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CAESAR 10 -A

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SUMMARIZATION OF REPORTS
PRECEDING BERIA PURGE

CIA SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
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Office of Current Intelligence

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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CAESAR 10-A
Summary

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

With the publication of Caesar 10, the Beria purge, it was thought desirable to summarize briefly the preceding reports in the series. Caesar 11, which is in process, is concerned with developments in the leadership situation following Beria's purge. After its publication, a critical review of the whole series will be undertaken, which will also incorporate additional information received since publication of the various reports.

It must be reiterated that these reports are concerned primarily with the Soviet leadership. They make no attempt to give proper historical weight or perspective to events taking place in the USSR during the period covered.

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CAESAR 10-A
SUMMARY

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Caesar 6 - The Zhdanov-Malenkov Relationship

This paper examined the validity of the hypothesis, current particularly among ex-Communists, that Zhdanov and Malenkov had battled for Stalin's favor and for control of the Communist Party. It was pointed out that Malenkov did suffer a definite political eclipse in 1946 and that this lasted until 1948. Zhdanov emerged as the leading party secretary in 1947 and 1948, while Malenkov spent this period in relative oblivion in the service of Soviet agriculture. At a time when agriculture was at least as difficult a problem as it is today, the chief spokesman was A.A. Andreev who headed the Council for Collective Farm Affairs. Conceivably Malenkov may have gone into this field as a trouble shooter and acted behind the scenes, perhaps as a balance to Andreev's Council. At any rate in terms of the Malenkov-Zhdanov struggle, it is clear that, whatever Malenkov's role in agriculture, it did not compensate for the setback he received in the party secretariat.

Caesar 6 also noted that "Malenkov was the only politburo member whose status dropped significantly in the period from 1946-1948 and whose position rose measurably after Zhdanov's death."

In an effort to determine how Zhdanov was able to persuade Stalin to demote Malenkov, the latter's association with Soviet intelligence activities, with Soviet policy toward Germany, and with the economist Varga, were explored. It was speculated that reverses in the foreign intelligence field and particularly a few key defections, such as that of Gouzenko, may have contributed to Malenkov's difficulties. With respect to his involvement in Soviet policy on Germany, several links were traced out which appeared particularly interesting.

Malenkov first became involved in foreign policy in connection with his chairmanship of the State Committee for Rehabilitation of Devastated Areas to which he was appointed in 1943. This body, called the "Special Committee," included Beria, Mikoyan, Voznesensky, and Andreev in its membership and later became the authority responsible for industrial dismantling in Soviet occupied areas in Eastern Europe. It was represented in the Soviet Military Administration in Germany by M.Z. Saburov who at that time was reportedly very close to Malenkov. □

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was badly handled; valuable property was destroyed or lost and hostility toward the USSR was fanned in the areas dismantled. In July 1946, Molotov announced that the dismantling would be discontinued.

In mid-1947 a new program was identified under the Chief Directorate of Soviet Property Abroad headed by ex-MGB chief Merkulov. This involved Soviet ownership of controlling shares of industrial firms in the Satellites. The Directorate was responsible to the Council of Ministers and not to Mikoyan's Ministry of Foreign Trade as previously suggested. Merkulov's deputies were Kobulov and Dekanosov. Further research is indicated to determine to what extent Beria became responsible for Satellite affairs.

The sixth chapter mentioned that various [] had reported Politburo conflict over Malenkov's dismantling policy. []

[] there does appear to be good reason to believe that Malenkov's policy was repudiated. If [] information is correct, it would appear that opposition to Malenkov's policy developed within the Special Committee itself. In this connection it is interesting to note that Mikoyan is the only one of its members in good standing today. Voznesensky and Beria have been purged and Andreev demoted.

With respect to Malenkov's connection with Varga, Caesar VI mentioned that Varga had espoused the dismantling program in a series of articles beginning in 1943 and had not come under attack until Malenkov's decline, suggesting an association between them. Various sources have also reported on this purported association.

