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1. report	re: Cuba, Korea, China, USSR, 19p including annotated reprint of page 13 and 14 <i>PART 1/20/03 F95-074/3 #67</i>	9/25/85	P1/B1 B3

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~~MTC~~

Trends

This issue includes . . .

- Castro vs. Radio Marti
- Korean exchanges
- PRC and '88 Olympics
- Treatment of Gorbachev speeches
- Gromyko's role

File Gorbachev

File Gromyko

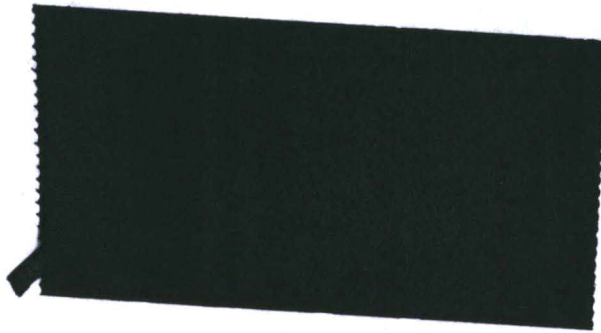


Foreign Broadcast Information Service

DECLASSIFIED IN PART
NLS F95-074/3 #67
By CIS, NARA, Date 1/22/03

This report examines selected foreign media, with emphasis on the controlled media of communist countries. The analyses are based exclusively on media content and behavior and are issued without coordination with other U.S. Government components.

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Cuba-U.S.

Castro Raises Specter of Interference With U.S. Broadcasts

Fidel Castro has broken the public silence he had maintained on Radio Marti since its inauguration in May, personally affirming Havana's capacity to retaliate against the broadcasts by interfering with commercial radio stations in the United States.

Castro's threat to interfere with the signals of U.S. commercial radio stations was conveyed in remarks to the closing session of a Latin American press forum in Havana on 19 September and reported by Havana television the following day. He did not mention Radio Marti or the Administration by name but touched on them indirectly in the context of general observations on the technical capabilities of Cuban media. Castro stated that Cuba has built "powerful" medium and shortwave transmitters that can be used as "weapons" against "subversive radio."

Castro noted pointedly that Cuba could "combine some equipment" to boost the power of its transmitters to "1,000 kilowatts," adding that if Havana were to take such a step, "no radio station would be heard again" in the United States. He expressed the hope that Cuba "will not have to use them for this purpose" but warned that Havana is aware of this option if "they do not take advice and persist in their plans for a campaign of subversion."

Other Reaction Since early July Cuban media have virtually ignored Radio Marti, treatment that contrasts with the extensive media attention immediately following the station's inauguration on 20 May. An article in the party newspaper *Granma* on 9 July noted only in passing that the delegates to the Fourth Congress of the Latin American Federation of Journalists, which was held in Havana from 5 to 8 July, had condemned the existence of an "anti-Cuban radio station" in the United States. Neither Castro nor Havana media have commented on Western press reports that Radio Marti has sharpened its criticism of the Cuban Government in recent weeks.

Prior to Castro's remarks to the press forum, the only Cuban official to comment publicly on Radio Marti since July was Politburo member Raul Valdes writing in the August issue of the Soviet theoretical journal *Problemy Mira i Sotsializma (Problems of Peace and Socialism)*. Valdes strongly criticized the station, stating that the Cuban people have nicknamed Radio Marti "Goebbels' station" because of its "vile fabrications, slander, and misinformation." Valdes reaffirmed Cuba's official position, first stated in Havana's protest note after the station's inauguration, that the inauguration of Radio Marti caught the Cuban leadership by surprise. Thus he called the decision to begin the broadcasts "unexpected" because of the steps that had been taken earlier to ease tensions between Cuba and the United States, alleging that the United States "suddenly cut off the way to normalization" in order to create a "climate of tension" around Cuba and divert attention from Havana's "just proposals" on the foreign debt problem.¹

Past Warnings of Interference

The possibility that Cuba might retaliate against Radio Marti by interfering with the operation of U.S. commercial radio stations was first raised by Deputy Foreign Minister Alarcon in August 1982. Two weeks later Havana demonstrated its technical capacity to carry out this threat when a series of high-powered medium-wave broadcasts interfered with a number of U.S. radio stations.

