

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

**1977**

**Donated by A.S. Chernyaev to The National Security Archive**

Translated by Anna Melyakova

<http://www.nsarchive.org>

January 1, 1977

Conversation with Brutents in my office ... About our despair... About the dead end we find ourselves in. How is this possible! The festival of awards for our 70-year-old General Secretary has been going on for almost a month. Against this background, I doubt there is a single person – from a simple worker to a refined intellectual or even an apparatchik – who could watch this on TV every day without feeling surprised and indignant, without mocking and laughing at ourselves and our leadership.

All of mass media is full of unbelievable babble about the successes, victories, growing status, excellence... the stuff is so politically stupid that if it didn't have obvious bureaucratic motives, one could think it was a provocation.

I talked about ethics: Primakov is leaving IMEMO to become one of the deputy directors of TASS because Inozemtsev, the director [of IMEMO], was not elected to the Central Committee at the Congress, and now he “has no future.”<sup>1</sup> Although Zhenya [Primakov] was Inozemtsev's deputy for 10 years and “best friend” for 20.

About Ulyanovsky, our 75-year old deputy, who wanted to become a corresponding member at the Academy of Sciences and wrote denunciations of his rivals, called vice president Fedoseyev and sent him packages with these denunciations by carrier.

And another point. Corvalan's release. Despicable remarks by Georges Marchais, *L'Humanite* and some of our Italian friends regarding the exchange of Corvalan for Bukovsky. My two-hour-long conversation on Plotnikov Street with McLennan on this subject (he was on a stopover in Moscow on his way back from a meeting of the CP in Vietnam). By the way, the Italians were cleverer in their reaction. They drew a clear distinction between the issues of Corvalan and Bukovsky.

Yu. Arbatov and I came up with Brezhnev's interview with Kingsbury Smith (in the form of a New Year's message to the Americans). It was published on the 29<sup>th</sup>, and of course caused a certain reaction.

B.N. assigned me to edit the manuscript of Brezhnev's biography, which is being prepared at the request of American publishers for the U.S. Up until 1960 it is vivid and convincing, afterwards it's a total drag. Still, the text is written without the cultish frenzy.

Karyakin gave me his book, *Raskolnikov's Self Deception* [*Samoobman Raskolnikova*], which he has been writing for ten years. We saw each other recently and he complained that “they won't let me say anything” (censorship). I asked him, “Tell me what you want to tell the people...” And I thought to myself: if we start talking seriously, it turns out these windbags don't really have anything to say.

---

<sup>1</sup> All words and phrases in quotation marks are similarly emphasized with quotation marks in the original. (Trans.)

Zagladin wrote an excellent essay for the first issue of *Novoe Vremya* on the subject of “Eurocommunism.” If we had started using this tone with the Communist movement a long time ago, and used it from now on, we wouldn’t have the current mess, and we would keep our authority! However, the paradox is that the first deputy head of the International Department of the Central Committee understands this and writes about it to the whole world. Meanwhile his boss, the head of the department, not only doesn’t allow himself such things, but wouldn’t allow Zagladin either, if he knew what the latter was planning to write... He probably won’t read it anyway, aside from hearing responses to the article from TASS.

The story with Antonio Rubbi’s (PCI) article, “New Internationalism,” in the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* [PPS]. It discusses the prospect of the emergence of socialist societies that would be different from each other not only in their political structure, but also “as socio-economic formations.” Zagladin allowed it. Harry Ott (CC SED) protested and now B.N. is torn: on the one hand, if we don’t give the French and Italians a platform in PPS, they will simply walk away, as they’ve promised to do already. On the other hand, how can we spend our money to publish something like this in what is essentially a Soviet journal, and in Russian!.. It goes against everything we stand for! The CC will be flooded with letters from propagandists, pensioners, and professors!

This is a symbol of the current reality of the International Communist Movement [ICM]. The journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* has become obsolete and should be shut down, as in its day was done with the newspaper *For a Lasting Peace, For People’s Democracy!*

January 5, 1977

I was talking with B.N. the other day. For some reason, he suddenly remembered that Suslov is sick. And he said something like: “He is sick once again... Not just his eyes. Something is wrong with his heart, it seems. Because his arm is affected. Overall, he really took a turn for the worse after the trip to Vietnam. People told him to take it easy, at least skip the [Politburo] sessions. But he showed up at the last Secretariat before the New Year, saying he would feel uncomfortable missing it because the issues are important and we need to balance the books... And now he fell apart again. Brezhnev is beside himself. I will tell you in confidence, yesterday he summoned Chazov (head of the 4<sup>th</sup> Department of the Ministry of Health) and announced: ‘Look here, if you don’t keep Mikhail Andreyevich well, I don’t know what I will do... I will resign!’

“Indeed, Anatoly Sergeevich, he is the only one! The only one! (He lifted his finger to emphasize that there is no one else.) There is no other person at the Politburo who could support Brezhnev. Despite all his... (he didn’t say shortcomings) you know, you have to give him credit. He doesn’t have all these (gestures to indicate intrigues, backstabbing)... He doesn’t make any claims, doesn’t covet the top post. What can I say, he is selfless. And he is alone in this! You understand, he is the only one who truly thinks politically, thinks about the Party.

“It is really a big problem! (He didn’t say the word “age.”) Look at Mazurov, he has been out of commission for a long time now. He must be getting some kind of medication, too. When he shows up, he doesn’t look normal at all. He hasn’t been able to work for six months.

Pogdorny is very ill too, it's either his kidneys or his liver, I'm not sure which. Kosygin declined a long time ago, and this summer he nearly drowned and was recovering for two months afterwards. And all the others... This is a major issue, Anatoly Sergeevich!"

Yesterday there was a meeting at the *Rossiya* Hall in honor of Corvalan. His speech... "pro-Soviet" in form but "Eurocommunist" in essence: Communist parties reject the leading role of the CPSU, all parties are equal (including the Christian Democratic Party of Chile), independent, and have the right to be different; all political movements (except the fascists) are legitimate and have the right to participate in building Chile's democracy. Even the word "pluralism" was mentioned, and for the first time it was quoted in *Pravda* in a political context. That said, the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was mentioned as well (apparently so as not to be like Marchais), but only as a means to defend democracy against encroachments.

Yesterday I had a conversation with Marcel Trigon and Patrick Le Mahec (deputy head of the International Department and deputy of a sector in the CC PCF). We discussed the plan for the PCF-CPSU exchange for 1977 – the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October. To start, Trigon gave a speech that was obviously planned out in Paris. As if nothing happened over the last two years: as if there was no Bukovsky over the last few days; the movie *Recognition* [*Priznanie*, 1976]; the meeting at the Mutualité with [Leonid] Plushch; Kanapa's articles in *Political Affairs*, etc., etc. Total "bhai-bhai!"<sup>2</sup> and not a single lead for me to start on the subject of what they are doing by putting Corvalan on par with Bukovsky. I couldn't start that conversation myself. After all, I couldn't trash talk the General Secretary and PB members of the PCF while sitting in the CC CPSU and speaking with PCF apparatchiks! They could have simply gotten up and slammed the door.

[Luca] Pavolini, editor of *L'Unita*, asked Brezhnev for an interview, with Berlinguer's blessing. There was one question on détente, the other five were on democracy in the USSR.

I suggested to B.N. to say no and cite *L'Unita*'s position on the Corvalan-Bukovsky issue as the reason. I don't know if he'll dare to do it. He is good at grumbling in his circle of deputies. But he is mortally afraid to take even the slightest step: like Churchill, he doesn't want to be present at the collapse of his empire.

January 9, 1977

On January 6<sup>th</sup> I was unexpectedly called to Ponomarev's office. He announced that Brezhnev is summoning "us," asked me to quickly get dressed and meet him downstairs by his car. We drove to the Kremlin. We managed to get Kornienko from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [MFA] while we were on our way. Blatov was already there. We couldn't find Bovin (he was "presiding" at a pub at the time).

Brezhnev began in his usual style, which I got to know well from Zavidovo. "I woke up today, did some exercises... I thought to myself, what was that idea I had yesterday? I didn't

---

<sup>2</sup> Reference to the "Hindi-Russi bhai-bhai!" slogan used from 1950-1980s to describe Soviet-Indian friendship, it translates roughly as "Indians and Russians are brothers!" [Source: [https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Хинди\\_русси\\_бхай\\_бхай](https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Хинди_русси_бхай_бхай)] (Trans.)

remember it right away. Oh yes! It's not a bad idea, in fact: Carter takes office on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Why not say something to him beforehand, a kind of show of goodwill. We have a good excuse: Tula was recently awarded the status of 'Hero City.' I've never been to Tula, though I've passed through it dozens of times. Folks from Tula even repaired my rifle. So, I will go, congratulate them, talk about how they fought to the death during the war and saved Moscow. And while I'm at it, I will say an appropriate message to Carter."

He began pacing in front of us, along the length of his table, dictating the "outline," all the time qualifying his words by adding, "something along those lines..." "It should not be just about the U.S., of course. We should mention France, for example" (he didn't name any others). He came back to the people of Tula. "We should name the ones who fought and survived. I fought, but I'm still here..." And he teared up. He got up, walked over to his writing desk, took out a handkerchief from a drawer. Then he sat down heavily, supporting himself. "We should make it expressive. I am in the mood to give a strong speech. I will prepare... In general, I think I should speak before the people from time to time. Without long breaks. People find it uplifting, it creates enthusiasm."

When we were leaving, he asked us to do our best, even though time is short – the speech is on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

And the whirlwind began. The same day Leonid Ilyich announced his plans at the Politburo. Since Ponomarev turned out to be something like a "foreman," he started getting calls from other CC Secretaries – everyone wanted to "participate." As a result, ten people (!) ended up at Novo Ogarevo, even though the workload (if we are being serious) called for two-three people over two solid work days. On Friday, the following people left [for the state dacha] (besides Ponomarev): Blatov, Kornienko, Mendelevich, Bovin, Nail' Bikkenin (from the CC Propaganda Department), Voznesensky (political observer for television), Masyagin (consultant from the CC Organizational Party Work Department) and I. We separated into two groups – "internalists" and "internationalists." And the nonsense began. We had a dull debate for hours, but didn't even come up with an outline. Ponomarev, claiming general leadership, mainly engaged in discussions based on the ciphered telegrams he read in the last three days, with his usual "favorite (anti-imperialist) toys." Everyone in our department is used to them; we learned long ago how to deal with them and do as little harm as possible to real politics.

