

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE ONSET OF THE CRISES IN POLAND AND HUNGARY

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This article looks at Soviet policy toward Eastern Europe in 1953–1956, prior to the start of the Hungarian revolution. It shows that the leadership succession struggle in Moscow often caused sharp, and undesirable, fluctuations in Soviet relations with Hungary and the other East European countries. Abrupt shifts in Soviet policy, stemming mainly from internal political maneuvering, helped to produce a volatile situation in both Hungary and Poland in 1956. Soviet leaders were so preoccupied by domestic concerns that they failed to take timely action to cope with the deepening instability in Hungary and Poland. By the time events came to a head in October 1956, the Soviet Union was faced with the prospect of the collapse of Communist rule in Hungary.

Keywords: Eastern Europe, Poland, Hungary, Soviet Union, Soviet foreign policy

The death of the long-time ruler of the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin, in March 1953 soon led to momentous changes in the Communist bloc. Within weeks of Stalin's death, his successors encouraged (and, when necessary, ordered) the East European governments to enact wide-ranging "New Courses" of political and economic reforms. The abrupt introduction of these changes, and the sharp rise of public expectations in Eastern Europe, spawned strikes and mass demonstrations in Bulgaria in May 1953, a rebellion in Czechoslovakia in early June, and a much larger uprising in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) two weeks later.¹ The Czechoslovak authorities succeeded in quelling a violent revolt in Plzeň and mass unrest in other Czechoslovak cities on 1–2 June, but in East Germany the government and security forces quickly lost control of the situation on 17 June when hundreds of thousands of people rose up against Communist rule. Faced with the prospect of "losing" a vital ally, Soviet troops and security forces in the GDR had to intervene on a massive scale to crush the rebellion and restore a modicum of public order.

The Soviet Union's decisive response to the East German crisis was motivated in part by a concern that destabilizing unrest could spread to other East European

countries and even to the USSR itself unless urgent steps were taken. The spate of protests and strikes in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania in the spring of 1953, and the much larger uprising in Czechoslovakia in early June, had demonstrated the potential for wider turmoil. As soon as the East German rebellion began, the head of the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs, Lavrentii Beria, contacted the Soviet foreign intelligence chiefs elsewhere in Eastern Europe and warned them that they would “pay with [their] heads if anything like this happens” in their assigned countries.² He ordered them to send status reports directly to him every few hours and to work with the local governments to prevent mass unrest and subdue any demonstrations supporting the East German protesters.

The use of Soviet military power in the GDR eliminated the immediate problem facing the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe, but the suppression of the East German uprising did not impart greater consistency to Soviet policy or eliminate the prospect of further turmoil in the Soviet bloc. Although the downfall of Beria in late June 1953 and the formal appointment of Nikita Khrushchev as First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in September 1953 helped mitigate the instability in Soviet domestic politics, the leadership struggle in Moscow continued to buffet Soviet-East European relations over the next few years.³ During the brief tenure of Georgii Malenkov as Soviet prime minister from March 1953 to February 1955, the Soviet government encouraged a significant relaxation of economic and political controls in Eastern Europe, similar to the changes that were being adopted in the USSR itself. Violent mass terror in the region came to an end, and vast numbers of political prisoners were released. The reforms in the East-bloc countries after June 1953 were not as far-reaching as those proposed before Beria’s ouster, but they still represented a notable departure from Stalinism. In a region like Eastern Europe, which had been so tightly compressed during the Stalin era, the sudden adoption of New Courses greatly magnified the potential for social and political upheaval. The leaders in Moscow, however, were still preoccupied with domestic affairs and the ongoing struggle for power, and they failed to appreciate the increasingly volatile conditions in the Eastern bloc.⁴ Most of them simply hoped that the uprisings in Czechoslovakia and East Germany in June 1953 were an anomaly and not a portent of more explosive unrest to come.

