

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1975

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February 9, 1975

I can't believe this is the first entry in the new year. That's because I'm almost never home. Looking back, there have been a lot of events over these two months. Things are moving rapidly and at the same time there is a constant depressing feeling that you are fluttering in the same place, waiting for something that is about to happen (both in society and in your personal life).

Yesterday I worked with Blatov (adviser to the General Secretary) on materials for [Harold] Wilson's (British Prime Minister) February 13th visit.

At this point, I can only briefly summarize the main points of recent events.

Brezhnev's illness. Rumors that it is irreversible and the talk about successors, both from "voices" and among the general public.

January 14th-15th with Poles and Hungarians ([Bogumil] Suika, [Gyula] Horn), pulling together the results of the Preparatory committee for the European Conference of Communist Parties; preparing materials for the working group. This drafting committee work had actually been assigned to PUWP¹ and HSWP² in Budapest, but they asked us to join too. As the result we ended up with our concept: a 150-page "volume," an "Introduction" plus a set of quotes from Warsaw and Budapest arranged according to our logic, the logic of the Gorky dacha. And a summary of everything that was said in Warsaw and Budapest following the plan and even the formulas from our draft Declaration.

Now all of this has been translated and the Germans sent it to the 28 parties, so on the 17th the working group can get started in Berlin.

Evening at Zagladin's on Starokonyushennyi Pereulok with Suika and Horn. Debates.

On January 17th with Harry Ott at the Embassy of the GDR. Pavlov, Poplavsky, Gostev and others from the industrial departments. Toasts to the international affairs guys. The industrialists probably felt that we were acting like "blue blood" and showing off. It was not very comfortable.

January 17th – Ponomarev's 70th anniversary. Hero of socialist labor. Our congratulations. Our gift – "His collected works" starting from 1931. Zagladin's speech. B.N.'s response. For the first time I saw him deeply moved and patting his eyes with a handkerchief. He spoke about the "people," that we are part of the people too.

From January 20th-23rd – Berlin. Zagladin, Shakhnazarov, and I. From the other side – [Hermann] Axen, [Paul] Markowski, Malov, and others. They will be hosting the working group,

¹ Polish United Workers' Party

² Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

so we had to coordinate the strategy. Also about Chilean affairs: Communist and Socialist Parties of Chile. [Carlos] Altamirano. Plenum of the Socialist Party of Chile in Berlin, which of course the Germans eavesdropped on. The socialists are increasingly eager to take the Chile liberation movement into their hands. [Volodia] Teitelboim is a wet noodle. Going over the mistakes, and who is to blame?

The socialists are guided by Fidel Castro, who almost publicly said that defeat was inevitable no matter what kind of assistance had been provided to Chile. This corresponds to my report during the visit to Chile in the fall of 1972, based on the words of the Socialist leaders: "If we don't arm the people, and if you don't supply us with weapons, we will perish. The revolution cannot develop further without a civil war." During lunch in Varadero, Cuba, [Carlos Rafael] Rodriguez said, "We knew they would be overwhelmed, so we stocked up on their magnificent wine in advance." This was a joke, but at the same time not open to discussion or questioning.

Right now Altamirano is apparently moving things towards armed resistance. For him, the Chilean Communist Party is either a hindrance or an auxiliary power. But he will never accept its hegemony, which is why he does not have "our" understanding of "unity."

Haus an der Schpree [sic in German]... Dinner in a hut. Dinner in Potsdam, i.e. trip there late at night, 150km around Berlin. An incredible undertaking in the German style.

Reception dinner with Honecker... He gives off the impression of being a person who is competent and very loyal to us, but one who knows that he would do a better job dealing with West Germans than we do. For this, we would need to give him a longer leash, if not complete freedom.

The level and tone of the reception ([we were treated] almost like members of the CPSU Politburo) could be explained by the fact that right before our visit the Germans got a "dressing-down," which was supposedly coordinated with Brezhnev but was initiated by Gromyko. The East Germans developed a plan of collaboration with West Germany – the "11 points," including the construction of an autobahn to Hamburg, the Beltov channel, and other economic developments mostly paid for by the FRG. Naturally, all of this was coordinated with us in advance. One of the MFA Department heads, Bondarenko, even went to Germany in connection with this. However, maybe he didn't report on time (although I saw the ciphered telegram from Berlin myself, in which Honecker reported to Moscow about these plans). Or maybe it was a deliberate provocation by Gromyko, Rusakov, and Blatov (who climbed on the bandwagon) to use the opportunity to "remind the Germans who they are, that if they want to have common policy with us, they should follow our policies." Either way, Gromyko initiated this dressing-down, and the Germans were made to understand this before our visit.

That is why when they received our delegation (which had nothing to do with this affair) they did everything they could to show that it was some kind of misunderstanding. I must say,

we did the same (including Shakhnazarov; he and his boss Katushev were against this whole idea). We tried to emphasize that nothing is happening and “our friendship is as strong as ever.” When we put together the ciphered telegram we wrote it with the subtext that suspecting the Germans of disloyalty is silly and ludicrous, as well as harmful. By the way, Gromyko held the telegram for three days; it seemed he would not release it into broad circulation at all. He eventually released it, but not before the resolution was signed to immediately invite Axen, Markowski and the new Minister of Foreign Affairs [Oskar] Fischer to Moscow to carry out the planned dressing-down.

And in fact they were in Moscow the day after we returned from Berlin. I had a nasty feeling that they might suspect us of adding fuel to the fire of Gromyko’s provocation.

Shakhnazarov later told me that the meeting (Gromyko, Katushev, Blatov, and Rusakov from our side) was “rough.” The Germans were put through the wringer and their “11 points” were effectively revoked, despite Axen’s reasonable arguments and references to the fact that “all of this was coordinated with you in advance.”

According to our ambassador, Axen’s report to the SED Politburo was “formal”: “a common point of view and complete agreement with Soviet comrades.” There was nothing about the atmosphere or the outcomes of the meeting in Moscow. It turns out that Honecker ordered the whole Moscow delegation to keep silent under threat of losing their party membership card.

On January 29th I gave my triumphal speech at the theoretical conference of the CC Apparatus, in the great hall. “The Scientific-Technological Revolution and Contradictions of Capitalism.”

January 31st-February 6th – raid on Cuba.

February 10, 1975

Supplement to notes for Brezhnev on Wilson – about Portugal (not to encourage the socialists to split with the communists. Historical examples of such actions and the consequences).

Comments to the draft speech for Brezhnev at the dinner with Wilson. Ciphered telegrams, more ciphered telegrams, and papers. Response to Kadar in connection to the confidential letter the CC HSWP sent to the Party organizations about our oil price increases. It’s a pretty angry letter, and in our estimation – quite a “nationalist letter”: now if there are any downturns in their economy, the Soviet Union will be to blame; since we did not even take into account that “they have a Congress coming up and they already put together their Five Year Plan.”

Meeting with B.N. plus Katushev, Zagladin, Shakhnazarov, Brutents – on the upcoming March meeting in Prague of Secretaries on international issues (coordination of foreign

propaganda). I've been assigned to this event, especially to B.N.'s report in Prague. This is now my most important project, of course (!).

I have a meeting with the guys who will be working on Ponomarev's report.

Short morning report to B.N. about Cuba. There was little that interested him. He kept interrupting me to call his secretary about various trifles.

I read [Herbert] Krolikowski's (Deputy Foreign Minister of the GDR) denunciation of Honecker, Politburo members, and other figures. What a bastard! I would return such papers to the [K]GBs of the respective country. Especially since everything [in the denunciation] is based on "personal impressions" rather than facts. And where would an MFA official get these impressions about the Politburo and its internal affairs if not from the stories of his brother [Werner] Krolikowski, who was recently kicked out of the Politburo.

Cuba. Shakhnazarov – Darusenkov. Flying at night. A barn – transit airport in Casablanca. Moroccans. Ten hours over the ocean at night. Meeting at the airport. "Residence" – an oasis on the outskirts of Havana, where Brezhnev stayed a year ago. Relocation to Varadero – a resort area 150km from the capital. New roads. Palm trees with "concrete pillars." Bungalows. Mosquitoes, the beach, Canadian tourists.

Havana is a city without storefronts. The Spanish and American parts of the city. Fidel: "Havana comes last. We are not building a façade, we are building a new building."

February 2nd: Raul Castro, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, Raul Valdes. Conversation at the Central Committee. Our main goal – to coordinate the European Conference of Communist Parties with the Latin American Conference of Communist Parties, which will take place in Havana in May.

March 2, 1975

Another break [in the diary], it's because I spend most of my time working in Serebryannyi Bor. I'm almost never home. Report for B.N. in Prague – the meeting of CC Secretaries to discuss foreign propaganda and ideology of socialist countries. This is the next one after the December 1973 meeting in Moscow, before which we were also sitting in Serebryannyi Bor. Plus all kinds of "joint" documents (drafts) that will be accepted for coordination. The Czechs will present them, but we are preparing them (like everything else).

We used Zagladin's dictation but removed the parts where he went too far in exposing our capitalist partners in détente. He recently came back from Berlin, where the working group was preparing the Conference of Communist Parties, deeply impressed (his political philosophy is often influenced by his latest confidential conversation with a Western politician). This time his "impression" was based on what that the French, Italians, Spaniards and others said at the working group. For them, détente (for the Western CPs) has negative aspects along with the

positive ones. It strengthens the authority of the governments we are fighting against as a class hostile force. And they need “compensation,” so to speak. Zagladin believes this could be achieved by tightening the capitalist order in France, in the FRG...

Actually, this is to B.N.’s liking. He loves to expose capitalism, especially now that there is an economic crisis and all kinds of contradictions. But he is being cautious because he knows that people in the West are watching him and are ready to present him as a “hawk” towards Brezhnev’s line [for peace].

Brezhnev came to the last Politburo. Unexpectedly. And, by the way, he started talking about the upcoming Prague meeting on foreign propaganda. He said he was not informed, while it’s a serious matter.

B.N. began to fuss and make excuses. He said it was the Secretariat’s decision and so on. But he made a note to himself (and told me about it a couple days ago): someone whispered to Leonid Ilyich that this ideological jabber about foreign policy could harm the actual foreign policy. B.N. suspects Andropov. It’s possible... In any case, he rushed to remove some of his favorite pet ideas from the report, like criticism of bourgeois governments and systems. He even removed the attack on Poniatowski...

So Zagladin’s “compensation” was just too out of place.

The talks with Wilson could not have concluded with anything but a “great success.” However, I was surprised to find that the documents they accepted were practically Soviet in the vocabulary, wording, etc. Yes, the Brits are a practical people. What do they care for words! They gave us a loan of 2 billion dollars. They got the better of the Americans (300 million dollars – as per Jackson’s law). B.N. and Blatov hinted to me that “our guy” didn’t use 80 percent of what we put in his notes. They gestured to show that “he is just not what he used to be.” But Wilson & Co. were delighted with his activity and dynamism. So it seems we have the same aberration as we did in 1963-4: foreigners admire while Soviets are at a loss. On TV – at the reception in honor of Wilson – Brezhnev looked very “disorganized,” it seemed he did not understand what he was saying and all he had the strength to do is read off some text that was written for him in big letters.

Right now he is being prepared for the HSWP Congress. It’s a delicate matter (due to our price increases on oil and the letter from the CC HSWP to its activists, openly “criticizing” us). Is Brezhnev turning into a symbolic form that by inertia is being filled with content along the lines of his past way of thinking?

Meeting with Arismendi before his trip to Cuba.

Conversation with Canadians – members of the CC executive committee who spent two weeks traveling around the Soviet Union. When you engage in these kinds of conversations,

again and again you feel like a significant person. But as soon as you go back to the regular and primary work – writing texts for Ponomarev – right away you “get back to your place!” – a petty official who can push his opinion only with clever verbal variations that might slip past B.N.

March 9, 1975

From March 3rd-6th I was in Prague. Meeting of Secretaries of socialist countries regarding foreign policy propaganda, especially in connection with the 30th anniversary of Victory Day. We were housed in the Presidential Palace in Hradcany. All of Prague was spread out before us. B.N.’s speech was first, of course – the text we worked on in Serebryannyi Bor. This was followed by an exchange of monologues. Each of them contained: a) praises for Brezhnev’s defining role in the modern world; b) effusive commentary on B.N.’s speech, which supposedly reflects the wisdom, realism, and theoretical depth inherent in the CPSU (especially the Bulgarians – Milov, the Czechs – Bilyak, the Germans – Hager, but not the Hungarians, and course not the Romanians. The Pole Shidlyak “praised” and joined in, but was restrained).

Stress over the collective documents and the report telegram. Awkward situation with Romanians: they refused to participate in accepting the documents (their representation at the meeting was at the level of deputy heads), and when it came to the communiqué, they declared that if the words about the struggle against “left” and right-wing opportunism were not removed, they would request to remove any mention of their participation in the meeting, only note in the end that the Romanian representative informed the participants about the ideological work of his party.

There was an altercation in which the Mongolian and the German attacked the Romanian for his unwillingness to fight against opportunism. Bilyak was leading the meeting, and he did it pretty stupidly. Katushev intervened and offered to accept the Romanians’ version. (Clever B.N. did not say it himself, but told the “mediator” Katushev to do it). Everyone agreed. But in the evening the Romanians came over and asked everything to be restored: they got it in the neck from Bucharest. Embarrassing. B.N. made a snide remark to Katushev about it: See, how important it is to be firm on questions of principle!

Here is how they dealt with our higher oil prices: they raised the price of gas, but cancelled the direct tax on car owners. As the result, all Czechs are happy, they even benefited from it. But if the state can afford it, it means they have the reserves! I remember two or three years ago we were hearing alarming information (including from the embassy) that the Czechs were eating away at their national income by diverting all of it into consumer goods to “butter up” the population and prevent the growth of political opposition. But it turned out that this policy (in essence the policy of our XXIV Congress) had a direct effect – the well-fed and happy Czech worked better, and the national income did not get eaten up!

The people in the street are better dressed and more fashionable [in Prague] than in Berlin for example, or Budapest (in Warsaw you notice the stark contrast between the super-fashionable and nearly-beggarly). A lot of things are getting built and decorated. Prague is beautiful.

On Friday, the 7th, the following incident took place: Blatov called B.N. and said that the General Secretary is dissatisfied with the Prague communiqué – the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Victory Day is not subordinated to the idea of the struggle for peace in the modern world. B.N. replied that firstly, it is apparent from the context if you read it honestly; secondly, it is apparent from the report, the telegram, i.e. the entire meeting was held under this overarching theme. And thirdly, why didn't they say anything during the twenty-four hours they had to review the draft communiqué with an embargo until a special permission? Be that as it may, B.N. was very disappointed. It's a fly in the ointment and all the more upsetting because it was the only thing that was shown to the General Secretary, and he is unable to see the positive aspects himself.

Of course, the advisers set this up. Most likely Sparrow (Aleksandrov-Agentov). Brutents commented that it's time for them to be thinking about their souls (in the sense of looking for consultant positions at the Departments), not spend their time tripping up CC Secretaries.

Then again, I read the conversation transcripts from Brezhnev's meetings with Wilson. They show that unlike the publicity from the breakfast, the General Secretary was in good shape and pressed the sly Wilson more than once in the polemics. He wasn't relying on a piece of paper, though he took into account the ideas and information included in his notes. And in general he appeared as a much bigger statesman than the Brit... I understood the enthusiasm about personal contacts Wilson expressed upon his return to England. I also understood (including from the remarks about our communiqué) that Brezhnev's main idea right now is the idea of peace. This is what he wants to be remembered for. In practical politics in this sphere he prefers real actions over any ideology. That is why at the Politburo before our departure for Prague he expressed a vague concern that ideological rants about foreign policy could harm the foreign policy itself.

I read a transcript of a telephone conversation recorded (or transmitted) by one of our intelligence officers in New York. It's a conversation between two Soviet émigré Jews, our former scientists – a cry of despair about émigré life in the U.S. Some émigrés are ready to crawl back on all fours, if we only would let them. Cheers to Andropov, who made it possible for thousands of Jews to leave, almost everyone who wants to. But what is his plan? What's the goal in the long run?

By the way, Shakhnazarov recently told me “in confidence” that he has reliable information from private sources that the “Chairman's” primary dream is to become General Secretary after Brezhnev, that's what he is counting on. Maybe it would be good. We'll see.

B.N. was assigned to give an instructional report next week to ideologues from all over the Soviet Union in connection with the 30th anniversary of Victory Day. Once again we barely had time to get off the plane before we were working our asses off. B.N. is essentially carrying out the role of the CC Secretary of Ideology. That's how he perceived (in conversation with me) this new assignment.

Visited the Tretyakov Gallery. They have an exhibition of XVII century portraits from the provincial backwaters of Novgorod, Orel, Yaroslavl, Samara. Impressive. Mostly the portraits are by unknown authors, but there are some works by Panin, Orlov, and the like. There are two halls from the collection given to the Tretyakov Gallery by Sidorov, especially the Soviet hall: Larionov, Mashkov, Chagall, Kandinsky, Malevich, Petrov-Vodkin, and others. They are wonderful; these drawings and paintings are such a reflection of the era, of the 1920s.

Le Monde published large excerpts from [Josef] Smrkovsky's³ memoirs – reprinted, by the way, from an Italian Communist journal. He talks about his meetings with Brezhnev here in May of 1968, when Smrkovsky led a parliamentary delegation; about the actual days of August 20-21st; about how they were taken and brought to a dacha outside Moscow; about talks in the Kremlin, the protocol, their departure; and about [Frantisek] Kriegel, who refused to sign the protocol. By the way, there are quotes of what he said to Brezhnev, Kosygin, and Podgorny in the CC CPSU when he and the others were brought from the dacha to begin the talks (in early September):

“Comrades, you have destroyed the centuries-old friendship that existed between our peoples. For over 100 years our people cultivated a Slavophile love of Russia, and in the last 50 years a love for, and loyalty to, the Soviet Union. In the eyes of our people, you were our closest friends. And in one night you destroyed all of this!”

Taking into account that the “action” was taken in a historical period when the idea of a nation as a people's primary form of life was far from outdated, and to some extent had resurged as a factor of viability and self-awareness; and taking into account that (based on historical experience) it takes a long time (if ever) to get over national humiliation... perhaps we really did pay too great a price to prevent something that probably wouldn't have happened in the first place.

In the end, having well-fed people is not the point; the Czechs would have organized that quickly enough, even if they had to live through a small civil war. Anti-Sovietism could not have won without outside intervention, and if such intervention had happened, then it would have been the perfect time for us to take that “action.”

³ One of the leaders of Prague Spring. [Author's footnote]

Another week has passed. We put together one more report for B.N. He gave the report yesterday at the meeting of ideological workers (how to organize the 30th anniversary of Victory Day). I had to essentially write the leading article in *Pravda*, too.

I am tired of it all. Even in the “functional” sense it’s ridiculous: for weeks and sometimes months I don’t read TASS systematically, not to mention journals and books. I only skim through the ciphered telegrams and other classified information. I have no time to think about anything.

March 22, 1975

Last Saturday I was at B.N.’s dacha. His birthday in a close circle. Toasts – Zagladin, Shaposhnikov, Balmashnov, and I. B.N.’s brother was there, he is a general; and a couple of B.N.’s comrades from the Komsomol in the 1920s. [B.N.’s] wife – a beauty from the frescoes of Rublev. She is great in general – she holds herself wonderfully and intelligently. And B.N. himself was great too. He was sincere and straightforward, talking about those among his friends and comrades who almost didn’t make it in 1937 and miraculously survived; the people who will never sing the praises of... he made a gesture with his fingers to imitate Stalin’s mustache.

We played billiards; Vadim played the piano and sang. In the intervals we talked, the kind of conversations that as a rule we allow only “amongst ourselves.”

I would say B.N. is a rare type of person on our active political front: he combines our “pure” past with the cynical present. In general, ideology is still alive in him. It is a significant force that largely explains his boundless energy and his seemingly unnecessary (for the sake of his career) initiative.

Finishing up the draft declaration (for the European Communist Conference) before the working group (April 8th in Berlin). Zagladin and Zhilin went to Paris for the meeting of “the three”: the PCF, CPSU, and SED. “Worked over” the text after the first working group. As we found out yesterday, they were praised by [Gaston] Plissonnier (member of the PCF Politburo) for “a united (with the French Communists) revolutionary approach to the problem of Europe.” When I looked at the product [of the Paris working group], I realized that such concessions turn the conference into a dangerous rant that is essentially directed against our political détente (“force imperialism to retreat even more,” only then would détente be secured, “defeat it,” “overcome it,” “turn all of Europe to socialism,” etc.). In accordance with this, the united foreign policy program was joined with the social program and the fight for socialism and communism. This made the program even more unrealistic: nobody will fight alongside us for socialism and communism. Many CPs will even object to a common program of struggle for socialism. Phrases about a broad coalition and cooperation with non-Communist forces turned into mockery.

I told Zagladin about all of this. He partially agreed, but he was busy – he is preparing a delegation for the Congress of the PCI. He asked me to fix some things, “and then we’ll see, all the work is still ahead of us”...

B.N. was interested in the draft and gave instructions not to give the Germans the go-ahead to send the draft out to all the parties (28) without his knowledge. I shared my concerns with him. He grew alarmed. At the same time I found out that Katushev read the draft and was even more worried.

We agreed to invite two Germans and fix some things with them. Of course, to some extent this is disavowal of Zagladin and Zhilin (in Paris), but what can you do... We fixed it. The Germans left, and the next day [Jean] Kanapa showed up in Moscow en route from Korea.

I fought it out with Kanapa until 2a.m. Jean very quickly figured out that “I am the cause of this.” He started to pressure me, but it was easy for me to squash his efforts because his arguments either contradicted each other, or were mere demagoguery, to which I responded calmly and when possible with a chuckle.

For example, Kanapa said, “You have socialism and want peace. We want peace too, but we also want socialism. Why do you interfere with our struggle for socialism?” And so on. According to him, the Program should be communist, not social-democratic.

I said sure, the Program should come from communists and in that sense it is a communist program. But it should be addressed to both communists and non-communists. Otherwise the Conference would turn into a sectarian project.

How to explain such revolutionary sentiments? I remember when we were preparing the Conference in 1969, Kanapa was making fun of us for being too revolutionary-minded and aggressive against imperialism. “Now,” he said, “we have raised the stakes based on the new situation in the world, while others like the PCI have lowered them.” Clearly. But what will they get from it; what can they get at all by exchanging politics for demagoguery, when Giscard d’Estaing is being practically compared to Hitler and French foreign policy is being portrayed as the Americans’ errand boy?!

We agreed to 3-4 changes. Today I conveyed them over the phone to the CC SED. I made it in time: they already had Honecker’s order to send it out and weren’t expecting any more changes. By the way, the German Winkelmann, First Deputy Head of the International Department, spoke very harshly with me and categorically rejected one of the changes. They are tired of acting on our orders, plus he was probably irritated that we are forcing them to give up their German precision and order.

March 29, 1975

A contradiction has erupted between our state foreign policy, and our “communist” policy. In the most important link. Marchais & Co. got wound up over Prime Minister Chirac’s reception in Moscow: pomp, press, front pages in the newspapers, TV, three hours with Brezhnev, etc. The trigger was Chirac’s impudence: he told our reporters that he knows Brezhnev and Marchais have some kind of relationship, and he will tell Brezhnev when he sees him that the PCF has an inconsistent policy when it comes to the armed forces of France. The USSR is in favor of a strong France, but the PCF undermines the French army’s fighting ability, etc.

A few hours later Marchais was already calling Moscow and demanding that Chirac receive a public reprimand for it (and Brezhnev should say something during their conversation, too). Naturally, considering our bureaucracy of reviewing such messages, nothing was done (or could be done) immediately.

Chirac returned home surrounded by the loud buzz of the press (France needs to emphasize that it has a privileged relationship with us) and right at the airport announced, among other things, that Brezhnev told him, “We trust Giscard. He is a person we can trust, he keeps his word!”

Georges immediately convened the PB and published a resolution: “Chirac’s visit to the USSR is insignificant, it produced no results, it is all a swindle – like all of Giscard’s politics. It was necessary only to reinforce the anti-people policies of the government and strengthen the anti-communist campaign.”

A letter was composed at the same PB, “To the Secretariat of the CC CPSU.” Back in the day you could only find something like this (from a fraternal party) written in Chinese.

The general sense of it: “Everything that happened in connection with Chirac’s visit causes great harm to the interests of the working people of France and the policy of the PCF. You, the CPSU, asked for our advice and recommendations before this visit. We gave them to you. But it seems you ignored them. Moreover, our policy is to do everything we can to show the French people that they cannot trust Giscard, that his entire policy is a lie. But you announce to the whole world that he can be trusted. You undermine our efforts in this difficult fight that we are fighting in the interests of the working people of France. We declare to you that you have violated the principles of proletarian internationalism. With fraternal greetings, Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the CC PCF.”