We more or less distributed the topics and split up into our different rooms. But on Saturday morning "Andryukha" Aleksandrov showed up from Barvikha, where he was staying for his pneumonia when Brezhnev called him and asked to intervene. He did not want to hear what we agreed upon the day before. As a matter of form, he stated his ideas, then refused to listen to ours or to our comments on his "ideas." He decisively deflected the slightest hint of other opinions and invited the stenographer. An hour later, the text of the international section was practically ready. It was loud and propagandist, but it set the course for the entire speech. Andrey Mikhailovich went back to Barvikha to continue on with his illness.

We were left with a text that many disagreed with, even Blatov. However, after grumbling a little, he started defending every word of Andryukha's dictation.

At Ponomarev's insistence we invited Arbatov, who added a section on relations with Yugoslavia and the Middle East, which Kornienko immediately struck out. We followed the "Sparrow's" outline, although later, after the "first reading" with Brezhnev, all that was left of his dictation were a few paragraphs, and even those were majorly reworked. Blatov, who was supervising us, was "frustrated" [by being torn] between his loyalty to Aleksandrov, common sense, and our "initiatives."

Georgiy Markovich Kornienko, then head of the American Department of the MFA, a clever Ukrainian, knowledgeable, a foreign affairs-man through and through, disliked Aleksandrov. People said he saw in him a competitor for Gromyko's place.

Mendelevich was an ambassador at large. I remembered him from the history department [at University] before the war. He was two years ahead of me, Gefter's classmate. He had all the answers, he was smart, clever, well-educated. He was the only Jew in the MFA who never tried to hide his Jewishness. He somehow managed to remain in senior positions his entire life; he must have been a professional of a rare degree. He not only knew which diplomatic document contained a substantial comma, where it was, why it was there and who put it there, but could quote the Bible by heart, as well as Gumilev, Goethe, Baratynsky. He showed off his knowledge of Latin, even though he only studied it before the war, at the University, same as me...

January 15, 1977

On Monday, Brezhnev called us to the Kremlin for the first reading. Bovin's privileges to read aloud have been reinstated. The General Secretary was in tears after the first pages, which referred to the defense of Tula in 1941. "Against this background," he thought the international section was boring (that's a fair assessment, though). He did not add anything on the substance of the speech. It was striking when two initiatives of the Political Consultative Committee [PCC] of the Warsaw Pact were mentioned (no first use of nuclear weapons by members of the Helsinki Conference and non-expansion by both blocs) and he asked "What does this mean? What's the point? Who suggested this?" It's been a little over two months since the PCC session in Bucharest where he suggested these things himself. It was recorded in a communique and our newspapers, radio and television incessantly paraded these initiatives as a new contribution by Brezhnev to the cause of peace.

He said he will visit Yasnaya Polyana and "we should include this in the speech – it will be important for our intelligentsia."

I thought to myself: our General Secretary is moving away from himself as an individual and thinking of himself as a symbol, belonging to the people... At the second reading, this comparison occurred to me: just as the tsar was dressed to appear before the people back in the day, now we "dress" Brezhnev in the text of the speech, which he will give without even really understanding what it says. The important thing (from the point of view of the state) is what the newspapers repeatedly write about in every way.

For the second reading, we created forceful passages – for applause (Boris Nikolayevich made an extra effort here). Some of these passages Brezhnev read aloud, with emphasis, the way

he planned to present it in Tula. He would look at us, asking, “Does it sound important? Yes, I think it does. They will applaud.”

The majority of the “discussion” (after approving the text as a whole) revolved around his intention to visit the arms factory. Blatov, Mendelevich, and Ponomarev started to dissuade him, saying the West will use it to say that he went to inspect military production, to “whip up the arms race,” while talking about peace, détente, etc. Brezhnev resisted, he really wanted to visit the arms factory. “Come on! I will be in Tula. They have been presenting me with hunting rifles for years, they have made special orders for me. How could I not visit them? It would be bad!” Ponomarev and Blatov went at it again, forcefully. Leonid Ilyich again did not want to agree with them, he just really loves guns, pistols, and all that stuff. (By the way, the famous Tula arms factory by that point had just one small facility that still made hunting rifles. The rest produced we all know what.) Finally we agreed that he would go to the factory but in the speech and in the newspapers we would say that Brezhnev visited a “mechanical plant”...

Ponomarev took me in his big car, Bovin joined us (the MFA guys went home, Blatov stayed at the CC). The three of us returned to Novo Ogarevo, technically to pick up our things, but we sat down to dinner while we were there. On his own initiative, B.N. suggested we have a drink. Bovin instantly made it happen. We “crushed” a bottle of cognac and a bottle of vodka. And we started talking...

I told the story of how Ernst Neizvestny was forced to leave. Bovin and I recalled some other examples of how we created dissidents with our own hands. Of course, we again touched on the “Jewish question”... And again B.N. declared, like he did on the airplane returning from England, that “we need to solve this problem!” As usual when he is drunk, he started reminiscing about the 1920s. This time, he recalled how Tovstukha (Stalin’s assistant) once let him into the leader’s personal archive (letters from exile, letters to women, etc.)...

We talked about the price increase (which went into effect on January 4<sup>th</sup>) and the fact that even in Moscow a lot of goods are not available.

Then Blatov joined us and took a “very active part” in the conversation. In particular, he described the onion production in the Ryazan region, which he represents in the Supreme Soviet. Women crawling in mud through beds of onions, and when you strike up a conversation, they mutter, “Just as long as we don’t have a war!”

As Arbatov used to say, “we had a good time.” It is astonishing that in this conversation, a member of the party leadership was equal to us in his powerlessness. By the way, he kept coming back to the theme of agro-industrial complexes. Brezhnev said they must be mentioned in the Tula speech. No one said anything, but “between us” Ponomarev argued in exasperation that we should not do that. Even in Moldavia this project did not work... These complexes will drive people to raise pigs and grow fruits and vegetables in their own gardens. What will that lead to?! How will we feed the country?!

The speech is intended to reach out to Carter on the eve of his inauguration on January 20<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, it aims to “pressure” the new president a little by refuting once again (at

the highest level) the “Soviet threat.” Another massive propaganda campaign has been launched before Carter assumes office. However, the noise about the “Soviet threat” is based on facts. Here I referred to Arbatov, who recently came back from the U.S., and his Institute “knows a lot.” We have not been able to conceal our missile and other buildup, and we won’t be able to conceal it in the future. Therefore, periodic statements that we are not threatening anybody will not work. The arms race, designed to exhaust us economically, will continue unless we make a real change in military policy and show in practice that we want arms reductions and aren’t seeking a “first strike” advantage.

January 17, 1977

Brezhnev’s speech in Tula is on the TV... with the text we prepared in Novo Ogarevo.

At the first reading of the text in the Kremlin, there was an argument between B.N. on one side and the MFA guys and Blatov on the other. The disagreement was over what to say to [Arnaldo] Forlani (Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs), whom Brezhnev was supposed to receive the next day. In his typical “ideological” manner, Ponomarev insisted that Brezhnev should take advantage of Italy’s economic interest in us and “pressure” – why do they Italians have an American submarine base near Rome. Say that it’s dangerous, and so on. Blatov and the MFA guys rumbled: this base is not important, and it’s not really a base anyway, it’s a fueling station. Anyway, the Italians can’t kick out the Americans, and they won’t leave NATO. So what’s the point of applying this pressure.

Brezhnev listened to this rather sharp argument in silence, but he made brief comments that made it clear he will not take Ponomarev’s way.

Later, in the car, B.N. poured out all his indignation at “these people”... “Where were they brought up?! They’ve completely forgotten. We are in a class war. Those Italians are cheating us too. We should pressure them, and instead... (he waived his hand). The General Secretary should not have met at all (with Forlani). Gromyko is the one who keeps dragging everyone to top-level meetings. Meanwhile, this Forlani may only last a couple months at the MFA, anyway.”

At the second reading, Brezhnev said some things about the meeting with Forlani: “[He is] pleasant, young, personable, sociable. He promised to raise the question of PCC’s initiatives in NATO... That is something. After all, NATO rejected our proposal... The Italians are giving us another loan, 700 million rubles.”

The meaning behind this statement was that Ponomarev got worked up for nothing. And in general – if we are pursuing détente, we should talk business instead of engaging in propaganda pressure tactics.

Today an article about [Jean] Ellenstein (for *Novoe Vremya*) got Suslov’s approval. This will be the first ideological attack against the PCF. They will respond.



Medvedev (deputy head of the Propaganda Department) was in France on a party exchange. He writes in his telegram that they are all pro friendship with the CPSU and so on. The same thing as in my office when Trigon and Le Mahec were here.

Meanwhile, Marchais and Kanapa continue to rage in the mass media. In the course of their fight against “any kind of lying in the party” they published a PB statement about the XX Congress of the CPSU. They dragged [Georges] Cogniot and [Pierre] Doize, who were in the PCF delegation with [Maurice] Thorez and [Jacques] Duclos, into the limelight and asked them to tell how it was. Their “confessions” were included in the PB text. They said Khrushchev’s text was given to the delegation in Russian, only for a few hours, and confidentially. They were asked not to make any notes. Later, when the CC PCF officially requested the text from the CPSU, the request was denied.

January 21, 1977

Incidentally, today is 53 years since Lenin died. Not that long...

Brezhnev’s speech in Tula. It was actively received abroad; the message came through to the Americans and to the Germans. Schmidt even noticed “with surprise” that his ideas about détente match Brezhnev’s. I wrote that piece all by myself. This means we got it right. The concept of détente should not have a “class” essence. “Peaceful coexistence” is a different story.

So, Brezhnev’s intention to extend an “olive branch” before Carter’s inauguration was realized. And it’s a good thing. The massive campaign about the “Soviet threat” immediately lost its edge.

Yesterday B.N. [mentioned] the PB session. He said Brezhnev was concerned that only half the Politburo members were present. Gromyko had a heart attack. Andropov has been sick for two months. Mazurov came to work but he is not doing well. Podgorny came down with something once again. Chernenko has respiratory complications after the flu. Kapitonov was admitted to the hospital yesterday. Suslov ended up getting really sick, even though he held out for a few weeks. Solometsev also has been sick for a long time.

B.N. has been assembling us frequently to go over his preparations for Sofia. As often happens before “important speeches,” his thoughts are jumbled and only those who know him well can feel that he wants to say something that is not very trivial. Something in the spirit of his orthodoxy, but more or less adapted to what our partners (CC secretaries of socialist countries) and the ICM movement as a whole need right now. We are racking our brains how to give these vague intentions some concrete form.

On Tuesday – at the CC Secretariat. Questions of “planning and stimulating” – they are going back to ideas of economic reform. I was very impressed with our ministers, especially Antonov (electrical industry). There is so much intelligence and talent in our people, their thoughts and acumen, the breadth of character! If they had the freedom to do what they are capable of, they would transform the country in five years. But, from Antonov’s own words at the CC Secretariat – the Plan gets in the way.

