

July 12, 1955
**Central Committee Plenum of the CPSU Ninth
Session, Concluding Word by Com. N. S. Krushchev**

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Summary:

Khrushchev responds to the accusations raised by Cde. Molotov about the state of Soviet foreign policy. He discusses the Soviet relationship with the Yugoslav leadership, the Austrian treaty, Soviet-US relations.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Comrades. I want to read you a telegram which cde. Gromyko cited in part, since this document is of interest in understanding the position of the Yugoslav leaders. It is a communication from our ambassador in Yugoslavia about a conversation with cde. Tito. On 29 June cde. Tito invited the Soviet ambassador to visit him and had a lengthy conversation with him. Here is what com. Val'kov wrote about that: "In a conversation with me on 29 June Tito told me the following: At present, Tito said, there are many conversations among the Yugoslavs and foreign representatives, surrounding the communication published in the Yugoslav press on 28 June about his, Tito's, acceptance of an invitation to visit the Soviet Union. I noted that at a lunch in the Egyptian mission on 28 June the Canadian ambassador, the Egyptian envoy, the Japanese envoy, and the English consul all asked me about this issue. After this Tito noted that he would be happy to visit the Soviet Union and, in keeping with the understanding with comrades Khrushchev and Bulganin, the trip would take place next year. Concerning [U.S. Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles' announcement at a 28 June press conference on the fact that the possibility of the Yugoslav president's visiting the United States of America would be reviewed favorably if the Marshal expressed a desire to visit the United States of America, Tito said that the Americans would have to wait a long time for the expression of such a desire, if indeed they ever wait long enough [to hear it]." (Laughter in the hall). Not badly put! Voice from the audience. Not bad... Now on Austria. This is a very important issue. I remember how Stalin, about a year before his death, said several times: - Why don't we conclude a treaty with Austria? But this matter kept being postponed; it was said that we would resolve it after Trieste. When the Trieste matter got cleared up, comrade Stalin again ask[ed]: - Why aren't we concluding a treaty with Austria? After Stalin's death, somehow cde. Malenkov and I began talking with cde. Molotov about Austria. He told us that the Austrian issue was a very complex one which we needed very much [i.e. to keep on the agenda without resolving it], [and] that its resolution had to be delayed. Here, at the plenum, I will frankly say that I believed Molotov's word on everything, [and] like many of us, thought that he was a great and experienced diplomat. Sometimes you'd look and then reason and think: - Damn it [chert voz'mi], maybe I am missing something! After all, that is what it means to be a diplomat - he sees, and I don't see anything (laughter in the hall). I'm telling you this in all sincerity. Some time passed, and I still wanted to find out what Molotov saw in the Austrian issue and [why] he was fighting to drag out its resolution, but I can't see [it]. I came to the conclusion that there was no reason for us to drag out this matter, since time was beginning to work against us. In Austria we are losing our good position by dragging out a resolution to the issue of a peace treaty with the country. I then say to com. Bulganin: - You know what I think, Nikolai Aleksandrovich? In my opinion, the Austrian issue as Molotov understands it is reminiscent of an egg which has gone bad. Soon you will have to throw it in the garbage because everything will change and there will be no value in resolving it positively. And that is really so. But if we had gone halfway [vyshli navstrechu] with a resolution of the Austrian issue when the events connected with the conclusion of the Paris agreement had just ripened, after all, then the issue of these agreements could have arisen in a different way. Voice from the Presidium. Correct. Voice from the hall. The Paris agreement wouldn't have come about. Khrushchev. We put forward the Austrian issue in a discussion of the CC Presidium. I said to cde. Molotov: - Listen, Viacheslav Mikhailovich, you understand this issue. But some comrades and I do not understand why we should delay the conclusion of a treaty with Austria. Explain to us how you understand it. Perhaps I will begin to understand it differently; after all, we aren't fools. And when I understand, I will support you; after all, right now I don't see anything complicated in it. I see only stupidity on our side, which consists of the fact that we are dragging out the conclusion of a peace treaty with Austria for no apparent reason. We discussed the issue and came to the conclusion that we should conclude a peace treaty with Austria, [and] make sure that Austria became a neutral state. When we came to such a decision, Molotov said: - It is good that it was decided this way. After all, I did not object to such a decision. Comrades! We, all of the members of the Presidium, each spoke to Molotov twice, reporting to him that it was necessary to stop dragging out the Austrian issue and to resolve it. And you know how we usually resolve issues in the Presidium, - we don't speak because everything is already clear and that issue that has been brought for examination does not need additional clarification. And here, I repeat, we all spoke several times without convincing com. Molotov that it was impossible to delay any further on this matter. Kaganovich. And [we spoke] quite

