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Session of the Politburo of the CC CPSU
14 October 1986

Chared: com. GORBACHEV. M.S.

Present: cc. Aliev G.A., Gromyko A.A., Zaikov L.N., Ligachev E.K., Solomentsev V.C.,
Chebrikov V.M., Dolgikh V.I., Eltsin B.N., Talyzin N.V., Biryukova A.P., Dobrynin
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About the results of the meeting of the General Secretary of the CC CPSU Gorbachev
with President of the US Reagan at Reykjavik

GORBACHEV. Yesterday you all received the records of conversations with Reagan, which took place in Reykjavik. Today we have to discuss the results of these negotiations and adopt a resolution. You have a draft of this resolution in front of you.

The Soviet-American meetings at Reykjavik evoked a wide resonance in the world. America is beginning to move too. There is criticism directed at Reagan. Some people are asking if he chose to have a bird in the bush rather than one in the hand.

With regard to the negotiations in Reykjavik I would like to express the following thoughts.

First of all, success was very close. Had we adopted the decision to reduce and liquidate nuclear armaments, this would have become a turning point in the evolution of international affairs. First and foremost, the agreements on this question would have created more favorable conditions for resolution of the issues related to the acceleration of the social-economic development of our country. And this is the main thing.

Why did we fail to end the meeting with agreements? This can be explained by a whole set of subjective and objective factors. As far as Reagan was concerned, we had to wage a struggle in Reykjavik not only with the class enemy, but also with such a representative of our class enemy, who exhibited extreme primitivism, a caveman outlook, and intellectual impotence. But this is not, however, the main reason [for the

failure]. Rather the reason is that the Americans started from two erroneous assumptions during the negotiations. The first one was of a tactical nature. The Americans persuaded themselves that we were more interested in reaching agreements on the issues of disarmament. They believed that because of our internal difficulties we would have to accept their proposals. They also made an incorrect judgment about my agreement to come to the US with a visit. They thought that I wanted to come to them at any cost because I needed to win political capital.

Another error is of a strategic nature. It is [the belief] that the US might exhaust us economically via arms race, create obstacles for Gorbachev and for the entire Soviet leadership, undermine its plans for resolving economic and social problems and thereby provoke popular discontent. Moreover, in this way they hope to limit the possibilities for Soviet economic ties with the developing countries, to create a situation, where those countries would be forced to come bowing to the United States. Finally, their mistake is in thinking that with the help of the SDI they could undermine the [strategic] parity and achieve military superiority. They do not know what would our response be to the SDI. All this determined the line of their behavior at Reykjavik, their desire to limit the talks to just cosmetics, so as to silence the critics, who speak against the policy of this administration. As we can see now, this strategic line of the current administration is based on illusions.

Secondly, after Reykjavik we have reached a new level of understanding of the disarmament issues. The options, which we advanced in the past, are now buried. After Reykjavik we have a new platform. A totally new situation has developed. The discussion about nuclear disarmament has reached a new, higher level, from which we now have to begin a struggle for liquidation and complete ban on nuclear armaments, and to conduct our peace offensive actively. This is a strong position. It reflects new thinking, and it is a practical implementation of the foreign policy goals, which were outlined by the XXVII congress of the CPSU.

This new position provides us with an opportunity to wage an even more active struggle to win the masses, various political circles that realistically assess the situation in the world to our side. It concerns Europe in particular. Our proposals to destroy the medium range missiles in Europe, to freeze [the deployment] of the missiles with the

range less than one thousand kilometers and to begin negotiations about their future - these proposals are very attractive for Europeans. The further we move from Reykjavik, and with more serious analysis of its results, the more effective this factor will be.

The world lays responsibility for the failure to reach agreements at Reykjavik on the United States. [Cyrus] Vance, other distinguished US political figures stated that Reykjavik became a defeat for the Republicans.

After Reykjavik we have a whole wide field of possibilities open for us among anti-war movements, and in neutral countries. Such activities should be conducted in all directions, as we promote our ideas showing our loyalty to peace and international cooperation.