Varga's book analyzing the impact of World War II on the Western capitalist economy, which had been completed in December 1945 and stood as the primary Soviet theoretical work in the field, was subjected to a highly critical review by a special conference of leading Soviet economists in May 1947. Several of the theses put forth by Varga and the Institute of World Economy and World Politics of which he was director had implied the ability of the capitalist system to undertake planning in the face of a great crisis and thus stave off its ultimate collapse. This ran counter to the narrow dogmatic interpretation of Marxian theory then held by doctrinaire party leaders and was particularly condemned at the conference.

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Following the May 1947 discussions, which had indicated the existence of considerable uncertainty even among Soviet economists on the course of developments in the capitalist economies, Varga and his Institute continued to publish controversial themes. In late 1947, Varga's Institute of World Economy and World Politics was merged with the Economics Institute (specializing in domestic economic problems) to form the Economics Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. This new institute, of which Varga continued as a member, was placed under the "scientific-organizational guidance" of the USSR State Planning Commission, then headed by Voznesenski. In his work The Soviet Economy During the Second World War published in 1947, Voznesenski had specifically attacked certain of the principles proposed by Varga. It is noteworthy that despite these attacks, apparently by the Zhdanov faction, Varga, an assumed associate of Malenkov, did not cease to be an important economist in the USSR and was never completely disgraced.

Zhdanov's role in formulating Soviet policy, particularly with regard to foreign communism, was examined and found to be important, [

] Specifically, Zhdanov was judged responsible for the militant Communist policy of 1947, the failure of which probably compromised his political career.

Caesar 7 - The Balance of Power

Caesar 7 began by tracing the ascent of Malenkov after Zhdanov's death. It was best symbolized by official politburo listings which saw Malenkov rise to the number-four position, and, after some initial jockeying with Beria, to the number-three ranking (behind Stalin and Molotov). Malenkov reappeared as a party secretary in July 1948. [

] Personnel problems again came under his jurisdiction and Kuznetsov who perhaps had assumed them in the intervening period was purged. In addition, Malenkov continued his interest in agriculture, the problem he had been assigned during his lean years.

Along with Kuznetsov, several other Zhdanov supporters were removed from office. Some interesting examples were:

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Colonel General Shikin, chief of the Army Political Directorate, replaced by F.F. Kuznetsov; N.A. Voznesensky, politburo member and Gosplan chief, replaced in the latter position by M.Z. Saburov; P.S. Popkov, party secretary in Leningrad, replaced by V.N. Andrianov; and G.M. Popov, party secretary in Moscow, replaced by N.S. Khrushchev. With regard to these replacements a note of caution is in order. It would be flaunting standard bureaucratic procedure as well as Stalin's operating methods to insist that they were all Malenkov men.

The government changes of 1949 which saw Molotov, Mikoyan and Bulganin relinquish their direct ministerial control were also examined with somewhat inconclusive results. Concerning Molotov it was noted in passing that he reportedly was responsible for Soviet rejection of the Marshall plan and that Mikoyan and Kaganovich had held a different view. Molotov apparently retained politburo-level supervision over foreign affairs and it was suggested that he was concentrating on Far Eastern problems.

The Voznesensky case was examined in some detail and the hypothesis that he had been involved in a theoretical or practical policy controversy was largely discounted. Suslov's attack on Voznesensky's "un-Marxist" views in December 1952 was seen as an ex post facto one. It was concluded that the probable reasons for Voznesensky's disappearance were his close ties with Zhdanov as well as a possible failure in the planning and direction of the Soviet economy.

Another topic mentioned in this seventh chapter was rearmament. Some sort of rearmament or re-equipment program was thought to have begun in the latter half of 1948, the extent of which was unknown.

Pravda's attack on Andreev's "link" system of collective farming in February 1950 was briefly examined, as was Khrushchev's movement to enlarge the collective farms in the Moscow Oblast by merging the small farms. This program was first outlined by Khrushchev in April 1950. He later intimated in December of that year that his policy was being implemented throughout the USSR. The controversy was regarded as signaling the temporary triumph of one political faction over another.

