

September 26, 1987

**Stasi Note on Meeting Between Minister Mielke and
Head of the KGB 5th Directorate Abramov**

Citation:

"Stasi Note on Meeting Between Minister Mielke and Head of the KGB 5th Directorate Abramov", September 26, 1987, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Office of the Federal Commissioner for the Stasi Records (BStU), MfS, ZAIG 5387, pp. 1-22. Translated from German for CWIHP by Bernd Schaefer.

<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115722>

Summary:

Meeting between the head of the KGB's Fifth Chief Directorate, Major General Abramov, and Minister for State Security Mielke, especially on changes in Soviet policy following Mikhail Gorbachev's accession to power. They discuss the increase in dissident activity, public demonstrations, and subversive organizations.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Blavatnik Family Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

N o t e

About the Meeting of Comrade Minister [Erich Mielke] with the Head of the 5th Directorate of the KGB of the USSR, Comrade Lieutenant General Abramov, on 26 September 1987 in the MfS [in Berlin]

[Additional] Participants:

from the KGB:

Major General Titov, Head of the KGB Representation
Colonel Nikolsky, Liaison Officer

from the MfS [Ministry for State Security]:

Colonel General Mittig
Major General Kienberg
Major General Damm
Lieutenant Colonel Salevsky (Interpreter)

Comrade Mielke:

Welcome. Please forward greetings to the other KGB comrades not present today. I have immersed myself in issues discussed during the two earlier [KGB-MfS] group meetings [where Mielke was not present].

Comrade Abramov:

Many thanks for the greetings.

Comrade Mielke:

I ask Comrade Abramov to make some remarks first about problems he thinks are worthy to let us know about. Then I will add some brief thoughts, although these issues certainly merit some more time. Yet we have to take the departure time of his plane into account.

Comrade Abramov:

I want to thank especially for the great hospitality and the meeting with you, Comrade Mielke.

Before my departure from Moscow last Sunday I had a meeting with [KGB Chairman] Viktor Mikhailovich [Chebrikov]. He instructed me to convey warm and cordial greetings of friendship. He "hugs you." This is no flattery. Comrade Bobkov also conveys very cordial greetings.

Comrade Mielke:

Many thanks.

Comrade Abramov:

Now to the issues (taking into consideration the limited time we have).

It is our joint opinion that the current meeting was not only very useful, but also that our recent collaboration became ever more substantial and useful.

So today we could talk about concrete measures we implemented together with your Main Department XX and other participating MfS units.

We have already begun now to direct agents against the adversaries infiltrating our

countries, especially via the churches.

I want to say special thanks for your timely information about an operation prepared in West Berlin by a double agent against a man of ours. If we would not have received your information, this would have resulted in an extraordinary provocation.

This is why I want to convey special thanks here.

As Comrade [Rudi] Mittig has certainly reported to you, we have agreed to further develop our collaboration on concrete and objective matters. We attribute major relevance to the upcoming multilateral meeting in Berlin. We think this will be a meeting that takes place under new conditions concerning the international situation, as well as with regard to new political and operative conditions in the socialist countries.

We probably both have to prepare thoroughly, though I do not want to minimize the importance of previous meetings. Yet new methods applied by the adversary, and new insights we have gained, require us to work out new approaches and tactics in our operations.

Another point. During the process of exchanging information on the operative situation and the adversary's activities, we arrived at the conclusion that practical forms of adversarial activities are similar.

No doubt you are well informed about our situation [in the Soviet Union]. In this context I want to address certain aspects we are currently confronted with. They are linked to certain extent to the processes of "perestroika," "glasnost," "democratization," and "solidification of socialist legal norms."

I do not want to say too much about the political aspects, but just want to emphasize that "perestroika" itself proceeds anything but smoothly and easily.