This caused a fuss. Brezhnev gave an order to prepare a response. (By the way, before they convened the Politburo, right after Marchais called Moscow, one of our embassy staff in Paris visited them and asked them not to rush. He said they would receive detailed information from Moscow about the talks with Chirac... but it “did not have an effect”!) Gromyko prepared quite a stupid response. Our sector made a slightly better one. The two texts went to Blatov (who is afraid of Gromyko). Zagladin flew in from Rome and was sent to Blatov. In a word, yesterday

the text was not ready. But they gave something to *Pravda* (under Sedykh's name, he is a correspondent in Paris). The article's title speaks for itself: "Positive Outcomes." It mentions, by the way, that "some media outlets" (!) tried, as always, to use the visit for anti-communist purposes. Of course, this is not sufficient for Georges.

In light of these events, what happened between Kanapa and me becomes crucial; and I'm afraid the European Conference of Communist Parties, with its main idea of combining official foreign policy with class struggle – is hanging over a precipice.

Brutents and I put together a draft address (based on a draft prepared by the consultants) from the CC, Presidium, and the government to the peoples, parliaments, and governments regarding the 30th anniversary of Victory Day. We rejected a completely idiotic text prepared by the MFA (I gave my opinion on this text to the Deputy Minister of the MFA Rodionov, it will turn into a little scandal yet). The whole thing is not a very good idea... But what can you do, it was the CC resolution. By the way, our allies in the anti-Hitler coalition said in response to our confidential probing that they do not plan to "celebrate" the occasion.

Overall I've been in a state of bliss this week since B.N. left on vacation: I've caught up on almost all my reading and read a lot of interesting things on top of that. Including the notes of the Kirilenko-Ponomarev talks with the Finnish delegation. Almost the entire Finnish Politburo was here. Once again I am convinced that "our guys" from the Finnish sector, headed by Shaposhnikov, have already caused damage (perhaps irreversible) to the Finnish Communist Party. They have set it on a divisive path, and it seems this schism will happen. Belyakov⁴ started this line ten years ago and it has been persistently followed since. They are playing on the ideological myths of B.N., Suslov, and others; and openly exploiting the opportunity to rudely "pressure" the Communist Party of Finland [SKP] in a way they can't pressure many other CPs. They are inventing some obviously artificial and absurd ideological deviations in the "majority" and setting them against careerists ([Taisto] Sinisalo) and indignant old men. But if you think about it, even these forced deviations look like pathetic babbling in comparison to what the Italians, for example, are printing in their newspapers and saying at their Congresses. Compared to "Finnish deviations," the Italian line is beyond revisionism – it is a full-blown bourgeois ideology. However, through Kirilenko's lips we endorse and support the Italians at the Congress of the PCI; while here we twist arms and create enemies, we are breaking up the party... It's very simple: we don't have the reach in the PCI.

April 12, 1975

On April 4th I went to the Mayakovsky Theater. "Conversations of Socrates." It's a strange feeling when for minutes at a time you can't understand anything, you can't make the connections... either you've grown coarse and don't get clear and simple ideas; or these ideas are so banal and flat (considering your volume of information and your inner freedom of

⁴ In the late 1960s he was Ponomarev's First Deputy, then was sent as ambassador to Helsinki. [Author's footnote]

thought) that you wonder how this can be shown to intelligent adults. Or maybe it is the claim to relevant associativity (suggestions) that is mind-numbingly irritating, because it is flipping the finger behind one's back, which is stupid and anti-artistic in general. Radzinsky rewrote Plato.

Yesterday – Bach's 3rd, 5th, and 8th Brandenburg Concertos at the Conservatory. Wonderful. Especially the fifth with the bassoon. Barshai's Orchestra.

Nadezhda Mandelstam's memoirs – many moving passages that gave me pause.

[Oswald] Spengler's *The Decline of the West*. Picked up this book again. Last time (ten years ago) I didn't take it seriously and did not read carefully. It makes a huge impression. Essentially, Spengler accurately predicted the main aspects of world development after 1917. And by the way, his philosophy is not pessimistic. It is realistic. It calls us to look at things, at history and at the future, soberly, straightforwardly, and knowledgeably (with expertise).

The working group met in Berlin from the 8th-10th (documents for the European Conference of Communist Parties). Zagladin mentioned some things over the phone but hasn't sent a report yet. He is distancing me more and more from this project. He took a bunch of good-for-nothings to Berlin with him...

“The incident with Mitterrand.” On April 14th a delegation from the Socialist Party of France was supposed to come to the USSR, virtually its entire leadership. By the way, the visit has been postponed about five times, including once because of Mitterrand's “anti-Soviet” interview. This Tuesday, the 8th, Blatov called Zuev (head of the sector) and said that the visit needs to be postponed and to come up with some arguments and prepare a letter to Mitterrand and Marchais. They came up with the following excuse: we are busy with the preparation of the Five-Year Plan and celebrations for the 30th anniversary of Victory Day. This caused a commotion in Paris. The Communists got more wound up than the Socialists (Mitterrand was in Tahiti at the time). Leroy and Plissonnier rushed to the embassy at night and said, “What are you doing? Is the scandal with Chirac not enough for you? Now you are postponing Mitterrand for the fifth time, you are practically saying that you don't want anything to do with the leftist forces of France! What does this mean? We are going to make a Politburo statement...” and so on.

And if the Socialists issued a message without any qualifications (“postponed at the request of the Soviet side”), Marchais “expressed regret.”

In the meantime, today the TV program *Vremya* opened by showing Brezhnev holding the hand of U.S. Secretary of Commerce Simon in both his hands for 5-7 minutes. Simon is in Moscow for another session of the Soviet-American Commission. Afterwards, Brezhnev “received” him for a long time...

The CC Plenum will open on the 16th, as B.N. told me when he assigned me to prepare the draft resolution (!). However, it will not be about the Five-Year Plan, but about foreign policy, and Gromyko will make a report.

The mutiny in Paris produced results. Maybe the fact that B.N. returned to Moscow and “said something” at the Politburo also had an effect. Mitterrand will be coming on the 23rd after all!

However, how do we make policy!? Two days before, Zuev had predicted to Blatov what would happen. But Blatov did not dare (!) “to inform,” and instead obediently did what he was told, even though the instructions were clearly unqualified and harmful. It is terrible and dangerous when advisers are meek and spineless. And it’s bad that they make political steps without consulting with people who can and should calculate the inevitable consequences.

I had to coordinate the draft address “To the peoples, parliaments, and governments” [on the 30th anniversary of Victory Day] between Gromyko, Ponomarev, Katushev and the CC Propaganda Department. Almost until the very end I managed to leave the word “Germany” out of it, but Gromyko (whose signature is final) put it in there after all. Still, I convinced B.N. to try to take it out.

I’m sitting at home, editing Suslov’s report for the Lenin days. It’s boring. If some regular propaganda worker was giving this report, the audience would walk out. But here the banalities look like serious ideology and policy. Some parts (on the communist movement and Vietnam) were written incompetently. I’m about to head out to give the comments to B.N.

April 18, 1975

I’m awfully tired. What to do? It’s unclear where my life is headed. But first a couple words on how political documents that the whole world has been talking about for days are created here.

Last Friday Ponomarev told me that the CC Plenum will take place on the 16th. Apparently we should prepare the draft resolution. The subject: the international situation and foreign policy of the Soviet Union. Gromyko was to give the report. I was supposed to think about it over the weekend.

I thought about it and wrote the draft resolution in two hours. B.N. was busy with the Iraqi Hussein and read it late in the evening. On Tuesday morning he ran over to Suslov with it; Suslov corrected two-three phrases. B.N. was in a rush to get back to Hussein, so he summoned me to the CC Secretariat room next to Suslov’s office and passed the comments to me. Then, on the 16th, half an hour before the Plenum started, Suslov ran the draft text by his Politburo colleagues and afterwards read it out loud at the Plenum. Brezhnev said that of course members

of the Plenum may want to change some wording, but he personally thinks the draft is excellent and he is ready to vote for it all the way.

In the evening I watched the newscaster expressively read my text on the TV. I did not attend the Plenum and did not hear Gromyko's report personally. The people who were there – Arbatov, Zagladin, and even Sparrow (Aleksandrov-Agentov) himself, not to mention B.N. – all considered the report to be boring and empty. Arbatov told me (not knowing that I wrote the resolution) that the resolution is by far stronger than the actual report, and that “everyone was saying so during the conversations in the lobby.”

Shelepin was removed. This came as a surprise to Ponomarev, too. Even the fact that the Brits may see it as the result of their caterwauling about him to the Chairman of the All-Union Central Council of Trade-Unions two weeks ago didn't stop this. Judging by how *Times & Co.* are presenting it, that's just how they perceived it. Shelepin filed his resignation to the Plenum, saying that for seven years he carried out the orders of the Central Committee, but after giving it some thought he decided that he does not have the “qualification” to lead this section!

Of course it's good overall that Shurik is out; he was one of the potential “little Napoleons.” Nevertheless, it was done in a confusing manner... and why now?

The XXV Congress has been scheduled for February 24, 1976.

B.N. already began to fuss and today among other things I had to urgently prepare assignments for the sectors on our three subjects: the ICM, social democracy and the national liberation movements.

Besides that, there is B.N.'s academic report, two drafts of an article (following a PB resolution) on the “Great Lesson” – assigning credit for the Victory. A scandal in Yugoslavia after Minister of Defense Grechko's article on the 30th anniversary of Victory Day. He equates the Yugoslavs' contribution to that of the Bulgarians and Czechs. It's a stupidity, but not accidental. It was prepared by our entire line of propaganda and our manner of correcting history to fit the current political situation. Tito made six angry statements about this and all of Yugoslav press has broken loose. Now, to “correct the awkwardness” there was an order to prepare an “objective” article. It is supposed to appear like a general article, but in reality it is aimed at this. The first *Pravda* version was very weak and dumb. The second one is more decent, even though it says some things about our allies...

B.N. still makes us attack the social democrats: why are they interfering in Portugal. It is ludicrous. He is planning to publicly lecture them while at the same time unrolling the red carpet for Mitterrand, who is coming on the 23rd for a meeting at the highest level... And at the same time he is receiving (at my insistence) the New Democratic Party of Canada (social democrats). Today Arbatov held a “round table” at his Institute. These are all vestiges of the Comintern.

Yesterday B.N. made me insert a section into Brezhnev's May 8th speech (for Victory Day) on the "ideological and political level of the people." I feebly protested, arguing that it is demagoguery: what level can we speak of when there is bribery, self-seeking, truancy, protectionism, drunkenness. A huge number of workers couldn't care less about the common good, etc. Still, he insisted. But I worked around it by writing "abstractly."

April 26, 1975

[Michael] O'Riordan visited after the Congress of his party (Communist Party of Ireland). His excuse for coming was that he wanted to inform us about the XVI Congress, the "Ideological Congress." They canceled the 1968 resolution on Czechoslovakia. There are 600 members in his party. I had a boring conversation with him. When I asked him about the work the communists are doing, the specifics of what they are doing in the country, he once again started to tell me about the general situation in Ireland. And he was rather embarrassed. His requests? To pay for the delegation to visit the Congress of the American CP and to accept 23 people into the Lenin School.

However, when I prevailed upon B.N. to receive him, O'Riordan prepared and made an impression on B.N. as a fighting, ideological, and loyal leader; the kind "we could use more of in other parties." Nevertheless, B.N. asked him about the size of the party and then kept coming back to it and saying that everything is very good, but "you need more, more members"...

O'Riordan was shown on TV, seated at the presidium in the Palace of Congresses for the Evening of Lenin (Suslov's report). He was treated very nicely. Before coming here, he spent several weeks in the GDR, where he was also treated very nicely. That's how he keeps his party, which, of course, does not have 600 members, but 100 at best.

Mitterrand. Delegation from the Socialist Party of France at the highest level. From our side – Suslov, Ponomarev, Zagladin and others. Vadim was telling me some quite extraordinary things. The surprising thing is not that Mitterrand fully supports our foreign policy. It is the very fact of a conversation of peers in which both sides acknowledge the legitimacy and even the necessity of each other's existence and actions. Mitterrand admires Brezhnev not just as a statesman, but as a communist whose qualities (precisely as a communist) enabled him to firmly, persistently, and steadily work towards his goals, no matter what.

When Zagladin tried to use our regular formula for the communiqué – "the Socialist Party of France notes the progress in the building of communism" – the French suggested different wording – "success in the building of socialism based on the plans and program of the CPSU." In other words, go ahead and build whatever you believe socialism to be, while we will build our socialism. And we (!) agreed with this.

On other issues Zagladin depicted Mitterrand's position as follows: "NATO! Why are you so sensitive about this issue? Yes, we are for NATO because Western Europeans have

grown accustomed to associating their security with NATO. It is a mass-psychological phenomenon that will gradually disappear as we work together to eliminate both blocs.

“PCF. We recognize it and believe that France needs it. But France also needs us. This is the objective reality. This is our position in the union of leftist forces. We have some competition with the PCF. It is inevitable and we don’t see anything dramatic in this.”

What about us, the CPSU? We agree with this, it follows from the very fact of such a meeting. What about our ideological premise of the leadership of a Marxist-Leninist Party? How does Trapeznikov feel about this, our guardian of Stalinist orthodoxy in the Central Committee of the CPSU? Or perhaps he and others like him think that this is only an opportunistic tactic on our part?

At lunch: open, warm, and natural conversation. “Suslov really got into it,” Vadim noted. Suslov remembered that he had some impressionist paintings at home and sent someone for them. He gave them to Mitterrand. Mitterrand gave him an album of original drawings from the days of the Paris Commune. Hugs, jokes and so on. This is Suslov! The guardian of the purity of Marxism-Leninism and a champion of the fight against all reformism, revisionism, and deviation!

Perhaps all of this is a mostly impulsive, not completely thought-out approach to new realities, a rejection of the stereotypes of an era that has irrevocably receded into the past.

But alongside this we have B.N.’s aforementioned demand for a note against social democrats. Alongside this we have Palme’s recent report at the Plenum on “Dubcek’s letter” and Husak’s speech about it. Then again, this does not mean that Palme, who is aiming for the chairmanship of the Socialist International, Kraisky & Co. do not recognize the realities of Communism. They are simply asserting the reality of social democracy and expecting a liberalization of communism.

But then why does Mitterrand need us? After all, he carries some weight in the Socialist International. It’s very simple: contact with us solidifies him as an alternative to Giscard. If this change happens, he will strive for “their own socialism” in France, using the situation in the world, in which the USSR is one of the main poles and one that has already renounced its aspirations to unify all revolutions on the model of the October Revolution. People in the West already understood this. This explains Palme’s audacity, and Brandt-Mitterrand’s eagerness to be friends with us. The people who have not understood it (and never will accept it) are Trapeznikov and millions of others like him in the CPSU.

Brezhnev-Mitterrand meeting. An hour before the meeting Blatov called and together over the phone we composed a draft report. We infused it with the significance of this meeting, which, of course, will be discussed in all the major news media around the world. Zagladin told me that Ponomarev winced when he saw the draft. But he did not have the authority to “water it

down” because he was told that it essentially already had the General Secretary’s approval. Mitterrand did not make a single change.

Bovin called me in the second half of the day and invited me to “rally somewhere on a solid Marxist-Leninist basis.” I picked him up at the “Izvestiya” building. We went to the [restaurant at the] House of Cinema. For a long time they would not seat us, but we looked respectable so they did not show us the door, either. They kept asking if we were members. Finally a waitress seated us, but it cost an extra five rubles. To be honest, I thought Sasha had something interesting to tell me. But nothing of the sort. He just had nowhere to go and was hungry.

He told me the following story from the time of the XXIII Congress. At the time, Shurik (Shelepin) was the focus of attention of the foreign press, there were rumors that Brezhnev was “temporary” and that the time of the “Iron Shurik” was coming. “His ‘boys’ came over to recruit me,” Bovin said, “They said they need smart people. ‘Why are you sticking with the eyebrows!’⁵ He won’t be around for long! We practically have everything in our hands already.’ I looked at them and replied, ‘Guys! I did not see you and this conversation didn’t happen.’ ‘Fine, as you wish. But you’ll be sorry!’”

I’m guessing that Bovin was not the only one who was aware of such activities by Shurik’s Oprichnina.

April 29, 1975

Jacques Duclos⁶ has passed away. Ponomarev went to his funeral.

The Portuguese Communist Party won 13 percent of the vote in the elections to the Constituent Assembly (30 seats). The Socialist Party – 38 percent (116 seats). There is a big buzz around this, even though it’s perfectly natural. The Socialist Party did not really earn this victory and it does not reflect (by far!) the real role of this party.

I found an album of works by Hieronymus Bosch. Mindblowing. It turns out even surrealism appeared 500 years ago, not to mention that Shakespeare has said it all already.

I finally got Dez’ka’s (David Samoilov) latest book – *The Wave and the Rock*. I read it and wept. Great Dez’ka, poor Dez’ka! Everything he writes feels so close to my heart.

May 13, 1975

From April 30th- May 11th I was in a hospital out of town. I made the decision to get the operation on my nose. The doctor’s note gives me leave until the 14th, but I went to work right away on the 11th. At the hospital I didn’t want to do any official work. But while I was on this

⁵ Reference to Brezhnev. [Editor’s footnote]

⁶ The oldest and most renowned leader of the French Communist Party. [Author’s footnote]

“suspension” I felt even more keenly that I am nothing without my work. Whatever they may say about freedom, there is no freedom without dignity, and dignity is a social category.

I am preparing for a meeting with Brown (member of the Politburo of the Socialist Party of Australia). He is visiting us before their Congress (second since the founding of the party) and wants to hear our opinion on their draft program. It is a boring and chaotic text; it contains almost all the right things... copied from a Lenin School textbook. The people who wrote it studied at the Lenin School. The graduates are considered theoretically sound cadres. In reality, if these people did not learn anything before the Lenin School and do not intend to learn or think independently afterwards, they are just people who memorized the “Prayer of the Short Course” and lost their ability to analyze events independently and realistically.

What will I say to this Brown about his draft?

Ponomarev’s report for the USSR Academy of Sciences, which will take place on May 21st. Keldysh will be dismissed. As B.N. told me, “the situation is paradoxical. Usually there is a crowd vying over the seat. But this time, no one wants it.” Yes! Even in this environment the other “system of social values” is increasingly taking over.

May 16, 1975

I talked with Bill Brown about the draft program they will accept at the second Congress in June. Three hours! He could not argue with me. In fact, it was impossible to argue because I explained to him (“following Lenin”) that the “pure communism” they included in their program is good for nothing from the perspective of the real struggles of modern communists (the possibility of war among the imperialists, the police and army, the “two stages of revolution,” and the possibility of independent policy and prevention of fascism under capitalism, about the various crises, etc. And especially about the fact that nowadays a communist party without a foreign policy is a hopeless affair).

In the evening I was on Plotnikov Street. Jose Vandel – in the last eighteen months, he is the first Chilean from the leadership of the Communist Party of Chile to cross the border into Argentina and come to Moscow. He flew back yesterday.

I got hot tempered about the Latin-American Conference of Communist Parties. The orthodox types from the Lenin School started to peck at the draft resolution. They even found various contradictions with the Declaration from the Meeting of 1969, and some thought it was intentional. They complained to our CC and even looked for support, showing off how ideologically vigilant they are. Suddenly, all these nitpicking theoreticians found a supporter in [Luís Carlos] Prestes,⁷ who said that the conference should be postponed because of the “useless” draft.

⁷ The elderly leader of the Communist Party of Brazil, a national hero. [Author’s footnote]

When [Rodney] Arismendi found out about this, he was furious. Today I signed his telegrams to Bogota and Jorge del Prado in Lima: warning and urging to rebuff Prestes.

Yesterday I was explaining to the Chileans (including [Volodia] Teitelboim and [Orlando] Millas, who came from Berlin, Correr, and their Youth Communist League leader) that if this conference is thwarted the Cubans would never agree to another one. They don't need it. Are the parties really so politically childish that they would jeopardize a matter of principal and maybe even historic significance – the virtual restoration of the unity of Latin American communists (in a new environment of unity with the Communist Party of Cuba, which is unprecedented)? All of this because of some differences in wording?

When I told B.N. about it, he “hinted” that he always suspected Prestes. And indeed, there is something perplexing about him. After all, he is the one who broke up the party. Plus, he has been in the country illegally for twenty years, and not a hair on his head has been harmed. And he is a figure that every schoolboy in Brazil knows. I don't think... But then again, who knows! Crazier things have happened in communist parties.

Today I had a conversation with Mendes, Cunhal's adviser. He came to discuss economic affairs. They want to sell us train cars, ships, bridge cranes. They are negotiating for us to supply them with cotton, from which they will make goods and export them back to us. Except the quality [of those goods] is not very high. And they missed an opportunity to unite the small textile businesses for this work; the government technicians already united the ten largest manufacturers. The most important issue for the PCP [Portuguese Communist Party] in all of this is to reduce the unemployment rate. There was no unemployment in Portugal before the revolution of April 25th, 1974.

May 18, 1975

In the evening I was at B.N.'s. I told him about Brown, Prestes, Arismendi, and about Cunhal's adviser. I warned him about the possible breakdown of the Latin American conference.

He in turn told me about his conversation with [Aleksandr] Grlichkov (League of Communists of Yugoslavia) about the European Conference of Communist Parties. “Did the Yugoslavs finally say what they want and what they are afraid of?” I asked. “They repeated the same things we already read in their documents,” B.N. replied. “They don't want the document to be binding. I asked them, ‘Do you want to just write it like that, that the document is not binding?’ They laughed. Everyone understands that it's silly. But they don't want any collective actions. They say it would be the reestablishment of the center.”

I said, “But even the World Peace Council makes collective decisions and agrees on joint actions.”

B.N., “They agree and nevertheless... They don’t want to jeopardize their nonaligned status. By the way, they also presented a party classification system consisting of four categories: parties in power and part of the bloc; parties that are not in power, but are influential; parties not in power and not influential; parties (the League of Communists of Yugoslavia) that are in power but not in any bloc.

“They also have a reasonable argument. They said they cannot allow the European Conference of Communist Parties to damage their national foreign policy. I (Ponomarev) supported this idea. And, in fact, the Geneva Conference is being pushed back once again. It will not happen before the fall. Which means we have to conduct our conference in the fall as well, because later on the Congress will be pressing. So the communists will have to come together immediately after the state conference and either essentially juxtapose themselves to the Geneva-Helsinki Conference, which is what the French want, or trail behind the state conference, which is what the Yugoslavs want.”

And once again B.N. started cursing the day we agreed to the Conference of Communist Parties and the people who supported the idea. (He said the Italians are kicking themselves right now for stepping forth with this initiative).

The European Conference of Communist Parties (and its preparation process) is not giving us anything besides a demonstration of the growing distance and deepening differences between the communist parties. The Communist Party of France is getting more and more wound up. Marchais said in a recent interview, “We are no less independent than the ICP. If the document does not suit us, we won’t sign it.”

L’Humanité explained it: the differences and arguments in the working group are between the people who want to “whitewash imperialism” and those who think that peace can be won through the struggle against imperialism and victory over imperialism in every capitalist country. Judging by the tone of the article, it was written by Kanapa (“some already have socialism and want peace; we also want peace, but we want socialism as well”...).

What about us... what do we want, and what can we do?

With the current situation at the top, the PB can’t even discuss a dilemma that is clear to all communist parties and clear to us – the international relations specialists, clear to Ponomarev, Katushev... Because the majority of the PB cannot comprehend how this question can be raised, they will think it is “wrong.” For example, if B.N. dares to raise this issue, it will turn into “who is to blame” and “how was this allowed” instead of “what can be done.” But he can’t raise it because the General Secretary “must not be encumbered with such trifles” since he’s been assigned a “low-stress regimen” (and Suslov too, by the way) and after the celebrations of May 8-9th he scaled down his activity level again. Because of this, Brandt’s scheduled May 14th visit was cancelled (or postponed) and the Western press is making a fuss about it, trying to figure out

whether it means that Moscow is changing its foreign policy course, or the FRG has gone too far in its games with West Berlin, or if Soviet-German economic relations may break down, etc.

Oh, Mother Russia! Oh, mass media! – there is no way you can apply your refined Western methods to understand our motives and reasons!

May 24, 1975

Towards the end of the day on Thursday, around 6p.m., Vershinin brought me a “Special Folder” and another thick folder that clearly contained a manuscript. He said: “B.N. asked you to read this, but you have to do it today. You must return it for the night.” Diligensky was in my office at the time, we were working on the multi-volume “Labour Movement” publication and also on Peregrudov’s book on the Labour Party, which the publisher is afraid to publish and so on.

Diligensky left, I opened the “Special Folder.”

There was a note from two departments (Propaganda and Organizational Party Work) about Andropov’s note to the CC “On the anti-Party activity of L. Karpinsky, Glotov, and Klyamkin.” L. Karpinsky is the son of a renowned old Bolshevik [Vyacheslav Karpinsky] who always sat in the Presidium of the Palace of Congresses on major holidays, Party Congresses, etc., from the XX Congress until his death two-three years ago. He must have been close to 100 years old. Until 1962, Len (name derived from “Lenin”) Karpinsky was the secretary of the Komsomol CC, then the Head of the *Pravda* department. He was fired for an article he co-wrote with Burlatsky in *Komsomolskaya Pravda* on how the Moscow cultural organs stifled yet another play at Taganka Theater (Burlatsky was also fired from *Pravda* at this time). Afterwards Karpinsky was ill, it was either his liver or his blood... then he got some kind of small position in the *Progress* publishing house.