sharply [i dovol'no ostro]. Khrushchev. During the discussion I ask[ed] com. Molotov:- Tell me, please, are you for or against war?- No, he says, I am against war.- Then what are you achieving by having our troops sit in Vienna? If you stand for war, then it would be correct to stay in Austria. It is a beach-head [platsdarm], and only a fool would give up such a beach-head if he planned to make war now. If [you are] not for war, then we have to leave. In our country, communists do not understand you; the Austrian communists do not understand, and Austrian workers begin to see our troops as occupiers. Communists abroad also do not understand us. Why are we sitting in Austria; what are we waiting for there? Com. Molotov was commissioned to prepare a draft. He presented the draft, but it said that if an anschluss were to be prepared of Austria with Germany, we would reserve the right to lead our troops into Austria. There was a lot of all sorts of nonsense in the draft presented by the MID. I said to com. Molotov:- Listen, we have to look at things realistically and concretely. Let's assume that we manage to conclude a treaty in which this is said. Imagine that they prepare an anschluss. After all, after we find out about it, everything will be ready for an anschluss-artillery will be deployed where they should be, and troops will be assembled. After all, they are not fools, and know that if there is an anschluss, we can oppose an anschluss and, probably, repulse it. So, in such a situation, would you start a war? You have to keep in mind, after all, that the Austrians and Germans are nations [natsii] close to one another. If someone set us such conditions: to separate the Russians from the Ukrainians or Belorussians, what would we say? We would say, without pausing for thought:- You take your proposals to God's mother [k bozh'ei materi]! Why should we stick our noses into that matter? Remember what has already happened. After the First World War, France reserved rights for itself as to the Saar, the Ruhr, and the Rhineland zones. But Hitler came to power in Germany. He squeezed France, seizing the Saar district [and] the Ruhr [and] Rhineland zones, and what became of it? An embarrassment. The French disgraced themselves, since it became clear that France was not in a condition to defend itself. And Hitler, having gotten cocky [obnaglev], began to mobilize forces for other expansionist adventures. I said to Molotov:- Why should we do what you are proposing in Austria? Let us save our strength at home, and everyone will understand us correctly. And so when we all bore down on him [navalilis' na nego], he couldn't do anything other than to say, I agree; we have to submit whatever draft you propose. After the resolution of the Austrian issue, abroad they began to write about how wise [and] what a good diplomat Molotov was, and how he so skillfully took care of the Austrian issue. I even once said to com. Bulganin: "Probably Molotov doesn't like to read such articles." After all we know what position com. Molotov took on that issue. And then at a meeting of the CC Presidium he said: - Did I really object to the resolution of the Austrian issue? Perhaps in another month he will say that he approved the resolution on the Yugoslav issue as well? Or take the issue of arms control. For a long time we took an incorrect position, proposing to cut the armed forces of all countries by one third. With such a stance on the issue [postanovka voprosa], they will send us to the devil and put forward convincing arguments as well. Who will make such an agreement? We have so many million [men] at arms (and the Americans have data on this). We say: let's disarm, cut armaments by a third. And what sort of disarmament can there be here; can they really discuss our draft? Judge for yourself: we have, for example, six million soldiers, reduced by one third-four [million] are left. They have, for instance, three million, which must also be reduced by one third. After this, what sort of correlation of forces is left after that? By making that sort of proposal, we give the imperialists trump cards to decline our proposal; we will look like opponents of disarmament. The rulers of bourgeois states under the pressure of their people also raise the issue of disarmament. In order to knock all of the trumps out of the hands of the imperialists, we decided to introduce a proposal that, on the issues of arms control, we start from the conditions of each state, taking into account the size of the territory of the country, the quantity of its population, and other conditions. Based on these conditions, we must attain arms cuts to an appropriate level. Is this decision correct? Undoubtedly, it is correct. Such a proposal permits us the possibility of taking the initiative. We adopted a resolution of the CC Presidium on this issue and instructed com. Molotov to inform com. Malik about it, but he sent a different directive, did not fulfill the resolution of the CC Presidium, as com. Bulganin has correctly stated here. At the meeting of the CC Presidium we asked com. Molotov:

why did he do so? He explained it like this: I gave correct instructions, but when they looked at the ciphered communication, it turned out that it was incorrectly written. Com. Molotov admitted that he had made an error in this matter, for which we then gave him a warning...###