Last year, when Havana was signaling its interest in improving relations with the United States, Castro seemed to back away from the interference option by playing down Havana's intention to disrupt U.S. radio stations. At a press conference with U.S. reporters during Jesse Jackson's visit to Havana in June, Castro stated that Cuba reserved the right to broadcast directly to the United States in response to Radio Marti but stressed that "the purpose would not be to jam" U.S. stations.

Havana's protest note following the inauguration of Radio Marti listed a number of retaliatory measures that it had decided to adopt or was considering, but the note did not explicitly mention the possibility of interfering with U.S. stations. The only step involving radio transmissions that it specifically mentioned was to stipulate Havana's "right to transmit medium-wave radio broadcasts to the United States to make fully known the Cuban view on the problems concerning the United States and its international policy." (U/FOUO)

¹ Havana's reaction to the inauguration of Radio Marti broadcasts is discussed in FBIS *Analysis Report* FB 85-10023 of 30 May 1985, "Havana, Moscow on Radio Marti."

Korea

Pyongyang Treats Exchanges, Economic Talks in Upbeat Terms

Despite nettlesome hitches and a flurry of polemics between the two sides, the North portrayed the just-concluded exchange of art troupes and family visits as a noteworthy success. It also professed to see a significant community of views forged at the fourth round of economic talks held last week.

Pyongyang's generally upbeat treatment of the 20-23 September Red Cross exchanges of art troupes and family members sought to convey the impression that the two sides have taken a historic step that has improved the atmosphere not only for further Red Cross contacts but for the North-South dialogue overall. At a reception in Seoul on 22 September, the head of the North Korean delegation, Song Son-pil, termed the exchange "useful and meaningful," noting that in Seoul he met various South Korean Red Cross officials and "figures of political and public circles" and had an "open-hearted exchange of views." He was even more positive in his departure statement on the 23d, carried the same day by KCNA. He called the exchange a "fine success" despite what he asserted was the "pitiful" inability of all of the members of the North Korean group to meet with relatives in Seoul because of the "very regrettable" failure of the South Korean side to "fulfill its responsibility."

Limited Criticism North Korean criticism of the South during the exchange focused narrowly on specific ROK actions or statements without raising broader questions about commitment to the dialogue. Much of the criticism seemed to be in response to negative ROK media comment, an approach that Pyongyang adopted during the delivery of flood relief supplies in September last year. At that time the North similarly attempted to accentuate the positive and portrayed itself as reacting more in disappointment than in anger to South Korean criticism.

DPRK reports on the ROK art troupe's performances in Pyongyang on 21 and 22 September, for example, briefly recounted their program but did not comment on the quality of the performances or the audience response. It was

not until the 23d, after ROK media criticized the North Korean troupe's performances, that Pyongyang voiced complaints about the performances of the South's troupe. In responding to the South's criticism, however, the North limited the scope of its countercharges, stating only that the ROK reaction came from "some people" who do not want "national reconciliation and unity."

North Korean media also showed restraint in failing to invoke the name of Kim Il-song or Kim Chong-il in reporting the Red Cross exchanges; to flaunt their names would seem provocative in this context. The younger Kim's connection with the development of the arts is a staple of North Korean reporting on performances by DPRK art troupes, while the elder Kim is routinely mentioned in discussions of economic and social progress. Although ROK media reported that the North Korean participants in the family reunions extensively praised Kim Il-song, Pyongyang accounts stated only that they credited their success and happiness to the care of the "party and the leader."

The failure of central North Korean media to mention either Kim Il-song or Kim Chong-il by name in reporting directly pegged to the exchanges seems significant in view of an unattributed talk broadcast by Pyongyang radio on 22 September that devoted unusual attention to Kim Chong-il's direct involvement in the North-South dialogue since the 1970's. The broadcast implied that he was personally involved in guiding the North's participation in both the current Red Cross and economic talks between the two sides.