The extent to which Soviet leaders misjudged the situation in Eastern Europe was evidenced by the confused approach that Malenkov’s chief rival, Nikita Khrushchev, initially adopted. To outflank Malenkov in the leadership struggle in late 1954 and early 1955, Khrushchev had temporarily sided with the hardliners, and this shift was promptly reflected throughout the bloc. At Khrushchev’s behest, the East European governments slowed or reversed many of the economic and political reforms they had implemented after Stalin’s death, and in Hungary the reformist prime minister, Imre Nagy, was removed in April 1955 by the

neo-Stalinist leader of the Hungarian Workers' Party, Mátyás Rákosi, who had been forced to yield the prime ministerial post to Nagy two years earlier under Soviet pressure. Because the new Hungarian prime minister, András Hegedüs, was a much weaker figure than Nagy, Rákosi was able to reacquire a dominant political role in the country and to undo many of the recently enacted reforms. Khrushchev later acknowledged, in a conversation with Chinese leaders, that one of his "most serious mistakes" in 1955 was to have gone back to "supporting that idiot Rákosi".⁵

The sudden dampening of popular expectations in Hungary and other East European countries – expectations that had been raised by the New Courses of the previous two years – helped generate strong currents of public discontent. Malenkov had been able to avoid the emergence of widespread unrest in Eastern Europe after June 1953 by pressing ahead with steps to improve living conditions, boost consumer output, and provide for greater responsiveness to public concerns; but after Khrushchev forced Malenkov to the sidelines in early 1955 (replacing him as prime minister with Nikolai Bulganin) and began curtailing the scope and pace of the post-Stalin reforms, he inadvertently heightened the potential for destabilizing turmoil in Eastern Europe.

The threat of instability in Eastern Europe was not as easy to defuse as it had been during the Stalin era. The Soviet Union no longer had recourse to Stalinist methods of ensuring bloc conformity. Although economic retrenchment had been possible, a return to pervasive terror was not; nor would Khrushchev and his colleagues have desired it. Hence, Khrushchev altered his approach somewhat as he sought to replace the political subordination of Eastern Europe, which had been possible in Stalin's time, with economic and ideological cohesion. He advanced the concept of a "socialist commonwealth" (*sotsialisticheskoe sodruzhestvo*) in which the East European Communist parties would have the right to follow their "own paths to socialism" – that is, to have somewhat greater leeway on internal matters – so long as they continued to "base all their activities on the teachings of Marxism-Leninism".⁶ Khrushchev apparently believed that popular support for the East European governments would increase if they were given greater independence in domestic policymaking, but he wanted to ensure that the Soviet Union would maintain long-term control of the bloc by promoting economic and military integration. In keeping with these goals, Khrushchev attempted to mend relations with Yugoslavia and bring it closer to the Soviet camp, give greater substance to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), and foster a more concrete Soviet–East European military relationship, most notably through the establishment of the Warsaw Treaty Organization in May 1955.

The bid for a rapprochement with Yugoslavia was of particular importance to Khrushchev, in part because he was able to use the issue as a wedge against one of his domestic rivals, Vyacheslav Molotov. Stalin and Molotov had provoked a bit-

ter split with Yugoslavia in 1948 and had subsequently tried to get rid of the Yugoslav leader, Josip Broz Tito. Various efforts to remove Tito ultimately proved futile, but Stalin remained fiercely hostile toward Yugoslavia to the very end. Within a few months of Stalin's death, however, on 16 June 1953, his successors agreed to restore diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia. This gesture marked the first attempt to end some five years of polemics and recriminations. Nevertheless, the significance of the move was limited because it did not yet entail a resumption of ties between the two countries' Communist parties. Molotov and a few other hardliners in the CPSU remained adamantly opposed to any suggestion of pursuing a reconciliation with the Yugoslav Communists.

Khrushchev began laying the groundwork in 1954 for a much fuller rapprochement with Yugoslavia, and he stepped up his efforts in the spring of 1955 to overcome the opposition posed by Molotov. On 26 May 1955, ten days after Khrushchev had returned from Poland for the signing of the Warsaw Pact, he traveled to Belgrade and held an extended series of meetings with Tito. The communiqué issued by the two sides on 2 June at the end of the meetings – a document that came to be known as the Belgrade Declaration – pledged respect for their “differences in internal complexion, social systems, and forms of socialist development”.⁷ The declaration also committed each side not to interfere in the other's internal affairs “for any reason whatsoever”. The visit and the joint declaration were valuable for Khrushchev not only in giving him another conspicuous foreign policy accomplishment, but also in allowing him to step up his attacks against Molotov. At a CPSU Central Committee plenum in July 1955, which Khrushchev convened shortly after returning from Belgrade, the delegates voiced a torrent of criticism about Molotov's “ridiculous”, “deeply misguided”, and “erroneous” views on relations with Yugoslavia.⁸

