V.M. Molotov’s Speech at the Party Conference of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, 6 January 1949[[1]](#footnote-1)

In 1939 the Central Committee of the Party decided to radically improve, or at least to take decisive steps to this end, the situation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The leaders were changed, and work on significant reorganisation of the Ministry apparatus was done, even more attention was paid to getting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then called the People’s Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, and its foreign bodies – Embassies and Missions – reinforced with reliable Party cadre[[2]](#footnote-2).

Undoubtedly, this gave us, those who came to work at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at this time, a big responsibility, and we must look back at the journey we have made, and see what is it that we are facing now, what is the most clear and defined Party task for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[…]

If put shortly, the goal of the reorganisation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that took place ten years ago was to make the Ministry of Foreign Affairs closer to the Party’s Central Committee, to a make it a more immediate organ of the Party and its Central Committee, and to finally end the period when the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was a refuge for opposition and all kinds of dubious semi-Party elements. This required huge organisational measures, major removal from the apparatus of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of senior staff who became corrupt or entangled in various relations, and a big renewal of the apparatus of the Ministry with new staff, the majority of whom are absolutely unprepared for diplomatic work, and who, I would say, in most cases never dreamt of working in diplomacy.

[…]

Comrades, you now know the general international situation. It is regarded by our Party, and not only our Party, as a demarcation of states into two adverse camps: a camp which is imperialist, anti-democratic, headed by the United States and England, and a camp which is anti-imperialist, democratic, headed by the Soviet Union.

We should take into account that in these circumstances, when such radical demarcation of forces has taken place, in the international situation and the wider international circles it is considered absolutely indisputable that the most authoritative and decisive forces in these two camps of the international situation are the United States of America on the one hand, and the Soviet Union, on the other hand, and certain great powers had turned into former great powers, although retaining the title of a great power.

Regarding the United States of America and the Soviet Union, it is now clear that these two powers determine the policies of the imperialist camp, on the one hand, and the anti-imperialist camp, on the other hand; the Party tells us that not only that the forces in the international situation now been defined, but the parity of one camp and the other has changed so, that it is a big shortcoming and a mistake for the Communists to underestimate these forces, underestimate the democratic forces, underestimate the anti-imperialist camp forces, what we have accumulated by now in the Soviet Union, and not only in the Soviet Union, in the people’s democratic countries, but also in bourgeois countries, in yesterday’s colonies, in dependent countries as well - there are so many important and active forces of democracy in the anti-imperialist camp; that has now great importance for the further development of the international relations.

And a lot depends now on the ability to accept and impact this parity of forces in favour of the Soviet Union and in favour of the democratic camp.

Under these circumstances, the Ministry, which is at the forefront of international affairs, bears ultimate responsibility for its work, for organising the process, for its staff.

[…]

Recently, when the Berlin issue was discussed in Paris at the Security Council[[3]](#footnote-3),Comrade Stalin warned us again that we should not forget about the new development, with regards to the coming of a new war, which has appeared recently in America’s and England’s policies of those who follow their course. In connection with this, all these Churchills, their henchmen, and “their pupils in aggression”, as Comrade Stalin put it, if they feel that we are weak politically, that we are not sufficiently competent in our posts, they will continue to increase pressure on our staff, and they will do their utmost to corrupt our people and to spoil them more.

It is a fact that this cannot pass without leaving a trace. Last year we had to dismiss a few ambassadors and envoys because we could not fully entrust them with these responsible posts. We have to check, on a daily basis, those people, who can be good today, but tomorrow it will turn out that they overstayed and became overgrown with philistine cobwebs; that they no longer are true champions of our Party in foreign posts. And we will certainly continue replacing, while promoting the stronger ones. Those who became weak or lost vigilance, but are honest people, we must bring back to our environment, and train them again, give them the opportunity to once again become fully fledged if they are capable of this, and if they are not capable – then we must mercilessly fire them from our Ministry.

[…]

[RSASPH, f. 82, inv. 2, file. 1027, pp. 77-79, 87-88]

Keywords: Post-war order, Post-war USSR

1. This text is a stenographic record of a speech and as such it occasionally evidences an oral style; it includes instances of tautology and incompleteness, as well as inconsistency in the way some phrases are developed. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In 1946 the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs of the USSR was re-formed into the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of the USSR. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. At the meeting on 25 October 1948, the USSR exercised its right of veto in the UN Security Council in order to remove from the agenda the issue of the Berlin blockade – raised by non-permanent Security Council members. See: S/PV.372. SOVET BEZOPASNOSTI. Ofitsialꞌnyi otchet. Tretii god. 372- е zasedanie 25 oktiabria 1948 goda. № 120. < http://www.un.org/ru/documents/ods.asp?m=S/PV.372> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)