

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1987

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I was on vacation from [December] 19 till January 8 at the “Rus” sanatorium near Ruza. There was skiing, tennis. But it’s boring. I even wanted to bolt from there. But I stayed and in general did not regret it.

I read a great deal: newspapers, journals; I was able to follow the “train of thought” of the present-day press. It is truly a grand phenomenon. Like Lenin, M.S. [Gorbachev] understood that he also needs to start his revolution from an *Iskra* [Spark]¹. Full independence of the press. And people are really writing what they are thinking without glancing over their shoulder or being afraid of anybody... all this, of course, within the limits of their writing abilities and journalistic talent. Incidentally, a whole heap of journalistic talent has sprung up like mushrooms after good showers. Where did all this come from!..

And there is a storm [шквал] in literature, film, and theater... By the way, right now with the first issues of the year’s journals the change is becoming evident. The vices, failures, the outrages have been named; every day there are plenty of them in the newspapers. But what should literature do? Before, it timidly tried to name these things in its bravest works. Now everything has been named. The trial by truth took place last year: Astafiev’s *Pechal’ nii Detektiv* [The Sad Detective Story], Rasputin’s *Pozhar* [The Fire], Aitmatov’s *Plakha* [The Scaffold], Bykov’s *Koster* [The Bonfire], Bely’s *Vse Vpered* [Everything is Ahead]... etc. And what are literature, film, and theater supposed to do now?

One idea is clearly visible when the year is regarded in retrospect: dig deep and show who is to blame. What was the real cause of [what happened in] the 60s, 70s, and early 80s?

People are writing openly about this. The critics and publicists are calling for it. Nobody raises any objections. This means everything will happen as Gorbachev said, as he says right now in a narrow circle: “We’ve failed socialism, nothing is left of it...”

It seems he will dot many an “i” at the forthcoming Plenum, where he will give a four-hour report. People say that not only the events in Kazakhstan, but also the nationalistic eruptions in Ukraine—i.e. [Vladimir] Shcherbitsky’s fate—will be “present” [in Gorbachev’s report].

Meanwhile: G.L. Smirnov is now director of IMEL [Institute of Marx-Engels-Lenin] (replacing Yegorov)... He is not the right man for the job. Even though he is an honest man, he does not have the strength, innovation, and knowledge to make this establishment into the headquarters of theory. But, he is a friend of [Alexander]

¹ *Iskra* (the Spark) was a newspaper Lenin formed in 1903 to promote his revolutionary ideas and organize his followers.

Yakovlev. [Yakovlev] “made” him one of Gorbachev’s advisers, and he fixed him with this “warm” position, while the position is actually on fire.

Rakhmanin is going to be the rector of the MLSh [Mezhdunarodnaia Leninskaia Shkola, International Lenin School].² It is clear that considering today’s policy regarding socialist countries and China he should have been removed long ago. But not to the International (Lenin) School—to the communists! Supposedly [Vadim] Zagladin (and [Anatoly] Dobrynin, from Zagladin’s words) objected to this, but [Yegor] Ligachev explained to them that the man needed to be placed somewhere while he is still a CC member, etc. And that’s that. This is in relation to the “personnel policies” issue.

The International Department is not happy with Dobrynin. They say his New Year’s greetings were “insulting.” In a word, the department cannot adjust to him, and he cannot adapt himself to the department. They won’t accomplish much together, I guess.

January 18, 1987

I worked on Saturday. M.S. came back from Zavidovo with a report for the Plenum. I read it. I also read a selection of letters about the Plenum—personnel policies.

M.S. called me and asked what I thought of the report. I told him that it was stronger and more significant than the XXII Congress. “I also think so,” Gorbachev said.

(He asked me what I was doing at the dacha, we talked about skiing.) “Can you ski?” [Gorbachev asked]. He’s a southerner—for him it is necessary to “know” how to ski.

Then I reported my thoughts about the forthcoming meeting with the Americans (Kissinger & Co.) and about the speech at the forum for humanitarian issues (in mid-February)—Gorbachev wants our conception of “human rights” to be drawn up.

I’m reading [Daniil] Granin’s *Zubr* [The Bison].

June 6, 1987

² Oleg Rakhmanin, a conservative first deputy head of the Central Committee socialist countries department, published an article in Pravda on June 21, 1985, in which he tried to undermine Gorbachev’s new policy toward the allies and criticized independent developments in those countries as nationalist. Gorbachev criticized the article at the Politburo and made the decision then to remove him from his position. The eventual removal took place only in January 1987.

It is a crime that I've neglected the diary. I've already sworn in here several times that it must be almost entirely about Gorbachev. He has brought about a great era in our country. And he himself is growing and becoming a truly exceptional figure in all of Russia's history. But do I have what it takes (the ability) to reflect it properly? At least to put down an outline? After all, nobody else is doing it.

Gorbachev's book is in the works now (after my insistence—in response to proposals from two American publishing houses Harper & Row and Simon & Schuster). Yakovlev and Dobrynin wanted to respond with yet another collection of his speeches. I suggested putting together a book of records from M.S.'s conversations with foreigners and my notes from when I was present at his narrow circle PB [Politburo] conversations. He liked the idea. For a month and a half we (myself, Shishlin, Ambartsumov, Weber, Kozlov) sat at the Gorky dacha putting together such a volume, systematized by theme—from his natural and brave speech. He read parts of it, got very interested. But it is clear that he has reservations as well: how will his colleagues take it? After all, these are not collectively presented ideas and words (even though they are his thoughts). This is his ideology and style of perestroika. Here one can see his personality, character, style, traits, his secret intentions, his readiness to really go far—he doesn't even know himself where and how far. But he "feels" that it will be (and has to be) a totally different socialism from the one that was advertised for 60 years and which has entered the society's genotype.

Recently he said to me that we would "come back" to this book and told me to give it to [Ivan] Frolov to read. (He believes in him and shows him friendliness and respect... But I think he is overestimating Frolov's abilities. Frolov's relentless anti-Brezhnevism wins one over).

I can't describe in detail right now everything that has happened over these months. But at least as an overview...

May 29. Late evening. Vnukovo-2. Gorbachev greets everyone. Smiles. His eyes are fierce. He closed himself in the "special room" with the PB members and CC secretaries. Then the secretaries and candidates came out. For another half an hour [he spoke] only with the members. He exited looking jokingly menacing. He barked out to us (the advisers): tomorrow at 11 o'clock at the Politburo.

On May 30 at the Politburo [Alexander] Koldunov³ and [Sergey] Sokolov⁴ were removed (for the FRG [Mathias] Rust's airplane landing by the St. Basil's Cathedral).

While this was going on I was sitting in my office and writing him a note about the shame and disgrace, about the fact that in such cases the military ministers in

³ Alexander Koldunov—Head of Air Defenses of USSR Armed Forces

⁴ Sergey Sokolov—USSR Defense Minister

“bourgeois democracies” resign, and that we need yet another, the fourth since the times of Peter I, fundamental “military reform.”

In the evening: over the phone from his dacha he told me how everything went at the PB. He began by saying that in such cases the entire leadership and the military council including its chairman should resign. That’s fine—[they] embarrassed the country, humiliated the people... But let everyone—here and in the West—know where our power is; that it is in the political leadership, in the Politburo. Now the wailers who said that the military is in opposition to Gorbachev, that it is about to overthrow him, that all he does was to keep glancing over his shoulder at the military—these wailers will have to quiet down. He said all this furiously and spoke for a long time, with many pauses. It was clear that he wanted to let some steam out.

On June 2 [Gorbachev had] a meeting with the Doctors’ Movement (the Moscow congress, Laun & Co.). He charmed everyone once again. And there are always new aspects of thoughts in his impromptu speeches. He told [us] with interest how together with Yakovlev he talked with the most important people at this congress, about evaluations that they gave him “personally.”

To me he said (in response to my question): don’t go too much... to the press... about the talk... Everyone laughed. Yakovlev commented: you received the most typical orders. And M.S. himself is laughing.

A day after the PB, when he suddenly decided to receive Tiwari (from Gandhi). Dobrynin and I sat together in his office, waiting for this Tiwari. “You—he addressed Dobrynin—tell Anatoly what the Australian doctor says about me in regard to my meeting with Laun & Co... The doctor made a surprising observation... “I,” he says (and he said this at the press conference, as well), “watched Gorbachev during the meeting as a ‘doctor observes a patient.’”

While Dobrynin was telling me this, I observed M.S.... There is not a shadow of conceit in him, as if it’s not even him we were speaking about... he already sees himself as an instrument of *perestroika*... at least when he reads the Western press’ compliments about him.