From the big and sharp debate led by Kirilenko, I understood that the most conservative force in our economic policy is Gosplan.

January 28, 1977

Curious considerations. Sharif Dzhavad (head of the British Sector) invites to his office in the CC an official from Lubyanka, who was in charge of the trial and other aspects of the Bukovsky case and accompanied Bukovsky (handcuffed) to the border. In his Oriental manner, Dzhavad tries to instill in him: “What are you doing over there?! You should have thought about the consequences a little. At a basic level: Bukovsky was convicted by a people’s (!) court as a criminal. You release him and throw him out of the country. But who gave you that right?! After all, according to the norms of any democracy, only the people’s court or the Supreme Soviet – the highest power – can release a criminal. So, the court or the Supreme Soviet should have issued an order that Bukovsky’s remaining years in prison would be replaced with deportation and revocation of his citizenship. Then we would hold a press conference and announce that Pinochet is offering to release Corvalan in exchange for the criminal. He is welcome to it! We have dozens of criminals, why not exchange them for good people. And we would announce it to the whole world. They can take our criminals and call them freedom fighters if they want.”

The comrade from the KGB “confidentially” told Dzhavad that in his initial “draft” his suggestions were roughly along those lines. But.. it was not approved!

Why? I think once again it is fear of transparency. They want to do everything behind closed doors. But nowadays this does not work.

Karen, who prepared all the plans for the Bukovsky-Corvalan exchange, but only knows “the other” (Corvalan’s) side, says that everything was decided at Brezhnev’s level. Alright. But the “chairman” (of the KGB) is a smart and experienced man. He could have foreseen the consequences.

In connection with this: tomorrow I will meet with McLennan and Woddis in Sheremetyevo (they are flying home, to London, from Tokyo). I told B.N. about it. He started schooling me: “Ask them if it is appropriate to conduct a high-level visit of the CPGB to Moscow right now” (hinting at the fact that *Morning Star* and the executive committee of the CPGB have fully joined the “Bukovsky-Corvalan” campaign, and recently also condemned the harassment of Czechs for their actions in connection with Charter-77). I told him what happened with Bukovsky in England (embrace with Thatcher in Parliament, Callaghan’s refusal to meet with him, embrace with Strauss in the FRG, etc.). Turns out, B.N. didn’t know about any of it, even though TASS provided this information every day. He started getting worked up: “Why aren’t our sectors on top of this, why hasn’t *Pravda* taken advantage of these events, etc.” He threatened to call Afanasiev or even Zimyanin himself. I cooled him off and reminded him that *Pravda* hasn’t once mentioned Bukovsky’s name, not in any context. And now, suddenly!...

Overall our B.N. is either going senile, or he is losing the last remnants of decency. He keeps inviting Corvalan and instructing him (before the latter’s trip to Europe), egging him on

against the French, Italians, Spaniards. He almost openly conveys that “you have to pay for your freedom,” or at the least – work it off.

B.N.: “Of course, we don’t engage in polemics, as you know. But keep in mind that the CC and the entire active body of the CPSU think that what is happening in France, Italy, and some other unfortunately big parties is revisionism, a move towards social democracy. What are the causes? Take a closer look at the leadership. In the PCF – who is Kanapa? A layman. He was a journalist and suddenly became a Politburo member. Anyway, he is not a Frenchman. Same with Fiterman, who heads their ideology, he is not a Frenchman. I don’t know about Marchais... But during the war, when everyone went into the Resistance, he ended up in Germany and worked in a factory there, voluntarily. You were in prison so you may not have read about the campaign the bourgeois press has launched in this matter. The PCF naturally defended its General Secretary. But the fact remains. Maybe he was recruited back in those days...

“...Did you get all the money we sent you? Through the Argentinean Communist Party?”

Corvalan: “Yes. But Lily did not take that money for us only, she distributed it among many families of prisoners...”

All of a sudden, [B.N.]: “Or take Carrillo... It’s unclear who he is. He wasn’t in the country for 30 years... The PCF financed him... with money that we gave them. Now he is the chief anti-Soviet in the communist movement.”

Corvalan sat through this (and there were three conversations of this kind) with a stony expression. Sometimes he would say “thank you,” sometimes he tried to interject about the shortcomings of our propaganda, which, he said, is unproductively criticizing “pluralism.” When Kirilenko and others honored him at a meeting in the *Rossiya* hotel, he openly and clearly spoke in favor of the broadest pluralism in Chile, including Christian democrats. In an interview for Italian television he expanded on this subject, in effect fully aligning himself with Berlinguer’s vision.

What is striking is not only B.N.’s rudeness, but also his blindness. Does he really think that a man of Corvalan’s stature will serve as a blind instrument of Ponomarev’s cheap propaganda just because he was liberated and given an apartment and a dacha?! Does he think that Corvalan will formulate a strategy for the struggle in Chile (he already announced that he got his freedom in order to unite all Chileans on a democratic platform against the Junta, and to be the initiator for the creation of such a platform) – can B.N. really think that Corvalan will create this platform under orders of B.N.’s outdated, Short Course<sup>3</sup> lectures?!

Hasn’t it occurred to him, B.N., that if he acts this way, Corvalan may simply relocate to Yugoslavia, Romania, or even Italy – to the accompaniment of a huge scandal?

February 5, 1977

---

<sup>3</sup> “A Short Course of History of the All-Union Communist Party (of Bolsheviks),” a textbook of Party history published in 1938 under Stalin’s direction. (Trans.)

Since Monday (January 31) I am in Serebryanyi Bor, in my old 100-meter room with views of pine trees, which are bent and have their “clusters” at the top.

We are working on the Sofia conference of CC Secretaries from socialist countries (which is coming up soon). Ponomarev, Katushev, and Zimyanin will be representing our side.

The ideological situation is as bad as can be: the Czechs have the “Charter 77”; the GDR – the [Wolf] Biermann case; in Poland, they are still dealing with the aftermath of the summer events around the announced price increases. The “Eurocommunists” are raging in the vilification of socialist regimes.

Zimyanin’s idea for Sofia is to “reassure our friends.” We are strong, so to speak, we’ve seen it all. These dissidents and their patrons are nothing to us. But they (Czechs, Germans) started to panic. We should support them, reassure them... Nothing will happen. Things will settle down and everything will go back to normal.

Marshal Ustinov’s article in *Kommunist* for the anniversary of the Soviet Army. It was sent around the Politburo. I gave B.N. a written review, which was totally impudent... I called the article an “echelon of firewood” sent to the bonfire of the “Soviet threat.” I expressed my surprise at [the author’s] complete reluctance to understand or at least know the foreign policy tactics of the moment, for which we racked our brains in Novo Ogarevo, preparing the General Secretary’s speech.

Then again, maybe that is how it is supposed to be: the CC CPSU and Brezhnev are one thing, and the generals are the exact opposite?!

B.N. did not respond to my note. And there really can’t be a response. Would he dare to say to Ustinov himself, or to Brezhnev’s adviser, or to Suslov, that “this is unacceptable”?!

March 11, 1977

February 27 through March 4 – in Sofia. A meeting of deputies on social democracy (preliminary before the meetings of CC Secretaries). My speech. Polemics with Romanians, the petty provincials – neither here nor there. It’s ludicrous and embarrassing (for ourselves and for them).

The meeting of Secretaries in Sofia. “The Six” – B.N. mumbled when he digressed from his notes. Bilyak’s hysterics, eagerness to “name names” in his condemnation of the PCF, PCI, CPGB. Nobody supported him. B.N. appealed to the methodology we used to disrupt the formation of a Eurocommunist platform in Madrid (Berlinguer, Marchais, Carrillo). But Bilyak named the parties anyway in front of the Romanians during the meeting. I think he secretly had Katushev’s support. The latter at the [meeting of] “the six” in contradiction to Ponomarev reacted “sympathetically” to Bilyak’s question. On the way to the conference hall in the morning, B.N. again offered to Katushev and Zimyanin for the three of them to “approach” Bilyak on this issue. Zimyanin readily supported him, but Katushev refused. This is not political.

Katushev isn't a "hawk," he just wants to be nice to all "our people," including the Romanians. Plus, in a simple way he believes that neither of these approaches, the carrot or the stick, can stop "Eurocommunism" anymore.

On Saturday evening (February 26) there was a fire at the *Rossiya* hotel. Forty-three dead, mostly regional committee secretaries who came to Moscow for some meeting. There are rumors that there are hundreds of casualties. There are rumors about sabotage. The next day there was a fire at the Ministry of the Navy. The entire Politburo was convened at night in the CC. Zimyanin told me in Sofia that "for now we should still think it was negligence: the elevator cable caught fire."

March 12, 1977

B.N. is once again planning to school our Western European fraternal parties with a brochure called "Is Marxism-Leninism outdated?" Kozlov, Butenko, and Shmeral' are supposed to create it in two months. Yesterday he convened the abovementioned group plus academician Fedoseyev and laid out what he wants. Afterwards they came to my office (except Fedoseyev) and I cynically explained to them exactly what Ponomarev has in mind. They laughed and scratched their heads.

I am not writing here about world events, though I often worry about them as much as I do about my own affairs. But a diary, after all, is "about yourself"... for example, the issue of dissidents. Carter met with Bukovsky and in general wants to become a sort of patriarch of all the offended, exiled, and arrested. Cynical European leaders (Giscard, Callaghan, Brandt, Schmidt) are snickering. Major newspapers are worried that the president's missionary outlook could hurt détente; they are advising not to mix politics and morals. We are nervous. In a closed letter to Carter on missiles, Brezhnev also gave him a piece of his mind regarding Carter's "personal" letter to Sakharov and his meeting with Bukovsky.

Our propaganda is raging about human rights violations in capitalist countries: this is called "offensive tactics" in the ideological struggle.

What I personally think about the dissident movement, which has been turned into the main weapon against us in the course of the real class struggle between two worlds. Carter, of course, does not realize that in the eyes of serious Soviet people he looks like a petty provocateur (maybe he does it to promote himself, for popularity with the average American). Because Bukovsky does not represent anyone (unlike the previous one, Solzhenitsyn, who represented some part of the intelligentsia). He is just a political rabble rouser, a petty troublemaker.

But he represents (or rather, reflects) the social troubles at home. They cannot be expressed in political terms, but they are real and the people feel it, even though they do not identify it with Bukovsky & Co. People are more likely to connect it with the fire in *Rossiya*, with explosions in the metro and on the streets (because Russian history naturally suggests this connection, not an appeal to other states against its government!).