In foreign policy the USSR was seen to have backed out of European problems and to have concentrated on the Far East. The shift seemed to be due more to circumstances than to a

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controversy over foreign policy and was not held to be associated with Malenkov's rise.

There was also little reason for believing that the plan for the North Korean invasion provoked any controversy. Although there is good reason to believe that Molotov was in the Far East in August and later in October 1950, probably in connection with Chinese Communist entry into the war, there were no grounds for concluding that he or any other person was the primary sponsor of the North Korean attack. The static situation in the Soviet hierarchy following the Korean war suggests that Stalin served up no scapegoats for the reverses suffered and thus was either personally responsible for the war or did not regard it as a debacle.

Caesar 8 - Indecision and Stress, 1950 - 1952

This report examined the evidence available in several critical fields during the period. All of it seemed to point to "indecision and stress." The Soviet leaders appeared increasingly concerned over US rearmament, integration of Western defense and the spread of the Korean war, but their foreign policy remained the same--rigid and provocative. It was suggested that controversy developed over Stalin's inflexible line in foreign affairs. Here is a synopsis of the topics examined:

Foreign Policy: Korean cease-fire feelers were made in April after bitterly anti-Western propagandistic statements, by Pospelov in January 1951, and by Stalin in February. Malik finally made his proposal in June and the talks began. The discussions soon bogged down, however, and evidence accumulated that the Communists were preparing a fall offensive. This was apparently called off at the last minute and probably involved a major policy decision. The truce talks were then resumed and continued until late 1952 when another stalemate developed which continued until after Stalin's death. In Europe the deputy foreign ministers met in Paris from April to June 1951 but got nowhere and in September of that year the USSR sent out a rash of notes in protest against NATO. Although Stalin's letter of February 1952, which later formed a large part of his Economic Problems of Socialism, was much calmer than his remarks of a year earlier, he came up with essentially no new foreign policy formula. Stalin denounced as heresy the view that wars between capitalist states were no longer inevitable and that imperialism must attack the USSR.

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Some vacillation on the German question was noticeable. In March 1952, the USSR proposed a draft treaty for Germany embodying a shift from its previous position but further exchanges proved unfruitful. In June the USSR shifted Ambassadors to the GDR and in July a harsh collectivization program was inaugurated suggesting that policy had crystallized on a divided Germany.

Industry: The international situation appeared to have complicated the internal planning system. Revisions in the draft Five Year Plan and subsequent efforts to redraft the plan in 1950 and 1951 probably reflected indecision regarding policy. In his February 1952 letter published in Economic Problems of Socialism Stalin stuck with the status quo solution and rejected changes in favor of either heavy investment in armament or in consumer goods.

Agriculture: In January 1951, Khrushchev carried his agriculture policy a little further in a speech advocating not only the merger of kolkhozes but the actual resettlement of peasants belonging to the merged kolkhozes in single urban centers known as "agro-cities"; the personal plots of the peasants were to be on the outskirts of the new settlements. Pravda's treatment of this policy indicated that it was too hot to handle: the speech was not published until 4 March and the following day Pravda ran a caveat saying that it had been printed "as material for discussion." Two regional party leaders ripped into it shortly thereafter: Arutinov of Aremlnia said the proposals were a "fantasy"; Bagirov of Azerbaijan said they were "harmful and intolerable." After this criticism the agro-city concept was discontinued but kolkhoz amalgamation continued.

Caesar 8 in attempting to analyze this curious disagreement reached the tentative conclusion that Khrushchev was expressing his own views in this matter and that Arutinov and Bagirov were emboldened in their opposition by the support of Beria.

Malenkov's position in the dispute is not clear. He was still active in the field [

[Andreev also continued active as Chairman of the Council for Collective Farms Affairs. At the October Congress Malenkov had mentioned that certain leading officials had indulged in a wrong approach and had overlooked agricultural production, the main task. This has been taken as a slap at Khrushchev. Stalin in his Economic Problems of Socialism remained aloof from the problem.

