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1. THE SHEPILOV-GROMYKO SHIFT

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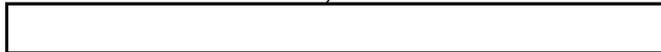


The transfer of Shepilov from the Foreign Ministry to his old job on the party secretariat and his replacement as foreign minister by First Deputy Gromyko, announced on 15 February, does not appear to presage major policy changes. It seems primarily intended to place the Soviet leaders in a better position to deal with problems currently facing them. Shepilov's stature within the top echelons of the party does not appear to be diminished. As late as 12 February he delivered the foreign policy report to the Supreme Soviet, and he continues to be a candidate member of the party presidium.

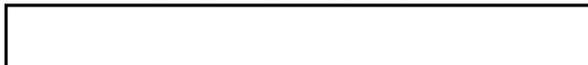
He may have been transferred to direct the party's campaign against ideological nonconformity, which has become a major problem in the USSR since the Hungarian crisis. By training and experience he is well fitted for this job, having served as head of the party's propaganda department and as editor of Pravda for a number of years.

The shift may also have been designed to permit a change of emphasis or manner in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy within established lines. Soviet leaders probably consider Gromyko one of their most knowledgeable diplomats in dealing with the United States.

The appointment of Gromyko to succeed Shepilov in effect downgrades the importance of the ministry, since Gromyko is a foreign policy technician rather than a policy maker. He ranks lower in the party than any foreign minister since 1939, when Litvinov was replaced by Molotov.



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2. SOVIET CENTRAL COMMITTEE PLENUM

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The Soviet Central Committee meeting of 13 and 14 February which decided on the replacement of Foreign Minister Shepilov also heard and approved a report by First Secretary Khrushchev on the "further perfecting of the organization of the administration of industry and building!"

In its only policy "decision" published thus far, the plenum pointed out that the "existing forms of directing industry and construction through specialized ministries...impede full use of the possibilities of our economy and do not insure concrete and efficient guidance!" The party presidium and the Council of Ministers were directed to submit solutions to the Supreme Soviet for the correction of this shortcoming. Specific decrees on reorganization and personnel changes can now be expected.

The Central Committee's directives apparently derive from economic conditions which have forced the USSR to cut back its production growth rates planned for 1957.

Over the years, the USSR's administrative policy has shifted back and forth between the concept of few units with broad responsibilities and the concept of specialized units. This decree appears to reverse the trend towards specialization prevailing since the fall of 1953. In addition, it reaffirms the policy of transferring powers to the union republics from Moscow, together with "strict observance" of centralized planning. The "decision," however, goes considerably beyond that of the December plenum and suggests that a basic reorganization may be contemplated.

The plenum also elected F. R. Kozlov a candidate member of the party presidium. Kozlov has been serving as first secretary of the Leningrad Oblast party committee since November 1953, when he was sponsored by Khrushchev to replace Malenkov's protégé, V. M. Andrianov.

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4. POLES REPORTEDLY TURN DOWN SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR ANTI-YUGOSLAV DECLARATION

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[Redacted] the Polish Communist Party has turned down a Soviet proposal for a "joint declaration of the Communist Parties" condemning Yugoslavia and its "road to socialism." A member of the Polish Communist Party politburo was quoted as saying that the rejection of this proposal by the Chinese and Italian Communists as well as the Poles had prevented a mistake similar to the Cominform condemnation of Tito in 1948. [Redacted]

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Comment

If true, this report would indicate that the Soviet leaders were willing to risk a serious rupture in relations with Belgrade, but deferred the attempt in the face of Polish, Chinese and Italian objections, probably because it would dramatize disunity rather than unity in the bloc.

[Redacted]

5. POLISH PARTY CALLS FOR PURGE OF CONSERVATIVE AND "REVISIONIST" ELEMENTS

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[Redacted]

[Redacted] the Polish party's politburo recently sent a letter to all regional organizations suggesting the exclusion of both Stalinists and those liberal elements who adhere to "revisionist" theories.

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[Redacted] the central committee has demanded the exclusion from the party of members who have shown anti-Semitic sentiments.

Comment This letter is probably intended as a warning which, if unheeded, may be followed by a move to exclude these groups when new party cards are issued.

Gomulka apparently hopes to avoid offense to the Kremlin without compromising his internal reform program, which in many of its facets is repugnant to the Soviet leadership. The simultaneous removal of active liberals along with some Stalinists would facilitate this course.

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8. SOVIET ECONOMIC OVERTURES TO GOLD COAST

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The USSR "bought heavily" in the Gold Coast cocoa market in early February, apparently as the first step in a friendship campaign toward the Gold Coast,

which becomes the independent state of Ghana on 6 March. According to the consul general in Accra, a Soviet trade representative entered a falling market and bought possibly as much as 10,000 tons of cocoa, the Gold Coast's principal crop.

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[Redacted]

The USSR normally buys about 5,000 tons a year from the Gold Coast.

By helping to bolster the cocoa market the USSR will improve its chances for the establishment of diplomatic relations with the new state.

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[Redacted]

Moscow undoubtedly sees in the new state an opportunity to extend its influence into West Africa, after its unsuccessful attempt to establish diplomatic relations with Liberia last year. The USSR and three Satellites have already accepted invitations to attend the independence celebrations in Accra next month, but a Soviet request for permission to send planes to Accra for the celebrations was turned down because of inadequate facilities.

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9. POLITICAL INSTABILITY RENEWED IN PAKISTAN

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Pakistan's Prime Minister Suhrawardy has suffered several recent setbacks which threaten to reverse the progress he has made in consolidating his political position. He failed to win control over his party in a contest with his chief rival, Maulana Bhashani, pro-Communist president of the East Pakistan Awami League, at the 6-8 February session of the East Pakistan Awami League Council. Suhrawardy had intended to push a resolution supporting his pro-Western foreign policies through the meeting, but Bhashani's

strength made it impossible without splitting the party. A compromise was worked out which confirmed the council's resolution of 1956 calling for the abrogation of military pacts, but left Awami League members of the National Assembly free to support Suhrawardy's foreign policies in the Assembly.

In addition, Pakistan's 1957-58 budget has come under such heavy attack from elements associated with the government as well as the opposition that on 13 February the finance minister was forced to withdraw his proposal for new taxes on a wide range of products. Such a retreat under pressure will undoubtedly encourage opposition forces to press their attacks on the government.

Suhrawardy's failure to gain Awami League support for his foreign policy will also prevent him from giving adequate attention to Pakistan's pressing economic problems, thus reducing the chances of halting the deteriorating economic situation. Despite reported pressure from President Mirza to arrest Bhashani for treason, Suhrawardy probably will continue to be unwilling to precipitate a crisis lest it split the party. The Bhashani forces probably are also unwilling to force a showdown lest it result in the downfall of the Awami-led central government which benefits East Pakistan.

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