The fact that we came to Reykjavik not with a disjointed list of proposals, but put them together in a package had a key importance. Since we went so far in our proposals, all the way to suggesting complete liquidation of nuclear weapons, we should have received complete guarantees of our security. And only agreement on all our proposals would have provided such a guarantee. We will stand on this firmly. Here everything is intricately intertwined. Therefore let us agree from the start - there should be no Foreign Ministry tricks that would contradict this. We do not need any cheap tricks: only the package.

MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO. Correct

GORBACHEV. Thirdly, a special responsibility is now on our propaganda. After Reykjavik we collected more scores in our favor than after [the summit of November 1985] in Geneva. In a way, we traded sides with Americans. Before we usually lagged behind them in promoting our information for consumption of the outer world. We were late in giving interviews, conducting press conferences. This practice should be developed ever further.

Reykjavik must become a new beginning for our propaganda. It should acquire more aggressive character, it should win over to our side the public in foreign countries.

Forth, the new situation demands new approaches in our military doctrine, in the construction of Armed Forces, their dislocation, etc., in defense industry. We must

carefully think about what should be done, if there are no more medium-range missiles, what kind of other armaments should be developed, etc. We must give appropriate directives to work on these issues. Defense industry must correspond closer to the military doctrine. We must not allow penetration of pacifism into Armed Forces and defense industry. It is important to have everything to ensure inevitability of our retaliatory strike. In this regard we should not touch the allocations for defense.

We should pay special attention to the issues related to our possible response to the SDI.

The meeting at Reykjavik demonstrated that what we have in representatives of American administration are people without conscience, with no morale. Their line is the one of pressure, deceit, or greedy mercantilism.

ZIMIANIN. In his first speech after Reykjavik Reagan declared that he stood and will stand on the position of strength.

GORBACHEV. If this is so, then the whole struggle still lies ahead.

ZIMIANIN. You, Mikhail Sergeevich, performed remarkably in the talks and at the press-conference. It was also correct not to put all dots above "i"s regarding a summit in the United States.

GORBACHEV. When I arrived to the press-conference in Reykjavik, I noticed that journalists were depressed. I tried to dispel this pessimism as much as I could. Of course, Reykjavik left far from cheerful impression. When Reagan bid his farewell to me, he even could not bring himself to look into my eyes.

LIGACHEV. Mikhail Sergeevich and the comrades that accompanied him did extremely intense and effective job. Although it did not work out to sign an agreement in Reykjavik, we witness a big movement forward in our policy.

GORBACHEV. After Reykjavik we have an opportunity to show who did what there.

LIGACHEV. Of course, it would be better to have the agreement signed at Reykjavik, but we failed to do it because of faulty position of Americans, their willingness to negotiation from the position of strength. The position of the sides have become more clear after Reykjavik. The process of polarization of public forces in the world will accelerate.

Representatives of various political forces abroad now see the position of American administration more clearly—its attempts to break down the parity, to achieve military superiority, all the reasons for the failure to reach an agreement. Americans dream of disarming us with the help of the SDI, to neutralize what we have achieved during 20-30 years.

At first I had an idea: if medium range missiles in Europe present a particular danger to us, why we cannot de-couple them [from the negotiating package]? Then, however, I came to conclusion that the issues of strategic offensive armaments, medium-range missiles and the ABM [anti-ballistic missile defense] with the SDI must be resolved in a package. If we de-couple medium-range missiles, then Europe would slip away. Therefore I fully support the proposal to consider the aforementioned issues in a complex, as one package.

One last thing. The situation, which is emerging after Reykjavik requires us to increase the offensive character of our diplomatic, informational, propagandist work. The effect it can yield is shown by Mikhail Sergeevich's the press-conference in Reykjavik, his appeal to peoples over the heads of governments.

GORBACHEV. What countries received television broadcasting from Reykjavik?

LIGACHEV. Europe. In the United States they cut down the broadcasting [from the summit].