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Bagirov and Arutinov were purged in the period following Beria's arrest, reinforcing the idea that he had been their patron. One of the accusations against Beria was that he had hindered the solution of urgent agricultural problems. Bagirov's latter day association with Beria however is still in dispute.

Security: In August 1951 MGB chief Abakumov was replaced by S.D. Ignatiev, a party functionary. Following this, nine new faces were numbered among the republic MGB chiefs and four among the deputy ministers in Moscow. One of the latter, A.A. Epishev, may actually have entered the ministry as a deputy minister for personnel as early as February 1951. He, like Ignatiev, was a party functionary of some stature and may have had links to Khrushchev by virtue of his service in the Ukraine. The shake-up was interpreted as a move by the party to strengthen its control over the MGB, particularly in view of a speech by the new Georgian MGB minister in September 1952.

The Georgian Purges: These purges which lasted from the latter part of 1951 through August 1952 were interpreted as considerably weakening Beria's position. [

[] The
[] Stalin personally ordered the shake-up and [] rumors that Malenkov had acted as Stalin's emissary in this matter.

Stalin's Economic Problems of Socialism: Mr. Kennan's views were quoted to the effect that Stalin, in his discussion of the capitalist world, had put forward a theory which had been challenged by a group which questioned its soundness. This group had presumably wanted to face up to the reality of the Western coalition and to negotiate before deciding on a definite solution. This view was overruled by Stalin, who argued that it was unnecessary to negotiate since the Western world would go to pieces anyway. This seemed to be the center of ideological disagreement in the Kremlin.

The 19th Party Congress: Changes in the statutes were viewed primarily as regularizing already existing practices. The presidium, which replaced the old politburo, was regarded as largely an honorary body with real power still in the hands of a "buro" within it, composed of the old politburo members. The central committee expansion reflected the elevation of party careerists over specialists and technicians from other sections of society and indicated the comparative importance of the party worker. This development was interpreted as increasing Malenkov's influence in the central committee since he had been the party organization specialist. As a matter of passing

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interest it was pointed out that every republic Congress, prior to the all-Union one had stressed the need for vigilance--primarily against bourgeois nationalism.

Post Congress Developments: The most significant post-Congress development was the announcement of the doctors' plot on 13 January 1953, following an intense propaganda campaign directed against laxness, gullibility, and bourgeois deviations and emphasizing the need for "revolutionary vigilance."

Several other interesting developments were briefly noted: The announcement 15 days after the conclusion of the Congress that Marshal S.I. Govorov's name had been "inadvertently" left off the list of candidate members of the central committee; the identification of D.T. Shipilov, ousted in 1949 from Agitprop for numerous "shortcomings" including complicity in the Voznesensky affair, as the new editor of Pravda; and the period of high political tension and behind-the-scenes maneuvering in the period from the October Party Congress until Stalin's death.

Most of the propositions advanced in this chapter are of a hypothetical nature, and numerous problems remained unsolved. Chief among these is the problem of Abakumov's replacement as MGB minister by S.D. Ignatiev, the reasons for this shift and the political relationships involved in it. Clarification of this point may serve to unravel many of the problems of the two years preceding Stalin's death.

Caesar 1 - The Doctors' Plot

This chapter attempted to outline all the known relevant information pertaining to the doctors' plot and to suggest a tentative hypothesis regarding its meaning. The plot definitely had anti-Semitic and anti-American overtones. The wording of the announcement hinted that other Soviet leaders had either been murdered or had had their life span reduced; one of the doctors had been chief of the Kremlin medical directorate and had presumably treated Stalin and other Soviet leaders. Only two low-level intermediaries were singled out in the plot, suggesting that there were more important participants whose names had not been disclosed. Because Shcherbakov's alleged murder occurred in 1945 when Merkulov was MGB minister and Zhdanov's alleged murder occurred in 1948 when Abakumov was the responsible security chief, it was suggested that the plot, primarily because of its criticism of the security elements, was directed ultimately against Beria.

