

June 18, 1981
Session of the CPSU CC Politburo, 18 June 1981
(excerpt)

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Summary:

Discussion of conversation between Brezhnev and Kania regarding the counterrevolution and other matters.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

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(Working Notes)

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO

18 June 1981

Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV presiding.

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

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12. On Cde L. I. Brezhnev's Information About His Discussion with Cde. S. Kania

BREZHNEV. As you know, for a long time I didn't want to speak with Kania, but he was determined to have a conversation. From Friday until Monday he was calling every day. Then, on Tuesday, the 16th of June, I couldn't any longer avoid having a conversation, so I linked up with him, as had been arranged with the members of the CPSU CC Politburo. I had a conversation with him about matters that were discussed with the members of the Politburo.

After mutual greetings, Kania began expressing his gratitude for the letter sent by the CPSU CC to the PZPR CC. He said that they value this letter as a new token of the CPSU CC's concern about the fate of socialism in Poland and about our relations. According to Kania, this letter is highly influential and useful.

Kania then described the plenum and the decisions adopted there. And he again emphasized the influence of our letter on the mood of the participants in the plenum. He himself, that is, Kania, declared at the plenum that the CPSU CC has every right to react this way, and that there is sufficient reason to react in precisely this fashion.

With regard to the plenum, it, according to Kania, featured a lot of criticism. The discussion at the plenum was heated and far-reaching. All the speakers at the plenum endorsed the letter from the CPSU CC. Criticism of the PZPR Politburo and leadership overall was extensive. A question was even raised about a vote of confidence. The plenum voted by a majority not to make any changes in the leadership until the Party congress. Kania assured me that he and the comrades who spoke at the plenum are determined to ensure that the congress is conducted as a congress of a Marxist party should be. Further efforts are under way to mobilize and energize PZPR members in the struggle against antisocialist forces.

Kania also briefly recounted the speech Jaruzelski had delivered at the Sejm. He emphasized that the speech had promised a firmer rebuff to the counterrevolution.

At this point I couldn't restrain myself and said to him: Comrade Kania, how many times have I spoken with you about such things since the very start of this long, drawn-out affair? The whole time I told you what must be done and said that you couldn't respond to counterrevolutionary activities through words alone.

Kania agreed with this. He noted that after the plenum there had been fewer hostile actions and fewer provocative incidents. Even Walesa had said they must pursue a

different strategy.

In short, Kania believes that conditions for the Party's struggle have improved, and that now the main thing is to restore order in the mass media. They approved a decision to dismiss the head of the CC Department for the Press, Radio, and Television, Klasa. A decision also was approved to dismiss the chairman of the Committee on Television and several editors. There will be other decisions as well. They are beginning to hold a trial for Moczulski.

On the question of Moczulski, I said to him: Comrade Kania, you've been bothering with Moczulski for so long, and then you had him under arrest and decided to release him. Now you're beginning a trial again. What's next?

Next, said Kania, we will try him according to the law and send him again to prison. He will receive what he deserves.

According to Kania, their conferences have now begun to proceed better and in a healthier atmosphere. The influence of the plenum and of the letter from the CPSU CC is evident. In particular, the party conference in Krakow passed off well.

They also will be rectifying the matter of workers' representation at the congress to ensure that the congress is Marxist-Leninist. A course has been adopted toward strengthening discipline in the Party and state institutions and toward bolstering unity.

I said to him that this is very good. Everything that we want to say to you about the situation in Poland and about our alarm over the fate of the PZPR and the cause of socialism — all this is expressed in the letter from the CPSU CC. I see no need to return anew to this. You yourself, no doubt, understand this. I will, I continued, say only one thing: The policy of endless concessions to the counterrevolution has proven utterly bankrupt.

If you don't succeed in achieving a turnaround in the political situation by the time of the Party Congress, you will ruin both the congress and the Party itself, giving power with your own hands to the enemy. That's where matters stand now. And it's time, finally, for you to own hands to the enemy. understand that. I say this to you as a comrade.

Kania fully agreed with this.

I then said to him the following: At the plenum there was no shortage of proper words. There were many such words in the plenum's resolution, too. However, the main thing now is not words, but action and practical work. You yourself, Stanislaw, declared that you must begin acting right away, beginning the very next day. Let's see what will come of this. It was time for you to take action long ago.

In my view, I said to him, an important question has arisen in connection with the plenum. There were, according to what I was told, many speeches there at various levels expressing criticism of the Politburo for its indecisiveness in the struggle against antisocialist forces. Was this so, I ask?

It was, Leonid Il'ich, Kania answers. There was very serious criticism.

Well, now, Comrade Kania, this is a serious symptom that evidently reflects the mood of a substantial portion of the Party membership, and it would be exceedingly

dangerous if someone or other on this basis were to try to settle personal scores.

With the congress so near, I said, it's especially important to maintain the combat readiness of the Politburo as a collective entity, which serves as the headquarters of the party and which operates on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles. That's what I wanted to say to you in response. It's necessary to preserve unity within the Politburo. And then, I again repeat to you, it would be very dangerous if someone on this basis were to try to settle personal accounts.

At that point Kania said: "Leonid Il'ich, I don't fully understand what you mean." Once again I repeated to him, using the same words, that it would be unacceptable to settle personal accounts. After that, Kania said he understood and had made note of it, and he said they all would act according to what he had been told.

Kania assured me that he would do everything in his power to fulfill our wishes, to which I replied: Time will tell. On that note we said goodbye.

As you see, the discussion did not take very long, but it was long on content. No doubt that was necessary. Let the comrades think it over. I think on one thing Kania is right, namely, that the letter from the CPSU CC positively influenced the healthy forces in the Party and brought a certain improvement in the whole atmosphere. Perhaps in the end they will think things over and begin to act more decisively. As they say, we shall see.

Do the comrades have any sorts of questions or comments? If not, let's approve this discussion.

EVERYONE. Agreed.

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