Legitimacy Issue Pyongyang's treatment of the art troupe exchange reinforces earlier signals that it is edging toward public acceptance of the legitimacy of the ROK Government. In two separate accounts of the DPRK troupe's performance in Seoul on 22 September, KCNA reported the attendance of ROK Prime Minister No Sin-yong but dropped the usual quotation marks around No's title—a device Pyongyang ordinarily uses to impugn the legitimacy of ROK officials. The reports also noted the presence of ROK National Assembly officials as well as ministers and vice ministers with full titles, again dropping the quotation marks.

North Korean media have departed from the practice of using quotation marks when referring to ROK officials only rarely and, apparently, when the North seeks to signal its interest in dialogue. For instance, in 1980, following the assassination of ROK President Pak Chong-hui, Pyongyang launched an effort to engage in a government-to-government dialogue with the South.

Authoritative DPRK statements on the proposed dialogue omitted quotation marks in referring to the ROK prime minister. Since last year, the North has several times, in a series of letters connected with the current dialogue, referred to ROK officials by their full titles. Until now, however, KCNA has adhered to the practice of using quotation marks in referring to such figures. Since the just-concluded Red Cross exchanges, KCNA appears to have resumed the practice. A KCNA account of a 24 September *Nodong Sinmun* commentary on this year's UN General Assembly session did so in reporting that the South Korean prime minister is scheduled to speak.

Consistent with growing public signs of its readiness to deal with the government of ROK President Chon Tu-hwan, Pyongyang seems to have made a particular effort to acknowledge the presence of ROK Presidential Secretary Yi Kyu-ho at the art performance. The first KCNA report on the performance, transmitted on the 22d, did not note that Yi had attended. In an unusual step, the press agency carried a slightly different report on the same event the next morning, which included the information that Yi was present.

Economic Talks Pyongyang's characterization of the fourth round of the economic talks, held on 18 September, as having borne "outstanding fruit" is consistent with efforts to moderate its polemics and show continuing progress in this area of the dialogue. According to a Pyongyang radio account on the 18th, the chief of the North Korean delegation, Vice Minister Yi Song-nok, asserted in a press conference that the talks had achieved a "series of successes" because of the "sincere efforts of the two sides." Yi claimed that despite some differences there is a "common foundation" on which to base future progress. He expressed optimism that future talks would be "successful" and "reach agreements easily."

As for the previous round of economic talks last June, Pyongyang media reports on the meeting itself contained no criticism of the South Korean position. The reports observed only that the two sides disagreed over the ROK calls for priority attention to reconnecting the Seoul-Sinuiju railroad and for concluding the sale of North Korean coal to the South, issues that the North argued could be the "first items" to be discussed at a DPRK-proposed joint North-South economic committee.

Departing from precedent, there was no followup *Nodong Sinmun* commentary on the talks—a method Pyongyang has used to dissect and voice complaints about the South's position. Criticism was confined to a

19 September Pyongyang radio commentary that, unlike Yi's comments the day before, complained that the talks did not achieve "substantial progress" due to the South's "insincere attitude and stand."

The commentary expressed "suspicion" about the South's basic approach and suggested that, in view of Seoul's stance, the North "cannot but wonder whether the South is trying to create confusion . . . and to avoid settlement of the basic question while delaying and stalling for time." The commentary also took issue with ROK criticism of the North's reference in its draft agreement, submitted at the talks, to the three-point principle of national reunification that the two sides had agreed to in July 1972. Seoul's complaints that the North was trying to "politicize" the talks, it said, raises questions about the South's basic attitude. Pyongyang had also raised the three principles as a basic guideline for abetting progress in economic cooperation during the second round of economic talks in May. (U/~~FOUO~~)

PRC-DPRK

Beijing Expresses Support for Korean Compromise on Olympics

Beijing has finally weighed in on Pyongyang's proposal to cohost the 1988 Olympics with Seoul, expressing cautiously worded support for a Korean compromise on the issue. This approach is consistent both with Beijing's efforts over the past year to encourage accommodation between both Koreas as a means to facilitate dialogue and reduce tensions on the peninsula and with its desire to foster the image of China as a responsible member of the Olympic movement and a suitable host for future games. --

Beijing's backing for Pyongyang's proposal was expressed in a 19 September letter from the president of the Chinese Olympic Committee to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), publicized by PRC media on the 22d. Avoiding an effusive show of support, the letter recommended the DPRK proposal as worthy of "serious consideration" and suggested that, if adopted, the proposal would benefit both the Korean situation and the Olympic movement.