The dissident movement in Lithuania, for example, is another matter: schoolchildren, students, plus the Catholic church and émigré centers... This is a special problem. Only life can solve this problem. And with this issue, we really do have to avoid responding openly.

However, we don't have a response to dissidents like Amalrik, Bukovsky, Sakharov. Our actions so far can be explained by surprise: how is this possible? This cannot and should not happen in our society! In other words, it is Shchedrin's approach, not Lenin's approach.

I also don't know what to do. But what our Western friends (Communist Parties) are offering is not the answer. They are pure dogmatists in this regard. They want to apply their own purely western models in Russia...

March 12, 1977

I am reading a novel in *Novy Mir* [*New World*] called *Safety Measures* by Yuri Skop, he is a student of Shukshin's. It's great, very modern.

[Yuri] Lyubimov staged *Master and Margarita*. People say it is like "a meeting with eternity." He invited me, but I don't want to go to the "viewing" (a prerelease show) because then I will have to tell Lyubimov what a great genius he is.

March 19, 1977

The biggest event at work was Katushev's "dismissal." At the same Politburo, at which they finally approved a letter to the CC PCF rebuking their "Eurocommunism" and anti-Sovietism, and finalized the outcome of Sofia, suddenly at the end, unexpectedly for all (B.N. told me this later) Brezhnev proposed to appoint Katushev as deputy head of the Council of Ministers and the Soviet representative in CMEA. He proposed to return Rusakov as head of the department. Of course, everyone agreed.

But what is the "sequence"? Was he not a good fit? Was he not a good match, or he couldn't handle the work? It seems the opposite. Everyone was happy with how skillfully he led a "careful" course with the Chinese, and Romanians, and with the economic difficulties in CMEA (oil prices, etc.). He is a reasonable, young, active guy who established good contacts with leaders of fraternal parties...

The truth is that "Rusakov had to be made a CC Secretary," people are saying this almost openly in the hallways. This is not about Katushev. The General Secretary really likes Rusakov and wants to reward him. That's all. A family matter, so to speak. But in this environment, with such "cadre policies," the emergence of political figures in our leadership is completely out of the question. They are all just bureaucrats who can be transferred, shifted, removed, promoted, demoted, etc. I can imagine Katushev's state of mind when he, who had just been actively speaking at the PB on the affairs of Sofia, heard this "proposal"!

March 22, 1977

I had a dream the night before the XVI Congress of Trade Unions. I am reproducing it as I recorded it when I woke up. "A park. It appears to be roughly at the location of the zoo, but the

configuration resembles Sokolniki. At the center, there are tsarist-style staircases leading to a platform. At the bottom on the right – a pool and baths. On the left – tennis courts. It is a warm spring day. A lot of people, waiting. I am standing at the edge of the platform. Brezhnev appears. He has a child in his arms, a girl of clearly Jewish appearance. Next to him is a woman, she is thin and unattractive, looks like one of my acquaintances. He is wearing a white suit. He is cheerful, joking with the people around him. The crowd is whispering: will he go to the baths or to the court? He seems to take a right turn, towards the pool. But a minute later he was on the platform again, this time in pajama pants and a sleeveless shirt (I saw him like this in Zavidovo once), with a scruffy robe thrown over his shoulders. He looked confused, drunk. The little girl is still in his arms. A young man is clowning around nearby, he is sporty and wears brown shorts and a t-shirt.

“Suddenly, Brezhnev takes out his dick, large and semi erect, and starts to piss. He pisses into the crowd rather than on the ground beneath him. Somehow the people close to him step aside and the stream is directed at me. Even though I am about 15 meters away and now for some reason in the corner of some hall, the stream nearly reaches me. I can see that he is not pissing on me “personally” (if you recall, he never turns towards me when I am speaking, even when I address him directly). Nevertheless, I don’t know what to do. Everyone is looking at me. I hesitate – would it be inappropriate or insulting to him if I duck to avoid his spray? Finally, I try to move away... Blackout. Brezhnev disappears somewhere in the vicinity of the tennis courts. At this moment, a terrible confusion sets in. People panic and rush to the fence, but before the fence there is a precipice, followed by a ditch, and then a street with speeding cars. People fall down the precipice, roll, knock each other down, climb through the bars of the fence and underneath them. Children are screaming, disheveled women are running among the fallen. There is a din and the sirens howling.

“I wake up and for a long time cannot understand what happened to me, was this a dream or did it really happen?”

At 10 am I am sitting in the front row at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. Elections of the “governing bodies” for the Congress. Shibayev is reading from a piece of paper, without pausing or looking at the audience. “The accreditation committee lists were distributed to the delegates. Those voting “in favor” raise your temporary IDs. Is anyone “against”? No. Did anyone abstain? No.” And so forth.

The General Secretary took the floor... And the dementia session began. Bovin’s oratorical clichés sounded completely absurd in this tongue-tied presentation. And it only got worse. The more tired he got, the clearer it became that he was barely grasping the meaning of what he was reading. Once he even stopped for a minute, turned back the page, and said to himself (but actually into the microphone), “Did I read that right?” At times he gathered himself (it was obvious this took a great effort) and tried to pronounce things “expressively.” He gesticulated but it didn’t really match the text very well. Then he again confused the word order, read words incorrectly, generating nonsense.

I leaned towards Mozhayev (deputy of the international department of the All Union Central Trade Union Council, our former consultant): “Do the simultaneous interpreters have the text, or are they going by ear?” “No, Anatoly Sergeyeovich, we asked [for the text in advance] but it was not given to us.”

I took the headphones and turned to the channel in French, then English. My God! They either had word fragments, or a string of separate phrases that the interpreter reconstructed at his own discretion.

The speaker persistently called the “XVI Congress of Trade Unions” the twenty-sixth... The audience was “whispering” and the people in the presidium exchanged embarrassed glances.

When he got to the section on the Middle East, even I, who knew the text (I read it the day before) couldn’t follow it anymore. It seems the speaker started panicking. He could barely control himself. His face was dark and drawn. As he walked off the podium accompanied by thunderous applause, he was unsteady on his feet and couldn’t see anything in front of him. At the presidium he sat down in the wrong seat. I think he was “in a knockdown” [«в нокдауне»]. Fortunately, a recess was announced shortly. He recovered and began to greet people and chat with members of the presidium.

This raises a few serious questions.

Why did they make the speech two hours long?

Why did he give this report at all, especially before the report of the chairman of the All-Union Central Trade Union Council?

What impression does the “optimism” and cheerfulness embedded in the text create against the background of the very drab situation in the country, of which the 5,000 delegates are well informed?

Why, knowing his physical limitations, did he expose himself and the leadership of the Party to this disgrace; why make the mechanism of supreme power a laughingstock?

However, in the evening TV broadcast of *Vremya* the record was masterfully edited. The most ridiculous mangled words and phrases disappeared entirely. The “26<sup>th</sup>” Congress did not come up, and the whole tonality of the speech was better than in reality. The miracle of “technology”!

There are even more serious questions underneath. How can he remain in his post if he realizes his utter feebleness? And knowing that nobody crosses him or dares to utter a disagreement: just like under Stalin (though without the tragic consequences) his power is absolute and his word (no matter how ridiculous and incompetent it may be) is decisive and final!

In a word, we will soon follow Mao Zedong and repeat what happened there, having previously downright mocked them for it.

April 1, 1977



I was sick for a long time, but returned to work yesterday. I went through a heap of papers that piled up over the last week. In particular, I read the transcript of the first Brezhnev-Gromyko-Vance (U.S. Secretary of State) conversation.

When you read foreign press almost daily, you don't find anything new in such "reports." That is my first impression. The only secret aspect is the spirit of the conversation and the details, not the military ones and so forth, but the "personal" ones and the atmosphere.

First, Brezhnev set out the general positions for the American (I read them previously through the distribution [*по рассылке*]). It was word for word, with the only addition being an expression of sympathy on the crash of two airplanes in Santa Cruz [de Tenerife] (nearly 600 dead).

But Brezhnev and Gromyko were not giving Vance a chance to speak. I imagine the situation like this: since his positions were presented to us in advance, they did not have the patience to listen to them. On the contrary, they were very impatient to express their displeasure and disagreement. This was done in a rather rude manner, sometimes downright insulting to Carter. Vance endured all of this without a hint of protest. He only stressed after every "little joke" that he would like to finish presenting the positions he brought to the meeting.

Brezhnev kept getting worked up on the subject of "human rights," sometimes out of context to what was being discussed in the course of the "exchange of opinions."

In response to Vance's statement that the current President has more support from the majority of Americans than any previous president, Brezhnev interrupted him to tell a "tale" (he used that word) from Nasreddin Hodja, I think. "At an Eastern bazaar, someone shouted that pilaf was being given away for free at the other end of the bazaar. At first one, then two, then three people ran in that direction, then a whole crowd. Finally, the person who was shouting about the free pilaf believed it too, and ran after them. It's the same with your idea that the president expresses the will of the people..."

Vance did not even bat an eyelash. He asked to continue. He was interrupted again and again – "giving it to him" rather harshly about their interference in our internal affairs on human rights.

Nevertheless, judging from the results of the talks and the context (despite an obvious demonstration of indignation and rudeness) I did not get the impression that we refused to meet the Americans halfway on the truly important subject of strategic weapons because we were upset at Carter for Sakharov and Bukovsky.

I think they want to dupe us after all: by proposing a noticeable quantitative reduction of missiles, carriers, etc., that is calculated to make a lot of noise "worldwide," they in fact want to weaken our potential. They have the qualitative superiority (electronics-navigation, accuracy, plus "forward-based" missiles around the USSR) so a reduction in the number of missiles would put us in an obviously disadvantageous position. Not to mention that the Americans want to exclude the "cruise missiles" from this, which threatens us with tens of billions to create new defense systems in addition to the missile defense against ballistic missiles and aircraft.

Therefore, our intransigence and rudeness (which was also present at Gromyko's teleconference on March 31<sup>st</sup>) are objectively justified. But I don't get it, do the Americans really believe that we will resort to self-deception for the sake of their technology? Do they really believe that we won't make it without their capital and technology (which often sits and grows rusty, buried in the snow for years, after we purchase it for gold)?! Could they, like us, still believe in nuclear blackmail and want to use it to write us off from world politics?!

That said, they are playing many keys, especially the sly Brzezinski, who started the "Eurocommunism" game. Eurocommunism has become more dangerous to us (as an ideological power and hence to us as a whole) than the U.S. nuclear potential.

