

September 21, 1990

Letter, V. M. Falin to M. S. Gorbachev

Citation:

"Letter, V. M. Falin to M. S. Gorbachev", September 21, 1990, Wilson Center Digital Archive, RGANI. F. 89. Op. 8. D. 27. L.1-4. Handwritten original.
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Summary:

Chairman of International Department V. M. Falin writes to Gorbachev about changes in the structure and organization of the Soviet political system and communist party.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

21 September 1990

Dear Mikhail Sergeyevich.

Some unconventional conclusions suggest themselves from the difficult meeting between CC Politburo and Secretariat members and Communist deputies, and not just from it, but from the entire experience of the last three years.

1. Whereas since supreme power in the country is passing to the Soviets and the CPSU is also becoming a parliamentary party, the place and role of the Communist parliamentary parties [fraktsii] (groups) in the Soviets of all levels should logically be changed. The class position, that the CPSU pursues its policy through its representatives in the Soviets, will obviously have to be amended in form and substantially fleshed out. Communists are becoming deputies both from the mandate of Party committees, and often in spite of them, and in sharp competition with "official" candidates. Consequently, even on formal grounds - membership in the CPSU - the question of whether or not a deputy represents the Party (and only it) does not find an unambiguous answer. Hence there is a natural complexity of cooperation and coordination of actions with deputies through CPSU CC and Party committee channels.

2. At the same time an opportunity to neutralize [snivelirovat'], if not eliminate, this conflict of real life is obvious. We turn to the experience of countries where the parliamentary political structure has been sufficiently tested by time and we notice that party members [of Parliament] do not simply carry out the will of the corresponding party echelons but as a rule actively shape party policy themselves. In some cases the leadership of the parliamentary party is the actual Party leadership (Britain). However, in the majority [of cases] the leadership of the parliamentary party acts as one of the central authorities of the party, having the right of a deciding or advisory vote in decision-making.

In our entire specific situation this practice might also be useful for the CPSU CC. The USSR Supreme Soviet parliamentary party (group) of Communists (and respectively in the republics) could be turned into a third central authority of the Party, namely an institution which would help turn CPSU policy into government policy.

If deputies are given a chance to directly influence the activity of the Party and stop being "cogs" then it will not be necessary to drive deputies into parliamentary parties. If Party membership means anything for them, they will join these structures of their own free will.

I am describing the idea briefly, for its substance is obvious to you, both as General Secretary and as President.

3. It is necessary to invite deputies elected from the CPSU lists to all CC Plenums without exception.

4. Not a single important issue (draft) should be submitted to a plenum without the Party leadership discussing it with Communist deputies beforehand.

Excuse me for the poor handwriting.

Falin

On page 1 of the document there are two signed notes: "[To] Cde. Ivashko V. Please

think about and elaborate on these ideas. M. Gorbachev. 24.IX.90" and "A number of the elements of Cde. Falin's proposal have already been realized and the rest are being worked on". V. Ivashko. 31.10.90", and also the stamp, "CPSU CC 24 Sept. 90 [Nº] 16546. Received in the CPSU CC General Department".

On page 4 [there are the] notes: "Reported" and "To the archive. From the Secretariat of Cde. Gorbachev M. S. [Illegible signature] 14.01"