

# **The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev**

**1976**

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January 1, 1976

I've been busy at work for the last three days. B.N. was asking me about Zavidovo. He is anxious to know Brezhnev's views on his colleagues. Karen and I told him that right now Leonid Ilyich particularly distinguishes and elevates Suslov. I remember from my previous visits to Zavidovo that Brezhnev used to treat Suslov derisively, mockingly (for his boring texts and orthodoxy, for his refusal to touch vodka and his preference for kefir, for his complete lack of a sense of humor). Now he calls him "Misha" and worries over how he was received in Cuba (Suslov replaced Brezhnev as head of the delegation to Cuba for the First Congress of the Cuban Communist Party). [Brezhnev worried] whether Castro might have treated Suslov badly because Brezhnev could not attend.

Several times Brezhnev raised the question of assigning Suslov to open the Congress. He, Brezhnev, wants to do it himself; he is the General Secretary after all. But then he would have to deliver the greetings to foreign guests for half an hour, calling out all those difficult to pronounce names... He would "get tired before even starting the report." (Brezhnev was very concerned that his jaw problems would get in the way of speaking clearly for several hours in a row. He really does get tired after 25-30 minutes of speaking, and begins to slur his speech).

During one of these discussions Shishlin suggested that Leonid Ilyich should enter the hall alone. He would open the Congress, hold the Presidium elections and then give the floor to Suslov to name the fraternal parties. That's what Brezhnev decided to do. He calmed down and said, "That's better. Last time Podgorny opened the Congress, some Party figure he is!" On another occasion he put down Podgorny in connection to the question of "eliminating the Union Republics' Communist Parties and turning them into Republican Party organizations." "I suggested this a long time ago," Brezhnev said, "but Shelest was against it and Podgorny was his primary supporter. Already then I sensed that something was off in his attitude..."

The following episode is noteworthy. At Zavidovo we were discussing the international section for Brezhnev's report at the XXV Congress. He suddenly got wound up. He remembered Khrushchev, who, according to Brezhnev, left behind a state of affairs that made it more difficult to move towards peace than it had been a decade before 1964. He got into a stupid gamble with the Cuban missile crisis and then shit his pants. "I will never forget," Brezhnev said, "how Nikita, in a panic, would send a telegram to Kennedy, then 'en route' order it to be stopped and recalled. And why? Because he wanted to f\*ck up [об...ать] the Americans. I remember he was shouting at the CC Presidium: 'We can hit a fly in Washington with our missiles!' That fool Frol Kozlov (under Khrushchev practically the second secretary of the CC) echoed him: 'We are holding a gun to the Americans' head!' And what happened? A shame! We nearly plunged into nuclear war. How much we had to withdraw, and how much work it took to make them believe

that we really wanted peace. I sincerely want peace and will never back down. You can believe me. But not everyone likes this line. Not everyone agrees.”

Aleksandrov was sitting across from him and said, “Leonid Ilyich, there are 250 million people in our country, there might be some among them who disagree. Should we worry about them?”

Brezhnev replied, “Don’t spin it, Andryusha.<sup>1</sup> You know what I’m talking about. The dissent is not somewhere among the 250 million, it is in the Kremlin. They are not some regional committee propagandists, they are the same as me. Except they think differently!”

I was amazed. He said this impetuously, with emphasis, and while Karen and I were present (he had only met with Karen two days ago).

He cannot speak about Kosygin without obvious irritation. He told us about one incident, apropos. Kosygin went to England and called Brezhnev from there on a regular phone line: “‘You know, Lenya,<sup>2</sup> the Queen herself received me at an ancient castle. This castle had been boarded up for decades, and now they opened it for the first time in honor of my visit...’ And he went on and on. I told him, ‘Aleksey, you will tell me about it when you get back.’ And hung up the phone. Some politician!” He shook his head with contempt.

He spoke about Mazurov as a helpless and clumsy leader. “I received a letter from Tyumen oilmen,” he told us. “They complained that they don’t have fur hats and gloves, they cannot work in -20° Celsius conditions. I remembered when I was Secretary in Moldova, I built a fur factory there. It later became known in the whole Union. I called Kishinev, they told me their warehouses are packed with furs, they don’t know what to do with them. So I called Mazurov, asked him if he is aware of what’s going on in Tyumen and Moldova on this subject. ‘I’ll look into it,’ he said. That’s an all-Union statesman for you!”

Now about Ponomarev himself. At one point B.N. called me there [in Zavidovo]. We talked. He asked me how Castro’s report at the Congress was viewed “over there.” I said it was viewed very positively and that Brezhnev was planning to let Castro know this through Suslov. The next day (B.N. couldn’t help but get busy) a paper came to Zavidovo from Ponomarev. It was a draft letter to Suslov, which essentially suggested that he should instruct “through our Cuban comrades” Cuban embassies in Latin America to disseminate Fidel’s speech in the respective countries. (I understood this move on B.N.’s part: Communist Parties have almost no resources, and the Soviet embassies in Latin America are few and far in between.) But to Brezhnev this argument seemed ridiculous. He flew into a rage, “Who is this Ponomarev, he is an academician, right?” (He looked at us with feigned surprise.) “What nonsense! They can’t

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<sup>1</sup> Diminutive version of the name Andrey, used with the familiar and informal form of address. [Translator’s note]

<sup>2</sup> Diminutive version of the name Leonid, used with the familiar and informal form of address. [Translator’s note]

write such a simple thing. Am I supposed to edit every piece of paper? A consultant probably wrote it, and he threw it in there. Is this what you call work... academician! What the hell is this. Call the stenographer... (he dictated the letter to Suslov himself). That's it. There is no need to drive a messenger [*фельда*] 150 kilometers with such a paper, please pass this on to Mr. Academician!"

All of this was said with irritation and contempt, with the explicit calculation that it would get back to B.N. (two people from his department – Karen and I – were sitting right there). It was evident that the misstep with the paper was only an excuse to publicly express his long-standing and deeply hostile attitude towards Ponomarev.

Why does Brezhnev dislike him? Maybe he cannot forget that B.N. "hesitated" in 1964 when the decision to remove Nikita was being made. Maybe (and most likely) it is for his bookishness, dogmatism, tediousness. Or maybe – and this is most important – it is because the Western press portrays Ponomarev as the representative and even the "leader of the revolutionary-class movement" in the Kremlin, in contrast to Brezhnev's "pacifist" movement?!

The incident with [Ivan Vasilievich] Kapitonov. After we "went through" the international section (and were expecting to go home) Brezhnev suddenly suggested that we should call in a second team – the economy team. "You will look at it together, after all it's our mutual work, Party work."

The following people arrived on Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> – Bovin, Tsukanov, Inozemtsev, Arbatov, and Sedlykh (agriculture, head of the sector). We read through it and first discussed it without Brezhnev. We were lenient, since the task at hand is difficult: it was a dreadful five years but the text had to be inspiring and instill optimism about the future. Brezhnev read the section, listened to Aleksandrov's presentation of our opinion, then got up and walked out of the room, leaving us in speechless confusion. He returned a half hour later and said, "I categorically disagree with your opinion (about the economic section)." However, after this alarming declaration he did not actually add much to what we came up with: more austerity, less boasting and loud words, more criticality and specificity. It would be great if we manage to maintain the text at this level! I don't believe it'll happen.

However, I am just now getting to subject of Kapitonov.

The next day at breakfast Brezhnev announced that he would like to get an idea of the report as a whole. He assigned Aleksandrov to get the text of the third section (on the Party and ideology) from Kapitonov, without summoning any of their people. In a few hours the text was in Zavidovo and we had to read it... It was unbelievable, as if they just copied a *Pravda* newspaper editorial. Around fifteen people had been working on it in Volynskoe-I since June.

We shared our impressions with Brezhnev. He said, "Let's read it together." We sat down to read, got about halfway through. Suddenly L.I. shut the manuscript, got up and said he has no intention of listening to any more of this nonsense.

Brezhnev: "Summon Kapitonov here immediately!"

Aleksandrov: "But he doesn't write anything himself anyway!"

Brezhnev: "I know that he's not capable of writing anything himself. But he is a CC Secretary. He is responsible for this section for the Secretariat. This blabber was written under his leadership, following his instructions. Who is responsible?! Why do I need a secretary who doesn't even understand the requirements of a Congress report?! Summon him immediately and give him a dressing down so it gets through to him."

Aleksandrov managed to insist that Petrovich should be invited also (he is Kapitonov's first deputy, Brezhnev had unflattering words about him as well) and Smirnov (first deputy of the Propaganda Department). In the morning during breakfast we collectively "snuck in" Zagladin and Kovalev's names, too. Brezhnev said a few "nice words" about Vadim, gave him a fatherly scolding for breaking away from "our group" for too long. "He is a capable guy and he should be called here immediately," which we did.

Zagladin from the International Department and Kovalev from the MFA<sup>3</sup> were assigned the Party-ideological sector and rewrote everything (especially Vadim) the day they arrived.

Kapitonov sat across the dinner table from the General Secretary, who on the first night told him everything he thought of his section, in rather derogatory terms and in our presence. [Brezhnev] immediately assigned us to pick the section apart. He told us not to talk to Kapitonov as a CC Secretary ("then there will be no use!") but as an "author."

However, Aleksandrov asked all of us not to attend this exercise and gave the message to Kapitonov and his new team only in the presence of other assistants (Rusakov and Blatov... Tsukanov did not want to go. He has some difficulties with the General Secretary and he is cautious about alienating the CC Party Organizational Secretary as well).

### January 2, 1976

I am waiting for the call to go to Zavidovo any hour now. Nobody knows anything and nobody dares to ask Brezhnev. People are guessing that departure may be rescheduled for tomorrow.

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs. [Translator's note]

About Yagodkin, the Moscow City Committee secretary for ideology. He is a Black Hundredist and Stalinist, he organized crackdowns in the Institute of Economics and Philosophy and other similar organizations.

His name came up by chance in the course of our work. I recall it was in connection with Brezhnev's complaints about his colleagues who disagree with him and do not want to understand him. Aleksandrov offhandedly threw in, "What do you expect when Yagodkin is at the head of Moscow's ideology..."

Brezhnev responded, "I've been told about him. But Grishin started defending him, although he wasn't a big fan before. He says when Yagodkin was secretary of the Moscow State University party committee he supposedly claimed that he doesn't like Brezhnev. As if I need his approval! But it seems he is good now that is he on the Moscow City Committee. I don't really believe it, but to hell with him."

We all jumped in: how is this possible, Leonid Ilyich. The Party suffers directly when such a man represents it, especially to the intelligentsia. People can't stand him. He recently published a full-page editorial in *Novy Mir* and if you read carefully it is clearly against the cultural policy outlined in the XXIV Congress. Plus he blatantly distorted Lenin in his article. It is inconceivable for a person like him to keep his post after the XXV Congress. And so on.

Brezhnev listened to us, looking from one person to the next, and finally said, "Alright, when I get back to Moscow, I'll speak with Grishin."

A couple days later Zagladin came to Zavidovo and of course found out about this episode. Without letting on, he wrote a note about a conversation in Rome with a member of the PCI<sup>4</sup> leadership, [Carlo] Galluzzi (he is very right-leaning). This Galluzzi (I remember him) supposedly said to Zagladin: "You claim there is no opposition in Soviet society, but you have it within you Party. Look at Yagodkin's article in *Novy Mir*, does it correspond to the line of the XXIV Congress?"

We were at breakfast (Zagladin showed us the note ahead of time, including to Petrovich and Smirnov – the leader of our entire propaganda). Aleksandrov leaned over to Vadim and said, "Vadim, this is the perfect moment. Put the note in front of Leonid Ilyich." Vadim got up, walked over, said a couple words and asked him to read it. Brezhnev read it slowly and carefully. Then he put it in his pocket, turned to Zagladin and said, "We already discussed this man here. Yes, yes. When I get to Moscow, I will definitely speak with Grishin."

Finally, when we were already back in Moscow, on December 29<sup>th</sup> B.N. called me to his office. I came over while he was on the phone.

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<sup>4</sup> Italian Communist Party, *Partito Comunista Italiano*. [Translator's note]

“No, no Viktor Vasilievich, it is not that we do not trust him, but you know, it wouldn’t be good if there was such a conversation and despite this fact he (I understood he was talking about Yagodkin) would be opening an important political event in the Hall of Columns. Of course we are sorry that we (!) are giving you extra work in connection with this, but it would be better if Grekov were to open, he is a second secretary, etc.”

I understood: the next day Pelshe and Ponomarev were supposed to give speeches in the Hall of Columns at the House of Unions on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Wilhelm Pieck. Yagodkin had been assigned to open this meeting. So, B.N. was “cancelling” it. As it turned out, Grekov was the one to open it. (B.N. mentioned to me in passing that a month ago Suslov assigned Smirnov to write a note to the CC about Yagodkin, but Smirnov didn’t dare to. By the way, he was terribly pleased when guys from the International Department took on this matter in Zavidovo, i.e. someone else did the work to bring about his secret dream of getting rid of Yagodkin.)

So, on the eve of the XXV Congress an important action has been taken in the implementation of what was written (also by Zagladin and Aleksandrov) for the “cultural policy” aspect of Brezhnev’s XXIV Congress report.

One more thing on this subject. As I mentioned, Brezhnev lost his temper when discussing Kapitonov’s section [of the draft Congress report]. “We removed Shelest, we removed Mzhavanadze, and before him Aliyev and Kochinyan.<sup>5</sup> That, by the way, was an ideological matter too, not just because they failed at their jobs. But there is not a hint of this in the text. It doesn’t say anything about work or how we should work. I recall this episode. Samoteikin (his assistant) brings me a letter. It is from Lyubimov – the director of the Taganka Theater. The latter writes that the city committee wants to expel him from the Party... he put on some show that they (!) didn’t like. I call Grishin, tell him, ‘Cancel the resolution if it has been adopted already. We cannot deal with the intelligentsia this way.’ Grishin canceled it, it seems he met with Lyubimov. And look what happens: a couple months later he puts on such a play... what is it called? (We all jumped in, *A zori zdes’ tikhie* [It’s Quiet Here at Dawn].) Not a single person leaves the theater without tears in their eyes. (He got teary eyed himself and a lump rose in his throat). That’s how you work!”

The way he spoke, I couldn’t help thinking – maybe he went to Taganka himself? Or maybe someone made a recording for him? Later I checked. They say L.I. hasn’t been to the theater, but Tsukanov saw the play.

Here is another example of how we do politics:

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<sup>5</sup> First Secretaries of the Communist Party Central Committees of Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia. [Author’s note]

On the eve of Brezhnev's birthday (he turned 69 on December 19, 1975) Gromyko came to Zavidovo. They talked one-on-one for three hours. Everyone thought that Gromyko came to congratulate him, after all they are considered to be friends. But the next morning, at breakfast, L.I. casually mentioned, "Gromyko asked permission not to go to Japan, there was a Politburo decision that he should go there in early January. I agreed: of course he doesn't want to spoil his New Year's with preparations, it is a difficult trip. There is really no point in going: they want the islands and we aren't handing them over. So there wouldn't be any results anyway. It won't make a difference whether he goes or not."

Aleksandrov frowned, turned pale, then exploded: "This is wrong, Leonid Ilyich. Are we a serious country? Do we keep our word? Or do we not give a damn? We promised them four times, the Japanese have already announced the visit in newspapers. Aren't we supposed to take their prestige into consideration? Or do we want to let them go to the Chinese completely? Would you look at that, Gromyko doesn't want to spoil his New Year's celebrations. The Politburo decision means nothing to him! He came here to beg off! You did the wrong thing, Leonid Ilyich."

Brezhnev, who clearly wasn't expecting such an attack, replied: "He asked – I agreed..."

Aleksandrov objected again: "It was wrong to agree. Kissinger visited Japan five times this year. It also appears that nothing changed, but this lack of change favors the Americans. Our Gromyko was happy to go to Belgium, Italy, France, some other places. But as soon as it was time to do truly difficult work, he 'doesn't want to spoil his New Year's.' We have to talk to the Japanese, even if we can't give them anything right now, as you say. We have to negotiate, show our good will. It is a major country and it wants to have relations with us. We should value that and take it into account. This is the point of diplomacy. You did the wrong thing, Leonid Ilyich."

Blatov jumped in, saying something along the same lines in his methodical, monotonous tone, but rather resolutely. We started speaking in support of "Vorobey." Brezhnev turned gloomier by the minute, he tried to change the subject and hold us off with little remarks. Finally, he got up and threw his napkin on the table, "What a nice present you prepared for my birthday!" and he left the table.

Soon we relocated to the winter garden. Sat down to work, but it wasn't coming together. Brezhnev came in an hour later. He went straight to Aleksandrov: "You won, Andryusha. I just spoke to Gromyko for a whole hour. I told him to go to Japan."

On another occasion, in the same key, there was another conversation in the same vein. Brezhnev reminded us that at the talks in Vienna, NATO members made a proposal: they would withdraw from Europe one thousand missiles with nuclear warheads and we would withdraw one thousand tanks. This would be a start, to move the negotiations from a standstill. "There are no obstacles from the point of view of security," L.I. went on, "Neither the Americans nor the

Germans would attack us after this kind of an agreement. There is nothing to be afraid of. The issue was with our socialist friends, they would be against it. They need our tanks for completely different reasons. Otherwise I would have agreed to even more. I don't know, did you hear about this?" (He turned to Andrey Mikhailovich) "No? Only Sukhodrev knows about it (the interpreter). I said this to Nixon one-on-one. I offered him: let our Supreme Soviet and your Congress solemnly declare that neither of our countries will never, under any circumstances, attack the other either with nuclear or any other means. We would pass this law and declare it to the whole world. And we would add that if a third party attacks either one of us, the other would help to curb the attacker. I remember Nixon was interested in my proposal. But then he was hunted down and deposed, and the whole initiative vanished into thin air.

"And now even after Helsinki, Ford and Kissinger and various senators are demanding to arm America even more, they want it to be the strongest. They keep pressuring us because of our Navy, or because of Angola, or they come up with something else. Then Grechko comes to me and says they increased this, they are threatening to "raise" that. Give me more money, he says, not 140 billion but 156 billion. What am I supposed to tell him? I am the chairman of our country's military council, I am responsible for its security. The minister of defense tells me that he is not responsible if I don't approve the funds. So I approve [the increases] again, and again, and again. And the money goes flying..."

This was the first conversation "about disarmament." Later, in a wider circle (the economists arrived) at lunch Andryukha<sup>6</sup> again reminded about NATO's initiative. Brezhnev responded sharply: "We will not accept this proposal. We've had this conversation with the Americans several times before, and every time I told them that it is unacceptable for us. Now it will look like I got scared. We need to prepare an answer in the negative."

We all sat grimly in silence. Nobody dared to object.

[This episode was] continued the day before our departure, on December 26<sup>th</sup>. In the evening after hunting Brezhnev stopped by the little room next to the winter garden. We call it the television room, Bovin writes there and simultaneously keeps an eye on the screen. Little by little, people started congregating there. We were chatting about all kinds of things. Brezhnev commented (for the umpteenth time) – there are too many papers and (jokingly) Andrey keeps handing me new ones.

Andrey got wound up: "Why are you upset, Leonid Ilyich. We don't have to make reports. As you wish!"

Brezhnev: "Why are you doing it again!" (As if to say, why is he agitated.)

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<sup>6</sup> Familiar version of the name Andrey. [Translator's note]

“Yes, I am agitated. I cannot be otherwise. For example, what should we do with NATO’s proposal? It is very easy to say ‘No.’ But there is the big-time politics. Do we want to continue with détente, or do we only want to say that we do. We started it – ‘political détente must be supplemented with military détente.’ Now what’s happening? We aren’t offering anything ourselves. They are offering a completely harmless move. We have 16,000 tanks in socialist countries. What will change if there will be 15,000. Absolutely nothing! Likewise, nothing will change for them if they withdraw one thousand obsolete missiles. But détente would win, because everyone would see that we are prepared to talk and do something when it comes to the arms race. If we simply say ‘no,’ we will be the ones to suffer. You can be sure that their propaganda will make the most they can out of our negative response.”

Brezhnev got up and left, Andrey followed him gesticulating and explaining something. Brezhnev turned back and yelled, “Time for dinner!” But when he was going downstairs he made a detour to the guard room (where the communications center is) and spoke on the phone for about 40 minutes. He came out and said, “I assigned Grechko to prepare proposals for Vienna. Let them think about how to respond to NATO’s move... And I told him to organize some type of maneuvers before Kissinger’s visit (01.19.1976) and invite NATO representatives.”

January 3, 1976

I will conclude about Zavidovo. (If something pops into my mind later, I’ll record it). I just remembered the following. We turned on the television one evening shortly before departure. There was some broadcast about the upcoming Olympic Games. Brezhnev said, “What fool suggested to host the 1980 games in Moscow?! It’s nonsense! We will waste a ton of money, and for what? ... Kosygin kept worrying about this. Once he called me, asking would it be alright for his deputy Novikov to be our chairman of the Olympic committee. I said sure. But I thought to myself: what is this guy spending his time on. It doesn’t occur to him that we won’t gain anything from these Olympics but a couple anti-Soviet scandals.” And so on. Everyone at the table eagerly agreed with him, adding our own arguments. Although I think Rusakov said that we’ve come too far, if we cancel abruptly there will be a huge uproar. I added: they will once again attribute it to our difficult economic situation.

Brezhnev responded to our comments as follows: “Naturally we shouldn’t call it off tomorrow... We have to pick the right moment, prepare the propaganda. But we definitely have to call off the Olympics here.”

Leonid Ilyich’s birthday was on December 19<sup>th</sup>. He started talking about it long before. You got the sense that he felt it was an important occasion, and that in general he has a very high opinion of himself. And this view is unconditional, so much so that he probably wouldn’t even get angry if someone doubted the importance of his role. He would simply think these doubts are ludicrous.

He told us ahead of time that he didn't want to celebrate his birthday in the company of "his colleagues." He came up with an excuse, "Ustinov recently lost his wife, so he is not in the mood for parties. And it would be awkward not to invite him." He repeated this argument several times. "We made an agreement with Viktoria Petrovna (wife) a long time ago, so there won't be any hurt feelings. She will bake a birthday cake and send it to us, and we'll drink to her here."

He ended up flying into Moscow by helicopter, but only to spend time at home, he didn't meet with any "colleagues." Though they clearly were eager to at least congratulate him over the phone (judging by Ponomarev's calls to me).

Chernenko collected the congratulatory telegrams and sent Brezhnev a list of the authors. Brezhnev told us that he received congratulations from every oblast committee and so on. What he really enjoyed were the "letters from workers." These letters covered more than birthday congratulations, some were for the XXV Congress. He read excerpts to us: one guy suggested to make Brezhnev a generalissimus; another to make him a General Secretary for life; a third wrote a poem about his accomplishments. Brezhnev was clearly moved by such things. With certain simplicity he commented approvingly on the enthusiastic and often naïve reviews of his work.

At 6 p.m. L.I. returned to Zavidovo (once again by helicopter). From 7 p.m. until 12 a.m. we sat at the table, "by candlelight." We made toasts. Overall you could say there wasn't any outright fawning. People said things about his real accomplishments and his truly good human qualities. I also said some words...

Some aspects of his personality materialized in his actions, with national and worldwide significance... a combination of sincere simplicity and statesmanlike scope... The toast ended up being a little enthusiastic. But I stand by every word I said.

"Everyone knows what you did for humanity, for peace. Unfortunately, people are starting to get used to it the way we get used to air or everyday food. However, these things are not transitory; they will remain in history and in national memory. I would like to draw attention to one thing. In your thoughts and actions the question of peace encompasses not only all areas of policy (foreign and domestic), it becomes a matter of party ideology.