No good reason could be adduced for the inclusion of the specific five military men mentioned. It did seem possible that the announcement was a warning against a group of

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individuals contesting for more political power. The belated appointment of Govorov to the central committee suggested that there was such a contest going on, but it was impossible to place the participants.

The plot set off an intense vigilance campaign in Soviet propaganda and both Stalin and Malenkov were employed as its oracles. This caused speculation that both were mixed up in the origin of the plot. However, in the vigilance campaign, Stalin's line (in his Economic Problems) that the capitalist countries were going to destroy themselves rather than get together against the Soviet Union, was abandoned for his earlier and stronger capitalist encirclement theory. One Pravda article, for example, said that certain "rotten theories" such as the view that capitalist encirclement no longer existed, were still prevalent in the USSR and must be rooted out.

Other indications of tension in the period leading up to Stalin's death were also briefly noted. The list of candidates for the local Moscow Soviets published on 27 January did not contain the names of several ministers, thus foreshadowing some of the organizational changes to be made after Stalin's death; P.N. Pospelov appeared as deputy editor of Pravda (Pospelov had earlier been replaced as head of the Marx-Lenin-Stalin Institute and had been passed over when the party presidium had been elected in October. The autopsy report on L.Z. Mekhlis, a party official who died on 14 February, listed I.I. Kuperin of the MGB as new chief of the Kremlin medical directorate; on 17 February Izvestia carried a curious announcement of the "sudden" death of General Kozynkin of the Kremlin guard; on the same day, the grim atmosphere prevailing at a Chinese reception on the anniversary of the Sino-Soviet pact attended only by Bulganin; Red Army day ceremonies on 23 February stressed the "liberation" role of the Soviet army, a departure from previous practice.

The main view that emerged from the chapter was one of an atmosphere of tension, confusion and fearful expectancy in the period just prior to Stalin's death.

Caesar 2 - Death of Stalin

This chapter began by pointing out that until 4 March neither the Soviet people nor the rest of the world had been given any inkling in Soviet propaganda that Stalin was critically ill. While this tended to suggest that his death had caught even the Soviet leaders off guard, it was noted that the West was completely dependent on the Soviet press for all the news on this development and it was therefore impossible to say when or how Stalin died. The sudden announcement of

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Stalin's illness focused attention on his successor; the strongest contender appeared to be Malenkov, due to his hold on the party apparatus and because of the strong possibility that he also controlled the MGB through Ignatiev. There was no specific mention of a successor, however, and responsibility was placed in the hands of the central committee and the Council of Ministers.

The announcement of Stalin's death came on 5 March and again no specific Soviet leaders were mentioned. Khrushchev was named chairman of Stalin's funeral committee and burial was set for 9 March. On the 7th the big party and government reorganization was announced to prevent "panic and disarray." The whole system was streamlined. Malenkov was named premier and ranked first in the party presidium followed by Beria. Four of the old politburo members became first deputy premiers and, of these, three took over control of a ministry: Molotov--Foreign Affairs; Beria--MVD; and Bulganin--War. Voroshilov replaced Shvernik as "president." A strong indication that jockeying for position was going on underneath the surface was seen in the reorganization of the party secretariat--the group handling party personnel matters. The announcement indicated that of the nine incumbent secretaries the status of three--Malenkov, Suslov and Aristov--could not immediately be determined; four--Pegov, Ponomarenko, Ignatov and Brezhnev--were transferred to other duties; two--Khrushchev and Mikhailov--remained. In addition three newcomers were added--Ignatiev, Pospelov and Shatealin. The secretariat was to be reshuffled again a week later.