Interest in Compromise

Prior to the letter to the IOC, Chinese media had acknowledged the North Korean proposal but had not commented on it directly. When the North first released its proposal on 30 July, Beijing reported it only briefly, omitting Pyongyang's enumeration of alleged reasons why Seoul is "unfit" to host the games. Subsequently, Beijing ignored all North Korean comment on the issue until 14 September, when Xinhua reported a *Nodong Sinmun* commentary the same day that emphasized the importance of the proposal for inter-Korean dialogue. Hinting that stronger Chinese support might be in the offing, Xinhua carefully noted the North's claim that its proposal was gaining a "favorable response" internationally.

Shortly before the North announced its proposal, Beijing appeared to signal its receptivity to a compromise solution on the Olympics issue. On 26 July Xinhua reported from Geneva that the North and South Korean Olympic

Committees had agreed to meet in Lausanne, Switzerland, under IOC auspices, to discuss the 1988 Olympics and other issues. Xinhua stated that the DPRK had proposed to the South that they jointly host the 1988 Olympics and that "South Korea did not indicate objection to such a possibility." Beijing thereafter conveyed its desire for progress toward a compromise by ignoring subsequent polemics between the two sides on the North's proposal. PRC media, for example, only belatedly and tersely acknowledged Seoul's rejection of the North's proposal and, at the same time, have not reported the North's criticism of Seoul's decision on the issue.

PRC Participation Possibly in line with its efforts to promote a compromise, Beijing appears to have altered its position on attending the Olympics, backing away slightly from statements made earlier this year that China had virtually decided to attend the games in Seoul. In a 29 July press conference in Los Angeles, as reported by the overseas Chinese news agency Zhongguo Xinwen She on the 30th, Chinese State Councillor Ji Pengfei asserted that Chinese participation was "still under consideration" and that there had "not yet" been a firm decision.

This circumspection contrasts with authoritative statements on PRC participation in the Seoul games and with Beijing's approach to the Olympic movement as a whole in recent years. In July last year, PRC media reported PRC Olympic officials as supporting an IOC move to make participation compulsory in future Olympics and noted that, if adopted, "the new rule could come into effect in time for the 1988 games in Seoul" and thus "avoid a repetition of the boycotts" of past games. More recently, PRC media quoted Hu Yaobang and Peng Zhen last April as saying that Beijing was adopting a "positive" stance on the question of Chinese participation in the games.

Though China passed up its first opportunity to participate in the Olympics by joining the Western boycott of the 1980 Moscow games, Beijing has since made plain its interest in having future games proceed smoothly without disruption from international political considerations. Chinese comment on the Los Angeles games last year portrayed participation by the PRC as a showcase of its emergence on the world scene as a modern country capable of fielding world class athletes and teams. Consistent with these purposes, Chinese media also have expressed Beijing's pleasure at having been selected host for the 1990 Asian Games and advertised its ambition to host the Olympic Games in 2000, a year that Beijing also cites as a major turning point in China's modernization. (U/~~FOUO~~)

USSR

Handling of Gorbachev Speeches Fails To Follow Pattern

Soviet media treatment of General Secretary Gorbachev's speeches has diverged sharply from the predictable pattern that was observed for the previous three general secretaries. The media's seemingly erratic handling of the speeches suggests that no fixed guidelines have been established for broadcast and publication of the new leader's public remarks, which appear to include substantial extemporaneous sections. There are no indications that the anomalies reflect factional infighting.

Since Gorbachev became general secretary, the longstanding pattern of dissemination of the top Soviet leader's speeches has been shattered. Whereas the speeches of Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko were released in one standard version regardless of the medium, Gorbachev's speeches have repeatedly appeared in two or even three substantially different versions.