June 4—PB. [Gorbachev] decided the date for the Plenum. He said that soon he would go away to prepare for it. He will only chair the meeting on Monday. He’s thought of something again. He invited academicians, some party workers. I don’t even know what it is about.

Yakovlev stopped by in the evening. He brought a flyer that black hundredists⁵ from “Pamyat”⁶ [Memory] are distributing around Moscow. It is called “Stop

⁵ Originally a conservative movement in the beginning of the 20th century that supported the Russian tsar and fought against the revolutionary movements.

Yakovlev!,” who is portrayed as the head of Zionism-Masonry, as the main threat to all the Russian sacred things. He paced around my office for a long time. I tried to convince him to just shrug it off and not tell M.S. that he is worried about it. But it turns out that he [Gorbachev] has already responded to it (and said to Yakovlev): “Do you think this is directed against you (Yakovlev)? No. This is against me (Gorbachev).” And he is right.

Yakovlev almost had tears in his eyes when he told me how hard it was for him right now. After all, this scum has Ligachev’s and [Vitaly] Vorotnikov’s direct support. He suspects that the flyer was not made without [Viktor] Chebrikov’s assistance. I thought this to be inconceivable. Yakovlev said: “I am a Russian bumpkin [muzhik], a peasant from Yaroslavl’, but anti-Semitism, or any kind of nationalism is physically disgusting to me... it makes me sick. Not even to mention state interests, if the Russian chauvinism is aroused right now, it would cause such a storm in the provinces, such nationalism, that all our “empire” would begin to crack.”

Yesterday I sent [Aleksandr] Askol’dov’s (director of the film “The Commissar” [Komissar]) letter to M.S., as well as the letter written by three other people: Borshchagovskiy, Shtein, and Zorin. They are asking for his intervention. Yakovlev, to whom Askol’dov already wrote, was not able to get past the MC [Moscow Committee] and the CPC [Committee of Party Control]. I decided to include Gorbachev in the process, tempting him by saying that the film is worth seeing. It’s powerful. And what actors! But they are letting the author rot “because of prejudices” (anti-Semitism) and esprit de corps. Plus the indifference. Ligachev, who saw the film and said, “I will not allow it,” is behind this. Then again, he said the same thing about *The Children of the Arbat* [Deti Arbata]. But the novel is being printed. He was against sending *The Repentance* [Pokaianie] to Cannes. But the film went and got a prize.

I composed a “frame” for the international section for the 70th anniversary of the October. Gave it to Frolov (M.S. assigned him to lead this topic). So far it is only a “denial” of Stalinism in our international history. Will it go through?.. I’ll have to work some more.

In the *Novy mir* article “Advance Payments and Debts” [Avansy i dolgi] [Nikolai] Shmelev reveals the essence of what we have done with the country and says that indeed we still have very far to go. The orthodox have already made their stand. In the “dressing-room” [предбанник] of the PB I walked up to Frolov and [Viktor] Afanasiev. They were speaking about the article... I expressed my enthusiasm. Then Ivan [Frolov] told me that I shocked *Pravda*’s chief editor: this kind of an evaluation from you, while I (Afanasiev) heard differently. What’s a poor peasant to do?.. I think that Shmelev’s article also will not be to Ligachev-Vorotnikov’s liking.

⁶ Reactionary informal movement and later non-governmental organization established to protect Russian heritage.

I asked M.S. whether he has read it already. He said not yet, but Frolov already put it on his desk.

Shmelev is also the author of a deep and sweet novel called *The Pashkov House* [Pashkov dom]—it is as if it was written about the 50s of my life, university, Leninka⁷...

There is a foul article in “Pravda” called “Historicism of Thought”... formulating the orthodoxy’s methods of fighting against perestroika.

And Volkogonov (deputy of Lizachev—chief of the Soviet Army’s Policy Control) writes notes to Frolov: against pacifism in the “new thinking.”

June 12, 1989

About “Pamyat’.” The PB discussed a note that Gorbachev assigned to Ligachev, Chebrikov, and Yakovlev to prepare. Here as well he rose above all of them. Actually he had not intended to broaden the discussion. But [Nikolai] Ryzhkov started it smartly, and [Vladimir] Dolgikh, [Eduard] Shevardnadze, Ligachev, and Vorotnikov joined in, while [Andrey] Gromyko used the opportunity to add Burlatsky’s TV show (“From one cabinet” [Iz odnogo kabineta]). M.S. gave a whole conception of the *glasnost* process in relation to this, and an evaluation of what we have right now. I made a record and sent it to him. And I left a copy for myself.

On Shmelev’s article. Arbatov keeps calling, he’s afraid that he’ll get in trouble because of it. The article has the logic of tar [логика дегтя]: the justification of the necessity of unemployment. A politician cannot accept that if he wants the masses to support *perestroika*.

And that is why he said about [Sergey] Zalygin (editor of *Novy Mir*): I respect him, but if Sergey Pavlovich wants to offer us capitalism instead of socialism we do not need that kind of an editor. However he objected to removing editors. He reminded everyone of Anatoly Ivanov’s proposal at the meeting with writers (we should have a new resolution on *Zvezda* [Star] and *Leningrad* journals). We would give the wrong signal, he said.

When Ligachev complained that he already spoke with Zalygin four times and would like to get something done so he would not have to speak with him a fifth time, M.S. laughed and said: “Remember how the Chinese gave the 391st serious warning...”

Gromyko made a vile attack on [Fyodor] Burlatsky. He did it in the old style, as he used to do when he was Chairman of the PB Committee on Foreign Policy

⁷ Lenin’s Library, now the Russian State Library—the biggest library in the USSR, the old building of which was called the Pashkov House.

Propaganda under [Konstantin] Chernenko. [Back then] he only had to name the author or columnist and that person immediately disappeared from the pages of journals and from the screen. This time nobody responded except Shevardnadze, who very emotionally said some sharp words to this dotard, taking Burlatsky directly under his protection and condemning the very approach Gromyko used, the very method of such “criticism.”

Today I wrote to M.S. my “impressions” of this trick that Gromyko pulled. And assuming that M.S. did not see the broadcast himself I described to him the way it really happened, and not how Gromyko lied about it. In any case, M.S. despises him deeply. [Gorbachev] sinks more and more of [Gromyko’s] silly “initiatives” in international issues, and sometimes he just ignores them, as if Gromyko did not say anything. The latter sits and grows red in the face, and then... “surfaces” once again.

I wrote both parts of the international section’s preliminary theses for the 70th anniversary of the October [Revolution]. Spoke with Frolov. He liked it and gave it to his two “boys” (Latsis and one other one), who prepare his “work” in this sphere. He puts me on guard. He scorns [Aleksandr] Bovin’s, Zagladin’s, [Georgy] Arbatov’s, and Burlatsky’s immodesty and conceit, but at the same time he is conceited about his modesty. By his essence he is not an intellectual, even though he is a Corresponding Member [of the Academy of Sciences] and a scholar. As a result I do not believe that he is honest. I am open with him. I do not hide my opinions... But Karyakin, who was his bosom-friend, warns me that this man is a professional traitor. I also do not believe him because he still respects [Pyotr] Demichev,⁸ he thinks that Demichev is progressive, while one can see with the naked eye that the man was and is a riff-raff and a nonentity.

I asked Galkin to visit me today. I asked him to look at my “theses” and to “put them in order” if he agrees with the conception in general.

M.S. retired to Volynskoe-2 with Yakovlev. They are preparing the Plenum report, which is compared in significance with 1921 and 1929...

June 14, 1987

I was at the CC for only six hours.

It was clear that M.S. read my proposal to meet with Rust (to tell him: “What have you done, you milksop [сопляк]?”) since he sent Rust’s parents’ letters around the PB. But he did not call me—neither about this nor about anything else, including my mention that his “book” we are planning needs the impulse that he promised.

⁸ Pyotr Demichev—conservative Candidate Member of the Politburo, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet. He was sent into retirement in October 1988.

It seems like [Uliy] Kvitsinsky (Ambassador to the FRG) has thrown him off course by making a fuss about Reagan “at the Wall” and the commotion the GDR youth raised over the rock music on the other side of the Brandenburg gate. Sometimes M.S. is prone to momentary bursts of emotion (at individual instances), but this is not reflected in the [policy] line. He restrains himself... then admits that emotions are not for politics. Sometimes he even checked me when I suggested snapping at something from the West.