Issues emerge which we probably had not fully thought through when we began this process. New problems come up with many questions we now have to solve. You could just list them schematically. For instance, we introduced state control of products [directly at factories]. In some factories this resulted in decreasing wages. Not everybody welcomes something like that. This is why our state security services are commissioned not to overlook anti-social phenomena for the reasons mentioned, to register such things at the time when they occur.

Now we have changes in how to set prices. Like with state control of products, this has created some issues and problems.

Or, something directly affecting our [KGB] operations: Currently organizations, groups, and associations comprised of certain circles of individuals spring up, and established by "self-initiative." In general, these developments occurred when we raised the issue of introducing elements of self-government in order to achieve active participation by the people to solve political and state problems.

The result is this: Individual "demagogues," "political adventurers," as well as just hostile elements, attempt to exploit this with support by Western circles. The latter want to steer these "associations" against the party and society by having them declare: "We are independent." The adversary espouses this task to build some kind of new party on such foundations. We have information about this from certain subversive centers and Western correspondents. We have a document, namely an instruction issued by the US Embassy [in Moscow] to use these informal associations

for infiltrating the party, state, and societal apparatus.

What is the big picture?

Two groups of such kind of organizations have crystallized.

The first group was in fact created by "political demagogues." The most evident example is the "Pamyat" association. Initially, it was established by representatives from literature, the arts, etc. They were honest people, "fighters" for preservation of historic buildings, monuments, and the environment. Then "adventurists" like [Dmitri] Vasilyev began to change this association into an extremist and chauvinist organization. They want to discredit the leadership of party and state, propagate the "futility" of CPSU policy, reject party control of the mass media, and advocate the establishment of a propagandistic base of their own. Those who disagree with their actions get terrorized. They claim power and usurp the role of an organization standing above party and state, analogous to the Polish model of "Solidarnosc." Its methods of confrontation and repression of critics are reminiscent of NTS methods. [1]

Recently they went so far as to state they will continue their activity "at any cost!" They accuse Comrades [Yuri] Andropov and [Mikhail] Suslov of being members of a Jewish freemason lodge. They also claim some of the current leading comrades are members of this lodge.

Comrade Mielke:

I have read these articles in "Pravda" and "Izvestiya." The correspondent also reported about the "performance" on Manege Square [in Moscow].

Comrade Abramov:

This is openly extremist and chauvinist action. There also exists another group of this chauvinist kind.

In addition, there is a Zionist organization called "Israeli citizens temporarily residing in the USSR." It consists of people who are not permitted to leave the Soviet Union for security reasons. This organization is also of extremist character.

There is another group working with pacifist slogans. It contains different kinds of people. They are broadly covered in Western media. The adversary attempts to exploit them.

Recently, all these organizations tried to have street rallies, something that had not been the case in our country in the past. They also attempted to hold press conferences in apartments and to organize hunger strikes.

Not long ago there was such a demonstration by Jewish extremists in "Friendship Park" where they protested against alleged anti-Semitism. There also was a demonstration by the second group at the Arbat [pedestrian street in Moscow]. This group was established by the public, but anti-societal elements have infiltrated its leadership.

We now use the public to a larger extent to act against these phenomena. Those questions are discussed in detail in the Central Committee.

When the Crimean Tatars attempted to enter Red Square and perform self-immolations (candidates were already prepared), Comrade Gorbachev instructed

the course of action in person. After some warning, the Crimean Tatars were physically removed from Moscow. We have established a State Commission to further review this problem. We will probably not concede autonomy to the Crimea. For now, this is the situation.

