

November 27, 1956

**Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC
Presidium on 27 November 1956 (Re: Protocol No.
60)**

Citation:

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Summary:

These notes (part of the Malin Collection) describe Romanian leader Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej's decision to negotiate with Yugoslavia regarding the fate of Imre Nagy after his arrest and transfer to Romania. The notes state that negotiations are inadvisable and remain the responsibility of Hungary. A second section of the document refers to instructions to the KGB for discrediting Nagy.

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Working Notes from the Session of the CPSU CC Presidium on 27 November 1956 (Re: Protocol No. 60)(1)

I. From Bucharest.

(Khr., Vorosh., Kagan., Mik., Mol., Perv., Bulg., Sab., Zhuk., Grom.) It's not advisable.(2) We should inform Dej that this is not to our advantage, and is not to the advantage of Hungary. Cde. Bulg. is to negotiate with Cde. Dej.(3)

Zhukov—we should state our view of the position of the Yugoslavs.

Khr.—we don't need to enter into correspondence with Tito about Imre Nagy; that's a matter for Hungary to handle. It was a mistake for our officer to go into the bus.(4)

II.(5)

Instructions to: The Foreign Ministry KGB, and On the discrediting of Imre.(6)

Konev

Translator Notes

1 These notes were compiled by Malin's deputy, Vladimir Naumovich Chernukha, not by Malin himself. Hence, they are somewhat sketchier than other notes from this period. No list of participants in the session is given, but the formal protocol for the session (“Vypiska iz Protokola No. 60 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS ot 27 noyabrya 1956 g.,” in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, L. 181) indicates that, in addition to those listed here, the participants included Brezhnev, Shvernik, Furtseva, Belyaev, and Pospelov. The protocol does not mention Andrei Gromyko.

2 The Presidium is discussing a telegram that was sent on 26 November by V. F. Nikolaev, an official at the Soviet embassy in Bucharest. The telegram indicated that the Romanian leader, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej intended to seek top level negotiations with Yugoslavia as soon as possible to alleviate the dispute that Yugoslavia was having with the Soviet Union and Hungary about the fate of Imre Nagy. During negotiations with the Yugoslavs, Kadar's government had given assurances of safety for Nagy and his aides if they left the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest. When Nagy's group went outside on 22 November, they were immediately arrested by Soviet military personnel. Soon thereafter, they were transported as prisoners to Romania. A senior aide to Gheorghiu-Dej, Emil Bodnaras, told Nikolaev that the Romanians “hadn't expected that the Yugoslavs would raise a fuss about the transfer of Imre Nagy and his group to Romania. However, as you know, they presented a note of protest to the Soviet and Hungarian governments. It's possible that this question might be raised at the UN, etc. We believe that we must be ready for different speeches and discussions regarding Imre Nagy. But first of all we believe it is necessary to discuss this matter with the Yugoslavs.” See “Shifrtelgramma,” 26 November 1956 (Strictly Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 13-14.

3 The formal protocol for this session (“Vypiska iz Protokola No. 60 zasedaniya Prezidiuma TsK KPSS,” 27 November 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, L. 177) stated that “on the basis of the exchange of opinions at the session of the CPSU CC Presidium, Cde. Bulganin is instructed to hold negotiations with Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej.” Later that day, Bulganin had a telephone conversation with Gheorghiu-Dej, which he promptly recounted in writing for the other members of the CPSU Presidium: “I told Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej that, in our opinion, a meeting at the highest level with the Yugoslav leadership about Imre Nagy and his group will not produce a good solution, since the Yugoslavs have a set position on this matter, and such a meeting might complicate the situation. The Yugoslavs might demand a meeting with Imre Nagy and

the others, which would hardly be worthwhile. . . . Cde. Gheorghiu-Dej asked that I let the CPSU CC Presidium know that they are working via plenipotentiaries with Imre Nagy and his group. They have set out to persuade Imre Nagy and his group to issue a statement in which they would acknowledge their criminal actions and indicate that the only correct course at present is to support and consolidate the Revolutionary Workers' and Peasants' Government of Kadar, and to strengthen the regime of people's democracy. In this way, said Gheorghiu-Dej, we want to test Imre Nagy." See "Informatsiya," 27 November 1956 (Top Secret), in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 16-17.

4 This refers to the manner in which Imre Nagy and his aides were arrested. A bus had been brought alongside the Yugoslav embassy, supposedly to transport the officials and their families to their apartments. It turned out that the bus was merely part of an elaborate plot devised by Ivan Serov and other senior KGB officials to lure Nagy from the embassy. A Soviet military officer was sitting in the bus, and others quickly approached. Two Yugoslav diplomats who were accompanying the Hungarians were forced out of the bus, and the remaining passengers were placed under arrest, contrary to the assurances that Kadar's government had given to the Yugoslavs. This episode is recounted in detail in the note of protest that Yugoslav foreign minister Koca Popovic sent to the Soviet and Hungarian embassies on 24 November 1956, in TsKhSD, F. 89, Op. 2, D. 5, Ll. 19-26. See also "Telefonogramma," Secure High-Frequency Transmission, from Malenkov, Suslov, and Aristov, 23 November 1956, in APRF, F. 3, Op. 64, D. 488, Ll. 95-96.

5 No title for this section is given, but the formal protocol for the session (No. 60, as cited in Note 187 supra) indicates that Point II dealt with "Questions of Hungary." According to the Protocol, "the USSR Foreign Ministry, the KGB, and the USSR Ministry of Defense [were] instructed to prepare materials about Imre Nagy and his group in accordance with the exchange of opinions at the CPSU CC Presidium's session."

6 Nagy's surname is omitted in this line of Malin's notes.