Soviet-Yugoslav relations continued to improve over the next several months as a result of Khrushchev's “secret speech” at the Twentieth CPSU Congress in February 1956 in which he explicitly condemned Stalin's policy toward Yugoslavia, describing it as “arbitrary” and “mistaken”.⁹ A summary of the secret speech, along with highly favorable commentary, was published in the main Yugoslav daily, *Borba*, on 20 March. The following month, Khrushchev agreed to dissolve the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), from which Yugoslavia had been expelled by Stalin in 1948. Although the Cominform had become mostly a figurehead organization after Yugoslavia's expulsion, the dismantling of it was clearly aimed at alleviating Yugoslav leaders' concerns about “future excommunications”.¹⁰ By the time Tito paid a lengthy reciprocating visit to the Soviet Union in June 1956, the reconciliation between the two sides had proceeded far enough that they could issue a joint communiqué praising the “diversity of forms of socialist development” and affirming the “right of different countries to pursue different paths of socialist development”. The communiqué repudiated the Stalin-

ist legacy by indicating that neither side would “attempt to impose its own views about ... socialist development on the other side”.¹¹

Khrushchev proved equally successful in achieving a settlement in Austria, a country that had been a major point of contention between East and West since the end of World War II. Under Stalin, the Soviet Union had consistently linked proposals for an Austrian peace treaty with other issues such as a settlement of the Trieste dispute and a resolution of the German question. The option of neutrality for Austria, which was first floated in the 1940s, was attractive to some officials in Moscow and in most Western capitals as well as in Austria itself.¹² But hardliners in Moscow like Molotov and Lazar Kaganovich were firmly opposed to the idea if it meant that the Soviet Union would have to pull all its troops out of Austria.¹³ Khrushchev, too, initially had been unwilling to accept proposals for Austrian neutrality and a troop withdrawal, but by early 1955 he had come to view a settlement of the Austrian question as a way of defusing a potential East-West flashpoint, eliminating the U.S., British, and French troop presence in Central Europe, and spurring progress in the long-stalled East-West negotiations on Germany by using the Austrian case as an example of how neutrality could be applied to a united German state.

In closed forums Molotov and other Soviet officials still heatedly opposed the prospective withdrawal of Soviet military forces from Austria, and Molotov sought to derail the whole question of an Austrian treaty in early 1955 when the CPSU Presidium discussed it.¹⁴ In the end, however, Khrushchev and his supporters were able to face down the hardliners, arguing that the removal of U.S., British, and French troops from Austria would more than compensate for the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Khrushchev alleged that Molotov’s “insistence on keeping our troops in Austria” must stem from “a desire to start a war”.¹⁵ Having overcome the main domestic obstacles, the Soviet authorities pursued bilateral talks with the Austrian government in March and April 1955, ironing out what neutrality would mean. Those bilateral talks were soon followed by a four-power conference and the formal signing of the Austrian State Treaty on 15 May 1955.¹⁶ The settlement marked a triumph for Khrushchev personally as well as for Soviet foreign policy.

Moreover, the establishment of the Warsaw Pact on 14 May 1955, the day before the signing of the Austrian State Treaty, forestalled any concerns that Khrushchev’s domestic opponents might have raised about the implications of the Soviet troop pullout from Austria.¹⁷ Until May 1955, the ostensible justification for Soviet military deployments in both Hungary and Romania had been that they were needed to preserve logistical and communications links with Soviet forces in Austria. The creation of the Warsaw Pact provided a rationale for maintaining the deployments in Hungary and Romania even after all Soviet troops were gone from Austria. The signing of the Pact was intended mainly as a symbolic counter to the

admission of West Germany into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but the legitimacy it conferred on the Soviet troop presence was part of a larger Soviet effort to codify the basic political and military structures of Soviet-East European relations. Rather than simply preserving the mechanisms devised by Stalin, who had relied disproportionately on terror and coercion, Khrushchev sought a less domineering approach that, he hoped, would permit greater domestic “viability” in Eastern Europe.