[Ilya] Erenburg’s concluding chapters (*People, Years, Life* [Ludi, gody, zhizn’]) have been published in three issues of *Ogonek*. He describes the Khrushchev years. And we all look like such idiots—out society fixated on dogmas, fears, suspicions, hate. A terrible lack of political culture combined with a unique spiritual wealth of almost everyone privy to the intellectual milieu. Truly... Stalin and Stalinism have profoundly broken our people. But what’s happening right now shows that [the people] remain healthy and free “inside,” in the inmost recesses of their spirituality and souls: as soon as *glasnost* provided some breathing space everything rushed to the surface. And now it could only be stopped by recessions [рецессиями].

But I already mentioned that at the PB while discussing “Pamyat” nobody offered to suppress them... Some (Ryzhkov, Ligachev) even specifically said that under no circumstances would they be in favor of suppressing them, even though “something needs to be done” with the leaders of “Pamyat” as well as the “Shmelevs,” who offer unemployment. But God forbid we frustrate, stop, or cross democracy and *glasnost*. M.S. made the following conclusion about it: while the other mechanisms of *perestroika* are not yet running smoothly, *glasnost* alone is supporting the process.

Having daily contact with the western press one sees what an enormous change Gorbachev caused in people’s minds all over the world. In essence, he has already laid the foundation for a new era in international relations. The people who do not want the new thinking and are afraid of it still have to *de facto* participate in the Seven game in Venice, and the reaction to it in the world shows this very clearly. Public opinion surveys all over the Western Europe show that Gorbachev has surpassed Reagan as “the ruler” of the political atmosphere in Europe.

I was at the museum of fine arts at the Russian-French exhibition. How unattractive our counts, princes, and their daughters and wives were, except for the Shuvalovs—faces with “un-Russian expressions.” There were silver and diamond studded gold pieces: it was a totally different life, if so much labor, patience, talent, time and money was invested in such things! And now all of that brings only one question to a normal person’s mind—what was it for? I also noticed the dresses and camisoles from the times of Peter I and Catherine (including her own dresses). How petite people were two centuries ago! The average present-day woman, or even a young woman or a girl would not fit into Ekaterina’s dress, and she was considered a good-sized woman in her day. In general, one sees very few beautiful women on the streets and in the crowds of people [nowadays].

I read some Pushkin and kept coming across poems that have later been made into romances one sometimes hears on the radio. I just feel like spitting at it. I would forbid it. But it's too late: Tchaikovsky and Glinka started the vulgarization of Pushkin. And it continues to this day. And they are delighted by it, saying that he inspired this and that... while in reality it's just an outcome of mediocrity and something foreign touching a genius.

June 15, 1987

Gorbachev calls me: are you alive, Anatoly Sergeich⁹?

- How is everything with the preparation of the Women's Congress? You know, more feelings are necessary there. We can attract this audience to our policies through emotion. It cannot be done otherwise. Remember Engels? He said: "Woman is a different civilization." We should proceed from that.
- I replied: Yes, Engels was a pro in this subject matter.
- He laughs: Well, for lack of personal experience we will have to lean on the classic.
- I: You are being modest, Mikhail Sergeyevich.
- He: Alright. You understand what I meant. We need [to discuss] Venice, Reykjavik, West Berlin. The world has shifted. Society feels the realities and is interested in our policies. Remember how Yakovlev and others protested against publishing the results of West European surveys about Gorbachev being better liked than Reagan and having done more for peace. They are afraid that we might cultivate a cult.
- Why? – I objected.
- I do not see any cult here.
- I: I also do not see one. And in general, Mikhail Sergeyevich, the people are receiving you properly. There are no associations with the past, despite the fact that you are in every newspaper. This is deserved authority. Remember Pushkin? "He was a worker on the throne" ([Gorbachev] laughs).
- M.S.: So we see the reality and society is beginning to see it too. And we make real policies, rather than putting up a cheap traveling show (that was about

⁹ Sergeich is the short and familiar form of the patronymic Sergeyevich.

Reagan in West Berlin)¹⁰. He is putting up this farce to win back Venice, which the world forced them to agree to. At the same time he is provoking us, so we that we would break down and help them to bring back the “Soviet threat.” If I gave weekly interviews like Reagan I would say that after eight years he has not been able to break free from his former profession. It’s good that you sent me records of my speeches from the last PB. Only you have an incorrect record there: it was the leaders of “Pamyat” who called the XXV Congress a “congregation of scum and prostitutes,” rather than me calling their “society” that. I cited them, you didn’t hear me. But you are right—it is a congregation of scum and prostitutes.

But in general it was a major talk at the PB. And everyone spoke well. We are growing, getting better. We are becoming educated in this.

- I: That’s for sure, Mikhail Sergeyevich, especially when you gave the descriptions from the words of western propaganda:

Gorbachev—the Westernizer, like Peter I;

Ligachev—the Russifier (there is even a letter going around “from Ligachev”);

Yakovlev—the Mason, uniting cosmopolitans around him;

Ryzhkov—this one is a technocrat and doesn’t care about ideology.

Everybody’s laughing and you too, and while laughing they are making a note of it!

- M.S. laughs into the telephone: That’s the kind of impromptu speeches I have to use, Anatoly! Oh, and it’s difficult going. This is the thin edge of the wedge. But that’s alright. The report (for the Plenum) is turning out strong. The theses are only a skeleton, the meat is in the report, and I’m adding some bones to it too. I have put off the interview with *[Der] Spiegel*. I don’t want to flirt with the Germans right now (he means Rust the pilot and the orgy [шабаш] in Berlin for the city’s 750th anniversary). As soon as we straighten out the German policy a little, I will publish it in *[Der] Spiegel*. And about Rust—don’t oversimplify it.

- I: I am not oversimplifying, but I am sure that even if he was objectively someone’s weapon, personally he did not have any bad intentions.

- M.S.: Still, do not oversimplify it. We will seal him off [мы его запечатаем]. According to the law, everything as it should be. Let them ask...

¹⁰ President Reagan’s Speech in West Berlin at the Brandenburg Gate on June 12, 1987 during which he challenged Gorbachev to “take down this wall.”

Today Aksenov Jr. and his “comrades in arms” —the creators of the neo-Marxism-Leninism—came to visit me. Chernyshev, the youngest, spoke for the most part. He has an amazing mind, a phenomenal education and the ability to wield thought and word together. This is a true giftedness that is being left at the curbside. But already [in his mind] there is schematism and adherence to logic that is too strict and moves away from the real life.

Everyone is “for” it, they told me. They’ve been to visit Bobkov eighteen times, visited Medvedev¹¹ three times, a number of times they discussed it with Kosolapov, Zagladin, Shevardnadze, Bessmertnykh, and other influential people. And what came of it? Everyone is for it, but no one can do anything.

In the summer I persuaded M.S. to read their essay. He read it “with interest.” Assigned Medvedev and Yakovlev to take care of it. When I started pestering Medvedev about it he said that he would not deal with that issue. Yakovlev excused himself citing his being busy.

Right now I suggested that they write an article for the *Communist*. Only without any outrageous material. I will see to it that it be discussed. And then all the heads will have to decide what to do with your “eureka.”

For a long time they pressed the great significance of their discovery on me. I feel that abstractly they are right.

For now we stopped at that.

I told [Anatoly] Kovalev what happened at the PB, praised his boss (Shevardnadze). He told me that there were plans to make Burlatsky editor of the *International Affairs* [Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn’] at the MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs].

June 20, 1987

At 10 p.m. on the private telephone line: M.S. calls me to Volynskoe-2. By the skill of my chauffeur I was there in half an hour.

M.S., Yakovlev, Medvedev, Slyunkov, Boldin are in the hall, discussing the draft of “The basic clauses of economic development,” which will be passed at the Plenum on June 26.

¹¹ Vadim Medvedev—Secretary of the CC CPSU in charge of relations with socialist countries, replacing Rusakov in February 1986, later full member of the Politburo.

M.S. sat me down next to him, and said: “read!” and passed me the report he had been working on here for 10 days.

I delved into it. He kept asking me “So, how is it?” They were arguing about something, I listened in. They were stuck on the issue of “control numbers.” M.S. summoned Ryzhkov to Volynskoe.

An argument flared up. The Premier [Ryzhkov] insisted on more levers of control for the center. Medvedev tried to convince him that in that case the “new mechanism” and the economic system of control will not work. M.S. kept entering the argument, refuting Ryzhkov, but he did not want to offend him. He doesn’t want it to be obvious that he supported Medvedev rather than the Premier. In the end they softened the formula and agreed to leave it until the PB, when all the additions will be discussed before the CC Plenum.

