

**Session of the Politburo of the CC CPSU**

**29 June 1985**

Chairman: cde. M. S. GORBACHEV

In attendance: cdes. G. A. Aliev, V. I. Vorotnikov, V. V. Grishin,  
A. A. Gromyko, D. A. Kunaev, E. K. Ligachev,  
N. I. Ryzhkov, M. S. Solomentsev, N. A. Tikhonov,  
V. M. Chebrikov, V. V. Scherbitsky, P. N. Demichev,  
V. I. Dolgikh, V. V. Kuznetsov, B. N. Ponomarev,  
S. L. Sokolov, E. A. Shevardnadze, M. V. Zimyanin,  
I. V. Kapitonov, V. P. Nikonov, K. V. Rusakov.

Questions of the Plenum of the CC CPSU.

GORBACHEV. The Plenum of the CC CPSU is supposed to consider the questions of the forthcoming session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The agenda includes issues of environmental protection, choosing the Prosecutor General of the USSR and approval of the Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

As you remember, when the decision was made to convene the session, the Politburo was planning to consider organizational issues as well. The main issue is the election of the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. We all know that until 1977 the posts of the CC CPSU General Secretary and the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet were never occupied by one person simultaneously. Subsequently, the same person held them both at the same time. One has to say that in the concrete situation of that time it worked well.

POLITBURO MEMBERS. Correct.

GORBACHEV. However, the appointment of cadres is a vibrant phenomenon. It is always linked to the tasks that are being solved at a certain stage of development. Today we are unfolding big plans, setting out the course toward acceleration of the economic and social development of the country. Huge in scale tasks are rising in front of us. In this connection, the volume of party work, of its Central Committee and the Politburo is growing.

In these circumstances, it would be, naturally, expedient, for the General Secretary of the CC CPSU to focus on the issues of the party leadership of the society, on uniting the efforts of all party, state, and economic organs and public organizations to

concentrate on solving the key tasks, to devote more attention to those spheres of our development, where the fate of the country is being decided.

In this connection, I am introducing a proposal to recommend cde. A. A. Gromyko for election as Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Andrei Andreevich is one of the oldest party members, he has an extensive political experience, he is well known in our country as well as in the world. He is distinguished by his party character, the statesmanlike attitude to work, and his dedication to the collective style of leadership.

As far as the positive aspects in the work of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the entire system of soviets in the recent years, we should enhance and develop them, to continue the course on increasing their role and responsibility.

All this is appropriate to the demands of the current situation, and is in the interest of the most rational configuration of forces considering the present tasks. How do you, comrades, look at it?

POLITBURO MEMBERS. We support it.

GROMYKO. I would like to express my appreciation and to thank Mikhail Sergeevich and all of you, comrades, for the decision to recommend me for the election as Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet at the session of the Supreme Soviet. I promise not to let you down.

VOROTNIKOV. At the present stage it is the right decision not to occupy these two posts simultaneously.

LIGACHEV. The present decision shows the unity and the cohesion of the Politburo. This is very important.

GORBACHEV. That is true. Now the question arises—who should we propose as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We will not be able to find another A. A. Gromyko with his experience, and his knowledge of foreign policy issues. However, even Andrei Andreevich some time ago was beginning his diplomatic career without the same kind of experience and knowledge, which he possesses now. Of course, during the Tehran Conference, he was not the same as he is now.

I spoke with Andrei Andreevich about who should we promote to the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. We have many well-qualified diplomats. Kornienko is an experienced official. Maltsev is a little weaker. Chervonenko worked in both party and diplomatic positions. Dobrynin is also in the field of candidates. And yet, our thoughts have traveled in a different direction. We need a prominent figure for the post of the Minister, a person from among our own ranks, whom we know well, and who enjoys our confidence.

GROMYKO. We brought up a whole cohort of diplomats.

GORBACHEV. As a result, we decided to recommend Eduard Amvrosievich Shevardnadze. I have spoken with him. He told me that he could have expected

anything, but not this. He is a fully formed public figure, a principled person, who understand the interests of the party. Eduard Amvrosievich has shown himself as an experienced, resilient person, capable of finding needed approaches to solving problems.

We have to have one more consideration in mind—that we have a multinational country, and it is important that it finds its reflection in the composition of the central party organs.

Comrades, I am convinced that this is the right decision. How do you feel about it?

GROMYKO. I propose that we support it. Cde. Shevardnadze is a member of the central leadership. This is important for a Foreign Minister.

GORBACHEV. The Foreign Ministry should be treated appropriately.

GROMYKO. Lenin used to say that the Foreign Ministry was a department of the central Committee.

PONOMAREV. And the international situation requires a strong leader.

GORBACHEV. I am convinced that by promoting cde. Shevardnadze to the post of the Foreign Minister, we will do the right thing.

LIGACHEV. We support it.

GORBACHEV. Considering his personal qualities and taking into account his recommendation to the post of the Foreign Minister, it would be expedient to promote cde. Shevardnadze from candidate to a full Member of the Politburo.

GROMYKO. It will be received well.

GORBACHEV. So what are we going to do, comrades?

POLITBURO MEMBERS. We support it.

SHEVARDNADZE. I thank comrades for their trust [in me]. It is the most important for the minister that the Politburo is involved in the issues of MFA. I will try to study the problems, get to the heart of them, and [I] will do everything not to let you down.

