and of disarmament.

The Soviet Union today has seized good positions on the international arena. The trip to the United States of America

[and] our proposal in the United Nations Organization on general disarmament was well received in the world and cannot be simply rejected and neglected even by the reactionary circles of various countries. Even those who do not want a reduction of tension, much less disarmament, even they cannot oppose [it] openly in view of such a mood of broad circles of the public and desire for detente and reduction of armaments; they would probably use procrastination to find some arguments in order to turn this down, or in order to delay or disrupt decision-making on our proposals.

I believe that we today should take advantage of this opportunity [*konyunktura*], which we created in our favor, not to feel satisfied by our conquests, which we won, by positive recognition and our sound international position, and our leading role and initiative, which we retain consistently for several years.

I would think that we should now undertake a further reduction of armaments in our country, even without conditions of reciprocity on the part of other states, and a considerable reduction of personnel of the armed forces. I think that one could cut by perhaps a million or a million and half - one still must discuss it, study it with the Ministry of Defense. I believe that such a considerable reduction would not undermine our defense capabilities. Yet, if one comes forward with such a decision and implements it - this would have a large positive influence on the international situation and our prestige would grow enormously in the eyes of all nations. This would be an irresistible blow at the enemies of peace, and war-mongers, and advocates of the Cold War.

Why do I believe today that this would be feasible and not dangerous? My decision is based, first, on the fact that we have now reached a good position in the development of the economy of the Soviet Union; second, we are in an excellent position with [regard to] missile-building; indeed, we have an assortment of rockets to serve any military purpose, from long-range to close-combat range, "ground-to-ground" rockets as well as "air-to-ground" and "air-to-air" ones, atomic submarines and so on, and also in terms of the [explosive] yield we have a good variety. Besides, we worked out [*naladili*] the serial production of these rockets. I will not enumerate in this note all these rockets - those who are in charge, they know,

and when we start discussing it, - we will repeat - therefore I do not enumerate [them] in the note, but I can lay out in more detail, when we begin discussion.

We now have a broad range of rockets and in such quantity that can virtually shatter the world. One may ask - shall we have this terrible armament - atomic, rocket armament, and shall we have such a big army, which we have [today]? This does not make sense. Our assumption is that we do not seek war and we do not prepare for offensive [war], but we prepare defense. If one accepts this assumption, as we do, our army should be capable of defending the country, of repelling enemies that might try to attack our Motherland or our allies, when we have these powerful armaments, such as rockets. But that is what they are for. What country or group of countries in Europe would dare to attack us, when we can virtually erase these countries from the face of the Earth by our atomic and hydrogen weapons and by launching our rockets to every point of the globe?

Therefore, if we now fail to take steps toward reduction of armed forces, and transfer this all, as it is already the case, for decision-making in the Committee of Ten, while having advantageous and active positions on our side, that would mean reducing our possibilities. Because our proposals would then be transferred to the labyrinths of the Committee, there will be much talk, speeches, and pompous verbiage, exercises in glorification, and this would scale down our initiative in this question.

If we, for instance, pass now a decision to cut our armed forces by a million or a million and a half, and would put forth appropriate arguments, it would be a considerable step forward. I believe that the conditions are quite ripe for us to speak about it. Indeed, we already spoke about it: in my report, that I made, and in our other declarations. We have already said many times that our ideological debates with capitalism will be resolved not through war, but through economic competition. Therefore our proposals and measures on further reduction of our armed forces would allow us to further pressure our opponents - the imperialist countries. Some comrades might object that we would cut armaments, while the enemy would not. But it is debatable if the enemy would be doing the right thing. If we cut and say that we cut because our

hydrogen and rocket armament enable us to maintain defense capabilities at the necessary level, because we do not want war, therefore we want to cut the army, because we do not get ready for attack, the Soviet Union has never sought conquests, nor have socialist countries - then why we need such a huge army? To maintain this huge army would mean to reduce our economic potential. We have a chance to reduce the army. And if our enemies do not follow our example - one should not consider it as if it would cause us some damage. On the contrary, the countries which would maintain big armies, in the situation which emerges in socialist countries (i.e., their economic potential and, more importantly, powerful thermonuclear and rocket armament in their possession), these armies would, so to say, be sucking from their budgets, depleting national economies, and if one takes this in the light of struggle between communism and capitalism, they [i.e., the imperialist countries] would to a certain extent be our "ally," since they would devour their budgets, reduce the economic development of these countries, thereby contributing to the increasing advantages of our system.