Regarding the demonstration in "Friendship Park," [CPSU Politburo member] Comrade [Yegor] Ligachev issued instructions for action since Comrade Gorbachev was already on vacation. The Moscow party committee was particularly involved. A coordination committee was formed with the 2nd Secretary chairing it. Included in this committee were also the head of the KGB Moscow department, the director of the Ministry of Interior district administration, the district attorney general, as well as representatives from Moscow state and party organizations and the Komsomol [Communist Organization of Youth]. When such public demonstrations are about to occur, the committee decides on according measures to thwart such actions, in particular those of preemptive nature. In case of illegal actions there will be arrests. Prosecutors are at hand for instant validation. Usually, the arrested are confronted by volunteer assistants of the Militia and engaged in multi-hour conversations. If we receive timely notification about such actions (one week or up to 10 days in advance), we publish in the central press, foremost in the Moscow press, that for a scheduled date some elements instigated by foreign correspondents are preparing for a subversive demonstration or action. This usually makes foreigners refrain from joining. Also, we instruct our agents to undertake efforts directed towards the organizers to forego the action. This way the recently planned action for 3 September 1987 in "Friendship Park" was forestalled.

We include the public at specific locations: People voice their outrage to participants of the demonstration. They call on the militia to dissolve the gathering, otherwise people would take matters in their own hands and solve the problem. Then the militia asks the demonstrators to disperse. If they refuse, they will be arrested.

Recently, the councils in Moscow and Leningrad have issued respective regulations concerning procedures for demonstrations. They stipulate that, according to Article 54 of the USSR Constitution, anything contrary to the interests of state, socialism, and society will not be permitted. Violators of the law will be held responsible.

When recently family Ch. demanded in the Foreign Ministry to receive an exit permit for Israel, we asked them to show their permit for the demonstration. If there is no permit, you have to disperse. The father protested against this.

He was punished and then released. In the same manner we acted on the Arbat with the "Group for Building Confidence between the US and the USSR." [2] A state prosecutor was called in. One demonstrator had to pay a fine, two others were issued a warning.

Then the "Deutsche Welle" ["German Wave"] reported that 100 people were arrested in this incident. [3] Immediately our [news agency] TASS issued a statement abroad how this is a deliberate slander by "Deutsche Welle," and how such news impairs the establishment of good relations between peoples.

Sometimes they also apply such methods like [the Orthodox Priest Gleb] Yakunin after his release from prison. He had decided to publish a document with slanderous demands, like calling for the abolition of all laws regulating religion, and for church access to the mass media. In return we requested high-ranking church leaders to react to this. They held a press conference to unmask Yakunin's demands and issued a statement on how the church leadership views his positions.

In this above-mentioned group of citizens of Jewish nationality, about 10,000 people

organized whose exit to Israel is denied. This issue was discussed extensively. We decided to grant permits to those parts of the group who so far have been denied exit and also have direct family relations [in Israel]. Those people are domestic enemies. People with security clearances stay as long as corresponding secrets persist. From time to time certain secrecy provisions are reviewed.

Comrade Mielke:

Not all secrets will remain secret.

Comrade Abramov:

Obviously. We already have checked 126 people. In some cases exit visas have already been granted ([Josef] Begun).

Comrade Mielke:

And Nudel?

Comrade Abramov:

We keep her![4]

Comrade Mielke:

The definition of a secret always depends on who is looking at it. If he is a good communist, he will say she knows too much. Yet the enemy knows everything. I do not want to say more as positions will change. One should not talk too much about people with secret knowledge; and then also do not offer them for exit in order to get our captured fighters and agents back. It is not that we always have to give.

Comrade Abramov:

I have talked with [Deputy KGB Chairman Vladimir] Kryuchkov and [KGB First Directorate Deputy Head Vadim] Kirpichenko. If our friends consider it necessary for exchanges, then we will hold back a certain number of people.

Comrade Mielke:

You must know who is who, and what they do stand for.

Comrade Abramov:

This is what we are saying.

There is this problem of Jewish extremism. We are aware that this problem will persist for a very long time. Now the enemy in particular stokes anti-Semitism to push parts of the Jewish population towards leaving the country.