DOBRYNIN. Only one American station fully broadcasted the press-conference of Mikhail Sergeievich at Reykjavik.

LIGACHEV. Now we should step up our denunciations of the SDI and the "Star Wars."

Another point. We must spell out well our proposals advanced at Reykjavik.

GORBACHEV. Today I will speak on television and will reconstruct, step by step, the course of the negotiations and will describe our positions.

LIGACHEV. Americans now would like to claim the credit for the progress achieved at Reykjavik. We must unmask this. We made a number of compromise proposals not as a result of American pressure, but in view of our genuine striving toward nuclear disarmament and development of international cooperation. Our conscience is clear. We acted in the interest of peace. Although no legal results embodied in specific

agreements could be achieved at Reykjavik, our positions in the world have grown stronger.

ALIEV. I fully support all conclusions and proposals made by Mikhail Sergeevich. Our position, the proposals put forward at Reykjavik correspond to the situation in the world. A giant work of historic significance has been carried out. One year elapsed since Geneva. We put on the table important foreign policy initiatives. However, no effective results have been achieved in the main area - in the talks at Geneva. In effect we can sum up the process begun at Geneva [in 1985]. Our position in the world has been strengthened. What happened in Reykjavik will yield even more results. There is a qualitatively new situation. We gave a start to the new phase in the struggle against nuclear armaments and the threat of war. This is an important result of Reykjavik. Mikhail Sergeievich conducted the negotiations with Reagan at a best possible political and professional level. It was important that our proposals were put on the table in the package.

I agree with Yegor Kuzmich [Ligachev] that Reykjavik has given us big advantages. The press-conference held by Mikhail Sergeievich resonated in a big way. It ripped the mask off the United States. No documents revealed the positions of the sides in the past so well as Mikhail Sergeevich's speech.

GORBACHEV. You may recall that we had in mind the following: either to reach an agreement at Reykjavik or, failing that, to use the summit for unmasking American positions.

ALIEV. I have met with [Francois] Morois. During this meeting he was not so much interested in the issue of sister cities, although it was his official agenda for the visit, but in the results of Soviet-American summit at Reykjavik. He said that the two sides at Reykjavik were close to a historic agreement, and it was not the fault of the Soviet side that it did not take place.

That we now moved beyond Reykjavik with the package of proposals is of great importance. A new phase in the struggle for disarmament is beginning. Our proposals have tied the hands of the Americans.

I agree with you, Mikhail Sergeevich, and also with the proposals of Yegor Kuzmich that we must now conduct skillful propagandist explanatory work. Reagan is

trying to attribute the success to his efforts. Bourgeois propaganda will try to misinform our people as well. Therefore it is important to activate our propaganda, to give it offensive character.

GROMYKO. I am adding my voice to the most laudatory estimate of the negotiations carried out by Mikhail Sergeevich with Reagan. Such conversations have never taken place before, both in regard to their content as well as the skill of the negotiator.

CHEBRIKOV. And with regard to diplomatic art.

GROMYKO. Mikhail Sergeevich performed brilliantly during the negotiations and the press-conference. When I watched the broadcasting of the press-conference on television, I felt as if I were present there. The press-conference ought to be evaluated with the highest grade. It has indubitable effect on the world's public opinion. New positions we achieved at Reykjavik have strategic significance. I would especially stress the importance of linkage among all the links, all the proposals that we put on the table. I fully agree with such a linkage. This is a principled step. All this turned out in a very shrewd way. As far as our concessions are concerned, we weighed them carefully, so to say, as they would do [gold] nuggets. These concessions deal blows to the Americans, but the linkage of all of them together is as necessary as the air. It is important not to let up our contacts, to continue this affair, to avoid thrashing about by combining old proposals with the new ones. This would only confuse people. We must operate from the fact that we stand now on new frontiers. And from these new frontiers we must conduct negotiations and work our influence on the public.