Yakovlev jokingly threw me a comment across the table: so Anatoly, this is how the fate of the country is decided. M.S. laughed.

[Gorbachev] asked me again: “How is it?”

I told him that I studied these thoughts and their conception through different sources (I’m hinting at the book).

M.S. (laughingly, biting): So there is nothing new for you in here?

I: Why do you say that? Everything here is systematized and in its final form. It is a whole symphony of *perestroika*.

We moved on to editing the draft Plenum Resolution. He accepted a few of my suggestions. He has such a mastery of the material that he quickly finds the optimal formulas.

I submitted my additions to his speech at the Women’s Congress (June 23), (which is why he summoned me in the first place). The main one is about the administrative system that formed in the ‘30s and which, in his version, he says was the only one possible. It turned out to be a 100 percent justification (historically) of this Stalinist system. He listened to this comment (Yakovlev supported me). Then he said: “later, later,” and put my paper aside.

We finished quickly with the women’s text. He liked it. But he made me redo the “disarmament” theme: he did not want to get into a squabble either with “Venice,” or with Reagan in West Berlin.

We said goodbye, he started getting ready to leave. It was already 6 a.m. He said: “you have worn me out; I could agree to anything that you might slip me right now.”

I left right after him. Then there was a call to the car, from his car: “Listen, did you leave your insertion with them?”

- No. You did not work on it.

- Well, all right. As you get to the CC right now, retype it and send it over.

July 5, 1987

Life is so dense [with events] and the days go by so quickly that more than two weeks have flown by since the last entry.

And it is probably impossible to even recreate the chronology of events.

On June 23, M.S. spoke before the women. I think he was not too happy with how he spoke (he really was tired and there was no excitement, especially in the first “women’s half [женской половине]” of the text; he got worked up when he started to shame the West about the INF [intermediate nuclear forces] and the SRM [short-range missiles]... He really liked the idea of “word and deed”—our and their programs. And this was what got the attention of the Western press).

Later he told me: “I was nervous about how they would receive me. You see, they were from all over the world, black, yellow, and others, all brainwashed by the anti-Soviet trash. What do they know about us? And when they greeted me... and then... these children... the American woman brought them out. You know, I am not a sentimental person, but here I got teary-eyed... did you see it?” (Yes, I saw it; everyone saw how he turned away from the TV and took out a handkerchief). “And it would be alright if it was only ‘Gorbachev, Gorbachev, Gorbachev!!’ but they yelled: Raisa¹²! What is she to them? That is how the political factor works out, Anatoly. Only our average guy cannot accept it... and not only the average one.”

In response I told him (from the words of Gusenkov, who accompanied R.M.[Raisa Maksimovna]) how afterwards, when he left the Congress, the people surrounded R.M. and she had to right away give several interviews to different newspapers; how she [interacted] with several groups around her. She behaved expertly—she is a teacher, after all! And she is educated.

On June 24, I remember, I was preparing materials like mad for meetings with Perez de Cuellar and Rajiv Gandhi, whom I received on the 29th.

¹²Gorbachev’s wife, Raisa Maksimovna Gorbacheva.

The Plenum.¹³ I think this was a more significant event in the life of the country than the transition to the NEP [New Economic Policy] in 1921, because it turned out that it was possible to crush the NEP... We hadn't seen what it would come to. We had no experience. We thought that since the pre-history became "real history"—when the person created it himself and was not a slave to natural laws—then we could do anything we wanted with the country, just as long as we wanted it badly enough.

Now a return to Stalinism is impossible, for if we do it for the third time then the death of socialism is provided for... and we will be well on the way to becoming a third-world country.

But retreats are possible and, most importantly, shuffling in one spot is very dangerous, it could trample the shoots of anything new. They are still very weak, the Plenum showed that. Some (mostly from the lower ends: *kolkhoz* chairmen, directors, etc.) were ardently and passionately "for" [*perestroika*]... But they are acting by their gut feelings. Vagin (chairman of the Gorky oblast' *kolkhoz*) for example, does not need to undergo *perestroika*, he was born a *perestroika* man, i.e. he is for common sense. But of course he does not understand the entire historical and philosophical (a trendy word) depth of the undertaking. Maybe he doesn't even need to.

Or, let's say Nikonov—the president of The Lenin Academy of All-Soviet Agricultural Sciences. He is smart, honest, educated, and even "from the people." His professional goal is to make the land work and feed the people. But he is not concerned with "forcing" society to form as the result of this. It seems he does not even think about it. But in general, such a stance is not too bad. He will do his necessary part of *perestroika* well, like a professional.

The trouble is that members of the PB—Shcherbitsky, Vorotnikov and first deputies of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, *obkom* [oblast committee] secretaries do not understand what is going on. And even though they utter good words about the revolution, about the changes, etc., it is clear that for them it is just their job, not participation in a revolution. They are not leaders of the process at their levels, they are just disciplined bureaucrats who will adjust to the process rather than form it, thinking that it will happen on its own. They do not know how to reform society. They are from the old structure, in essence they come from a Stalinist type of leadership.

[Viktor] Nikonov (he has the same last name as the person I mentioned above, he is a member of the PB, secretary of the CC for agriculture) is another matter. It was no accident when clever M.S. made him a Politburo member. This is a person who is soft, absolutely indifferent to any kind of personal interest; by the way, his looks and personality resemble the artist Leonov. He has a deep knowledge of our agriculture and he understands everything. It is this soft, goodhearted person who will do the destructive part of the work. He made such a statement in his speech at the PB. His most important

¹³ Plenum of the CC CPSU on radical reform of the economy, June 25-26, 1987

goal is to forever **stop** intervention into agriculture by anybody (except for science), such as party, soviet, industrial, administrative, or other superiors. And then, after we feed the people, we will see what will come of it from the socio-political point of view.

Gorbachev dictated his report three times. For two weeks before the Plenum he lived by this report day and night. He thought through all the details, he called me often, thinking out loud about how it would resonate, how it would be received, whether it would be understood and whether it was necessary for everything to be understood. “I myself do not understand everything completely” he worried.

The report truly was a turning point (in everything, in its very Leninism). If one reads carefully and looks several layers deeper between the lines, then the explosive, revolutionary nature of the report is evident.

And the debates? They were not only not at the level of the report, they were not even at the level of the Plenum agenda.

On Wednesday, July 1, a Politburo session took place. It drew conclusions from the Plenum. Premier Ryzhkov spoke frankly and deeply. He understands what is important right now. That is why he said that even at the Plenum that surpassed anything our people or the West could have expected, we did not say the entire truth, but only a half-truth about the present situation and how incredibly difficult the process of adjusting the new economic mechanism is going.

Everybody is worried about the fact that we will have to raise prices. By the way, Ligachev reported that prices at the market are higher than last year but the fruit and vegetable supply of Moscow is worse, already more produce has been lost than in the previous year. And this is a matter of big politics. The fate of *perestroika* is in this.

Ryzhkov added that it was difficult to come to such a Plenum and it is staggering how quickly Mikhail Sergeyevich was able to prepare such positions. But it will be even more difficult to keep moving, to bring the Plenum ideas to life. This not a task measured in months, but in years.

During the discussion, Gorbachev suddenly said: “I received a letter from Shmelev, the guy who published an article in *Novy Mir* about unemployment, about which a voter asked me, you remember?.. You see, people are interested in everything, there are fewer and fewer indifferent people. So anyway, this Shmelev admits in the letter that he got carried away but insists that something needs to be done about the loafers. He swears that he is ready to loyally serve *perestroika* and thanks me for being so lenient toward him when I answered the voter’s question. It’s alright; we need this kind of people as well. Let him! We need to learn to use all our brains and not be nervous. And [we need to learn] not to hit people over the head as soon as we don’t like something.” (By the way, Arbatov admitted to me that he “organized” that letter, and then edited the text).

At the Plenum [Dinmuhamed] Kunaev (First Secretary of Kazakhstan's Communist Party) was removed from the CC. Before the start of the session he grabbed my elbow in the hallway and cheerfully and self-assuredly said to me: "Tell Mikhail Sergeevich to briefly receive me. Do it for an old friend. Remember what a good trip to England we had.¹⁴"

During the session Ligachev read the Kazakhstan Communist Party CC's request to withdraw Kunaev from the CPSU CC, then he stated the claims against him, gave a description of what Kunaev turned out to be like in reality. Kunaev asked to be permitted to speak. Gorbachev allowed him to speak. And the guy started to impudently and aggressively praise himself: it was he who discovered mineral resources in Kazakhstan (Kunaev is a geologist), he condemned the nationalistic book *History of Kazakhstan*, he built the ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy in the republic, he modernized the cities, he... etc., etc., etc. As for "those December events,"¹⁵ so what? Some boys ran out into the streets and to deal with him like this for that... Stop comrades, do not make a hasty decision..." M.S. couldn't get him to stop, one could see how he restrained his indignation, he kept calling him by his full name with patronimic [по имени отчеству]...