So far no precise or predictable pattern has emerged. Sometimes the television or radio versions—especially if they are videotapes of Gorbachev delivering his speech rather than an announcer reading the speech—are the most complete. In other cases, the fullest version appears later in pamphlet form.

Some of the variations may be traceable to Gorbachev's habit of departing from his written text while delivering a speech, a practice that is evident in his televised speeches. Not all variations can be explained in this fashion, however. The irregular handling may, to some extent, also reflect personal editorial whims of the general secretary. Whatever the reason, there have been no indications that the changes reflect any tampering with Gorbachev's speeches against his wishes or any effort to accommodate other leaders' concerns.

During the period from mid-March, when he became party chief, to late September, Gorbachev delivered 28 speeches that were reported in some fashion. Most were short, ceremonial speeches such as at dinners for visiting foreigners. Three (his 18 June speech to media editors, his 1 July plenum

speech, and his 11 July Minsk speech to military leaders) were mentioned in Soviet media and may have been important but were not published by the central press or broadcast by Soviet radio or television at the time and, as far as can be determined, have not been released subsequently. Nine substantive speeches were given broad media publicity, and it is the handling of these speeches that has manifested a highly irregular pattern:

- **8 April Speech to Economic Managers Conference.** This speech, Gorbachev's first substantive speech after becoming general secretary, was disseminated in unusual fashion but did not appear in more than one version. Initially, *Pravda* and TASS carried only a short report on the conference, including only two or three paragraphs describing Gorbachev's opening speech. Apparently a decision was made later to publicize Gorbachev's sharp comments on economic management in detail. Three days after the speech—on the evening of 11 April—TASS presented an extensive version of his short opening and closing speeches, and this version with minor variations appeared the next morning in *Pravda* and later in the journals *Kommunist* and *Partiy'naya Zhizn* (*Party Life*). No pamphlet version of this conference speech has been issued, however.

- **23 April CPSU Central Committee Plenum Speech.** Gorbachev's next important speech—on economic questions—was handled in traditional fashion, with only one version appearing on radio and television and in the press. In keeping with usual Soviet practice for speeches to Central Committee plenums, there was no broadcast of Gorbachev delivering the speech.

- **8 May Speech on World War II Anniversary.** This ceremonial speech was broadcast live and published in *Pravda*, *Kommunist*, *Partiy'naya Zhizn*, and in pamphlet form.

- **17 May Speech in Leningrad.** This speech appeared in several variations. Initially, Soviet radio and television on 17 May and *Pravda* and *Leningradskaya Pravda* the next day carried a short summary of his speech, omitting many controversial passages that were subsequently released. Four days later, on 21 May, Moscow radio broadcast a long (50-minute) recorded version. This broadcast, the most complete account of the speech, included numerous personal comments (for example, referring to his dealings with Leningrad leaders) that had been omitted from the earlier version.¹ Later, another long account appeared in pamphlet form and in *Kommunist* and

¹ See the *Trends* of 30 May 1985, pages 6-9.

Partiy'naya Zhizn. This published version, however, dropped some of the statements included in the 21 May radio account and added some other remarks. Further complicating the picture, even the initial short *Pravda* version contained some comments not in either of the longer radio or pamphlet versions.

- **11 June Speech to Science and Technology Conference.** Replays of this speech continued the bewildering pattern of differing versions. Soviet television on the 11th broadcast a 73-minute recording of Gorbachev's speech. The version released by TASS and printed by *Pravda* and *Partiy'naya Zhizn* was shorter but included sections not in the television version. A few days later a third version appeared in pamphlet form (signed to press on 17 June) and printed in *Kommunist* (signed to press on 19 June). The latter version also included substantial sections not in the television version.

- **26 June Speech in Dnepropetrovsk.** This address was carried on the same day in lengthy recordings on television that differed considerably from the version published in *Pravda* the next day and later in the two party journals. A third account of the speech came out later in pamphlet form (signed to press on 9 July). The *Pravda* version omitted many significant statements about economic policy but at the same time included others not in the television version (for example, that reorganization of administration would start with the agro-industrial complex and machine building).