Today I read Edvard Kardelj's speech. He is smart. "Marxist thought in Western Europe has broken through barriers of dogmatism and... the ideology of anti-communism." We must understand that CPs really have integrated into Western society and are becoming a factor of its "revolutionary evolution" (this is my term, but Kardelj's). He adds: "The working class there faces (as an enemy) not only bourgeois reactionary forces, but also military blocs." In other words, us – the socialist system, the socialist community. The communist movement is turning from one bloc's weapon into a weapon of struggle against the socialist bloc. Carrillo expounded this thought recently, before Kardelj. Unfortunately, it reflects reality... Because now it is not just the social-democrat working class that is against us, but also the part of it that is represented by the communists.

Yesterday I called [Yuri] Zuyev to my office (he is the head of the sector on Romance language [*романских*] CPs). He just returned from Paris: he delivered the CC CPSU letter to the PCF. He gave me a detailed rundown of whom he met with and how it went. Kanapa, Plissonnier, Leroy. (By the way, the PCF along with the Socialist Party [PS] just had a major victory in the municipal elections, which Marchais did not fail to attribute to the XXII Congress line). Zuyev did not bring back an official response. But – we did not expect this – the PCF promised to discuss the letter at the CC, i.e. they are not planning to hide it, they are not afraid. The main point everyone made – from Kanapa to Leroy – "you must agree that there are serious disagreements between the PCF and the CPSU."

When this formula was first officially pronounced at the XXII Congress of the PCF, we were shocked in Moscow. We did not understand its deep and fundamental significance. It meant: "From now on we are fundamentally different from you, there cannot be ideological unity between us. And there cannot be normal relations until you (the CPSU) understand (just like you understood it in regard to Brandt, though it strongly strained the relationship) that the PCF and the CPSU are 'two very different things.' Henceforth you cannot demand from us the things you had 'the right' to demand for nearly 60 years by claiming that we are of the same essence within the framework of the ICM."

The very fact that we sent the letter (although its content is not about "their path to socialism" but only about their "anti-Sovietism" and their attempts to gain points by criticizing us) is the result of this lack of understanding from our side. We are still working from Ponomarev's formula: "It is incomprehensible! How can communists allow themselves such a

thing!” Well, they can! The Yugoslavs did it (though when they did, it “was not the era” when we could have understood them), then the Chinese did it (it was easier to understand them, because they are “the East,” the mysterious “East.”). And now, finally, our brothers, from the core of the ICM... it turns out they can do it too!!

We are finding fault with the details. For example, in the letter we ridicule Marchais’ thesis that “Freedom is indivisible!” Indeed, demagogically and from the point of view of any serious theory similar to Marxism – it is pure absurdity. But the important thing is not the essence of the formula but its purpose. And the purpose of this formula is to be different and distance themselves from us, to be completely unlike us! They don’t give a damn about theory! It’s even better for them that this thesis does not fit into any “general theory.”

I read [Boris] Pilnyak’s *The Hungry Year* [Голодный год] [sic].<sup>4</sup> It made an impression on me... He brought up the things I’ve thought about hundreds of times before, about Russia and the Revolution, about where we started, where we are going, and why. And of course, it is strong artistically. He did not create a school in literature, but he left a powerful mark in (real!) Soviet prose.

April 2, 1977

Zagladin sent a chapter from the big new work of the American author Schapiro<sup>5</sup> to the deputies. The book is on the CPSU, the chapter is about the role of the CC International Department. Overall it is one tall tale on top of another, even though Schapiro is their leading Sovietologist and Kremlinologist. The role of the Department and Ponomarev are exaggerated beyond belief, to the point that we supposedly create all foreign policy initiatives, the MFA walks mutely below us, we select all the foreign relations cadres, and ultimately they “tremble” before us as opposed to anyone else. Ponomarev’s role in the CPSU leadership is also unbelievably inflated and completely far-fetched. Although from the point of view of “scientific logic” – i.e. B.N.’s biography – they think it cannot be otherwise. They really don’t get us!

However, there are some interesting observations. All Ponomarev’s public speeches are carefully analyzed. They are used to trace the evolution of Moscow’s international strategy, in particular its line to adapt Communist Parties and the ICM, as well as various “democratic movements,” to Moscow’s needs and main foreign policy objectives at any given moment. The CPSU’s tactics, designed to keep the ICM under its influence (“the struggle for unity”). This part also has a great deal of simplification, conjectures and conclusions that are overly logical. But in some parts we do see a broken reflection of the “evolution of realities.”

Zagladin’s role as first deputy is noted. The author uses Zagladin’s articles to expose our “strategy and tactics.” I would say their view of his place in the International Department corresponds to reality. Ulyanovsky is mentioned, which once again shows that “over there” they have no idea about the real operation and state of affairs of our department.

---

<sup>4</sup> The novel is called *The Naked Year* [Гольй год]. (Trans.)

<sup>5</sup> Most likely Leonard Schapiro, a British Sovietologist, whose work *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* was published in 1960 and revised in 1970. (Trans.)

Neither Shaposhnikov nor I are mentioned, even though we have a direct bearing on everything they inferred from B.N.'s texts. I have to admit, this "got to me." Yes! Even here, "appearance" is more important than "substance." For example, Ulyanovsky does not do anything for the department and has no significance here, but he appears almost monthly in *Pravda* – either as the author of below the fold articles (empty, shameless twaddle) or as a participant (together with some CC Secretary) in conversation with some American or Asian [politician]. As for Zagladin, he manages to write despite his enormous workload. This is talent, or rather a superhuman ability to work. By the way, his writing on the ICM is much bolder, and therefore interesting, than what I can do in Ponomarev's articles and reports. Naturally!

April 10, 1977

It looks like I will be going to the FRG and Switzerland next week (for 3-4 days) to talk with [Herbert] Mies and [Jean] Vincent about "Eurocommunism" and the significance the CPSU attaches, in these conditions, to the meeting about the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* the parties will be holding in Prague.

Fidel Castro was in Moscow. From the transcript, it is clear he had nothing to do with the uprising in Katanga (Zaire). On the contrary, he was upset that the Angolans did not inform him in advance, because "they had to know about it." Brezhnev started the conversation on this subject, clearly with the intention to probe whether this is the Cubans' doing. Brezhnev agreed that "we should not get involved in any way." In the meantime, everyone from the Americans to the Chinese is making a fuss about our and the Cubans' intervention. Mobutu [Sese Seko] even broke diplomatic relations with Cuba.

All of April Brezhnev was on the TV screen and in the newspapers with Vance, then with Castro, then with Arafat. Podgorny travelled all over Black Africa. Kosygin – with the Finns (he went there), then with the Turks. The people are watching and wondering: are things so good at home that these old men can afford to spend their last bit of strength to deal with... well, alright, Vance is understandable, it is ultimately a question of life and death. But with Arafat?

Who is this Arafat and all these Arabs (by the way, Assad is coming in a week)? Why do the Soviet people need them? What do we need over there? Why are we spending so much time on them, and probably money? Of course, the trolleybus and metro passenger is used to it. It is not a sensitive issue for him, even though he grumbles. But the authority and prestige of our leadership keeps falling. People's indifference and mocking contempt for all this fuss has become an everyday phenomenon of mass psychology. It is some kind of absurd logic of dementia, supported by the precise and feverish work of the apparatus – precisely in this direction. The propaganda and party-state apparatus. And I have a direct relationship to this disastrous logic.

I am sitting here, reading Akhmatova and... choking up. She never moved me before. Then again, maybe I never read her seriously. However, it is symptomatic that the intelligent youth, coming back from the war (and those who grew up during the war) "pounced" on Akhmatova and Pasternak (I remember their astonishing evening in the Fall of 1946, in the

Communist Hall of the Moscow State University on Mokhovaya Street) – poets, who were only “conditionally” called Soviet before the war.

April 23, 1977

On April 14<sup>th</sup> Rykin and I left for the FRG. We arrived at Frankfurt am Main late at night, the only people meeting us were an Aeroflot employee and a comrade from the Hessian DKP, formerly an active crypto-Communist (the embassy staff has to get permission to travel beyond 40km from Bonn).

The road to Dusseldorf. We were told that we would first stop by the house of a CC secretary, Karl-Heinz Schroeder (I know him well and for a long time). A villa with a large plot of land, swimming pool, garage, etc. Inside – like in the best movies about the beautiful life in the West.

I told Karl-Heinz about the purpose of our visit. Then we sped off to Dusseldorf.

We went to the DKP administration. Manfred Kapluck (PB member) – the “elector” [*«кырфиорст»*] for the entire party in the Ruhr. A fanatical party member with a steely glance and a thin, barely noticeable smile that almost never comes off. They say he is the most capable party leader, but he drinks. Schroeder was also present, Martha Buschmann and others. I essentially did not interfere in the conversation: Rykin was conducting his “business” on inter-party relations (money).

Then Schroeder put us in his car and drove to the apartment of Herbert Mies, the chairman of the Party. He lives alone. His wife and daughter are in the USSR, studying. The apartment is quite... It is furnished and maintained at the expense of the party, i.e. at the expense of the SED.

We sat down in the living room, Mies turned on the radio (against bugs), and at length thanked the CPSU for its trust. They already have our letter to the French CP. I outlined the CC CPSU’s positions on Eurocommunism more fully. I told him about the PCF’s reply, about the conversation at the CC with [Dolores] Ibarruri (before she left) and about the outcomes of talks with Vance in Moscow. However, after two hours of my outpourings, Mies suggested we sit down at the table. I tried to maneuver, thinking how to continue. But Mies started talking and couldn’t be stopped.

He started by saying that the French are pressuring and courting him. There are voices in his own party saying why not follow the PCF and PCI, since the benefits are so obvious. Then he delved into an interesting topic, but he seemed embarrassed the whole time. The topic was: the objective reasons why the DKP cannot and “has no right to” lean towards Eurocommunism.

“Firstly, because the German ruling class is not like the French or Italian. It is stronger and harsher. It has aggressive tendencies and its nationalism is more dangerous for others. We must always remember what it brought to the world in the past.

“Secondly, we are representing the socialist part of Germany here. You know what our prospects are... However, we are an indicator of the state of world affairs. If and when our ruling

class resorts to fascist methods to suppress Communists, it would mean we are on the brink of war.

“For these reasons, we cannot “integrate” into the system, as the French and Italians are counting on doing. Most importantly, of course, it is because we are internationalists.”

He is more of a tribune demagogue than a political worker, but with a strong character. And he behaves with our people, the Soviets, without a hint of sycophancy. When he plays up to us politically, he covers it (fairly convincingly) with devotion to principles. So it was this time – he did not pretend to be terribly interested in what we brought him. He listened without “straining” himself, and it was clear that he already knows what to do with Eurocommunism. We do not really need to teach him.