I knew him a little, we met a couple times at the Taganka Theater, and once we bumped into each other on the trolleybus. He stopped by my office a couple times and brought lists of foreign books from which we, the International Department, were supposed to select the ones we needed and they, *Progress* publishing, would translate them into Russian for a “special list.” I made only one observation from my conversations with him: he is a soft, very intelligent man and at the same time a simple, open person, pleasant and responsive in communication. It was very easy to become friends with him. He used the informal form of address with me and talked as if we were childhood friends. He never expressed “those” views in front of me or to me. But he always looked sad and depressed, and his whole old-Russian-Muscovite intelligentsia appearance bore the stamp of “Weltschmerz.” He had big eyes, a thin aquiline nose, thin oval [face], a beautiful well-shaped mouth, black hair; [his frame was] bony, broad-shouldered, a little stooped and narrow-chested. He must be a little over 30 years old.

Everything about his manner showed that he was dissatisfied with the “regime,” though he couldn’t have been a malicious oppositionist by his nature.

I’d never come across the last names Klyamkin and Glotov before. Turns out they are department heads of the editorial staff at *Molodoi Kommunist* [Young Communist].

The gist of this affair: Andropov reports to the CC that it was discovered that these three men (led by Karpinsky) were planning to publish an underground (samizdat) journal *Solaris*. The first issue was supposed to have an article by Karpinsky called “Words are also Deeds,” an article by [Mikhail] Gefter on Leninist methodology of the study of society, and Latsis’ work called “The Great Turning-Point Year.”

Karpinsky, Klyamkin, and Glotov were summoned to the KGB and gave signed statements renouncing the idea. They were given a warning. The rest is left up to the party organs (i.e. the question of their party membership and dismissal, whether they can keep their jobs).

The file contained a tape recording of Karpinsky’s conversation with KGB [Political Police] Department director [Filipp] Bobkov and a photocopy of Latsis’ manuscript (the thick folder I mentioned earlier). The tape recording stunned me. It turns out that Bobkov and Karpinsky worked together until 1962 in the Komsomol CC. They hadn’t seen each other since then. And now they met...

They talked about it. Then Bobkov reminded Karpinsky, as if suddenly remembering himself, that he is an officer on duty now. He asked whether Len can guess why he was invited “here.” Karpinsky pretended that he did not know. This was followed by what is probably standard phraseology – shall we be honest with each other, why waste each other’s time.

Bobkov led the conversation very smartly, decently, without the slightest hint of intimidation or blackmail. He said straightforwardly that he was talking about *Solaris*. After some very mild and feeble resistance, Karpinsky understood that Bobkov knew everything about everything and disclosed all the names and activities. This started an almost theoretical discussion, even though both men periodically repeated that they are not here to have theoretical discussions.

Karpinsky denied that the journal was meant to follow “the samizdat line.” Bobkov reasonably countered: why then do you need to express your thoughts in the format of connected articles, why edit the texts (Karpinsky did this with Latsis), and even write an afterword (to Latsis). Karpinsky argued that it was only an exchange of ideas in a very small circle and they needed to record them in order to clearly express their ideas, build consistent and organized arguments, have some kind of order in their thoughts, and to record the results of the discussions, etc. Bobkov responded (and quite competently) that all samizdat publications started out the same way. As soon as something is printed, the thing inevitably gets out from under the control

of the initiator, no matter how good his intentions were. “For example,” he said, “your journal (even if you want to call it just a ‘library’ that you planned to fill up your own shelves with) is known to Yanov.” (Yanov, it turns out, is that same writer who published an interesting article in *Novyi Mir* [New World] two-three years ago about the Scientific-Technological Revolution and the modern hero of the industrial novel. I recall it caught my attention). “Now this Yanov is in Israel, working for the ‘Voice of Israel.’”

“Or consider: you have to type up what you write. For this you need a typist. You find the typist Alexeyeva. But we were not the only ones who found out about what she was typing. We conducted a search and now we have your *Solaris*, but someone else could have gotten it as well. And perhaps they did.”

At this point Karpinsky exclaimed, “Then we got the wrong girl!” They both laughed.

In between these “digressions” Karpinsky expounded his credo. For over ten years he has been plagued by the question of where Stalin came from. He has studied and thought about [this phenomenon] and as the result has been living a double life, which made him miserable. (It seems he is unhappy in his regular life as well. I heard that his wife left him, or maybe he got the divorce himself. He fell in love with someone else, a woman who has four (!) small children. Apparently they live in perfect harmony, he takes care of the children. But he is poor, sometimes downright destitute. His always looks shabby and unkempt, like a truck driver coming off a shift, or a plumber...)

The reason he is tortured by this question is because after observing what is happening in the country, he came to the conclusion that it is due to the inconsistency of the XX Congress. The analysis of the “Stalin” phenomenon at the Congress only scratched the surface and was theoretically untenable. After the Congress only a few political conclusions were made (mainly the elimination of the camps), but in the social and economic – and consequently ideological – spheres everything remained the same. Democracy is not developing, and this is the source of our troubles and woes.

Bobkov agreed. Two or three times they came back to the subject of democracy and Bobkov’s reaction was always unambiguous – we need to develop democracy, “but not through some illegal publications.”

Karpinsky fervently argued that it is harmful to conceal and distort our history, that [without knowing our history] we will not be able to find ways to effectively solve our economic and spiritual problems. In fact, it is impossible to conceal our history. Russia’s long experience with this shows that it is impossible. We also cannot do it because our enemies, our foreign enemies, are analyzing the things about which we are silent. Everything will become known anyway.

Bobkov objected, “Who is preventing you from doing this research? There are dozens of institutes, scholars, etc. who are studying this.”

Karpinsky reasonably retorted that nobody would print the things he would like to say, and the kind of thoughts he’s had. As for the institutes, even the verbal conversations there are limited to a framework that barely approaches the point at which real research and understanding of the subject begins.

This was their pleasant conversation.

Karpinsky implored [Bobkov] not to touch Klyamkin and Glotov. Bobkov replied that nobody is going to “touch” them, in a certain sense. But they have been summoned for a conversation and behaved stupidly. They denied everything.

Karpinsky: “I’ll tell them to stop fooling around.”

(Though from the conversation, and from the note, it’s unclear what the role of these two guys from *Molodoi Kommunist* was in the *Solaris* affair.)

Bobkov: “What about Gefter?”

Karpinsky: “Gefter has nothing to do with this. I talked with him, in general we discussed these subjects a great deal. He is an intelligent, deep person. But he told me (Karpinsky), ‘Do what you will, but I will not participate in this.’”

I’ve known Gefter since 1938, my freshman year at the university. He was two years ahead of me. I remember him at first as the Komsomol leader – he was the secretary of the university Komsomol committee. Before the war (he was finishing his fifth year in 1941) he was the secretary of the history department’s party bureau. Gefter was idolized far beyond the history department. He was an excellent speaker, his line of thought was clear and distinct, and he had great culture of the spoken word. He could bend any argument in his favor; he captivated audiences with his conviction. I remember how I was amazed that I would walk away from his speeches thinking something completely different from what I was sure about before and during the meeting. (Of course, he did not know or notice me. Back then I was a very ordinary and very passive element). There was something in him of the revolutionary leaders, of the civil war era. He probably represented the kind of statesman that stemmed from Trotsky and Zinoviev. A powerful tribune with a good dose of demagoguery that is distinguishable only for the experienced listener (or for a not very orthodox intellectual). In contrast to the statesmen like Kirov, who was also an orator and a tribune and also had a burning, irrepressible energy. But people like Kirov were sympathetic to people’s weaknesses and circumstances, they were capable of understanding a regular person – in a word, they represented a type of Russian revolutionary and fighter. But Gefter was (like probably Trotsky and Zinoviev) a statesman with a Jewish personality, an unforgiving rigorist who would not tolerate any objections or

weaknesses, who recognized only “black” and “white,” and who had some admiration for his own superiority and “iron principles.”

Maybe right now I am modernizing my impressions from those days (and my “awe”) from the pre-war Gefter. But it must be close to what my impressions really were. One must also remember that these were the years “1937-1939”!!

On June 22, 1941, we were gathered for a meeting in the auditorium, many people spoke. Gefter spoke too. It was fire and flames. We left that evening without a shadow of confusion or bewilderment that had gripped us, or me at least, after Molotov’s speech on the radio. On June 26th or 28th (I don’t remember exactly) we were already taking the train towards Roslavl to dig anti-tank ditches. Gefter was riding as the commissar at the head of our detachment of several hundred.

[At the front] he was also strict, omnipresent, and implacable. We called him “Misha,” but you could always feel the distance between him and the masses. His authority was absolute and quite natural. Everyone admired and truly respected him. Indeed, a difficult role fell on him. We had to be fed (and food had to be gotten from God knows where, including from evacuees who were fleeing to the east), our spirits, discipline, and even more importantly – our enthusiasm – had to be kept up. Later, when the Germans started getting around us and we barely had enough time to finish digging a line of trenches before we had to get out of semi-encirclement and start digging at another position – again Gefter organized all of this. He contacted military units, distributed the assignments and supervised the work.

I recall how once we got a lice infestation. Misha gave an order: everyone is to get a haircut immediately. The hair cutting began. He, by the way, picked up the clippers and helped the volunteer hairdressers do the work. I rebelled: at the time I had a luxurious head of hair. Misha gave me a long public reprimand, but condescended and allowed me to only get a trim.

Towards the end of August the grumbling began. We had to retreat all the time (cars came at night to evacuate us). Because we were under constant surveillance by [German aircraft] the “frame” [Focke-Wulf Fw 189] and the “crutch” [Henschel Hs 126], the Germans kept deeply bypassing us on the left and right. The guys called Misha and demanded that we be given rifles, otherwise we would be captured like helpless ducklings. Misha gave a speech (of course we did not get any rifles), but I remember that he did not have the same confidence in his manner that everything will end well for us. At the end of August, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th-year students were evacuated to Moscow “on Stalin’s orders.” I remember the furious speed the driver of the echelon kept up day and night, and how the students got him out of the car at Kiev train station and carried him on their arms for about 20 minutes. The 1st and 5th-year students stayed. Gefter stayed too.

The rest I know from hearsay. They kept digging until they were completely surrounded. Then everyone got out as best he could. Misha reached our line without his party card – he buried it when he was in a situation that he could not imagine getting out of.

June 8, 1975

I talked with Ponomarev. He got sick too.

“Have you heard? About Karpinsky and the others. And Latsis stuck his nose in there. [He is] from the journal (*Problems of Peace and Socialism* in Prague). We were the ones who sent him there. Who is this Latsis?

“I don’t know, this is the first I ever heard of him.”

“Is he not the husband of that poetess who visits us often? She keeps saying, ‘My husband, Latsis, he is so talented, so talented.’ There’s your talented... and we need to remove Krasin⁸ as soon as possible. I hope he is not mixed up in this. Roy Medvedev would be right around the corner!”

I tried to draw him into a serious discussion. Karpinsky’s naiveté does not convince anyone, which is both a problem and a tragedy. I started to describe what I managed to read from Latsis’ folder (it had three chapters: “Stalin against Stalin,” “Bukharin against Bukharin,” and I think “Lenin against Lenin”). I only had time to read the first, brilliantly written story of how Stalin and Bukharin strongly defended and conducted Lenin’s general line (after Lenin’s death) and how Trotsky, Zinoviev & Co. were defeated – partially because Stalin controlled the apparatus and partially because Trotsky, Zinoviev & Co. went against the Congress-approved general Party line and therefore were doomed from the start. Latsis provides numerous quotations from Stalin, which we all once knew by heart (I was amazed [to realize this]), especially from 1927, the XV Congress... in which Stalin truly looks like a consistent and skillful conductor of Lenin’s (NEP) approach to building socialism.

But then it was January of 1928. Stalin went to Siberia and his speeches there are unrecognizable, as if he was switched for a different person. By the way, it turns out these speeches were only published in 1949, when “Stalin was no longer afraid or embarrassed of anybody.” He switched completely to Trotsky’s positions, which Bukharin had Aesopically pointed out six months later in his “Notes of an Economist.”

There was more along these lines. I tried to explain this to B.N., but it came out rushed and muddled. His reaction was, “This is not relevant right now.” I replied, “What could be more relevant in our history than this?” These are the roots of our current ideological struggle. I told

⁸ Krasin was a consultant at the International Department. Following somebody’s recommendation, Ponomarev “summoned” him from Leningrad about ten years prior. Krasin associated with Roy Medvedev and was “exposed.” [Author’s footnote]

him that after reading Latsis, I understood for the first time that by keeping a monopoly over this period in our history, Trapeznikov gets to decide who is a revisionist and who is an orthodox. I understood why he holds on to this monopoly so furiously, sinking his claws into it. After all, in our ideological turmoil right now we have a division along the lines of Stalinist – anti-Stalinist (or, which is also “suspicious,” non-Stalinist). And it was Trapeznikov who was at the control panel and took this position in “History of the CPSU.” As long as this persists, he will set the ideological atmosphere and various “Karpinskys” will appear again and again.

B.N. listened to this tirade impatiently and repeated that “it is irrelevant.” He added, “They (?) have to see that during the celebration of the 30th anniversary of Victory Day, there is not one mention of...” and he ran his hand over his mustache. That’s what’s important.

At that point our conversation came to an end, somebody was in a hurry to see B.N.

Of course it’s “important”! But Trapeznikov and others have grown used to ignoring that. And they get away with it. Most importantly, the conclusion I wanted to confine myself to today: nobody took the trouble to get to the core of the case (except for the KGB man Bobkov, but his functions are limited and he does not have to make ideological conclusions). Even B.N. did not want to read the conversation between Bobkov and Karpinsky, or Latsis’ es brochure. But all the CC Secretaries signed the case in support of the two departments. It looks like the same thing happened at those two departments as well; the only person who read the materials fully was some instructor. All of this was transferred to the Party Control Commission [PCC] to determine the Party standing of Karpinsky, Glotov, and Klyamkin.

There were all sorts of events in the last two weeks. Woddis visited on the 25th. I met him at the airport and had dinner with him. Ponomarev received him on the 26th. Everything was pretty cut and dry, though considerably friendlier than in previous times. Then we had two big “discussions” about different issues: “Why do you want a summit between the CPSU and the CPGP so much?” “Will there be an informal conversation?” He didn’t like that B.N. called the Thai, Malay, and other such communist rebels “pro-Chinese monkeys sitting in trees and shooting from there.” Woddis gave me a lecture about the legitimacy of their armed struggle and the appropriateness of Chinese influence there, as well as in Africa.

I replied: if this is how we prepare the Brezhnev-McLennan meeting, we will only cause a quarrel between our parties. It is not a theoretical symposium. Do you have anything political to offer on the discussion of such questions? No! Then we should not raise them as this level. For example, we don’t have anything to offer to resolve the problems of the communist movement in these countries, therefore we should let time do its work, not Brezhnev and McLennan.

We also talked about our specialists and Chinese specialists in Africa and whether there is a “starving English working class” (Ponomarev asked Woddis this question), as well as “Who needs the European Conference of Communist Parties; who needs it more – us, or them?”

Lunkov (Ambassador in London) at the Sheremetyevo airport. He predicted 60-40 on the "Common Market." Now we know it was 67-32. And 20 million Brits did not go to the polls at all, that's how much they are about this "Common Market"!

Tension with Ponomarev before his departure to [meet] the voters: speech and report (for the activists). In a fit of anger I told him, "Why fuss so much? Nobody reads these speeches anyway!" That hurt his feelings and he didn't "bother" me about it anymore; he put Vershinin to work, telling him that the working class is starving in the West after all, and our scholars and statisticians are all lying.

On Friday, May 30th, B.N. met with Arismendi before he left for the Conference of Communist Parties in Havana. I prepared a discussion outline for him, but I wasn't present.

I had to see the Chileans off for the same conference. For Ponomarev they are now the defeated party, and he is not really interested in them. We had a big conversation – about the meaning of the conference, about the fact that we would like a mention of the International Conference, a mention of Maoists and the like.

They told me about Altamerano's trip to Romania. He returned in a rage. Among other things, when he asked why Romania maintains diplomatic relations with Chile, Ceausescu replied, "Why not? In 1939 the Soviet Union even signed a non-aggression pact with Hitler!"

The bastard! But what can we do?

Right now Ponomarev is very concerned about Brandt, Palme, and [Bruno] Kreisky's solidarity with the Portuguese Soares (financial support too), and their zeal to unleash an anti-Communist offensive (after Vietnam). He writes me all sorts of resolutions on every ciphered telegram that comes in, saying that something needs to be done. I once offered him a concrete action plan (before Mitterrand's visit). I was sure that he wouldn't use the plan, and that's exactly what happened. This time I composed a beautiful reply, "Measure of Responsibility," seven pages long. Supposedly it is for *Pravda*. But this kind of material has to be sent around the Secretariat, and once again B.N. won't do it, making excuses that it is "not quite there" and "not quite right." In reality, on June 20th Brandt is coming to visit Brezhnev and of course B.N. doesn't know how things will go there and can't influence anything. Naturally, he will not agree to stick his nose out with a critical, persuasive article about social democrats. Plus, the General Secretary's election speech is coming up!

On Monday, June 2, Aksen and Markowski (SED) were here. They discussed with B.N. what to do with the European Conference of Communist Parties. They discussed the French incident as well. In the meantime, the French are getting more and more wound up. Pankov writes from Paris that he met with [Gaston] Plissonnier. The latter was unusually harsh, saying that their party is fundamentally at odds with the Communist Party on the analysis and evaluation of the essence of peaceful coexistence. [Plissonnier said,] "The CPSU has departed

from the principles and from the agreement. It followed the Italians, Yugoslavs and Romanians. The CPSU is ready to bend its principles in order to ensure those countries' participation in the Conference. The document presented to the subgroup in Berlin in mid-May is unacceptable for us. It cannot serve as any kind of foundation. If there is no return to the April avant-project, we will not sign the document.”

Marchais is also publicly threatening not to sign the document. *L'Humanité* published an article with all the things that Kanapa said to me on Plotnikov Street when he was on his way back from Korea.

Kanapa became a member of the Politburo at the last Plenum! (He divorced his Soviet Valya just in time!)

On June 3rd we had the first meeting of the *Questions of History* editorial board with the new members. Now we have Khromov (Trapeznikov's man from the Department of Science) and about five more people like that from the Institute of Marxism-Leninism, the Institute of World History, etc. The close atmosphere we developed over the last ten years – the camaraderie, the ironic humor, the trust and openness (with the ground rule of never taking offense) – is completely gone. Khromov objected to my points three times (indirectly) by “strongly” supporting the people who disagreed with my assessments (on three subjects). Trukhanovsky maneuvered deftly. Gaponenko leaned over to me and said, “It will be tough for him now!” But Khromov's interventions had a very clear goal: to show who is boss now. He sat down next to the editor-in-chief and constantly muttered something in his ear, on every article.

Until the first big clash... It's a shame. After all, this journal was an outlet for me into a different sphere. And now? Should I be demonstrating my adherence to principle? For what? In a situation like this, when essentially nobody really cares.

The newbies tried to show off, and all for the benefit of Khromov. Loudly, persistently, they demanded an ideological approach to everything. I watched them and thought: what drives these 50-60-year-old men? Why do they need this? Are they driven by some kind of idea, some kind of personal principle? Do they believe that if a paragraph in an article is written with their wording, something will change? Or is it the simple inertia of holding on to one's chair? Not just inertia, but an entire philosophy.

On June 5th I visited Dez'ka (David Samoilov), his birthday was on the 1st. He read his prose. Two big chapters (about an hour and a half). It is a memoir, but deeply objective. At times I felt like I was present at the reading of something akin to *War and Peace* by the scope and structure of the thoughts and feelings.

One of the chapters was about [Ilya] Ehrenburg as a phenomenon of Soviet history and the Soviet way of life. The other, “Mountain Girl,” was about the mountain division he served in on the Volkhov front in late 1942-early 1943.

It would be pointless to try to recap them here. The passages are very different, in manner and subject matter. But they are united by Dez'ka's worldview, which is very distant from Solzhenitsyn's; from cheap anti-Sovietism; from petty savoring of our failures, inconsistencies, and shortcomings. But he positively rejects the official and semi-official, closed and half-closed (though permissible in a small circle) explanations of our history. He does not proclaim his own explanation and he does not formulate it directly, at least in these chapters. But it seeps through from this very real prose: the nation lives by its own laws, it changes under the influence of unforgiving circumstances but not how the inveterate politicians, philosophers and writers would have it. The people change in their own ways, and eventually determine the direction the country takes. This happened before the war (to a lesser extent than during the war), this is the case now and it will continue this way in the future. The nature of the nation's development comes through the vivid images of soldiers (not necessarily always "good"), as well as from the calm, dispassionate and unstoppable exposure of Ehrenburg as a teller of lies and half-truths, as a profiteer on people's feelings and ideas. It's a little terrifying to realize that it is impossible to escape the fate that is contained in this unconscious force. It comes through in the language that Dez'ka first heard during the war. He heard it and understood that the language of the people is something completely different from the language of intellectuals and politicians.

Dez'ka's outward appearance is quite terrible. He is old and shabby. But his vision is better. He reads. And he is cheerful, not with the feigned cheerfulness of despair, but with cheerfulness that comes from the fullness and confidence of intellect. And from the fact that he has so many friends. The atmosphere in which people don't sweat the "little things in life" must also be an important factor.

June 14, 1975

Yesterday Brezhnev spoke before the voters. I wanted to go, but as soon as I realized that every sentence will be followed by applause (which is exactly what happened) I felt irritated and didn't go. I feel ashamed (personally, and in general) for these applause-games in a serious matter. His speech (i.e. pronunciation) is getting worse and worse. The text on internal affairs was very trivial – more trivial than before (even though it was written by the same team of Bovin, Blatov...). There were some new things on foreign affairs. He lashed out at Ford and NATO for toughening their position (after Vietnam), for their various threats and pressure, and for inflating military budgets. He's doing the right thing. Sterner language will not spoil anything and in the modern struggle it is useful to show your fists at the right moment.

Everybody noticed that Kirilenko appeared before his electorate (in Leningrad, by the way) after Suslov (in Ulyanovsk) and just before Kosygin. Everyone is wondering what this could mean.

B.N. ended up making me write a piece for *Pravda* in response to the West's tougher position after Vietnam, with an accent on social democracy. I had already finished it by last

Sunday. But, as could be expected, he put it on the shelf. It's time to get used to the fact that his hyperactivity dies down as soon as we have to move from making noise to actually doing business on a political level. That's when he immediately feels the "limits of his capacity."

On June 11th there was a meeting of "the six" socialist countries in Volynskoe-1. Regarding the European Conference of Communist Parties and the situation in Portugal. They also discussed "the French incident"; the majority were inclined to attribute it to the "prestigiousness" and arrogance of the French. However, this is only on the surface. What actually stands behind it is a policy that relies more sharply and confidently (than the Italians, Spaniards, and many others who have a real position in their country) on a distinctly "non-Moscow" direction as the main factor of their survival and movement forward. Just the day before yesterday, *L'Humanité* brazenly chastised the Poles for "praising" Giscard d'Estaing, who is scheduled to visit Poland very soon. They're saying that peaceful coexistence does not require us to praise imperialist leaders who are practicing deceitful politics and engaging in anticommunism every day by calling socialist governments "fascist," "totalitarian," etc.

Axen offered to discuss Portugal when he visited on his own. B.N. readily agreed and gave a long didactic speech. However, it became clear from Axen's, Telalov's, Frelek's, and Denesh'es speeches that their countries and parties are more actively and effectively involved with Portugal than we are. Their aid to Portugal surpasses our aid not only in proportion to their size, but in total amount of aid as well. I wrote Vadim a note about this, which he ended up giving to B.N. The latter agreed, with sadness.

A week or so prior to this he said (in connection to the honors bestowed on Jean, the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, and the elegant Margrethe II of Denmark, who were in the USSR on official visits), "We are receiving and courting the devil knows whom, while nobody really wants to pay attention to Portugal, a country that is of great importance to our entire mission!"

By the way, Kostikov, head of the Poland sector in Katushev's Department, told me about Gierek's meetings with Palme. Gierek was in Sweden for an official visit. They met one-on-one with Palme (both are fluent in French). Gierek later told Kostikov about the conversation in detail.

Gierek: "Knowing that we will be talking about Portugal, I called Brezhnev from the airplane." L.I. told him, "Tell him (Cunhal) that we're not meddling and will not get involved in the future. Tell him that we are restraining the Portuguese communists' enthusiasm for socialist reforms and their relations with other parties. We don't need any bases in Portugal and we have no plans to get involved."

They also discussed Czechoslovakia. Palme was supposedly very surprised when he found out that Husak was one of the leaders of the Slovak uprising and served time after the war "for nationalism," while Dubcek demanded that "all people like Husak should be hanged." Palme was sure that Husak was a Gottwald-type of Stalinist.