There is an interest into applying repressive measures. You know that we had nationalist demonstrations in Alma Ata and Yakutia. In Alma Ata it was a serious issue. Some dozens of people have been sentenced now, among else for murdering an employee of the State Radio and Television Committee. The dean of a faculty, a Komsomol secretary of another faculty, and some other instigators were sentenced. Many have been expelled from the Komsomol and university institutions. In addition to the education section of Kazakh party organizations, these issues were also discussed in the KGB leadership.

The following main issues were put forth:

□ We have to strengthen the agent network in circles of ethnic population and in particular among the youth.

□People expelled from positions must stay under operative control. They are spread out over the entire republic [of Kazakhstan].

Comrade Mielke:

Alright. But the people are still around. They live on. It is a very complicated ideological problem. Even if they quietly return to their homes, they continue to have an effect.

Comrade Abramov:

No doubt about that. A certain part is still subject to certain influences.

Comrade Mielke:

This why it is correct to especially educate and integrate them into societal life. They travel back and forth, and it is hard to keep them under control. This is very difficult. The Soviet Union is a large country.

Comrade Abramov:

A few words about people we have pardoned and released from prison. This is not an amnesty but a pardon. It concerns about 200 individuals who were sentenced for anti-Soviet activity. Recidivists and those who refused to sign an appropriate statement had to remain in prison (not more than 20 people).

10 were sent to the West. A certain part of the pardoned is eager to live on and also to work again. Yet another certain part attempts to resume enemy activities in Moscow, Leningrad, the Baltic Republics, and in the Ukraine. Some intend to publish a newspaper titled "Glasnost." One of the pardoned attempted in the Ukraine to resume ties with Ukrainian nationalists.

You are informed about the events on 23 August 1987 in the Baltic Republics.[5] The instigators heading the organization were people who had been sentenced in the past for especially dangerous crimes against the state. Comrade Chebrikov ordered local security services in writing to take this category of people under operative control. If they resume their hostile activity, they will have to be subjected to operative measures.

Hereby the public as well as the workplaces will have to be involved. As far as concrete hostile actions by those released people are concerned, we will publish on them in the press. We have made clear that they are not political prisoners but criminal elements (speculators, rowdies). This is what we emphasize, in order to demonstrate who they actually are. For now we refrain from holding them accountable by criminal law. Currently we have no evidential documents that they undertake anti-Soviet activities in organized fashion.

Recently, Comrade Ligachev met with representatives of the mass media. He stated straightforwardly that those who violate the laws will be hit by the severity of the law.

Comrade Mielke:

He said even better things: You shall not publish everything. The editorial collectives have to raise their responsibilities, and not refrain from publishing certain things.

Comrade Abramov:

We have problems with religion. Next year the celebrations for the 1000th anniversary of Russia's Christianization are coming up. The Pope has voiced interest

to come for a long time already. We do not intend to let him enter.

There are issues of how to fight terrorism. There are some problems with the artistic intelligentsia, especially with some publications. There are indications about certain journalists who go way over the line and attempt to slander the entire history of the Soviet Union (he quotes excerpts from the speech by Comrade Ligachev!). Comrade Ligachev had convened this meeting after an obituary in the Moscow [newspaper] "Novosti" for [former Soviet writer Viktor] Nekrasov who had gone into Western exile [in 1974].

Comrade Ligachev did say: In quite some publications we are seeing a distorted picture of the 1930s. He reminded that Comrade Gorbachev had already issued some warnings in the name of the Politburo. The role of the press in the context of perestroika is highly valued. It leads the struggle against ignorant equations, and for criticism and self-criticism. All attempts to stifle criticism will be rejected. We cannot solve the perestroika without criticism.

However, some comrades have stagnated. When they write about the period of the 1930s, and the period of industrialization and collectivization, they only write about errors. This leads to criticism of Lenin. In his anniversary speech Comrade Gorbachev provided an assessment and narrative of this historical period. There everything is set straight. The 1930s were a true boom for culture. The national question was solved. When now some are writing about the period without any pain and sorrow, there arises the impression that they want to square up with the Soviet system.