Then three Kazakhs spoke—"impromptu with a piece of paper"—and "referred to the facts." But overall, Kunaev's behavior was the strongest factor against him. There was a secret vote. He left before the results were announced: 298 out of 299 were in favor of removing him.

A Plenum is a Plenum, but my work had to go on: during the week there was one [visit] after another—Perez de Cuellar on the 29th, Carter on the 1st, Rajiv Gandhi on the 2nd and 3rd, and on the 7th [Richard] Weizsäcker—to whom M.S. assigned great importance because of Germany.

I've become adept at preparing such material based on what I get from the MFA, the CC International Department, some of the specialists, and of course the departments: [Vladimir] Kamentsev, [Sergey] Akhromeyev, Chebrikov. But it must have Gorbachev's idea in it. Almost always from his former talks, his speeches at the PB, from his other replies "for the occasion," from constant contact with him I can imagine what he is thinking, what his position on this or that topic is. And nowadays I am rarely mistaken... Even though during conversations he moves away from the prepared material and makes the conversation deeper and richer with thought (by the way, he never reads texts when he is face to face with the person he is talking to. He does not even keep his notes open, only glances at them sometimes to start a new question). But the passages that he really likes he repeats to different people.

¹⁴ We really did go to a congress in Great Britain with him about ten years ago. I remembered a story he told then, about how as a student in Moscow he watched from the other side of the Moscow River how the Cathedral of Christ the Savior was blown up. [Footnote in the original]

¹⁵ December 17-19, 1986 ethnic riots in Alma-Ata in response to Kunaev's removal as first Secretary of Kazakh Communist party and his replacement by an ethnic Russian Gennady Kolbin. Over 300 people were wounded when the riots were put down with force.

That happened with de Cuellar, and with Carter, who turned out to be a rather dry and boring type. I looked at him and thought—how could it be that such a person was President of a superpower that determines the fate of humanity? And then I stopped myself. What kinds of types have we had ourselves?!

But I was talking about something else. Whoever sits opposite M.S. (with the possible exception of Quaddafi's representative) trusts him, and there is a feeling that they do not speak with the other "great" leaders such as Reagan, Mitterrand, Deng Xiaoping, and even with Thatcher so sincerely...

They believe that he wants to do exactly what he tells them, as well as what he says publicly. It is another matter that he cannot do everything, or even the most part, of what he says.

It is impossible to be cunning and play games in a conversation with him. He is open and he disarms any "class" opponent because by his entire manner he invites him to be first and foremost a normal human being.

The Indian festival in Moscow has completely worn him out, especially since he hates "protocol." I came in to ask him about when he will be one on one with Gandhi whether it will be really one on one as it was in Delhi, or with advisers. He sat back, smiled weakly. "Come to the meeting, why not... and Rajiv will probably bring an adviser. You know, I am terribly tired. I work into the night every day. I don't feel myself anymore, and the work just keeps piling on. But, Anatoly, it needs to be done. We have started upon such a great cause! There is nowhere to retreat. And what a Plenum! Oh, I will go far. I will not back down, I will not waver. The most important thing is not to waver and not to show that you're hesitant, that you're tired, unsure... And you know what's upsetting: they do not want to believe that I'm doing it for the cause. They are jealous. Jealousy, you see, is this strange thing..." (I of course didn't ask him who exactly he had in mind. I only noted that jealousy is not characteristic of the Russian character. But, "what you are describing," I remarked, "is the heritage of moral rebirth of a society that came from Stalin.")

He said: you're at it again. Although, you're right. Stalin is not just 1937. It is a system, a system in everything—from economics to people's consciousness. Everyone was delighted with his short phrases and did not notice the short thoughts that then came down on us all... and it still goes on today! Everything is from there. Everything that we need to overcome now, it is all from there! That's how it is.

But he is not very consistent in that. I already mentioned how difficult it was for me to convince him to make the reservation that not everything in Stalin's command-administrative system was justified by the circumstances (in the Plenum report)... he inserted a phrase, but not the one I suggested. It was a very watered-down version... He's afraid that he will be blamed (!) for tarnishing names and nihilism about the past. Perhaps the instinct of carefulness is at work here: since he is preparing to go far from the

socialism we had and have, he thinks it tactically appropriate not to distance himself from what was done before, no matter by what means it was done! Maybe that's it. Also I noticed that it is because of his paradoxical feeling of love for the people, because of respect.

On June 22 there was the following splash at the PB. In some connection (M.S.'s Plenum report was being discussed) Ligachev started deriding the "vilifiers" of the past, once again mentioning Yuri Afanasiev, Academician Samsonov (Yakovlev told me yesterday that Yegor Kuzmich [Ligachev] assigned them to collect "some materials" on them). Some others agreed: Solomentsev, Vorotnikov, Gromyko. And M.S. took off about this: the biggest political mistake is to allow disrespect for the people, while they... not sparing themselves, hungry, tattered, with only the shirt on their backs, with heads shaved against lice, they worked without leaving anything for themselves, not even counting on using the fruit of their hellish labors—they were building the country, preparing it against fascism, fighting for an idea... And what now, are we so smart that we can tar all of that? Are we to say "You did the wrong thing?" No, here we must be very careful. We need to respect the people.

I sat there, listened and was angry. When I came to my office I dictated five pages about how Stalin "respected" the people: he destroyed the most diligent muzhik—the peasantry, the best part of the village population; he put 3-4 million soldiers under fascist tanks by his games with Hitler and by the attempts to appease him in the summer of 1941; and how he "complied" with the party by liquidating everybody who made the revolution and started socialism in Russia.

I sent it to him. He read it. But—not a word, although yesterday when we were discussing the "Book" it was clear that something stuck. I think [the comments] about "jealousy" were also in relation to this. Recently the BBC had a great deal of material about the preparation to publish Trotsky's "Stalin," which he hadn't finished when his hero put an end to him. There, "jealousy" is one of Stalin's main character traits during his entire political life. That was the "jealousy of the mediocre" of anybody outstanding. I think M.S. spoke about jealousy in relation to him with this association.

Here is an episode that took place towards the evening of July 3, the second day of Gandhi's stay here. Two conversations took place at which I was present. On July 2 there was a dinner in a "close circle" in Novo-Ogarevo (plus Raisa Maksimovna); on the 3rd a "lunch" at the Indian embassy was scheduled before the meeting of friendship in Luzhniki. About an hour and a half before the lunch, M.S. calls me:

- Where are you?
- At work, as you can see.
- You know, Gandhi is telling me right now (as they were walking down the Cathedral Square) that we will have to say speeches... at this

luncheon. And I don't know anything... Yes, Vorontsov told me about this yesterday, but I asked him to convince Gandhi to make it without speeches, just short toasts "to health" and such.

- And, what is Gandhi saying?
- I don't know. Call Vorontsov right now so I can hear [your conversation].
- I'm calling. He's not there, he's gone somewhere to the Indians.
- Well, then give me a speech.
- I can't. I already used all the words and thoughts for speech about "Great India" and its leader. (He laughs).
- It's alright, you won't die. Come up with a couple of pages and send them over right now. I'm in my office at the Kremlin.

And he hung up the receiver.

I called Tamara and right away started to dictate in an unbroken flow. She recorded it and typed it up. I corrected it. The entire process took 20 minutes. I sent it to him.

There was no reaction. And I have a strict rule: not to ask him about the results of my work. Never, in any shape or form.

I came home around 9 p.m. Suddenly the work telephone rings. He is calling from Luzhniki (it's the opening day; there are celebrations, dances-shmances [танцы-манцы]):

- Anatoly Sergeevich, Mikhail Sergeevich asked to give the speech that he said at the Indian embassy luncheon to the press, and also to translate it into English to give to Gandhi before his departure.
- In the form in which I sent it to him?
- Yes, exactly in that form.

Work! It is around 11 p.m., the newspapers have been formatted, and Gandhi leaves at 12:15 a.m. The only copy [of the speech] is in my office.

I called TASS [Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union] and let them know. I called for a car. There is no Xerox machine; no one of the typists is around. At the MFA there's only one man on duty, no translators. I sent what I had to the TASS, they held up

the newspapers. By TV [sic] from TASS they communicated it to this poor man on duty at the MFA.