Reactions to Stalin's death were then explored, somewhat inconclusively. In the satellites unusual security restrictions were enforced. In the Soviet Union the Moscow citizens appeared relatively unmoved but in the provinces, [

] there had been widespread grief and shock. A gradual de-emphasis of Stalin was begun, though nothing suggestive of criticism appeared. At the funeral only Molotov displayed any grief. Malenkov and Beria devoted their attention to the future. Beria did not once refer to Stalin. He indicated that the Party's policy would brook no interference and said that one of the decisions taken in this connection was the appointment of Malenkov as Premier. (Beria later made the nominating speech for Malenkov at the Supreme Soviet meeting called to ratify these changes in the leadership). Beria included one curious passage in his speech alluding to the government's regard for the rights of its citizens.

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The funeral ceremony presented the Soviet leadership as a triumverate with Malenkov primus inter pares closely trailed by Beria and with Molotov a relatively poor third. It was followed by an abortive Stalin-like build-up of Malenkov in the Soviet press which lasted only until 11 March. The uncertainty in Soviet propaganda as to Stalin's successor caused confusion in the Communist world outside the USSR. In addition [] [] claimed that Communists in Western Europe thought Molotov would succeed Stalin.

The halt in Malenkov's build-up roughly coincided with the Central Committee meeting of 14 March where, at his own "request" Malenkov was removed from the Secretariat. Khrushchev, Suslov, Pospelov, Shatalin and Ignatiev were listed as members of the Secretariat and Shatalin was raised from alternate to full membership on the Central Committee. This development strongly suggested that Malenkov had succumbed to pressure either direct or indirect, from the other Soviet leaders, and had given up his direct control over Party personnel matters. Thus his power was being limited at the outset. The relationship between Khrushchev and Malenkov was explored in the chapter with inconclusive results.

The central committee meeting on 14 March seems to have formalized the collective leadership principle although realignment probably began on 6 March with the peculiar reshuffling of the secretariat and the statement that Khrushchev was to be assigned "leading work in the central committee." This meeting was not publicized until 20 March but it obviously prepared the way for the 15 March Supreme Soviet meeting which had apparently been postponed to allow the central committee to meet. At this session Malenkov came out publicly for the principle of collective leadership. The Supreme Soviet at this 15 March meeting ratified all the preceding government changes and made several more which were equally as sweeping. As mentioned previously, Beria made the nominating speech for Malenkov, []

[] Beria clearly gave the impression of being the "ringleader." Molotov, however, of all the leaders, received the most applause.

At this meeting: the War and Navy Ministries were merged; A.I. Kozlov, a party official, received complete control of agriculture by inheriting several merged ministries dealing with the subject (the State Council of Collective Farm Affairs under Andreev was finally abolished); P.K. Ponomarenko, who some Western observers thought would become either a deputy premier or minister of agriculture, moved completely out of the latter field and became minister of culture; Gossnab and Gosprodsnab were merged with Gosplan giving it supervision

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over allocations of materials, food and industrial products, thereby greatly increasing its importance (Kosyachenko, its new chief, was not even a member of the central committee); Mikoyan, who earlier had been named minister of external and foreign trade, was made the only deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers and thus given a peculiar niche all by himself; N.G. Ignatov, who had also been marked on 6 March for an important government position, was not even mentioned though he later turned up as a party secretary in Leningrad; V.V. Kuznetsov, who had been appointed ambassador to China on 10 March, was made a deputy minister of foreign affairs; A.A. Andreev was elected a member of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

[The Chief Directorate of Camps of the MVD (slave labor) was transferred to the Ministry of Justice, and several other directorates of the MVD dealing with such matters as mining and metallurgy were transferred to their ministerial counterparts. In at least some cases the chiefs of these directorates as well as the personnel moved with them. Thus the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) which before the 6 March merger had been separate from the MGB (Ministry of State Security) and which had handled primarily economic functions, was gradually losing its economic role.

This development was of great interest, particularly because Beria had regained direct control of the reorganized MVD.

[Furthermore the MVD functions included a good deal of construction for the atomic energy program which Beria was reliably reported to head. Therefore it was believed that Beria may have succumbed to pressure to give up this empire within an empire in the give-and-take atmosphere of 6-15 March.