The [CPSU] Central Committee receives many letters in which people are upset about such kind of publications.

Comrade Ligachev said further that they unfold an anti-Soviet campaign. The West gives money to them. There are constitutional provisions stipulating that rights and liberties may not be used for inflicting damage on socialism. The adversary is attempting to influence the atmosphere within the Soviet population, applying a variety of means and methods.

On economic matters Comrade Ligachev remarked: We have to develop further the extra work in the agricultural sector. Over the next two to three years the demand for allotment gardens must be met. Credits will be offered with respective payment deadlines.

Comrade Ligachev gave a precise and appropriate partisan assessment of Central Committee positions. He basically underlined all the issues raised by Comrade Chebrikov in his report, like on the fight against Trotskyism, on evaluations of the situation in the media, and so in.

Tomorrow there will be a meeting at the KGB with the leading cadres from the Center and the local institutions. It will not be followed by discussion. Comrade Bobkov will talk in this context about the overall situation I just informed you about. In particular he will talk about those informal associations building up.

So much in all brevity, and in consideration of time limitations.

Comrade Mielke:
Many thanks.

Those problems would need much more time to discuss. They feature aspects of the fight of socialist forces against the anti-socialist ones. The situation has become truly

complicated, and the work of the State Security has gotten so much more difficult.

When the first signals for “glasnost” and “perestroika” came, I already alerted Comrades Shumilov and Titov that hostile centers will immediately exploit “glasnost” and “perestroika” and use it as a cover for their operations. As a consequence, the situation grew into where we are today. Thus the problem is really very difficult.

We are leading the struggle for preserving the peace under the leadership of the Soviet Union. Major activities in this regard come from Comrades Gorbachev and Shevardnadze (at the United Nations). Yet under this very flag, and in addition given the struggle for human rights, the enemy operates as well.

These are the core issues. Peace and the Church are the flags of the enemy. They deny the deterministic development of societal order. This is a basic problem. They want to liquidate socialist society and “prove” that the new society of socialism has no future.

Ideological and theoretical work with the people has to improve. I will talk about this in fundamental terms at the opening event for our party’s new academic training year. I will raise basic questions about capitalism and socialism. This is about truly big questions. Also, the struggle against ideological subversion: The battle of ideologies is the fundamental question.

Then there are such things, which even complicate our work despite all our joint Soviet-GDR unanimity. For instance, there are the statements by [Novosti Chairman] Comrade [Valentin] Falin on the “German question” and “Westberlin” currently published in the Western media. Comrade Falin might be a “great theoretician,” and in the year 2000 when I am no longer around he might be even recognized as such. Maybe he is skilled in interpreting Comrade Gorbachev well, but this is a serious issue. Now our party leaders read his statements and immediately ask themselves: “Is something going on there [in the Soviet Union]?” “Is Comrade Falin acting on his own?” He has thrown such rhetorical bombs before. This is ideological subversion! This has an impact on our party’s leadership he himself cannot even imagine.

Now another issue: [US Vice President George] Bush will come to Poland and talk to the Polish people on television. I do not mind that. The Polish comrades must know. At the same time, Polish government spokesman [Jerzy] Urban says that Bush also wants to meet with oppositional elements. He announced this intention critically.

With this I just want to demonstrate: We are fighting against ideological subversion, and this is where the big ideological subversion bombs are thrown. The entire “world” is full of them. Maybe there is indeed something going on? If you want to reach a solution [on German issues], then you have to talk to Comrade Honecker and myself. Then we get ready for it. Such problems you cannot even raise just by making hints.

This is the fundamental issue: Capitalism or Socialism!

If [Soviet] direction goes toward capitalism, then we can nullify socialism. This is about really big issues!

I agree that we must focus our work in the enemy’s centers.

It does not matter at all whether we characterize those hostile elements as criminal or not. We are not going to convince anybody this way. Then they will only say this is spin of the KGB to portray them as bad people. We need evidence proving their links to the enemy. If they receive money we can prove that they are paid.