"Lenin saw and understood that it was impossible to eliminate war back then. He always approached peace as a respite, while war was a condition for revolutionary action.

"Later we knew a time when talk of peace was only used to deceive our opponents. It was used as a tactical weapon. This only increased the danger of war. It so aggravated and confused the situation that in 1964 it became much more difficult to maintain peace than it had been ten years prior. You recently told us yourself how it was.

“Unfortunately this view of politics of peace still exists today. This is why there is resistance and lack of understanding.

“Your sincerity and conviction in the struggle for peace have embodied the living refutation of the idea that peace is incompatible with revolution. You personally proved that in our time to be loyal to party ideology and Marxism-Leninism, to be a revolutionary, is to be a passionate fighter for peace. In this sense our party is very lucky. You gave it the authority that our people have earned for more than just victory over fascism.”

The atmosphere was very down-to-earth. It was six of us international affairs guys, not counting the general, gamekeeper... later he called over two more guards, very nice guys.

Leonid Ilyich himself spoke several times. He noted some of our exaggerations in the toasts. But he mentioned in passing that he dreams of writing a book, *Resume and Life* [*Анкета и жизнь*] i.e. what life stories are behind each one of the lines of the “short biography” on the posters that go up on the streets before elections to the Supreme Soviet. This topic was widely discussed in the toasts and in general was, of course, the main subject of conversation at the table.

In the end we persuaded him to read some poetry. He once again (like in 1967 in the “hut”) very expressively read Aptukhin, Yesenin, and somebody else.

He does have something of the actor’s gift. The next morning, still a little bit drunk, for some reason he remembered the Victory Parade in 1945. He got up and described three episodes: how he showed up at the banquet hall before others, went closer to the side of the presidium where Stalin would be appearing, and knocked over a chair with a heap of replacement dishes (about three dozen); how he and Pokryshkin were drinking in the “Moskva” restaurant and how Pokryshkin took out a gun and started shooting at the ceiling when they were asked to leave after midnight (the next morning it was reported to Stalin, who retorted: “A Hero is allowed!”); how he [Brezhnev] was totally drunk on the walk home from the victory banquet with his wife and started up a conversation with the Tsar Bell. This last story he depicted especially picturesquely, with gestures, drunken antics, stumbling and so on.

L.I. hinted that he wouldn’t mind spending New Year’s in Zavidovo as well. But by then our “company” would grow threefold, even our lunch table would need an extension. We started whining for various reasons. On Saturday, December 27<sup>th</sup>, Brezhnev unexpectedly announced that in the evening we would be going home until after New Year’s. He gave everyone time off and forbade us from coming to the Central Committee.

But Karen and I have our own boss (or more precisely, I do).

The following episode was of interest from the three days at the CC before the New Year.

Andropov presented a note to the Politburo on the situation with “dissidents” in the USSR. According to him, Soviet people are surprised when they hear on the radio that the PCF<sup>7</sup> suddenly started defending [Leonid] Plyushch and [Andrei] Sakharov and in general hounding the CPSU about “having political prisoners in the USSR.” The note doesn’t say what to do about it. I got the impression that the hidden agenda of the note was to justify before the Central Committee the fact that we “have to keep doing it” despite protests from our partners in détente. The document contained interesting data: over the last ten years, 1500 people have been arrested for anti-Soviet activities. When Khrushchev announced to the world in 1954 that the Soviet Union has no political prisoners, there were at least 1400. In 1976 there are about 850 political prisoners, 261 of them on charges of anti-Soviet propaganda. I was struck by the following number: the KGB has seen 68,000 people “prophylactically” [*профилактированных*], i.e. people were summoned to the KGB and warned about the “unacceptability” of their activities. Over 1800 anti-Soviet groups and organizations uncovered through “penetration” have been given warnings. Overall, in Andropov’s opinion, there are hundreds of thousands of people in the Soviet Union who either are acting against the Soviet regime or are prepared to do so under the right circumstances.

January 6, 1976

For New Year’s my secretary went to Kostroma for her stepdaughter’s wedding. I asked her:

“How are things there?”

“Bad.”

“How come?”

“There is nothing in the stores.”

“What do you mean, nothing?”

“Just that. Herring that has turned a yellowish color. Canned soup – borscht, cabbage soup, you know the kind? Here in Moscow it spends years gathering dust on the shelves. Over there nobody buys it either. There are no sausages, no meat products at all. Whenever there is a meat delivery there is a huge crowd at the store. The only cheese they have is local from Kostroma, but I hear it’s not the kind we get in Moscow. My husband has a lot of friends and relatives there. In the course of the week we visited a bunch of people and everywhere we were treated to pickles, sauerkraut, and marinated mushrooms, i.e. the things people stocked up in the summer from their gardens and the forest. How do they live there!”

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<sup>7</sup> French Communist Party, *Parti communiste français*. [Translator’s note]

I was struck by this story. We are talking about a regional center 400km from Moscow, with a population of 600,000! What enthusiasm can we speak of, what ideas?

About Zagladin. He keeps showing up on the pages of the bourgeois press. Yesterday I read in "Le Monde": a big leading interview on the situation in the communist movement in Europe in connection with the December 15-19<sup>th</sup> Working Group in Berlin. Zagladin is described as "Brezhnev's closest adviser," his *porte-parole* [spokesperson, sic in French]. His trip to Rome and meeting with Berlinguer is presented in this light. They paint a picture of Zagladin everywhere carrying out direct orders from Brezhnev, who supposedly decided to give concessions to the Italians, French, Yugoslavs, and Romanians in order to ensure that the conference takes place. However, the concessions are being made *de facto* in such a way that we could not be taken at our word or caught "deviating from our principles." Supposedly there is only one condition – that communists remain communists. But nobody can say what that means anymore. The newspaper sardonically suggests that communists from the East and the West should gather for a colloquium to answer one question, "What is socialism?"

Brezhnev supposedly did not agree to these concessions right away, only after he became convinced (during preparatory meetings for the European conference) that otherwise the CPSU would get neither the European nor the international conference.

If they only knew how things stand in real life! That Brezhnev mostly doesn't concern himself with Zagladin's numerous evolutions; that he looks bored when he listens to him (if he listens) and doesn't react at all. That's exactly how it was in Zavidovo, when Zagladin just got back from Rome and Berlin and tried to present his "results" and considerations at the breakfast table. Brezhnev was periodically exchanging jokes with the women and the gamekeeper, he simply wasn't listening. It looked like he had zero interest in what Zagladin was saying and like it wasn't even intended for him, more for his neighbors at the table.

Brezhnev made just one comment about Marchais' antics, in passing while he was complaining that he hadn't been sleeping well, "I am being crushed under information and on top of it I have to worry about why Marchais is going crazy!"

On another occasion, at the working table, he was informed that the French are asking about the composition of the CPSU delegation to their XXII Congress. He said, "We should teach them a lesson" (meaning to lower the level of the delegation).

January 10, 1976

The rush of preparations for the meeting of Secretaries of the Central Committees of the socialist countries has begun (January 27-28 in Warsaw). B.N. once again wants to "stun the world." His vanity is laughable against the background of: a) Brezhnev's attitude towards him, which I described earlier. He isn't going to be made a member of the Politburo, he would be

lucky to remain at his current level. Despite this (and maybe because of it!) anti-Communist yellow press continues to publish articles that depict Ponomarev as the head of a mighty agency (the International Department of the CC) which is higher and more powerful than the KGB and which directs all the secret revolutionary operations around the world, finances and subordinates everyone they can to Soviet interests and politics.

b) Because the dissolution of the traditional ICM<sup>8</sup> has become obvious and irreversible. Although the Italians did “apologize” for an interpellation in Parliament about Sakharov (after our presentation). But they are just smarter and more tactful than Marchais. They understand that it is not in their interest to quarrel with the Soviet Union. Whereas Marchais keeps at it.

The CPs<sup>9</sup> of socialist countries want some kind of explanations from us, that is why they insisted on a meeting in Warsaw. The meeting will be devoted to coordinating external propaganda after Helsinki. But we won’t be able to say anything substantive about the situation in the ICM because the Romanians will be present! And what’s the point anyway, if we will speak in “our traditional spirit”?

January 12, 1976

Today consultants from the Department and I were preparing B.N.’s speech for the Warsaw meeting. In the evening he called me over and dictated to a stenographer “his own approach” – a bunch of platitudes. Once again he is torn by contradictions: on the one hand, he wants to teach fraternal parties to be vigilant regarding the “Montblanc of weapons” (his term), and on the other hand Kissinger will be in Moscow soon and we can predict that his meetings with the General Secretary will be “positive and informative.”

On the one hand, he wants to say something about the bad guys Marchais and Berlinguer, on the other hand he understands that the Romanians will immediately report it to them and we will have a scandal before the Congress.

I met with Drozdov (former adviser in Paris, now our consultant) – information for the CC “on negative developments in PCF’s policy.” Everything is smoothed over and attributed to Marchais’ subjective approach. Nothing on the substance of the developments...

I am reading the CC Secretariat protocols (I get them every week) – 95 percent is about awards to people and enterprises, about “greetings from the General Secretary” to this or that factory, construction site, etc. The rest is about personnel transfers. Rarely you see a fundamental question on domestic or foreign policy.

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<sup>8</sup> International Communist Movement. [Translator’s note]

<sup>9</sup> Communist parties. [Translator’s note]

I found out about the CC CPSU's comments on the draft of the SED's new program. Honecker "gratefully" agreed with all the comments except one – to mention the "disengagement" of politics with the FRG. He protested pretty sharply and was backed up by Hager and Axen, without naming the true reason for their disagreement.

B.N. told us he heard from Zagladin, who called from Zavidovo, that they held a reading of the Congress summary report in its entirety. Supposedly the General Secretary once again really liked the part of the international section that deals with the "third world" and the revolutionary process (i.e. Brutents-Chernyaev), but the piece on socialist countries he allegedly told Aleksandrov to rewrite. At the same time this contradicts that Brezhnev was said to have taken a large marker and written across the entire international section: "Accept!" Zagladin was persuading B.N. to "raise the level" (if [the report] is sent to him for review). I warned B.N. of the danger of interfering with the text with "fundamental" objections at this stage. I essentially think that any Ponomarizaiton of the summary report text would be politically harmful.

January 14, 1976

I received Janos Berecz – head of the MSZMP<sup>10</sup> CC International Department. We talked about social democracy, the conference in Budapest on social democracy, which is once again being postponed till May.

He asked our opinion on the Marchais-Berlinguer Declaration. I responded by just shooting the breeze. I did tell him that we are preparing closed "presentations" on Marchais activity regarding dissidents, but I said in general our CC hasn't discussed "this question" and we have no intention of stirring up trouble before our Congress, we don't want to turn it into a platform for a split. Overall, I said, never mind them – let them try their democratic way. We will see what they do when they come to power, for example with their fascists, etc. If they weren't lashing out at us, at the foundation created by our efforts and sacrifices, we wouldn't even be thinking about a "theoretical" public refutation of their intentions. We only want fairness: if it wasn't for us, for all our mistakes, failures, and achievements, our dramatic experience, they not only wouldn't be able to talk like this, they couldn't even imagine their "democratic way."

I.I. Udal'tsov was removed from his position (as director of News Agency "Novosti"). He was the one in Prague in 1968 responsible for the "information to the center" that led to the actions, it's on his conscience. I've known about his Stalinism and his longing for order for a long time, as far back as the XX Congress, when he was head of a sector in the International Department, and then deputy head of the Science Department. However, he wasn't removed due to these "beliefs," but for their consequences: for saying that we have no order anymore, that

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<sup>10</sup> Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party, *Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt*. [Translator's note]

useless old men have seized the top leadership and won't let the qualified younger generation (i.e. Udal'tsov & Co.) advance. That's the cause of all our problems, according to him.

Zagladin, who just got back from Zavidovo, says that the "impetus" about Udal'tsov recently came from Moscow to Zavidovo, where the issue was decided in a matter of seconds. Consequently, Ivan Ivanovich [Udal'tsov] is being sent as an ambassador to Greece, where, as we all know, "they have everything" and the last thing they need is him.

Zagladin told me about the Demichev problem, how it was taken up there again. It started the same way it did under our watch, from the fact that ideological sectors [of the Congress report] are once again (as before the XXIV Congress) being prepared by the international affairs guys, while the corresponding CC departments and the Ministry of Culture have nothing to do with it. Apparently Brezhnev made a remark that we don't have a good candidate for the position of Minister of Culture, otherwise... To which Kulakov replied (he was summoned there to work on the agricultural sector): "Let's move [Vasiliy Filimonovich] Shauro there. We don't really like him as head of a CC department, but maybe he would do better as a minister."

On top of this word reached Zavidovo that at the latest PB session Demichev allegedly said that we need to "take action"... we have a mess in the economy, in the International Communist Movement... How long are we going to tolerate it?

"Oh that little shit!" the General Secretary exclaimed, "Did he have order in ideology!? Does he have order in culture right now!?"

According to Zagladin, Brezhnev was very mad.

B.N. suggested that I think about whom to nominate for the new body of the CC (from "our core group," i.e. people who can work on our assignments – in the ICM and among social movements). I suggested: Nekrasov ("Pravda"), Naumov ("Novoe vremya"), Ratiani ("Pravda"), Polyakov ("Izvestiya"), Trukhanovsky ("Voprosy istorii"), Stukalin (printing committee), Aganbegyan (academician from the Siberian division).

B.N. indignantly rejected Ratiani, ignored Aganbegyan, argued with me about Trukhanovsky but in the end left him on the list. I also mentioned Timofeyev, with all the caveats of course. B.N. is very hesitant, although he wants to have a more obedient entity in the Central Committee than Arbatov and Inozemtsev.

I think the General Secretary will add Sashka Bovin to the CC (the Auditing Commission).

January 19, 1976

Inozemtsev stopped by today. He, Arbatov, Bovin, CC Secretary Kulakov and the General Secretary's advisers returned to Zavidovo after New Year's, unlike me, Brutents, and Kovalev. He used my high-frequency phone line to call Shevardnadze in Tbilisi.

He asks me:

“What are you working on?”

“As you see, I'm preparing for Warsaw (meeting of CC Secretaries), writing B.N.'s speech.”

“You know, there was such an outburst on this subject at Zavidovo the other day. I don't remember how it started, only he (the General Secretary) suddenly flared up, ‘What the hell are they doing coming up with some kind of meeting. Do they have nothing better to do? Instead of helping us to prepare for the Congress they are doing this nonsense. What can they say there before the Congress anyway? Who needs this?!’ And he just kept going and going against your Ponomarev. Aleksandrov even defended him, saying, ‘Why do you say that, Leonid Ilyich. Ponomarev's first deputy Zagladin is here working with us. Before that Chernyaev and Brutents were here and contributed a lot, they are also from Ponomarev's department. The CC International Department has already done a great deal for the summary report.’ And so on. But to no avail. Poor B.N. got a worse lashing than that time with the ill-fated Cuban telegram.”

I practically shouted, “How is this possible, Kolya? We were against having this meeting before the Congress, not just us deputies but B.N. himself. For two months he held it back, even though Katushev and the Czechs were pressuring him. But he could no longer resist when we got a message from the PUWP<sup>11</sup> Congress in Warsaw that at a meeting of a delegation of fraternal countries Brezhnev strongly supported this idea, which was put forward by Husak and Bilak. They were the ones who suggested moving up this meeting to January; it had been scheduled for June (in Warsaw). There is a record of this in the Soviet delegation's telegrams from Warsaw, in the invitation letters from the PUWP CC by Lukashovich and Frelek, who made a special trip to Moscow this week. We aren't idiots and realized that it would be pretty absurd to hold a meeting on coordinating foreign propaganda ahead of our Congress. However, who could disobey direct orders. Kolya! You must go and tell B.N. about this right now.

He hesitated, then called reception. B.N. was busy with a delegation. [Inozemtsev] sat around, thought out loud, and suddenly started persuading me not to tell Ponomarev anything, not to upset the old man since we can't really change anything at this point.

But I went to B.N. and told him what happened. He was surprised and upset. For a long time he was telling me how it really happened, even though he knew that I already know. I told

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<sup>11</sup> Polish United Worker's Party. [Translator's note]

him: “You still have to give Leonid Ilyich your comments on the summary report (the text had been sent around to the CC Secretaries), so you should “by the way” mention that you are carrying out his orders.”

B.N. said that calls to Brezhnev are not allowed. He will be submitting his comments in writing. And in general he won't get involved in this affair. Let Katushev... At this point I left.

What's going on?

Either Brezhnev was misunderstood (although when I was in Zavidovo he praised the “ideological coordination of socialist countries” on one occasion); or his dislike for Ponomarev is so strong that the very fact of his presence in a matter turns it into an empty exercise and showing off, into “the academician's folly” in the eyes of the General Secretary. In the meanwhile, Ponomarev is bending over backwards to show how he's giving everything to the job, how he “serves the Party” without regard for his health of old age.

On Saturday I was at Yevtushenko's recital. He invited me personally and left two tickets for me, which he paid for, in the lobby at the Central House of Writers. I gave one ticket to a woman who was shivering in the cold by the entrance. We ended up sitting together. Turns out she is from Tula, works in a printing office. She adores Yevtushenko, “I clip his poems from all the newspapers.” What wonderful spontaneity and simplicity. I was once again amazed at our provincial erudition, which makes up the mysterious Russian power. Although this is quite comical from the point of view of metropolitan intellectuality (even the genuine kind, not snobbishness.)

[Yevtushenko] reads himself well, brilliantly. A bottle of kefir, pulling up his pants, which after all is the latest fashion in London, from where he just arrived.

Especially “The Old Women” [*Starukhi*]. The new poem about Ivan Fedorov is so-so, a rehash of his own (and others) popular theme: culture and power through ancient times. Perhaps it is under Dez'ka's (David Samoilov) influence, but without his education and historical insight. Plus, Yevtushenko covertly criticizes [the Soviet government], but he does it too crudely.

The audience is 90 percent Jewish. I tried to figure out why, but got exhausted looking for an answer. It is mostly a pseudo-literary crowd and just regular visitors for this sort of cultural event. That said, everything was proper, there was no wild applause for passages that smelled of “anti-Sovietism.”

January 27, 1976

I just got back from Warsaw. I went there on Sunday for a meeting of CC Secretaries from socialist countries on international and ideological questions. Our delegation: Ponomarev, Katushev, Smirnov. Plus deputies and advisers.

At the meeting – the usual jabber, which, however, indirectly reflects the political mood of each participating party.

But first we had a meeting of “the six” (without the Romanians and for some reason without the Cubans and Mongolians) in the Radziwill palace. The park and palace are just like in Polish films.

B.N. informed [the group] about the positions of the French and Italian Communist Parties. Instead of reading our notes, which were clear and logical, he chewed the cud for an hour and a half. Sometimes he would return to the text and get confused. I don’t think people could follow his “train of thought” as there was none.

Afterwards everyone played along and expressed their concerns, the Bulgarians even outlined a theory about revisionism, etc. We came to an agreement based on our advice – do not make noise about it, do not engage in open debate, but in a “positive way” theoretically demonstrate that these new views are wrong and dangerous.

Then, this morning, when B.N. and Katushev met with Gierek separately (Kostikov told me about it, he is the head of a sector in a fraternal department and translated at the meeting). B.N. took a much more pessimistic position regarding the prospect of “rectifying the PCF” than he usually takes with us. When Gierek suggested to influence Jeannette Vermeersch to challenge Marchais’ references to [Maurice] Thorez about the dictatorship of the proletariat, B.N. objected: it’s not out of the question that these references are justified.

Naturally the French and others were not mentioned at all at the general meeting for which we officially gathered. The planned meeting of international department deputies fell through when the consultant who accompanied the Romanians mistakenly invited their deputy. It was a scene from *The Inspector General* [Revizor], but Frelek (a Pole, presiding at the meeting) quickly got a hold of himself and just started shooting the breeze, which we all actively supported.

I didn’t go to the farewell concert late last night: I had to work on the ciphered report. And I didn’t want to. I get sick of this deliberate spontaneity at formal parties.

In the morning I was finishing up the report together with B.N. and Katushev.

January 28, 1976

At work: B.N. is running around with the “dictatorship of the proletariat.” Kirilenko is breathing down his neck, he is going to the PCF’s XXII Congress and at the last moment Marchais agreed to see him “during the Congress.” Kirilenko is demanding that B.N. outline what to say about the dictatorship. Of course Ponomarev is demanding it from me. I dictated three pages, along the lines of: “Almost none of the CPs use this terminology, and until now no

one made a big deal about switching the wording. You [PCF] turned this issue (which you need for internal reasons) into bait for anti-Soviets and instigators for a schism in the ICM. We never objected to adjusting theory in accordance with the situation, and we, the CPSU, starting from the XX Congress sharply and fundamentally raised the question of taking into account the specifics of each country. I have no intention of arguing with you publicly about the dictatorship of the proletariat. However, a lot is unclear. First and foremost, what is the ‘new power’ that will defend the gains of ‘new democracy’ from those, who, as you say yourselves, will start expropriating. You shouldn’t disparage Chile’s experience quite so much.” And so forth.

B.N. did not like it. While I was in his office he dictated his version. The gist of it: rejecting the “dictatorship of the proletariat” is a revision (although he doesn’t use that word) that threatens to split the party. However, he immediately commented, “They won’t listen anyway!”

In other words, he is once again torn between orthodoxy, common sense, and a desire to “hit the bullseye” in the eyes of his superiors.

He was infuriated by the last conversation between our ambassador with [Gaston] Plissonnier in Paris. The latter swore that the PCF’s attitude to the CPSU and USSR is a matter of principle. The disagreements are just particulars, while overall they will always be loyal and declare it loudly and write it in a resolution on the importance of the Soviet Union and proletarian internationalism. However, the Frenchman insisted, there will be one paragraph on “disagreement with the CPSU” on questions of democracy. “We can’t avoid saying it now!” That’s that.

Political logic is inexorable. Now in their Congress document they will solidify their right to criticize the CPSU, thereby legalizing differences in the ICM as an integral part of how it functions! They will drive an official nail into our thesis (and our nostalgia) about a monolithic front.

B.N. wrote three pages for Kirilenko, what to say to Plissonnier about it. I don’t think it’ll work!

February 10, 1976

This morning B.N. gathered me, Shaposhnikov, Zhilin, and Brutents and announced that we urgently need to write an article about Soviet democracy. Supposedly there is information that in the eyes of our dissidents Marchais is turning into a messiah who will bring them and “the Soviet people” freedom and democracy, and defend the persecuted. Of course we should not call Marchais by name [in the article], but we need to “let him know,” and warn everyone who is counting on him that “we will defend our state by all possible means.” Exactly that – warn them, “so we wouldn’t have to jail people later, which is undesirable.” [Ponomarev] says it’s all

because “they listen to all kinds of voices.”<sup>12</sup> Crimean Tatars are appealing to Marchais. “You know how it was with Plyushch: Marchais and *L’Humanite* defended him more fiercely than ‘Free Europe.’ Then Plyushch had a press conference in Paris and *L’Humanite* published the whole thing.”

Yevtushenko is allegedly going to head a student march during the XXV Congress to call for “freedom” (I don’t think this is true).

So, the task is to explain how democratic we are with the subtext of warning Marchais that his schemes won’t work! We went off to write it.

The PCF XXII Congress took place on February 5-8. B.N. put a lot of effort into writing Kirilenko’s speech (he was the head of our delegation) to convey in Aesopian language that we are very displeased with the PCF’s new line. However, French communists acted like they didn’t notice our displeasure and greeted the CPSU delegation and Kirilenko’s speech with thunderous applause.