The next day around 11 a.m. M.S. called together Yakovlev, Frolov, Boldin and me in his office.

- What will we do with the “Book?” (The one I had been working on in March at the Gorky dacha)

We all decided that it would be a sensation even in the present raw state. But they criticized it, gave advice, recommended things, and enriched it. We agreed that on July 10 I would again go to a dacha in Serebryanni Bor and finish it in a month.

And he [Gorbachev] started the meeting by telling about what happened with this “toast” at the Indian embassy—that Gandhi literally demanded that the speech be published in Moscow and in Delhi. “You see,” he says, “the most effective things come impromptu.”

July 12, 1987

The week consisted of Weizsäcker. M.S. again displayed depth and unexpectedness. Once again he charmed the person he was talking to: on the “European home” and especially on the issue of the Russian Germans. He feels it in his heart that the problem cannot be removed and that someday the Germans will reunite. That is why he said straightforwardly: let history run its course, let’s leave it to history.

He also surprised Weizsäcker with his unexpected move: he said to give his sincere hello to Chancellor Kohl...

An incident took place. A day ago Gromyko hosted a lunch for Weizsäcker. Weizsäcker’s [speech] was twice as long (and he is a German!). Gromyko told Kvitsinsky to reduce it to “equal [lengths],” of course this was done at the expense of parts that, as Gromyko said, would be “unpleasant to the Soviet people.” (About Kant in Koenigsberg, about a single German consciousness, about freedom being the freedom to visit each other, a hint at the “Wall,” etc. In other words, this was the most important part for Weizsäcker, who tried—an aristocrat and an intellectual—to be maximally loyal and tactful).

And it was printed that way. The Germans started to express their surprise, disappointment, and offense through all possible channels (“what about your *glasnost*, Thatcher and Chirac were printed in full”). I received phone calls from our people: Arbatov, [Valentin] Falin, Shakhnazarov, asking what was going on. Why are we making fools of ourselves again? *Glasnost* should be *glasnost*.

I call Kvitsinsky, prodding him: back in the FRG you probably aren't used to *glasnost* at home, why did you do that? He says: Gromyko put it down as an order.

M.S. comes to work, I call him. Tell him what I think—we are making a mistake. The thing that works in our favor we are turning on ourselves. And then, we could let our readers know that even such a highbrow and noble representative of the FRG has parted with his revanchist sentiments.

M.S. spoke angrily: Well, let it be so. That's how we should behave with the Germans. They like order—Ordnung (what does that have to do with anything?). And then he started saying something jokingly about how our [soldiers] slept with German women when they went to Paris to overthrow Napoleon.

I said alright... I felt that he was worked up about something, or maybe frustrated with himself... This was the night before his meeting with Weizsäcker.

Later I find out the following from Yakovlev: after the lunch where the speeches were given, Gromyko decided to consult with his colleagues—Ryzhkov, Shevardnadze, Yakovlev—whether it was necessary to censor Weizsäcker. Everybody was decidedly against it, and Ryzhkov was particularly direct about it. Gromyko got upset, turned around and left.

And I “figured it out:” he went to call Gorbachev. The latter had not read the speech and agreed with Gromyko. That's why he had such an angry reaction when I came in and started reminding him about *glasnost*.

After M.S.' talk with Weizsäcker (who did not say anything about this episode) we went into the presidium room of the Kremlin: M.S., Shevardnadze, Kvitsinsky, and me. I brought up the publication again. Shevardnadze strongly supported me, Kvitsinsky kept quiet. M.S. shifted the conversation to another topic. I understood that once he gave his agreement to Gromyko, he did not want to “disagree” with himself.

After returning to my office, I called Yakovlev and we agreed to publish the full Weizsäcker text in *Novoe vremya* and in *Nedelya* (which is an addition to *Izvestiya*). So really it was in *Nedelya*, since *Novoe vremya* would come out in a week.

I don't know either M.S.' or Gromyko's reactions to this action. But the Western press noticed the “censorship.”

The Politburo was on the 9th.

The question of building housing and selling construction materials and household goods in general to the population was discussed sharply. Once again Voronov (deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers) and the ministers tried to report that in 1985 there was this much, now there is that much, even though they haven't fulfilled the

plans and assignments for a single position. And letters just keep coming in, angry ones and with a stinging hint: what's happening with *perestroika*? Somehow we, the common people, aren't getting anything from it.

M.S. flew into a rage: this is the people's need. In our Soviet state the big heads have all the blessings, they renovate their apartments at the expense of special departments, and they couldn't care less about the people. And these are CC members, ministers, members of the Soviet government. How long will we allow this to go on?!

He concluded by saying that this is the last time this conversation takes place about such issues. If you do not get it done, we will be talking with new people.

Shevardnadze's note about the 70th anniversary of diplomatic service was discussed. All kinds of jubilees are proposed, including distinguishing with memorial plaques the houses in which Chicherin, Litvinov, and Kollontai lived. Gromyko took the podium, he was very irritated.

"Chicherin? What did he do that was so special?.. So, he worked with Lenin. Well, all right, Chicherin's name can be understood. But Litvinov!! How could that be proposed? The CC dismissed him from the position of People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs. Did you all know about that? And for what? For disagreeing with the line of the party! He was against reorienting from England and France to Germany. And he was removed... well, temporarily... that was clear from the start... They sent him as an ambassador to Washington, but even there he pushed his line. You can read his ciphered telegrams. And from there he was removed as well. He was replaced by a different fellow" (i.e. Gromyko).

I looked around at the PB members, their faces were full of barely concealed irony. Everybody understands the meaning of his words: you suggested Litvinov and Kollontai, but did not even mention him, Gromyko.

And he went on: "Kollontai? Who is Kollontai? Yes, Lenin knew her. But she was always against him! Remember Brest, remember the worker's opposition. So, she was an ambassador to Mexico, and after her [service there] Mexico broke diplomatic relations with us (that was because of the Soviet-German agreement of 1939!!). Then she was in Sweden. And so what, some underground activities... It is true that recently articles about her came out "from the point of view of particular authors," etc.

How will M.S. behave? He already baited Gromyko during his tirade when he commented about Litvinov being removed from his post by order of the CC ("But, Andrey Andreyevich," with a smile, "it seems Chicherin also did not leave his post completely of his own volition!")...

Further M.S. said this: Chicherin, yes. Nobody is objecting to that, even, it seems, not Andrei Andreievich. And let's keep Litvinov, too. You say he did not agree. But an

anti-Hitler coalition took place after all. That means he was not totally wrong in predicting the outcome of events.

As for Kollontai—it's true, there were many significant ambassadors. Andrei Andreievich named some of them (he named Pushkin, Vinogradov, Zorin, Gusev... was creeping up to himself). But she was not famous for that. And the fact that she spoke against Lenin, well, Vladimir Ilyich said himself: everybody makes mistakes! And he respected her very much.

The facts you, Andrey Andreyevich, mentioned—that she was the daughter of a tsar's general, and Litvinov the son of a major merchant—have no relation to this matter.

That's how M.S. told him off with the public's approval. Gromyko sat down with a frown. But... how will this continue? How long can one stand this scoundrel who thinks that everything that happened in his time was good and right?

By the way, when we were discussing M.S.' "Book" on the fourth, the conversation about Gromyko's memoirs came up again (they are sitting in Politizdat, the editor-in-chief of which came to the CC asking what to do, instigated by a note from me). M.S. assigned Yakovlev to "resolve" the matter. He laughed. I spoke my mind: "This is an absolutely harmful thing."

- M.S.: And what about *glasnost*? (He got me there)
- Frolov: But he is a PB member. If he was not, there would be no problem.
- M.S. (to Yakovlev): Still, look at the "connection between the times," we need to do this somehow... objectively, honestly.
- Yakovlev (laughs): If we do it honestly then it is what Anatoly Sergeyevich said.

The conversation did not arrive at anything in the end. Gromyko's assistant Parkhitko is calling everybody and threatening Politizdat's editor-in-chief with some punishment, especially with the idea that Andrey Andreyevich **himself** will give him a call!

Rust's case was also discussed at the PB. Chebrikov reported. He cited [Rust's] statement made during the investigation: I wanted to meet with Gorbachev because it would have been pointless to meet with Reagan. I chose the extravagant method because otherwise it is impossible to attract the necessary attention.

Chebrikov's proposition was to give him to the Hamburg court, which brought the case against him. He added that some research was done among the people and it turns out that the public is of the same opinion.