Mies said openly (I wish Ponomarev would hear these kinds of conversations, but they never say anything like this to him, and he is not interested himself): the German worker lives very well here. The German ruling class cannot afford to lower the workers’ quality of life to a level comparable to the GDR.

I asked: the German bourgeoisie manages to keep a considerable piece for itself – greater than in England, France, and even the U.S. (comparatively). How does it manage to feed both the wolves and the sheep?

Mies’ response was so muddled that I cannot reproduce it.

I am reading Zimyanin’s spirited, “passionate” report on Lenin’s 107<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Loyalty to Lenin signifies a revolutionary. Distance and distortion of Lenin – a sign of revisionism. General rules that are valid now, for everyone. But what does this give the ICM? What is he talking about, exactly? How is this loyalty supposed to be expressed, and to what? To the dictatorship of the proletariat? In that case the PCF, PCI, CPGB, PCE and many others are total revisionists. Or is it in something else? But what? Communists in the West will read *Pravda* and wonder: what does the CPSU want, what does it mean? Because it still won’t say specifically what theoretical positions it finds acceptable and unacceptable. Or does it only care about the general formula of loyalty to Leninism, i.e. the abstractly ideological side of things; not the essence of the revolutionary, i.e. necessarily theoretically specific approach to reality, the only thing that provides practical effectiveness to communists? I’m afraid that Western communists will see only one thing behind the general loud declarations of this report – a call to level with classroom theory that is taught in Soviet universities.

This is a futile position in the present day. In my opinion, the only possible position is to intercept (“rebuff”) the anti-Sovietism of Marchais & Co., and hold serious, calm discussions (open and closed) on the issues of Leninism – the modern strategy of our day.

In the morning of the 18<sup>th</sup>, Monday, I was flying to Switzerland, with Yakukhin this time. With the same mission. I was a little nervous because I already knew the lineup they appointed for the meeting: Vincent, their chairman of the party, and four PB members, CC secretaries – [Andre] Muret (Lausanne), [Armand] Magnin (Geneva), [Jakob] Lechleiter (Zurich) and Hofer (Basil).

From 10 a.m. and almost until 6 p.m. we had a “discussion.” They were cautious. I already felt (based on information from our embassy) that they saw me as a messenger who came to deliver a reproach from Moscow about their recent Plenum, where they wrote that they “do not agree with administrative measures in the fight against ideas.”

They planned out their tactics: show with documents in hand that they did not borrow anything from the French, they came up with “their own way” 20-25 years ago; that they are independent and emancipated.

When they understood that I did not come to reproach them but to talk about what to do together in the face of the PCF and PCI’s positions, they clammed up. One after another they made declarations: “We can explain all aspects of our policy to you or anyone else, but we are not responsible for others. We do not want to be ‘either accountants (hinting at: collecting quotes against the CPSU), or judges.’ We do not share the concept that “freedom is indivisible,” but we expressed our disagreement with administrative measures against beliefs.”

Vincent told me that he appeared on television recently to speak about human rights in Switzerland. “You know, I received 60 phone calls while I was in the studio. All of them on the subject of – what is it like in the USSR? One Bulgarian immigrant said something along the lines of: it’s good for you, Monsieur Vincent, to sit in a comfortable studio and expose the human rights shortcomings in your country! But if you tried to do the same in my Bulgaria...”

And more along those lines. Muret said, “Why do you forbid abstract art exhibitions? What is the danger?”

They talked about the “quality of Soviet propaganda exports,” which are unsuitable for consumption “here” and no one takes it.

I was sick of hearing all this. Firstly, because I’m tired of it. Secondly, because communists, even if they do not sympathize and agree with us, have to show some understanding that we cannot and will not do otherwise. If they want to respect the Soviet Union’s role – such as it is – they have to adapt to this or at least take it into account. Otherwise, what’s the point of the communist movement?

However, I’m increasingly doubtful that the Swiss and others need us. Of course, these old men are counting on (or already receiving) a pension from us, they also receive assistance annually. But they do not need us for anything else. Our moral authority for the working class, not to mention other segments of the population, as a revolutionary force and an example to follow is reduced to zero. Our foreign affairs and “successes” have the opposite effect on the Western public. Communists can no longer appeal to the masses from the position of fraternity with the CPSU. In the eyes of these masses we are a superpower at best. Our heroic past and sacrifices against fascism are history. And then, ultimately, we were defending ourselves! Churchill said this, and 30 dynamic years have passed since then. We are maintaining historical continuity artificially (in school, propaganda, literature – all of our Soviet culture). For them, this history is the field of “experts” and a part of the intelligentsia, who have their own “historical continuity” (that has to do with their homeland).

I was listening to the Swiss and thinking: is the ICM turning into Comrade Ponomarev's departmental business before our eyes? Is it being kept alive by trips like mine, not to mention events like the Berlin conference, which we created entirely ourselves (and which then turned against us)?!

Here in Geneva (like in other similar instances), I sincerely "got worked up" – told them about the absurdity and danger of representing the spiritual and ideological life, and in general the entire character of the life of Soviet people, like they do it "here." I told them about the enormous stream of literature, high class literature too, the innumerable variety of acute and great problems that are raised and worked on and discussed by more than just the intelligentsia. About the unquenchable thirst for knowledge, the incredible demand for spiritual values – above any other country in the world. About the scale and complexity of our society, the content and philosophical wealth, the diversity of that thing called "an individual." I tried to provide examples.

In a word, I wanted to show them that they have no idea about the [world] they judge with such ease and aplomb, basing their views on bitter and petty "dissidents." Or rather, I urged them, communists, not to add material to paint the image created by anti-Soviets.

I saw that it was "having an effect"... For example, Hofer started to argue that young people in the West are politically literate now, with a decent cultural background, and they are unhappy with the way you write your own history (hinting at suppressing information about Trotsky, which the embassy people told me about in advance). I replied with a parable: of course, we do not have the resources to satisfy all the tastes of the Western youth who are interested in us. But those who are studying us specifically, especially from the CPs, should know that over the past 20 years, after the XX Congress, we have published thousands of books, archival documents, entire document series, tens of thousands of research articles, collections, transcripts of congresses, conferences, CPSU Plenums... Nothing is suppressed there, everything is presented as it was. Be our guests. But even such a "renowned" specialist like Ellenstein did not bother to familiarize himself with this material. Superficiality in these matters leads a communist into anti-Soviet company, even if he is not an anti-Soviet at heart. It is inevitable because of the environment, including the bourgeois literary and "Kremlinological" [elements].

They essentially had nothing to respond with. But that is not the problem. All of these arguments are valid and relevant when there is a "communist conscience," in other words, a sincere desire to know and understand us, to be our friends.

But the thing that created the International Communist Movement, what sustained it as a unified whole – [the wish] "to do it like Russia" – has disappeared forever not only from objective life, but from communists' consciousness, even ones most loyal to us. In this case, why do they need to know us? Only to fight off bourgeois anti-Soviets? Perhaps. But this is not a vital need, since now they firmly know: "they will take their own path," or none at all. Berlinguer posed this dilemma sharply and openly: the ruling class very much wants for us to take the Soviet way, because by now it is sufficiently strong and smart, and it understands that for us this is the surest way to fail.



We finished around 6 p.m. Vincent concluded in such a way as to “remove the need” for me to speak again. But I still asked for the floor. And “explained” for another 20 minutes.

Vincent walked Yakukhin and me to the consulate. Along the way, I tried to tell him about Ibarruri, what she said about Carrillo at the Central Committee. He rushed to respond that she told him the same a long time ago. Once again, he does not want to be “informed by us,” he does not want to engage, he not only does not want to pry, but even to know about “other people’s affairs.” But he is a great master at talking about nothing.

It was drizzling. Vincent showed us Geneva. He was tired by the time we got to the consulate. I asked for a car to drive him home. But for his 72 years, he is quite active.

#### April 30, 1977

Today I met B.N. at Vnukovo-2 airport. He returned from Prague, where 75 communist parties met to discuss the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. His speech in *Pravda* took up almost half a page. His toast at Husak’s reception. Large selection of speeches by others.

In a word, B.N. once again forced a notable political event out of nothing, a mini international communist meeting. It has zero significance in terms of real impact on the ICM. But it is significant in terms of symbolism, which, as a matter of fact, is the thing that gives the ICM a flicker of life. The bourgeois propaganda will finish the job by organizing large commentary with feigned fears about Moscow’s intentions, which will only strengthen impressions of this “event.”

There was a Politburo at the end of April. The draft Constitution was discussed (it will be brought up at the Plenum on May 24). B.N. has been working on this project for two years, if not more. Even Krasin worked on it at the Gorky Dacha. Now B.N. has been appointed as head of the working group to prepare the draft. He must again see this as his finest hour...

However, it will be almost impossible to prepare a sensible draft in the three weeks we have left. I read the PB members’ comments, including Leonid Ilyich’s. There are a lot of them, some even with suggestions for paragraphs (here the advisers really did some work. Possibly whole departments...). Even what Brezhnev said – and he had the most political comments – shows that there is still a lot of work to do. B.N. clearly underestimates this, even though he understands: today he went to the CC directly from the airport, to put together his “team,” which was at the ready.

Apparently, all the innovations of the draft have already been scrapped: for example, the right for every individual to choose his or her nationality, regardless of “biological” origin... Autonomy of universities... rights for Soviets of People’s Deputies, etc.

Now B.N. is going to run us ragged in these two-three weeks.

#### May 7, 1977

The first work week of May was chaotic and finished downright depressingly. On Thursday, the PB had a “concomitant” and “spontaneous” discussion of problems of the ICM,

connected to the discussion of outcomes of the Prague *PPS* meeting and... unexpectedly for me – the letter from the CC CPSU to the CP of Great Britain. I wrote that letter (together with the sectors) on B.N.'s "orders," before my trip to the FRG. He was inspired by the "success" of the letter to the PCF... However, Suslov had doubts about it already at the Secretariat. Although he did not reject it, he suggested to postpone mailing it ("we will agree on a date later"). I think he brought the letter to the Politburo to kill it completely.

Brezhnev said: "Aren't we writing too many letters to communist parties?" Andropov found fault with the interpretation of the word "dissident," saying that we are not imprisoning and exiling dissidents (people who think differently), but criminals. Suslov again suggested to "review the date." Though in general, this letter is polite, unlike the letter to the French. There aren't even any reproaches (and hints) at the leadership of the CPGB, only a "slight" jab at *Morning Star*...

So, it would seem, there is one line (do not quarrel! Do not pick a fight!). Very well. I would be the last to disagree with this. I had objected to B.N., arguing that we should not "write [the letter]." However, I was reprimanded for being too liberal...

But what happened later totally contradicts what was said in connection to the letter to the CPGB.