In substance, the Congress was a turning point in the ICM. An official document from the Congress of the most orthodox and authoritative communist party in the capitalist world has legalized the right to develop Marxism-Leninism without the CPSU, in spite of the CPSU, and in some aspects against the CPSU. All of this is dressed up with “fervent” recognition of the CPSU’s achievements, the role of the USSR and the October Revolution, including the Soviet dictatorship of the proletariat, swearing allegiance to internationalism, solidarity with the USSR, with countries of victorious socialism, etc.

With this, the right to disagree with the CPSU has been legalized “on a friendly and internationalist platform,” and even the desirability of criticizing the CPSU, its politics, its methods and so forth.

These last few days the world press is inundated with commentary on PCF’s XXII Congress and everyone recognizes that even if this is all tactics, it cannot remain without consequences because there is no going back after what’s been said and done. An attempt to turn back now would be disastrous for the party.

We are behaving foolishly: we printed Marchais’ report in *Pravda* but censored the most important parts that defined the “turning point.” Now Comrade Ponomarev is surprised, “A politically mature, theoretically competent teacher or Marxism called me,” he says, “he is a very experienced person and he was going on and on, ecstatic over Marchais’ report...” I retorted loudly, “What do you expect? Misinformation in such matters always turns against us, and nowadays it happens almost immediately.”

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<sup>12</sup> Reference to Voice of America radio broadcasts. [Translator’s note]

“Where were you looking? I gave you the excerpted text for *Pravda*.”

“No, you did not give it to me. Just the opposite, you only asked my opinion afterwards if we should ban the sale of *L'Humanite* with Marchais' report. If you remember, I strongly objected. We reprinted articles from *Neues Deutschland* that praise the dictatorship of the proletariat, we even stooped to such a sleazy move as reprinting Ceausescu's speech in defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

But we can't say anything ourselves. Firstly, because our resounding speech in defense of the dictatorship of the proletariat for others (we already have a “people's state” here) will raise universal suspicion, including in our foreign policy line. Plus, you cannot set anyone on the right path anymore. (By the way, the consultants group calculated that only 14 out of 89 CPs retain this concept in their program documents!). It is theoretically ridiculous to refute the French since they essentially are keeping all the main elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a socio-political category (according to Lenin, in the broad sense of the word), but rejecting its use in the narrow sense of the word (also according to Lenin) as an instrument of violence that has no regard for any laws.

Ponomarev understands this. It's no coincidence that today he let it slip, “This is their internal affair, we shouldn't touch upon the dictatorship of the proletariat in the article.”

Meanwhile, before the delegation left for Paris, he tortured me for several days on this subject – he wanted to include a reprimand regarding the dictatorship of the proletariat in the memo for Kirilenko's conversation with Marchais. I kept making him drafts with the theme of “we were surprised and concerned by the format in which [the PCF] rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat. It was sensational and anti-Soviet, while other parties did it in a way that nobody in the world noticed.” He rejected it. In the end, Suslov and Kirilenko decided not to raise this issue with Marchais at all and instead to stress “the inadmissibility of criticizing the CPSU in their summary report” (about democracy). However, Plissonnier, who met the delegation at the airport, and later Kanapa and Marchais himself categorically rejected our protest.

The old man can't keep up. He is torn, getting stuck on the little thing, frazzled.

One more example: in January two high level social-democratic conferences took place in Elsinore and Paris. The central question was about the relationship with communists (in light of such evolution!). [Ponomarev] suggested that I respond with a note in *Pravda*. We wrote it. Now it's been sitting on his desk for two weeks, among a heap of other papers. But the moment is gone!

February 14, 1976

I am “in general” tired of B.N.’s endless nonsense initiatives that require constant “creative” effort, i.e. I constantly have to come up with something “original,” engage in pharisaical journalism.

The French Congress is done; our delegation is back. But our ordeals are not over. Ponomarev teaches us that we have to prepare “a page” for the Summary report – give a specific response to the French situation, though without mentioning the term “dictatorship of the proletariat.” “You’ve read the ciphered telegrams,” he says, “the good parties are waiting for the XXV Congress to respond to the French. Our people (you read the selection of letters to the CC from various ordinary people, they were outraged by Marchais’ behavior!) want an answer too.”

I asked him what to do about the article.

“Either postpone the article or give it to the consultants to finish.”

As soon as I got back to my office Andrei Mikhailovich (Aleksandrov-Agentov) called me. He asked if I was working on any assignment for Leonid Ilyich’s report. I had to confess. Then he opened his cards. It turns out Andropov proposed an insertion: on the general laws that bind every Marxist-Leninist, and which were signed by the entire ICM at meetings in 1957, 1960, and 1969. [Aleksandrov-Agentov] said Brezhnev approved this idea, Suslov enthusiastically supported it, and Ponomarev “not very coherently” agreed. What was my opinion? (Then he read the text of the insertion). I said that it was too point blank and 20-year-old meetings aren’t really an argument for anyone right now. They (including the PCF) are precisely appealing to the creative development, even of Lenin. What do they care about meetings! Not to mention that by doing so we would suggest that the passage regarding the SKJ<sup>13</sup> from 1960 is still *valable* [valid, sic in French] for us.

Aleksandrov started to energetically defend Andropov’s insertion, as he always does when the matter is practically settled. Naturally I did not continue the discussion. We finished the conversation on a peaceful note. “I’d like to celebrate with you now the fact that the foundation of the international section, which we laid in Novo-Ogarevo, remained unshaken.”

Nevertheless, he asked: “Are you going to work on the insertions?” I said, “I can’t just blow off Ponomarev’s assignment. Take it up with him!”

A couple hours later Blatov was breathing down my neck with the insertions, though he was objecting to B.N.’s initiative. I made these insertions (with Karen): it’s a veiled but obvious to all attempt to poke Marchais where it hurts.

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<sup>13</sup> League of Communists of Yugoslavia, *Savez komunista Jugoslavije, Савез комуниста Југославије*, SKJ/CKJ. [Translator’s note]

However, Karen and I get the feeling that this “initiative” won’t reach its target, just like the article on Marchais. B.N. feels it himself. His enthusiasm noticeably waned between morning and evening.

There is a flood of various references and memos for those (CC members, ministers, etc.) we are attaching to fraternal delegations (following a CC order). I don’t really have time to work on it properly, but I can’t pass by the more important ones – I read and edit them. I’m annoyed and cursing nonstop. Besides obvious indifference and utilitarian approach (shoddy work just to get it done and turn it in) of our apparatus, [you see] not just many people’s pitiful capabilities (by today’s requirements), but also rigid thinking, the inability to understand and react to the completely new situation in the ICM. The lack of a political instinct used to work in our favor one way or another, now the same thing will work against us.

February 22, 1976

B.N. managed to get his article written and published just a few days before the Congress, on the 20<sup>th</sup>. What a pain it was for me... Initially it was called “Freedoms we will defend.” Zhilin came up with the title and B.N. really liked it. But Suslov didn’t like it at all and he suggested “Real and imagined freedoms” (as Karen predicted).

At 2 p.m., after a clean linotype printing, the article went around the Politburo. Soon their comments started coming in. Andropov insisted that Jewish emigration only be referred to as “family reunification” in all cases. I – in a group of three people who received comments – argued that “it doesn’t correspond to reality.” You have to understand that he does not want to encourage emigration at all, on any grounds.

In general, I think that from an internal standpoint the most important point of the article is the paragraph about Jews, which I wrote straight off and which did not get corrected by anyone at any point. [It says] that most Jews are regular Soviet people just like everyone else, and the Soviet Union is their only and beloved homeland (contrary to Israel’s claims of a double loyalty, to the right of Jews to have two homelands!). They indignantly reject the very idea of leaving. This kind of official moral-political rehabilitation of the Jews in “Pravda,” on behalf of the Central Committee (the article is signed “I. Aleksandrov”) is long overdue. It is necessary for our Jews and against our anti-Semites, both semiofficial and amateur ones.

Kosygin called Ponomarev and protested the expression, “socialism provided freedom from need,” giving to understand that we still have need.

Andropov and Kirilenko “asked” to remove the intimidating reference [*yzpозy*] about only arresting 15 people for anti-Soviet activity (meaning propaganda) last year.

Polyansky demanded to significantly reduce “the piece on crazies” (i.e. about our psychiatric hospitals).

Suslov, who was reading it for the second time, carefully removed the word “emigration” (of Jews) and replaced it with “departure” everywhere.

Blatov asked to give the part on the Helsinki Final Act in more active form. He didn’t say anything else. This was seen as a tacit endorsement from Brezhnev of the “fact” of this article coming out. We were actually expecting someone from his circle (or Brezhnev himself) to object that the timing is wrong, on the eve of the Congress! But no objection followed, even though Solomentsev, for example, was pushing for it.

Katushev sent us his text littered with editorial corrections. We accepted some of them, but the majority is personal preference of a man who doesn’t know much about writing. Zimyanin wanted to reject all of them, he was dismissive and throwing around epithets that surprised and shocked Lukich (G.L. Smirnov).

In the evening, at around 8 p.m., Zimyanin asked me to come to *Pravda* to go over the text together one more time after all the corrections. We worked till 11 p.m., i.e. right until it was time to hand over the morning edition of the newspaper to the printers.

I think there will be a lot of noise over this article. It is another explanation that we have no intention of changing our ways because of Helsinki, and that we never had that in mind.

Another article was published on February 13 after Ponomarev’s approval only, Veber and I composed it even earlier (on the socialist-democratic conferences in Elsinore and Paris). Ponomarev, who initiated it, sat on the text for 10 days, then suddenly called and said, “I approve, you can go ahead!”

It seems it wasn’t noticed in the West, while I thought it laid a “new style” of conversation with social democrats.

Alongside all of this I have an enormous amount of routine work: various notes and memos in connection with the arrival of fraternal delegations to the Congress and the upcoming work with them.

Karen and I are also assigned to write the toast that Brezhnev will say on March 5<sup>th</sup> at the reception in honor of foreign guests to the Congress. (They say Stalin’s famous speech at the XIX Congress was born out of such a toast, on the banner of bourgeois freedoms...<sup>14</sup> We aren’t

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<sup>14</sup> “ [...] The banner of bourgeois-democratic freedom has been thrown overboard. I think you, representatives of communist and democratic parties, have to pick it up and carry it forward if you want to bring the majority of people to you. There is no one else to pick it up.” [Translator’s note, Russian text found at: <http://petroleks.ru/stalin/16-59.php>]

claiming anything like that of course, especially in this verbally saturated age even the brightest political aphorisms live no longer than one newspaper day.

By the way, Marchais is not coming to the Congress, but Berlinguer is. The Italians in general are constantly producing “warm fraternal statements about the CPSU” – scoring points at foolish Georges’ (Marchais) expense.

March 7, 1976

The Congress took place over the last two weeks. It would have been more interesting to jot down at least something every day, of course. But in cases like these it’s similar to what happened at the front: during the hottest time it’s impossible to even remember about the diary, and when the fighting stopped the entries would turn “literary.”

Nevertheless, I want to leave something of “my own” to remember.

Brezhnev was unexpectedly alert and his pronunciation clear. And the farther he got, the more energetically he read the text. I think he was on par with his speeches (in oratory) from 4-5 years ago. The foreign press and communist delegations noticed it.

The report sounded (as I expected, since I knew it in detail) more “Party-oriented” than the XXIV Congress and especially compared to all of Brezhnev’s major speeches of the last years. In the sense that it wasn’t a report of the head of state and government, which Brezhnev has been and appeared as over the recent years, but a text of a Party leader. Though in language and formulas it was very different from the orthodox Party reports of the Khrushchev-Stalin era.

First and foremost – by the critical view of internal affairs and the lack of blatancy and demagoguery over foreign affairs. Everyone in the West and in the audience noted the “balanced,” calm tone, and the “self-confidence.” There was even self-restraint with respect to the ICM, which, if it hadn’t been Brezhnev but anyone else from the current PB instead, would have never happened.

Of course the skill of the writing team contributed to this, but Brezhnev’s personality and approach was the deciding factor. This I can say “first hand,” so to speak. I saw it with my own eyes and participated in some measure. This [document] is called the CC Report. But the CC never even saw the text. At a Plenum four days before the Congress, the CC was given a “message” (by Brezhnev) about the report in 30 pages, while the actual report was 130 pages.

Members of the PB and CC Secretaries read the report once, while a select few (Suslov, Ponomarev, Andropov, Gromyko) had an opportunity to see one of the final drafts. Essentially these four were the ones to make some comments that were taken into account. B.N.: to strengthen the topic of disarmament and talk about women. Suslov: more about the crisis of capitalism and say that concessions to opportunism (in the Communist parties) will eventually

turn against the Party. Andropov: talk about the general laws of the socialist revolution, citing the 160 meeting of Communist and Labor parties. Last summer Gromyko suggested to combine the sections on the “third world” and the capitalist world, but this was not accepted... by Aleksandrov. Suslov and Andropov’s comments “toughened” the corresponding places in the report, but didn’t influence its general tone. So you could say that it’s not even a Politburo report, it is entirely Brezhnev’s report.

My 12-14 pages remained practically unchanged from the Novo-Ogarevo version, though with a notably “tougher stance.” My other inserts and edits (in other sections) were accepted. Brutents’ text (on the third world) was more altered, but the “spirit” and main formulas were preserved.

I was in the auditorium only for the report (on the first day) and for the closing on the 5<sup>th</sup>. The rest of the time I was behind the scenes, in dressing rooms in a semi-basement along with the rest of our department.

My job was to “produce” speeches and greetings of fraternal delegations for the transcript and for *Pravda*.

Sometimes I essentially had to rewrite them. In many cases, especially when it came to small, hopeless parties, the basic political illiteracy was astonishing (even to me). Our intricacies and various finessing, for example to separate détente from interference (“revolutionary”) in the affairs of others, are completely over their heads. Our creativity with wording is simply beyond them. They reveal in “class” terms the things that we would like to conceal by various means in our press and documents. So with the help of “editing” I often had to hide the “most impossible” bits. Sometimes it was done through translation, sometimes by advising the speaker to change or remove something, suggest different phrasing. Most often – by leaving things for the transcript, but decidedly expunging for *Pravda*. Of course it was relatively easy to convince a Syrian to drop the paragraph on how the ICM must unite “around the CPSU.” More difficult – to get Siad Barre (President of Somali Democratic Republic) not to publish in *Pravda* damning paragraphs on French imperialism in Djibouti; or to persuade a Moroccan and Algerian not to start a row over Western Sahara.

And it was completely impossible to change anything with Berlinguer or McLennan. In fact, we didn’t even try. Everyone understood it’s hopeless.

Both of them, same as Plissonnier (Marchais did not come) politely said everything they wanted: about “their socialism,” democracy, freedom of culture, the (Italian) wish to remain in NATO, the (French) disagreement with us over Giscard and French foreign policy as a whole.

All of this attracted attention. So when Masherov, Shcherbitsky, and some others spoke about opportunism, the “modernization” of Marxism, about internationalism – these passages

were practically met with a standing ovation. Gus Hall devoted his entire speech to practically a direct attack on the French, Italians, Spaniards and English and was accompanied by thunderous applause.

But Hall has nothing to lose and nobody to answer to for his words and his policies, which he doesn't really have. Same as he doesn't have any political influence, not to mention prospects. However, McLennan is essentially in the same position. And the fact that he "dared" was perceived as an insult to the Congress. The Presidium had a worse reaction to him than Berlinguer. "Gods may do what cattle may not." He is trying the same, so to speak!

In a word, our Congress "exposed" the real situation in the ICM before the whole world. Now we have to reckon with all of it. There is only one way out: without admitting it openly, to retreat in the direction of "new internationalism" (the Italians) to save at least something of internationalism at all.

To finish this topic, I met with several delegations during and especially after the Congress at hotel lunches and at the CC as well. It's wretched. They are very poorly informed, if at all, about each other (one party about another). They don't amount to much themselves: the Canadians, Irish, Australians, Germans, the English too, plus now the Maltese and a host of Latinos.

Here they are being driven around in "chaikas"<sup>15</sup> with police flashers. They are making all kinds of claims to us and even getting offended. Kashtan threatened to leave the Congress if he doesn't get to speak at the Palace of Congresses. Meanwhile, he and his party are not worth more than the six dozen others who instead of the Palace of Congresses had to speak at rallies in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, Volgograd.

I was struck by the fact that, for example, the Canadians only have secondhand knowledge of the PCF's position, Marchais' antics, the situation in the European communist movement in general. They aren't even aware of what's written in *L'Unita*, *L'Humanite*, they don't know *Morning Star*, though it's in their language.

All of this is more and more proof of the fact that the majority of our fraternal parties are purely symbolic. If there were no Moscow, they would have as much significance (if they existed at all) as other small political groups that exist in any country of the "free world."

Against this background, Ponomarev's attempts to "teach" and "mobilize" them with his APN<sup>16</sup> articles and brochures look clearly ridiculous.

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<sup>15</sup> Luxury Soviet-made cars used by top level party and state officials. [Translator's note]

<sup>16</sup> APN-Agenstvo Pechati Novosti, News Press Agency, a Soviet political news agency. [Translator's note]

Brezhnev's "philosophy" on the ICM is much more realistic, even if not completely formulated.

A real alternative to capitalism is the PCF, the PCI, and social democrats, of course under "the current balance of forces on the world stage," i.e. with us in the picture. The ICM as a whole is a purely ideological and hopelessly outdated category.

On the other flank this is substantiated by the massive presence at the Congress of black Africans and some Arabs, who are not in the ICM.

March 13, 1976

At the Congress I was elected to the Central Auditing Commission, i.e. to the CC. About a month and a half ago, when B.N. asked me to think about who from our core (international department) group we could recommend for the CC, he casually mentioned that he spoke with Suslov about me and Shaposhnikov. At the time or at any point afterwards I never even considered that it could happen (especially considering Suslov's attitude towards me). Therefore, when after a closed session of the Congress B.N. told me that I had been included in the list for secret voting, I took it as a surprise. I didn't find anything to say in response except to ask, "What about Shaposhnikov?"

"Shaposhnikov – no. There cannot be three people from one department (he meant Zagladin, too)."

I got details in the evening. Bovin called me (he is a delegate at the Congress and attended the closed session) and started to congratulate me: "Frankly, I was waiting for Shaposhnikov's name, and was pleasantly surprised when I heard your last name instead of his... Only between us, Zagladin really pushed for Shaposhnikov back in Zavidovo. But the General Secretary winced. He kept saying that he doesn't know him and so on."

This was the only hint that the question was discussed in Zavidovo. I still don't fully know how it happened. It's clear that Suslov was the decisive element in selecting candidates for the CC. Maybe some of them were "presented" for Brezhnev's decision. There are two possibilities: either Suslov got both candidates from Ponomarev and then chose himself or consulted with the General Secretary. Or B.N. was invited to decide himself and out of us two he chose me.

When [Ponomarev] was congratulating me officially, I mentioned that I'm "a little uncomfortable," and he replied they don't know Shaposhnikov "over there," and in general his profile is more in organizational questions and he works only on the scale of the department.

The department obviously wasn't expecting this turn of events. By the logic of the department-apparatus, it would have seemed more normal to people if Shaposhnikov had been

selected. He even carried himself like he was in charge, though he gave Zagladin his due as the official first deputy. Lately he practically didn't leave Zagladin's side. It was clear from his behavior and attitude (especially during the Congress) that he really wanted it.

Friends tell me that among colleagues, my "promotion" was received with a "positive surprise." I got many congratulations from other departments too, and most of them were from the heart. People feel it was "fair" and "well-deserved" for my work. They know that I wasn't seeking it, wasn't preoccupied with it and definitely didn't [use] "intrigue" to get it (as Arbatov put it). People at the department, and in general, know that I did a lot of work at the dachas, i.e. directly for the Congress. Some of those who don't like me say (among themselves) that it's a reward for Zavidovo. But even they can't deny that it was earned, not obtained through connections.

For all that, I feel like my appointment was seen as a kind of mini-sensation, but if Shaposhnikov had been in my place people would have taken it as a perfectly normal step.

That's why Shaposhnikov is now in a stupid situation. He is really taking it hard. I think he must hate me – after all, "with all due respect" and outwardly friendly relations, he always considered himself senior to me, and was perceived as such. I played along too, to please his vanity and "do something nice" (it didn't cost me anything, it only satisfied my inner contempt for him) I acted as "junior rank," though equal in my readiness to take on any responsibility.

B.N. did not move up [to full Politburo membership]. At 72 years old, he remains a candidate PB member. He was waiting and was clearly convinced that it would happen this time. Of the people close to him, only Brutents and I knew that it wouldn't. But he too was thinking of "fairness" and a "deserved" reward. He held himself accordingly: among the candidate members he was the first to enter the Congress auditorium, beaming and greeting people left and right, "patronizing" a huge part of the presidium filled with delegation heads.

He ran into the Sverdlov Hall for the CC Plenum in the same manner. Half an hour later I saw him again at the Congress presidium, in his old place – they were announcing the election results for the CC governing bodies – he was tense, pale and had a forced smile on his face. He was next to the beaming Romanov, who was elected to the PB and was ready to burst from excitement. Only Polyansky looked worse than Ponomarev. He was removed from the Politburo but still sitting in the front row of the Congress presidium and had to vigorously applaud the proceedings along with everyone else.

March 14, 1976

B.N. is really a man of steel, I must say. At work he was "back to normal." He was congratulating me and explaining why Shaposhnikov wasn't elected. He only said that "Suslov is not a generous man, I feel it on my own example." Then he "moved on to the next matter at

hand” (a quote from the Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)).<sup>17</sup> I need to write an article for him for the *Problems of Peace and Socialism* journal on the outcomes and significance of the Congress; prepare a summary note to the CC on the situation in the ICM in light of the fraternal parties’ attendance at the Congress; prepare a report of a Congress delegate to the organization that sent him there (for some reason in Lithuania, even though B.N. was elected in Dmitrov). Trifles and daily routine. As if nothing happened.

When I talked with Brutents about it, he retorted: “You are measuring him by your own yardstick. You would send it all to hell and concentrate on your own work, at the Academy of Sciences, for example. After all, he is 72 years old, how much longer can this go on! But B.N. follows a different logic in life: he will doggedly wait in the wings, he will wait for another Plenum, he will wait for Suslov to leave.”

Maybe he is right. But I don’t understand this logic. At least he could tone down his fountain of initiatives, 80 percent of which goes into the wastebasket and triggers the exact opposite effect at the top – it reduces his chances even more.

I was at the CC Secretariat on Thursday. Suslov chaired it. He made a curious comment about our (and the Propaganda Department’s) draft on publicizing Congress outcomes. There was an innocent phrase: “to use fraternal delegations’ speeches to show the CPSU’s role in the ICM.” He started nervously objecting: “We can’t write that. Where are you taking us? Do you want us to be accused of hegemonism again, of claims to a special role in the ICM? No, we cannot have that. This [passage] needs to be categorically changed.

Another episode. An article on Stalin for the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* was under discussion. Suslov said, “I compared it to an article that was published in 1970 in the *Historical Encyclopedia*. Comrades essentially took that text, but removed certain things from it: 1. That Stalin made mistakes during collectivization, but later they were fixed by the Central Committee “with Stalin’s participation.” 2. From V.I. Lenin’s letter to the Congress about Stalin and more, a passage is removed that mentions his rudeness and other traits that are unacceptable in a political figure in such a position. I think it was a mistake to remove this. It should be restored. Otherwise people will compare and ask questions. On the other hand, another passage should be restored “on the opposite spectrum.” The earlier text mentioned that Stalin proved himself during the Civil War as a major military-political leader and was awarded the Order of the Red Banner in 1919. For some reason this was removed. It should be restored.”