Caesar 3 - the Reversal of the Doctors' Plot

On 4 April 1953, close on the heels of the 27 March amnesty, Pravda reported that an investigation committee of the new MVD had discovered that "ex-officials" of the MGB had used "illegal methods" to get the doctors to confess. The guilty officials were said to have been arrested. The

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announcement obviously caught some Soviet papers, notably Young Communist, completely by surprise since on the same day that journal ran an article praising the original informer on the plot. Six non-Jewish doctors were added to the list of those falsely accused while the names of two of the original nine were missing.

The language of the Pravda editorial on the release of the doctors as well as the actual circumstances appeared to indicate that Beria was a prime mover in the action. On 7 April the central committee removed S.D. Ignatiev, the MGB minister at the time of the doctors' arrest, from the party secretariat, less than three weeks after he had been confirmed in the post. On 10 April Izvestia promised that the persons found guilty of falsely accusing the fifteen Soviet doctors and attempting to foment racial prejudice would be punished.



On 22 May, N.N. Vasilev, minister of state control of the RSFSR, claimed that the guilty parties, including Deputy MGB Minister Ryumin, had been punished. Why or by what authority Vasilev made the announcement was never determined. On 8 May, the leading newspaper in Georgia linked Ryumin with Rukhadze, a former Georgian MGB minister, who had handled the 1951-52 purges there; Rukhadze was accused of fabricating evidence and attempting to stir up racial hatred. It seemed, therefore, that Beria was getting ready to clear out undesirable elements in the MGB. The doctors' plot reversal was followed in Georgia by a reversal of the 1951-52 purges there and V.G. Dekanozov, a Beria supporter moved in as minister of the reorganized MVD.

The various efforts made by the new regime to reduce internal and external tension were briefly reviewed in the chapter and it was concluded that on the external side the efforts were designed to promote a period of international relaxation while the collective leadership thrashed out its problems. Wedded to this, however, was the possibility that the new leaders, aware of the failure as well as the danger of Stalin's rigid foreign policy, were anxious to try something a little more safe, sane and productive.

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Caesar 4 - Germany

P.F. Yudin's appointment as political adviser to the Soviet Control Commission on 15 April 1953, vice Semenov, did not result in any policy change. Walter Ulbricht maintained his dominant position and his "hard line" policy. On 28 May, Moscow completely revamped its representation in Germany, dissolved the Soviet Control Commission under General Chuikov, and named Semenov to the new post of high commissioner. Semenov's return 37 days after he had been replaced implied Kremlin indecision on its German policy and on the personnel and organizational set-up necessary to implement that policy.

Chuikov, whose function was now limited to command of Soviet troops in Germany, switched places with the commander of the Kiev Military District in early June. Yudin remained as deputy to Semenov until 2 December when he was named ambassador to China. A similar development occurred at the same time in Austria where Ilyichev, a professional diplomat, became Soviet high commissioner.

Four days after Semenov's return, the SED spectacularly reversed its program. A week following this reversal, on 17 June, the East German government encountered the greatest show of resistance ever experienced in any Satellite. Soviet authorities reacted swiftly and efficiently to quell the disturbances and employed Soviet troops. The revolt, however, did not effect the "new economic course" in the Satellites.

Ambassador Bohlen suggested on 19 June that the reforms embodied in the "new course" stemmed from a realization on the part of the Soviet leaders that a continuation of intensive socialism would lead to economic or political catastrophe which could be coped with only through measures of terror they were unwilling to employ.

In Poland, the USSR also shifted ambassadors. G.M. Popov replaced career diplomat Sobolev. Popov had been removed from the all-Union party secretariat in 1949 and also from his position as first deputy of the Moscow City and Oblast party committee. This was of interest, because Popov had been strongly criticized for his handling of agricultural problems in the oblast. His successor was N.S. Khrushchev, who was shortly to introduce his "radical" scheme for collectivizing agriculture.