By the way, during “the six” I was assigned to the Poles (Frelek-Suika). Despite my sincerity and openness, I didn’t feel a reciprocal “affection” from them. At the going-away party Zagladin and Zhilin (the latter knows both of them much less than I do) were much more popular, not to mention Shakhnazarov, who is their “boss” in Katushev’s department. It seems I don’t invite familiarity and consequently “heartfelt Party emotions.” Plus, even though Frelek is a Secretary of the PUWP, he is also a poet, writer, and artist and therefore more susceptible (like everyone) to crude flattery.

B.N. told me that when Karpinsky was summoned to the PCC, he declared: “I will not give you the pleasure of picking me apart. I am leaving this Party.”

The planned CPSU delegation visit with the Labour Party fell through. We had delayed it for two years despite Hayward’s insistence. The reason is very simple: Suslov doesn’t think it’s very important and he needs Ponomarev here to deal with the U.S. senators. And while Ponomarev understands that by walking away from the visit we are blocking a very important channel to England and the European socialist-democratic movement and wasting the work that we started ourselves and invested quite a bit into over the last two+ years, he does not insist on the visit. He is sure that Suslov suspects him of “just wanting to take a trip to England.” This is the level of political relations between them!

Of course, Hayward and the entire left wing of the Labour Party, same as Wilson & Co., could not even imagine that such “simple things” are the cause for canceling the visit. They will wonder whether we changed our policies and our relationship with the Labour movement and social-democracy overall, maybe even with England.

It’s also sad because there is no one besides Ponomarev (and maybe Suslov himself) in the entire Central Committee who could lead this kind of a delegation. The head of the delegation would have to discuss a wide range of issues right off the bat, he would have to know these issues and be able to use this knowledge in a debate with the sharp and acerbic Brits. This kind of debate can’t be read off a paper prepared in Moscow (as Kapitonov requested, for example). That would make a laughing stock of our entire Party.

My conversation with Morris (Gus Hall’s deputy). The incident with Andropov’s election speech – the *New York Times* speculated on one phrase from his speech, something along the lines of: despite all the democracy in America, the unemployed can protest by the White House as long as they want but nothing will change. Gus Hall was furious and demanded an explanation from the CC – why are they struggling and making sacrifices, sometimes even getting shot at during these demonstrations, while in the CC’s point of view they are wasting their time and none of it matters! Should they just sit and wait for a revolution and socialism?

B.N. and later I spent a long time giving Morris explanations, but in the end we had to send Hall a written explanation prepared by Andropov’s guys with his consent.

During his visit here Morris, and Kashtan and Woddis before him, officially protested an article by a certain Dm. Zhukov in *Ogonek* from October 1974 for being clearly anti-Semitic. Woddis even met with Safonov, the editor of *Ogonek*. The latter acknowledged that the article is bad and that Zhukov “let him down” and wasn’t accepted into the Union of Journalists “for this.”

I also told everyone that it’s a bad article, that it “does not reflect,” and so on. They replied: alright, but nobody besides us knows your views about it, while Zhukov’s article has been disseminated around the world by the bourgeois press.

I reported to Ponomarev along these lines. He told me to take measures “together with *agitprop*.” I will take measures, but I’m sure that the fact that Zhukov’s article is anti-Semitic will remain “between us” with Morris, Woddis, Kashtan, and the Chairman of the Communist Party of Israel [Meir] Vilner (who at a recent reception with B.N. also sharply objected to the article).

June 29, 1975

I went to Budapest. Once again we were housed on the government hills. I slept in a bed that had been previously slept in by Elizabeth II, Brezhnev, and the like. The Hungarians joked that they have changed the sheets since then.

“The six” – Bulgarians, Hungarians, East Germans, Poles, Czechs, and I. Deputies of international departments. On the agenda: what to do about socialist democracy; Portugal; anticommunism.

I had to lead all the discussions (this time I was “the CPSU”), which is a role I’m not used to. Everyone except the hosts adjusted to me and would not say anything if I was being modest and waiting until “later” to speak. The Hungarians were stubborn (even though we came to an agreement with them in advance of the meeting) and pushed their illusory maximalist plans. I kept gently bringing them down to earth.

I got back on the 18th. A couple days after my return B.N. left with a delegation to Syria, taking with him our new deputy Rummyantsev (who “passed” by Suslov, while Brutents did not).

I was left to write yet another report for B.N. for the 40th anniversary of the VII Congress of the Comintern! I’ve been struggling with this anniversary for a year now. But I could not resist the second wave, which was started by Timofeyev as self-promotion. Even though twice already I argued with Ponomarev about the poor timing and absurdity of this anniversary – waving Comintern flags at a moment when the European Conference of Communist Parties is coming to a dead end (precisely because the CPSU is suspected of hegemony), and the Yugoslavs are openly talking and writing about the nostalgia some feel for the Comintern.

And so I’m struggling once again, chewing over the associations and allusions to the VII Congress and the present day. Over the last 12 years I wrote about five articles and reports for

him on Dimitrov, and 3-4 reports and articles on the Comintern, including one for the 30th anniversary of the VII Congress. In other words, it's all about the same thing but with an update for the current state of affairs.

B.N. certainly has “graphomania” for speeches. Right now he is breaking all the records: he gives speeches 3-4 times per month. Besides his claim to the title of “theoretician of the Party,” i.e. his petty vanity, it seems he has a political idea behind this as well.

He is popular in anticommunist literature. People follow his speeches and comment on them with the idea that he reflects the so-called true, secret plans and intentions of the Kremlin – to use détente to undermine the West, to export revolution or at least encourage revolution in capitalist countries. There are special articles about him in which he is portrayed as a secret leader of the communist movement, the driving force behind communist activity and propaganda, the organizer of financial and other support to communist parties. He knows all of this, of course. He knows that he is contrasted to Brezhnev, who is seen as a sincere supporter of peace who plays fairly. And of course B.N. knows that Brezhnev is also aware of how Ponomarev is seen in the West. But for now everything has worked out.

Recently all of this culminated in a big provocation and TASS even released a refutation yesterday. The French paper *Quotidien de Paris* printed a “Letter from Ponomarev” that supposedly contained directives to communist parties on how to seize power in a crisis situation. The newspaper obtained this “document” from Portuguese socialists. This is making noise all over Europe. Communist parties are coming out one after another with angry rebuttals. Leroy and others showed up at *Quotidien de Paris* and demanded to see the original. (By the way, all of this is very characteristic of the present situation in the communist movement – everyone's worst fear is to be suspected of receiving directives from the Kremlin.) The Portuguese Communist Party denounced the allegations.

The purpose of this campaign is clear as day – to instill fear of communism (from Moscow) because of Portugal, the PCI's election victory (33 percent of the vote) and other symptoms of left-leaning tendencies due to the recession.

Naturally there never was, nor could have been, any such letter. But the provocation has a rather “material” basis. (It was organized by employees of the Portuguese newspaper *Republica*, as we were notified by ciphered telegram from the CC of the Portuguese Communist Party. *Quotidien de Paris* only reprinted their material.) The material was put together from excerpts of Ponomarev's speeches and articles, including first and foremost at the Consultative meeting in Warsaw and the Preparatory meeting in Budapest. Naturally it is made in the style of Sovietologists. Just the bare essence (we should use the crisis to overthrow capitalism) with a tone of a directive in a circular letter.

By the way, B.N. was supposed to go to Portugal with a CPSU delegation on July 6th at Cunhal's invitation. Now in the aforementioned ciphered telegram they are asking him not to

come. They think it would be “misinterpreted” and there could be provocations, etc. However, as far as I can see, B.N. is in great spirits. It’s possible that he even enjoys this role of a “gray Majesty” of the communist movement, a “consistent revolutionary,” a “Leninist,” and a “fighter against imperialism.” Perhaps he is tying his immediate and posthumous future to this “fame.”

If this assumption is correct, then it is understandable why he is once again ready to celebrate the Comintern anniversary.

The story with the publication of the Declaration of the Havana Conference. While I was in Budapest *Pravda* published the TASS “summary” on two pages, which contained only what we imposed on the Cubans (Shakhnazarov and I – in Cuba through Arismendi): speak more strongly about the USSR’s role, invite the Chinese to the Conference, call for an International Conference, etc. The Cubans were furious.

The decision was made to urgently publish the Declaration in *Kommunist*. But how? The Declaration is three printed pages. That’s the first thing. Secondly, it criticizes Ford “by name.” Despite this (or maybe not having read it) Shaposhnikov, who leads the Latin American sector, made a note to publish it in full. B.N. initialed it before leaving for Syria, but asked that it be shown to me before sending it to the CC. I objected [to publishing it in full].

Suslov agreed to a “summary” (mostly because *Kommunist* can’t really accommodate the full length). I reduced it by 1/5, naturally taking out the bit about Ford. When B.N. returned the *Kommunist* already had the revisions. He summoned Shaposhnikov and me. Shaposhnikov insisted on his point of view (we should publish it in full because the Cubans will never let it go). I insisted on my point of view (We have our own policies, we are serious people and détente does not depend on the Cubans, etc.). B.N. was clearly on Shaposhnikov’s side, but did not dare to scrap the work already done in *Kommunist* because it was backed by Suslov’s agreement.

Clashed with Shakhnazarov over an article in *Pravda* about the same Declaration. Blatant ignorance and irresponsibility of *Pravda* employees and Darusenkov (Shakhnazarov’s head of sector), who composed the article. Scandalous. I yelled at Shakhnazarov on the phone.

July 4, 1975

Fifty leaders and members of the Central Committees of various communist parties who are currently visiting Moscow have been invited to a performance at the Hall of Columns where Suslov and B.N. will be speaking. I’m sorry that I did not oppose this idea. It will be a demonstration with the background of “Ponomarev’s Letter” and such. Fedoseyev was the initiator; he got Suslov’s approval while Ponomarev was busy and brushed it aside. I didn’t have the energy to take any measures against it.

The world will notice once again the Suslov-B.N. contrast on the one side, and Brezhnev-Brandt on the other. Right now Brandt is here on a visit following an invitation from the General

Secretary of the CC CPSU. Yesterday at lunch they exchanged speeches. Brezhnev's speech both in style and spirit (I saw it when it was initially sent around) is categorically different from Ponomarev's attempts to appear as the "principled fighter for ideals."

I cannot shake the suspicion that B.N. is deliberately moving in this direction, he is pressuring our fraternal parties: this is who I am and you are going to have to take that into account. But he is cautious. He made noise over the publication of the Havana Declaration: what are we afraid of, look at Cubans living right next to the biggest imperialist country and they are not afraid. (This is in connection with the passages in the text that would be offensive to Ford, which I insisted that we take out). But in this report at the last moment he removed even the slightest mention of Ford and Kissinger (regarding their statements that the US has to be the most powerful country, first and foremost more powerful than the USSR) and replaced "socialism" with "social progress" throughout. He agreed with me that it's not the right time for him to come out with the theme of Communists joining governments and he crossed out the corresponding pages, which he had made us compose (it had been one of his main ideas when he was "planning" the report).

July 6, 1975

On Saturday I didn't come in to work. I wasn't feeling well.

Started on the album *Mir iskusstva* [The World of Art]. It came out recently, magnificent illustrations and an inspired 100-page preface that would have been impossible [to publish] even five years ago. Along with genuine pleasure I once again feel bitterness and frustration. Decades of persecution of the greatest artistic discoveries of Russian genius: Somov, Benois, Dobouzhinsky, Bakst, Golovin, Kustodiev, Ostoumova-Lebedeva... Or suppression, for example of Lanceray, who had actually been awarded the Stalin Prize in 1948 [sic] for his pseudo-Russian ornamentation of "Komsomolskaya" metro station. And there is still a ban on Mashkov, Larionov, and Goncharova.

What did that do for our ideology (in the true sense)? It fostered vulgarity and consolidated the right of foolishness (in the social sense), which even now triumphs "when necessary" with no argumentation or explanation (the case with Neizvestny).

And now they release a magnificent album with fairly objective and reasonable introduction that explains what they, these *miriskusniki*⁹, meant then, now, and in the future.

Or: on Friday I stopped by the exhibition hall at the Union of Artists on Kuznetsky Most. There was not a single visitor. A few contemporary artists were on display, it seems they are all young. In the "modern" style there is something of *Mir Iskusstva*, and of Petrov-Vodkin, Léger, Picasso, and first and foremost of our 1920s. But even to a layman it is obviously imitation: there

⁹ Members of the *Mir Iskusstva* [World of Art] movement. [Translator's footnote]

is no search for new content = reaction to the official theme of our time. And the imitative nature of the form, sometimes downright naïve, makes one smile (rather than get irritated).

By the way, this is one of the outcomes of Stalin's cultural policy and that of his heirs in the Union of Artists, Ministry of Culture, Demichev and Furtseva and their apparatus. And another sad smile appears when you look at this exhibition. Nowadays these kinds of modern-style exhibitions are commonplace. People don't even go to them unless the artist is famous. But only 3-5 years ago the emergence of several such paintings was a sensation and the subject of merciless abuse in the departments "in charge of the arts." Party memberships were lost, biographies were ruined, people lost their jobs, means, reputations. What was it all for? What was the point of this Erasmus-style iconoclasm?

So these so-called abstract artists started last fall to illegally and then half-legally exhibit their works, and now they are exhibiting abroad. They are probably even worse – all they have is a vulgar pretense for protest through art, but there is not a hint of art in what they do.

The general and main outcome of the cultural policy is the complete disconnect of professional talent (and I mean talent, not professionals and amateurs) and the environment, the material that needs to be expressed through the appropriate art forms. Hence the absence of the general development in art; although there are individual successes, they do not move things forward.

Today *Pravda* finally ran the editorial on the Latin American Conference of Communist Parties with my edits.

An amazing paradox is forming in present-day international life. Brezhnev meets with Brandt. Both emphasize that "we have different ideologies" that are incompatible and should not be mixed. Both say that reason must be the prevailing force in relations between countries and peoples because the alternative is a nuclear catastrophe; or at least the inability to solve the problems of humanity (economic cooperation, division of labor, energy, raw materials, hunger, poverty, etc). But the most basic question that arises from this situation is the following: why do we need ideologies if they get in the way of us solving essential problems, if they only put us at risk of disaster – in other words, if ideology contradicts reason as we see it in the XX century?!

Indeed, world history has evolved in the struggle of ideologies (with all the horrific, bloody consequences). But it seems that the same way the logic of perfecting weapons leads to the impossibility of using them even to develop society, so the logic of the struggle of ideologies becomes meaningless and inhuman in the modern world. This is something you cannot undo. But the same common sense that made us engage in international affairs is now presenting these naïve, "childish" problems.

July 13, 1975

In a couple hours I'm leaving for the Riga beach, the resort "Yantar" [Amber], somewhere near Kemeris, where I was fighting in the fall of 1944. The Latvians say that it's the most luxurious place in the Soviet Union of all the government dachas.

And B.N.?! Once again he was right. The report on the VII Congress was great. Suslov praised him, Podgorny even muttered some approval at the PB. B.N. is ecstatic. He smoothed out the edges a little more before publication. (The publication in *Partiynaya zhizn* [Party Life] went through at lightning speed, publication in *Kommunist* is coming up.) The world press is talking about him again, this time as a mouthpiece of Kremlin's reconciliation with the social democrats.

By the way, around this time Brezhnev dragged Brandt into a session of the Supreme Soviet and the deputies met him with thunderous applause. This is a sign of the times for you! This is how Brezhnev solves the age-old problem of the split in the labor movement and everything connected to it. Through common sense, through human relations, through the "trust complex."

In this sense Bondarev's new novel *Bereg* [The Shore] in *Nash Sovremennik* [Our Contemporary] is quite symptomatic. It is certainly written with talent. But that's not the point. Bondarev is in our orthodoxy by now, and probably in the top five truly and officially talented writers, i.e. the ones for whom the CC Culture Department is no longer an authority. It's amazing how he examined the human material that secured our victory in those days, how he disregards the well-established rules of the game and ideological taboos. And in the background there is a discussion with contemporary Germans. This is also (like with Brandt) a conversation on the human level using today's language of common sense, not an argument between two dummy figures representing two different worlds. All of this is very symptomatic! Peaceful coexistence is drawing us into a completely different climate, in which familiar concepts take on a new air and hackneyed stock phrases shed their scabby shells and appear in their original form of simple and good ideas.

After B.N. made his report, he intensified his efforts on the preparation of materials for the XXV Congress and almost foiled my vacation because of this. He organized a group led by Brutents. He personally took the trouble to get us a "theoretical dacha" and finally got the Administrative Department to give us Novo-Ogarevo – the place where the idea for the "Peace Program" was born before the XXIV Congress, and where it was formulated. The group is already there. I will settle in there myself when I get back from Latvia. The preparatory work could be interesting. We really have to try to reflect the "new reality" of the communist movement. Life is already ahead of our clichés. In the next five years a lot of things will happen and all in the direction of a complete renewal of the ICM. And if we cannot give a frank assessment of this new reality, at least we will try to use language to open cracks through which common sense could seep through in this sphere as well.

Curious: how will the Congress Report reflect the new situation in the world, what will we say about imperialism, the capitalist system, the “national liberation (from whom?) movement”? But we have to develop our ideas first, then put together the words. We need to make such a breakthrough into the new understanding of what is happening that later neither B.N. nor “Tireshka” (Aleksandrov-Agentov) can edit everything out. Something has to remain besides the inevitable platitudes.

It will be an interesting project.

I didn't have time to look at the materials supplied to us by the Institutes of the Academy of Sciences in connection with the XXV Congress. I wonder, will they sense something and will they dare to say something new in substance, instead of trifles?

August 1, 1975

From July 14-28th I was at the “Yantar” resort in Yurmala. Essentially it is a government dacha. Grishin was staying there at the same time (PB member and Secretary of the Moscow City Committee). The house was built in 1974. It's modern, regally comfortable. They say it cost 8 million (the planned construction cost was 2 million). The Latvian staff: unsmiling precision, almost imperceptible helpfulness without Russian-style fawning.

Our mansion in the center of Majori stuck out like a luxurious obelisk to the privileges of power. Crowds of passersby would stop with simple curiosity, and you could read in their eyes: “the masters are having a good time.”

In the evening, the beach and the streets turn into avenues of fashion and beautiful attire. But alongside professional vacationers there are a good number of Russian provincials, throngs of them, tourist groups.

I ran into Yu.P. Lyubimov several times at the beach. He was on vacation at the House of Writers in Dubulti, two kilometers away from our “Yantar’.” He was in a very spirited mood. When he would see me, he would leave his entourage and take me on walks until I was exhausted. He would tell me about his struggles with the authorities, with Demichev (whom he calls “Nilovna” – Pyotr Nilych – a mocking reference to the heroine of Gorky's novel *Mat'* [Mother] that we all know from our schooldays). He was yelling loud enough for the whole beach to hear that Demichev is a bastard and a scumbag and that he, Lyubimov, is not going to take it anymore! That's it! Enough of this mockery! Let them drive him out of the theater, but he's not going to take it anymore. He will come back from vacation and write “to the highest authority.”

The fact of the matter is that after Demichev became the Minister of culture, he finally deigned to visit the Taganka Theater. He saw the preview of the long-suffering “Kuz'kin” by [Boris] Mozhaev. He said that he will “allow” it and sent his people with notes. Lyubimov spent

two months editing the play according to the notes. When it was ready, Demichev's apparatus showed up to the new preview and "banned" it without making any references. However, Lyubimov later learned that when the Minister of Culture came back to his office the morning after visiting the Taganka Theater, he said to his subordinates: "It will not go through!"

So Lyubimov is in a rage: what kind of minister is this? He tells some people one thing, other people another thing, and then does the opposite.

Periodically he would stop and, immediately gathering a crowd of onlookers, artistically portray some bureaucratic scene, acting out the parts. He was especially good when "Kat'ka" (Furtseva) was one of the characters.

I visited the Riga Cathedral twice. Mozart's Requiem and Bach. Violin and a Sonata for violin and organ. It was truly marvelous.

Went on tours of Riga and its suburbs.

Visited the places where I fought my last battles – in Sloka and Kemeru.

In Kemeru I stopped by the famous sanatorium that was intact when we entered the town but all its windows were shattered and several dozen meters of broken glass covered the ground around it. Then we drove out to Džūkste, which we never managed to capture in January of 1945 and from where the Germans launched a counterattack. That's when I was wounded near the Putnu-Jidi [*Путь-Жиды*] farmstead, three kilometers from Džūkste. I remember the front line, which started right at edge of the forest clearing. The Germans were 50 meters away at the farmstead. And we just couldn't drive them out of there, while their machine gun constantly forced us to crawl on our bellies.

About five kilometers from there we reached my final front line. I couldn't find the farmstead where our headquarters were located approximately 1.5 kilometers from the trenches. Everything is overgrown. But I'm pretty sure I clearly made out the grove where from May 2nd-5th of 1945 under the cover of darkness we were digging starting positions for the division that was supposed to replace our regiment and go on the offensive. A bridge, a creek, and a very distinctive edge of the forest clearing. Here, 30 years and two months ago, I led my last "mission"; here we fought off German sorties that tried to prevent us from consolidating our positions, tried to scare us. Here our sergeant-major was killed point-blank from a machine gun, he was moving in front of me when we rushed for the newly dug trench. I was told the Germans occupied it as soon as we left. Here I was nearly blown up on a spider mine and froze when I felt my hands touch the trip wire. Here we were ferociously blanketed by mortar and machine gun fire almost constantly during nighttime hours until we retreated to our front line at dawn. From here we carried on our waterproof capes three, four, and sometimes up to ten wounded and dead soldiers. After these nights, our regiment engineer, a captain who was very scared but kept himself together, told Bambal' (the commander of our regiment) right in front of me: "Well,

Comrade Colonel, our captain (referring to me) has courage and nerves of steel. He walked around with such an aura of calmness while we were digging that I am still amazed. Without him, we would have run away from that horror...”

Even before this, one night I was arguing with a much-decorated battalion commander from Georgia until we almost came to blows; he refused to send his deputy on patrol. I organized a search team myself to capture a prisoner for interrogation. Five people and I was the sixth. But we didn't make it to the German front line, they discovered us, set off some rockets to make us visible, and opened frenzied machine-gun fire. We barely got out of there.

I also remember the terrifying sensation I felt here: when you would be checking the overnight posts in the trenches, standing near a soldier, and suddenly there would be a shot from the German side. And they are shooting directly at you, though of course blindly because at night you cannot see who is looking out of the trenches. The shots from a rifle could be very loud, like from a small-caliber gun, and with a bright flash. And indeed it was almost point-blank: the line of our trenches in some places was 100-150 meters from the Germans.

I recall it was precisely here that I once woke up in the morning in our headquarters to find a German sitting on a stool right in front of me. I was taken aback. He turned out to be a prisoner that our guys had just brought in for interrogation.

We returned from Tukums via an excellent highway, worthy of Switzerland and Belgium.

It feels strange. At dinner I even felt awkward telling my neighbors at the table where I went and why. This is all my personal past and my personal feelings about it. It would look like I was bragging.

August 4, 1975

Last day of vacation. Today I'll start on the introduction to the multi-volume publication. Before I went to Riga I left a new version with B.N., it reflected his June remarks. The gist of them: now we went too far to the left. This is new, coming from B.N. I think the wind of change is starting to affect him, or more likely it's the situation on the top – Brandt, détente, and so on. Back in June he reproached me because the draft didn't contain his central idea about the two paths of the labor movement: the revolutionary, which led to such (!) victories; and the reformist, which led to “we all know what.” I quickly fixed it using the template we made with Veber about five years ago in the form of a large booklet. When B.N. read it he got scared of excessive “revolutionism” and such vilification of the reformist path – the path that is incidentally used by the majority of the working class in the capitalist world and which eliminates the prospect of unity. Now the draft needs to be reworked “a little bit in reverse.”

The European Conference of Communist Parties! (which I've mentioned before numerous times). I haven't spoken with Zagladin, who once again went to Berlin at the end of

July for the working group. I don't know how it went. But apart from the contradictions that the French exposed and I wrote about earlier, right now a more serious and general circumstance is coming up. After Helsinki (which was truly a milestone in the social sense, I am sure of this) it is absurd and stupid to continue with communist initiatives like the aforementioned conference. What will people talk about there, what goals will they set? And what for? It's clear that global politics are done differently nowadays, not through confrontation and pressure. And that's essentially the kind of methods the communist movement is designed for: methods of implacable, hard-edged struggle with the enemy. But alongside whom will this European Conference of Communist Parties call us to struggle? Alongside extremists who are raging [against the system] and who do not participate in the creation of policy and will never be allowed into the key aspects of mainstream politics. But then the communist movement will veer off the highway of history and doom itself to the role of picking up litter on the flanks. It will not agree to publicly demonstrate this kind of transition. So why should we convene?!

Tomorrow I'm going to Novo-Ogarevo, where a group has already gathered to prepare materials for the Congress.