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<sup>17</sup> “A Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks),” a textbook of Party history published in 1938 under Stalin’s direction. Until Stalin’s death, the “Short Course” defined not only Party history, but also broad elements of the study of history in general. [Translator’s note]

After the meeting was closed, Suslov suddenly stopped everyone and in a very didactic and sharp tone made a speech about the “orgy of awards” for various people and institutions. He called for a more rigorous and principled approach to this.

By the way, speaking of Suslov. Everyone expected that at the XXV Congress Bovin would be “promoted somewhere.” He is once again in great favor with the General Secretary (I saw this myself in Zavidovo) and did a great deal for the text of the Summary Report. He is a deputy of the RSFSR and so on. However, it “didn’t happen.” I think the question was resolved before the Congress, in connection with replacing the editor in chief of *Izvestia*. Moscow was full of rumors that Bovin was under consideration. Turned out it was more than just talk. B.N. told me that the question really came up. But Suslov declared, “How is this possible! He is not a member of the Party!”

My numerous meetings with delegations from the communist parties of the U.S., Canada, Ireland, newborn Maltese CP, Australia, New Zealand were all more or less the same. The main problem was the French. They asked questions and I explained.

I think today was the last delegation. Phew! By the way, we (the International Department) exist for them and only because of them.

#### March 15, 1976

The draft document for the European Conference of Communist Parties, which Zagladin and Zhilin coordinated with the Germans, has taken on quite an Italian feel as the result of numerous amendments, edits and adjustments. Every page mentions “equality,” “independence,” “non-interference,” “respect for self-sufficiency” and sovereignty, “the right of each party to choose its own path”... and not a single mention of “unity of action” among the CPs, or “proletarian internationalism” – this word doesn’t even appear there, not to mention Marxism-Leninism. But there is plenty on cooperation and unity with other democratic forces, social democrats, etc.

In other words, slowly and imperceptibly, in exchange for our stubborn wish to hold a conference, we got a radical change of its very nature, which is what the Italians along with Yugoslavs and others wanted the whole time.

Today I read a conversation between [Herbert] Wehner (SPD)<sup>18</sup> and “our man in Bonn.” He does not understand: the Franco-Italian model is the only realistic path to power for communists in Western Europe, but the XXV Congress condemned it unequivocally, thereby sentencing all others (who won’t follow the PCI-PCF because of loyalty to Moscow) to further

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<sup>18</sup> One of the historical leaders of Social Democracy. At some point, before World War II, he was no stranger to the Comintern, and never lost a secret connection to Moscow throughout his life. He was a “spiritual father” to Willi Brandt. [Author’s note]

stagnation. In the meantime, Wehner, who understands the risk of the aforementioned model from an internal point of view and in terms of order in the socialist camp, still believes that this model could be acceptable to the USSR from an international standpoint. He is asking for clarification: is there some secret tactical agreement between the CPSU-PCI-PCF, maybe they've distributed roles?

I think he won't get a response.

March 27, 1976

Yesterday I got permission from B.N. to take the eight days I have left from my vacation. I'll catch up on some sleep. I got a suggestion to go to Uspenka, get up early, go for a run, then with a clear head work on the report and a speech for Hamburg (I'm going to Hamburg on April 12<sup>th</sup> to celebrate Erns Thälmann's 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary). Then I would work on my papers or serious books, then go for another jog and go to bed, with my nose in the next book. Maybe I will do that. But right now, even though I'm tired of crowds around me, I don't want to be alone. I'm afraid that I won't be able to concentrate and won't get much done in an empty house, and I'll get tired of pure relaxation after two days. I don't know, we'll see.

On Monday the 22<sup>nd</sup> I spoke at a party meeting of the entire CC apparatus in the Grand Kremlin Palace. This kind of circus parade [*парад-алле*] is rare, only two or three in my memory. It was dedicated to the XXV Congress with Kapitonov's report, which presented Brezhnev's Summary Report.

From our department Zagladin was supposed to present (he is now a candidate member of the CC). But he is in Bonn for the DKP<sup>19</sup> Congress, so I had to do it. The Party Committee only wanted Congress delegates or those elected to the body of the CC for debate participants. I was nervous for a whole week: I hate publicity. I even tried a trick and told Ponomarev that if he wants a high-quality article, he should "excuse" me from speaking, as my entire nervous system is distracted by that task.

He replied: "Anatoly Sergeyevich, you are a political figure now, and political figures have to speak. Assign someone, Veber for example, to prepare a speech for you. If you want, I can help however I can. But your first speech before the communists of the apparatus is very important. This is your personal prestige and the prestige of the entire department. So if you please..." It didn't work.

I prepared for no more than an hour. My topic: the significance of the Congress for the ICM, arguing that under current conditions it could be equated to an international meeting... and why (six bullet points).

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<sup>19</sup> German Communist Party, *Deutsche Kommunistische Partei*. [Translator's note]

The second topic: the “departure” of the PCF and the CP of Spain. The gist of it and how we will act in light of the Congress’s provision.

They chose me for the presidium. I sat close to the place where Stalin sat for the last time in public at the XIX Congress.

Two thousand people. The discussion started and I started getting nervous. However, as the speeches went on, I began to get angry. You would think, this is the epitome of primary Party organizations. There are serious issues to discuss in this circle of one’s peers – the CC apparatus – the outcomes of the Congress, specific problems, concerns. But it was nonstop showing off: 30 percent of each speech consisted of bowing to the General Secretary, 5-10 percent to the speaker, who was called by his full title (no matter how many times he was referred to) “Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Comrade Kapitonov Ivan Vasilievich.” The rest was a rehashing of Congress materials or something on the work of “subordinate” ministries and institutes. Smirnov (Propaganda Department) was yapping on about something like the circulation of Brezhnev’s report and so on. Fifteen minutes into his presentation the auditorium started to buzz, i.e. people started talking among themselves as usual in such situations. From the top rows you could see a lot of people just opened up books and started reading. In this atmosphere I got more and more brazen every second. I wanted to be called on as soon as possible and “in protest” I would give a speech completely unlike the rest.

Rakhmanin beat me to it though (first deputy of the Department of Socialist Countries). The auditorium woke up during his presentation, he intrigued them with a “behind the scenes” look at the CC’s activity. [He talked about] How Le Duan came to Moscow 11 times in 10 years and how Brezhnev and others explained to him what to do and how. This helped their victory no less than our guns and airplanes, because it taught the Vietnamese about real politics, restrained from Sino-opportunistic ambitions. And so on.

Or – Castro! Look at where he was 10-12 years ago and how he appeared at his Congress and ours. This is also the result of our patient, steady work with him, our well thought-out policy towards Cuba.

Aside from the demagoguery that went through Rakhmanin’s entire speech, there was some truth to what he was saying. The audience appreciated it: it was frank and to the point, instead of the empty chatter and stamping out incantations. Rakhmanin walked off the stage to thunderous applause.

I was announced after the debate part was concluded – I was left as a chaser. And Kozlov (party committee secretary) announced my last name in about the same manner as Muslim Magomayev or Leshchenko would be announced at a concert. A murmur went through the auditorium, people livened up when Kozlov said, “Chernyaev get ready!” I wonder why?

It seems some sort of telepathy exists. I was sitting in the presidium and had a weird feeling: it seemed the auditorium (at least a majority of it) is waiting for my speech and expecting to hear something different from “the others.” Later a friend of mine (he lives in my building) said: “People in the apparatus know that Chernyaev gives good speeches, that’s why they left him for the end, so [the meeting] wouldn’t end in total hibernation.”

The auditorium listened to me in total silence, which means my presentation was interesting. I mostly spoke without looking at my notes and everything I said was to the point. Of course there were some “highlights” (Marchais’ position, Carillo’s statement about our “primitive socialism” and so on, about which only a couple dozen people in the apparatus know). But as I was told the next day, I had “my own idea” and the audience perceived that as a sign of respect. There were no coined phrases or genuflections. I didn’t call Brezhnev by his full title, simply “Comrade Brezhnev.” I only mentioned Kapitonov once, and only to say “Ivan Vasilievich mentioned this already...”

When I walked off the rostrum, followed by applause, I had a feeling that something didn’t quite work out. Maybe I was still embarrassed for misspeaking once and calling the XXV Congress the XX Congress. However, when the meeting was over and the mass of people started moving toward the wardrobe, many people came up and congratulated me. The next morning, I was getting one phone call after another with a bunch of different congratulations, most of them not from sycophancy.

I was particularly surprised that Ponomarev called and said, “Looks like your debut (!) was quite successful!” He was clearly pleased that “his Department” looked better than others. Someone filled him in early in the morning. I think he inquired himself as soon as he could.

Why I am writing about it at such length? Out of vanity, of course. But also because it’s things like these (being elected to the “highest party organ,” getting a chance to speak at such (!) a meeting, giving a good performance there, and so on) that make up the facts of life for a person who belongs to “party society.”

I came away from the meeting with something else, too – a feeling of “civic” concern. One could see in advance that the audience would enjoy speeches like mine and Rakhmanin’s, instead of the stuffy coined compulsory material and primitive false pathos of the rest of them. We can also assume that the speakers (aside from the totally dim ones) understood that their speeches wouldn’t be liked. Nevertheless, they chose to give this type of speech. They must believe that this is “necessary,” “this is how it’s done,” and they “shouldn’t stick their neck out”... this way is more reliable. After all, the speaker’s “position” and “authority” doesn’t depend on the audience in the orchestra and balconies. No, it depends on those who are behind him while he is at the podium. The audience understands this as well. Over 99 percent of those in

the hall would have spoken like Smirnov, not like me, if they were given the chance. This is sad and dangerous.

Today *Pravda* ran an article on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Kirov's birth. In it, Kirov is not being praised for qualities characteristic to the speeches I described above!

The Midtsev incident. I wrote earlier that he published a brochure without getting permission (there is a rule: an employee in the apparatus can publish only after getting permission from the leadership of the department). He works on Africa, but at CC affiliated Academy of Social Sciences, which he finished about 10 years ago, he specialized in exposing revisionism. In this article he supposedly is exposing revisionism in general, but any French or Italian communist will easily recognize him or herself in the article. Moreover, Midtsev openly called Grupp (member of the CC PCI) a revisionist and this and that. Before the Congress, a journalist from *L'Unita* in Moscow saw this brochure and warned our guys that "there will be a scandal." That's how I first heard about this brochure.

I gave Midtsev a dressing-down. He went around the department, hinting that it's clear that the revisionist didn't like to see the revisionism of his "spiritual friends" exposed.

I told Ponomarev what happened. He hesitated between essentially agreeing with Midtsev and disapproving the fact that we might "end up with a story." He said, "We'll see. If there is any reaction to the brochure, we'll quietly transfer Midtsev to some institute." Zagladin grilled Midtsev at the party meeting, both for "breaking the order" and so others don't do the same.

Then we had the Congress, there was meeting between Brezhnev and Berlinguer, and notable pleasure that Enrico didn't follow Marchais' example, didn't succumb to pressure from his side (and there was pressure, we now know for sure, [Armando] Cossutta informed us). Berlinguer came to Moscow, despite some opposition in his Politburo, and made a very positive and laudatory report about the XXV Congress at a CC PCI Plenum. And so forth.

Now last Friday (03.19) *L'Unita* broke a scorching editorial, "The reasoning of philosopher Midtsev." The article begins by saying there are 40,000 copies [of the brochure] and the author is in the International Department of the CC CPSU. The PCI took the criticism of Grupp personally (and correctly so). All of bourgeois press is buzzing. Of course, the Yugoslavs have joined in. Long story short, it's another excuse to make a lot of noise over the split in the ICM.

I came to B.N. and told him about what happened.

B.N.: "Maybe he is right to criticize them?"

I: "Even if that were the case, it's not the point!"

B.N.: “What’s the point?”

I: “It goes against the paradigm in Brezhnev’s report at the Congress.”

B.N.: “Hm!... But they always want an open discussion...”

I: “They may want it. The question is whether we want it. In any case, the question of an open debate with the Italians should be decided by the CC, not Comrade Midtsev. What if they start bombarding us now? Are we prepared to respond in kind, to engage in direct polemics?”

However, the next day he showed “initiative.” Ordered to publish in *Pravda* an interview with L. Longo, which he gave to the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. A gesture at the Italians...

March 29, 1976

Yesterday I went to Dez’ka’s (David Samoilov) evening at the Central House of Writers. Libedinskaya spoke first, she always appears as his commentator, including on television. She spoke well – about the generation to which she and Dez’ka belong, and I do too... We couldn’t get butter in our rations, so we ate potatoes without butter. We walked around in whatever we could find... And we didn’t see any heroism in this, we didn’t feel we were unhappy or suffering...

And another thing that struck me and the audience, it is something that always moves me and I still can’t quite explain why it disappeared. She said that none of us were interested in nationality, we never asked and it didn’t make any difference. We first noticed it when new children appeared in our classrooms and they only got “A’s” in German language. These were children of Austrian Schutzbund members. Then Spanish children showed up. And we started to understand: when people start being interested in nationality – it is fascism.

In contrast: the evening mainly consisted of Yakov Smolensky’s compositions. The standard was high. He tried to imitate Dez’ka’s manner, his intonations. At times his skill got the better of me and I let go of my hostile feelings, I even got teary eyed at “Anna Yaroslavna” (this poem resounds with me with some kind of crushing force every time). The pop canonization of Dez’ka was unpleasant (especially at first), it doesn’t suit him at all. Maybe I feel this way because I know how Dez’ka presents his poetry himself. Another thing: [Smolensky’s] reading manner exuded smug and arrogant Jewishness, which is absolutely alien to Dez’ka himself (either in thought or content, in his lifestyle or his poetry. He is a “great Soviet Russian poet.” This label characterizes him perfectly). Smolensky, on the other hand, reminded me a great deal of assistant professor Zastenker at the Department of Modern History when I was a graduate student and later a professor at Moscow State University.

Lyal'ka and Galya were there – both of Dez'ka's wives. He quipped: "I was married twice and both times successfully." Lyal'ka is still beautiful at 50. The new one is quite the shrew, "Marfa the Mayoress."

Boris Slutsky spoke after Yakov Smolensky. I ran into him on the stairs during intermission. He said, "Now I'll have to take the rap. They forced me to say a few words about Dez'ka. I told him I'll include a couple critical remarks about him. But he said no way. So I'll have to restrain myself."

He talked about how Dez'ka was when they first met in 1938, i.e. precisely during "our" time. Dez'ka left school (us) and went to the Institute of Philosophy, Literature, and History (them).

Dez'ka himself read badly. He chose pieces that were not suited for a large audience, but for a dozen closest friends. Even though the room was mostly filled with his admirers, nevertheless it seems there are certain "laws of the masses" which can never be broken.

But he wasn't embarrassed... Judging by how he was downstairs near the wardrobe when we were saying goodbye and Lyal'ka said, "I already told him that he read badly."

April 22, 1976

Today is Lenin's Day. I listened to Andropov's speech on the radio. Ordinary things but presented in a big way. Our B.N. is incapable of it, because he has been looking over his shoulder his entire life. He never understood that without risk, without the necessary courage you cannot rise above the average. I bet a lot of people are listening [to Andropov's speech] and thinking to themselves, "He could be the next General Secretary!"

From the 12-16<sup>th</sup> I was in Hamburg for the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thälmann.

One hundred kilometers along excellent highway. Flatlands along the road, resembling our landscapes. With groves and farms.

In Kiel we went directly to the Schleswig-Holstein regional committee. The regional committee officials were young cheerful guys. They were friendly but looked at us a little ironically.

A walk around the city. Kiel canal. A base for Olympic sailing. A nursing home overlooking the dock (pray to God we get one like this).

At 3pm we met with regional committee secretaries at their "club." The young people (about 15 of them) came straight from work. I behaved naturally. Latecomers came up without ceremony, shook hands, exchanged couple words with their colleagues and found seats wherever they could. The conversation was strained at first, then Rykin (head of the German sector in our

Department) provoked a downright attack. He asked: how did your workers (not party members) react to the XXV Congress?

They started talking, interrupting each other, with notes of aggressiveness and offense that I didn't understand at first. They were challenging us. It turned out that overall, they didn't have any reaction to the Congress. They don't care about it.

After my "crafty" questions it became clear that things are not that simple. They all started by saying that workers don't care about anything besides their salary. All they read is Springer's newspapers, which presented the XXV Congress as a commonplace event that didn't concern anybody.

Détente? Why, sure! The workers are for détente. But they don't see it as Soviet Union's achievement. Some believe there wouldn't have been war anyway. If détente helped this – that's great, but why worry about it now? Others think the USSR needs détente to get new technology and grain from the West. Once that's done, they'll be back to their old games. Why, for example, is the USSR building such a powerful navy? Why isn't it disarming, if it's for détente?

Plus – democracy! In general workers say they don't really care, everyone is the same when they are in power: communists, fascists, Social Democrats, Christian Democrats, Free Democrats. But they prefer to be able to say whatever they want.

I retorted – what makes them think that our workers can't say what they want? Sakharov is not a worker. Workers do not need the things Sakharov wants to say; workers despise Sakharov's yapping. Our workers, like yours, are realists... The guys were silent. It somehow didn't occur to them to consider the difference between a worker and Sakharov.

I asked them: do you feel sufficiently armed, do you have enough arguments to use in your discussions with your "colleagues" (that's how they call non-party people they work with).

Silence. Then one guy says: "If only! They don't want to listen to the arguments we do have. They say, 'If it's so good over there (!), why don't you go to 'your' GDR?!' It's very difficult to get them to read *Unsere Zeit* (the CP newspaper)." Another guy said, "I get two copies of *Unsere Zeit* and leave one on my coworker's workstation in the evening. He comes in the morning and throws it away. Not because it's *Unsere Zeit*, but because it's not sports, tabloid, or porn. He has no time for it. Or he might keep it till evening so he could use it to wrap something."

Another one: "I came up with a trick. I leave an issue in the restroom. When people have 'nothing to do' in there they might end up taking a look at it. You know, it worked. Two weeks later people started coming up to me and asking if I have any more of that '*Unsere Zeit* of yours?'"

APN brochures?... That stuff is impossible to read. It's simply not written in German... the language sounds dead. The content is nonsense. The only thing made clear is that life in the Soviet Union is better than anywhere else. But workers want specific facts. When facts are available it becomes clear that the things workers care about are not at all better in the USSR.

Soviet work orders – now that is something! When your ships dock here for repairs, we communists have a celebration. Nobody can deny – that is quality work! But even this our workers see from this point of view only, and no other.

One young man from those present visited the Soviet Union (with the Friendship Train). He said it gives him an advantage: “When they push me with anti-Soviet facts, I tell them, where did you get these ‘facts’? From *Die Welt*? I was there. I saw everything for myself. And your ‘facts’ are boloney. Although,” he added with an embarrassed smile, “by far not all the ‘facts’ are untrue... unfortunately. But of course I don't mention that.”

I liked these guys. They aren't in the party for any kind of personal gain. “Pure idea.” How much effort, how much thought and time (with all the temptations around) they have to spend to stand their ground daily and to convince, debate, insist, in an atmosphere of suspicion, ridicule, sometimes outright hostility.

Their personal qualities do not go unnoticed. They say colleagues readily elect them to work councils, as delegates to negotiations with the administration, to trade union positions. But when it comes to municipal elections, i.e. when workers have to make “policy-based” choices, they rarely give their votes to communists (the same people). It goes without saying that nobody favors a communist in parliamentary elections. Then it's not Hans and Helmut, good guys and true friends. Then – it's “Moscow” looming behind him.

I left the conversation in a sad mood.

April 24, 1976

In Hamburg we had lunch at a “fish quay.” At home when we have distinguished guests for lunch it is usually heralded as something special, an “event.” Here lunch is lunch. This time, for example, I was sitting at a table with drivers, since we were a little late and all other seats were taken.

The day before we went to a port where Herbert Mies (Party Chairman), Gautier (Deputy Chairman), CC Secretaries Karl-Heinz Schröder, Willi Gerns and others were already assembled. We got on a boat and sailed along the docks and piers, greeting, incidentally, Soviet ships. Sailors waved at us suspiciously from above, as if to say what is this drunken bunch?! It was true: as soon as we went aboard the din of beer and vodka started, with Mies leading the revelry.

They brought out a basket of Thälmann-themed hats and we tried them on, exchanged them, took photos.

I walked over to Schröder (one of the secretaries of the DKP Central Committee) and said, “Karl-Heinz, I am giving my speech in three hours. Could you look over my text, cross out everything that is not necessary. It is longer than specified, could you trim it as you see fit.” Schröder, together with Gerns, another member of the DKP leadership, and Rykin, retired to a far corner of the deck to read with the hubbub in the background. About 50 minutes went by when Rykin came up to me. “They are at a loss,” he said, “They don’t know what to remove. They are immensely impressed. They did not expect such a ‘non-official’ text.” Then I saw they both ran over to Mies and started excitedly telling him something. Then they came over to me with all kinds of words, exclamations, pats on the back. They said they got approval to give me 25 minutes instead of the allotted 15, because it was a pity to throw out even one line, and they will publish the speech in full.

The main event took place in the “Community Hall.” It was packed, mostly young people. They looked nice, with intelligent beautiful faces, boys and girls, very direct and interested, some were sitting right on the floor between the stage and the first row.

The hall, designed for 500 people, was packed to overflowing, people were standing in the isles and along the walls. Jan Wennike, a Hamburg regional committee secretary, opened the meeting. I sat in the presidium next to Mies, and with us a representative of the SED, director of the Thorez Institute [Jean] Burles from the PCF, secretary of the Danish Communist Party Christiansen, and others. When foreign guests were announced, the audience gave a rousing welcome to the CPSU, so-so to the SED, normal to the French, and a warm welcome to the Dane.

Mies’s report. Very loud, polemic towards their own Social Democrats, explaining the tasks of the DKP Congress that just took place in Bonn.

I was given the floor after the break. I said a few words of greeting in Russian. Next to me on the podium was German Gunther, he is a party secretary from one of Hamburg’s districts. He is a good speaker and was assigned to read my text in German. He studied it beforehand with German thoroughness, even practiced it out loud in private to get my accents right. And he began to read loudly and aggressively what I had written: about the shock of 1941, our disappointment in the Germans, whom we had considered the closest to us after the revolution, about Thälmann and the DKP – without whom it would have been impossible to heal the past, about the great German people, the nobility and strength of the spirit of the German worker’s movement – qualities that were crystallized in Thälmann...

The room was filled with a tense silence, occasionally broken by bursts of applause. When I started talking about current affairs, about new and old internationalism, about the fact

that the CPSU doesn't need a hegemony, and so on, the audience reacted precisely and keenly to every such passage. I was amazed at how well they understood the subtext. When at the end I talked about the grave of Soviet soldier Maslov, who died storming the prison in Bautzen where Thälmann was believed to be held still alive, people jumped up in their seats. It was a long time before they calmed down and quieted down enough for me to finish my speech.

I left the podium in a "triumph of approval." Later many people came up to me, said something. Erika – one of the editors of *Unsere Zeit*, very nice and just glowing with intelligence and kindness, a typical "Western" journalist in appearance – kept telling me that evening and the next day why I created such an impression: the combination of thought with inner feeling, sincerity, a serious approach and trust in West German communists and German people, respect for the audience's ability to understand complex issues, and a decisive, "provocative" (her words) reluctance to talk in platitudes that people are sick and tired of.

Mies was satisfied, but restrained in his praise. It seemed to me that he was not quite sure that I reflected "official" thoughts and feelings. Apparently he still remembers how he was "received" in Moscow during the XXV Congress of the CPSU, and how our delegation of CC CPSU Secretary Dolgikh and Zagladin behaved at the DKP Congress. Rykin "whispered" to me the impressions of delegates from the congress: official clichés, trite platitudes, pompousness and orthodoxy in personal communication...