GORBACHEV. [Soviet arms control negotiator Viktor] Karpov here told us [before Reykjavik]: Americans would not accept this, would not accept that, etc. [Deputy Foreign Minister Anatoly] Kovalev was present at these conversations here. But they accepted [our proposals]. Events began to develop according to our scenario. Thus we must revise the directives for Geneva negotiations [on strategic armaments], to give an appropriate instruction on this issue in our resolution.

GROMYKO. This is correct, we need new directives. We must make more active our propaganda, to have it explain well the novelty of our positions. A real storm of criticism of Reagan has broken loose. This, undoubtedly, will be a grave blow on the

Republican party on the eve of the elections. And this also works to our advantage. Who supports Reagan? It is, above all, big armaments' business.

GORBACHEV. It was visible in Reykjavik. As soon as we would begin to go down to big issues, Reagan at once would refer to the need of consulting them with experts. And the experts who accompanied him to Reykjavik were primarily representatives of the right reactionary forces. Its reactionary political views are well known. But from a professional viewpoint, as [head of the Soviet General Staff Marshal] Sergei Fedorovich (Akhromeev) told me, they are prepared well.

GROMYKO. The forces that support Reagan currently do everything to influence American public and gives the public only the information on Reykjavik that casts the Administration in a good light. We should write more about the SDI, unmask it. There is a widespread term, for instance, that the SDI is allegedly a shield. What kind of a shield it is? Its purpose is completely different.

Our position right now is a very good one. The situation after Reykjavik is working in our favor. Yet we should be ready for a contingency when [the US Administration would] aggravate the situation. Time will tell if the American Administration has become more clever, if it has drawn correct conclusions from the outcome of Reykjavik summit.

In the end of my talk, I would like to express once again my admiration at brilliance with which Mikhail Sergeevich carried out that summit.

CHEBRIKOV. First of all, I would like to say a few words about the negotiations. I read the records of conversations at Reykjavik in one breath. The way the talks were conducted by Mikhail Sergeevich makes one feel proud. I support the opinion already expressed here that a colossal job has been done at Reykjavik and it was also exceptionally well done.

I would like to add to points. There was a conference of NATO. [US Secretary of State George] Schultz spoke there with the report on the results of Reykjavik summit. This was not an easy meeting for the U.S. NATO allies spoke not so much about their support of the positions of the American administration, as they asked questions concerning the US positions. Shultz failed to win a unanimous support in Brussels.

DOBRYNIN. Did they ask him: was it the SDI that ruined everything?

CHEBRIKOV. He attempted to convince his allies that the Soviet Union allegedly tries to drive a wedge between the US and NATO allies by combining in one package its proposals, including the ones on the medium-range missiles and the SDI.

Yuriu Kuzmich has spoken here that at first he thought of an idea of a separate agreement on the medium-range missiles. The remarks of Shultz prove once again that this issue must be considered in one package with the others.

Upon his return from Reykjavik Reagan in his speech made anti-Soviet attacks. He declared that the Soviet government does not enjoy support of Soviet people. For that reason in our propagandist work we must not only provide objective information on the positions of both sides in Reykjavik, but also give rebuff to hostile anti-Soviet attacks.

Recently the Chinese also showed their teeth. They say that since the 1970's there was the balance of nuclear armaments between the USSR and the USA. Why the question of the SDI looms with such seriousness? Because the side, which dominates in space can deliver the first strike.

GORBACHEV. They also would like to pull us into the [competition with] the SDI.

CHEBRIKOV. The wave of discussion has been growing concerning the Soviet-American meeting in Reykjavik. The draft [of Politburo resolution] envisages - preparing and submitting by 1 November specific proposals regarding corrections of the positions of the Soviet Union on strategic offensive and defensive arms. In preparation of these proposals we must take into account American proposals at Reykjavik and "grind" much out of what is being discussed after Reykjavik.

