

SESSION OF THE CPSU CC POLITBURO

10 September 1981

Cde. L. I. BREZHNEV presiding.

Also taking part: Cdes. M. S. Gorbachev, V. V. Grishin, A. A. Gromyko,
N. A. Tikhonov, K. U. Chernenko, P. N. Demichev,
M. S. Solomentsev, I. V. Kapitonov, V. I. Dolgikh,
M. V. Zimyanin

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9. Exchange of Opinions on the Polish Question

BREZHNEV. Yesterday I familiarized myself with the "Appeal to the Peoples of Eastern Europe," which was adopted by the Congress of Polish Solidarity.¹ It's a dangerous and provocative document. It contains few words, but all of them are aimed at the same thing. The authors of the appeal would like to create confusion in the socialist countries and stir up groups of different types of turncoats.

I think we should not restrain ourselves at all in our condemnation of this insolent stunt. How about having collectives from our large enterprises — say, the Kirov factory, the Magnitka, Kamaz, etc. — give a rebuff to these demagogues? No doubt, it will be difficult to ignore letters from them addressed to the Solidarity congress, particularly because we'll feature these letters prominently in our mass media.²

¹ Translator's Note: The reference here is to "Poslanie do ludzi pracy w Europie Wschodniej," *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* (Warsaw), No. 25 (18 September 1981), p. 6. The appeal, adopted on 8 September by Solidarity's first National Congress, offered support for "workers in Eastern Europe" and "all the nations of the Soviet Union" who were seeking to establish their own independent trade unions. Despite the importance of the statement, there was no debate about it before it was approved.

² Translator's Note: This suggestion was promptly implemented. See, for example, "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh Moskovskogo avtozavoda im. Likhacheva pol'skim rabochim," *Pravda* (Moscow), 12 September 1981, p. 4; "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh Leningradskogo proizvodstvennogo ob'edineniya 'Kirovskii zavod'," *Pravda* (Moscow), 13 September 1981, p. 4; "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh kievskogo zavoda 'Arsenal' imeni V. I. Lenina pol'skim rabochim," *Pravda* (Moscow), 19 September 1981, p. 4; "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh Manitogorskogo metallurgicheskogo kombinata imeni V. I. Lenina pol'skim rabochim," *Pravda* (Moscow), 24 September 1981, p. 4; and "Pis'mo kollektiva rabochikh moskovskogo zavoda 'Serp i molot' pol'skim rabochim," *Pravda* (Moscow), 22 September 1981, p. 4. These letters, supposedly written by collectives of Soviet workers, were actually composed by the CPSU Central Committee Propaganda Department. Because Solidarity's "Appeal to the Working-Class People of Eastern Europe" was never published or broadcast in the Soviet Union, it would have been impossible for ordinary

If the comrades agree, we'll instruct the Polish commission to approach three or four factory collectives and help them, as needed, prepare a rebuff to "Solidarity."

GROMYKO. The situation is getting worse all the time. One might even say that little now remains of the regime. The position of the PZPR CC and the Council of Ministers is diminishing every day. With regard to a face-to-face conversation with Cde. Kania, it's now perhaps not worth speaking with him, since there already was a conversation not long ago.³

With regard to leverage from a telephone conversation, that should be pursued, since it is a good way of exerting pressure.

BREZHNEV. To be frank, I myself don't have any great desire to speak right now with Cde. Kania, since nothing will come of it.

CHERNENKO. Conversations were held earlier, sound instructions were issued, and a discussion was held in the Kremlin. But to what end? Cdes. Kania and Jaruzelski are doing everything as they please.

GRISHIN. Now they themselves no longer deny that they are relinquishing one position after another.

ZIMYANIN. I want to tell the Politburo what sorts of publications are planned in connection with the Solidarity congress.⁴ We will say that the congress demonstrates a

workers to have drafted letters of their own referring to it (if they had been so inclined). This consideration, however, was of little importance in the large-scale propaganda effort that unfolded.

³ Translator's Note: Brezhnev's final face-to-face meeting with Kania was in the Crimea on 14 August 1981 (see Notes from Brezhnev's Meeting with Stanislaw Kania and Wojciech Jaruzelski, 22 August 1981). Gromyko, too, met with Kania and Jaruzelski in the Crimea. (Gromyko also had met with them in Poland six weeks earlier, on 3-4 July.) Presumably, Gromyko is referring here to a phone conversation that Brezhnev had with Kania on 3 September.