Mies was also uneasy over the contrast between my speech and the speech of the SED representative. The DKP is dependent on the SED financially and politically. My Walborg,<sup>20</sup> who was sitting next to me, didn't know what to translate in the speech that mentioned "Comrade Honecker" after every other word, as well as "Thälmann's legacy in the GDR," "developed socialism," and three times that "loyalty to the CPSU is a criterion for internationalism..." Later I was told the audience noticed that in each one of those three cases, I was the only one in the room not clapping.

The Frenchman spoke after me. When he was talking about the brotherhood of the past (Thorez-Thälmann) things were going well. When he started talking about socialism painted in the colors of France people pricked up their ears, fell silent, and gave the speaker a very sour reaction when he was finished. Once again I was amazed at their "awareness" about Eurocommunism.

In the evening, at a banquet in Thälmann's house, I got a stream of congratulations – from the Germans (except from SED representatives), from our correspondents and consulate employees. The clash between Mies and Burles took place during the dinner, too. I was sitting near them but kept my mouth shut. In the heat of the argument both of them kept looking over

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<sup>20</sup> Schröder's wife, she studied in the GDR, knew Russian, and was "assigned" to me as an interpreter. [Footnote in the original]

“at the CPSU.” The Frenchman started to praise Mies’s report for strongly emphasizing the “national factor” – the special conditions of the country and the consequently unique features of their actions and policies. Mies interrupted him, “I understand what you’re getting at. But don’t hold your breath for us to follow you to Eurocommunism. And overall you are behaving arrogantly, not comradely. When we were at your congress, you didn’t give us a chance to speak. You sent us to some kind of meeting with a couple dozen people. Still, we didn’t say a word regarding what we think about your ‘new ideas.’ Now you come here and say whatever you want. Today you completely laid out your program. When I was preparing my report I took out even the slightest hints that we disagree with you (though I was tempted to leave them in). But we won’t keep quiet forever. You think you are big and we are small, so you can treat us this way... However, under Thälmann we were the biggest. This means it’s possible for us to grow here. And please, let’s not have familiarity. We will have our say yet.”

The next day there was a rally – columns (tens of thousands) marched past Thälmann’s house. Mies was standing on the balcony of his apartment. I was next to him. Many of the participants recognized and greeted me. At the meeting after the rally Gautier was speaking (Deputy Chairman of the Party) instead of Mies. Three times in his shrill speech he shouted oaths of loyalty to the Soviet Union. The first time, the audience responded with thunderous applause and shouts of “Hoch!” with a raised fist to the temple (Thälmann’s gesture). The second time he got some weak applause. The third time there were some catcalls...

Karl-Heinz Schröder joined Rykin and me at the hotel in the evening. We drank our vodka. He got into it, called Gautier every name in the book, “If he wasn’t an idiot, he might have been considered a provocateur.” We talked “heart to heart” for a long time. He kept stopping, taking me by the shoulders, and saying, “Anatol! Rede!” [sic in German] (i.e. my speech). He would lower his head, drunkenly shake it from side to side, as if he couldn’t find the words. “That was it! That was real! It [will live on] for decades. We will never forget. We’ll include it in our Party education program. You understood us. You understood what the relationship between the CPSU and us should be.” He railed against the SED, Honecker... And again and again, as a refrain, “Anatol! Rede!”

April 25, 1976

Yesterday morning I went to a bakery and a dairy shop. Hordes of people! The grumbling symphony of a random crowd: there is no order, they can’t organize things, two saleswomen are moving crates and opening boxes, instead of selling... Spending our day off standing in line... And they don’t even have groceries... We can forget about farmer’s cheese, don’t even remember what it smells like anymore! Etc. etc. Above it all came the rough voice of a man who’s about 40.

“What do you want! That’s our system. These women (saleswomen) are not to blame. Blame those who are devouring caviar behind the green fence. They have farmers cheese over there. Our country doesn’t have a leader. All our leader does is make speeches about the bright future of communism, and even that he does worse every year. It’ll stay this way until we get a real leader.” And so on.

No one was surprised, no one protested. It must be a regular occurrence – such speeches in stores. The crowd mostly made encouraging noises and comments, including a young police officer who was in line for milk. And there I was, excuse me, a member of the CC CPSU Auditing Commission, standing there surprised and keeping quiet. What could one say when the others have their “facts on the store shelves.”

In the bakery women got into a fight over some Easter cakes, and when a voice from between the shelves said, “We are out, that’s it! There won’t be any more!” there was such a ruckus that I was ready to jump headlong out the door.

April 28, 1976

The department party meeting with B.N.’s report just ended. It’s a rare event. About our objectives after the XXV Congress. He repeated our draft note to the CC – on the situation in the ICM – which I finished today. And another text, which Kozlov prepared for him for the occasion (a trimmed version of his own lecture on the ICM). It’s a boring, unpromising, bureaucratic reaction to events that may be truly approaching a historical turning point.

About a CPSU delegation to the Labour Party in England. Even before our Congress, after yet another reminder from the Labour General Secretary Hayward to our ambassador, we promised (for the umpteenth time) to come in May. Hayward repeated it at the executive committee. Then he started bombarding Lun’kov with requests for the composition and level of the delegation, since he needed to put together a program, meetings with the Prime Minister, with prominent Labour Party members. [He needed this information] at least a month before the visit, which was scheduled for May 17-18. I pressured B.N., he pressured Suslov. The latter stalled (as he had for these last two years), made excuses, put it off. B.N. shared his puzzlement: Why? Does he want to go himself, or does he have some ideological grounds? Today Brutents suggested that it is more likely Suslov did not want B.N. to go. Last year he went to the U.S. as head of a Supreme Soviet delegation. Now England, with whom we are starting a serious game... Finally, B.N. prevailed upon Suslov and got permission to present the “proposals” to the CC and today Suslov signed our memo himself.

But a week ago Hayward warned Lun’kov that if there was no response by April 26<sup>th</sup>, they would have to cancel the visit. On the 27<sup>th</sup> was the meeting of the Labour Party Executive Committee, where the visit was to be discussed. Yesterday Lun’kov got a phone call, explaining that the Executive Committee of the Labour Party has postponed the visit indefinitely due to a

lack of response from Moscow. Today we found out that Hayward gave a newspaper interview in which he publicly explained everything, placing the blame for the failure on the CPSU. Our ambassador found out indirectly that there was a heated discussion at the Executive Committee, it mentioned an “insult,” the fact that it’s been three years, that “we (i.e. LP) sent our entire shadow cabinet to Moscow, but they...” And so forth. And the “left” wing of the Executive Committee (Hoffer) declared, “Why do we need to deal the CPSU at all? It would be better with the PCF or PCI, who are welcoming ‘democratic socialism.’”

That’s how it works out. We make all sorts of projects to influence the Social Democrats, the Socialist International, we offer different ideas, some of which even are even pronounced from the podium of the Congress – contacts with social democracy and so on. We write comments and articles in *Pravda*. Then in one fell swoop it all goes down the drain. Why? Because of senile impotence and political sclerosis, which is natural for a person who is well past 70 years old.

I saw “all of this” yesterday when I was at a SS Secretariat session. My god! What serious political activity can we speak of?! The main issue under discussion was restructuring the political education system. Medvedev (Deputy Head of the Propaganda Department) was speaking. From the questions he received it became clear that, first of all, Suslov and the CC secretaries don’t have a very clear idea of how the system of political education works right now. The “main ideas” of restructuring, as I understood it, consisted of transferring the Institutes of Marxism-Leninism from the jurisdiction of city committees to regional committees, and creating a Central House of political education in Moscow.

Kirilenko, in his usual brusque manner, declared (and then stubbornly stood his ground) that this is all a waste of money and effort. Why not entrust the matter to the CCs of national communist parties? Actually, from the point of view of common sense, all of this restructuring is nothing more than “bureaucratic enthusiasm,” veiled under the importance of the times we are living through and other such loud phrases.

The following episode was the most curious at this session. Those present were surprised and puzzled at the behavior of the newly made CC Secretary Zimyanin (this entire project was done under his leadership in the Department of Propaganda). He defended the project passionately and forcefully – according to official logic that there is only one Marxism-Leninism and we cannot allow it to be interpreted one way in Tashkent and another way in Yerevan. When Kirilenko started to interrupt him, appealing to common sense and cost cutting, Zimyanin interrupted him in turn: “Excuse me, Andrei Pavlovich! I will allow myself to say what I wish to say!” The latter shut up... It was awkward. Until now, nobody allowed himself to turn his tail up at the almighty A.P.

This is something new. The mature apparatchiks looked at each other, not understanding what's going on.

Concluding, Suslov "saved face for A.P." but essentially supported Zimyanin.

May 5, 1976

Ponomarev's absence (he is at an editorial committee meeting in Berlin to prepare the European conference of communist parties) fundamentally changes the course of my workday: I have enough time to really think about the information and reflect in general, instead of cracking like sunflower seeds all of those ciphered telegrams, radio intercepts, TASS, KGB and institute reports, abstracts and journals in general.

Now that parliamentary elections in Italy have been scheduled for June 20-21<sup>st</sup>, the crystallization process of "non-Moscow" communism has sharply accelerated. Openly, right before our eyes – in interviews, articles, statements – all the central concepts are being rejected, eroded, filled with different meaning. Things like "independence," "equality," the balance between large and small parties, the center's rejection of a leading role among communist parties, the development of Marxism on the basis of one's own experience, consideration for national characteristics, alliance with other parties and movements, cooperation with social democrats, democracy, stages and conditions for the progress of socialism, etc. etc. – i.e. everything that for a long time we have been accepting in word is now becoming a reality and policy of the Italians, Spanish, French, British, Belgians, Swedes, not to mention Romanians and Yugoslavs.

In order to gain credibility and recognition as a national party they are disassociating themselves from us. They have to do it more often, more harshly, acutely, uncompromisingly and irreversibly because the Soviet Union and Soviet socialism has been successfully discredited through the campaign conceived in anti-Soviet headquarters and carried out with the help of Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov & Co. Our prestige in the eyes of the world public has been struck a terrible blow. It will have long-lasting consequences and it may be nearly impossible to recover. We have lost the biggest ideological battle of the XX century.

The result will be this: socialism that according to the theory of Marx-Lenin will finally grow on the basis of highly developed capitalism, which we made possible at the price of sacrifice, suffering, loss, and so on, this socialism will arise as an antithesis to us, as a force that, if not hostile (like the Chinese), will in any case be alien to us. And we will finally come to the model of society that the French and Italians will create (i.e. as Lenin said, "they will do it better than us"). The fact that it is taking us so long to let go of Stalin's legacy will go down in history as a mistake, and we will be judged for it. Only a handful of eccentric historians 50-100 years from now will assert that our path between the XX and XXX (if it takes place!) Congresses was necessary, they will argue that Stalinism (a weaker form of it) had to happen in order to ensure

the emergence of world forces that made it possible for the Italians and French to have any kind of socialism at all...

I just hope to God that we will not exacerbate what history will mark as our mistake through hostility and ideological condemnation of the French and Italian “models” of socialism, when they become reality.

It is quite possible – because the ideological and political substance of French and Italian socialism is the same as the 1968 Czechoslovak model. However, our attitude to the latter was guided by cynically-pragmatic considerations: concern about the balance of power. This time pragmatic considerations may give rise to a different reaction.

May 8, 1976

It's the eve before Victory Day. Again, as always on this day, I am torn by a dilemma: to put on my service ribbons or just the Order of the Patriotic War. For some reason I want the latter. And once again I am cursing the corps commander who refused to give me an Order of the Red Banner, saying, “You (i.e. our regiment) weren't the ones on the offensive! You just prepared the starting lines.” By the way, the regiment that relieved us on May 5, 1945, also didn't get to advance – the war ended. While we dug those trenches every night, 30-100 meters under the noses of the Germans, we lost dozens of people and risked our lives up until a few days before the war ended. Anyway.

In the evening I watched an episode of the TV movie based on Vasil Bykov's “The Long Roads of War” [*Dolgie dorogi voiny*]. His work always feels natural, without nonsense, and honest about the war. I got emotional again. And again that strange longing for something irretrievably gone (!) and lost.

May 9, 1976

Victory Day. There is less fanfare than last year. But... Brezhnev was made Marshal and a “bust” [sculpture of Brezhnev] (as Shcherbitsky called it) was unveiled in Dneprodzerzhinsk. The entire *Vremya* program on TV was dedicated to this event.

There can be a lot of explanations. But, honestly, I personally do not understand it at all. Is it really possible that “up there” (as a person from the street would say) they do not understand that such events have a 95 percent opposite effect than intended?!

I walked through the streets of Moscow with my friend Kolya Varlamov (commander of a machine gun platoon in a naval infantry brigade – 1942). We talked about the war and everyday trifles. Drank vodka. I came back home and caught the minute of silence on TV. I felt very sad for some reason...

May 12, 1976

Yesterday B.N. and I discussed the prospectus for Brezhnev's speech at the European Conference of Communist Parties. B.N.'s regular gimmicks: "Montblanc of weapons,' despite détente, communists should directly say why this is so. It's time to move 'from words to deeds'..." And the same as before the Congress, it doesn't cross his mind that Brezhnev cannot announce to the whole world that he hasn't been making peace this whole time, just talking about it. It is not true in substance, either. There was a colossal turning point. The psychological change turned into a "material force."

But I still have Ponomarev's report to foreign propagandists to finish ("The XXV Congress and the world revolutionary process"). It's coming to 75 pages. Incidentally, the preparation of such materials reveals how much our sectors are worth. In this case, the Middle East sector brilliantly demonstrated its shabbiness.

May 16, 1976

I went to an exhibit on Kuznetsky Most. There are two halls next to each other. The large hall is showing war veteran artists. It's plainly boring. I wanted to leave but when I glanced at the small hall I saw some A.A. Labas.<sup>21</sup> It was the first time I heard that last name, so I reluctantly wandered in. Later the artist himself (born in 1900) showed up, together with his wife, who is depicted in some of the portraits in the exhibit. It was a discovery for me. The kind of work I'd seen in the vaults of the Russian Museum back in the day. High class Soviet expressionism. 1920s. The spirit of the era is captured with great accuracy and artistic force. There is a series of drawings about "October." Two paintings from 1928 – "Red Army Soldier in the Far East" or "Morning after Battle in the City" – they are staggering. Or...1932, a painting that even anticipates "Guernica" in style and theme.

And another thing: cities of the future (drawings) – Western futurologists have only recently started "discovering" this. The Moscow metro as a symbol.

This Labas participated in some exhibitions, about a dozen of his works have been acquired by the country's leading museums. The rest are at his house. This exhibit is his first "solo exhibition" in his nearly 60-year career. Nobody knows him from among the general public. Those who are not in the know about the broken history of our art won't understand it at all. They will walk through the hall indifferently and immediately forget about it.

At work we had an outing to Serebryanny Bor to prepare the General Secretary's speech for the Conference of European Communist Parties. Politburo discussed the outcomes of the Berlin editorial committee meeting (they even published it). Brezhnev had the following reaction

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<sup>21</sup> Aleksandr Arkadievich Labas. [Translator's note]

to the report: “They won’t understand it if I don’t go!” Regarding the remaining unsolved issues (references to proletarian internationalism, the Soviet Union as the main force of détente and the primary target of anti-communism) Andropov said: “Who cares! Who is going to look for it, what will these words matter a week after the conference! This is no reason to get upset. That is not the point.”

May 20, 1976

Today I was told the following story. The day before yesterday Brezhnev spoke at a meeting of regional, oblast, and republican party workers. This was reported in *Pravda*, but a transcript wasn’t provided. One could guess, and it turned out to be the case, that it was a meeting of Organizational Department representatives. They used to be called the “special sector” attached to party committees of various levels.

The Azerbaijani and Armenian – participants of the meeting – were talking over each other in a rush to tell what happened. They were in a state of complete shock, they didn’t know whether to be surprised, make fun, protest, or what else to do.

“The meeting was called but not a lot of people showed up, the auditorium was half empty. Probably because it wasn’t announced ahead of time and the guys were out doing some shopping. You know why there was no advance notice... He [Brezhnev] came in through a back door, walked down the aisle through the auditorium. Of course everyone jumped up, applauded, cheered... Understandable. He got up to the presidium and started speaking. Something along the lines of:

‘Kostya (that is CC Secretary, Head of the General Department Chernenko!) is making me speak here. I don’t really know what to talk about. It seems we had a meeting two years ago. (Chernenko jumps up: ‘Two years and 31 days, Leonid Ilyich!’) There you go... See what memory I have! Did we make a promise back then? We did. And we kept it. Back then you were heads of sectors, now you are heads of departments. Your salary is different, and your position. Am I telling the truth?! (Thunderous applause).

‘So, you know that we held a Congress recently. A major event. Now we will carry out [the resolutions of the Congress]. What can I tell you? I don’t have any notes (shows them his pockets). They say the French and Italians are talking about our democracy. They don’t like it. That’s fine. We will follow our own path! (Gestures like Lenin’s statues). The Americans are acting foolishly. I woke up the other day, didn’t want to do anything (he stretched himself)... They bring me a ciphered telegram. It says Ford is asking to delay signing the agreement on nuclear explosions (for peaceful purposes). You [bastard], I thought to myself... Gave the resolution to Aleksandrov, telling him: Let’s postpone it, but he’s going to have to ask me properly next time he wants to sign it.

‘You know the other day there was a big event. A bust of me was erected. The Politburo passed a resolution to award me, as the General Secretary and Chairman of the Council of Defense, the rank of Marshal of the Soviet Union. This is important. (And he jokes...) Of course you marked this event in your speeches at the meeting. (Chernenko jumps up: ‘Yes, of course Leonid Ilyich, everybody talked about it with great enthusiasm...’).

‘Kostya tried to convince me to come here in a Marshal’s uniform...’ (Chernenko: ‘Yes, yes, Leonid Ilyich, everybody really wanted to see you in uniform. But since you... We did...’ And he raised a portrait of Brezhnev from under the presidium table. He held it in front of him with both arms. Ovation).

Chernenko put the portrait on the table, looked out from behind it and yelled to the auditorium, ‘Leonid Mitrofanovich, do it!’ Zamyatin (director of TASS) got up from the second row and bought another portrait to the presidium, also in a Marshal’s uniform but this one in color (the first was an enlarged photograph). Two portraits raised up high... Ovation!

‘What else can I tell you,’ Brezhnev went on. ‘There are a lot of events. Let those who don’t like us make noise. We will follow our own path!’ (And once again Lenin’s gesture).”

The other day B.N. asked me to read a ciphered telegram from Peking. Australian Ambassador Fitzgerald told our Ambassador Tolstikov about New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon’s meeting with Mao. The Helmsman was escorted in supported on both sides. Muldoon was brought over to him. Mao stretched out his hand, but was looking sideways (he has a loss of coordination). Chinese ceremonies, seating. In order to play along, Muldoon started the conversation with almost a quote, “There is great excitement in the Celestial Empire. The peoples of the world are rising to fight for independence. And they will certainly win!”

Mao was quiet for a while, then said, “No!”

Muldoon, “Of course, if they have real leaders!”

Mao: “No!”

Muldoon wouldn’t give up, “And if they unite.”

Mao: “There is still the Soviet Union.”

With that, the reception was over, as the Helmsman became tired and was escorted away. The philosophical debate lasted ten minutes.

May 22, 1976

One can observe curious “transformations” while preparing “key” reports for B.N. Right now this work is at the finish line. He is speaking on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Twice he “straightened us out” in

our drafts. The main issue is how to treat the PCF's rejection of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." We wrote it, of course, with the consideration that he will still call it revisionism (it's ok in a closed report). Therefore, while we created a condemning tone, we tried to avoid labels and insults.

So we couldn't believe our ears when B.N. started to reproach us for being illogical. "Nobody will understand what we are calling for. I am speaking in front of propagandists; they need practical advice. And what do we have here? On the one hand, you are saying that in 1968, during the preparation of the Document for the International Conference of 1969, the CPSU agreed with arguments that it is inexpedient to include this term in the Document. Now we are condemning the PCF for doing the same thing as the most orthodox fraternal parties have been doing for the last 10 years (they no longer use the term 'dictatorship of the proletariat'). Let us be consistent. And in general, comrades, the Comintern doesn't exist anymore and we cannot interfere in other parties' internal policies. If we discuss something from this sphere, we can only do it 'theoretically' (i.e. anonymously), on our 'issue' articles. We did not criticize the PCF anywhere specifically for rejecting the 'dictatorship of the proletariat.'"

I: "Yes, Boris Nikolayevich, we did not criticize them ourselves. But we published an article from *Neues Deutschland* in *Pravda* in an approving spirit, and from Czech and Bulgarian newspapers. Everyone understood why we did it, including *L'Humanite*."

B.N. "Well, that was a mistake. I, for example, disagree with the article in *Neues Deutschland*." (!!)

All I could do was throw my hands up in the air in response.

"It's another thing," B.N. continued, "when they criticize our party, our democracy, etc. That is interference in our affairs. Here we need to fight back."

And one more episode. I signed off on an International Department newsletter distribution to CC secretaries (internal party information for core members, with a circulation of 25,000). It contained an article on the XXII Congress of the PCF. I was signing for it because Zagladin is "at a [writer's] dacha." I was struck by the harshness of its assessments, including personal ones directed at Marchais. And the whole spirit of the article was as if we're in 1951 instead of 1976.

I called Zagladin. I think he was a little "embarrassed" but then tried to convince me that it's appropriate, "the core group should know the truth." I sent it out. But I felt uneasy. So, at the risk of getting in trouble, I called Pomelov, Kirilenko's assistant (he headed the delegation to the PCF Congress) and warned him, "It's pretty sharp, watch your boss's reaction." Then I called Ponomarev, even though it was a move against Zagladin. B.N. lost it, "Why the hell are we sending this information to those slackers! What do they have to do with anything?! Do we want

to sever relations? If not, why do we need such things? We are restricting ourselves, we are driving ourselves into a corner. We are ideologically reinforcing our disagreements, making them insurmountable for ourselves (meaning “at the top”!)” And so on. “Hold this publication!”

With actions like these, B.N. reminds me of Derzhavin from Dez’ka’s poem:

He, old man, [...]
Thought something quietly to himself.
[...]
Derzhavin was a flatterer and a cheapskate,
And in the rank, but great of mind.
That’s the kind of old man Derzhavin was!

Brutents, who finally became a deputy last Friday, told me what took place “at the dacha” in Serebryanny Bor. The following crew went out there: Zagladin, Zhilin, Pyshkov, Brutents, and others. Preparation of the General Secretary’s speech for the European Conference of Communist Parties. They’ve got a tight little group there. Brutents was the white crow, but he was used as an excuse to drink (in connection with his new appointment). There were all kinds of conversations. Brutents gathered from them (I laughed at his admission) that the department’s porridge is cooked by “the four”: reputations are compiled, references are authorized, personnel issues are discussed, the division between “ours” and “outsider” is determined. They’re a vulgar group.

The hardest for me to understand is Zagladin. Maybe it’s just a combination of boundless indifference and unscrupulous cynicism regarding people (anyone), combined with the desire to have a comfortable microenvironment. To look like a “good guy, one of us.”

Shaposhnikov is torn. He was deeply and irreversibly offended by my appointment to the Auditing Commission. This is driving him to rash and despicable acts.

B.N. senses all of this. But he may be afraid to air dirty linen in public, or sees his inability to change anything.

A “musical moment,” again from the preparation of B.N.’s report. Yesterday he kept me at work till 10 p.m., he kept editing it, though not heavily. Finally, he must have left for his dacha. He calls me from the car, “Anatoly Sergeyeovich, we need to say it more warmly, it all sounds too dry!”

I: “About what, communist parties?”

B.N.: (irritated) “No, of course not... Alright, when I arrive I will call you on a different phone. Don’t you understand? All the events...”