It is established that Rust is not quite normal in the head. But if we send him to get an examination the whole world will shout about the “madhouse” that the Russians are experts of. And it will turn out that he was normal when he came here and insane when he left.

There was no discussion. Only Zaikov asked a question: imagine that our boy had landed in Washington. What would they do with him?

Chebrikov: “Well, first of all, they would have shot him down while he was still in the air...” (laughter). And right away he noted that our anti-aircraft gunners had aimed and made a photo-shot at Rust 10 times. Each time they had 100 percent accuracy. But they did not have an order for a real shot, because the head anti-aircraft defense commander found out about Rust when the latter had maneuvered over to the cathedral of Christ the Savior.

I watched M.S.: he was turning pale, while his eyes became black like uncut diamonds. One could see that he was growing furious: so what do we have here? He wanted to see me, he says. Many people see me: they write me letters, and I answer them. And here... no, this is a provocation. We have 150 generals and officers under trial. We’ve replaced the Minister of Defense. And what for? Perhaps we didn’t have to? And now we let him go, free? No. Democracy is not babyish helplessness. He broke our laws three times (crossing the border, flying outside of air corridors, and landing in a populated area). And he must be punished according to the law. Is the investigation closed? Yes, it is. Let there be a trial. Everything is in order; he is supposed to get from one to ten years... and we’ll go from there.

August 28, 1987¹⁶

¹⁶ In August and September I was in Crimea with Gorbachev, not at the ill-fated dacha in Foros (it was called “Sunrise”), but at the [dacha] inherited from Brezhnev in Nizhniaia Oreanda.

Gorbachev was mostly busy working on the book, which he initially proposed to call “A word about perestroika” [Слово о перестройке]. But then he came up with another name “Perestroika and New Thinking for our Country and the Entire World.” Millions of copies were published under this name in America and then in many other countries.

Gorbachev was working on the text “with passion,” dictated it two or three times over. He foresaw that this book would create a new image for him and for the changing country; it would help win the West’s trust, which, according to his plans, is supposed to become the new and most important factor in transforming international relations.

We spent many hours on the terrace (he in the sun, I in the shade), discussing the “movement” of the text and the major issues.

We had to get distracted for routine affairs: information from Moscow was coming in non-stop. Sometimes he thought out loud about some things. Some of them I recorded and provide below.

It seems Cuba still needs primitive socialism with wage-leveling. Castro has gigantic thoughts about this. He is a great orator! But wage-leveling socialism will lead nowhere and we will not move forward with it.

They pulled us into Afghanistan, f**** it all [ѐ.т.м.], and now one doesn't know how to get out of there.

Karmalism is the dogmatism of Marxism-Leninism plus parasitism in relation to the USSR. In general we have a shitload [до х.] of Marxists, in Africa too. It was pretty awful when you had to defend Brezhnev's policies. They were terrible. And now you are defending what you think and believe in. Trust and independence are the norms of our new politics.

August 31, 1987

We raised a great cause, but we need intuition to feel the fine line between “smearing the past” and deserved criticism. We should not dash around. The party conference is coming up. We are painting the portrait of socialism with *perestroika*. But it should not be blurry in the surrealist style, where it's impossible to tell feet from other parts, etc... Double-dyed [махровые] figures are rising in the changing society. A search is in progress. We created the carcass of a new building—the renewed socialism. We have the carcass, we will come up with the rest. And we will see what turns out. But do not let anyone claim truth in the highest instance.

Look carefully at Marx and Lenin, there are “shades” between them. I read Marx's *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* from 1844. In it, he does not reject private property.

There will be no miracle. What a lazy society we have after all! And the leaders are no better: they came to power, got their feed, are sipping some tea and not only tea, and railing at higher leadership. Others, like Yakovlev, are sniveling [рассопливились].

To Afanasiev (*Pravda*): tell him not to add fuel to the fire of the Tatar issue. Let the committee work in peace. In general the press should not fuel any campaign.

To Lukich (Georgii Lukich Smirnov, the General Secretary's adviser for ideology): call and tell him to prepare materials on the nationality question for the Plenum.

To Bromel' (academician, director of the Ethnology Institute at the USSR Academy of Sciences): assign him to prepare detailed material on the situation of nations and nationalities of the USSR—about what was done under Soviet rule and what was done wrong. And he should give a frank analysis. He should show everything fully.

September 3, 1987

Call Ivan Frolov (the General Secretary's adviser): tell him that the theme of estrangement needs to be developed in my article in the *Communist* (about socialism and the market). Marx planned to return the person to himself through the socialization of private property. But, truth be told, we had an estrangement in the economy and in politics due to the absence of democracy. Directive methods of the command-administrative system deprived us of the opportunity to resolve this most important problem of socialism.

...The criteria to evaluate society and its true level of development are not the level of consumption or consumerism, but the growth of the individual, the development of his abilities and possibilities. All of this needs to be "worked through" in the concept of "new thinking."

When the theme of "developing socialism" (a concept we have yet to understand fully) is discussed in an article, we need to show that our goal is to restore the socialist nature of society.

September 17, 1987

Three Yegors have sent me [Gorbachev] letters here: Yegor [Kuzmich] Ligachev, Yegor Yakovlev¹⁷, and Georgy (he's also a Yegor!) Arbatov. I read them all and here's what I have to say to you about them.

We have planned and started a colossal, historical work. All three are deeply concerned—they want our plans, which are significant on a historic scale, to be realized. But their positions reflect an incredible range of differing opinions, arguments, positions, discussions—all of the now-open pluralism of our society.

There are people who have already called Gorbachev a revisionist. Others, on the contrary, scrutinize me for intentions to destroy Marxism-Leninism because they've forgotten about the creative methodology of Marxism-Leninism. Look at how carefully and delicately Bukharin approached every question. And he was meticulous about being true to socialism.

And how do our discussions go? Instead of a calm discussion, analysis and realistic evaluations they attack each other right away. All three Yegors are concerned

¹⁷ Yegor Yakovlev was a prominent Soviet journalist, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Moskovskie Novosti* [Moscow News] from 1986. He should not be confused with Aleksandr Nikolaevich Yakovlev, who was Gorbachev's adviser from 1985 to 1991.

about the same thing. But they all are panicking that we might, God forbid, bog down and suffocate. They think that we are opening the gates of indiscriminate morality. They mention the recent film about a brothel that came out in Riga. This movie truly is an example of moral decay: they are reveling in obscenities, there is nothing sacred. A naked woman [баба] on a boar... And to speak about the movie with Klimov (the producer), for example, he will tell you that it is a great film! Depravity and moral decay bring forth repulsion, so from his, Klimov's, point of view, the film is denunciatory. But I think that it advocates permissiveness, this admiration of a raspberry [любование малинкой].

The range of opinions is enormous right now. Overall that is good, it is inevitable with such a change as we started. Confusion always accompanies revolution, especially with the intelligentsia. But at the same time we didn't want to destroy everything sacred—our patriotism, our love of the Motherland.

We want to awaken and free everyone from the social passivity, from everything that hinders the forward movement and *perestroika*.

All three Yegors are for democratization. The intellectuals, workers, and peasants are joining the process. But keep in mind the fact that we have 18 million officials plus their family members. That's about 60 million around the country. They are all afraid for their source of income...

In the end of his letter Arbatov complains that he might have displeased the General Secretary, he's afraid to spoil our relations. Tell him all that is rubbish. Tell him that Gorbachev values his opinion, his information, his thoughts that he shares frankly, and that I read his notes carefully. And let our relations remain the same as they were. The main concern is that our work does not stop, and I understand him. Let Yuri Arkadievich not panic.

We need to see the criteria of *glasnost*. They are in the values of socialism. There is overkill, and that causes a reaction. Pamyat' is a part of this reaction, a manifestation of the self-preservation instinct. On the other hand... Viktor Nekrasov died in Paris recently. And another Yegor (Yakovlev) puts Nekrasov's portrait in his newspaper in a black frame of mourning. A frame of mourning for an anti-Soviet!

So overall, they should not panic. I had a conversation with Yegor Kuzmich [Ligachev]. "Some officials," he said, "are not accountable enough before the people. Yakovlev told me (*i.e. Yakovlev told Ligachev at a CC meeting with the editors*) that he might leave." That's responsibility?!

Tell Falin not to dramatize what happened at Yegor Kuzmich's meeting, but let them draw conclusions.