⁴ Translator's Note: These materials were prepared jointly by the CPSU Central Committee Propaganda Department and the CPSU Central Committee Department for Ties with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries. Solidarity's Congress was divided into two parts, the first of which (5-10 September 1981) ended on the day of this CPSU Politburo meeting. The second part lasted from 26 September until 7 October. Groups of PZPR regional officials were sent to the Soviet Union shortly before, during, and after each round of the Congress to receive briefings on the need for "harsh measures against the enemies of Poland." See "Tsentral'nyi Komitet Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza," Memorandum No. 245s (Secret) from V. Mikulich, first secretary of the Minsk oblast party committee, 28 August 1981, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 85, Ll. 16-18; "Informatsiya o poseshchenii Cherkasskoi oblasti gruppoi partiinykh rabotnikov Pil'skogo voevodskogo komiteta PORP," Memorandum No. 4-2/561 (Top Secret), from I. Lutak, first secretary of the Cherkassk oblast party committee, 9 October 1981, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 85, Ll. 44-47; "Informatsiya o prebyvanii v Kostromskoi oblasti delegatsii Petrkovskogo voevodskogo komiteta PORP," Memorandum No. 707/2 (Secret), from Yu. Balandin, first secretary of the Kostroma oblast committee, 13 November 1981, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 85, Ll. 165-169; and "Otchet o rabote Yaroslavskogo obkoma KPSS po osushchestvleniyu druzhestvennykh svyazei s Brashovskoi uezdnoi organizatsii RKP i Radomskoi voevodskoi organizatsii PORP v 1980-1981 godakh," Memorandum No. 0774 (Secret) from V. Gorulev, first secretary of the CPSU's Yaroslavl oblast committee, 27 October 1981, in TsKhSD, F. 5, Op. 84, D. 85, Ll. 302-306.

further worsening of the situation in Poland. As you know, they appealed to the parliaments and peoples of certain countries, including the socialist countries, with their program of "renewal."⁵ Hence, our press and TASS are now preparing appropriate materials in response. These materials will expose the activities of the Solidarity trade union. I fully support the proposal by Leonid Il'ich to have the collectives of major large enterprises offer statements. This, too, we will try to prepare.

TIKHONOV. Nonetheless we will still need to react — and by that I mean react concretely — to the stunts of hooligan elements now active in Poland, whom the government has not taken any measures to combat.⁶ What's going on there now is that they're defacing the monuments to our soldiers, they're drawing hostile cartoons of the leaders of our Party and government, they're insulting the Soviet Union in every possible manner, etc. In other words, they're mocking us. It seems to me that we can't remain silent any longer, and that we must, either along state lines or through some other channel, issue a protest to the Polish government about this. A failure to react, in my view, would be unacceptable.

GROMYKO. We must think this over carefully. We're talking here about a country that is friendly to us.

GORBACHEV. I believe that Leonid Il'ich was completely right in proposing that the collectives of large enterprises speak out and that the activities of Solidarity be exposed in our press.

GRISHIN. Both in "Pravda" and in other newspapers we must organize statements of this sort. We will do what is needed for collectives at "Zil," "Serp i Molot," and other large factories to issue statements.⁷

BREZHNEV. I think we should instruct the USSR Foreign Ministry and the CC Department to prepare a draft for presentation to the government of the Polish republic about the hooliganistic stunts of Solidarity officials against the Soviet Union.⁸

⁵ Translator's Note: See "Uchwala programowa I Krajowego Zjazdu NSZZ 'Solidarnosc'," *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* (Warsaw), Vol. 1, No. 26 (25 September 1981), pp. 3, 6.

⁶ Translator's Note: This was not entirely true. Two weeks earlier, on 25-26 August, the Polish authorities had finally decided it was time to proceed with the publication, at KGB printing facilities in the Soviet Union, of "announcements concerning the introduction of martial law" in Poland. Quoted from "Notatka z 27 VIII 1981 r," 27 August 1981 (Top Secret), in CAMSW, Sygn. 2304/IV. The printing of these announcements was to be completed by 4 September to allow ample time for them to be transported back to Poland. The reason the announcements were printed in the Soviet Union rather than Poland is that the use of printing presses in Poland would have risked leaks by sympathetic workers to Solidarity.

⁷ Translator's Note: See the items adduced above in my first annotation to this document.

⁸ Translator's Note: This letter was presented to Kania and Jaruzelski a week later by the Soviet ambassador in Poland, Boris Aristov. See "Oswiadczenie KC KPZR i rządu ZSRR przedstawione kierownictwu KC PZPR i rządu PRL," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 18 September 1981, p. 1. See also "Protiv antisovetizma v Pol'she," *Pravda* (Moscow), 19 September 1981, p. 4. Aristov had met with Kania on 10 September as well—see "St. Kania przyjal ambasadora ZSRR w Polsce," *Trybuna Ludu* (Warsaw), 11 September 1981, p. 1—and this has led some Western scholars astray. Nicholas G. Andrews, for example, erroneously claims, in *Poland 1980-81: Solidarity versus the Party* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense

Simultaneously, as the comrades here already mentioned, we should feature a series of items in the press exposing the activities of Solidarity and the decisions of its Congress.⁹

[Source: *TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 42, D. 46*]

University Press, 1985), p. 290, that the Soviet letter was presented to Kania and Jaruzelski on 10 September. Aristov actually gave it to them on 17 September.

⁹ Translator's Note: These articles began appearing the very next day. See "Gdan'skii s"ezd — antisotsialisticheskoe sborishche," *Pravda* (Moscow), 11 September 1981, p. 5.