I: “I understand, Boris Nikolayevich. It will be done.”

B.N.: “Don’t make it too heavy. But we should have something at the beginning and the end...”

I remembered this because I heard some things at the store today, and then my neighbor told me [some stories] too. People are openly saying things for which, as she put it, under Stalin half of Moscow would have been shot. At a minimum: “They are putting up busts of themselves, donning Marshal stripes as if they’re planning to go to war. In the meantime, there is nothing to eat. They brought the country to a state where peasants have to come to city stores to stand in line for some green onions...”

B.N. was telling me and boiling inside, “Kissinger, Ford, all those senators – they give interviews at the slightest provocation. They say whatever comes into their head. They pommel us indiscriminately. Whereas here, Gromyko suggested twice that Brezhnev should give an interview... After all, they will print it all there, down the last comma. But the latter: ‘Why do it... to hell with them, what will I say?’ But with his prestige in the world, he could fight off any slander against us right away.” And so on.

I listen to him and think: what are you saying, Boris Nikolayevich?! As if you do not understand that with the command of thoughts and words demonstrated at the meeting Chernenko organized, there can be no question about any interview. Plus, with his almost physical aversion to any mental exertion. That is the reason he tries to avoid meetings with important visitors, though it would seem the meeting is extremely important (with Kaysone Phomvihane, the Cambodian [sic] Prime Minister, for example).

May 28, 1976

B.N. has a new idea – to publish a didactic article about proletarian internationalism. If the approach is similar to [what we did with] the dictatorship of the proletariat, it would be beneficial. Right now nobody can make out what we want and what we’ll defend, why we are so interested in proletarian internationalism, and in general what do we mean by it if not our own hegemony and worship of us (which no serious person can defend anymore).

For example, Korionov slipped me page proofs of a *Pravda* article on proletarian internationalism. There are enough loud proclamations [звонарства] and quotes to fill a page, but as for what we want – nobody could understand from the text or even from between the lines... I don’t think Korionov understands it either.

Ponomarev told me about his displeasure with “the group” he took with him to Berlin for the editorial committee meeting: Zagladin for “taking liberties,” he is too much on his own and made some mistakes. Zhilin, Sobakin, Yermonsky – for drunkenness. I will try to convey it in his

words: “They got so brazen that they didn’t attend meetings. Then at the table, in Katushev’s presence, just imagine the current situation, but none of them care, no one raised a single question, they didn’t want to discuss anything, they kept drinking... Zhilin now gets drunk after two glasses and starts talking nonsense. He spars with Sobakin, it’s cheap and disgusting to listen to. What is going on! Not a word about the matters at hand. And you understand what kind of matters [we were working with]... There was a serious faux-pas because of their laziness: they didn’t notify me that the French are planning to include “proletarian internationalism” into the Document. Katushev asked to speak and started going all out in favor of “international solidarity” (the earlier Italian proposal). I had to step in and support the French proposal. It was a mess, Katushev was saying one thing and I was saying another. Right after each other. Meanwhile, Zagladin is sitting next to me, red in the face, and suddenly says to me, ‘We are making a gross political mistake.’ I frankly had to tell him later that such behavior is unacceptable...”

And more along those lines.

It’s not the first time I’m listening to his complaints. I do not really understand them. It is true that he won’t “get along” with Zagladin anymore. (I happened to be in Zagladin’s office when a fellow from the General Department brought him [a card] to sign – congratulations [to Brezhnev] for “making Marshal” from his very close circle.

Of course I did not share my impressions. But I asked a provocative question: will the conference of communist parties take place or not? B.N. shrugged. “Here is Brezhnev’s letter to Berlinguer. Have you read it? Read it.”

I: “I’ve heard about it. But I am not sure it is the right move. Let Honecker ‘finish the business with Berlinguer.’ (During the SED Congress in Berlin a letter came from Berlinguer, asking to postpone the conference because at the end of June, immediately after their elections, it will be impossible to find time for it, etc.). This letter was discussed in a small circle in the CC SED, with Suslov’s participation, and the resolution was made to ‘pressure the Italians.’ Supposedly they keep playing up to the bourgeois segments and to Americans, they want to increase their distance from the Communist movement, they ignore others’ interests!! It is an imprudent decision. Whatever is driving the Italians, they are currently at the forefront of international communism,” I got into it. “Finally, a historic question is on the table, one that was posed under Lenin: how to win under highly developed and highly organized capitalism. Nobody has come close to a practical solution to this problem. The PCI is getting there. It would seem, it is the duty of all communists to do everything possible to help them... and first and foremost **not to impede** the Italian’s chance to win.”

Italian parliamentary elections on June 20<sup>th</sup> and this stupid European Conference of Communist Parties, which nobody wants and, if we are serious, nobody needs – these two events

cannot even be compared in their significance. And the latter can really harm the former, truly historic, event.

In the meantime, we are resorting to our main weapon – a letter from Brezhnev. I think Brezhnev does not have a clear idea of the situation, and his assessment of the Italian phenomenon is guided by almost philistine prejudices, based on the “Short Course” ideology. But the informed and all-seeing experts Zagladin-Zhilin-Aleksandrov, who sit in Novo-Ogarevo writing Brezhnev’s speech for the conference, are pushing such a move on him!

I am almost certain that Berlinguer will politely decline. [This response] will be triggered not just by the objective interest of giving their all to victory in the elections, but also by consideration from the sphere of political cunning – what if the pen pushers find out about Brezhnev’s letter the way they found out about Berlinguer’s letter to Honecker! They will say that Berlinguer is standing at attention to Moscow, that despite the interests of his party he accepted humiliation by going back on his earlier decision to seek postponement of the conference to make sure these two “events” don’t overlap.

I think Berlinguer will refuse. It will be embarrassing! Brezhnev will get mad, which the Italians – i.e. the ICM! – really don’t need right now. Brezhnev’s anger will be directed at Ponomarev too, not just the Italians.

If Berlinguer goes to the conference, he will demand a great price for it – both in the Document and in his speech at the conference. And we will have to bite the bullet, listen to everything and not say a word in response!

Either way, it will be bad for the International Department.

That was the gist of my comments to B.N. I said a lot less. However, I did say that I “foresee” a negative response. The Italians need the conference right now this much (I drew my finger across my throat). Their position will be met with understanding not only by the SKJ and PCF, but by the French and the British, and privately by most Westerners. We will find ourselves in an awkward position. Of course, I understand the comrades in Novo-Ogarevo. But, alas, theirs is the logic of apparatchiks. Nowadays it is not always far-sighted logic.

Boris Nikolayevich listened to me silently. He looked at me skeptically but did not object. Once again he reminded me of Derzhavin. He is torn himself between apparatchik logic and real politics.

I am reading a book by the Englishman A. Taylor, [*The Origins of the*] *Second World War*, which, as he says, it took him 30 years to write. A conglomeration of thoughts and assessments. I think he is closer than others to the truth, even though he personifies events a little. Finally, our role is properly recognized (by the pen of a major historian!).

June 1, 1976

Difficult day. Text for yet another report for B.N. to the CC apparatus (it most likely won't take place).

A private assessment for B.N. (in secret from the Novo-Ogarevo team) of the General Secretary's text for the conference. A note based on [B.N.'s] demand to do something to repel the anti-Soviet line in the U.S. presidential campaign (indefatigable B.N.... the MFA won't support this and all this work will fly into the wastebasket).

He is busy with affairs of the European conference today. It turns out that Axen (member of the SED Politburo) on Sunday sent a message from Rome that Berlinguer is not giving in to persuasion, and that possibly it would be best to refrain from giving him Brezhnev's letter (the ambassador hadn't had an opportunity to give it to him yet).

Today Axen is already here, in Moscow. He says Enrico was unusually harsh and uncompromising: "It is not a question of dates; we agree to the end of June. It is a question of unanimity with regard to the final document. If the French refuse to sign even one part of it, we won't go to the conference. If anyone from the 28 parties refuses to attend, we won't go to the conference. If the French don't go, we won't either. We don't want to look closer to Moscow... We curse the moment we agreed to tie the conference to a document. And in general, we will never agree to something like this again! You (Germans) keep talking about an International Meeting (it was in Honecker's report at the Congress). What is it for? You know that we and others disagree. You are only provoking unnecessary speculation. Or maybe you already have a draft final document of the new meeting in your pocket?"

"We have to agree that only an unanimously adopted document can be a condition of the conference. This means we have to throw out everything that any of the participants disagree with. Otherwise we are not going to the conference."

And so on along those lines.

After hours-long discussions today, B.N, Katushev, Axen, and Zagladin came up with a stupidity – to send CC representatives (Ponomarev and Katushev, respectively) to Paris, Rome, Belgrade to persuade them to compromise and to deliver a message from Brezhnev. This in itself is humiliating. When I read the drafts for Brezhnev's letters and the notes for the conversations, I lost it. The way it appears, if there is no conference – it will be a catastrophe for the CPSU. The CPSU is so interested that it's ready to make any concession necessary. We are agreeing to things we protested just a little while ago – the French formula for a "conference with a limited agenda"; to throw out our analysis of the state of affairs and leave only points-goals; to back away from mentioning not only "proletarian internationalism," but even from our own achievements in détente.

Meanwhile, at the same time as B.N. is signing such papers, he tells me angrily, “Eh! We should just slam on the table and say – if you don’t want it, fine. Do we need this more than anyone else? Go to hell with your conference...”

I reply: “You are right. Except we should have already done it in the fall!”

On Thursday the PB will decide whether to send these letters from Brezhnev to Paris and Belgrade, and agree to hold the conference “utterly and completely” like the Italians, Yugoslavs, Spaniards, Romanians want it, instead of how we wanted it.

It’s possible that June 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the day when Brezhnev slams on the table and says about the same thing as Ponomarev said to me today. But with the difference that Brezhnev’s words will be partially directed at Ponomarev, if not directed at him first and foremost.

### June 3, 1976

Today I spoke at the presidium of the Academy of Sciences – “praised” Inozemtsev, who organized this whole thing himself. He forced Ponomarev to send me to this unprecedented event. Formally: the social sciences sector of the presidium was discussing IMEMO’s<sup>22</sup> work over the last five years. I was supposed to talk about how the Institute “helps” the CC’s International Department. My presentation brought some dissonance into the pompous academic chatter. I named names of those who actually did something. Among them 70 percent are Jews. I praised old man Khavinson and his journal (*World Economy and International Relations*).

Episode: Kuzmin, deputy of the Department of Science, was sitting at a table with a U-shaped layout, across from Murat Urmancheev (an official in the presidium). He asked me to come sit next to him. I innocently thought he wanted to tell me something before my speech... As it turns out (as everyone understood), he simply wanted me to approach him in front of all the academicians, instead of the other way around. My god!... However, he is a stupid and shallow man who gets a chance to put on airs due to his position as curator of the Academy. We formed a tacit Vivendi [sic]: we are pretending that nothing ever happened between us. Meanwhile, he was one of the organizers of my persecution “during the Fedoseyev campaign.” He is one of those who finishes (according to them) the condemned and bootlicks those on their way up (just in case).

I must really have “grown up”: all these games that are played seriously in all institutions (and not without reason, because position and salaries depend on them) sincerely make me laugh and give me a feeling of contempt.

Our Igor’ Sokolov (consultant) recently “organized a professorship for himself” at the Lenin school. He did it with an energy he’s never shown at work. He got me to sign a reference

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<sup>22</sup> Institute of World Economy and International Relations. [Translator’s note]

and gave me all kinds of instructions, arguing that this is precisely how the reference about him should be written. He mentioned, “You should note... according to the instructions, you could also do it... take a look...”

I did look, at him. He was taken aback and said, “What is it?”

“Nothing, Igor’. Except I will not do this sort of thing. I don’t need a “professorship,” or a doctorate, or anything of the sort.”

I didn’t like going to this Presidium either, I’m afraid they’ll think, following the logic of Sokolov-Timofeyev and others like them (and they are all like that there), that I’m getting ready “to be a Doctor [Ph.D.]”!

Ponomarev was getting ready for the Politburo and remembered that back in the fall of 1974 at the Gorky dacha we prepared another document, a short one, alongside the Declaration. Preparing that Declaration played such a cruel joke on the conference itself, the Communist Movement, and our authority in it. The document is brief – an Appeal to the Peoples of Europe. Without ideology, like a manifesto. I rummaged through my papers and found this Appeal... and gasped. Beautiful rhetoric and exactly what we need to “unite” and remove the problems of the “final document.”

June 5, 1976

An exhibition of [Viktor Efimovich] Popkov on Kuznetsky Most. Of course I’ve seen his work in reproductions and heard something about him. When I walked in a lot of things seemed familiar. But immediately, after the first careful look, I understood that it is something powerful and simple. “In the Cathedral,” “Silence” (with a girl, monuments of war and ruined church over the hill), “Babka Aksinya [sic, Anis’ya] was a good person” (a painting of tremendous poignancy and universal understanding of life. You can look at it for a long time, then step away. When you come back, you get a lump in your throat again), “Northern Song” (a contrast of civilizations in Russia), “A Couple,” “Autumn Winds,” and many others. I remember all these paintings, they are etched in my memory, I can envision them. I haven’t experienced something like this in a long time. This Popkov alone is worth an entire “school.” But here he was [treated as] mediocre. He died at age 42...

Early in the morning I went to the Department to “evaluate” an article prepared (by Zhukov) for *Pravda* against a French chief of staff, who blurted out something about the French troops’ readiness to fight “at the cutting edge.” B.N. flew into a rage. Plus, he really wanted to please Marchais-Kanapa, who always peck at us for supporting Giscard and now they can say, “Here! We told you so!” He ran to Suslov. The latter was cautious, said he’ll consult with Gromyko. In the meantime, B.N. already went to Zimyanin, who went to *Pravda*, and three hours later Zhukov penned a little article along the lines of “How could this be! Not good!”

It is all nonsense. It is politically insignificant. Giscard d'Estaing's policies are essentially no different from de Gaulle's or Pompidou's. I think the article won't be printed. Especially because it would dampen Gromyko's April visit and our "achievements" in détente, which were outlined at the Congress. In any case the article draft has to go "through the top" before it is released.

In the interval I met with Lyubimov. I drove up to his house on Chaikovsky street and we walked around for half an hour. He's been asking for meet for a long time. I suspected that it would be about a trip to France, Italy, or somewhere else, i.e. another instance of "using" me. So I kept making excuses. Yesterday Samoteikin (Brezhnev's assistant) called me and said that Lyubimov is scheduled to meet with Zimyanin and we need to "settle him down" beforehand. Supposedly he would pressure Zimyanin to allow Mozhaev's play "Kuzkin" (the play was made five years ago, but was first blocked by Furtseva, then by Demichev, then by Yagodka). All of them "left" and now Lyubimov, apparently, decided to launch an attack on the new secretary. So, Samoteikin said, we can't let this happen. It's a hopeless cause and will only irritate Zimyanin, and "in this state" he will report to the General Secretary. He will have to report it because Zimyanin is meeting with Lyubimov on the General Secretary's orders, after Lyubimov sent him a letter.

So, I got my own "need" to urgently see Lyubimov, before the CC meeting. I tried to reason with him, warned him not to do anything stupid if he cares about the theater and his fame – just now everything could be easily destroyed if Brezhnev gets "disappointed" that after helping Lyubimov and saving him from getting expelled from the party, the "genius" is now at it again.

I think it made an impression. But too bad he turned to Zimyanin and Mozhaev this time.

June 6, 1976

By the way, yesterday Marchais "refused" to receive Ponomarev in Paris. He "doesn't have time." "Kanapa will come to Berlin for the editorial committee, you can talk there," so to speak. This is despite the fact that our ambassador informed him that Ponomarev is bringing "a message from Brezhnev"...

There you go. I think it is Zagladin's mistake again... even if the initiative of the visit to Paris came from Axen. This should have been foreseen.

With Dez'ka's help I noticed Yuri Kuznetsov (a few of his poems are in Issue No. 3 of *Novyi Mir*). They say he is turning a new leaf in Russian poetry.

June 18, 1976

On the 10-11<sup>th</sup> the Editorial Committee for the preparation of the European Conference of Communist Parties met in Berlin. Three hundred fifty speeches in two days. You could say we've agreed upon the "Document." We consider it acceptable because it is not at odds with the XXV Congress' "program of further struggle" and essentially signifies approval of our foreign policy. In return we gave up all analyses of the situation and any assessments that resembled ideology in the slightest. This is also good.

The counterpoint of this meeting and the entire 20-month long preparation for the conference could be the confrontation over "proletarian internationalism."

For a long time, the Yugoslavs did not want to mention this term in the document. Katushev was sent to Belgrade on the eve of the Berlin meeting and persuaded Tito and [Stane] Dolanc. They agreed, but insisted that this concept be expanded to include everything under the sun: independence, autonomy, the right to choose one's path of socialism, non-interference, solidarity with the nonaligned, etc.

However, when this was proposed in Berlin, the Italians balked (they never said anything about it before because they were sure the term would not make it past the Yugoslavs). We had to go back to the previous version – "on international solidarity in the spirit of Marx-Engels-Lenin." When everyone agreed, Kanapa made a "statement": "I am saying it for the record that with the support of the CPSU, MSZMP, BKP,<sup>23</sup> KSČ,<sup>24</sup> SED and other parties the concept of 'proletarian internationalism' is no longer used in the communist movement. This is a new situation, which I have to report to my leadership..."

B.N. was the first to recover his senses. (He told his deputies himself how it all happened). "I saw that everyone was waiting for our reaction: will we continue to back down to save the conference, or will we fight back. So I came forward." You could tell that he was extremely pleased and proud of his speech. Witnesses say it was a brilliant impromptu performance. He started out by saying: "Comrade Kanapa himself does not believe what he is saying. He knows that he is not speaking the truth." He went on to explain to Kanapa what the CPSU's internationalism was, is, and will be.

Lagutin summed it up as follows: "B.N. punched Kanapa between the eyes."

It took off from there. Eighteen delegations spoke after B.N. Everything came up: they called his statement a provocation, demanded an apology, explained that "the ideas of Marx-Engels-Lenin include internationalism," reminded him that when Marchais visits Japan or Yugoslavia he does not use the term "proletarian internationalism" in the final communique, because the other side does not want it. Kanapa thinks this is ok... They talked about the fact that

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<sup>23</sup> Bulgarian Communist Party, *Българска Комунистическа Партия, Balgarska Komunisticheska Partiya*, BKP. [Translator's note]

<sup>24</sup> Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, *Komunistická strana Československa*, KSČ. [Translator's note]

he for some reason forgot to mention the party that categorically opposed this term for the conference document – the Italians – and instead named those who insisted on it for 20 months and now decided to meet PCI halfway in light of its pre-election needs. And so forth.

Kanapa was pale, but did not go back on his words.

I think he “ran ahead” and miscalculated. He essentially called for a referendum, putting the participants before a choice – Eurocommunism or the CPSU. The vast majority chose the CPSU for now, i.e. traditional internationalism. The SKJ, PCI, Romanians, and Swedes did not say anything. Some just did not get a chance to speak; the Irish, for example, who of course would have gone with the majority.

Meanwhile, in real life, “Eurocommunism,” led by the Italians, continues to rapidly gain momentum. Berlinguer is speaking at meetings or giving interviews almost every day. If some time ago he used to say that the PCI won’t demand the country’s withdrawal from NATO so as not to disrupt the international balance and undermine détente, now he openly says that NATO is necessary to protect “the Italian path to socialism” from the fate of Prague in 1968. In a manner that is uncharacteristically brusque, he reminds that when he met with Brezhnev after his speech at the XXV Congress of the CPSU, the latter did not say a word about the speech or about the PCI’s position regarding “Soviet socialism.” He keeps denouncing our “democracy” and our ways more and more often and harshly, almost a la Marchais.

Yesterday the CC Secretariat adopted a resolution on our analytical note on the situation in the ICM. It is very good that they adopted the methodology proposed by our department: do not panic, do not attach labels, do not rinse dirty laundry in public, direct all work with CPs to establish trust and friendly relations. Until the European Conference of Communist Parties takes place, there is a ban on publishing any articles that criticize communist parties, even anonymously.

This is a step towards recognizing the new realities of the ICM.

The following episode took place at the PB this Tuesday, after a discussion of Ponomarev’s report on Berlin (including Kanapa’s attack). In contrast to what others were saying, Gromyko suddenly declared, “Under these conditions, do we really need this conference? Maybe we should quietly derail it? Who knows what Marchais and Berlinguer will say! And why do we need a document that will clearly be inferior to the one from Karlovy Vary?!” (He is referring to a document adopted in 1966 at the European Conference of Communist Parties in Karlovy Vary.)

Of course, nobody “rebuffed” him. Brezhnev kept quiet and did not say anything on this subject at the PB at all. However, the next morning when B.N. told me about it, he added,

“Everyone was surprised and disagreed. I just had phone calls from PB members (?), Brezhnev’s assistants (?), and they are all unanimously outraged by Gromyko’s statement...”

I don’t know, I don’t know... After all, after Grechko, Gromyko is the closest person to the General Secretary. They share complete confidence... Could he have done this without warning? And if he did, I am sure he will continue his “speech” in a difference setting, especially since he felt isolated.

July 9, 1976

Important things happened during these 20 days when I had no chance to write anything. The Berlin Conference of European Communist Parties (June 29-30), my trip to France, my confirmation as a member of the editorial board of *Kommunist* and my first speech there. I was asked to say something about Berlin and Paris, just to get things going and let my colleagues hear my voice.

I think B.N. used the opportunity to send me to France so he wouldn’t have to bother with including me, along with Zagladin and Zhilin, in the accompanying team to Berlin.

Berlin is certainly a milestone: we recognized the right to publicly disagree with us and with the communist movement not only “on certain issues” but on questions of ideology. Our most intelligent class enemy (in the person of the columnist [James] Reston) appreciated our wisdom: it’s more important to save the communist movement than hold on to dogmas of faith that aren’t very clear right now.

Guys from the department (there are dozens of them – interpreters, assistants, consultants) tell stories about Brezhnev’s meetings with leaders of fraternal parties. Twelve meetings. He patted Mies on the shoulder – communique. Shook McLennan’s hand – communique. The meeting with Kadar was the most pleasant, according to Brezhnev. Kadar came up to him and said, “Leonid, I don’t have any questions. But *Pravda* is running one communique after another. I need a communique too.” They hugged – and a communique appeared.

It’s a circus.

B.N. told me how Leonid Ilyich once said to him, “Boris, I won’t meet with your guys, don’t have the strength.” “In truth,” B.N. continued, “he really was ‘off.’ He has hearing problems... The situation is completely absurd, and in the meantime we have ‘a historic success’...”

However, maybe this is for the best. Maybe it’s not our business to “coordinate” communist and other forces on a world scale? Maybe our job is to go like a wave-piercing boat [волноорез] – where there’s opportunity and ability, relying on Russia being unsinkable? The

most important thing is not to have nuclear war. Maybe all of our activity in the “third world” is only inertia and paying dues for previous ideological commitments?

Maybe our political fatigue and senile incapacity for leadership is – “the hand of God?” Maybe it conveniently coincided with Russia’s objective need to be left alone to float for a while wherever and however it can, just so as not to be disturbed?

I must have written this under the impression of a book I just read. I bought it in Paris, *La tradition russe* by Tibor Szamuely. I read it with excitement, partially because I knew the author: after the war he studied in my department at Moscow State University. He is the nephew of the famous Tibor Szamuely (there is a photo of him next to Lenin on Red Square in 1919) – one of the leaders of the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Tibor-junior was born in 1925 in Moscow. In 1951, during the “cosmopolitan” campaign, he was imprisoned. He was released in 1955 and left for Hungary, and after the “events” he emigrated to London, where he soon became a university professor. He died in 1973.