Despite the successful overtures to Yugoslavia, the conclusion of the Austrian State Treaty, and the establishment of the Warsaw Pact, Khrushchev’s policy toward Eastern Europe as a whole remained erratic. The Soviet Union’s vacillations between reform and retrenchment both at home and abroad, far from promoting either the “viability” or “cohesion” of the Eastern bloc, directly contributed to instability in the region, especially in Hungary and Poland. By early 1956, sociopolitical pressures in Eastern Europe had reached a dangerous point, and they increased still further as a result of the unintended spillover from Khrushchev’s secret speech at the Twentieth Soviet Party Congress. Although the speech was geared overwhelmingly toward developments within the Soviet Union, it could not help but undercut the position of many East European leaders who had adhered rigidly to Stalinist principles, as Mátyás Rákosi and Bolesław Bierut had done in Hungary and Poland.¹⁸ (Rákosi was ousted for good in July 1956 and had to take permanent refuge in the Soviet Union, and Bierut might have met the same fate had he not suddenly died in March 1956, apparently of heart failure and pneumonia.) Khrushchev’s speech also emboldened dissenters and critics of the East European regimes, leading to open hints of unrest in Communist ranks. The widespread popularity of one of the victims of the Stalin-era purges in Poland, Władysław Gomułka, and the continued influence of the erstwhile prime minister in Hungary, Imre Nagy, merely heightened the instability. Political unrest thus became intertwined with the economic discontent that had followed the re-imposition of harsh economic policies.

When the unrest turned violent in the Polish city of Poznań in late June 1956, it ushered in a four-month period of growing turmoil. The Polish army and security forces managed to crush the uprising in Poznań, but the two days of fighting left at least 73 people dead and more than 700 seriously wounded.¹⁹ The clashes also caused tens of millions of zlotys’ worth of damage to buildings, transportation systems, and other state property. At least thirty of the Polish army’s tanks, ten of its armored personnel carriers, and dozens of its military trucks were destroyed or rendered unusable during the operation – an indication of how intense the fighting was. It is now known that a few Polish officers tried to resist the decision to open fire, but their opposition proved futile because the security forces were willing to

carry out the orders and because Soviet commanders (and their Polish allies) still dominated the Polish military establishment.²⁰

The lessons that Soviet leaders drew from the Poznań crisis were decidedly mixed. At a CPSU Presidium meeting on 12 July 1956, Khrushchev claimed that the rebellion had been instigated by the “subversive activities of the imperialists, [who] want to foment disunity and destroy [the socialist countries] one by one”.²¹ On the other hand, the notes from the meeting show that Khrushchev and his colleagues were well aware of the explosive situation that was developing in both Hungary and Poland. The CPSU Presidium dispatched a senior Presidium member, Anastas Mikoyan, to Budapest on 13 July for a first-hand assessment of the growing political ferment in Hungary. Soon after arriving in Hungary, Mikoyan, who was one of Khrushchev’s closest aides, oversaw the removal of Rákosi and his replacement by Ernő Gerő, who Soviet leaders hoped would be better able to defuse the mounting discontent.²²

Khrushchev and his colleagues also sent a group of high-ranking Soviet officers to Hungary to inspect Soviet forces based there (the so-called Special Corps).²³ The officers, led by General Mikhail Malinin, a first deputy chief of the Soviet General Staff, discovered that the command staff of the Special Corps had not yet worked out a secret plan to prepare for large-scale internal disturbances in Hungary. (In the wake of the 1953 East German uprising, the commanders of all Soviet forces in Eastern Europe had been ordered by the CPSU leadership to devise appropriate plans for anti-riot and counterinsurgency operations.) When this omission was reported to Soviet defense minister Marshal Georgii Zhukov, he ordered that the requisite documents be compiled immediately. The visiting Soviet generals helped the commander of Soviet forces in Hungary, General Lashchenko, put together a “Plan of Operations for the Special Corps to Restore Public Order on the Territory of Hungary”, which was signed on 20 July.²⁴ This plan, codenamed *Volna* (Wave), envisaged the use of tens of thousands of Soviet troops at very short notice (within three to six hours) to “uphold and restore public order” in Hungary. The plan required a special signal (known as *Kompas*) to be put into effect, but the formulation of *Volna* at this stage indicates that Soviet leaders wanted a reliable fall-back option in case their attempts to bolster political stability in Hungary did not pan out.