B.N. gathered me, Zagladin, and Brutents and in a very muddled way told us what took place. He was very upset. He did not identify who said what, except for two instances. It's also unclear who started it. But it began the usual way (like a conversation between two random passengers on a bus): "We need to do something about that Eurocommunism!" "It is getting out of hand!" "We pay them as if nothing happened, we give them our national funds. We should close the cashbox, stop giving them anything. Let them flounder." "Yes, yes." "We should have done it long ago," Kapitonov agreed (but with whom?).

Gromyko joined in: "Please. (!) They want to get into the government! Who is going to let them! It is a joke."

Someone objected, "But should we interfere with their struggle for power?!"

"We aren't rebuking them enough in our press. We practically aren't doing anything against this revisionism and opportunism. We are letting them get away with everything..."

"Yes" – I think this was Suslov – "We should order for a long-term line to be developed to deal with CPs prone to Eurocommunism."

They settled on that. No one remembered that they had approved such a line themselves by a special PB resolution on September 8, 1976, "On the outcomes of the Berlin conference."

So what?

I'll tell you what! First of all, of course it is upsetting that all our work (the department's and Ponomarev's) is "invisible" – so much energy, nerves, ideas, words and paper, not to

mention professional and personal time, including literally sleepless nights – and all of this, it turns out, is “tears the world will never see.”

Secondly – the most distressing – is that our top leadership does not even know that it has a “line” with regard to Eurocommunism. The level of discussion of this problem, to which we give “our hearts’ best efforts,” truly does not rise above armchair politicians. It’s too embarrassing to even bring up the level of competence and understanding the essence of the matter, what it all means and where it is going.

Then again, what can we expect and count on, when yesterday the TV program *Vremya* devoted 20 out of 30 minutes to meetings and high-level talks with the Abyssinian leader (even experts can’t pronounce his name). Everyone – Brezhnev, Podgorny, Kosygin, and others – everyone was occupied for three days with this visit. We don’t have any other more important matters to attend to!

The people are used to it, of course. But it’s terrible that Gromyko, along with the “generals” (Ustinov) are slipping in all this nonsense. It seems the General Secretary is no longer capable of separating the wheat from the chaff, and his close associates and even advisers do not dare to tell him (or at least hint) that nonsense is nonsense. It is nonsense in and of itself, not to mention the moral and political consequences for the leadership’s authority and “personal” [authority]...

May 13, 1977

May 9 – Victory Day. As usual, my front-line friend Kolya Varlamov and I walked around Moscow. As the years go by, there are fewer and fewer people with medals to be seen on this day. Afterwards, we stopped by my place, sat and reminisced. We bragged to each other, criticized some people.

At work after the holidays I concentrated on consolidating all the pieces for B.N.’s report (in June, in Prague) on the “CPSU’s theoretical contribution” to Marxism-Leninism over the last 60 years. It was reprinted today and came to 66 pages, while it needs to be 40. All the theory is from political conclusions, the origins of which is buried in the depths of all the apparatus groups ever. The “summa summarum,” as B.N. likes to say.

A harsh review of Carrillo’s “Eurocommunism and the State” is in the works.

Today on TV there was a 10-minute broadcast of how Suslov, Ponomarev, and Zagladin saw Dolores off as she flew home. M.A. read heartfelt words off a piece of paper. Ibarruri, without a piece of paper, promised to fight for the friendship between our parties.

Zagladin is meeting with Egon Bahr, the executive director of the SPD, the organizer of *Ostpolitik*, close to Brandt. A tenacious, cynical, unceremonious German mind. He says directly what he wants: for us not to interfere as the SPD matures. Namely, we should criticize it, thereby giving it a certificate of anti-communist reliability.

I once again was surprised to see for myself that Vadim gives much more interesting post-factum accounts of his talks with such people, than what happens in reality. He was dull in

the conversation with Bahr, shied away from a candid exchange, and made banal jokes and “demonstrations of friendship.” I felt I had to jump in to give the exchange sharpness and frankness. At first Bahr looked at me like, “Who is this?” (This was his first time seeing me, while he was acquainted with Vadim from the time Brezhnev visited the FRG). But later he would only look me in the eyes and spoke as if only with me. I could not stay till the end, I had a meeting scheduled with people presenting on “Eurocommunism.” I told Bahr about this when I was taking my leave. He immediately responded: “Oh, we are also concerned about this issue, like you. But it is more complex now than it was in 1968. It is the same as Dubcek. But you won’t be able to deal with it, like you did with Dubcek. Alas!”

Today I spent 4 hours with the Cubans from the CC International Department of the Cuban CP. Two of them were black, one creole. Smart and educated people (we were mostly talking about Guyana and the Caribbean affairs), and very much active in a revolutionary way. The Guevara element is still strong: no permission required to intervene in any place, especially “in their zone.”

#### May 15, 1977

Sunday. I visited the Museum of Oriental Art on Obukha St. There is an exhibition on Russian artists painting the Orient, from the late XIX – early XX century. It is obvious from the first glance that the subject is just an excuse. In reality, the exhibition is meant to show Kuznetsov, Lentulov, Mashkov, Kuprin, Goncharova, Volkov, and others. In addition to that, they came up with a wonderful idea: advertisements (commercial, industrial), posters, price tags, announcements of balls, price lists, etc. from the early XX century when the artists from “God’s Earth” [«*Мира божия*»] got into this sphere. I enjoyed it tremendously. It is incredible and unexpected.

#### May 16, 1977

I had a bad day. I began perfecting Ponomarev’s report. Then the ciphered telegrams and other papers started coming in. Zagladin called: he finally deigned to work on the “Eurocommunism” note, and sent it back to me for review. But I didn’t have time to do it, because guys from our fraternal department came by and asked me to join them for a lunch with the Cubans, who postponed their departure until tomorrow.

This purely political lunch (they are revolutionaries, and former Cuban intelligence officers to boot – they cannot talk about anything else) lasted for about three hours. With cognac.

I finished reading the *In Their Wisdom* by C.P. Snow. Powerful British prose, but with greater wisdom than Galsworthy, because the country has become sad and tired.

#### May 21, 1977

S. Carrillo’s book *Eurocommunism and the State*. A mix of Berlinguer and Garaudy, plus some things from himself. But I think his analysis is correct, overall. The decisive instruments of preserving capitalism are the ideological apparatus and the army. To overcome capitalism, it is necessary to infiltrate them (through a difficult process of democratization of all aspects of life in

the country) and engage them on the side of anti-capitalist forces. It is foolish to count on the victory of socialism (even “democratic”) when the army is against you. The only way this would happen is through a crisis and collapse of the army, which is only possible as the result of a colonial war (like in Portugal). But we are done with colonies. Or as the result of any other war, which in Europe would mean a world war, i.e. the end of all politics and civilization as we know it.

In a word, Carrillo is the [Karl] Kautsky of our time. He is just as much against the CPSU (current leadership) as Kautsky was against Lenin.

He could, of course, have done without dotting all the “i”s – without describing his thoughts on “Eurocommunism,” without offensive hints and direct assessments of the CPSU, without disparaging everything the CPSU has done since Lenin.

Ninety five percent of the book is devoted to the strategy of revolution in the conditions of Western Europe, the problems that concern every communist there. Not everyone will immediately notice the anti-Soviet veins in the text, especially since this indirect format is now common in the West.

This is why our protest against the book, even though it is aimed at “exposing” anti-Soviet and divisive (for the ICM) aspect of the book (which is stated explicitly), will be received as an ideological condemnation of theoretical, strategic, and tactical pursuits of Western European communists. A dogmatic, hegemonic intention to reduce their entire line to the common Short Course denominator.

The Politburo gave orders to prepare such an article. It was made in Zuyev’s sector, under Zagladin’s supervision. Yesterday the deputies discussed it in B.N.’s office. I was surprised by his concern that the article will be received precisely in the above-mentioned sense. Vadim and I later used this to edit some things.

Shaposhnikov expressed a legitimate idea, though it was too late (after I set out my doubts on the basis of having read the book, as opposed to the abstract prepared by the KGB, which basically contained hand-picked anti-Soviet pieces) – maybe instead of the book, we should speak out about Carrillo’s interview, where his anti-Sovietism is more open and visible, and not covered up by the needs of the realistic struggle for socialism in Western Europe?

B.N. waived his arms, “The question was discussed, PB members are outraged and asking how long we are going to take it,” and so on.

By the way, why is the KGB reporting about such things to the Politburo, instead of us (the CC International Department)?

Yesterday, Zagladin and I submitted the note (as ordered – on our long-term line in the ICM) to Ponomarev. How long will it stay on his desk? Will it ever go further?

The same with the note on Social Democracy. We presented our report on the conversation with E. Bahr to him... He probably won’t send it around the PB either. He won’t dare.

I also submitted to him the first draft of his speech in Prague, “On the CPSU’s theoretical contribution to Marxism-Leninism over 60 years.” This will spend a long time on his desk.

Anyway, these days all he worries about is the Constitution, and in reality, the thing Zagladin indicated yesterday without words when he touched his hands to his shoulders, i.e. “epaulettes” – whether Ponomarev will be made a PB member at the Plenum opening on May 24<sup>th</sup>...

May 22, 1977

Last night I tried to read the draft Constitution, it was sent to members of the Plenum with an accompanying facsimile from Brezhnev and a request to report comments to the CC Secretariat. On Friday Zagladin told me that he already did – he sent 26 sentences to Chernenko. I won’t do it, it wouldn’t be loyal to Ponomarev.

I delved into the text. Everything it contains of formal value was already present in the Stalin version. The new things – about “freedoms,” “human rights,” even on “the right to exit” and live anywhere in the USSR – is for our current campaign in the West. An attempt to deceive. In reality, such things only complicate matters. Wouldn’t it be more honest to just say: this is who we are, we are going to stay this way, and don’t expect that we will introduce all kinds of Western freedoms here?

The attempt to define “developed socialism” (which was, essentially, the excuse for why we need a new Constitution) is amateurish, stylistically helpless, and at times downright cheap. The entire preamble is disgusting: the empty twaddle of people who forgot how to write normally, in a language that regular people can understand. All of this is dishonest... One only has to compare it with “page 13” of the *Literaturka* paper from May 18<sup>th</sup> (it is now specifically devoted to customer service) to see how this preamble has zero contact with reality.

Brezhnev called B.N. when we (the deputies) were discussing B.N.’s article against Carrillo. B.N. spoke with him for a long time on the phone. They were discussing the conflict between Somalia and Ethiopia (two “Marxist-Leninist regimes,” and both great friends of the USSR!). Brezhnev was upset, he asked whether or not he should receive either of their ambassadors. B.N. advised him against personally “getting into this mess.”

