

NSC BRIEFING

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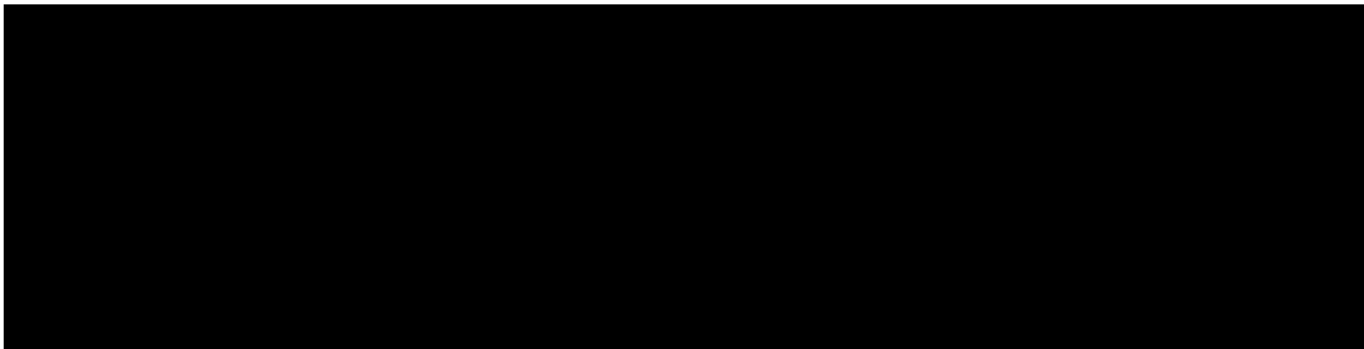
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17 JULY 1956

DEFECTOR

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A. [redacted] was close enough to the ruling circles to observe the developments in [redacted] and the USSR that led up to the denigration of Stalin. Here are some examples of the information concerning the USSR he has given us:

B. He has confirmed reports that, last year, a "confidential" letter was circulated among party workers in the Soviet Union and Satellites, outlining the "errors" committed by Malenkov which led to his removal as Premier. These "errors" included:

- (1) Failure to act wholeheartedly in removing Beria.
- (2) Partial moral responsibility for the "Leningrad Affair"--a trumped-up purge undertaken in 1948-1949.
- (3) Favoring policies in Hungary which resulted in a definite right-wing deviation.
- (4) Following a policy of lowering prices without adequately increasing production--with resulting shortages.

However, the "confidential" party letter did not mention Malenkov's "lack of experience" as a prime shortcoming (one of the chief reasons Malenkov himself cited in his resignation statement).

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C. [REDACTED] has given us information concerning a July 1955 "secret" session of the Soviet Central Committee. One copy of the minutes of this "secret" session was sent from Moscow to the Politburo of the [REDACTED] party, where only a few high-level party officials were permitted to read it. [REDACTED] --although not entitled by rank to see the document--^{WAS} bootlegged the minutes by a [REDACTED] Politburo member-- [REDACTED] --and told to prepare instructions for carrying out the Soviet directives. As [REDACTED] recalls the minutes:

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(1) Khrushchev started off the session. He stated that for various reasons, mainly international, the Communist Parties in the West are not able, at present, to carry out a revolution. He added that, in this situation, any attempt by the Communists at a revolution in a Western country would end in complete destruction of that country's Communist Party and the loss of cadres which might be more effectively used at some later and more propitious time.

(2) Khrushchev continued that Soviet international policy is more elastic than ever, and that it is clear that--if the USSR has decided on this policy--it has to make some compromises. He cited Austria as a typical example of a wise compromise. The USSR lost some bases, but won excellent starting grounds to show its goodwill without increasing the military potential of the USSR's enemies. He added that the limit of such compromise was the unity of the Socialist world--i.e., compromises should not be allowed in areas where they would weaken the unity of the Communist countries. Austria did not have a Communist government.