- **27 June Speech in Kiev.** This speech, which was shorter and less substantive, was handled differently than his Dnepropetrovsk address. Only short recorded excerpts appeared on television, and no version was published in *Pravda*, the local Ukrainian papers, *Kommunist*, or *Partiy'naya Zhizn*. Eventually a longer version did appear in pamphlet form (signed to press on 9 July), including an interesting statement that "not the market, not spontaneous forces of competition, but primarily the plan should determine the main aspects of economic development."

- **6 September Speech in Tyumen.** Soviet television telecast a long (79-minute) videotape of Gorbachev's speech on the day of delivery. *Pravda* on 7 September carried a much shorter version, omitting most of his critical remarks.

- **7 September Speeches in Tselinograd.** No version of Gorbachev's first speech in this Kazakh city appeared until three days after the event, when television carried a long (71-minute) videotape of his address. *Pravda* followed

the next day with a shorter version. A videotape of a second, shorter speech on 7 September was also carried by Soviet television, on 10 September, but nothing was published in *Pravda*. *Pravda* did, however, announce on 15 September that the next issue of *Partiynaya Zhizn* would include versions of both the first Tselinograd speech and his earlier address in Tyumen.

**Other Media
Irregularities**

The appearance of varying versions of speeches in the central media has occurred for at least one other Soviet leader on one occasion since Gorbachev became party chief.² CPSU Secretary Yegor Ligachev's speech to the 26 July CPSU conference of regional organizational secretaries was published in a short version in the 27 July *Pravda*, but longer versions later appeared in *Kommunist* and *Partiynaya Zhizn*—with each journal printing slightly different versions. No pamphlet of Ligachev's speech is known to have appeared. (U/~~FOUO~~)

² As in the past, longer versions of speeches delivered outside Moscow by Soviet leaders below the rank of general secretary are often published in the local press. Thus, when Ligachev delivered a speech in Yerevan on 1 June, the local papers carried a much longer version than *Pravda*.

Evidence Accumulates on Gromyko's Role Under Gorbachev

Soviet media reporting on Andrey Gromyko's activities since he became chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium suggests that his public role may be limited. The pattern of Gromyko's activities is not yet fully established; however, his public appearances so far have been mainly at routine ceremonies, and his substantive responsibilities in the position—the nominal equivalent of president—appeared to be limited when he failed to participate in talks with the visiting Finnish president.

Gromyko had a low public profile in the initial weeks after he gave up his job as foreign minister and was elected at the 2 July Supreme Soviet session to be Presidium chairman (see chronology on page 14). He resumed a more active role beginning on 10 September, following a lengthy period when he presumably was on vacation. Since his return, he has performed a number of domestic and foreign ceremonial functions, but his only reported substantive activities were an exchange with the Vietnamese defense minister on 10 September and his participation in a 16 September conference of Soviet leaders and arms control negotiators on the U.S.-Soviet arms talks in Geneva.

Koivisto Visit

Gromyko's role was apparently only ceremonial during the 19-20 September visit of Finnish President Mauno Koivisto—the only occasion so far to assess Gromyko's responsibilities in dealing with a counterpart in his new position. He met Koivisto at the airport and attended a state dinner for him at the Kremlin, but, in a break with past practice, Soviet reports did not indicate that either he or any other Soviet leader participated in substantive talks between Koivisto and Gorbachev on the 19th. At the time of Koivisto's last comparable visit, in April 1984, similar talks reportedly included then-General Secretary and President Chernenko, then-Foreign Minister Gromyko, aide to the general secretary Andrey Aleksandrov, and the Soviet ambassador to Finland.

Background

Gromyko's role as Soviet president is not clearly defined by Soviet political practice, since between June 1977 and March 1985 the post was filled by the party general secretary. During this period, the routine duties of the position, such as meeting with parliamentary delegations, presenting awards, and receiving ambassadors' credentials, were often handled by other ranking members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, particularly Vasilii Kuznetsov.