The book, which was published posthumously, is written with an astonishing love for and poignancy about Russia, for a man with such a fate. It is a tragic story. It presents Russian history as a never-ending drama of a great nation that for a thousand years has been defending its right to life and greatness. The book’s main idea is that Russians would not have been able to preserve themselves as a nation, could not have overcome the colossal obstacles, unparalleled by any other nation on this scale, if they did not sacrifice almost everything for the benefit of the State... including almost all values and rights (political, social, individual, etc.) that constitute the natural framework of West European societies.

France. A delegation “for sharing experience of ideological work”... V. Afanasyev – the editor in chief of *Pravda*, T. Zhdanova – Secretary of the Leningrad City Council, M. Nenashev – Deputy Head of the CC Propaganda Department, E. Chekharin – Rector of the Higher Party School, D. Moiseenko – our [department’s] assistant on France.

The surprise visit was a sign of “a thaw” between PCF-CPSU, which was noted by *Le Monde* and *Figaro*. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> Kanapa received us at the CC PCF, railed against the Socialist Party of France. “I love you Anatole, but I won’t tell you anything” (regarding the PCF Plenum’s resolutions on participation in the Berlin conference).

Meetings with other members of the PCF, conversations, heated debates, discussions. Sightseeing and exploring the city, visiting museums and shops.

At work we are racing with results from Berlin. Zagladin and Zhilin returned two days after the rest of the delegation. For some reason B.N. dragged me to Suslov’s – to draft the PB’s resolution on Berlin (it was published on July 3<sup>rd</sup> in *Pravda*). Suslov seemed surprised. Then Brezhnev showed up. I was in the waiting room when he came to Suslov’s. I think he took me

for Suslov's secretary. He only asked me if Suslov was alone. At that moment, B.N. and Suslov came out from the next room. Brezhnev, holding on to Suslov's cabinet door, announced that in the morning he shaved, rested, called regional committee secretaries and for the rest of the day was working at the Kremlin. B.N. tried to bring up the idea of the draft PB resolution on Berlin, Brezhnev only said, "Is it not too soon?" But B.N., "We have to provide a foundation for analogous resolutions for parties that are loyal to us." It seems Suslov must have thought the same thing, because the resolution came out the next day. However, I think Brezhnev was also cautious because he did not understand that the draft would be circulated to everyone (including Gromyko and Andropov, without whose opinion, it seems, he does not pass anything in foreign affairs).

July 19, 1976

I spent last week writing an article for Ponomarev for *Kommunist*. It was tough going: to say it "our way" and at the same time without going beyond Berlin's "collective agreement," without letting an overly CPSU-colored interpretation of the conference seep in. B.N. clearly does not want that. Maybe the wise old man wants to use this careful way to let fraternal parties know that the CPSU "made conclusions" and calmly accepted the "new stage" of the ICM as something inevitable.

By the way, in the first draft [B.N.] asked me to remove the number of quotes "from our chief" and carefully put the paragraph praising his contribution to the conference in brackets. He verbally explained the changes to me. I wonder if he is getting ready for the "era after Brezhnev"??

My participation in the editorial board of *Kommunist* is already giving me a lot of extra trouble. There are weekly meetings of the editorial board. They keep sending me texts, and it seems I have to at least look at all of them.

Balmashnov told me that Iskanderov visited him and asked to convey to B.N. that Trapeznikov (secretly) assigned someone in the Institute of History to prepare an "internal review" of Volume I of the *International Labor Movement*. Balmashnov commented this way: they are plotting a repeat of what happened with Volume V of the *History of the CPSU*, when B.N. got a slap on the wrist (many thought it was the bell tolling for him). I don't really buy it. Most likely Iskanderov is weaving an intrigue: he really wants the position of director of the Institute of African Studies, so he is demonstrating his loyalty. It just seems to be a clearly no-win undertaking. In today's ideological situation, when things are being said at the conference of communist parties that would have given heart attacks to our orthodoxy two years ago – in this situation to catch unfortunate ideological phrases and accuse a CC Secretary... No, Trapeznikov is not such a fool, though he is a fanatic.

Plus, there are already positive reviews in *Problems of Peace and Socialism*, in *Pravda*, in *World Economy and International Relations*. *Kommunist* perfectly captured its essence. In August there will be a piece in *Questions of History*. If Trapeznikov was up to something, he could have prevented this process somehow. Moreover, he knows there is an “internal review” of the volume’s manuscript from the Marx-Engels Institute. Whom will he lean on? Not to mention that his head of the sector Khromov – a member of the chief editorial board – gave a great review of the manuscript, and his main minions are also “smeared” by participating in the chief editorial board and discussions.

It must be bogus.

On Thursday I met with friends. Bovin, Karyakin were there. We attempted to figure out the meaning of our “positions” in each of our lives. Bovin was indignant: “If I had the freedom, I feel I could speak with the people how they deserve, to explain to them what is really happening in the world.” I lazily objected, “Who is stopping you, unless of course in your heart you think like Kissinger and Carillo.” My thoughts about myself – “frontier” [sic in English]. This frontier has already reached the West coast. Everything has been mastered, the Indians have been turned into an object for tourists. There is no strength left to do anything else. You are satisfied with a job well done within the boundary of your official microcosm, dismissing the thought whether it’s any use to anyone on the outside. Bovin deciphered it as follows: you sit in a pile of shit and force yourself to think that you can’t get out...

Yesterday at the dacha I was looking forward to Bovin’s TV appearance on “International Panorama.” He was decent. At least three times he departed from canonical views: on Spain, on Carter and presidential affairs in the U.S. in general, and on Lebanon.

August 31, 1976

I skipped a month and a half. Therefore, I will summarize what happened during that time.

From August 12-27<sup>th</sup> I was on the Riga coast, in the super comfortable “Yantar.” Before that, on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, I met with Andrew Rothstein, who refused to meet with B.N. because he thinks the latter is scared to treat the British Communist Party the way it should be to bring it back to the path of Marxism-Leninism. Naturally, Brezhnev and his friend Suslov did not want to waste their time on him. I invited Nenashev to the conversation, he is the deputy of the Propaganda Department, we went to France together. Old man Rothstein is living history of the Comintern and so on. As a boy he sat on Lenin’s lap while he played chess with his father<sup>25</sup>... He says that “our trouble” (the “fault” of your leadership) is that you (the CPSU) have gotten full

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<sup>25</sup> Theodore Rothstein was a prominent figure in the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, Lenin’s friend in exile, he moved to England permanently before World War I. [Author’s note]

of yourself. He remembered that Stalin refused to send a division to London in 1945 for an Allied parade... That's when the British working class realized that they do not count. And they – being Englishmen – do not forget such things. (By the way, Rothstein speaks Russian quite fluently, although a little too correctly). His main topic is the worthlessness of our propaganda. “You do not reach the Western public. Your journalists and propagandists are engaged in literary exercises, while we need facts, we need a skillful presentation of reality.”

Nenashev assured him that we understand, that there was a CC resolution regarding the press agency “Novosti,” which stipulated a staff of special observers who know the Western audience.

Meanwhile, a few days later I learned the following. After this resolution was released, the one that “strengthened and expanded” “Novosti,” Brezhnev called Kirilenko (from Crimea), apparently unaware of this decision, started telling him that this organization only guzzles public resources and is “inflated,” while its materials are gathering dust in embassy hallways...

A note along these lines appeared right afterwards, signed by two members of the Politburo, Kirilenko and Andropov. Immediately another CC resolution passed, it cut “Novosti” by 75 percent and brought it down to a level that, incidentally, it deserves. It should be closed entirely. It was a lifeless idea from the start. Now Tolkunov is trying to find new positions for his employees wherever he can. There are hundreds of them, it is hard to believe, thousands.

Before my vacation I met with a few CP delegations. An Italian delegation – 15 regional committee secretaries. I told them about the greatness of their party, what their work means for all of us. I said how important it is that we (Brezhnev and Berlinguer) demonstrate our friendship to the world “despite our differences,” thereby disappointing and confusing our enemies.

#### September 18, 1976

In the first half of September I was in Hungary with my daughter. The Hungarians entertained us freely, showed a lot of interesting things.

While I was there I read a transcript of conversation between Brezhnev and Kadar in Crimea (August 26, 1976). Brezhnev calls Kadar by the familiar form of address [*на ты*], Kadar uses the formal [*на Вы*]. [Brezhnev takes] a lecturing tone, going as far as offering evaluations of Hungarian leaders and giving recommendations on their account. At the same time, there is a sincere expression of confidence, praise for Janos himself for internationalism, for understanding and wisdom. Brezhnev behaved as a “senior” and “indisputable,” he did not “consult” he advised.

Incidentally, I was struck by Brezhnev’s harshness when talking about foreign policy and ideological questions in particular (a lot tougher than in Zavidovo before the XXV Congress). In

regard to the FRG-GDR problem he gave “no easing” to Schmidt, and in regard to ideological intolerance of lurches he condemned [Gyorgy] Aczel (member of the MSZMP Politburo) for supposedly being dangerous with his liberal manners.

I was also surprised by his statement about a new International Meeting of the ICM. It is too early to put it in the practical plane, he said, but it’s time to think about forms, approaches, and methods. There is no use waiting for the Chinese to agree to a meeting. To him, the entire problem of the unity of the ICM (despite Berlin) boils down to a new meeting...

In Budapest we spent an evening with Nadia Barta, Kadar’s assistant. We had a nice conversation on literary and sociological topics. Nadia offered me *Kontinent* to read. “Don’t be shy, it’s simple here... Tomorrow when you are at the CC, just give it to someone and they’ll get it to me!”

So, issues Nos. 7 and 8. Maksimov, Nekrasov and a multitude of other names that used to be famous at home. I read it for two nights. Including a pamphlet by Naum Korzhavin – an appeal to “leftist intellectuals” in the West. His assessments of Fidel, Che Guevara, Allende... Not everyone would dare.

How powerful his words! I can see the absurdity of his views and I’m ready to debate him, I have killer arguments. But [his writing] is so effective! The style, satire and venom as such... The mastery of the written word. There are also chapters from Vasily Grossman’s second book, a continuation of *For a Just Cause*. It is called *Life and Fate*. It’s about preparations for the battle of Stalingrad. Incredibly powerful piece. There is an afterward by literary critic Yampolsky – about the final decade of Grossman’s life, after the arrest of his manuscript in 1963, and his funeral.

The protest of E. Etkind, a famous literary critic, his anger and reproach for judges and KGB agents who forced him to leave the country (in 1974). According to him, he did not do anything anti-Soviet, nor was he planning to. And he didn’t write anything [anti-Soviet] publicly. He was charged because of a few phrases in a letter to his brother-in-law, who was planning to emigrate to Israel. Etkind tried to persuade him against it, saying that he should fight for justice at home, that he would be a nobody in Israel. The letter really landed in the right hands. He describes how he was expelled from the Writer’s Union and the Herzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad, how his friends – writers and poets – treated him.

I was in a terrible mood after all this reading. By now probably hundreds of highly talented and educated people have emigrated to the West and are telling the inside story about us, armed with all their knowledge and skill.

In Budapest I found out right away that I was assigned to a delegation that will attend the Congress of the Danish CP (September 23-26), headed by Chernenko. I got back to Moscow and

the flurry of papers started: speech, memos, “gifts,” the main one being – orders for “Burmeister & Wain” ships, they have the biggest party organization there.

So far interaction with Chernenko (he is perhaps Brezhnev’s closest and most trusted person) shows that he is smart and simple, he doesn’t fuss even though it’s a new undertaking for him.

I am on the phone with B.N. almost every day, he is in Crimea. I’m working on articles on “social democracy” and “Soviet democracy,” the upcoming CPSU delegation visit to England.

Today I went to an exhibition of Konchalovsky. It must be the first time his work is exhibited in its entirety – all its stages, from the 1910s to the 1950s. Yes, we are finally growing up and aren’t afraid to show artists who, during the October Revolution, Civil War, and the first five-year plans, painted nude models, flowers and landscapes showing old-world scenery and family portraits.

Terrific drawings by Lithuanian artist Kraskaus – “Memory,” “Struggle,” “Life” – three series. It is up for the State Prize this year.

#### October 16, 1976

Morning till night I’m “getting B.N. ready” for England. A pile of all kinds of references, speech drafts, notes for conversations. All of this will end up in the wastebasket of course. His “guidance” consists of saturating these papers with more and more propaganda (in many respects demagoguery), which will, of course, only offend the British. I am continuously surprised that he, a man with a sharp, critical, and practical view of things, with a tendency to view things from the inside and to see the bad rather than the good in people, to always suspect them of self-interest (if they are doing something that is not directly for him), a man with so much political experience and sometimes even a police approach to foreign affairs – that he can believe that the Brits, the Labour Party on the level of the LP and LD [sic in English], will give him the opportunity to give hours-long speeches with calls to détente, arms reductions, cessation of the arms race, reduction in military budgets... and at the same time “campaign for Soviet power” by pointing out that our bread and milk cost this much and trams and metro that much without change for the last 50 years!

No matter how hard I tried to convince him that conversations will be strictly business, he just got annoyed. I am willing to bet that Callaghan-Healey-Crosland will have the following questions: when is Brezhnev coming to England; why are we interfering with a peaceful settlement in South Africa; why are we building up our naval forces beyond what’s necessary for defense; about dissidents and Jews (the third basket of Helsinki); why are we choosing so poorly

with the half-billion loan that the Brits provided to us in 1975, and at the same time talking about the need for a world-wide development of economic relations.

B.N. does not have authority to speak on any of these issues. In response he will “make propaganda” and call for further cooperation for the sake of peace! And he will blatantly deny any accusations (for example, he does not even know the state of affairs with the navy).

I gave him articles on Social Democracy (before the Geneva Congress of the Socialist International, in light of our Berlin meeting) that have been edited over and over. He poked at them while he was on vacation in Crimea. I must say that Sasha Veber wrote an excellent, very political article on social democracy. It could become a turning point for the International Labor Movement, because it would be “penned” by Ponomarev himself. But now – *Hic Rhodus, hic salta!* [sic in Latin] Now B.N. has to go to Suslov and decide whether he will speak or not. The Congress of the Socialist International is just a little over a month away. I reminded him several times, he agreed. He sees Suslov every day, but no result. I’m sure the same thing will happen as numerous times before with this subject and others: it will be postponed and forgotten. Then, a year later, usually before a vacation, B.N. starts to grumble – I’ve been insisting on this article for years, this Veber of yours can’t get anything done (hinting at me, too), or he doesn’t want to, he clearly has reformist tendencies, so he puts it off. And so forth.

This is once again the outcome of his position in the bureaucracy, he essentially does not have much power in the top levels of the Party. Just as we interact with him, so he can only surreptitiously push through his agenda, he can make comments but they are often ignored. He does not determine anything there, and certainly he does not make the decisions.

Woddis was here last week. He came to work out a visit for his General Secretary to Moscow, but at the level of Brezhnev. This matter has dragged on over three years. But once again B.N. blew it off till next year.

These two weeks I also had to work with Blatov to prepare Brezhnev’s talks with [Agostinho] Neto (president of Angola), as well as prepare the text of Brezhnev’s interview for French television. It took place on October 4<sup>th</sup>, and it seems it made an impression in the West. Such are the laws of modern politics and mass media! The same words in hundreds of smart and authoritative articles produce almost no results. But here, even without any special arguments, they represent a real contribution to policy.

The Moscow public for days could not regain consciousness from surprise – how could Brezhnev speak so well, for half an hour, and without any notes. It doesn’t even occur to them how it’s done.

One more thing on this subject. It happened the day before yesterday. Yesterday it was published in full in the newspapers. I quote an excerpt from Kirilenko's speech on the occasion of Brezhnev receiving a second Hero of the Soviet Union star for his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

“Dear Leonid Ilyich! During this time, you, like nobody else, elevated the greatness of our country and its peoples to such heights, you so wisely changed the course of world development towards détente and consolidation of a lasting peace in the world. For this, you, Leonid Ilyich, deservedly gained the deep love of millions of people on our planet...

“The Party and our people love you, Leonid Ilyich... Your whole life journey, wisdom and talent gave you the opportunity to collect and absorb such precious qualities of a party and state leader, which are unique to a great man of our time, a leader of our Party and all the peoples of our Motherland.”

I think we are approaching the final frontier. I don't recall getting to this level with Nikita.

Yesterday I inadvertently was present during a phone conversation between Ponomarev and Grishin (the latter is ill and was not at the PB when Brezhnev received the award). B.N. told him how it went. They are not very close or on familiar terms with each other, but B.N. still told him what happened and in the end couldn't help saying, “Andrei Pavlovich spoke for a long time, and the same thing over and over, everybody already knows it... Everyone was tired already, but he kept talking and talking. More than others in such cases.”

The old man is perturbed by this inexorable advance of the Brezhnev cult.

October 23, 1976

Brezhnev spoke with [Armand] Hammer, who, like Harriman, came to promote Carter. Brezhnev said to him, “I don't know, I don't know... What your president has said about détente and the Soviet Union is unacceptable.” Hammer assured him that it was all only done to get in power. Supposedly things will be different [once he is in office]. He boasted that his billion-dollar deals with us are successful, that he will provide us with so much fertilizer we'll be exporting bread ourselves soon. He thanked us for continuing the construction of the shopping center in Moscow, despite the cooling of Soviet-American relations due to presidential elections.

Highlights: 1) he tried to persuade Brezhnev to restore relations with Israel. “It would make it easier to solve all your problems: first of all, with our Jews. You could send everyone who wants to leave to the Israeli consulate and let them figure it out. In general,” he said, “You need to resolve the Jewish issue. You still underestimate the power and influence of Zionists in the U.S. They are the ones who got rid of Nixon.”

Brezhnev said with emphasis: "I gave orders to let everyone go who wants to, with the exception of those working with defense or state secrets. The rest can go."

"Secondly," Hammer said, "You'll have an easier time in the Middle East, you could directly influence Israel... Take Golda Meir as an ambassador in Moscow again, and I assure you, thousands of problems will immediately lose their acuteness."

Brezhnev: "It is not a simple matter. We severed relations in protest against aggression. But the aggression continues."

Hammer: "But you do not have to approve a state's policies to have diplomatic relations, that's how it is everywhere."

Brezhnev: "It is an interesting proposal; we will think about it."

2) "You have a huge number of artwork from the 1920s in the vaults of the Tretyakov Gallery and the Russian Museum. Works by Russian abstract artists like Kandinsky, Malevich, etc. It is unlikely they will ever be popular in the Soviet Union. Frankly, I do not really understand them myself, but they are fashionable and in huge demand in the West. You should organize an exhibition of these paintings in Paris or somewhere else. It would be profitable and it would be a good gesture in terms of the Helsinki Third Basket. Incidentally, you could make good money if you sell these paintings in the West, each one would fetch millions."

Brezhnev: "We will think about it; this idea is not without appeal."

Ponomarev is wearing me out with preparations for his visit to England. Dozens of versions for his speeches and so on. Any normal person would see that no one will let him sing his propaganda songs there.

Inozemtsev stopped by. He flipped through some papers and unceremoniously summed it up: this isn't even propaganda, just cheap agitation. I told him, "Kolya, why don't you go and tell B.N. the same thing. I have blisters on my tongue on this subject."

"He can go to hell," the academician replied. Only a person who has someone powerful backing him, such as the General Secretary who is not shy expressing his contempt for Ponomarev, can tell a CC CPSU Secretary and candidate member of the PB to go there. There is also an objective principle that is reflected by people like Inozemtsev, Arbatov, in part Aleksandrov, although the latter is more ideological. It is called the "political approach," i.e. the ability to work from realities and act in a businesslike manner with Western politicians, to expect real results for the economy and for peace. Ponomarev, on the other hand, thinks in ideological, revelatory-propaganda categories of "the struggle against imperialism." Of course, he irritates people, especially because he wants to appear as the implacable defender of "our class interests,"

even more than Leonid Ilyich. I am entirely on the side of Inozemtsev and Arbatov, and they know it, but they also understand that life has tied me to Ponomarev.

Overall, Brezhnev is close to this [pragmatic] concept (Czechoslovakia is another matter). Ponomarev's approach, on the other hand, is destroying the ICM. Everything still viable in the movement will never return to the Comintern corral, because it is a dead end, idiocy, suicide for communist parties.

#### November 7, 1976

I was on Red Square. Went to the reception at the Kremlin. The strongest impression – the magnificent wives of high-ranking officials: furs, diamonds, lordly demeanor. In a word, the salt of the earth.

From October 28<sup>th</sup> through November 3<sup>rd</sup> we were in England. The first visit by a CPSU delegation to the Labour Party. Headed by Ponomarev. The delegation consisted of Afanasyev (*Pravda*), Inozemtsev, Pimenov (VTsSPS)<sup>26</sup>, Kruglova (SSOD),<sup>27</sup> and I. Our accompanying interpreters – Dzhavad Sharif, Lagutin, Mikhailov.

In advance of our visit, about 10 days before, the English press and radio organized an anti-Ponomarev coven [*уабау*]: he is the main instigator of the occupation of Czechoslovakia, he is our chief anti-Semite, from the days of Comintern he has been teaching communist parties how to destroy democracy, and right now his main task is to undermine Western regimes. There were banners – “No[t] wanted in Britain!” [sic in English], i.e. the kind usually made for criminals.

Ian Mikardo himself, the Chairman of the International Committee of the Labour Party, one day before our visit told the BBC that Ponomarev was “undesirable” indeed, but they, the Labourists, do not get to choose the makeup of the delegation. “Same as when we went to Moscow in 1973 we would not have allowed them to dictate the makeup of our delegation, or I, a Jew and a Zionist, would have never been allowed to set foot there. It is my job to receive Ponomarev, but my wife will be outside with the others, demonstrating against the oppression of Jews in the USSR.”

The moment we arrived in Heathrow we felt what British security means. Later we drank cognac together. They are the knights of their field. It was a pleasure to watch how they work. Our security has a lot to learn.

From the very beginning and until we flew home, B.N. was playing the same tune: we are for peace, against the arms race, for Soviet-British cooperation, for trade, for friendship between

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<sup>26</sup> All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. [Translator's note]

<sup>27</sup> Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Contacts. [Translator's note]

our peoples. He did not let anything derail him. Only one time he lost his temper – at the parliamentary committee, but more on that later.

In Parliament we nearly had a scandal. We were seated in the visitors' gallery. Winston Churchill's grandson, also named Winston, as well as Margaret Thatcher, a "a beauty and a bitch" (as I assessed her the time I first saw her) and others, especially the Zionist speaker [Greville] Janner, who demonstratively came to the session in a yarmulke, organized an obstruction of the discussion on the agenda. The Speaker kept having to strike the gavel and shout, "Order! Order!" but the parliamentarians would not calm down.

In the end, someone shouted, "I spy strangers!" This is a medieval parliamentary signal, if it is said during a session, the Speaker has to call a vote (divisions [sic in English], i.e. the parliamentarians either move to the right or the left depending on whether they are voting "for" or "against"). If the majority is "for," the gallery has to be immediately cleared of strangers. We were told this kind of vote hadn't taken place in the British Parliament in 150 years.

Prime Minister Callaghan came to the rescue. He got up and walked out of the room, thereby indicating that he is ready to change the time of our meeting and hold it immediately in his office, which is also in the Parliament building.

We got up and went for the door, accompanied by scornful shouts from the parliamentarians. (The next day the newspapers wrote: the delegation wanted to avoid embarrassment in case they would be asked to leave. However, the vote was completely unexpected – 198 voted for us to say, and only 8 – against!)

Ponomarev was "wound up" on the Jewish issue to the limit. When we returned from Scotland and had a meeting with a group of Labour MPs in their office at Westminster, the following incident took place.