That is the direction we are working in. We have infiltrated everything and work on what you have talked about. We know since 1950 that ideological subversion is the enemy's most dangerous weapon. This is not an ideological struggle but instead explicit subversive enemy activity in order to achieve the strategic objective of imperialism: The liquidation of socialism.

One has to outline how very contradictory and complicated the situation has become, for example like the situation in Hungary. I already mentioned Poland. We talk about this at our multilateral meetings. Yet this makes sense only when we also implement what we have agreed on.

Or take Bulgaria. There they are liquidating the party and state apparatus. There is only the working class left. You have to lay the power in the hands of the working class. Here I have asked myself: Who am I, actually? Am I the head of the Czar's intelligence service? I am a proletarian! I have committed my life to this cause.

The situation for the GDR is even more difficult. There are Germans over there [in the FRG], and there are Germans here in the GDR. I am not Chinese and I do not want to be. For now, I am with the position of the Soviet friends and I am happy that great perspectives are lying ahead [in the Soviet Union]. Yet the visit by Comrade Honecker to the FRG [a few weeks ago] had impacts. The enemies took advantage of it, like at the [Protestant] Synod in Görlitz, or during the Olof Palme Peace March with according banner slogans. Here in the GDR this march lasted 20 days, in other countries just 5. [FRG Chancellor Helmut] Kohl also wants to come for a "private visit."

Why am I saying all that? Here we see the results of ideological subversion. And if there might only be around 200 [enemies], I cannot know which impact they will have or what thoughts they have in their heads. If they are not already under operative control, they will continue their activities.

I am for holding a multilateral meeting but only with a clear agenda.

I have followed the speech by Viktor Mikhailovich [Chebrikov]. The comrades of our politburo also liked it very much. Without myself exerting any influence, Comrade Honecker decided at the beginning of our Politburo meeting that this speech will be published in "Horizont" (our foreign policy paper) and in "Einheit" (the theoretical organ of our party). It is interesting that Viktor Mikhailovich addressed what we have read recently, including the "Izvestiya" piece from 18 September 1987 by the party secretary from a department of the Dynamo factory. I read it out to Comrade Honecker. This party secretary said: "I am no supporter of Stalin's methods. Yet under Stalin there was order and discipline. You had to work. If you did not work, you were put in prison." In "Pravda" this line was published: "Better to shoot one too much than not having the regiment marching in lockstep." The author is quite right "deep in his soul" when he uses this line.

What is on display right now? Currently the enemy believes to have extraordinary opportunities to infiltrate groups that were under control until now, to have talks with them, to coordinate tactics, and to test how far you can go. Those groups want to create an "independent movement." They want to become an independent partner of the party and government. Then they want to address the issue of an independent party like the "Greens" [in the FRG]. Such "Greens" like they now are received [in the Warsaw Pact], and to whom we [in the GDR] talk as well.

Yet we as Chekists do know that they conduct underground work. We practice differentiated approaches. We ferment, infiltrate, and drag positive elements in our

direction [to recruit them as agents]. The latter should participate in ecological groups. Yet under no circumstances should they join demonstrations or similar events, nor public relations activity.

If they do something in a church we cannot intervene right away, but in public they have to respect the constitution. When they did a "procession," they had to walk on public sidewalks from one church to another. This was a concession by our "Berlin" leadership. We did not intervene since E. Honecker just happened to be in the FRG. Still we told them: "You have no business on the streets!" The banners they carried at the Palm March to Dresden we covered with other banners. We only did that in order not to affect the [Honecker] visit to the FRG, and not to divert from its political importance. Yet this generosity gave them a boost, as if they from now on could afford to act more openly.

The "Greens" we permitted to enter the GDR will not be allowed in again. If they do not follow the laws, they cannot enter the GDR. This way we will continue to keep this under control. You want to hold a conference on human rights in Moscow. The adversary does not like this. It sees the danger. This is why our party policy cannot make concessions without affecting the larger issues.