I gave much thought to this issue, and decided before my arrival to Moscow to send such a note, so that the members and alternate members of the CC Presidium could read it, and, when I arrive, discuss it. If the comrades agree with me, then one could adopt necessary proposals. In my opinion, one could do the following: to convene a session of the Supreme Soviet, for instance, the session could be convened at the end of January or in February (one should select a time, but not delay) before the Committee of Ten starts, which is convened for February to discuss our proposals. So we should convene a session of the Supreme Soviet before this Committee starts its work, to approve a rapporteur, to report to the Supreme Soviet, to summon arguments and to take the decision, to accept an appeal that would say that, regardless of the reaction of other countries to our appeal, whether they would follow our example or not, we would abide by the decision of the Supreme Soviet.

I am confident that this would be a very powerful, fantastic [*potryasaiuxchii*] step. Moreover, this step would not in any way cause damage to our defenses, but would give us major political, moral, and economic

advantages. Therefore, if we fail to do this, then speaking in economic terms, it would mean failing to make a full use of the powerful capital our socialist policy and our socialist economy have accumulated. For our economy is prospering, developing fast. Our science has advanced to such an extent that it has given us advantages in creating means to defend our country. And there are not only discoveries of science, but skillfully implemented scientific discoveries for practical needs.

I think that it would not make sense now to have atomic and hydrogen bombs, rockets, and to maintain at the same time a large army.

In addition, one should keep in mind that since we possess modern armaments of the strongest kind, against which so far there is no defense, and [since] we maintain the largest army in the world, this indeed scares our enemies, and it scares even honest people among those who otherwise would welcome a fair disarmament, but who are afraid that perhaps this is just our tactical move. Their argument is the following: the Soviet Union introduced a proposal for a new reduction of armed forces, but does not make these reductions within its own territory. This might scare off some honest people, among those who seek disarmament; and the reactionary forces, who resist the reduction of international tension, these aggressive and militarist forces would of course use it for their ends.

If, however, we carry out a further reduction of our armed forces, then such a step would encourage those forces in bourgeois countries, those liberal bourgeois, capitalist circles who seek to improve the international situation, to live by the principles of peaceful coexistence. This would strengthen them and weaken the arguments of aggressive, militarist circles, who take advantage of our might and intimidate other countries.

How we could do it and all the details - for this one should already exchange opinions; we will give instructions to the Minister of Defense, to the General Staff so that they prepare [a proposal] in a concrete way.

Such a reduction, such a reduction (considerable) would be better extended over a year, year and half, or two. Thus during this time we would take a decision, would gradually start to reduce the army, because, while cutting such a number of

people in the army, one should accommodate them: officers, military officials (soldiers are easy to accommodate), so that they would be all set and accommodated. And then we would see in which direction it goes, because we are not cutting at once: it would take a year, year and a half, two (but no more than two years). It would be logical. If we introduced a proposal at the session of the [U.N.] General Assembly about general and complete disarmament in 4 years, then a partial, unilateral disarmament we might carry out within two years or less. This would also be logical and convincing. And besides, it would not be dangerous.

Presenting for deliberation of the Presidium these proposals that I have thoroughly thought through, I hope that we will discuss them well at the Presidium and will weigh all arguments for and against. Perhaps I cannot foresee everything. But it seems to me that these proposals of mine, if we implement them, would not cause any damage to our country and would not threaten our defense capabilities vis-a-vis the enemy forces, but would rather enhance our international prestige and strengthen our country.

I have some details in these proposals, but I do not outline them in the note. When we begin discussing them, I will explain my arguments in more detail than [I do] in this note. For instance, while reducing armed forces, at a certain time, to a certain degree, perhaps one should move to a territorial system (militia formations). In other words, there would be regiments and divisions built on a territorial principle (with citizens recruited to serve in them without leaving their industries). Of course, one should have an appropriate cadre of officers for such regiments and units, armament must be stored somewhere in warehouses. We must have transport aviation, because in case of emergency one must transfer these regiments quickly from one place to another. For instance, if one has to transfer several divisions to Germany, we must do it practically in a few days. Armament for these territorial divisions must be stored in a suitably reasonable variety near the sites of deployment of these formations. And these divisions, for instance from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Kharkov, would get together right away, on alert, to a gathering point, would board planes and leave.