We were seated at a large round table. Joan Lester was chairing the meeting. Janner came in his yarmulke, demonstratively put a Bible signed by 250 MPs in the center of the table, and a "roll" of the Magna Carta. But as soon as he raised the Jewish theme, Ponomarev exploded. He spontaneously gave the most expressive speech I've ever heard from his lips. He got carried away, lost self-control, banged on the table, pointed his finger. The quick Zhenya Lagutin, an assistant in our department, could barely keep up with the translation. He started quietly, but flared up with every phrase: "I would like to know whether anyone ever explained to the boys and girls making a ruckus outside these walls, "Ponomariev out!" [sic] (he actually said it in English), that if it wasn't for the Red Army there would be nobody left to emigrate to Israel, not from the USSR or any other country?! There wouldn't be a Jewish nation as such!"

The honorable gentlemen were stunned at first, smiled ironically at his quick temper, looked at each other. Then they turned serious and started to give Janner disapproving looks.

One of them took advantage of a pause in Ponomarev's squall and threw a "lifeline" by offering to switch to the question of Ango-Soviet trade. B.N. came to his senses and took the opportunity.

In the morning newspapers came out with big headlines, "Mr. Ponomariev shouts on M.P.'s" [sic in English]. That is how Janner presented the event in his press conference. But Joan Lestor, who gave her own press conference, responded to questions that she was sitting next to Ponomarev and did not see or hear him banging on the table or yelling at members of Parliament. Meanwhile, at the airport before our departure she gave me a large packet of letters with requests to allow our Jews to emigrate. During a "heart-to-heart talk" with the delegation on the airplane, B.N. summed up the results: "We need to do something about the Jewish question. We are underestimating the negative impact of this issue on our foreign policy and the possibility of promoting socialism in the West in general."

The Jewish theme was present as a leitmotif throughout the visit. Already at Heathrow we were met with posters on the theme of freeing the Jews, and it was the same everywhere. Groups of demonstrators of various sizes followed us with the slogans, "Civil rights to Soviet Jews!" "Helsinki is not a joke!" "Down with Ponomarev – organizer of repression of Jews!" "Freedom to Bukovsky!" and so on. These posters and others like them were displayed by the hotel where the delegation was staying, by Transport-House, by Parliament, by Westminster Abbey. Whole scenes were played out by the Abbey: people dressed in Red Army uniforms would seize people dressed in prisoner uniforms and drag them down the street, shackled with a ball and chain. In Glasgow the Ukrainians joined in the protests, "Mr. Ponomarev! Free 49 million Ukrainians!"

In Westminster Abbey the supreme hierarch welcomed Ponomarev with the words, "It is a high honor for us!" This was a second after we walked through a wall of demonstrators, deafened by insults, drums, and whistles. The deputy supreme hierarch led us through the Cathedral, making witty and ironic comments, like the British do, while showing us tombs and other "things," left here from the greatness and pettiness of those who made British history.

A reception at the General Council of Trade Unions: Murray, Jones, and others. B.N. lectured them on Marxism-Leninism. He led the conversation rather poorly, even though these smart, polite, large-scale politicians are very friendly towards us. They patiently listened to how much bread costs in the USSR, what the rent is, how much we pay for metro, etc. It was embarrassing. When B.N. reproached them on why they don't stop the race of military budgets, he was calmly rebuffed. Nevertheless, everything ended well, "warmly." We barely left Transport House when Murray, who represents 11.5 million trade union members, told the press, "The demonstrators against the Soviet delegation do not represent the British Labour movement."

Dinner at the embassy. Wedgewood Benn, [Ronald] Hayward, [Norman] Atkinson (treasurer), and a skinny Englishwoman whom B.N. kept ignoring in his toasts, and she turned out to be an influential lady. Finally, again with British irony, she started shouting “discrimination!!”

On the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup> we visited [Anthony] Crosland (Foreign Office). Same issues as with the others.

In the afternoon we flew to Glasgow. In the evening there was a reception at a regional council of Glasgow. It was chaired by a woman representative of the local Scottish Labour Party, naturally in a long tartan skirt. The atmosphere was as if we were in Hungary or the GDR, the Scots joke about themselves and the “foreigners” (that’s how they call the British in Scotland). An astonishing capacity for oratory: jokes and irony are organically mixed in with serious politics. Everyone loves to talk. Ponomarev’s toast, a fairly mediocre one, was spruced up by Lagutin’s masterful translation.

On the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, we had a meeting with shop-stewards and ordinary workers... Communist trade union leaders. Q&A. I got the Jewish question and gave a “passionate speech” about the role of Jews in Soviet society. B.N. started to rein me in, and finally cut me off. The atmosphere again was like a good fraternal communist party, though apparently there were almost no communists in the auditorium.

Trip to Edinburgh. Watched a soccer match. A tour of the city. The famous castle, the birthplace of Connolly, a monument to Walter Scott, Burns. Hills covered with heather and red with fallen leaves, the bay, sheep in the city limits.

A reception at the Greater Edinburgh Council. Amazing goodwill. This time B.N.’s toast was more or less successful – he imitated the style of the Scots (added some soccer references to his political speech).

Nighttime transfer to Glasgow by car. On Sunday the 31<sup>st</sup> we took a trip to the lakes and bays of Scotland. I’ve never seen anything more beautiful in any other country...

B.N.’s conversations along the way, including at a tavern in St. Catherines with a fisherman and a miner, as the TV portrayed it.

In the evening a reception by leadership of the Labor Party and the Congress of Trade Unions of Scotland. The same chairwoman. Toasts, gifts... A conversation with my seatmate – Deputy General Secretary of the Scottish Trade Union (turned out he was a communist; he talked with me in “confidential” tones).

On the morning of the 1<sup>st</sup> – flight to London. Before that, a press conference at the airport. It seems they ran out of questions. At 3 p.m. we had the main conversation in the Labour

Party Executive Committee. Only five people showed up. B.N. expounded the entire “main memo” from Moscow, despite the fact that in the opening speech Mikardo made it clear they didn’t want a serious conversation, nor did they have the authority for it (he talked about three reasons for difficulties in the relationship between LP and the CPSU).

On Wednesday, November 3, we flew back to Moscow.

The next day I wrote B.N. a memo for the Politburo. He wasn’t expecting to speak. However, it happened. He came back very happy: “They listened with interest, asked a lot of questions, and said to ‘keep it up.’”

The result? There is none. Social Democrats will never make peace with us, no matter how “good” we appear and how politely we conduct the “ideological struggle” with them. The contrast in attitudes towards us between “ordinary people” and “top leadership” is striking, the latter reserved and reluctant. Like it was forced. Then again, if it wasn’t for the Jewish problem, it could have worked out and in five years or so we might have struck up an “official friendship.”

November 8, 1976

Yesterday I read materials for the editorial board of *Questions of History*. Among them is academician Strumilin’s posthumous piece “on historical sciences.” Around 70 pages. It is an amazing work and along the same lines as what I wrote about Konchalovsky’s exhibit. Everything is finally falling into place, and for Strumilin – even the God-Builder [Alexander] Bogdanov, who, it turns out, foresaw computers, the basic principles of cybernetics, systems theory [*оргнауку*], not to mention the fact that he died from a medical experiment on himself.

I wonder how the members of the board will react to this article? (It was rejected.)

I re-read my opus from 10 years ago (the piece that Fedoseyev made the object of his study of my revisionism back in the day). How brilliantly it’s written! I probably won’t be able to write like that now. By the way, it predicts all the processes in the labor and communist movements that have now come to the political surface.

November 12, 1976

Ponomarev and Zagladin went to Portugal for the CP Congress. I am in charge. I went to the Politburo: Gromyko reported on his talks in Sofia with the Egyptian Foreign Minister [Ismail] Fahmi. I listened to him, to the comments and “discussion,” and once again scratched my head in wonder. They seemed to be saying that Sadat found himself in a stupid position, he is not receiving “a single bullet” from the U.S., so he wants to restore “good relations” with us. Gromyko had a directive – to remain tough and make it contingent on restoring the Agreement. In other words, use Sadat’s difficult situation to get him to agree to “truly good relations.” But why do we need good relations with him? Why we need any relations with Egypt was somehow

completely out of sight... That is to say, the point of the policy (its goal) was completely absent throughout the discussion.

Admittedly, you could feel the “fatigue” from all these Arab affairs. Fahmi thinks that a meeting between Brezhnev and Sadat would be the main “weapon” to restore relations. Gromyko remarked on this subject: but then we would have to meet with Assad.

Brezhnev: “I don’t trust any of them. The only people who can be honest among them are the Palestinians.”

Other members of the PB politely raised doubts. Kosygin said that all of them (Arabs) are happy when any one of their “brothers” is defeated or beaten. And they all, he said, lie to each other and to us. Gromyko added that “they all” turned away from the Palestinians and are pleased there was some bloodletting. That is why, “even [Houari] Boumediene, who was their fierce supporter, now doesn’t give a damn about them.” And so on along these lines.

Our minister finished by saying that according to Fahmi, Assad is afraid of a terrorist attack against himself. He startles at the click of a camera...

So what?!

Then [the Politburo] discussed Gromyko’s note: to take “our own measures to defend the USSR’s interests” if West Berlin is embroiled in the election of a European Parliament (beforehand he tried to explain in layman’s terms what that is).

Maybe this is the class approach, “don’t touch what’s mine, or else!” But West Berlin is “not mine”... And does détente mean anything at all? What do we want with the West Berlin issue? What’s the prospect? I.e. once again – is there a **policy**?! After all, following this logic we shouldn’t have allowed the Austrian Treaty of 1955!

Today I was at the CC Secretariat. B.N.’s note (in his absence) for his conversations with Axen (what Zagladin and I wrote on Vorobyovy Gory [Sparrow Hills]). It was rejected with irritation, especially by Kirilenko and Zimyanin. Their reason was that, firstly, why are we only working with the Germans on this matter (i.e. agreeing on how to bring in line wavering Western fraternal parties who are engaging in anti-Sovietism). Secondly, if these parties find out, they will be offended and quarrel for the next 10 years... Axen likes to talk, and if we tell any others (socialist countries), a leak will be inevitable.

The only moral that can be deduced from this discussion is: to hell with them, with these Marchaises and Berlinguers. They can do whatever they want, as long as they don’t criticize us and we maintain “good relations”...

This is wise, this is right. I already wrote about this when I considered Chernenko's "attitudes and behavior" in Denmark (in contrast to B.N., who is burdened with dogmas and an ideological itch to teach, cultivate, encourage them to sermonize!).

Lyubimov [gave a] vulgar and cowardly interview to *The New York Times* (about bureaucracy, conservatives, Joseph [Иосифе Прекрасном],<sup>28</sup> etc.) He is making yet another tour of Italy and Yugoslavia. What a petty, stupid man. How can such a man possess great talent?!

November 13, 1976

"Medals are a promissory note of public opinion: their value is based on the credit of the issuer." This is Schopenhauer, I'm reading him again. Archaic, but periodically you come across "pretty decent ideas," which show that we haven't had a lot of new ones over the last 100 years.

November 14, 1976

I went to a performance by [Arkady] Raikin, "It depends on us." Boring. He has outlived himself and his genre. He was always a joker and overall an optimist. Now he wants to be a pure satirist with philosophical and political overtones (rather sad ones). This doesn't work anymore, nobody believes in the effectiveness of satire, or anything else. And covertly flipping the bird, even when it's fairly obvious, doesn't surprise anyone anymore and doesn't cause a reaction like it used to. The public knows that it's pointless, that even if much more was allowed it still wouldn't be effective and wouldn't change anything.

He was greeted with a big round of applause and a sense of gratitude. At the end he got a long standing ovation. As I was standing there, clapping, I thought to myself: this isn't the applause of encouragement, it is a farewell.

November 23, 1976

The day before I read Politburo dispatch with Brezhnev's upcoming speeches in Romania. I was jarred by all the superlatives: Ceausescu is a "prominent figure in the ICM" (the same was said about Tito in Yugoslavia). It's ludicrous – before mass media and fraternal CPs. "Complete unity of views..." "on the basis of Marxism-Leninism," "common ideology," "we are happy when Romania supports our foreign policy," "traditionally unbreakable friendship," and so on. As if nothing ever happened.

I said to B.N.: I agree with the tactics – we are bigger and should be gracious, we should crush the Romanians' complaints in a tight embrace, taking advantage of the fact that Mao died and disappointed Ceausescu's hopes, while the Western market didn't open up based on anti-

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<sup>28</sup> Biblical Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel in the Book of Genesis. [Translator's note]

Sovietism alone (they need profits, too). However, the word choice is undignified, it is overboard, a little laughable.

B.N. was understanding and suggested at the PB to “correct it,” especially the parts on “common ideology” and “on the basis of Marxism-Leninism.” Brezhnev: “Let it go, Boris. When it comes to theory and all kinds of ideological matters, we have fallen behind him (Ceausescu). We will need to catch up: he is an iron Stalinist!” (??)

A week of English cinema. The movies are in the style of classical realism. We selected them ourselves. Nothing about the present. “Historical period drama” or historical comedies... But the supplementary documentaries... About the creation of the automobile, the history of rail transport, London, and especially about oil production in the North Sea. The latter is simply “ideological sabotage.” Amazing technology, people doing fantastic, skilled, and precise work, creating exceptional material wealth... If you didn’t know [what you were watching] you could think it was “the great building of communism”... except without slogans and “selflessness for the greater good”... The audience saw everything. Guys around me mocked out loud our versions of such documentaries.

November 26, 1976

The epic of Brezhnev’s 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary is underway. Our B.N. hopped in and volunteered to prepare Brezhnev’s responses to the awards he would be getting from socialist countries, to Soviet medals, and his speech at the banquet. As the result, Brutents and I have been writing enthusiastic texts for the last two days. It’s astonishing how our work is organized: two deputies of the Department (and there is no one else right now), who have a huge amount of regular work, lock themselves in a room and write speeches that have absolutely nothing to do with their direct responsibilities.

And most importantly – all of this will go into the wastebasket because Aleksandrov won’t allow “just anybody” to propose this kind of material. He and only he is the master of these texts!

Andre Malraux has died. I read an article in *L’Humanite*.

Yu. Zhukov sent a “top level” telegram from Paris, reporting on the attitude of French communists to the “peace movement” (in connection to yet another call to convene the “forum of peace-loving forces” in January in Moscow – a mini-Congress for Peace), the endless initiatives that Moscow sprouts like mushrooms, various committees... The French dubbed the “Committee to aid the continuation of the 1973 Congress of Peace-Loving Forces” as the “committee of runaway Congress participants.”

This is all the fruit of Shaposhnikov's relentless energy. It's costing our government millions, including in hard currency, and for what... Peace is "made" in completely different committees. But [this activity] does create hundreds of feeders for "activists" of various levels, "fighters" for anything you want, just as long as they get a good salary and handouts from Moscow.

Someday, we (the International Department and Cde. Ponomarev) will get slammed for all this activity.

December 4, 1976

I was in Budapest from November 29<sup>th</sup> – December 3<sup>rd</sup>. "The six" on social democracy – in particular, in connection with the just-convened (on the same days) XIII Congress of the Socialist International. We had to land in Belgrade due to weather. In Budapest – on the "hill" for three days in state dachas. Discussion. My main speech with a reference to Pasternak, using the analogy of social democracy as a "footnote" to the movement of history determined by communism. The possibility of using social democracy's opportunism to collaborate with them and use them... Some others tried to find original approaches to social democracy as well (though not the Bulgarians and Czechs, they are still at a scholastic level, just shabby and drab, especially the Czechs!).

(By the way, yesterday Zagladin told me about a conversation with Berlinguer: "Why do you always pick on the Czechs?" Berlinguer: "What about you, don't you see yourselves that they're morons?!")

At "the six": I intervened in an argument between the smart and pragmatic Poles ([Bogumil] Suika, Sylwester) and the rigidly scholastic Bulgarians, who were shocked that I essentially supported the Poles, although formally I gave each side credit.

Dinner with CC Secretary [Andras] Denes. He is wise, calm, and boring. My toast, which was later brought up at every opportunity.

December 11, 1976

Yesterday I met [at the airport] and talked with General Secretaries of Canada and England – Kashtan and McLennan. I also met Plissonnier, but we didn't talk about anything. They are flying through Moscow on their way to a party Congress in Vietnam. Kashtan keeps asking, like a pupil, "what do we think about events in Canada and how should they formulate, 'based on the CPSU's experience,' the communist party's policy." It's not even subservience (on the contrary, he is very moody and minds his party leader prestige), he would never ask B.N. about something like this. He simply wants to borrow ideas wherever he can. He doesn't have many of his own, nor does he have thinking people around him... He went as far as getting our

Institute of USA Studies at the Academy of Sciences to write the history of his party for him. Our guys are writing it, along with the party's program and so on. Then Kashtan presents it as his own work: full guarantee, after all, the Soviets can't expose the plagiarism!

It is completely different with McLennan: we talked about unrelated subjects, mostly about the crisis in the U.K. and so forth.

When you are dealing with people from such meager parties, you always get an annoying feeling that you are dealing with armchair politicians. They think about politics and the situation in their countries in this spirit – not from within, as participants of events, but as grumpy onlookers.

This is in sharp contrast to the Italians, the French, the Danes... By the way, I did not notice this "armchair" quality in West Germans, even though their position in their country is no better than that of the Communist Party of Great Britain.

I recently read a transcript of a conversation between Brezhnev and Tito in Belgrade. For a long time, I couldn't come to my senses and make up my mind. Leonid Ilyich calmly and good naturedly (in the presence of both delegations) explained that we, the CPSU, don't have anything up our sleeve, we don't have any secret plans, and all the chatter about our intentions to encroach on Yugoslavia is pure nonsense and provocation. We do not support "[Com]informists" [*Информовцев*]. "I cannot imagine that anyone in the USSR could support someone who speaks against the SKJ, against you (Tito)! We recorded in joint and international documents that we recognize each country's right to choose its own path to socialism. Nobody should interfere or meddle. However, why does your press keep lashing out at us, attributing all sorts of fantastic intentions to us, and your officials sometimes talk of 'two superpowers' and 'two centers of hegemony and suppression,' dropping all kinds of hints, etc. They keep raising a fuss about Stalinism, even though we are done with it. The resolutions of the XX Congress remain in force. We cannot allow anyone to undermine our friendship and cooperation. Both of us have many enemies and they use 'all this press' against us and against you." This is the essence of it, though not the exact words, of course.

Tito responded the next day. He praised L.I. for his frankness and promised to be frank himself. He said, "We see contradictions in your statement yesterday." (Brezhnev and Tito mostly use the formal form of address with each other, especially when in the company of others. Brezhnev sometimes slips and uses the familiar form, but Tito – never.) "There is a lack of understanding of our domestic and foreign policy. You ask, why stir up the past? Of course we should not fixate on it, but we should not lose sight of it either. You cannot remove the past with declarations alone. A lot of things in your (i.e. the CPSU's) behavior remind us of the past. Yes, there are people on both sides who question the other side's sincerity. Those on our side are fueled by the CPSU Program's known positions (on the revisionist leadership of the SKJ). Allow

me to quote two paragraphs from the “CPSU Program”... Three Party Congresses have taken place since this Program was adopted, yet you haven’t thought to fix these passages.

“Your suggestion to restore ‘Friendship societies’ is unacceptable to us: too much of its work here would be ‘unnecessary.’ We are grateful to you for supplying us with some military technology, but overflights by military aircraft and ships entering our ports can only be allowed in accordance with our legislation (notification within 60 days).

“As for our press, we do not think that criticizing Stalinism, statism, and the cult of personality is anti-Soviet. Moreover, we have developed our own information system that is different from yours. We have no intention of changing it.

“... There is a desire to involve Yugoslavia in the socialist community. We believe it will only complicate our relationship and hinder our cooperation with you.

“We consistently adhere to the decisions of the Berlin Conference (i.e. the communique adopted at this year’s conference of 28 European Communist Parties in Berlin), while in your press you allow yourself to continue relations with CPs from “pre-Berlin” positions. Your statements and actions are contrary to the spirit of the conference...”

In response, Brezhnev only praised Tito for being direct and said that he will “take it into consideration, even though he does not agree with all points...”

I thought about it for a long time afterwards. In fact, we sincerely want friendly relations with Yugoslavia, and we sincerely have no intention of absorbing it and so on. But we have not recognized it “in theory.” Subconsciously, without realizing it, we consider it to be a “deviation from the norm” and expect it to “reform.” They see this. Maybe Brezhnev was speaking from the heart, they do not doubt it. But the fundamental concept of our socialism remains the same, essentially a Stalinist and “Short Course” one. The Yugoslavs, same as the Italians, and the French – they see it as fundamentally incompatible with them. Hence their reluctance to integrally accept the term “proletarian internationalism,” which reminds them, not without reason, of the Comintern. Hence its replacement with the “international solidarity” category, which is sporadic on the surface.

## 1976 Epilogue

I must correct myself: in the epilogues to the previous two “volumes” I gave an unfairly disparaging assessment of Brezhnev. I wrote him off as a statesman too soon. He clearly surpassed his “colleagues.” I did speak about his achievements in preserving peace, but I underestimated the depth of his commitment and the sincerity of his determination to prevent a nuclear war.

This volume describes the preparation of the CPSU’s XXV Congress. The preparatory work was done in Zavidovo, the remote General Secretary’s dacha (it was also a hunting ground). A small group of top-level apparatchiks-intellectuals gathered there and made what was probably the last attempt to save face of the Soviet state, impose some common sense to its policies. In the course of incredibly frank discussions with the General Secretary, his quality as a staunch and steadfast “supporter of peace” (I apologize for the cliché, but I cannot find a better term for it) came through all the way. Here his role is truly “historic.”

If not for “Czechoslovakia-68,” which (we now know) he reluctantly agreed to most likely because he did not yet feel completely confident in top leadership; if not for “Afghanistan-79,” which a trio of Politburo members swayed him to do, using his physical and mental feebleness (he almost did not understand what was happening around him), I now think he deserved the Nobel Peace Prize. In any case, for his work for the cause of peace, Brezhnev deserved it more than anyone else who received it in the 1970s. Of course to imagine him as a Nobel laureate at that time would be pure fiction. Nevertheless...

In contrast to what has been said, his personal degradation continued: endless awards to himself, blatant vulgarity in demonstrating himself as the indisputable “master” of the country, encouragement of disgraceful fawning, an orgy of greetings and congratulations sent in the General Secretary’s name practically daily to plants, factories, republics, cities, and all kinds of collectives; breakdowns that indicated his mental distress.

This new “volume” contains new evidence of the decline and disintegration of the communist movement. Efforts continued to keep it afloat in connection with the XXV Congress of the CPSU and the European Conference of Communist Parties, though the efforts were cynical, ludicrous, and hopeless. The people involved – from the top leadership to the various levels of CC apparatchiks – did not believe in its reality of viability anymore. Moreover, though they did not admit it to themselves, they felt that the communist movement had become useless to most countries where it existed, and even more importantly – it was useless to the Soviet Union. The author’s (and others like him) commotion over “fraternal parties” has only one, though flimsy, excuse: if we could not give up the myth, at least we had to do our best to keep the preservation maneuvers from looking too silly and ridiculous. We tried to preserve some

dignity, personal and political, while conducting an obviously failing and wastefully expensive policy.

This “volume” contains two important points related to the CPSU’s delegations’ visits to Germany and Great Britain. They expressively and substantively reveal how cut off Soviet society was from the Western world. Access to (and understanding of) this world was available to a select few Party “intellectuals,” who could see the reality and make sense of the secret and other information they received from the West.

As for public sentiment and culture during this year, it continued to become alienated from ideology, but the reader won’t find anything fundamentally new (compared to the two previous “volumes”), although some observations are interesting.