[...]

You are thinking whether to modify Soviet relations with the socialist countries. This creates really big problems. Of course I told Comrade Honecker that the Soviet Union is thinking in terms of war and peace. Yet you have to think it all through carefully.

I fully agree with Comrade Abramov's remarks. Just one last comment: These are all good insights. Yet we need a comprehensive plan how to fight against all this. With isolated actions, which are of course needed as well, we cannot solve this. We need a fundamental plan. These [enemy] people are not gone, they continue to hang on.

Comrade Abramov:

We will discuss this plan tomorrow [in Moscow].

Comrade Mielke:

You will pass certain measures there and define certain conditions, etc. etc. Everybody wants to add his own wisdom. At the end, nothing comes out of it. You talk, and they sign a good resolution.

You have to develop methods in such a way that the general line of the party remains unaffected. This is important. You have to support peace policy. The more successful the policy of peace, the harder the blow against the enemy. These are the dialectics of the issue.

We must not lose sight of the main issue. Many thanks for what you said. But I am full of concern since this is very complicated work. We always write down "they are kept under control." I always ask myself how this "control" actually looks like. Actually, it implies that the author of this phrase does not know how to get it done.

This is why Bobkov will give a good speech tomorrow at your [KGB] conference in Moscow. Give him my greetings. Yet when he does not tell his people what they are actually supposed to do, the entire ideological explanation will not be of much value. All nice and well, but our comrades at the party base have to deal with "bandits." Also, the speeches by Ligachev and Chebrikov, as well as recent publications in "Pravda," were good. It was high time to say that the sanctums of the October Revolution may not be touched any more.

[...]

You cannot forget that millions of Soviet citizens went to their deaths with the words "for Stalin" on their lips. They did not enter the fight against the enemy with these words because of personality cult. Personality cult and all its concomitants must be avoided; yet currently this cover is used to attack everything else. Millions of Soviet citizens became heroes under a banner called "Stalin." Stalin was the leader of the Bolshevik party. They people entered the fight as communists. This is the other side of the coin regarding Stalin. He was not the only one responsible. There were people around him. Sure, he was elevated. I have experience, I know how these things work. Yet on the other hand, the personality cult created a "banner," leading to the victory over fascism.

[...]

The question is up: Who - whom?! That is the question: Does our societal order own the future, or does it not?

If we take Gorbachev's great peace proposals, the "abolition of all weapons," then we could explain communism. With all the riches saved this way, we could feed all of humankind.

[...]

Comrade Abramov:

Many thanks, Comrade Minister. If you would not have defended your ideas so energetically, I would not have believed that you are Comrade Mielke. This is how we know you and hold you in esteem.

I will forward your words to Comrade Viktor Mikhailovich [Chebrikov]. Also your remarks concerning Falin. We talked with Falin. He categorically stated he did not say that. We will clear this immediately upon my return and let you know.

As far as the publication of Chebrikov's speech is concerned: Please publish only what was printed in "Pravda."

Comrade Mielke:

Of course, I am Chekist. You do not have to tell me that.

[1] NTS, the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists, an anti-communist Russian exile organization

[2] "The Group for Establishing Trust Between the USSR and the US," an independent peace organization lead by Moscow artist Sergei Batovrin. See their bulletin, Return Address: Moscow, available in the CWIHP Digital Archive.

[3] Deutsche Welle was a West German government-funded state radio and television station for foreign countries

[4] Actually, Soviet-Jewish dissident Ira Nudel was granted an exit visa to Israel one week after this talk.

[5] 23 August was the anniversary of the signing of the German-Soviet Treaty of Non-Aggression in 1939 ("Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact"). The treaty contained a secret protocol, defining the then independent Baltic states as part of the Soviet sphere of influence. Subsequently, Germany remained neutral when in 1940 the Soviet Union

annexed Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.