The Congress materials need new ideas too. It would be pointless to develop the ideas as the continuation of the XXIV Congress and the ones preceding it. The very structure of the General Secretary's report (instituted by Stalin) now looks like an anachronism. Yes, it seems that we are entering a new stage of "revisionism." It's inevitable and it's already coming – through the Italians, through peaceful coexistence, through embraces with Brandt, etc. In other words, it's determined by the objective circumstances of our world today. We need new ideas. Deep, fundamental changes in our approach to the critical ideas of Marxism-Leninism. We need a turning-point that would be equivalent in significance to the creation of bolshevism, or the NEP. Otherwise, our theory will become totally pointless. We need ideas that would completely outrage the ministers of ideology, as was the case with the NEP and the XX Congress. And we need somebody with great authority, someone who could deal with the outrage. For now, it seems like Brezhnev's authority is still capable of providing this kind of turning-point (though he has really deteriorated physically).

We'll try to come up with something in Novo-Ogarevo. I wonder if the guys there now are thinking along these lines, or just taking the same old well-worn roads?

August 10, 1975

I went to Novo-Ogarevo. Took over the reins from Brutents. Read what they put together. Not very impressive. When I flipped through the academic material, I understood that our guys did a hack job overall because even the academic materials were better and more interesting than what the speechwriters produced. When I sized up the situation, it was the same old problem – they didn't put in any special effort and definitely didn't do their best.

But that's not the point. The day when I told them everything I thought about them and made suggestions on how we should proceed, we found out that on Brezhnev's and the Politburo's orders another group was coming to the dacha, headed by Aleksandrov-Agentov. It turns out that Ponomarev knew about it. They made a concession to him and included me and Brutents in the group. The rest of the guys had to evacuate the same evening.

As could be expected, our text was "ignored." Although during the first discussion they graciously agreed to consider how to build a bridge, our plan on which this text was built. Naturally, Aleksandrov-Agentov pushed aside our plan's idea (to bring to the front our international achievements that the whole world really saw) and suggested that we take the traditional route: the socialist system, the crisis of capitalism, etc.

In addition to Aleksandrov-Agentov, Chernyaev, and Brutents, our group included Kovalyov (Deputy Minister), Blatov (Brezhnev's adviser), Zagladin and Shishlin.

Right at the first discussion we had a "musical moment": a clash between Aleksandrov-Agentov on one side and Kovalev and Blatov on the other. The rest of us watched this circus. Kovalyov asked whether it might be expedient to present a new formula of peaceful coexistence at the Congress, one that would not scare off our partners, since we keep reminding them that it is a special form of class struggle in the international arena.

Aleksandrov-Agentov pounced on him with a hysterical fury (he doesn't care that the whole world now knows Kovalyov, that in the span of two years in Geneva he accomplished a tremendous amount for the Helsinki Conference). He accused him of opportunism, of rejecting the Party Program, of pacifism and liberalism. Tolya [Kovalyov] calmly objected. Blatov stepped in [to defend Kovalyov]. And then the real hysterics began: if that's how you feel Anatoly Ivanovich (Blatov), then we will not be able to work together!

To us this argument looked absurd and primitive in its essence. The form it took is quite symptomatic. Aleksandrov-Agentov's intolerance and fanatical egotism will cost him dearly someday!..

For now, this is what happened: after the discussion Aleksandrov-Agentov, of course, started preparing the draft himself. He dictated all evening and the next morning. He has an astonishing ability to work, but of course a draft created in this manner is full of banalities, no attempts to say anything new. And most importantly – it is a draft of a speech the Minister of Foreign Affairs might give to diplomats, not the CC CPSU General Secretary's summary report at the Party Congress.

August 17, 1975

A week has passed under the leadership of Aleksandrov-Agentov. Impressions of him as a person: bigotry, morbid self-importance, a combination of outwardly intelligence and gentlemanly ways with women and inner boorishness and hysterical rudeness.

In the end we had the following division of labor: Shishlin and Blatov – socialism; Karen – the third world; I – the crisis of capitalism, the labor movement, the communist movement, the common revolutionary process. A three-tiered cake, as Aleksandrov-Agentov himself put it.

Aleksandrov-Agentov took on all of foreign policy but didn't start writing. He is waiting for Gromyko's version. As Ponomarev explained to me, the Politburo assigned Gromyko to submit this version by August 1st, but he couldn't care less even though his guys already composed the text.

We wrote our sections. I worked like a madman, perfecting each phrase and trying to use the new formulas and ideas from the academic materials as much as I could.

We discussed these preliminary versions on Saturday morning, sitting in the sunshine on the first warm day after a week of cold weather.

Blatov accused Karen and me of being too academic. But Aleksandrov-Agentov jumped in to defend us, since he already feels partially invested in the texts. He snapped at Blatov and thereby saved everything else.

Next week we will be finishing up our sections.

B.N. returned from the Crimea, where he was with Brezhnev and American congressmen. Once again he started to pester me about the "Introduction" to the multi-volume set on the labor movement. He's still afraid. He says it's too early to submit it to the publisher (in the meantime, Volume I has already been set in type) and God knows what is written there, judging by the fact that we've had to redo the "Introduction" five times already. I objected: I don't know about God, but I personally know what is written there and how, because I read and edited this volume twice.

August 23, 1975

One more week in Novo-Ogarevo. To mine and Brutents' surprise our relationship with "Sparrow" (Aleksandrov-Agentov) is quite normal. Daily interaction (at the table, swimming, jokes, discussions on "extraneous topics" about literature, etc., especially since he likes to show off his erudition and knowledge of poetry from D. Bednyi to Goethe and Kipling) take place in quite a "friendly atmosphere." Our work-related interaction is better still.

On Wednesday we were discussing the second drafts of our sections, and to my surprise both he and Blatov started praising my section. From this Brutents concluded that for whatever reason Aleksandrov-Agentov wants to make me into an alternative to Zagladin (it's possible that

he is jealous after Brezhnev's public statement that he only feels confident about a text after it goes through Zagladin).

In any case, this time working with Aleksandrov was not only relatively peaceful, but with this group of people it was interesting. I am still enthusiastic about working on my sections, at least.

It was only yesterday that we received the section on foreign policy written at the MFA by Adamishin and corrected by Gromyko. It came from Brezhnev in the south. It seems he looked it over and really did not want to send it out for fear of offending Gromyko. Aleksandrov is under the impression (he shared this with Brutents) that Gromyko has really changed and gained influence (with Brezhnev), which he uses without ceremony and crudely. It turns out that two speeches were prepared for Helsinki – one by Gromyko and one by Aleksandrov's group. Andrey Mikhailovich naturally believes that his version was better (and it probably was). But Gromyko threw a fit and Brezhnev said, "Alright, don't quarrel. I'll read the MFA version, what's the difference!"

Karen and I invited ourselves to visit Ponomarev at the hospital, he was there for a pre-vacation check up. We told him how things were going and our relations with Aleksandrov. He looked "frightened" to see us – worried that we wanted to see him because we got into a conflict with Aleksandrov. He calmed down, but then started worrying about the opposite scenario – that we fell too much under Aleksandrov's influence and are now ready to give in on everything... including on matters of principle. Then he gave us advice = "thoughts" for the summary report. For all his political savvy and awareness, he is a retrograde. He thinks about the communist movement in police terms and about the struggle for peace in Grechko's terms – from a position of power. If Brezhnev pays tribute to our "historical tradition" but essentially has long moved away from the concept of "how can we cleverly swindle the imperialists," Ponomarev staunchly holds this exact position. It's no wonder that the anticommunist propaganda placed them in different "camps" in the Kremlin correlation of forces.

B.N. suddenly went to his bedroom and brought out Tvardovsky's *Distance After Distance* [*Za dal'u dal'*] and started reading aloud to us the chapter on Stalin. He read expressively for a long time and made comments. He approved some parts but was indignant that Tvardovsky entertains the idea that the nation may be to blame for having that kind of leader. It was a "scene worthy of the brush of Aivazovsky." Once again we saw a man who was completely made up of pieces of Party history and permeated by its spirit, with its almost unbelievable fate and actions, contrasts and incompatibilities.

Things are going badly in Portugal. B.N. believes that it will end with [Mário] Soares; that there is no energy for a fascist regime. I don't know, I don't know. I hope so! But the communists are overdoing it, though maybe they are not the main reason either. The progression from Cunhal's reception resembling "Lenin's return to Petrograd" to the current siege of

buildings where he is giving speeches, pogroms and arson of PCP headquarters, is terrible. It seems there is some kind of general anticommunist trend emerging everywhere – on the grounds of the CPSU’s disconnectedness – a factor of peace and yet an unacceptable model to follow.

August 31, 1975

One more week in Novo-Ogarevo. Each one of us was polishing his own section. When we put it all together it came to 75 pages. And it should be about 40.

Yesterday Brezhnev returned from Crimea to Moscow. This may have some effect on our work in Novo-Ogarevo. Kirilenko told Aleksandrov: “Don’t rush. Even though the deadline is September 1st, do not sacrifice quality for speed. You can work on it for a week or so more.”

Aleksandrov spoke with Suslov as well, who also recently got back from vacation. He said that he likes our plan but that we should press imperialism harder. He said we restrained ourselves before Helsinki and now our hands are freer. We should remind them about Chile, Portugal, and Vietnam.

I wonder, do we have a common propaganda line, or is it everyone doing his own thing? Most likely the latter (of course, as it relates to personal sympathies and fears for one’s seat). After all, no one systematically thinks about and manages our ideological activity at an authoritative level. We mostly make do on a case by case basis, usually with a delay and without planning even two steps ahead.

September 6, 1975

Yesterday we finished our stint in Novo-Ogarevo. The week consisted of polishing up the text and petty mutual nitpicking. Now, following the Politburo decision, it has to go to Suslov and Kirilenko and they will decide whether to give it to Ponomarev and Katushev or someone else.

The section on socialist countries gave us the most trouble. There is really nothing to say there, it’s all mythology. But we need to make it sound impressive and beautiful, because it is “the most important thing.” Then came my piece on the crisis of capitalism (inserted into Aleksandrov’s section on our foreign policy). There were “doubts” every time because the critics are astonishingly ignorant on the subject and claim that the speaker and the “first readers” will be even more confused “with the various theories in there.” I didn’t really get into any particular theories, but I wanted to at least systematize the specific features of our current state of affairs.

I think we have surpassed all the parties of the ICM in our “dislike of theory” (which Lenin wrote about). We have a distaste for any theory that goes beyond propaganda. So our scholarship on capitalism, which nowadays is fairly advanced at Inozemtsev’s institute and the materials it produces, does not “engage” with our policy. From this perspective (i.e. from the standpoint of political theory) this scholarship is unutilized and useless.

The situation now is that not only the main leaders of the CPSU haven't picked up Lenin's works in decades (I won't even mention Marx), but even their highly educated assistants don't know Lenin and couldn't care less.

September 11, 1975

The workweek is in full swing. I am reading a lot about social democracy and Portugal. Zagladin is there on a special mission, he sent us three telegrams. His task (CC directive) was to "suggest" to Cunhal not to "go too far left," to stop, maybe even to retreat and gather his strength. The course to power through the military failed. Apparently the Leninist tactic turned out to be missing some essential elements.

"Zagladin's mission" should have happened sooner, specifically when Cunhal was in Moscow. But at the time he was given a trivial reception. Brezhnev didn't want to meet with him; and B.N. said some platitudes along the lines of his textbook on the "History of the CPSU" (I was present at the meeting).

Our department's feebleness is now obvious. Pertsov (consultant on Portugal) "informed" the CC (through Zagladin and Ponomarev) by transmitting what the Portuguese told him, without a drop of analysis or his own interpretation. He gave everyone the impression that the Communists had Portugal in their pocket (and first and foremost the Movement of the Armed Forces [*Movimento das Forças Armadas*], the army). And it's not just Pertsov! Nobody wanted to seriously work on Portugal. I think that's due to a) senile indifference to matters that aren't directly connected to us and aren't urgent; and b) the almost subconscious division of spheres of influence with the Americans (Czechoslovakia is "ours," Portugal is "yours").

Today I received [Henry] Winston (Chairman of the CPUSA, he is black, blind). I filled him in on the ICM, the European Conference of Communist Parties, the outlook for the CSCE, the CPSU's relations with the ICP, PCF, PCE, and the Middle East. He was very pleased. They don't need much, these party leaders!

Yesterday I read Yu. Trifonov's new story in *Novyi Mir* called "Another Life" [*Drugaya zhizn'*]. It's like he took a scalpel to the everyday life of Moscow intelligentsia; a terrifying thing against the background of "building communism." We are either in the process of universal social disintegration, or a new society is quietly forming – one that is banal, ideologically uncommitted, aimless, boring.

Brezhnev's inability to function is becoming more and more noticeable. He returned from vacation on August 29th but hasn't made any appearances and there is no sign of him at the CC. All matters of any significance are dependent on him, so nothing is getting done. One only has to look at his schedule for the next three months – Costa Gomes, Giscard d'Estaing, Ford, congresses in Poland and Cuba, and at least some sort of CC Plenum – and it becomes clear that

there won't be a European Conference of Communist Parties (even if we manage to get it ready and prevail upon the fraternal opposition).

September 13, 1975

Today I met with O'Riordan (General Secretary of the CP of Ireland). He stopped over from Budapest to visit his beloved. And while he's here, he wanted to get up to speed on the latest developments. I spoke frankly about Portugal, the European Conference, our work before the Congress. He replied with platitudes. But he is a smart man who understands what you can do and say in his position.

I read V. Afonin's "Letters from Yurga" [*Pis'ma iz Yurgi*] in *Nash Sovremennik*. Like Trifonov he is very talented, but his subject matter is very different. And yet, the social aspect is the same: the hopelessness of our life both in the city and in the village, the total loss of a unifying idea, complete break with our revolutionary past and even with "hopes for the future," which had been the resolute image created in society. Similar to the Russian society of the 1870s, there is no "point of reference," as happens some time after a turning-point historic event. There is an incredible gap between the official ideology, daily press, radio, and television on the one hand, and real life on the other. We have not yet gotten used to the fact that we've turned into a trite society. We are still emotional about it. The French and the English, for example, got used to it a long time ago.

On Thursday Harry Ott (ambassador from the GDR) came to see me. He brought me the SED's proposal for the schedule of preparations for the European Conference of Communist Parties. They are suggesting to convene a working group at the level of CC secretaries on October 9-10th. B.N. called from the south and he agrees. At the same time he told me about his conversation with Brezhnev, who is not too enthusiastic about this conference, primarily because of the "density of the program."

September 24, 1975

I'm sick and staying at home.

Friday night I was at Bovin's for dinner. We talked. He is working in the economic group that is preparing the XXV Congress at Volynskoe-2. Gostev is in charge there. He is the first deputy of the CC Planning and Finance Department, Kirilenko's right hand. Arbatov, Inozemtsev, and a couple other apparatchiks from the industrial and agricultural departments [are also there]. It's a depressing scene. At first they spent a long time arguing over what to use as the reference point to measure the successes of the five-year plan. It would seem natural to start from the Directives of the XXIV Congress. But then it becomes impossible to hide the glaring failures on all fronts. If they measure from the Five-Year Plan Law the picture will be even worse, because the law was passed a little later and with an emphasis on intensification of indicators. The only remaining option was to measure from the sum of the annual plans because each one

had been more or less lowered opportunely, and as the result just barely met many of the parameters. Of course it is a completely ridiculous reference point, one that has never been used before. And of course it will be immediately evident, especially to Western Sovietologists, who will not fail to calculate everything in our Directives (naturally!) and report on this through all the “Voices of America” to Soviet listeners.

Bovin says (from hearsay, of course, he doesn't rub shoulders with Brezhnev) that the General Secretary is grumbling about all these discussions over the reference point. Now it looks like it is all Kosygin's ideas with these Directives and the like... “After all, we've made achievements! Everything is growing, multiplying, increasing. What more do you need? Why should we poke around in ‘methodologies,’ etc.?”

Indeed, seemingly there is growth. But where are we going, and how! It is already obvious that nothing is left of ideology. Now it looks like we are beginning to trample central planning (one of our three pillars) underfoot as well. Bovin said that the speechwriters (the best minds, the most skilled and experienced writers are assigned to this project) can somehow manage to present failures and backlogs as new historical successes. But they are completely at a loss when it comes to defining perspective for the future. Everything is so tangled, so uncertain in terms of potential and resources...

That means that for the most part, the Tenth Five-Year Plan will be put together from guesstimates pulled out of a hat. And then, what's the central idea of the new five-year plan? At the XXIV Congress it was very nicely stated in Arbatov's words that the foundation of the Ninth Five-Year Plan was supposed to be the improvement of people's well-being; that rates of growth of Group “B” [consumer goods] now had to be higher than rates of growth of Group “A” [capital goods]; that we reached a level where we can successfully solve problems of accumulation and problems of consumption. Finally, the Ninth Five-Year Plan was the plan of quality, labor productivity, and the fusion of socialism with NTR.

There has not been any major progress or achievements on any of these parameters since the Congress. So what new idea can be incorporated into the new Five-Year Plan? The Five-Year Plan of quality? But we said the same thing about the Ninth, at the XXIV Congress and all the CC Plenums in between the congresses, and in all our propaganda. That's the only thing we talked about in the routine resolutions of the CC on economic issues. In this situation, the working group (speechwriters) is stumped, and the same goes for the departments, starting with Gosplan, that supply data to the working group.

We chose the path of peace, which is certainly a great achievement. Right now we need to pray that we don't stop halfway, like we did after the XX Congress with the cult of personality, etc. We need to make the decision to stop the arms race, to have real disarmament. Otherwise things will become blurred and possibly even revert back. Our people, especially the post-war generation, perceive the problem of peace the same way as people in the West (despite

the memory of World War II) – as something that any normal person in a government position is obligated to do. They no longer see any special merit in it. This political capital is quickly spent and the stagnation and confusion of our economy is becoming clearer. In the West there is a recession, inflation and so on, and yet they are giving us credits and supplying us with grain – over 20 million tons per year. People know this. There is even a ditty going around now, “New tradition in old Rus’, start the day with BBC!” [*Повелось на Руси в восемь слушать Би-Би-Си*].

In the meantime, the decision was never made to hold even one special Plenum on the economy after the Congress, even though a working group was preparing and perfecting materials for this type of Plenum almost constantly (I should know!). That would have been the minimum: the regular Plenums are of little use, when one person talks and the rest listen, lost in their own thoughts, and later discuss in the lobby the various appeals and teachings from the podium. And even after special, seemingly concrete CC resolutions – there were a great many over the last several years – essentially nothing changed.

Overall there is a feeling of some kind of helplessness, inactivity, and inefficiency “at the top.” This is felt in the CC apparatus and probably in the so-called public opinion too. This feeling is exacerbated by the CC’s or Brezhnev’s daily salutations for various occasions like the 40th anniversary of the Stakhanovite movement, or the commissioning of a bridge over the Lena River, or the launch, for example, of the Ryazan state district power plant, or whatever else. Plus almost daily there are new awards of the Hero of Socialist Labor and various other orders.

Everything points to the lack of real leadership in the country. All of our major “leaders” are over 70, and it seems that Brezhnev overstrained himself when he personally took on the entire cause of peace. Now he is physically unable to fulfill his role, which is once again, just as under Khrushchev, disproportionately concentrated on the General Secretary.

Sadat, who rails against us daily, recently said in an interview: “It’s impossible to work with Soviet leaders – they take three months to vacation in Crimea, and then need another month and a half to rest up from the vacation.” Voice of America, BBC, etc., broadcast these words all over the world and around our great, vast country. Unfortunately, he’s right. Brezhnev hasn’t “governed” systematically, daily, as required for the modern politics of a superpower, in over a year. He is on a sparing regimen for both information and physical activity. At the same time, all the key, fundamental, and even daily political decision-making is confined to him. It’s the same situation as with Nikita and Stalin, although it didn’t happen in the two years before Lenin’s death when he was no longer able to lead the country directly.

Everything I’m writing here is fairly obvious. Sovietologists fill their studies with similar conclusions and the common anti-Soviet propaganda is full of them too. However, “Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.” It’s a shame that a country with such resources is most likely already turning into a typical big state with an irrational logic of domestic and foreign policy that

is soulless and uninspired, but inherent to any big country. We respond to all kinds of things at home and abroad, but without our own ideas or inspiration. And nobody knows what to do. It's not like we can follow that scumbag Solzhenitsyn.

The most frustrating thing is that in all these decades we haven't managed to fill the stores from Brest to Vladivostok with modern goods and food. It seems this would require real courage and willingness to take risks without getting stuck in the calculations of senile Baibakov and his ilk.

Zagladin came back from Portugal and France. The Politburo listened to him for an hour and a half. That is unheard of, but even more unheard of is that we agreed to a socialist democratic Portugal and conveyed it to Cunhal through Zagladin. This could have fundamental implications, but not for our propaganda and scholarship, which will continue to chew over and turn over paragraphs from old textbooks. In this sense, the full-page article in *Pravda* about the objectives of philosophical science in the modern day is striking. It is something! On the one hand, according to the article we are operating on a scientific basis. On the other hand, for a person who knows the situation, this article is a cynical confirmation that our Marxist-Leninist science is nothing but chatty scholasticism that is completely disconnected from real life and politics. The wheels of the institutes are turning; good salaries and royalties are getting paid; little intrigues are starting up; the hunt for revisionists is in full swing. Individual lives get broken and someone might lose his or her Party card, which on the whole lends a serious air to the "ongoing work" and raises the "consciousness of political responsibility." But all of this exists only to keep the wheels in this part of the stagnating establishment turning, showing "compliance."

According to Zagladin, his meetings in Paris with Kanapa, Denis, and Fiterman were outrageous. He said he wanted to get up, knock over the table, and leave. The French rudely and arrogantly told him that we are doing everything wrong, that their views on détente and general world developments are fundamentally different, that we've drawn the wrong conclusions from peaceful coexistence, etc.

It seems that Berlinguer and the Yugoslavs already passed this stage (demonstrative and no longer surprising independence from Moscow, they no longer need to talk about it every day) but Marchais still needs to overcome this problem. Paradoxically, they accuse us of reformism and revisionism in our foreign policy, but essentially they are defending their right to lead a reformist policy domestically. In other words, they want us, the USSR, to help them come to power by directing our anti-imperialist rants at Giscard d'Estaing, so they can bring socialist democracy to France.

What is our position? We have none. However, Brezhnev's unexpected meeting with Zarodov (editor in chief of the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*) left all of us confused. Zarodov recently published a scathing article about Marchais, the Italians, and the Spaniards in

Pravda. And Brezhnev meets with him at a time when he doesn't see anybody and it's impossible to get a meeting with him. And he's not really aware of what's going on, anyway.

So we are left to guess whether this top-level punch in the teeth is intentional or just carelessness, when one action is not connected to any others and even directly opposed to them.

September 25, 1975

B.N. returned from Crimea. He called me twice on the internal line, asking me what I think about the European Conference of Communist Parties. Axen (SED Politburo member) was supposed to arrive today to haggle [*пядуть*] with B.N. "What should we do?" I told B.N. that the new draft of the Declaration (communiqué) attempts to accommodate both the French and our new critics. But I said that I made a number of significant revisions and expect that they will be taken into account.

B.N.: "Isn't there a risk that neither party will end up being satisfied?"

I: "It depends on their chief objective. For example, if the French are set on disrupting the conference, they won't be satisfied with anything."

B.N.: "What are you saying! Why would they want to disrupt?..."

I: "I think they have their reasons. Right now Marchais is doing what Berlinguer did a few years ago: he wants to show and convince everyone that he is not the hand of Moscow, that he is completely independent. So he is rudely and arrogantly demonstrating this, 'solving his chief problem.' In this situation he really doesn't want to put his signature under any collective document, i.e. the CPSU's document."

B.N.: "Indeed Anatoly Sergeevich, something is rotten in our household. Think on it. Let's talk tomorrow. And then... Zagladin keeps telling me that we need to hold the conference. But are we even ready to hold it? Say on October 9-10th we get everyone in the Berlin working group to agree to hold the conference before the end of the year. And then in Moscow we'll be told that there is no time."

I: "That's right, Boris Nikolaevich. December is completely out of the question for us – the PZPR Congress, the CP of Cuba, Ford... Consequently, all we have left is November, i.e. one month to prepare... Moreover, I'm troubled by the fact that in the draft document for the conference we essentially "fire off" the whole "Program No. 2" (95 percent of it) that's intended to be the continuation of the Peace Program for the XXV Congress. In our day and age, will our leadership agree to repeat at the Congress something that will be "developed" together with Romanians, Spaniards, and "other Swedes"?"

The Taganka Theater is back from Bulgaria, from their first tour abroad. Demichev had to agree to let them go under pressure from Zhivkov and because there had to be some response

to the 42 invitations Lyubimov received from abroad. Bulgaria was picked as the “safest” choice. Zhivkov gave the theater special attention. And it will be more difficult to harass it now; it will be embarrassing in front of our “brothers.”

September 28, 1975

I started reading Byron’s diary again. It’s a magnificent thing. Who (including me) is going to read his famous poems nowadays? Who will be satisfied or even just seriously interested in his poetry (aside from specialists)? But it is such an extraordinarily spiritual experience to touch this quite “realistic” person through letters and diaries.