Yegor Yakovlev writes about the popularity of his newspaper. But this popularity must serve the *perestroika* cause. There is no comparison of opinions in *Moskovskie*

Novosti [Moscow News], as well as in *Ogonek*, and in much of the other press media. There is no diversity of authors. Only “our” people are there. We need to have others there, too. Then we’ll have democracy and *glasnost*. There are different topics, burning issues. But we should not make sensations out of them. We will do great work. We need clean hands and clean intentions rather than stuffing people’s minds with God-knows-what in order to cause a stir and a sensation.

I am disgusted when people settle for something worthless. Let the authors of the letters think about this.

Yegor Kuzmich told me that at the meeting with editors he noted that many good issues are raised in the MN [Moscow News]. So he does not see everything in one bleak color.

Aleksandr Nikolaevich [Yakovlev] recently told me over the phone that he said to Ligachev that they are not walking the same road. Meanwhile he collects all kinds of information about Yegor Kuzmich and gives it to me.

Sure, I agree that Ligachev is short on polite expressions. But he is honestly concerned for our cause, for perestroika. As for methods of interaction, well, he does not always get it right. I agree that right now not only what is said is very important, but also how it is said. Tell Yegor (Yakovlev) that Graham Greene visited all of Siberia and was surprised at how much the Bolsheviks accomplished after the October Revolution. But he—Yegor—has been abroad all over, gave all kinds of interviews, but he hasn’t been around his own country. Is that good?

Come on Anatoly, we need to unite them all. I do not think that these people are a lost cause.

... Mistakes harm *perestroika*. We cannot afford to provoke the people who are “for” or the people who are “against” to do things that damage our movement.

Yes, yes, the entire society, and the Politburo as well, are getting wound up...

It would be a mistake to remove Yegor Yakovlev right now. Although the CC Propaganda Department is refusing to work with him, saying that there’s just no keeping him in check. I told Yegor Kuzmich: it will not do to remove him. But at the same time let Yegor think at the MN about his responsibilities. In a word, let everyone act and not panic.

But overall, Anatoly, in our own leadership provincialism is also prospering.

Postscript

The year 1987—the peak of *perestroika*. If we refer to Kant’s idea of the “phenomenal world” or Schopenhauer’s “the world as representation,” we can recognize that in this sense *perestroika* was on the rise. *Glasnost* was strongly making a name for itself as “freedom of speech” as it began to be seen less and less only as an ideological instrument of the CPSU. It created an absolutely new atmosphere in society as it responded to the many years of repressed need for truth and honesty along the line of “power—people.”

The hidden processes however, the “things in themselves” (if we again follow Kant), were poorly recognized by the “mind of *perestroika*” and were decreasingly subject to its influence.

By moving in essence (not in form) away from the Marxist-Leninist dogmas, Gorbachev demonstrated outstanding analytical and cognitive abilities; he pointed out more and more frankly where “real socialism” has led us. This “volume” contains his deep, oratorically masterful and completely frank speeches. At this point, he is still full of optimism about the initiated reforms, and tries in many ways to instill this in “the consciousness of the party and the masses.” However, during this year his first doubts emerge about the possibility of success. He trusted only to the people closest to him with these doubts. There was uncertainty as to where the “unknown forces are leading us.”

The famous January Plenum was devoted to staff policies, here for the first time since Lenin the Party’s and the CC’s culpability for what had happened in the country, for the country’s critical situation, was brought up. However, the Plenum did not produce the results *perestroika* needed, while Gorbachev had had great hopes for it. From then on, the Party never found the wish nor the ability to be the vanguard of change. (Much later Gorbachev recognized that the party by its nature was not suitable for this role). He found a solution: to take away all governmental power functions from the CPSU through the All-union party conference and to restore the full power of the Soviets, which Stalin had liquidated in the 1920s. (It had continued to exist after the Revolution, although in the control framework of the party).

For the same reason--the absence of the “subject” of change, of loyal to *perestroika* and capable cadres--the subsequent attempt to eradicate the consequences of Stalin’s forced collectivization and to return the village to its role of bread-winner of the country were unsuccessful.

The year 1987 gave clear evidence of resistance to *perestroika*. At this stage it was still “structural resistance” [сопротивление материала] rather than political-ideological opposition: signs of disappointment in the people (“we do not get anything, the *perestroika* is only in the center,” etc.), which meant growing apathy, and most importantly—passivity, lack of talent, Stalinist stupefaction [зачумленность], unprofessional work and unwillingness to work in the new way of the people who, according to Gorbachev’s plan, were supposed to be the “superintendents of *perestroika*.”

The cohort of the “founding fathers” slowly dissipates. They still more or less agree in their description of the “present situation,” but their positions increasingly differed on the readiness to tell people the truth, on the evaluation of the existing order, which they wanted to “improve,” as well as on specific measures for “what is to be done.” More and more often their discussions reveal essential differences. In the highest leadership next to Gorbachev the only people who really remained were Yakovlev, Shevardnadze, and Ryzhkov (later joined by Medvedev).

Gorbachev tries to “regulate” the chaotic review of Soviet history. For this purpose he used the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. But the “balanced criticism” of individual moments in history in his anniversary report, and especially the rehabilitation of Bukharin, turned into a powerful impulse for the rapid growth of this process, and very soon the question arose of whether we ever had socialism, and whether we even need it (even with a “human face”).

At the same time, the year 1987 is distinguished with a breakthrough into the outside world. Gorbachev's international recognition and fame are quickly growing. In the West people are slowly convinced that the “Gorbachev phenomenon” in the USSR is not the Kremlin's tricky maneuver, that *perestroika* is for real. A new and powerful factor arises in foreign policy—**trust**. This factor will later make possible the end of the Cold War. The conclusion of the first treaty on the reduction of nuclear weapons seals the tendency of ceasing confrontation.

In this context the final rejection of the Comintern legacy in the Communist Movement is natural.

Gorbachev's book, “*Perestroika* and New Thinking for Our Country and the World,” which became an international bestseller, played an enormous role in the formation of Gorbachev's and the Soviet Union's new image.

Starting in '87, there is a divergence of vectors in Gorbachev's foreign and domestic policy—not in the sense that they lose interdependence (in this case it's actually the opposite), but in the sense of bring able to achieve the goals that were set. The gap in Gorbachev's international and domestic authority formed and began to grow during this year.

Finally, 1987 will enter history as a year during which the dangerous and in due time “unidentified object” appeared in the *perestroika* sky, namely—Yeltsin.

His loud, abrupt, and demagogically saturated activity in Moscow did not convince the Politburo that he was ready to be transferred from a candidate to a member of the Areopagus. Resentful Yeltsin presented criticism of Gorbachev's report for the 70th anniversary of October, impudently casting doubt on everything that had been accomplished during the three years of *perestroika*. (By the way, nobody remembers the Stalinist note in his criticism).

Gorbachev did not like this nihilism. In general he considered harmful such fault-finding approaches, especially “in the beginning of the journey.” Plus, people were not used to encroachments on the unquestionable authority of the General Secretary. Moreover, it was clear to everybody that Yeltsin was beginning to be manipulated by the people of his circle: himself he was not capable of formulating his objections so clearly. It was also obvious that Yeltsin was not acting out of conviction, but with the aim of flying to the top should *perestroika* succeed in breaking down the traditional forms and functioning of power.

Mikhail Sergeyevich allowed himself to waive the principle of “the pluralism of opinion,” which he himself had announced. He taught Yeltsin (at this time still a delicate) lesson, which was “learned” quite differently from the intention. Two weeks later, at the CC Plenum devoted to the discussion of Gorbachev's 70th October anniversary, Yeltsin decided to openly blackmail the leadership, sharply criticizing the CC Secretariat and threatening resignation. The result is known. Yeltsin was cast to the fringes of politics, but not “squashed.” This fact was then used by the real opposition to Gorbachev.

There is a great deal of coincidence in the incident with Yeltsin, which brought such ill-fated consequences for the country. But something essential in it was a natural outcome. It was a collision of two tendencies: one was the inertia of the past and the other the result of *perestroika*. One was “holy” for the Leninist party—the untouchable nature of its monolithic unity and the absolute authority of the highest leadership. The other was the need for real democratization of the party life and the “rules of the game.”

Formally, the first tendency won. The “heretic” already could not be burned to ashes as he inevitably would have been under a totalitarian regime. The winds of democracy were blowing. But the kind of democracy that later grew from the remaining rootlet to this day leaves people with nostalgic memories of the totalitarian times.

As it were, when speaking of the year 1987 in the history of the country, one has to acknowledge: the year of the 70th anniversary of the Revolution did not gain enough potential for development that people had counted on in preparation for it.

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