Despite these precautions and the growing recognition in Moscow of the unstable situation in Eastern Europe, Soviet policy in the region remained hesitant and uncertain over the next few months, in part because Khrushchev was still under pressure at home from hardliners in the CPSU, who had forged close links with old-line Stalinist leaders in Eastern Europe. Fluctuations in Soviet domestic politics thus continued to roil intra-bloc ties. This internal-external dynamic helped to precipitate the crises that erupted in Poland and Hungary in October 1956 – crises that are discussed at length elsewhere in this special issue.

Notes

- ¹ For more on this unrest, see Mark Kramer, "The Early Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and Upheavals in East-Central Europe: Internal-external Linkages in Soviet Policy Making (Part 1)", *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Spring 1999): 3–55.
- ² These directives were recounted by Vitalii Chernyavskii, who served as the Soviet intelligence station chief in Bucharest in June 1953, in a lengthy interview in 2005. See Leonid Mlechin, "Moi pervyi nachal'nik podpolkovnik Chernyavskii", *Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie* (Moscow), No. 26 (15 July 2005): 7.
- ³ On the general course of the Soviet leadership struggle, see William C. Taubman, *Khrushchev: The Man and His Era* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2002), 256–269.
- ⁴ See Yurii Aksyutin, "Pyatyi prem'er, ili Pochemu Malenkov ne uderzhal bremya vlasti", *Rodina* (Moscow), No. 5 (May 1994): 81–88.
- ⁵ "Zapis' besedy tovarishcha Khrushcheva N. S. s Predsedatelem TsK KPK Mao Tsze-Dunom, zamestitelyami Predsedatelya TsK KPS Lyu Shao-tsi, Chzhou En'-Laem, Czhu De, Lin' Byao, chlenami Politbyuro TsK KPK Pyn Czenem, Chen' I i chlenom Sekretariata Van Tszya-syanom 2 oktyabrya 1959 goda", Osobaya papka (Strictly Secret/Special Dossier), 2 October 1959, in Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii (APRF), Moscow, Fond (F.) 45, Opis' (Op.) 1, Delo (D.) 331, Listy (LL.) 12–13.
- ⁶ "Zayavlenie tovarishcha N. S. Khrushcheva na aerodrome v Belgrade", *Pravda* (Moscow), 27 May 1955, 1.
- ⁷ "Deklaratsiya Pravitel'stv Soyuzu Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik i Federativnoi Narodnoi Respubliki Yugoslavii", *Pravda* (Moscow), 3 June 1955, 1–2.
- ⁸ "Plenum TsK KPSS – XIX Sozyv, 4–12 iyulya 1955 g." 4–12 July 1955 (Strictly Secret), in Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Noveishei Istorii (RGANI), F. 2, Op. 1, Dd. 139–180.
- ⁹ The text of the speech appeared promptly in the West but was not published in the Soviet Union until 1989. See "O kul'te lichnosti i ego posledstviyakh: Doklad pervogo sekretarya TsK KPSS tov. Khrushcheva N. S. XX S'ezdu Kommunisticheskoi partii Sovetskogo Soyuz", *Kommunist vooruzhenykh sil* (Moscow), No. 11 (June 1989): 63–92.
- ¹⁰ "Informatsionnoe soobshchenie o prekrashchenii deyatel'nosti Informatsionnogo Byuro kommunisticheskikh i rabochikh partii", *Pravda* (Moscow), 18 April 1956, 3.
- ¹¹ "Pust' zhivet i protsvetaet bratskaya sovetko-yugoslavskaya družba!" *Pravda* (Moscow), 22 June 1956, 1.
- ¹² For an analysis of this issue, see Michael Gehler, "From Non-alignment to Neutrality: Austria's Transformation during the First East-West Détente", *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (Fall 2005): 104–136.
- ¹³ See, for example, the large volume of documents on this matter in Arkhiv Vneshnei Politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii (AVPRF), F. 06, Op. 14, Papka (Pap.) 9, Dd. 107 and 116.
- ¹⁴ "Plenum TsK KPSS – XIX Sozyv: Stenogramma trinadtsatogo zasedaniya 11 iyulya 1955 g. (vechernogo)", 11 July 1955 (Strictly Secret), in RGANI, F. 2, Op. 1, D. 175, L. 178. See also A. M. Aleksandrov-Agentov, *Ot Kollontai do Gorbacheva: Vospominaniya diplomata, sovetnika A. A. Gromyko* (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1994), 95.
- ¹⁵ "Plenum TsK KPSS – XIX Sozyv: Stenogramma trinadtsatogo zasedaniya 11 iyulya 1955 g. (vechernogo)", L. 178.
- ¹⁶ For an analysis of Soviet policy in the lead-up to the treaty (though focusing predominantly on the Stalin period), based in part on declassified Soviet documentation, see Wolfgang Mueller, *Die sowjetische Besatzung in Österreich 1945–1955 und ihre politische Mission* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2005). See also the valuable collection of declassified Soviet documents pertaining to Soviet policy vis-à-vis Austria from 1945 to 1955, edited by Wolfgang Mueller et al.,