On Friday at the end of the workday I spent two hours with Zagladin, Shaposhnikov, and Zhilin going over the state of the ICM in preparation for Axen’s visit to Ponomarev and the upcoming preparatory meeting for the European Conference of Communist Parties. I am firmly convinced that it will fall through... Not just because we don’t have time. No, it is because we don’t need a conference that won’t produce the desired “Hurrah, hurrah” for the CPSU and won’t demonstrate unity around us. And there is no way we are going to get that kind of conference.

October 3, 1975

On Tuesday I was at the CC Secretariat. Suslov presided. He gave a generalized tongue-lashing on one of our projects – Soviet organizations participating in the “USSR Days” in Italy; in 10 cities of Italy’s “Red Belt” – Bologna, Ferrara, Siena, Rimini, Reggio Emilia and others. The plan was to send 450 people (ensembles, exhibits, lecturers, athletes, cooks, general artists, etc.). It’s actually the same number we sent to Naples in 1972 and Rome in 1973 for similar events. This would cost us 150,000 rubles and no foreign currency. The Italians are collecting 300 million lire for this event themselves. The initiative came from the regional government of Emilia-Romagna and of course the PCI CC.

The Italian Communist Party, with whom we don’t have the smoothest of relationships, is using its positions in the political life of the country to maximally open the door to Italy for us. This is just common sense, not to mention our concerns, internationalism. We could not get this from any other capitalist country.

As usually happens in such cases, Suslov did not listen to anybody and started an attack: “Outrageous! The scope of it! We are trying to save every ruble we can and you want to send 450 people to a regional event, and not somewhere in Donbass, no! You want to send 450 people to Italy, not just for a few days but for almost a month! Cut the budget! Cut it sharply!”

This is despite the fact that there was a reference note explaining that a number of activities in Italy that are in the annual plan have been organized to coincide with the “USSR Days”; everything is approved by the CC; and the money is already released. The additional costs are minimal.

There were some noises of assent from other members of the Secretariat, including Ponomarev (who was on vacation when the materials were being prepared, so he has an alibi to dissociate himself from the work of his own department). Suslov fired off a new round: “Why 10 cities! Take just one city, Bologna for example, as your base. The other cities should bus people in... Why so many days for the ‘roundtable’ discussion? Two is enough.” (Meanwhile, the note explains, though it’s pretty obvious anyway, that the PCI is organizing this! Not us! We can’t tell them to take Bologna as a base and bus the rest of the people! How many people can you bus in, anyway? The Italian communists want this to be a popular festival, not just events to check off a list, like we do.)

This attitude is shameful for our country and our party. How are we going to face the Italians now, after they spent a year preparing this with our respective organizations, renting all the venues, etc.?

The very fact that we are trying to save on such things is sad. Suslov reminded that the day before, the Politburo discussed the Tenth Five-Year Plan and said, “Remember how difficult it will be for us to balance the budget”... I ran into B.N. in the hall on Monday evening after the PB, he shook his head (about the meeting) and gestured that it’s hopeless.

The day after the Secretariat I learned about the demands we are making on states that buy weapons from us (mostly Arab and African) – to pay the amount due in advance and at world market prices, not the agreed prices, and in convertible currency, which wasn’t specified in our agreements. Bakr, the President of Iraq, brazenly replied to this, “The Soviets won’t get any of this, and if they push us, they’ll get a second Egypt!”

But why is it so bad?

Incidentally, here is one example why. On the same day, the Secretariat approved a trip to Canada and Mexico for deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers Novikov with an accompanying party of eight to discuss the upcoming Olympic Games. Suslov was in the same peremptory mood and the audience made the same approving noises. So: first class airfare for ten people; 450 gold rubles for each of the scheduled meetings; money for souvenirs, etc. Overall (in real value for the country) it’s not less than our poor affair in Italy’s “Red Belt.” But from the standpoint of the interests of the party and the country, Novikov’s trip has zero value. It is bureaucratic protocol. But it didn’t occur to anybody to save on this; they even ignored the currency costs.

And here’s another reason. Suslov’s adviser Vorontsov gave away the “secret” of economizing on the Italians to our consultant, whom I sent over to try to convince Suslov and explain the political importance of the event. “Kirilenko started all of this,” Vorontsov said, “when he was at the PCI Congress. He made a bunch of promises to Berlinguer. But it did not work! He was unable to present the CC with a *fait accompli*!” Suslov strongly dislikes Kirilenko, his rival for second place.

Kirilenko is on vacation right now. If he were here, Suslov might not have started this disgrace. And if Kirilenko had been presiding over the meeting, we might have gotten more money for this event. And the audience would have been nodding its approval the same way they just did, only “vice versa.”

And that’s all there is to this fundamental economy!

Finally, one last thing. B.N. summoned me for something, and then said: “Mikhail Andreyevich (Suslov) gave me your text from Novo-Ogarevo, asked me to read it and prepare my opinion. He read only a few pages (this is from September 8th!).¹⁰ He is going blind. Did you know? He hasn’t been able to see out of his right eye for a while now. He only reads with his left. You can’t get much reading done with just your left eye!” – B.N. commented innocently. “And now his left eye is starting to fail. Our doctors treated him. Then he consulted a Swiss professor. He recommended to train the blind eye... In a word, he can’t really read anything anymore.”

Indeed, the man is 73 years old. And now he can’t see. In other words, his level of awareness must be at a minimum. And he is in charge of our country’s vital issues. He presides over the CC Secretariat and often the Politburo.

Everything I described here seems to be tied to a particular incident. But I think to some extent it explains why we are doing so badly financially, and not just financially.

I don’t attend the CC Secretariat meetings often, but when I do, as a rule I come out with rather gloomy impressions. Same thing this time. It’s depressing – the feeble level of discussion, the incompetence when it comes to questions raised by others, the pettiness of the questions themselves. Out of the 20-something small questions raised at this Secretariat, around a dozen dealt with awards for people and organizations. Or various texts for speeches. Kapitonov commented on one of these speeches (in connection with the 250th anniversary of the USSR Academy of Sciences). It was like he was at a lesson in a village school, clearly using a cheat sheet prepared by his department; he droned on, “This word is repeated, this one doesn’t really work, and this comma doesn’t seem to be in the right place,” and so on.

B.N. told me that Kuskov visited him yesterday. “He doesn’t look ready for work at all,” B.N. said. “He can barely string his words together. We talked. I considered that he’s been suffering for almost a year and the doctors can’t promise anything, and went ahead and asked him: ‘Elizar Ilyich, perhaps you should retire. Right now you are a member of the CPSU Auditing Commission, and first deputy. It will be easy for us to get you an all-Union pension and save your Kremlin hospital privileges. It will be more difficult after the Congress. And you could overstrain yourself if you start working in your condition. To my surprise, he took it calmly,”

¹⁰ The text in question is the draft summary report for the XXV Congress. [Author’s footnote]

B.N. went on, “and he agreed. So now we have to think about a new first deputy. I remember that when we first talked about this you spoke in favor of Zagladin. What about now?”

I: “I still think so. Shaposhnikov filled this role very well when you were gone. However, even nominally it would be difficult to present him and not Zagladin, who is a member of the Auditing Commission and well-known and loved at the very top.”

B.N. “This is true. But he is trying too hard to get to the top. His trip to Portugal, for example. He didn’t do anything special, but the PB listened to him for an hour and a half! Or consider this: he holds on to some important projects and no matter how much I urge him to finish the work, he hangs back and stalls until I go on vacation or a business trip. Then he immediately takes the matters up to the top to show himself. He hasn’t once gone abroad, even on vacation, without sending highest-level ciphered telegrams about his outstanding work there!”

The old man caught on to Zagladin’s plans to take over his chair. And although he does not believe that it is possible while he is still alive, it’s still unpleasant. He doesn’t want his first deputy to be a person who would use every opportunity to show that he’s smarter than his boss. Plus, Zagladin has direct access to the General Secretary, not to mention his advisers.

I: “Have you spoken with Shaposhnikov about this?”

B.N.: “Yes, but Anatoly Sergeyeovich, strictly between us please, he is against appointing Zagladin as first deputy. He suggests to wait.”

I: “That’s up to you. But it would still be awkward to present Shaposhnikov right now. And after the Congress, Zagladin will either be a CC member or a candidate member... Plus, with all of Shaposhnikov’s merits, he is not qualified (speaking, writing, knowledge base) to adequately represent the International Department in the present day.”

With this, the conversation ended.

Today I had a very unpleasant conversation with B.N. about Volume I. He did not read it and has no intention of reading it. All my attempts to tell him how interesting, original, and sometimes even thrilling it is are met with scornful skepticism: “The introduction had to be changed five times, and the rest of the volume was written by the same people!”

I am amazed at his brazen tactlessness. He impudently tries to project his doubts onto others, even though it is clear that anyone in my position would take it personally.

With this attitude, what’s the point of this large group’s intellectual efforts, this concentration of knowledge and enthusiasm, love of the subject and skill?! All of this is present in Volume I. B.N.’s almost innocent cynicism reflects the same internal decay in our leadership that was exposed in the case of “USSR Days in Italy.”

October 5, 1975

I visited Dez'ka (David Samoilov) yesterday. We talked about this and that. About Portugal, Israel, Saddam, about which way Vietnam is going to lean... Even Dez'ka's great mind cannot compensate for the lack of necessary information. His attempts to generalize are banal, as usual for people who are not involved. Then he suddenly said, "I submitted my poem about Alexander I's abdication to 'Poetry Day.' By the way, they are going to be the first to publish a response to Solzhenitsyn's 'Letter to the Leaders.'"

He reads his own work wonderfully. And of course the piece is not just exceptional; it's truly a major work – both in terms of its ideas and its poetic quality.

He has a sober view of Solzhenitsyn, no slobbering and reverence. He summarized *The Oak and the Calf* [*Bodalsya telenok s dubom*] for me... "Of course," he said, "it's impressive when one man stands up to the powerful KGB [*ГБ*]." He said there was nothing there about Tvardovsky, who helped him so much. In general this whole undertaking is nonsense. It won't lead to anything. As a writer he is "secondary." This became especially evident in "August 1914." His artistic strength is as a memoirist-debunker, he is clever and fanatical. But that's it.

October 10, 1975

Right now we are celebrating the 250th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences. Speaking of awards. All the academicians, corresponding members, directors, and deputies received awards, except for people who already received something in the last two years. Arbatov got an Order of Lenin, even though he recently got the Order of the October Revolution on the occasion of his 50th anniversary. Inozemtsev and Fedoseyev were nominated for the Hero [of Socialist Labor] award but didn't get it. They only got the Order of Lenin. The award orgy continues. The Academy of Sciences has been celebrating for almost two weeks – meetings, sessions, endless mutual praise. Serious grown up people are working up a sweat engaging in these activities... Devaluation of awards, celebrations, protocols, toasts, speeches, reports – based on our general inflation. But any inflation at a certain stage becomes a sign of ill health, or at least some trouble in society.

Ponomarev suddenly decided to go himself to the Berlin working group to prepare the European Conference of Communist Parties. Representatives of 27 parties are gathered there, at the level of Politburo members and secretaries. It seems everyone understood that it is risky to delay any longer (for different reasons for each CP) in the atmosphere of practically excitement in the Western press over the prospect that the conference will fall through.

I don't know the results yet, even though B.N. is coming back tomorrow. He got the "go ahead" (from L.I. [Brezhnev] at the PB, although it's not final) to move things toward holding the conference before the XXV Congress. Before he left, he had a "serious talk" with me. Essentially he accused me of wanting to foil the conference. For several days prior he kept asking for my opinion about the conference and the draft documents. I spoke frankly: firstly, I don't think that Brezhnev will find the time; secondly, I don't see the point of having this

conference right now – it will not say anything new compared to Helsinki; thirdly and most importantly, it could turn into a demonstration of dissociation of the most influential parties from “Moscow.” As if to say that since they made the concession to the CPSU by coming to a conference that the entire world sees as the “Kremlin’s” desperate attempt to show its leading role and its ability to have its way – since this was inevitable, they will use this public tribune to tell the world in front of Brezhnev himself that they are “independent” and will do things their own way come hell or high water.

I told Ponomarev, “You reproached me for not understanding ‘the interests of our department’ and that it would be important for the prestige of our department to make this present in time for the Congress; for it to be our department’s present. But what if we end up with an across-the-board demonstration of independence (as Zagladin once said – it’s no longer a ‘unity in diversity’ but a ‘variety of diversities’), how will our department look then! Right now Brezhnev is selectively informed about the situation with communist parties, some facts are omitted to avoid irritation. He does not see the full picture of the collapse of ‘our household.’ But at the conference he would see this picture in full size.”

This made an impression on B.N., but he backed out by saying, “We need to think, we need to think.” The whole point of the serious talk was to make sure that my concerns and arguments do not reach Aleksandrov. He started out by asking whether I already brought them to his attention. He went on to say, “I am trying to get Aleksandrov as an ally for his ability to influence Brezhnev, and you are undermining my efforts. I became convinced that you (Chernyaev) are against the conference when I read the draft Summary report for the Congress. Your section talks about the conference of communist parties as something that might happen after the Congress.”

I reassured Ponomarev that Aleksandrov doesn’t know anything about my arguments, he never heard them. But I was disgusted with the whole scene. He essentially suspected that I would sabotage the conference because I was pushed aside from the planning process and the numerous trips to Berlin, etc. I wouldn’t put it past him to have these suspicions, even though he’s known me for over 15 years.

Yesterday Sakharov was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. I wonder where this is going to go.

October 11, 1975

I have in front of me the page-proofs of Salychev’s article for *Kommunist*. It’s called “Revolution and Democracy.” Deputy Editor-in-chief Bagramov asked me “strictly confidentially” to take a look at it. I did. Revolutionary scholasticism. One more example of what happens when relatively intelligent and educated people operate within the framework of our ideological logic and create politically illiterate compositions, which are even harmful from the perspective of real policies.

If this article is published it will bring a surge of suspicion regarding our seriousness about Helsinki from the official West; and a stream of contemptuous comments and disagreement with “Moscow” from such friends as the Italians, French, and the like. So why is this article in an official organ of the CC CPSU? For ideological self-gratification.

I am reading Bykov’s *To Live to See the Dawn* [*Dozhit’ do rassveta*]. The war, and again I feel moved. I’m always moved when I read Bykov because he writes about the selflessness in the hearts of the soldiers, which did not always lead to heroic results.

October 15, 1975

Afanas’ev called me today (he is the editor-in-chief of *Kommunist*): “You are going to have to join our editorial board after all.” He first called me about this about ten days ago, on Suslov’s instructions. I told him that I would prefer to stay at *Questions of History*. Ponomarev summoned me to discuss this too. I explained to him that I don’t want to leave *Questions of History*, and I’m already connected to *Kommunist* because for every more-or-less serious issue they send someone over to me with materials to look over.

“It’s up to you,” B.N. concluded.

Afanas’ev kept pressuring me, referring to Suslov. This was unexpected for me. Supposedly Suslov said, “If you need someone from the CC International Department on your editorial board, you better take Chernyaev. He is more competent than the rest.”

Ponomarev called again, this time he knew about Suslov’s opinion. He didn’t try to talk me into it like he did during our first conversation, he just said, “Anatoly Sergeevich, didn’t you say that you don’t want to...” The old man has something in mind. But I have no idea what.

On Sunday I organized an “October nineteenth” get-together at Uspenka (in imitation of Pushkin). Dez’ka, Vadim, Luchana, Felix, and others. We had a lot to drink. Nice atmosphere. I avoided escalating a political discussion with Vad’ka. Dez’ka read some of his new stuff. His writing is very strong right now. He wants to buy a house in Pärnu (Estonia) but they won’t sell it to him because he does not want to rent out his apartment in Moscow. Today I called Vaino Valjas (CC Secretary of the Communist Party of Estonia) about this; I met him last year in Finland. He promised to make an “exception to the rule.”

I read the transcript of the working group in Berlin (October 9-10th) on the preparation of the European Conference of Communist Parties. People liked Ponomarev’s appeals to the glory of internationalism, but it didn’t change anything in the communist parties’ positions. The discussion was a firsthand confirmation of the fact that the communist movement is not an international political force. The only things they could agree on were the same things that heads of state and governments agreed on in Helsinki. Perhaps the key to understanding this is in a thought expressed by the Italians: it’s time to put a stop to the idea of the unity of communist

parties. This is sectarianism. It would be relevant and realistic to have unity of communists, social democrats, socialists, Christians, and all democrats in general. This would have potential, this has real social force. This idea corresponds to the majority of participants' statements; including those who did not quite understand it and those who are fundamentally strict towards social democrats (like the Austrians), but who noticed that the draft of the final document weakly reflects the need for unity with social democrats. Meanwhile, as [Erwin] Scharf pointed out, social democracy is in power in most of Western Europe. And we are going to have to deal with it, if we want to build any kind of new Europe.

The participants were not troubled by the resolution of the Socialist International, which was recently adopted in Lisbon and directed towards strengthening anticommunist activity.

So, Berlin has shown that the communist movement is "irrelevant" and that from the point of view of the participants, it is an "outdated form" of historic initiative and the formation of real social force capable of bringing about change. Thus, the Italian "historic compromise" is spilling beyond national borders the same way that Palmiro Togliatti's idea of "unity in diversity" imperceptibly became a reality.

Today I saw Clancy and Simon, the chairman and the general secretary of the Socialist Party of Australia.¹¹ They are infiltrating the trade union movement. But their overall level is pathetic, they keep asking for handouts. We recently gave them one when we signed up for 100 copies of their newspaper *Socialist* and cancelled our subscription to the CPA's newspaper *Tribune*. It was a CC decision, it made them happy.

Clancy on people from Timor, saying we should not delay in recognizing this fragment of the Portuguese empire.

The story with Midtsev's (department consultant) correspondence in *Pravda* about a Socialist International conference in Tunis. That Stalinist asshole, led by Ulyanovsky (deputy head of the department) wanted to sneak in an article about social democracy in the spirit of the late 1940s. Good God! Politicians! I nixed this idea, luckily *Pravda* noticed it and sent me the article before printing it.

Giscard d'Estaing in the USSR. A demarche by the PCF – a warning to the CPSU not to act like we did with Chirac earlier this year. Insolence. Then again, it's the same aspect of the communist movement's evolution. Before (a year ago) they would complain and insult us in closed letters. Now – in *L'Humanité*.

I am reading a book on Giscard, prepared "for official use" by the Information Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. It's well put together from French sources. Informative reading.

¹¹ A group of "Marxist-Leninists" who broke away from the Communist Party and were loyal to the CPSU.
[Author's footnote]

It seems Zagladin was confirmed as first deputy today (Brutents told me). I don't know the precise details of how it happened or why B.N. suddenly rushed with this.

October 16, 1975

The situation in the top tier of the Party and country is practically deadlocked. Brezhnev's illness and mental decline is becoming apparent to everybody. He gave a lively speech at the lunch with Giscard d'Estaing, but beforehand at the airport he was "boring"; all of Moscow noticed this from the TV broadcast. The next day the French were once again asked to postpone the talks until Friday. Giscard went to Yasnaya Polyana and Borodino. All of Western mass media are buzzing that something happened. What will tomorrow bring? Ponomarev told me that Brezhnev "isn't feeling well" and waved his arm in a hopeless gesture. Ponomarev himself is jittery over the fate of the European Conference of Communist Parties. The contradictions and disagreements with fraternal parties are creating uncertainty. But the main uncertainty for B.N. is whether Brezhnev will be able to participate in the conference.

It sounds like Brezhnev will preside himself at the PB tomorrow. They will be deciding who will go where: the PUWP Congress is on December 8th; the CP of Cuba Congress is on December 17th; then a meeting of the PCC (Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Pact); then the General Secretary's trip to the U.S.; Conference of European Communist Parties... Plus, we promised to receive official visits from the Mongolians and Algerians in December.

It looks like Brezhnev is planning to attend the Congress in Cuba, since it is the first congress of the Cuban Communist Party. From there he would go directly to the U.S. What will the "Beard" think of this? It's unthinkable for the General Secretary to miss the Polish Congress, too.

Where are we going to squeeze in the European Conference? Especially since neither Brezhnev, nor other PB members besides Suslov and B.N., have any real understanding of why we need this conference in the first place and what it will give us. And today Suslov is getting admitted to a clinic for his eye operation, i.e. he will be there for about a month and a half.

How long can this go on? After all, I only know about international affairs, and mostly the aspect of international affairs that has practically no influence. But there are domestic affairs too, matters that are connected to people's daily lives. In the meantime, the country's leadership is essentially paralyzed. Nobody can take any substantive actions, i.e. make decisions, because we have an absolute leader who holds indisputable power in his hands. But his hands are feeble now.

Talked with B.N. about my conversation yesterday with Clancy and Simon. He couldn't care less about it all, including the question of Timor.

Dzhavad (head of the British sector) visited Malta. He confirmed that they have a Communist Party. But B.N. didn't even want to hear about it, not to mention consider including it in the preparations for the European Conference. His only concern now is not to overload the conference boat with some new problem.

October 18, 1975

Yesterday there was a reception in honor of Giscard d'Estaing in St. George's Hall. I haven't been at this kind of performance in a long time. This is how it happens: there is a crowd of "our people" on the main entrance staircase, the usual set of faces invited from list №... They form a tight corridor and are not allowed inside until the diplomats pass through this corridor. As usual with us, this is done in a rude and insulting manner. Some women complained.

Then the people are allowed into the Hall. More or less quickly, the crowd rushes through the tall doors to the tables and gets seated in the familiar small groups. For example, I noticed that the deputies of the CC apparatus were entirely concentrated in one part of the Hall... And everyone immediately starts eating and drinking, talking amongst themselves, raising toasts, and grabbing the tastier and more unusual appetizers (sterlet fish, caviar, etc.).

At a designated time the key guests gathered at the entrance to the hall. This time Brezhnev, Giscard, Kosygin and Podgorny were in the front. Behind them were members and candidate members of the Politburo, followed by the wives of the top leaders, and then the French officials closing the assembly. The Marseillaise played, then our anthem. Then the group slowly moved past the tables, to the applause of the guests. Brezhnev smiled, waved to people he recognized. Others, like Kosygin, who is always frowning, walked as if the hall was empty. Ponomarev was cheerful and bowed left and right. He noticed me momentarily and seemed to be surprised.

Once the main group reached their seats in the hall, everyone went "back to business" with even greater fervor. I wound up sitting next to Kovalyov (deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs), Samoteikin (General Secretary's consultant), Tsvigun (Andropov's menacing deputy), and their wives. I concentrated my attention on Tolya Kovalyov's wife – a smart, down to earth, intelligent woman.

There were no formal toasts or speeches. Exactly one hour later, the "main group" left the hall in the same order as they came in, accompanied by less organized applause. That was it. It's been nearly two years since I saw Brezhnev up close. He looks fatter, flabbier, his face is darker.

This evening I'm reading Jean Ellenstein, *Historie du phenomene Stalinien*. He's a French communist, author of a four-volume *History of the USSR*. The book is written to support the PFC's current political position – "We are following our own path. What happened in Russia was a result of its pre-revolutionary backwardness. Stalinism was as inevitable in Russia as it is

impossible in France...” And more along those lines. The factual data in the book are shocking once again.

October 19, 1975

Ponomarev’s former first deputy, Elizar Kuskov, recently retired and was given the following pension: 270 rubles, plus he gets to keep the Uspenka [dacha] until next year, and access to the Kremlin cafeteria and hospital. The man has left the stage... And he was such a bigwig for so many years.

One of Ponomarev’s casual remarks caught my attention. He was telling me about our agenda (PUWP Congress, Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, the European Conference of Communist Parties, Brezhnev’s meeting with Ford, etc.) when he said, “[Brezhnev] dismissed the materials for the congress, saying ‘Later, later’...” B.N. commented, “It’s strange, I don’t understand it. This has never happened before... After all, the CPSU Congress is just around the corner...” He again threw up his hands and made a face.

I wonder if Brezhnev may be getting ready to retire. Every time he appears in public his physical and mental decline becomes more apparent. He must feel it himself. In the TV broadcast from Vnukovo-2 airport yesterday, sending off Giscard, he looked pathetic. He kept holding his hand by his hat as if he was giving a military salute, but you could see his hand was shaking. The whole ridiculous protocol looked gloomy, boring, and meaningless. Surely, he must be concerned about his legacy?

It seems he has lost interest in materials for the Congress. He hasn’t inquired about them since giving the order for writing teams to go to the dachas. It is possible that he does not plan to personally deliver the speeches that are written for him. I can’t imagine how he would stand at the podium for 4-5 hours in his current condition. Maybe he will follow the example of the XIX Congress – make a brief opening speech himself, then assign someone else to give the main report (as Stalin did in 1952).

On Sunday I took a walk with Brutents. He is concerned too. There are holidays every Sunday (today, for example, is the Day of Food Industry Workers), anniversaries, greetings, awards, receptions, congratulations, meetings, farewells, talks... What’s going on? Where are we? Where are we going? What’s going to happen a year from now? Not to mention – what will happen with the Congress?