GORBACHEV. At the forthcoming session, it is proposed to recommend comrade V. P. Orlov from the RSFSR and comrade Ya. Ya. Vagris from the Lithuanian SSR for the positions of Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and to relieve cde. M. A. Yasnov and cde. P. Ya. Strautmanis in connection with their retirement. At the same time, it would be expedient to decide the issue of relieving cde. B. N. Yeltsin, who had been confirmed as head of the Construction Department of the CC

CPSU after his work as First Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Oblast Party Committee, of his duties as a member of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

POLITBURO MEMBERS: We support it.

GORBACHEV: We will need to introduce a number of changes in the composition of the Commissions of the chambers of the Supreme Soviet.

Obviously, we should relieve the General Secretary of the CC CPSU from carrying out the duties as Chairman of the Commission on Foreign Affairs of the Council of Union. Following the tradition, we could recommend cde. Ye. K. Ligachev, as the one conducting the Secretariat sessions, for this position, while at the same time relieving him of his duties as Chairman of the Commission on Legislative Proposals. It would be expedient to elect cde. N. I. Ryzhkov chairman of that Commission.

POLITBURO MEMBERS. Right.

GORBACHEV. In connection with the planned election of cde. V. P. Orlov to the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, we should relieve him of his duties as Chairman of the Commission on Consumer Goods and Services, and to recommend V. K. Gusev—first Deputy Chairman of the RSFSR Council of Ministers—as Chairman of that Commission.

In connection with the appointment of S. L. Sokolov to the position of the USSR Defense Minister, we should relieve him of his duties as member of the Mandate Commission of the Council of Nationalities.

Necessary correctives will be introduced to the composition of some other commissions as well.

If these suggestions are approved by the CC Plenum, then I could address the session of the Supreme Soviet with the proposals about electing the Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and cde. Ye. K. Ligachev—about electing the General Secretary of the CC CPSU member of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet. As far as Minister of Foreign Affairs is concerned, I consulted with our main legal expert Anatoly Ivanovich [Lukyanov]. It would be expedient to carry out the appointment of cde. Shevardnadze to this position not outside of the session (by Decree of the Presidium), but at the session. N. A. Tikhonov could introduce the proposal.

Cds. V. I. Vorotnikov, B.K.Pugo as well as Chairmen of the chambers could present proposals on the rest of the organizational issues at the session.

POLITBURO MEMBERS: We support it.

GORBACHEV. We need to hold a meeting of the party group of the Supreme Soviet and a session of the Councils of Elders of the chambers on July 1. Cdes. M. S. Gorbachev and Ye. K. Ligachev could introduce proposals on the organizational issues in the party group, and cdes. Ye. K. Ligachev and V. V. Kuznetsov—at the session of the Councils of Elders.

Do comrades have any other proposals? Does everybody agree?

POLITBURO MEMBERS. We agree.

GORBACHEV. Now we need to discuss several more organizational issues that are outside of the framework of the issues of the session of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

We received a request from G. V. Romanov asking to relieve him of his duties as member of the Politburo and Secretary of the CC CPSU and to allow him to retire due to deterioration of his health. He visited me yesterday. We decided that he would extend his leave for the period of work of the Plenum. I think that it would be expedient to satisfy Grigory Vasilievich's request. Do comrades have any questions or other considerations?

POLITBURO MEMBERS. No.

GORBACHEV. Then let's make the decision to satisfy G. V. Romanov's request to relieve him of his duties as member of the Politburo and Secretary of the CC CPSU and retirement due to the health situation.

The question emerges about secretary of the CC CPSU on defense issues. There are many ZAVALY in this sphere of our work. Here we have to shape up considerably. Grigory Vasilievich did not succeed in managing the Military-industrial commission. There of course, such questions arise that neither Gosplan, nor any other organ except for the Politburo and the CC Secretariat can solve. We should strengthen control [over the Commission] on the part of the CC Secretariat. One can observe substantial red-tape in consideration of the issues concerning the defense branches of our industry. Coordination take a lot of time. We need to fix things here. It is clear that the Defense Minister is not the right person to deal with this. In short, we need to decide the issue about a secretary of the Central Committee who would be in charge of the issues of the defense branches of the industry. Various candidates were considered. It seems that L. N. Zaikov will be the best candidate.

VOROTNIKOV. Correct.

GROMYKO. Good.

GORBACHEV. He is an energetic leader, knows his area well, has connections with the ministries of the defense industry. When we looked into the "Intensification" program developed by the Leningrad residents, we became convinced that he is a person with broad knowledge of the economic issues. I have not talked to him yet. We can talk to him after we decide the issue about him at the Politburo.

VOROTNIKOV. Cde. Zaikov is a person of initiative, and a firm leader.

GROMYKO. He enjoys great respect in Leningrad.

SCHERBITSKY. He is recognized by engineers, who maintain close connections with him.

GORBACHEV. Then, if there are no other proposals, let us recommend to the Plenum to elect cde. L. N. Zaikov Secretary of the CC CPSU.

POLITBURO MEMBERS. We will recommend.

GORBACHEV. In the case if cde. L. N. Zaikov is transferred to work in Moscow as Secretary of the CC CPSU, the question arises about the first secretary of the Leningrad Oblast Committee of the CPSU. Popov has not proven himself yet, and it would be too early to promote him. There is a proposal to recommend cde. Yu. F. Soloviev, who is now working as Minister of Industrial Construction of the USSR, to the position of First Secretary of the Leningrad Oblast Committee of the CPSU. He is a resident of Leningrad, and knows the situation there well.

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