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Caesar 5 - Melnikov's Removal in the Ukraine

On 10 April the Ukraine began to reorganize its government apparatus in accordance with the USSR reorganization of 15 March. The MVD-MGB merger which took place there saw P.Y. Meshik, a reported associate of Beria, come in as the new MVD minister. On 30 May, A.Y. Korneichuk was appointed first deputy chairman of the Republican Council of Ministers. This was of some interest because he had been attacked by Ukraine party secretary Melnikov at the September 52 Ukraine Party Congress for his "bourgeois nationalist" tendencies. Interest in Ukraine party affairs had also been heightened, because, when the Malenkov propaganda build-up had ground to a halt in mid-March in the central press, the Ukrainian press, presumably under Melnikov's direction, had continued to play up Malenkov as the number one leader.

In early June the Ukrainian press began criticizing "violators" of the Soviet nationalities policy. Finally on 12 June, Melnikov, the first secretary of the Ukrainian party, was removed from office. He was also an alternate member of the all-Union party presidium and as such was the highest official purged since Stalin's death. Melnikov was accused of allowing "distortions" of the Soviet nationalities policy in the western areas of the Ukraine. One of these "distortions" was the substitution of Russian for Ukrainian in the school curriculum. A.I. Kirichenko, a native Ukrainian, was named to replace Melnikov.

Melnikov's removal seemed to reflect on presidium members Khrushchev and Malenkov. Melnikov had been second secretary under Khrushchev from 1947-1949 when the latter was first secretary of the Ukrainian party. Melnikov had faithfully reflected Malenkov's views on party discipline, policy and procedure and had also taken a rather prominent part in the Soviet vigilance campaign which derived much of its ideological inspiration from Malenkov's speech at the party congress.

It was speculated that Melnikov's ouster was instigated by Beria, since it was the third instance of a party purge on charges of promoting Russification which seemed to come in the wake of MVD personnel changes. The first was the doctors' plot reversal and the removal of Ignatiev, and the second was the mid-April purge in Georgia following the appointment of Dekanosov. Melnikov's purge followed Meshik's appointment as MVD Minister in the Ukraine.

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Caesar 9 - Politics and the Soviet Army

Caesar #9 included extensive background research to determine how important a political factor is the Soviet military, and what types of political action or influence might be expected of the armed forces and their leaders in times of crisis. This research revealed that the Soviet armed forces do not have a history of successful interference in internal political crises as a single, organized element of power. Their heritage includes a tendency toward fragmentation and inaction during internal crisis. Military freedom of action is restricted by the interlocking networks of political officers and security police operating within the ranks, by a tendency toward conformity among officers and men alike, by a growing officer caste system, and by the presence in the ranks of a high percentage of Communists subject to party discipline. Unless the existing controls break down under drastic circumstances, the armed forces as a whole must be looked upon as a relatively passive and non-monolithic body with regard to a Soviet succession crisis.

Caesar #9 continued with a current review of developments beginning with the 19th Party Congress in October 1952, to determine what changes occurred in the political position of the Soviet armed forces and their leaders during the period of extreme tension ensuing from Stalin's death. From the 19th Party Congress until Stalin's death, there were some indications of the participation of military leaders in political maneuvering, as evidenced by Govorov's belated designation as a candidate member of the central committee and by the naming of military officers in the doctors' plot announcement. The period of the post-Stalin struggle between Malenkov and Beria, from March until June, was a time of outward passivity on the part of the military leaders, with an increase in political control over them, indicated primarily by the reorganization of the ministry of armed forces and the return of Bulganin as minister. The re-emergence of Zhukov, probably considered by the party leadership as a safety measure at a critical moment, gave increased influence to an outspoken professional officer.

A shift from a passive toward a more active role of the military in politics probably occurred beginning with the Beria purge. Representatives of the armed forces participated in the removal and sentencing of Beria, and the new party leadership probably rewarded military support by giving the

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professional military men greater freedom within their own establishment. After June, some high officers of the armed forces were promoted, greater consideration was given to a military point of view regarding questions of morale and security in the armed forces. The political position of the Soviet military leaders appeared better than it had for several years previously, and an uneasy alliance was probably maintained between top professional officers and party leaders.

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