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THE MISSING MIKOYAN

The 4 May reorganization of the Party-State leadership, the most extensive reshuffling of the ruling hierarchy in the Soviet Union since the expulsion of the "anti-Party group" in July 1957, affected primarily the Secretariat and the Presidium of the Central Committee.¹ Although some note was taken of the promotion of A. Kosygin from candidate to full member of the Party Presidium, and simultaneously from Deputy Chairman to First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, the transfers of N. G. Ignatov from the Secretariat to the post of Deputy Chairman and the shift of Ye. Furtseva from the Secretariat to head the Ministry of Culture were completely overshadowed by the move of F. Kozlov from the top governmental organ to the key Party body. Almost entirely ignored in the first appraisals of Khrushchev's latest realignment of his subordinates in the Party-State machines was the seemingly unchanged status of A. I. Mikoyan, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, who, after the resignation of K. Voroshilov as Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet,² is the only one of Khrushchev's former comrades in the original post-Stalin collective leadership still active in Soviet politics.

Two weeks after the May plenum, however, the person of the adaptable, Armenian "Old Bolshevik" has suddenly become a central figure in the shifting pattern of Moscow's internal and foreign policies. Unlike most of the speculation concerning pressures from allegedly renascent Stalinists, rightfully resentful Army leaders, and righteously orthodox Chinese, the belated efforts to fit Mikoyan into the recent changes is based on documentary evidence, if only a single isolated fact: the omission of the name of the Armenian revolutionary from his historical place among the heroes of the Azerbaidzhan Party in the latest article dealing with the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Bolshevik Party

¹ See "Khrushchev and the Presidium (X) - The Secretariat Shrinks in Size," and "Khrushchev and the Presidium (XI) - Shadow and Substance in the Secretariat," Background Information, 9 May 1960 and 12 May 1960.

² 7 May 1960.

and establishment of Soviet power in that tiny Caucasian republic.³

The sudden and unexpected deletion of Mikoyan from the Azerbaidzhan honor roll can be clearly demonstrated in the following list of references which granted him due recognition:

A leading role in guaranteeing the victory of the Soviet power in Azerbaidzhan belongs to the true companions in arms and students of Lenin, S. M. Kirov, G. K. Ordzhonikidze, N. N. Narimanov, A. I. Mikoyan. (Speech by V. Yu. Akhundov, Izvestia, 26 April 1960)

The toilers of Azerbaidzhan, as well as all the Soviet people, consider as sacred the names of the leading figures of our Party, the outstanding revolutionaries who at various times were organizers and leaders of the Baku Bolsheviks, the bearers of Leninist ideas to the masses: Iosif Vissarionovich Stalin, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin, Sergei Mironovich Kirov, Grigory Konstantinovich Ordzhonikidze, Nariman Narimanov, Kliment Yefremovich Voroshilov, Anastas Ivanovich Mikoyan. (Speech by N. S. Khrushchev, Izvestia, 26 April 1960.)

The absence of Mikoyan from this celebration which Khrushchev selected as the occasion for his rejoinder to a series of strongly-worded restatements of U.S. policy by Secretary of State Herter, Undersecretary of State Dillon, and Vice President Nixon might, in retrospect, be taken as the first indication of a subsequent loss of stature in the supreme councils of the Party. Yet, in view of the close association drawn between Lenin and Mikoyan in both the speeches of the Azerbaidzhan Party leader⁴ and the head of the Soviet Party-State, such a premise would scarcely seem justifiable. Particularly at a time when only Mikoyan, Voroshilov, Shvernik, and Kuusinen -- among the present Presidium members -- can lay any claim to have had personal contacts with Lenin, such rare public acknowledgments of past ties warrant at least as much consideration as an admittedly conspicuous failure to participate in the 40th anniversary festivities in Baku.

Only 10 days after these tributes to Mikoyan's historical role in the capital of Azerbaidzhan, an article by the

³ D. Floyd, London Daily Telegraph, 18 May 1960, was the first to note the absence of Mikoyan from the article by T. Allakhverdiev, Partinaya Zhizn, #9, 1960, p. 8 (passed for publication, 3 May 1960).

