

February 18, 1977

**CPSU CC Protocol #46/10, Instructions to the Soviet
Ambassador in Washington for his Conversation
with Vance on the Question of 'Human Rights'**

Citation:

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<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/110034>

Summary:

Response to the US State Department's protest of the arrest of Aleksandr Ginzburg, a prominent Soviet dissident, for alleged currency violations.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Proletariats of the World unite!

COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Top secret

No P46/X

To: comrades Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kosygin, Andropov, Gromyko, Kirilenko, Suslov, Ponomarev, Zamiatin.

Extract from protocol No 46 of the meeting of CC CPSU Politburo on February 18, 1977 _____

About the instructions to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington for his conversation with Vance on the question of "human rights."

The draft of the instructions to the Soviet Ambassador in Washington this question is to be approved. (The draft is attached.)

SECRETARY OF THE CC

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Must be returned within 7 days to the
CC CPSU (General Department, 1st sector)

On the point X of the protocol No 46

Secret

WASHINGTON

TO THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR

FIRST. Meet with Vance and tell him that you have instructions to inform President Carter and his Secretary of State of the following:

Raising by the Americans in Moscow of the question of freeing [Aleksandr] Ginzburg, a Soviet citizen, convicted for his actions punishable by law in accordance with our criminal code, aroused the utmost bewilderment.

The fact that such an interference into our domestic affairs is being done in the name of concern over "human rights" does not change the essence of the matter.

Obviously, everybody has a right to have one's own view on different issues including the liberties and rights of people in any country. And we too have our own view of these problems and their current situation in the USA.

But it is another matter to bring these views into the sphere of inter-state relations

and thereby to complicate them. How else can one see the position of the representatives of the USA administration, when they are trying to make the questions, thoroughly under the jurisdiction of the Soviet state, a matter of discussion? It touches upon the basic principles of our mutual relations. It must be a complete clarity on this problem from the very beginning. Such a position of the USA is categorically unacceptable to us.

You and we are aware that we have different ideologies and social political systems. Certainly, due to this fact we have different approaches to different questions.

We, in the Soviet Union, are proud that the socialist revolution and our system not only proclaimed but also provided in reality the right for work, education, social security, free medical assistance, and retirement to all Soviet citizens. And we really guarantee these rights.

At the same time the Soviet laws guard our people from antisocial tendencies such as the propaganda of war in any form, the dissemination of the ideas of race inequality and national divisiveness or from the attempts of moral corruption of people. In our country nobody has the right to break the law that is equally obligatory to everybody.

We do not try to impose our understanding of rights and liberties of man on anybody, although much of what is going on under the conditions of another social system seems unacceptable to our people.

It is not difficult to imagine what would have happened if we, proceeding from our own moral principles, had tried to link the development of our inter-state relations with the USA or other capitalist countries with such actually existing problems in these countries as multi-million unemployment, deprivation of rights of ethnic minorities, race discrimination, unequal rights for women, the violation of citizens rights by the state organs, the persecution of people with progressive convictions and so on.

By the way, if one speaks about the concerns regarding human rights, how should one view the systematic support by the USA of dictatorial, anti-populist regimes in some countries, where constantly and violently the most basic human rights and liberties are violated.

If we had begun to raise all these questions as a part of our inter-state relations then, apparently, the result would have been the aggravation of all the relations between ourselves and other countries. It would have detracted us from the solution of those problems, which could and should be the goals of interactions and cooperation of our states. All the efforts for guaranteeing the rights of human beings to live in a world free from wars and burden of arms race, to live in the environment of security and friendly relations between the peoples would also have been jeopardized.

We firmly believe, therefore, that the questions of domestic development that reflect the differences in ideologies and social political systems should not be the subject of inter-state relations.

It is not accidental that precisely this principle, together with other fundamental principles, was clearly expressed in the "Fundamentals of mutual relations between the USSR and the USA" signed in 1972. One also should be reminded that during the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1933 our countries obliged to absolutely respect unquestionable right of each other to build its own life as they see fit and refrain in any way from interference into the domestic affairs of the other partner.

Not always, however, and not in all respects are American statements and actions in agreement with this. In actuality, the statements about "concern" over "human rights in the USSR" serve the purpose of the support and even outright instigation for some persons, who separate themselves from the Soviet society. It is not just a demonstrative approving attitude of the (USA) administration toward the activity in the Soviet Union of some American journalists, whose only interest is to find and publicize the so-called "dissidents." Some people from the USA Embassy personnel in Moscow are directly involved in it. We could specifically name who we have in mind.

(For the Soviet Ambassador: If the interlocutor asks who exactly we are talking about, you could name the First secretary Pressel [sic])

And when, for the violation of the law by the USSR citizen, the Soviet authorities take actions in accordance with the Soviet law, actions which are the prerogative of any state, then this is used by the American side thereby harming our mutual relations.

Besides, it is known that the representatives of the American Embassy in Moscow secretly meet with [Andrei] Sakharov, who knows the state secrets related to the national defence. The last such meeting by the Embassy's initiative took place on February 8. This is an extremely unusual fact and no reference to the human rights cannot hide that this is a direct act of the American intelligence services against the USSR and against the Soviet social system. As for the references to American public opinion, the sentiments in the USA Congress, etc., one should not forget that in the Soviet Union there also is its own public opinion, and it decisively rejects all attempts to impose on us the values which are incongruent with social democracy and legality.

SECOND. After the conversation the following kind of announcement should be sent to Moscow via the TASS channel:

"On February" " the USSR Ambassador in the USA A.F. Dobrynin visited Secretary of State S. Vance and drew his attention to some statements and actions of the American side, which are in disagreement with the goals of positive development of the Soviet-American relations. In this regard it has been emphasized that the Soviet side resolutely rejects all the attempts to interfere in the Soviet domestic affairs, into the problems related to the prerogatives of other governments, using the pretext of "the protection of human rights."

The Soviet side could have also said - and it has firm grounds for it--some things regarding the guarantee of human rights in the USA, like unemployment of millions of people, race discrimination, unequal rights for women, violation of personal liberties of citizens, the rising wave of crimes, etc. It must be clear, however, that all the attempts to impose one's own views upon the other side, to bring such questions into inter-state relations, would only aggravate and make more difficult to resolve those problems which should be the subject of interaction and cooperation of both countries.

The relations of peaceful co-existence and constructive cooperation between the USSR and the USA in the interests of both peoples can fruitfully develop only when they are guided by the mutual respect of principles of sovereignty and non-interference into the domestic affairs of each other, as it is stated in the basic Soviet-American documents."

Telegraph the fulfillment.