When Nikolay Podgorny—~~the last president prior to Gromyko who was not simultaneously general secretary—held the post from December 1965 to June 1977, his public appearances were essentially of five different types: one or two trips outside the Soviet Union each year, hosting state dinners during visits by foreign heads of state, conferring state awards and medals, meeting with low-level foreign delegations, and receiving the credentials of foreign ambassadors. Podgorny also frequently attended the substantive talks between the general secretary and visiting heads of state, as he did during Finnish President Kekkonen's visits in December 1965 and May 1977. The latter visit took place one week prior to Podgorny's ouster from the Politburo. (U/FOUO)~~

Chronology of Gromyko Presidency

3 July	Chairs Supreme Soviet Presidium session.
17 July	Receives North Korean ambassador (at ambassador's request).
22 July	Meets with Yemeni parliamentary delegation.
25 July	Meets with West German trade union delegation.
27 July	Attends opening ceremonies of international youth festival (along with other members of leadership).
10 September	Holds talks with Vietnamese defense minister in Moscow.
13 September	Presents awards to Soviet airmen.
16 September	Attends conference with Gorbachev and chief negotiators on preparation for resumption of Geneva arms talks.
17 September	Signs Yepishev obituary (along with other members of leadership).
19 September	Attends state dinner with Gorbachev in honor of Finnish President Koivisto.
20 September	Presents awards to Stakhanovite workers.
23 September	Meets with Luxembourg parliamentary delegation.
23 September	Presents Order of Lenin to chairman of West Berlin Socialist Unity Party.
24 September	Meets with Japanese parliamentary delegation.
25 September	Attends Kremlin luncheon for Hungarian party leader Kadar.

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*File
Gromyko*

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Koivisto Visit Gromyko's role was apparently only ceremonial during the 19-20 September visit of Finnish President Mauno Koivisto—the only occasion so far to assess Gromyko's responsibilities in dealing with a counterpart in his new position. He met Koivisto at the airport and attended a state dinner for him at the Kremlin, but, in a break with past practice, Soviet reports did not indicate that either he or any other Soviet leader participated in substantive talks between Koivisto and Gorbachev on the 19th. At the time of Koivisto's last comparable visit, in April 1984, similar talks reportedly included then-General Secretary and President Chernenko, then-Foreign Minister Gromyko, aide to the general secretary Andrey Aleksandrov, and the Soviet ambassador to Finland.

Background Gromyko's role as Soviet president is not clearly defined by Soviet political practice, since between June 1977 and March 1985 the post was filled by the party general secretary. During this period, the routine duties of the position, such as meeting with parliamentary delegations, presenting awards, and receiving ambassadors' credentials, were often handled by other ranking members of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, particularly Vasiliy Kuznetsov.

When Nikolay Podgornyy—the last president prior to Gromyko who was not simultaneously general secretary—held the post from December 1965 to June 1977, his public appearances were essentially of five different types: one or two trips outside the Soviet Union each year, hosting state dinners during visits by foreign heads of state, conferring state awards and medals, meeting with low-level foreign delegations, and receiving the credentials of foreign ambassadors. Podgornyy also frequently attended the substantive talks between the general secretary and visiting heads of state, as he did during Finnish President Kekkonen's visits in December 1965 and May 1977. The latter visit took place one week prior to Podgornyy's ouster from the Politburo. (U/FOUO)

Chronology of Gromyko Presidency

3 July	Chairs Supreme Soviet Presidium session.
17 July	Receives North Korean ambassador (at ambassador's request).
22 July	Meets with Yemeni parliamentary delegation.
25 July	Meets with West German trade union delegation.
27 July	Attends opening ceremonies of international youth festival (along with other members of leadership).
10 September	Holds talks with Vietnamese defense minister in Moscow.
13 September	Presents awards to Soviet airmen.
16 September	Attends conference with Gorbachev and chief negotiators on preparation for resumption of Geneva arms talks.
17 September	Signs Yepishev obituary (along with other members of leadership).
19 September	Attends state dinner with Gorbachev in honor of Finnish President Koivisto.
20 September	Presents awards to Stakhanovite workers.
23 September	Meets with Luxembourg parliamentary delegation.
23 September	Presents Order of Lenin to chairman of West Berlin Socialist Unity Party.
24 September	Meets with Japanese parliamentary delegation.
25 September	Attends Kremlin luncheon for Hungarian party leader Kadar.