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(3) Summing up, Khrushchev stated that one problem which was never properly assessed was nationalism. Several failures in Soviet relations with the Satellites, both past and present, resulted from not recognizing these nationalistic feelings. He said this problem should be tactfully handled, and stated that the party is now trying to take nationalism into account.

(4) Finally, Khrushchev read a communique: "Before the Soviet delegation left for Yugoslavia (May 1955), there was a meeting of the Party Presidium where this visit was discussed and opposed only by Molotov. At the same time, Molotov, as Foreign Minister, obstructed the proposed healing of this break. In the case of Austria, Molotov disagreed with the party line concerning withdrawal. Because Molotov stuck to his opinion, the Presidium decided that this should be presented to the central committee plenum."

(5) Molotov spoke next. Although he did not argue directly against the general thesis of Khrushchev's speech, he attacked the attitude concerning Austria, Yugoslavia and the Satellites. The audience felt that Molotov was attacking the Party Presidium. Molotov's statements were often interrupted by shouts and short interjections by Khrushchev, Bulganin, and Mikoyan, and the atmosphere was rather tense. Mikoyan and Bulganin then spoke in defense of Khrushchev's thesis, and Khrushchev took the floor again to sum up.

(6) Finally, this resolution was read to the plenum: "The Central Committee approves the present policy of the Politburo and accepts with pleasure the results of the talks in Belgrade, regarding them as a big achievement by the leaders of the Party. The direction to follow in the future policy is to stick to these directions, which were approved at the present Plenum. The Central Committee acknowledges with pleasure Molotov's withdrawal of his previous stand. It considers that all the high-level activists of the Party should be informed about the main problems discussed during this secret session of the Plenum, but only in the form of final resolutions, without mentioning the polemics with Molotov."

25X1X 2. [REDACTED] has also provided us valuable information about the serious ideological discontent concerning future policy and control that has developed within the Polish Communist Party. This background information has proved indispensable for an understanding of current events in Poland. He explains that a number of influential Polish party members have been agitating for three years for a more liberal policy for the country, and that the position of the "Liberals" was strengthened by the revelations of Swiatlo (the former security official who defected in December 1953), concerning the high-handed, "anti-democratic" and "illegal" activities of the Polish security police. Swiatlo's revelations "added oil to the fire" with respect to liberalization, since they "compromised the Politburo and revealed the weakness of party control."

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A. After the Soviet repudiation of Stalin, the demands of this liberal group erupted into a ferment of almost unchecked criticism of the Polish regime.

B. This criticism was already under way in 1955, notably in the form of satirical writings, such as Adam Wazyk's Poem for Adults, which criticized the regime for being "anti-humanist."

(1) Wazyk's poem, [REDACTED] created a great disturbance among the Politburo leadership. 25X1X

(2) The Politburo called a meeting of the Polish Writers' Association, and castigated the group for permitting publication of Wazyk's poem but most of the 150-200 persons at the meeting refused to disavow it. 25X1X

C. [REDACTED] has given us much other interesting background on Polish Party conflict. In describing the controversy over the Polish "national Communist", Gomulka, a principal feature of this internal political turmoil, [REDACTED] states that Gomulka's 1955 release from imprisonment came as a result of an independent Warsaw decision, without Moscow consultation. 25X1X

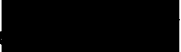
(1) Contrary to our previous belief, [REDACTED] tells us that the Gomulka affair had become an "almost forgotten" problem within the Polish party. 25X1X

D. [REDACTED] has also provided extremely detailed reports on the reorganization of the Polish Ministry of Internal Security and the manner in which the Party reasserted its control over the security police.

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E. Finally, his information concerning the top leaders of the Polish regime, their attitudes towards each other, and the interplay of forces within the Polish politburo, has also proved valuable, particularly within the context of developments during the past several months.

(1) For example, the ouster of Jakub Berman from the Politburo, following the appointment of a new party first secretary, Edward Ochab, was in part dictated by the strong animosity between the two men. The existence of this animosity was first learned from  25X1X

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