Official reality – or, more precisely, mythology – has completely diverged from real life, from people’s mindsets and interests. Newspapers and literary journals are at the opposite ends of the spectrum. Newspapers print optimistic gibberish according to the old familiar rules. Journals are full of highly artistic works about everyday life – melancholy, hopeless, with no goals or aspirations. In the past, *Novyi Mir* “transgressed” with this kind of material. People picked on it, it was the black sheep. Now all journals are like this. I don’t think their editors are

gradually and maliciously pushing this atmosphere (which reflects the lack of ideals and convictions of today's society). Maybe there are some hidden liberals of this sort. But the majority would probably suppress this material like they used to. However, that seems to be impossible now, because there would be nothing to print. Readers would not accept filler. Plus, the level of professionalism (and "ethics" in this environment) seems to have reached a point where they can no longer create artificially "inspired" things.

There is a sense of expectation everywhere, practically on the streets. People are openly talking about the "senility of the government." Indeed, probably no other civilization in all of human history had such an elderly "body" in the government.

A great thing has been accomplished – détente. Brezhnev is its author. But we've reached a point in the process where we don't know what to do next. Détente has potential if we keep moving forward. Otherwise we will inevitably come to a new edition of the "Cold War." Giscard gave a sensational speech at the dinner in the Kremlin, in which he accurately laid out the only possible way forward for détente. Namely, there are two directions – disarmament and renunciation of the "Cold War" in the sphere of ideology, i.e. ideological détente (while maintaining the battle of ideas). We are not moving toward one or the other. And the West isn't moving, either. But the fact is that they can take their time, even in a recession they can afford both "guns and butter."

Furthermore, since we are the initiators of détente and we are the ones who need it most, as we claim, the West expects us to continue "leading by example." They can afford to wait, blackmail us, provoke us, try to catch and expose our inconsistencies, our deviations from Helsinki.

But we can't let ourselves tread water... Then again, maybe we can. And probably nothing will happen. If for so many years, in worse circumstances, we could pour half the national income into army and weapons, then why not keep doing it now. And what else is there to do? Having created a military apparatus with dozens of marshals, tens of thousands of generals, and hundreds of thousands colonels, and a military industry infrastructure that employs millions – we can't just ship them off to the moon! By now it is a self-propagating force. It is a social category of our society, one that is highly privileged and influential. You can't simply part ways with it.

It's even worse in ideology. We have come to a point of ideological idiocy (in no small part due to our economic and military policies), which will eventually produce a "new quality" (when a completely new generation grows up, free of the revolutionary-patriotic convictions of their fathers). But that's still a ways away. For now we can pretend that everything is okay. Plus, the problem of our society's ideals cannot be solved by ideological means. It is rooted in the cadre-psychological tumor that is clinging like corals to the political and economic infrastructure of our society, and does not let it breathe, choking it and pulling it into a rotten swamp.

But I digress... The West already understood that we've reached a point in our policy of détente that is very difficult for us to cross (disarmament and ideological détente). This is where they'll take us to task (they are already doing it), using the "civilized" methods and principles of Helsinki that we brought to life ourselves.

This is why the European Conference of Communist Parties is becoming critical. If it takes the route preferred by the French (and, as we found out in Berlin, the majority of our "fraternal" parties), i.e. the path of "increasing the class struggle against imperialism," then our Helsinki partners will immediately seize us by the arm. And I'm afraid the Chinese will be right in their rants about a false détente. Alas, Comrade Ponomarev with his Comintern psychology is likely to go precisely in this direction. And, considering the fact that the main author of détente is clearly becoming disconnected from practical policy and is physically unable to figure out what is happening, it seems that Ponomarev (with Suslov's support) might succeed in this operation. This portends years of balancing in uncertainty between the Cold War and détente; nothing will be solved, all problems will be frozen, nothing will move forward and the social dementia will grow stronger.

Ponomarev loves to shout about disarmament, to expose the arms race everywhere, etc. At the same time, with his European Conference he will make a contribution commensurate to his abilities to reinforce this race at this stage.

October 24, 1975

It was a very informative week. On Tuesday I inadvertently overheard a phone conversation between Katushev and Ponomarev: I was in Ponomarev's office when Katushev called. From their exchange I figured out that the European Conference of Communist Parties is falling through. But I didn't let on. The next morning B.N. called me to his office and after talking about the Congress report, he suddenly flashed a sly smile and said, "Well, it seems your point of view about the conference is winning." The conversation, telegraphically: Apparently Suslov fundamentally supported the idea and wasn't backing down, but he is now in the hospital. According to B.N., Kirilenko is humoring... and took the course to block the conference on the pretext that it would be too much of a load on Brezhnev!

In response to these "explanations" I once again made a "short speech," suggesting that it would be better to have no conference at all than the kind of conference that is coming together right now. The Italians (Segre and Pajetta) gave an interview about the working group in Berlin, in which they cynically devalued the conference, openly said that the mountain is giving birth to a mouse. They brought the solidarity of the participants' views to a bare minimum, equivalent to interstate relations. They are explicitly warning that by giving in to Moscow and attending the conference, they are using it as an opportunity to demonstrate their "independence" and disdain for the CPSU.

The French are even more coarse in their methods, and although they are coming at it from a different side, they are achieving the same result (demonstrating the lack of any kind of communist unity whatsoever) with Kanapa's interview, Marchais' new speeches, etc. We set ourselves up with our incessant activity: now to the entire front of anticommunism we appear as the party that for some reason has an almost vital interest in this conference. But why we need it – even the bourgeois press doesn't understand it anymore!

B.N. dutifully listened to me and instructed me to prepare materials in favor of not holding the conference this year (I am supposed to write it by hand, so even the typists wouldn't know).

Meanwhile, a group of Germans has been in Moscow since Monday, led by deputy head Bruno Malov, who is working with Zagladin, Zhilin, Sobakin, and Ermonsky to urgently prepare a new draft document for the conference (based on the results of the working group). The new draft is supposed to be discussed by the end of October with the Spaniards, Italians, French, and Yugoslavs. The dates are already set for them to arrive in Berlin. This draft has to go out to all twenty-eight Central Committees two weeks before the drafting committee, which was supposed to meet around November 20th in Berlin. In short, the work was in full swing. In an effort to do everything properly and accommodate the CPSU, the Germans have been increasing the pace. They grew suspicious when B.N. refused to look over the results of the joint work and to put his signature on the draft.

Last night, when Zagladin and I were holding the main drafting committee on Volume II of the *History and Theory of the International Labor Movement*, a note was slipped to us on the table: "Ponomarev is coming back from the Politburo and asks all his deputies to wait for him." It was after eight o'clock when we were in B.N.'s office. Without preparing us, he announced: "The Politburo has decided not to hold the conference before the Congress."

October 31, 1975

The Politburo's decision was not based on political considerations at all (like the ones I expounded in my doubts about the usefulness of such a conference). Brezhnev simply realized that "all of this" is too much for him. As B.N. told us, the Politburo members understood (and did not hide the fact) that we went too far [with the conference preparations]... But nothing to be done about it! B.N. tried to make excuses: why didn't they mention this "possibility" before the Berlin working group? He would have handled things accordingly and used the PCF's outburst as the scapegoat. At this point, how can we turn back? We put the SED in a very difficult position. But they calmed him down by saying that the PB trusts his (B.N.'s and the International Department's) "skills" to get out of this situation without any damage.

After B.N. told us the Politburo's decision and discussed strategies for backing out, we went over to Zagladin's office. We were wound up. I watched Vadim and Zhilin, who had carelessly pushed B.N. to force the conference and worked in this spirit on the Germans and

other fraternal parties. How would they behave now? Not a shadow of regret! They were trying to outdo each other, with cynicism and gusto going over anything and everything that crossed their mind in terms of arguments against the conference, and how to hoodwink the people they dragged into it, how to shift the blame for delaying (and essentially failing) the conference.

B.N. assigned us to think everything over and write out the tactics and arguments. Since I knew about it before they did, I quickly wrote five pages in the morning – political motivations for why the conference is inappropriate and how to convey this to the various parties.

On Friday B.N. received Malov, but didn't say anything to him. But the latter sensed the "loss of interest." He called Berlin. Over the phone, Axen invited himself to come to Moscow immediately. He arrived on Sunday, met with Ponomarev and Katushev. B.N. laid it all out frankly. Axen was upset, he argued and tried to "prove" something. But then he thought better of it and said, "If the CPSU Politburo made this decision, it is our internationalist duty to carry it out."

Ponomarev delegated all of this work and switched his attention to the international section of the Summary Report we wrote in Novo-Ogarevo. Brezhnev asked him to make comments (even though Suslov had asked him the same thing and he had the text since the beginning of the month, but he didn't do anything until he got Brezhnev's note). He did not like the section.

November 1, 1975

B.N. said it is all run of the mill and common knowledge. He believes that it is impossible to step away from the "tradition of our congresses" – we have to start with a picture of the world, the correlation of forces, the retreat of imperialism and advent of socialism. The recession is presented "weakly" ("remember how Stalin did it at the XVI Congress... Although Varga prepared it for him..."). We should write more sharply about the shocks, unemployment, inflation; and we should present it against the background of our "steady rise," our successes. It would be beneficial to us to show this right now – we don't have recessions, unemployment or inflation. The communist parties are waiting for this. The masses are waiting.

As for why it is "common knowledge," from his point of view it is because the text goes into detail on how our relationships formed with the U.S., FRG, France, etc. (He is right in the sense that we broke it down under pressure from the MFA version, which was sent to Novo-Ogarevo by Brezhnev himself).

However, what is B.N. suggesting that is new? It turns out, saying that "the nature of imperialism has not changed," that it is escalating the arms race to undermine détente, that "peaceful coexistence does not mean class status quo," that we need to intensify the struggle against imperialism, etc.

He wrote his comments along these lines (showed them to me) and sent them directly to Brezhnev. However, in the final version he didn't include the formula "the nature of imperialism has not changed," even though he schooled me on this for several days in a row. He suggested to make the Peace Program central in the report on progress and to advance the World Conference on Disarmament as the central idea around which we will continue to make noise in the struggle for peace and détente. It would be something like the next step after Helsinki, i.e. Helsinki-II.

I didn't really argue when he told me all this, but I fought off slowly and doggedly: what will we achieve with this traditional class offensive? Will we please Georges Marchais? Hardly. He has a completely different goal. His aim is not to compel us to a policy that would make us, the USSR, look more revolutionary. It is more to distance himself from the CPSU, to erase any possibility of associating him with "orders from Moscow." He is losing sleep over Carrillo and Berlinguer's laurels in this regard. Therefore he is looking for any excuse to insult and provoke us to a scandal and disassociation from the PCF.

We got nothing from Marchais anyway. Yes, if we do it your way, we will please our loyal friends – DKP, Sinisalo, the Danes, Austrians, Luxembourgers, and of course Gus Hall. But they don't mean anything in the real politics at home or on the international arena.

However, a "toughening of class [struggle]," even just verbally (but from such a podium), could seriously damage the general direction of our foreign policy offensive – the course of peace and economic cooperation. These are real things both from the standpoint of slowing down the burden of the arms race, and the standpoint of much-needed economic ties with the outside world.

So we have to choose between propaganda (poor and ineffective propaganda, by the way), and politics.

The same goes for their recession. Yes, they acknowledge that it is very deep. Maybe it really is worse than the Great Depression of 1929-1933 (in its fundamental laws). But in contrast to what happened then, this time capitalism is dealing with it pretty well. In 1929 they were completely unprepared for the hit. Now, on top of having immeasurably greater wealth and economic resources at their disposal, and the absence of contradictions that led to a war between the powers at the time, they have international mechanisms and psychological readiness to take on "the challenge," as they say. In fact, even this sharp and prolonged recession resulted in only a 1-2 percent reduction in the standard of living, and even this happened only in some countries. Can we really compare it to the social devastation of the 1930s?!

B.N. interrupted me by saying: "You are in the grip of our liberal scholars and Western propagandists. Look at their inflation – 16, 25, 34 percent! And the mass strikes!"

Fine, I said, but the workers use these strikes to get salary increases of 30-50 percent at a time. This has never happened before. Unemployment – yes. Nobody is saying that a recession is

good for the people. But in some sectors, the unemployed are paid more than CC CPSU consultants...

B.N. got angry and again started to tell me that I am under the influence of wrong data and falsifications.

I said alright, if we really want to “press the devastating disasters” and such, then we need to have data, numbers. We don’t have them – not from our institutes, not from the communist parties. Where are we going to get them? We can make them up. Otherwise we will look ridiculous. It would be irresponsible to engage in cheap propaganda from the podium of the Congress, especially for a person like Brezhnev, who has a specific reputation in the world. It won’t give us anything but sneers both at home (we buy bread from these decaying imperialists) and especially in the West, including in our fraternal parties.

Moreover, we again have to choose – is it beneficial to the interests of our economy and foreign policy to dance the cancan about their crisis and wish them more of the same? [*у кричать «таскать вам не перетаскать»*]?

B.N.: Why the cancan? We should just state things as they are.

I: First of all, you don’t want things as they are; you want it tougher for propaganda. Secondly, this is a political report at a Party Congress, not a lecture on the global economy! So there is always the question: why do we need this or that topic in the report, from a policy perspective?

Of course these are not the exact words we used; I’m conveying the gist of it here schematically. The conversation=debate was lively and uneven, but I think I got the main points of my ranting to B.N. across correctly.

Last week I had a similar discussion with B.N. about his idea to publish an article on “Peaceful coexistence and class struggle” in *Kommunist*. I told him frankly that it will be primarily perceived as a “response to Giscard d’Estaing.” He responded in his usual style: “We don’t need to refer to Giscard, though of course no one in his right mind would get that idea anyway.” B.N.’s idea once again was born out of necessity “to justify ourselves before Marchais,” to tell good communists that we, the CPSU, are also good fighters in the class struggle, and even though we are pursuing a policy of peaceful coexistence, we are not giving up the goal of destroying imperialism.

We wrote the article. But when I brought it to B.N., he didn’t take it. Instead, he told me to distribute it among the deputies and have them answer three questions: is this article necessary? Do we have a basis for it? What can we add? And specific comments on the text. Now the deputies are working on it. I asked Zagladin to put it all together and personally report to Ponomarev.

So B.N. is torn between statesmanship and his propaganda-class nature formed in the 1930-50s. He slipped up with the European Conference of Communist Parties because the latter part of him took over. If he had given it some serious thought in due time, he would have realized that such a conference was not necessary. Plus, it's impossible to put back together the unraveled shirt [*расползшийся кафтан*] of the Communist Movement, especially with methods that only exacerbate the unraveling.

During the week B.N. received Morris Childs – member of the CPUSA who is Gus Hall's special envoy for "these kinds of matters."¹² B.N. called me over. The formal reason for Morris's visit is to inform the CC CPSU about their recent Plenum (as payment for our financial assistance, so to speak. Nonetheless, B.N. refused to provide it). But in his presentation, and in Gus Hall's report at the Plenum, there was pressure on us regarding "peaceful coexistence and class struggle" – in the spirit of the French Communist Party. They expressed "doubts" about Academician Arbatov's article on the subject, in which he supposedly rejects the thesis that "peaceful coexistence is a form of class struggle on the world stage." Later Morris visited Arbatov, after which the latter called me, very worried, and asked to explain to B.N. that the Americans misunderstood him because *The New York Times* published only excerpts from his article with some incorrect translations.

Nevertheless, he bitterly swore at Morris and Hall for meddling in our affairs and wanting us to once again shout to the whole world that we expect to overthrow imperialism with our policy of détente.

Of course, B.N. knows a great deal and has a lot on his plate; he is accustomed to thinking big, on a "theoretical" level so to speak. But the huge amount of information he consumes daily from the ciphered telegrams, from TASS, from conversations with communist parties – all of it is fragmented, varied, and contradictory. He doesn't have the time or strength to synthesize it. When he tries to summarize it, the data follows the law of energy conservation and falls into the ancient "theory" patterns that B.N. ultimately inherited from Stalin, though he genuinely denies this and would be outraged if someone said this to him.

After all, he is over 70 years old. He has a functional response to information, as a conscientious official. Only in his weary spare time does he begin to think about prospects and consequences.

Because of my own position in the bureaucracy, and because B.N. belongs to that leadership circle that, according to mass psychology, is supposed to know and understand everything – because of all these reasons I myself can't help but look to B.N. for answers to our "great problems." In this sense I am like a man on the streets who thinks, for example, that Brezhnev is supposed to see and know everything – from the state of affairs in literature to what

¹² In 2001 it was revealed that for decades, Morris Childs was a CIA [sic, FBI] insider in the CPSUSA. [Author's footnote]

is available (or not) in stores, what happens in transportation, the thieving and corruption in the administration, the state of our economy, everything. And he is supposed to fix everything himself. This is the legacy of tsarist psychology, which was toppled by the revolution but revived in a different form at the same time, and then restored, strengthened and solidly consolidated by Stalin.

I got a copy of Willy Brandt's London speech. I'm impressed by the scale of his political thinking. It seems that from the point of view of the West's interests, he expresses the best approach to the problem of confrontation of two social orders. We should have an approach on a similar global scale, from the standpoint of our socialist world. And we don't have one. Not just because we are in the grip of obsolete ideological clichés that we are afraid to let go. It's also because such an approach involves a lot of money, material wealth that would be at least somewhat comparable to the American-European-Japanese levels.

November 2, 1975

There was an election meeting, a regular formality. But since it happens once a year, B.N. made a speech. He spoke in platitudes that could have been said 5, 10, and 25 years ago. As if nothing is happening in the ICM, as if things are as smooth and great as ever, it's just "not clear why the French are behaving this way," etc.

We have one deputy of the Scandinavia sector who has been in the department for about 30 years. He is dumb and meanly cunning. He needed to show his adherence to principle, so he picked on me in his speech (he said I do not educate the sectors on what to do with social democracy; I only go abroad to various meetings on the subject but nobody ever finds out the results). It is all petty nonsense, but everyone noticed: a deputy head is being publicly criticized! From a professional standpoint this is obvious disloyalty, I could have summoned him and let him have it, and no party committee would say a word about suppressing criticism. But I don't give a damn. However, it is noteworthy that he dared to do this against me... Why? Either because he thinks (like many others) that I don't have enough actual power to "press" anyone, or because they think that I'm too much of an intellectual to seek revenge.

I am reading Viktor Afanasyev [sic, Astafyev], the collection *War is Raging Somewhere* [*Где-то гремит война*]. He is one of the authors who represent our great contemporary Soviet prose. Tremendous master. Each one of his stories has a point where it becomes impossible to restrain an explosion of feelings.

November 8, 1975

Second day of the holiday. Yesterday I was at the parade and partially lingered to see the demonstration. I noted that Grechko's speech from the Mausoleum was done in quite a peace-loving spirit, he even mentioned "Soyuz-Apollo." And – this was especially interesting – the

parade was given in the “defense mode.” The new things were launchers for low-flying aircraft, the infantry carrier rocket “Strela” without strategic missiles.

I went to the reception at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. Brezhnev gave the toast himself, it was also pretty peaceful. Then he made a joke suggesting that the marshals and generals should court the ladies. (There was quite a variety of ladies in the room, all of them lavishly dressed but very few with taste.) There was one episode that everyone paid attention to: the Patriarch of [Moscow and] all Rus’ and his entourage, clearly already tipsy, walked towards the presidium. Brezhnev stood up to greet him. They embraced and then for five minutes chatted in front of the astonished public, as the saying goes. And then the Patriarch marched across the entire hall to the exit.

We’ve been back at Novo-Ogarevo since November 3rd (Aleksandrov, Blatov, Karen and I, and Shishlin). Zagladin comes by on short visits and only participates in discussions. He obviously does not want to get engaged. He told Karen “privately” that the text is boring and that we should play up the “class aspect”; that both East and West benefited from talk about détente but it is nonsense; that Helsinki took place and “never mind about it,” we should keep our course for chipping off at imperialism bit by bit, etc. Who knows whether he picked this up somewhere at the top, or if he came up with it himself under the influence of the French.

Incidentally, the comments we got to our August text from Brezhnev and especially from Gromyko give reason to think that although Zagladin is running ahead, he is moving “in the right direction.”

Brezhnev’s remarks are vague and not clearly formulated. He listened to the text, made some marks in the margins or underlined some things, following the “figure it out yourself” principle. He put question marks in some places and said that we should be more careful and restrained when it comes to assessing the “establishment of peace.”

Gromyko, although he “highly approved” the text, essentially rejected any disarmament perspective and virtually excluded the possibility of curbing the arms race. He made it clear that it is not to our advantage and we shouldn’t bind ourselves because, he said, we aren’t going to do it. We were all left with our jaws hanging open, and Aleksandrov nervously said that he cannot agree with this.

Andropov, on the contrary, seems to have approved the course we set out in the text – that détente essentially has no further prospects without an emphasis on doing away with the arms race.

November 9, 1975

Nobody really made comments on my section (“The CPSU and the revolutionary process”). But Brezhnev put a bunch of question marks next to paragraphs on regional

conferences of communist parties and said that it “reads like a lecture.” Plus, I will have to reduce the whole text by more than a third. This section will now have to cover the recession, which must fit on a page and a half and “not have all kinds of terminology or sound too academic,” but still needs to feel new. Really, God forbid having this task: using all the resources of your mind and nerves to depict the extremely complex modern world in the most primitive language, all the while trying to make some of the ideas look Marxist. For example, the client made the following remark: we have to better define what the revolutionary process is, it must be clear that it is the struggle for independence and peace!

November 15, 1975

Another week spent entirely cooped up at Novo-Ogarevo. It is torture to waste your effort on making things sound as primitive as possible, even ideas that are presented more or less intelligently in *Pravda*.

After editing the report to reflect Gromyko’s, Andropov’s, Ponomarev’s, Katushev’s, and of course the speaker’s comments, we managed to reduce it from 58 to 47 pages, but we need to get down to 40 or even 35. But even with this volume, the text is visibly drying up, while any eloquent wording takes space. It looks like we’ll be spending another week here, cutting down the text.

November 20, 1975

Yesterday Sashka Bovin stopped by to visit me. He just got back from a trip to Greece, Turkey, and Cyprus (as a correspondent for *Izvestiya* but with an assignment from us). He said he wrote several telegrams while he was over there, thinking to help our policies. But when he got back to Moscow, he found out that nobody paid attention to them above a deputy minister of foreign affairs. A common occurrence.

Bovin continues to sit in the group at Volynskoe-II (the Economic section of the Summary Report). They also prepared the speech for the General Secretary at the Plenum that will take place on December 2nd, covering the plan for next year and the economy in general (pre-Congress issues). Brezhnev met with them. There was, as Bovin put it, one musical moment: they wrote that we had to buy grain abroad. The General Secretary told them to take it out. They tried to argue, saying that everyone knows about it and people might say something. The General Secretary: “While we are alive, nobody will say anything. When we die, let them talk!” Meanwhile, we are harvesting 50 million tons of grain and there is a PB resolution to purchase 30 million tons abroad, we already purchased 24... And yet, it’s true that nobody will say anything for now.

I get the impression from Novo-Ogarevo and from today’s conversation with Ponomarev that the General Secretary is practically incapacitated. The advisors – Aleksandrov, Blatov – have no way of contacting him, not even by telephone. Members of the PB and Secretaries can

only get in touch through the Head of the General Department Chernenko. There is an order “not to disturb.”

Aleksandrov couldn't say anything worthwhile regarding the future development of the Congress materials before he left. He only knows what we already knew from B.N. before leaving for Novo-Ogarevo: Brezhnev said at the PB that from January 1st he will go away to Zavidovo and devote himself entirely to preparations for the Congress.

The editorial committee for the preparation of the ill-fated Conference of Communist Parties met in Berlin. B.N. didn't go. Katushev and Zagladin went. Today I read their ciphered telegram report: they are informing the CC that we do not need a conference that would showcase our differences before the Congress. In other words, exactly what I'd been telling Zagladin and Ponomarev since August.

November 21, 1975

Hectic day. B.N. called me over and asked if I'd read the joint Marchais-Berlinguer interview after their two meetings in Rome and Paris. They made a mutual and final statement that they will only move to socialism through the maximum expansion of democracy; that the Soviet way decidedly does not work for them. And even though the October Revolution and the Soviet Union's contribution to the world are huge, the condition for moving forward is a union of all democrats (and not just democrats). It is time to put the unity of social-democrats on par with the significance that was previously assigned to the unity of communist parties, and the unity of the latter is only possibly on some issues, such as European security and progress in Helsinki. That is the only reason we need the Conference of Communist Parties, they said.

I have been telling B.N. for a long time that I see no fundamental difference between the PCI and PCF's positions on policy issues; and that French criticism of our policies supposedly from the “left” is not leftism but anti-Sovietism. They need it to assert their party's national positions.

But he is no longer capable of going below the surface. The abundance of information slips through him without penetrating his police mentality. And he continues to have blind faith that if, for example, *Pravda* publishes an article, then everything will fall into place.