And there are other considerations we

should take into account so that the defense capabilities of our country would not diminish, but increase. The burden of maintaining armies would be smaller, and the political position domestically, as well as internationally, would grow stronger, since we would free the resources that are sapped by the maintenance of a huge army and armament. And we would conquer even more [ground] in our favorable position in the international arena in the struggle for peace, the prestige of our country would grow even further. And all this would promote our Marxist-Leninist ideas, our teaching, our struggle for peace, because not only workers, but also peasants, petit bourgeois elements would become more sympathetic to us with every new year. Their sympathies would grow. They would move first from fear to neutral positions, and then would develop sympathies toward our country. This I take to be natural, and we should work to achieve it.

When I am saying that one perhaps should have not only a cadre army, but also in part territorial, militia forces, in doing so we essentially, to some extent, repeat what Lenin did after the October [1917] revolution, but in a different situation and somewhat in another way, since back then we had no other option, we had no army; and today we have both resources and armaments, we have an army. And we cannot be left without an army and we do not want to be. But we should build this army in such a way, that it would be reasonable, without excessive frills [*bez izlishestv*], so that it would be combat-ready and meet the needs of national defense.

Of course, we would have to revise the system of military schools: their profile and number. Perhaps, if we switch to a new system, we should also establish such military schools where officers would be trained without leaving their jobs in industries. This is also of great importance.

All these measures will undoubtedly take the burden off the national budget. We have big opportunities for implementation of the proposals I have outlined on a unilateral reduction of our armed forces.

A couple of words about our military schools. When we created our multiple military schools, we did not have a sufficient number of trained people in our country. Today all young people have education, and therefore it is possible to enlist enough

people for military schools who will work, will train cadres without denying them to industrial economy, and will prepare officer cadres for all branches of the military. These commanders will be of the kind that will be even closer to the people, will be free of the so-called caste spirit that is emerging as a result of better material supply for students of military schools.

On the other hand, it would make sense and the costs would be less expensive.

These are the questions that I would consider necessary to offer for deliberation at the CC Presidium.

N. KHRUSHCHEV

8 December 1959

**Document 2: CC CPSU Presidium decision, 14 December 1959**

*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*  
Communist Party of the Soviet Union.  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

#P253/P

Top Secret

To com. Khrushchev.

Excerpt from protocol no. 253 of meeting of the CC Presidium of 14 December 1959

About further steps in the struggle for reduction of international tension.

1. To approve the proposals laid out in the note of com. Khrushchev N.S. to the CC Presidium about the unilateral implementation by the Soviet Union of measures directed at the reduction of international tension.

The question about the unilateral implementation of measures directed at the reduction of international tension, should be put on the agenda of a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

2. To commission the Ministry of Defense (com. [Rodion] Malinovsky) to introduce concrete proposals on this issue for deliberation of the CC CPSU, while taking into account the exchange of opinions that took place at the meeting of the CC Presidium.

3. To convene in the CC CPSU on 18 December this year a conference of commanders, chiefs of staffs, and members of

military councils of military districts for discussion of practical measures in the army, related to the proposals com. Khrushchev N.S. outlined in [his] note to the CC Presidium.

To entrust the chairmanship of the conference to com. Khrushchev N.S.

SECRETARY OF CC

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**Document 3: CC CPSU Plenum protocol, 26 December 1959**

*Proletarians of all countries, unite!*  
Communist Party of the Soviet Union.  
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

# Pl. 15

Top Secret  
Special Dossier

Excerpt from protocol no. 15 of meeting of Plenum CC of 26 December 1959

About the measures of the Soviet Government aimed at the reduction of international tension.

To approve the measures aimed at the reduction of international tension, outlined in the note of com. Khrushchev N.S. of 8 December 1959 and in his report to the CC Plenum.

SECRETARY OF CC

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[Source: Center for the Storage of Contemporary Documentation (TsKhSD), f. 2, op. 1, d. 416, ll. 1-11; translation by Vladislav M. Zubok (National Security Archive).]

*Vladislav M. Zubok, a research fellow at the National Security Archive, is co-author (with Constantine V. Pleshakov) of Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996) and a frequent contributor to the CWHIP Bulletin.*