Sowjetische Politik in Österreich 1945–1955: Dokumente aus russischen Archiven (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005). Unfortunately, the relatively small number of documents in this book from the post-Stalin era shed almost no light on Soviet policymaking and high-level debates. A forthcoming essay on this topic by Aleksei Filitov, “The Post-Stalin Succession Struggle and the Austrian State Treaty”, to be published in Arnold Suppan, Gerald Stourzh, and Wolfgang Mueller, eds., *Der österreichische Staatsvertrag* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2006), is intriguing and insightful, but a good deal of murkiness remains. For a definitive history of the Austrian State Treaty, along with documentation and an extensive bibliography, see Gerald Stourzh, *Um Einheit und Freiheit: Staatsvertrag, Neutralität und das Ende der Ost-West-Besetzung Österreichs 1945–1955*, 4th ed. (Vienna: Böhlau, 1999).

¹⁷ “Podpisanie dogovora o druzhbe, sotrudnichestve i vzaimnoi pomoshchi”, *Pravda* (Moscow), 15 May 1955, p. 1, and the text of the treaty on p. 2.

¹⁸ For the effects on Rákosi’s position, see “Shifrtelogramma”, from Yu. V. Andropov, the Soviet ambassador in Hungary, to the CPSU Presidium, 29 April 1956 (Strictly Secret), in RGANI, F. 89, Op. 45, D. 1. For the effects in Poland, see the two reports from P. Turpit’ko, counselor at the Soviet embassy in Poland, in AVPRF, F. Referentura po Pol’she, Op. 38, Por. 42, Pa. No. 127, D. 178, Ll. 1–11 and 12–24.

¹⁹ Some estimates of the death toll range as high as 120. The most reliable and detailed discussion of the varying estimates is in Edmund Makowski, *Poznański Czerwiec 1956: Pierwszy bunt społeczeństwa w PRL* (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2001), pp. 165–171. Estimates of the number of wounded and of the extent of material damage also vary considerably. See *ibid.*, 171–174.

²⁰ See the analysis and valuable collection of declassified documents in Edward Jan Nalepa, *Pacyfikacja zbuntowanego miasta: Wojsko Polskie w Czerwcu 1956 r. w Poznaniu w swietle dokumentow wojskowych* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Bellona, 1992), 72–74, 111–120.

²¹ “Rabochaya zapis’ Zasedaniya ot 9-ogo i 12-ogo iyulya 1956 g.”, in RGANI, F. 3, Op. 12, D. 1005, Ll. 2-2ob.

²² See Mark Kramer, “The Soviet Union and the 1956 Crises in Hungary and Poland: Reassessments and New Findings”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (April 1998).

²³ Lieutenant-General E. I. Malashenko, “Osobyi korpus v ogne Budapeshta (Part 1)”, *Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 10 (October 1993), pp. 23–24. Malashenko, who in 1956 was a colonel, was the commander of the Special Corps.

²⁴ “Plan deistvii Osobogo korpusa po vosstanovleniyu obshchestvennogo poryadka na territorii Vengrii”, 20 July 1956 (Strictly Secret), as recorded in Tsentral’nyi arkhiv Ministerstva oborony, F. 32, Op. 701291, D. 15, Ll. 130–131.