This time, too, he called a stenographer and started to dictate an outline for an article on how good our democracy is; that the critics need to know it before they criticize. And those who don't want to know, there is no changing them. All this despite how well informed he is! He does not want to understand that the main reason why they (CPs) disassociate themselves from us is because from their point of view, our democracy does not have guarantees against Stalinism. They, like you [B.N.], have only one thing with which to counter the anticommunist propaganda on this question, and that is the CPSU's good will. In the West, nobody believes such a guarantee, and some even refer to historical materialism.

I read Regis Debray's new book, *Criticism of Weapons* (he is the author of the famous *Revolution in Revolution*, an associate of Che Guevara in Bolivia). He is a man of great intellect; his analysis of the situation in Latin America is almost on the scale of Lenin.

Yegorov, the director of the Institute of Marx-Engels-Lenin, sent his review of the manuscript for Volume I of *History and Theory of the International Labor Movement*. It is positive. This will come in useful against Ponomarev, who still has cold feet and keeps grumbling (instead of taking a look at the manuscript or page-proofs). He again told Timofeyev in my absence that because we remade the introduction five times, the rest of the volume must be shoddy. I decided not to speak with him about the volume until it comes out, just put him before the fact. Otherwise we could jeopardize the whole publication, which involved hundreds of people and tens of thousands of rubles, salaries and so on.

November 23, 1975

Yesterday I was at the Museum of Fine Arts. The main hall had XVI-XVII century Italians. A couple Caravaggios and five-six paintings from Naples. For people who have been in the West, this is boring: every European capital has a ton of them. Our public is pretty indifferent to them, too (except for assiduous girls and old ladies, who make notes on the names of the paintings and artists).

But the side galleries showcased contemporary French artists. There was almost no abstract art; the only one that might come close is "Laser beam." One artist – one painting. There were at least 200 there, aside from feeble imitations of Picasso, Degas and others.

Especially striking was the Vereshchagin-style attention to detail, but the level of spirituality (through skill that has absorbed all the extravagance of our century) does not compare. And everything is very much "not ours." The scenes and objects are similar to the best examples of the Russian classics, but they are nothing like it. The feeling is completely different.

Yesterday I read a bunch of papers, especially on social democracy. In the spirit of the above-mentioned speech by Brandt. Social democracy is surpassing communism because it is based on the efficiency, power, and wealth of modern capitalism. In the past, the bourgeoisie used social democracy at its convenience, but now social democracy is using capitalism for its "democratic socialism" and to beat communism. For now we will ride the wave of peace (they are prepared not to interfere and even to help us, so we exhaust the momentum). They will ride the wave of economic efficiency, using the "benefits of peace" and détente.

The only ideological weapon we have against them is archaic rhetoric. We are already blocked in the fight against them politically, because they are our main socio-political partner in the struggle for détente.

November 24, 1975

I spoke with Zagladin, who participated in the Berlin meeting of the editorial committee on the European Conference of Communist Parties (November 17-19). The “loyal” parties (Austria, Ireland, the FRG, Belgium, Denmark) said tête-à-tête: “We no longer understand the CPSU. You rushed us with this conference. We tried to support you, to adapt our affairs to suit your needs and interests. And suddenly – stop! You should have warned us!”

It is true that some of them received very confusing information from the embassies. The ambassadors understand (and know) even less than we do. Most importantly – there were no explanations. At the committee itself about ten of the “loyal ones” spoke in favor of holding the conference as soon as possible, expressing willingness to remove additional comments and suggestions from the draft document to lighten the load. But after the Romanians, Spaniards, Swedes, and others made a bunch of comments it became clear that things were moving towards a total devaluation of the document. After Katushev’s speech they started to understand what is going on and backtracked in their follow up speeches, insisting on careful preparation of the document. The “loyals” were offended by the very need for such a large-scale maneuver in front of everyone, despite the smart speeches like O’Riordan’s.

One-on-one they said: “Of course we condemn George Marchais’ anti-Soviet practices. But there is some reason behind such things. It’s starting to become unclear to us how you, the CPSU, resolve the problem of balancing your state and Party priorities and interests. There is a huge flow of receptions for various state leaders, and a total lack of receptions and meetings at a high Party level in the last two years. It seems the meetings with Arismendi and Arnedo on November 7th were just in passing, either at a parade or some holiday reception.” The German said, “Comrade Mies has been chairman of the DKP for four years. We’ve asked for a visit and reception (even if not at the level of Brezhnev) ten times, to no avail. We will stop trying.” (By the way, the ICP had asked three times between August and October for Brezhnev to receive Berlinguer. They didn’t even get a proper response.) Scharf (Communist Party of Austria): “The CPSU provides monetary and other assistance. But nowadays this is not enough. Communists need political support. When we do manage to get some level of conversation in the CC CPSU, we hear the same things again and again: “we have to work with the masses,” “we must increase our numbers,” “we need an alliance of leftist parties,” etc. These are all very true, but we’ve known these things for decades! What we would like is a concrete and competent conversation with the CPSU on exactly what we should be doing in the specific current international context. After all, nobody [in the CPSU] really knows what we are doing and what our current situation is.” (Here Zagladin tried to object).

The “loyals” are saying that one gets the impression the CPSU has lost interest in the communist movement, that it is inclined to “do business” on matters of state with its Warsaw Pact allies. Then why should we be surprised that first we got Brussels (the Conference of West European Communist Parties, January 1974) and now the Marchais-Berlinguer “historic declaration,” which legalizes the special path of the West European communist movement and openly disassociates itself from the CPSU’s experience. It does not even mention the socialist

countries in its framework of fighting for democracy, social progress, and socialism. The Soviet Union is only given a truly prominent role on issues of détente, peace, etc. related to Helsinki.

I asked Vadim: “Did you tell all of this to B.N.?”

- Yes.
- And?
- Nothing. What can he do?! He understands all of this.

By the way, when I returned from Novo-Ogarevo and met with B.N. regarding other matters, he suddenly broke out in obscenities about the fact that “they are receiving the lousy [Giovanni] Leone, but we haven’t been able to get them to meet with Berlinguer for over three months.”

Indeed, due to the force of circumstances, we are increasingly inclined to view the ICM as an instrument of our foreign policy propaganda (we don’t need it for anything else!), but on a greater scale we lost any real ability to use it even for this purpose.

Naturally, the communist parties are looking for explanations. Just as the Sovietologists in the West, they are prone to using formal logic, which they derive from our doctrines. They come up with various concepts to reconstruct the logic behind our behavior.

Maybe there is logic to it. But it is not the logic of behavior, i.e. not a thought-out policy. It is objective logic – the inevitable result of the power structure’s development. It wouldn’t even cross their minds (i.e. they wouldn’t allow themselves to think it) that the situation is primitively simple. Brezhnev is old, tired, and sick. He is only capable of a bare minimum amount of informed political activity. The others are also old and feeble, for example Suslov, who “manages” the parties. Plus, everything is locked into the General Secretary. If he is not around, there are no meaningful decisions. Gromyko, who is a pig but Brezhnev’s friend, uses every opportunity to take advantage of this situation and impose people on Brezhnev that he, Gromyko, thinks are important: people like Leone, etc. Ponomarev does not have access to Brezhnev anymore, not even by phone. There is no one to suggest a meeting with someone like Berlinguer to him, or to explain why it is important.

The situation is such that take for example the famous Declaration of Marchais-Berlinguer. The world press has deemed it an “historical turning point” that marks the end of the traditional Leninist communist movement, in which socialist countries (in one form or another) were leaders and had authority, they were the first to be consulted in decisions on any issue.

But I’d be willing to bet that Brezhnev has not even heard about it. So what politics, what priorities can we talk about in these circumstances? The Secretariat or Politburo, as the decision-making bodies, did they pay attention to this declaration, did they assess it and draw conclusions for our policy?! No, and they will not. That means we don’t have a policy on the ICM. We have

sporadic, inertial connections; the political and ideological content is becoming increasingly uncertain, vague, and of course it is beginning to elude our attentive friends. Naturally, they are at a loss.

November 29, 1975

Romesh Chandra¹³ (who cost the Soviet people at least seven chemical plants, they say) awarded Brezhnev yet another medal: the Joliot-Curie Medal of Peace. This was announced in Leningrad, at the meeting of the peace movement, which was attended by Shaposhnikov. Immediately after the announcement, Shaposhnikov got a thrashing from B.N. over the government communications line. One of B.N.'s senior colleagues sternly asked him why they were not aware of this ahead of time. To B.N., this question sounded like suspicion that he is seeking to gain personal favor. But others thought the question might have a hidden message as well, namely: "Enough of this!" However, everything went well. Everyone was present in the Sverdlov Hall. B.N. was sitting in row with the man of the hour, listening intently to Chandra's undulating speech ("to make sure he doesn't say too much!" Which he did, by the way). This has been the life of the press and media, not to mention the Soviet people as they are, for the last three days.

Yesterday I read Brezhnev's speech for the upcoming December 1st CC Plenum. It was written by the Bovin-Arbatov-Tsukanov team in Volynskoe-II. Very skillfully and sensibly done. In terms of the volume of production, no other five-year period has had such figures. However, the national income fell by 160 billion rubles due to two lean years (the drought in 1975 was the worst in 100 years). There will be "difficulties with milk and meat. There is a risk of a massive loss of cattle. There is a possibility of a new crop failure in 1976. Most importantly, 'Group B' did not surpass 'Group A,' despite the decisions of the XXIV Congress. Have we rejected this goal? No. But we have not yet learned how to ensure its fulfillment."

They cite Tyumen as an example that "we can when we want to" (Tyumen is responsible for the entire increase in gas and oil production). But he says himself, "we spared neither strength nor resources," which means it does not really work as an example. In light industry we did not even come close to what was promised. We are competing with the U.S. in the arms race at the light industry's expense. Once again, in 1976 the growth of "Group B" is set at only 2.7 percent!

"We don't know how to work!" Indeed, it is sad when we invest into the production of the most powerful tractors K-700 and T-150, but then do not manufacture attachments for them. And they are used at only 50 percent capacity. Or: we dump untold resources into cotton production, but our textile, dyeing, and clothing manufacture is so outdated that the final product gathers dust on store shelves. However, carelessness is probably not to blame here. The fact of

¹³ Chairman of the pro-Soviet World Peace Council. [Author's footnote]

the matter is that there is barely enough money for the K-700s (and to manufacture them is a matter of prestige), but for the “components” to the tractors – sorry, no money!

Despite the skillfulness of the speech, it worries me that our main methodology for the future is the same thing we said at the XXIV Congress and the Plenums. And it seems until there is a “psychological” turning point about the arms race, there is really nothing else to offer. Brezhnev once again in the face of the whole world bound himself to the cause of peace when he sincerely and emotionally responded to Chandra. But the objective logic remains: peace through the threat of force. The Americans follow this logic openly and publicly. It is easier for them: they dump a significantly smaller share of their national income into the arms race than we do. Technologically, they are approaching a level of modern weapons that could turn all our nuclear and tank strength into a pile of nonsense one of these days. Do we really still believe that the Americans will attack us if we stop the arms race?!

In this context, what to make of the Church Committee’s report on the CIA, which over the course of nearly 20 years organized assassinations of Castro, Lumumba, Schneider, and other disagreeable political leaders? Most likely they were crazed and driven to distraction with fear of us, of communism. Of course now they look abominable. But the amazing thing is that the world was not surprised. As if to say, what can you really expect from modern politics? The best and wisest course of action is not to pay attention to their provocations, including the arms race they are imposing on us. It is nothing more than a provocation against us. We need to decide once and for all: we are not afraid of you and we are going to go on with our own business, not giving a damn about all the “fears” that you are trying to strike into us. It seems this primitive approach is the only way out, and the only choice.

December 28, 1975

We were in Zavidovo from December 15-27th, preparing Brezhnev’s speech for the XXV Congress. We got back last night. Before we left there were a ton of events that I will only have time to briefly jot down.

On December 8th there was a Party conference of the CC apparatus. I was elected to the drafting committee, so I heard only parts of what was said. I noticed that along with bureaucratic ritual and completely preset sequence of the entire conference – from the opening to the elections and the requisite number of times that Brezhnev has to be mentioned – some interesting things were voiced as well. Especially by Gostev (head of the Department of Planning and Financial Organs), an acrimonious and intelligent pragmatist. For example, 95 percent of enterprises do not manufacture any high-quality products; 2/3 of ministries did not fulfill the plan. Prices had to be cut on 2 billion worth of consumer goods due to poor quality and outmoded styles, but they remained unsold anyway. The Party bureau secretary from the Party Control Committee provided a ton of facts about corruption at all levels – from regional executive committees and national ministries to journalists and industrial managers. It turns out Nasriddinova, who was the

Chairman of the USSR Soviet of Nationalities for many years, was relieved of the position and later removed from the CC for unbelievable scams involving dachas, fur coats, and cars. Her daughter's wedding cost the state almost a million rubles.

That day we also had a meeting of deputies with B.N. on the situation in the ICM. B.N. thought we would only talk about what to do with the Italians, who (communist senators led by Pajetta) demanded in parliament to take measures regarding the Soviet government's refusal to let Sakharov travel to Oslo. But we (I started and Zagladin took over) talked about the "deep tendencies," about the fact that the Marchais-Berlinguer Declaration is a format for the new direction of the ICM that breaks with traditional Leninist and Soviet [path]; and even though Moscow pretended it didn't happen, we will have to react. Not before the Congress of course, so we don't turn it into a symbol of the ICM's collapse, but afterwards. We can do it in two ways: there is the "Yugoslav option." A month ago by the decision of the CC an article was prepared and published in *Pravda* on the persecution of Cominformovists [коминформовцев] (the persecution has been going on for 3-4 months and it has already taken on the nature of a massive ideological-repressive campaign. Two hundred people have been arrested, and no secret is made of the fact that Cominformovists are agents of Moscow). In any case, in this article the CPSU condemned the Cominformovists using the wording from Yugoslav press, as traitors and counterrevolutionaries. We basically told the Yugoslavs – "Do what you want. It's your business what to do with ideology, and your domestic and foreign policy. The only thing that's important to us is not to get into a conflict with you and for you to remain a 'socialist country.'"

We could follow the same strategy with the PCF-ICP-Spanish CP and the whole trend in question: do and say whatever you want, however you want; just don't speak ill of the CPSU and everything will be alright between us and in the ICM. This is precisely what they want to get from us. However, like the Yugoslavs, they insist on their right to criticize us and disassociate themselves from us (especially on freedom of expression and administration in ideology). And they do it with an aim to provoke us. The latest example was when Marchais and *L'Humanite* picked up some kind of fake secretly taped documentary about a labor colony near Riga and again started condemning us for "political prisoners for ideological reasons."

But I digress... B.N. listened to us tensely, then contemptuously rejected our analysis of the objective reasons behind Marchais-Berlinguer & Co. He said the most important thing is the "personal aspect" and then "moved on to other matters." He obviously does not want to be present at the collapse of the ICM (same as Churchill once did not want to witness the collapse of the British Empire). However, the collapse is happening and we need to adjust. (For now I made a version in the traditional spirit for Brezhnev's XXV Congress report, but conciliatory.)

I thought my participation in the preparation of the Summary Report would end in Novo-Ogarevo. The summons to come to Zavidovo was unexpected. Aleksandrov called and told me the General Secretary's orders. I think it worked out this way because Aleksandrov suspects Zagladin of wanting to distance himself from Brezhnev in due time, because the latter is

relentlessly deteriorating from progressive senility. Aleksandrov hinted about Zagladin to me and Brutents back in Novo-Ogarevo. He also took advantage of the fact that Vadim was supposed to go to Rome and Berlin around this time.

So, the Novo-Ogarevo team was called to Zavidovo to work on the penultimate round of the Summary Report: the advisers Aleksandrov, Blatov, Rusakov, and Brutents and I.

First of all: contrary to fears and expectations brought about by impressions from televised appearances and rumors in the apparatus, which are supported by Brezhnev's long-term disengagement from affairs, I found him to be in a more or less normal (for him) condition, i.e. the same way as I remember him from my previous visits to Zavidovo over four years ago. He hardly remembered me, even though I've been to Zavidovo five-six times since 1967. Brutents appeared as a completely new person to him. However, that did not stop him from acting as if we were some petty distant relatives. His jokes with the women (stenographers, typists, doctor, nurse, waitresses) were borderline rude and risqué. Those who had been with him for a while took it calmly, but newcomers like the typist Valya were initially at a loss. Sometimes it seemed she was about to faint. For example, at breakfast: "Why did you paint your lips such a bright color? Is it so people don't touch you? Such a thing wouldn't stop me..." Then he saw how embarrassed she got and said, "Here, take this pastry (he gave her one from a platter, even though she had the exact same thing in front of her)... Why are you like this, I'm only joking!"

Every morning at breakfast he would tell us in detail how he spent the night. He has trouble sleeping and constantly complained about it. For example, one time he said: "I went to bed in a sleeveless shirt, but I don't like when my arms are bare. In the summer it's a different matter... So I got up and put on a robe – you never know, the doctor might come in. I went to the table thinking to drink some milk, I like Mozhayskoe, but there wasn't any. The doctor must have swiped it or drank it himself. (The doctor, Mikhail Titych, a sharp young man, objected and laughed it off.) So I had to make do with Borjomi. I called Volodya (the guard), told him to bring me the newspaper. I thought I would read Suslov's speech in Havana. Volodya brought it, but I didn't feel like reading anymore. Then I almost went to bed, but remembered about the sleeveless shirt and took it off. I got my favorite shirt from the closet; it must be fifteen years old, it's been mended all over. I immediately felt calm, because I'm so used to it... Valya, there is another hole in it. Will you come tomorrow night to mend it? You know, half my bed is empty..." (Everyone laughs and the toothy experienced Valya (another one, the stenographer Mishustina) winks at the crowd and says mischievously, "Of course Leonid Ilyich, just be sure not to change your mind!")

Or [another episode]: he leaned over to his neighbor at the table, Vika (Victoria, his most senior stenographer, a woman of about thirty, pretty and smart), "I don't remember on what occasion I had to have a bowel movement. The doctor gave me some kind of pills. I took two, then three. Then a handful – no result. Everyone in the hospital was amazed; they'd never seen anything like it. There was no effect on me at all. But in an hour and a half it suddenly exploded

– I could have flown like a rocket to the moon. Everyone was a little embarrassed, but they went on like it was a normal thing.”

Or he would start telling us in detail how he shaved, went to the pool, how long he thought about what to wear. He would start admiring one of his jackets or sweaters, remembering where he got it. One time he came out in a jacket that he said he hadn't worn in fifteen years, he had forgotten it existed and then found it in the depths of his closet.

On one occasion he announced that he loves watches and guns. Indeed, he has a whole collection of watches. He was given a bunch more for his birthday on December 19th. Shokin, the Minister of Electronics Industry, presented him with some complex electronic watch, which didn't have a clock dial but the time would “pop up” every minute. For a long time Brezhnev was showing us the watch and explaining how it works.

Once he came to the “winter garden” in a military belt with an American-style holster (handle on the outside). We were all curious and surrounded him. He drew the gun with a flourish (he clearly has some talent for acting; he said that in his youth, when he was a student in Kursk, he worked part time as an extra on the stage) and aimed it at Arbatov's stomach. The latter shrunk back. “Don't be scared academician, I'm kidding!” He explained to us that he got this unique silent gun from the KGB guys. The little gun has great stopping power, no less than the “Colt” given to him by a cowboy actor in the U.S. He showed us the “Colt” too, on another occasion. He told us how he finished off a wounded boar with the little gun – [the bullet] tore right through the boar, but the animal kept kicking and when the people stepped away, it jumped up and ran another 50 meters. “What tremendous strength! A surprisingly tenacious beast!”

Everybody oohed and aahed, “What tenacity, can you even imagine!”

He talked a lot about hunting (he hunts for two-three hours every other day) during meals and while we were working on the texts. “We climbed on the tower and waited. For a long time there was nothing. Then suddenly a whole herd showed up. The first one came out from behind the tree, I shot – bam! Got him. The second one followed: again I shot, bam! Got him. I got eight in a row, without a miss! This is a smart and sensitive beast. But it can only see at eye-level. It can't look up, and we were there in the tower. But they have an astonishing sense of smell and hearing. They can smell things for miles and if the wind changes and carries the hunter's scent, then don't hold your breath; there will be no hunting that day.”

Every day there was something along these lines.

Postscript to 1975

The year of Helsinki. The year Sakharov was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Perhaps it is no coincidence that around this time began to emerge a contradiction, if not yet a break, between the state policy of détente and the activities of the CPSU, the ruling communist party.

Despite the hypocrisy and the secret hopes to cheat and beat the West (“imperialism”), in a certain sense the Soviet leadership chose to stick to the Helsinki Final Act. The diary entries show that Brezhnev embodied this attitude, the “post-Prague Brezhnev.” Indeed, he was for **peace** by his “nature,” though he was not really capable of “philosophizing” on the matter. He was probably the only person in the Soviet leadership who felt the huge responsibility of his position to prevent a world war, a nuclear war (the word “realized” is perhaps not suited to his mental abilities). In those days, if the General Secretary of the superpower thought so – it was more than enough.

However, under Brezhnev détente could not become irreversible and grow into something greater. First and foremost because he vigilantly protected and encouraged the fortification of the system’s main pillars – the military industrial complex, the KGB, a closed society, censorship, a repressive ideology, an essentially Stalinist mechanism and control apparatus, the appointment of cadres from the top to the very bottom.

All of these pillars of support had long outlived their usefulness as “tools” to serve the interests of the people, in the sense that was instilled in them by the Great Revolution of 1917. They had always been inherently hostile to the outside world, to its most dynamic and progressive aspects. Therefore they became potential carriers of a military threat.

This volume contains a great number of observations about Brezhnev as an individual, episodes and facts that illustrate his intellectual and cultural mediocrity. His everyday behavior, mannerisms, his whims and passions were oftentimes ridiculous, embarrassing, and humiliating alongside his kindness and generosity. In relations with people of “all ranks” he combined a plebeian democracy with a provincial Russian haughtiness.

It was one thing when thousands of people at some meeting or congress would burst into applause when he entered the room and after every phrase he uttered. That was an official ritual that could not be avoided. In such instances individuality is lost in the crowd. But it was sickening when in a narrow circle, such as during the preparation of a report or some other materials with his participation, grown men, doctors and professors, people of culture, war veterans no less than him would slobber over his vulgar familiarity, laugh at his stupid jokes, be thrilled by a nice word from him, echo and praise his platitudes. Especially because you despise yourself while doing it.

Brezhnev’s illness, which I would call “intermittent senility,” clearly manifested itself in 1975. The periods of clarity became increasingly shorter. What better evidence could there be

that the system was losing viability and progressively deteriorating than the fact that a person who was mentally and physically on the decline (for 7-8 years!) stood at the helm of this great nation!

Nevertheless, it is Brezhnev's historical achievement to have kept the momentum of détente until it was broken by Afghanistan. In light of Brezhnev's illness, we can only hold him minimally accountable for Afghanistan.

In parallel to Brezhnev's line there was also present, often in close contact, the international activity of the CPSU, personified by Ponomarev and Suslov. In this volume the CPSU's activity is amply represented in the hectic efforts to organize the European Conference of Communist Parties, in which the author of this diary was directly involved and was tormented by the senselessness of what he had to do despite his beliefs and common sense.

As he had predicted (and warned his superiors) this work ended in failure for many reasons:

Firstly, it was at odds with the line and intentions of the General Secretary.

Secondly, unlike the General Secretary's line, it did not correspond to new realities, including the needs of the communist parties, which finally realized the vital necessity for them to fit into the national identity of their countries.

Thirdly, the goal of the CC CPSU traditionalists was to revive the unity of the communist movement. However, "by the nature of things" (i.e. following the tradition and historical mission of the International Communist Movement) this unity could not avoid being **ideological**. For the parties it meant maintaining subordination to the CPSU. But by the mid-1970s, this was not an option for the communist parties that amounted to anything domestically. Not least because the Soviet Union in their eyes ceased to be a symbol and model of the kind of socialism to which they aspired. Precisely during this year the unequivocal rejection of the CPSU's policies and practices was bared publicly by the majority of European Communists. The parties did not want to draw on the CPSU's experience and listen to lectures on the subject.

Fourthly, our "fraternal parties" could not and did not want to continue serving as an unquestioning mouthpiece for the apologetics of Soviet society and Moscow's policies – because of the aforementioned reasons and due to the pitiable state the majority of them found themselves in for their own internal reasons. In these circumstances, the Soviet leadership, starting with Brezhnev himself, lost interest in the fraternal parties. They became unnecessary in the context of *real politik*. Their dissent and oftentimes hostile statements and actions caused resentment and outbursts of anger in Moscow. There were attempts to cajole them, to reconcile against all odds. But all of this was done without any real conviction that things could be turned back, that "order could be restored in the ICM." It appeared as an automatic function of officials

and institutes like the International Department of the Central Committee. It was as if we were carrying out orders received in the distant past.

For all these reasons, the year 1975 can be used to mark the beginning of the end of the communist movement as a significant factor in Europe or internationally. There was no longer a position of influence for the ICM in the global balance of political forces.

The 1975 volume turned out to be fairly large, and it contains a great deal more than the abovementioned issues – curious episodes that reflect a way of life in the USSR, strange events, observations by the author as well as his friends and colleagues.