⁴ In another section of his speech Akhundov did, in fact, also omit Mikoyan's name from a much longer list including Stalin, Voroshilov and Kalinin (see comparative texts below).

present secretary of the Baku City Committee, brought forth a slightly revised list of heroes which has set off the new wave of speculation involving Mikoyan. It is given below on the left for comparative purposes with the introductory text of almost identical references from an article and a speech by the first secretary of the Azerbaidzhan Communist Party:

<u>Party Life #9</u> (passed for publication 3 May 1960)	<u>Kommunist #6</u> (passed for publication 18 April 1960)	<u>Izvestia</u> 26 April 1960
In the years of struggle against the Tsarist autocracy the outstanding role in the creation and strengthening of the Bolshevik organization Azerbaidzhan was played by	In the creation and strengthening of the Bolshevik organizations, in organizing the revolutionary struggle of the toilers of Azerbaidzhan the outstanding role was played by	At different times the following personalities of the Communist Party worked in Baku:
I.V. Stalin	I.V. Stalin	I.V. Stalin
S.G. Shaumyan	S.G. Shaumyan	S.G. Shaumyan
M.A. Azizbekov	M.A. Azizbekov	M.A. Azizbekov
M.I. Kalinin	M.I. Kalinin	M.I. Kalinin
V.Z. Ketskhoveli	V.Z. Ketskhoveli	
K.Ye. Voroshilov	K.Ye. Voroshilov	G.K. Ordzhonikidze
G.K. Ordzhonikidze	G.K. Ordzhonikidze	K.Ye. Voroshilov
	<u>A.I. Mikoyan</u>	
N.N. Narimanov	N.N. Narimanov	N.N. Narimanov
P.A. Dzhaparidze	P.A. Dzhaparidze	P.A. Dzhaparidze
S.M. Efendiyev	S.M. Efendiyev	S.I. Efendiev
I.T. Fioletov	S.S. Spandaryan	S.S. Spandaryan
S.S. Spandaryan	M. Mamedyarov	
M. Mamedyarov	I.T. Fioletov	I.T. Fioletov
B. Sardarov	B.M. Knunyants	
V.F. Yefimov	B. Sardarov	
K.M. Agasiev	V.F. Yefimov	

It is tempting, at first, to suggest that the omission of Mikoyan's name from the post-anniversary article by the Baku secretary is simply due to an oversight or to the use of Akhundov's list as given in the Baku speech on 25 April. This is, however, hardly a satisfactory explanation since nowhere else in the article is mention made of Mikoyan in any capacity whatsoever, an omission made all the more striking by the introduction which claims that "the coming of Comrade N. S. Khrushchev to Baku has made our holiday still more joyful, still more significant." The slight to Mikoyan, therefore, must be considered as intentional and meaningful as the praise bestowed upon Khrushchev.

Even a brief glance back to Mikoyan's career is sufficient to warn against too hasty and sweeping conclusions from either the isolated fact dealing with the recounting of the distant past or from the listing of Mikoyan's recent absences in Moscow since 9 May.* A little more than five years ago, for example, the resignation of A. Mikoyan as Minister of Trade⁵ did not presage his disgrace, but the ouster of G. M. Malenkov as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Then, the Kremlin's best-known salesman and the rather tattered symbol of the consumer-goods sector in the Stalin era had been given slightly more than a year -- from October 1953 to January 1955 -- to direct an internal economic policy calling for a sharp increase in the rate of development of light industry, generally associated with Khrushchev's chief rival, Malenkov. The victory of the First secretary in the second phase⁶ of the intra-Party struggle and the reversal of the "new course" left Mikoyan's position practically unaffected; indeed, it merely marked his switch from close identification with the humiliated Malenkov on matters of internal affairs and the intensification of an ever-closer association with Khrushchev in foreign policy, which after five years now seems to have come to an end.

The solo performance of the First secretary-Chairman of the Council of Ministers in Baku on 25 April, tantamount to a refusal to share the platform with Mikoyan on this important holiday, may thus have been the first indication of Khrushchev's latest tactical shift which culminated in his deliberate wrecking of the Paris meeting and which has, once more, left Mikoyan seemingly tarred with the feathers of a discarded policy. Noted in the West primarily as a response to the hardening of the U.S. pre-summit position, Khrushchev's words in Baku -- coupled with Mikoyan's absence -- have apparently been given an extreme interpretation by an Azerbaidzhan functionary on the eve of the 4 May Central Committee plenum. The extensive reshuffle in the Party-State machine -- the day after the Party Life article went to press -- nevertheless left Mikoyan still holding his membership in the Presidium of the CC and the post of First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers, although the switch in foreign policy in the spring of 1960, like the shift of line in internal affairs in the winter of 1955, has again thrown -- or caught -- Mikoyan off balance. It is still premature, however, despite the editorial evidence found in an important journal of the CC, CPSU, to relegate to political obscurity the man who has served his masters in the Kremlin so well and so long. As a matter of preference the mild-mannered Mikoyan may well have found the recent prolonged phase of coexistence more to his liking; as his record shows, from Baku in 1919 to Warsaw and Budapest in 1956 and Baghdad and Havana in 1960, his words can be counted upon to support any deeds committed in the name of the Party and its present leader.

*Officially reported on vacation,
UPI, Moscow, 24 May 1960.

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⁵ Tass, 25 January 1955.

⁶ The first ended with the arrest of Beria