You, Mikhail Sergeevich, are absolutely correct in saying that our propaganda should work hard both for consumption abroad and at home. We have pacifists ([Yuri] Orlov tried to do this), and people who vacillate and others who express doubts that we may lose in our defense readiness. I am talking, of course, about a few select individuals. As a whole the society expresses satisfaction with our proposals at Reykjavik. In this regard it is especially important now to raise the issues of economic development and defense.

GORBACHEV. Perhaps it would make sense for me to talk about the defense issues today in my television speech?

CHEBRIKOV. Americans respect only strength. We should counteract them by the demonstration of loyalty of our people to our party, to intensify patriotic education of working people.

SOLOMENTSEV. I agree with a high estimate of the activity of Mikhail Sereevich in Reykjavik. The results of the meeting are in our favor. Mikhail Sergeevich conducted press-conference with brilliance. Preparations for Reykjavik were conducted on a profound, scientific basis. It is the credit of Mikhail Sergeevich and other comrades who prepared the materials for the summit. As one reads the materials prepared for the summit one sees how profoundly Mikhail Sergeevich mastered the issues that were on the table of negotiations.

I must evaluate positively the fact that there was a group of well-prepared people at Reykjavik that conducted active work with foreign journalists. This testifies to new methods and approaches that our foreign policy propaganda began to use.

GORBACHEV. And during these meetings our people gain valuable experience.

SOLOMENTSEV. Active work of our propaganda is of great importance. When we keep silence and lag behind with providing information to the public, we lose. And on the contrary, when there is efficient and timely explanatory work, we get an edge. We should learn from this in the future. We must fully bring to attention of Soviet people our principled position on the questions of nuclear disarmament. Now [Soviet] people have more clarity on this issue. Nevertheless we must support the proposals to activate even further our propagandist explanatory work. We should also act more energetically in communist parties, in international public organizations so that to wake up their activity in the struggle against militarist bellicose strivings of the ruling circles of the US. We must peel out to the core what is actually the SDI about.

The issue of human rights has been so far the weak spot for our propaganda.

GORBACHEVA. During the summit Reagan completely failed with human rights. He sounded almost apologetic when he raised this issue.

SOLOMENTSEV. In conclusion I would like to say once again that I wholly and wholeheartedly support the activities of Mikhail Sergeevich in Reykjavik. The victory is on our side.

ZAIKOV. I also share the conclusions and estimates regarding Reykjavik that Mikhail Sergeevich spelled out in his talk. He conducted his negotiations with Reagan with a profound ability, he handled the details of military-technical problems with precision. On the main questions we scored a victory at Reykjavik. Now we must tell our people in precise terms where we stand now. At first an agreement on the medium-range missiles looked attractive. But today it is clear - the package is important. In this situation we must raise to the new level the work of the Ministry of Defense and the defense branches of industry. I must say that sometimes one feels certain coolness towards the defense industry, although everyone says that defense is sacrosanct. It is necessary to ensure that local [authorities] treat these matters with duly attention. I would welcome if you, Mikhail Sergeevich would raise during your forthcoming speech the issue about defense. It is highly important now not to allow any vacillations and hesitations in the Ministry of Defense.

GORBACHEV. I suggest we discuss these issues at the Defense Council.

ZAIKOV. We should obligate everybody to work even harder. With regard to this we must mention the Defense Industries Department of the CC CPSU in the first paragraph of the resolution.

GORBACHEV. I think that as a whole we have reasons to be satisfied with the results of the Reykjavik meeting. We did the right thing when we came forth with the initiative of holding this meeting and when we put forth the new proposals. Our line fully lived up to expectations. Reagan and his Administration found themselves in a quandary. Let them flounder. Let them try to clean themselves.

As far as the draft resolution is concerned, the discussion showed that the comrades are in agreement with it. Let us accept the proposal of Lev Nikolaevich [Zaikov] and mention the Department of Defense Industries of the CC CPSU in the first paragraph.

POLITBURO MEMBERS. We agree.

The proposal is accepted.

[Signature of the head of the General Department of the CC CPSU in control of Politburo
protocol:] Anatoly Lukyanov

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