

CC CPSU Politburo Session, June 5, 1986
Anatoly S. Chernyaev's Notes

Gorbachev. About Chernobyl. We should make every agency individually responsible (for dealing with the consequences). Because the effect of getting used to it is already kicking in. And they will be held to strict account. In this case, we are responsible to our people, responsible to the entire world. And let's put an end to the bureaucratic parochialism. One hears all the time: I am in charge of my own objective there. Everybody is in charge of their own objective, it turns out. No, the objective is the same for everybody—Chernobyl! But comrades are incapable of looking beyond the lines of their particular work responsibilities. Chernobyl is everybody's business: of all the ministers, and all the members of the Central Committee, and the entire CC apparatus.

The social aspect is extremely important. We have to have very strict oversight here. We must determine all the social parameters of the consequences before July. I am very concerned about the work of the government commission, which is investigating the causes of the catastrophe. We will raise this issue very strictly and very extensively at the Politburo, and we will not allow them to manipulate us with all kinds of professional conclusions, which are actually just excuses.

It is quite obvious—lack of responsibility, dissoluteness. Nobody should count on mercy. A repetition of anything like this should be absolutely excluded. One or two accidents like this and we would get it worse than from a total nuclear war. Already now you see the resonance and the kind of expense! The loss of production by now is already at one billion eight hundred million rubles. And the expenditures for the object itself are at about two billion rubles. In a word, we are talking about very serious things.

Addresses Shcherbina (Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers): Be at your best. We are talking about life itself. You must prepare a very serious party-state document (about the causes and consequences). We should not shy away from anything. Now, trying to present it as an easy task would be the worst thing. [shapkozakidatel'stvo]

And in Budapest (at the Political Consultative Committee meeting) we should relate everything honestly to the general secretaries. And not what our newspapers have written so far. Because they are building nuclear power stations, building with our assistance, and with our designs. And look, what a signal! In the GDR, 50% of our equipment was declared defective.

Addresses Dolgikh. You bring it all to order. Safety and order at the stations is the utmost priority. Those that function today should be ensured of maximum safety. And don't be shy to interact with people at nuclear power stations. Do not tell tales, speak honestly.

Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya for the National Security Archive.

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