

July 12, 1984
Meeting of Politburo of CPSU, 12 July 1984

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Russian

Contents:

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Top SecretSingle CopyWorking NotesChair: Com. CHERNENKO K.U.Present:
Comrades Aliev, G.A., Vorotnikov V.I., Gorbachev M.S., Gromyko A.A., Romanov G.V.,
Tikhonov N.A., Ustinov D.F., Kuznestov V.V., Chebrikov V.M., Ligachev Y.K., Ryzhkov
N.I. [...] CHERNENKO: Departing from today's agenda, I would like to inform you
about a few letters I have received. As you know, we have made a decision
concerning one of the letters. This was the request of V.M. Molotov about his
restoration to the ranks of the CPSU. I received V. M. Molotov, had a talk with him.
He heard our decision with great happiness and almost started crying. Molotov said
the decision was like being born again. Molotov is now 93, but he looks hearty
enough and speaks firmly. He declared that the Politburo CC CPSU has preserved
and continued that work, which the party persistently conducted. The only bad thing
is that you work like we used to, until midnight. Molotov talked about how he is
interested in the press, reads periodical journals. He declared: you are doing things
right, and for this you have the people's support. USTINOV: That is an important
evaluation. CHERNENKO: Molotov said that he does not understand people who
hold a grudge and remain in the opposition. He declared that he recognized his
mistakes and made the necessary conclusions. After our conversation Victor
Vasil'evich Grishin in the city committee of the party presented him with his party
card. TIKHONOV: In general we did the right thing in restoring him to the party.
CHERNENKO: And right after this the CC CPSU received letters from Malenkov and
Kaganovich, and also a letter from [former KGB chairman Alexandr] Shelepin, in
which he declares that he once was against Khrushchev and includes a list of
requests. Allow me to read Kaganovich's letter. (Reads the letter). A letter
with analogous contents, with a confession of his mistakes was sent by Malenkov.
TIKHONOV: Maybe for now we shouldn't do anything with these letters?
CHERNENKO: For now we can do nothing, but let's agree to examine them after the
XXVII Congress of our party. USTINOV: But in my opinion, Malenkov and
Kaganovich should be reaccepted into the party. They were active figures, leaders. I
will say frankly, that if not for Khrushchev, then the decision to expel these people
from the party would not have been taken. And in general those scandalous
disgraces which Khrushchev committed in relation to Stalin would never have
occurred. Stalin, no matter what is said, is our history. No one enemy brought us so
much harm as Khrushchev did in his policy towards the past of our party and our
state, and towards Stalin. GROMYKO. In my opinion, we need to restore these
two to the party. They were part of the party leadership and government, and for
many years led specific parts of work. I doubt that these were unworthy people. For
Khrushchev the most important task was to decide questions of cadres and not to
expose mistakes made by certain people. TIKHONOV: Maybe we should return to
this question at the end of this year or at the beginning of next year?
CHEBRIKOV: I would like to inform you that Western radio stations have been
transmitting news about the restoration of Molotov into the party for a long time now.
And they are saying that to this moment the workers of our country and the party do
not know anything about this. Maybe we should include an announcement in the
Informational Bulletin of the CC CPSU about the restoration of Molotov to the party?
Concerning the question about the restoration of Malenkov and Kaganovich into the
party, I would request a little time in order to prepare a summary of those resolutions
which these individuals wrote on the lists of repressed people. Indeed, in the case of
their restoration to the party, one can expect a large stream of letters from those who
were rehabilitated during the 1950s, who, of course, will be against restoring their
party membership, especially Kaganovich. We need to be ready for this. I think that
such a summary should be viewed by the Politburo of the CC before making a final
decision. TIKHONOV: Yes, if not for Khrushchev, they would never have been
expelled from the party. He soiled and stained us and our policies in the eyes of the
whole world. CHEBRIKOV: Besides that, a whole list of individuals were illegally
rehabilitated. As a matter of fact they were rightly punished. Take, for example,
Solzhenitsyn. GORBACHEV: I think that we could go without publicizing the
restoration of Molotov in the party in the Informational Bulletin of the CC CPSU. The
department of organizational and party work could communicate this in an
operational manner to the regional and district committees of the party.
Concerning Malenkov and Kaganovich, I would also support their restoration in the
party. And we wouldn't need to connect their restoration with the upcoming party
congress. ROMANOV: Yes, these people are already elderly and could die.
USTINOV: I will stand by my evaluation of Khrushchev's activity, as they say, until I

die. He did us a lot of damage. Think about what he did to our history, to Stalin.
GROMYKO: He rendered an irreversable blow to the positive image of the Soviet Union in the eyes of the outside world. USTINOV: It's not a secret that the westerners never loved us. But Khrushchev gave them such arguments, such material, that we have been discredited for many years. GROMYKO: Basically thanks to him the so-called "Eurocommunism" was born. TIKHONOV: And what he did to our economy! I myself have had to work in a Sovnarkhoz [Soviet regional economic organ]. GORBACHEV: And to the party, breaking it into industrial and agricultural party organizations! USTINOV: We were always against sovnarkhozy. And many members of the CC Politburo, as you remember, stated such an opinion.
In connection with the fortieth anniversary of the Victory over fascism [May 1985] I would propose discussing one more question. Shouldn't we restore the name Stalingrad to Volgograd? Millions of people would support this. But this, as they say, is information for thought. GORBACHEV: This proposal has positive and negative sides. TIKHONOV: Recently a very good documentary film was released called "Marshall Zhukov," in which Stalin is portrayed rather fully and positively.
CHERNENKO: I watched it. This is a good film. USTINOV: I really should see it.
CHERNENKO: Concerning Shelepin's letter, it, at the end, requests support on the level of former Poliburo members. USTINOV: In my opinion, what he received upon retiring is quite enough. He raised this question in vain. CHERNENKO. I think that in terms of these questions we should limit ourselves to exchanging opinions. But as you understand, we will have to return to them. TIKHONOV: We wish you, Konstantin Ustinovich, a good rest during the recess. CHERNENKO: Thank you."