I was thinking about something else. Lately, Brezhnev’s appearances on TV have been of him receiving various statesmen. Judging by his appearance, he has very little strength left. It’s unlikely that he can get to the heart of problems or events right now. He sees his role (influencing the course of events) in “receiving or not receiving” someone. The rest is done by the mass media and other aides. The fact of the meeting matters, not the content. But in this case, isn’t the role of Gromyko and advisers becoming too great, since they essentially determine who will be received, and what will be said?!

May 24, 1977

The Plenum of the Central Committee. Brezhnev was energetic and trim. His report on the Constitution was businesslike and clear, without Bovin-style literary embellishments. The

first applause was (in the text) in response to the following: “After the Constitution of 1936, we all know that repressions took place, violations of the law and principles of Lenin’s democracy – in contradiction to the newly adopted Constitution. The Party has condemned all of this and it must never happen again.”

The debate. A young and spirited secretary of the Donetsk *obkom* was the first to speak – he proposed to unite the posts of General Secretary and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and hand them both to Brezhnev. Of course, all the others – eight speakers (following a text written in advance) supported him and “developed” the idea. Shcherbitsky spoke on this subject particularly clearly and straightforwardly, as he always does. One of the secretaries from Tashkent, who everyone thought was a little dumb and primitive, added: “... and to release Cde. Podgorny from his post...” There was a hubbub in the auditorium. Everyone thought it was excessively rude, since everything was clear anyway. But, it turns out, it was necessary (and planned) to formulate a Plenum resolution.

Podgorny was red in the face, pathetic, applauding his own funeral.

Suslov, who presided, read out the draft resolution. First – about appointing Brezhnev as Chairman of the Presidium. Ovarions and so on. Then – about relieving Podgorny from this post and... (another surprise)... from PB membership. An unpleasant scene takes place: Podgorny stands up, starts collecting his papers, and says something to Suslov. The latter makes a dismissive gesture and says (the microphone is right under his nose!) something like: “it’s ok, you can sit here a little longer.”

Then there was a vote. The draft becomes a resolution. Podgorny again stands up and mumbles something to Suslov. It seems Suslov at first thought that Podgorny wanted to leave the auditorium entirely and at first made a negative gesture, then points down, implying: go, sit over there, where everyone else is sitting.

Scene: Brezhnev descends to the podium to say thank you, Podgorny descends after him down into the auditorium and, ironically, sits next to Katushev (who a few minutes later would also be relieved of his position as Secretary of the CC). Brezhnev says that he will faithfully serve the Party... and not a word about Podgorny.

I understand, everyone understands: our former “president” is a nonentity and an layman in politics, he did not accomplish anything and could not, even though he grumbled against Brezhnev’s elevation, but not because of some principles. He wanted to be at least one out of three, so some of the glory would fall to him.

But there are basic laws of humanity. There is the moral and political side: the authority of this position and any other. If the “president” can be knocked down in a second, and without the slightest explanation of the reasons (it could at least have been “due to poor health”), then any other position becomes shaky – a function of personal sympathy or antipathy at the top. Today you are quite the somebody, and tomorrow you are nobody. This is our great and mighty Russian democracy – it started with Ivan the Terrible and was cemented by Peter the Great. Everyone was equal before him as before God: marshals, ministers, deputies, secretaries, etc.

Therefore, once again, nothing fell to B.N. Even though everyone, starting with Brezhnev, praised the draft Constitution. Of course, Ponomarev was not mentioned. Probably nobody outside the apparatus knows that he is the “main force” here and put the most energy into it.

In all fairness, it’s time: he deserves it and has served for it in the full sense of the word.

Suslov made an announcement about the anthem [of the Soviet Union], listed over a dozen poets and as many composers who worked on it and consulted for over 10 years. He described what was outdated: “Be true to the people, thus Stalin has reared us, Inspired us to labor and Valorous Deed;” about German invaders and that we will win freedom for all through battle (something like that, I don’t remember exactly; Suslov said these passages can be “misunderstood” today).

We stood to listen to the tape: a chorus and orchestra sang and played. It is more solemn-ecclesiastical-melodic, the same melody.

In 4 hours of work, so many events that will go down in history!

May 28, 1977

The week of my birthday. Turning 56! People from our department took turns congratulating me. One with whiskey, another with whiskey, and... Suspiciously, B.N. congratulated me too.

In the evening we happened to be having a Party meeting at which Vadim gave a report on the outcomes of Prague-1 and the Plenum. He led the meeting in a light and clear manner, he was a little worked up.

Ponomarev refused to meet with [Tony] Chater (member of the CPGB, editor of *Morning Star*). I already noted that in April, B.N. came up with the idea to send the CPGB leadership a letter similar to the French one. But our PB had a reserved reaction. It accepted it “in principle,” but left the date to be determined. I suggested to use Chater’s visit (at *Pravda*’s invitation) to speak to him and convey the essence of the letter (without revealing our intentions), to see what will happen next. My secret intention was to “wrap up” the letter this way for good. Chater traveled for 10 days in Uzbekistan and Armenia, yesterday he returned to Moscow and B.N. (together with me, according to the CC’s decision) was supposed to receive him. But he refused, suggesting that Afanasyev (editor-in-chief of *Pravda*) and I carry out the whole operation ourselves.

B.N. is going through another “slump” on the subject of: you work and work, you don’t spare yourself, and they not only don’t make you a PB member, they don’t even mention that it was all Ponomarev’s work on the Constitution! In a word, he is having a “let everything go to hell!” moment. This has happened dozens of times and will keep happening until the end of his political career.

So. We received Chater with Afanasyev (plus Dzhavad, Lagutin, Ovchinnikov) in *Pravda*’s editorial office. He is a former chemistry professor at Leeds University, a typical



intelligent liberal Englishman. Afanasyev is primitive and uncouth (even though he is the author of a dozen books, a professor, doctor of sciences, correspondent member, journalist, the editor of a newspaper with a readership of 11 million, etc.). He lacks not only European culture, but also political instinct (which is inexcusable). B.N. also considers “pressure,” exerting pressure, as the purpose of such conversations, but his vast experience and natural intelligence allow him, usually, to push the right pedals at the right time. Afanasyev, on the other hand, is no good for international (at least) politics (I’m convinced of it once again). He managed to “casually” touch on the “Czechoslovak question” and provoke Chater to give an entire lecture on the fact that parliamentary struggle is also class struggle. Afanasyev caused offense, which is quite dangerous in this kind of situation: Chater was forced to give a rebuff against “accusations of anti-Sovietism.”

I couldn’t wait for our editor to leave for an hour to attend an editorial board. But I intervened before he left. Chater sensed that before him was a person who knew how to handle “Eurocommunists” (we hadn’t met before). I pushed the same ideas as Afanasyev, but I provided facts (from their own experience) that made him flustered, he started babbling. He did not expect that we know the details of everything they do regarding “human rights in the USSR.” But I didn’t back him into a corner... and I “helped” him to recover, by switching to broad class generalizations and by saying that since they demand we recognize and understand their particular characteristics and difficulties – kindly reciprocate.

I also stumped him with the idea that we need to be accepted the way we are, instead of trying to transform us into an “open society,” which is hopeless.

Then we went to the House of Journalists for dinner. Toasts at dinner. In a word, we let Chater know that everything is much more complicated, and we are not such simpletons and not the kind of people you would imagine from the words of Bukovsky and Plyushch.

The dinner was friendly in a true sense, frank, cheerful, self-critical (from our side, which Chater really did not expect – sharp and critical assessments of our own affairs!).

It seemed to me that he left wavering on “Eurocommunism” (the anti-Soviet part of it). In any case, he has plenty food for thought to share with McLennan, Woddis & Co.

May 31, 1977

Today at B.N.’s request I wrote a speech for Suslov based on the CC Plenum’s decision to inaugurate Leonid Ilyich as the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. In other words, B.N. wants to show his efforts here too. I wrote a beautiful speech, but of course B.N. will edit it in his style.

The fuss with preparing materials for a meeting with Gus Hall, the most capricious and presumptuous of all the CP leaders (it’s funny to watch). But Brezhnev always agrees to receive him, “without a peep”...

On Sunday, there was an article in *Pravda*: “Black Magic on Taganka,” about “Master and Margarita.” The article is intelligent, even elegant, with compliments – but it is a thrashing.

[The author] accurately notes Lyubimov's political intent, his vulgarity, his talent, and everything else.

June 5, 1977

Yesterday, Ponomarev and I met Gus Hall. Today on Sparrow Hills I spent four hours telling him about "Eurocommunism." The plan is that I enlighten him on all the details, then he speaks with Suslov and B.N. at the CC, and then they bring him to Brezhnev.

I wonder if these three "contacts" will sing the same tune in terms of interpreting our line and the line we want from him.

The draft of the Constitution has been published. Even though Bovin called my comments nonsense, he ended up including 75 percent of them. I'm sure no one else insisted that he should. Especially since he probably steamrolled the team, as always. Then again, maybe my comments coincided with others that carried more weight.

June 11, 1977

The Suslov-Ponomarev-Gus Hall and Brezhnev-Gus Hall meetings took place. I was at the first one. Brezhnev told B.N. ahead of time that he will only talk about Carter and related subjects. "Everything else – Marchais and so forth – discuss your business without me." I warned Gus about this. And we carried it out...

The evening before, B.N. told me with frustration, "Brezhnev doesn't like the memo. He asked why is it written in this manner: on this issue, one could say...; in response to this, one could inform... (i.e. it is composed following our "classic model"). It should be direct, the way he will speak." I objected that Mostovets, head of sector, got chewed out by Aleksandrov last time (in 1974!) when he tried to do exactly that – write it in the first person – "Why are you speaking for Brezhnev – I, I, I? Doesn't he know what to say himself?" To this, B.N. reasonably replied that "it was a long time ago!" and I should have asked him, not Mostovets.

To be honest, I wasn't happy with this format myself, in the beginning. I told Mostovets that in my experience, direct speech is better. But he convinced me not to bother with Aleksandrov again, that he can change it himself if he wants to...

B.N. said: "It's a 'difficult situation' right now, and in general, you know..." In other words, he made it clear that Brezhnev is again in a state where all he can do is read what's written in big letters.

I sat down and rewrote everything in the first person, adapting to Aleksandrov's "vigorous" style. In addition, I included at his insistence a sharp assessment of Carter's just-published report to the U.S Congressional Commission on compliance (by the Soviet Union) with the Helsinki Accords. Aleksandrov called the report "rude." I included it in the memo, and Brezhnev said it.

At Suslov's. M.A. greeted Hall for a long time, the entire time laughing a little nervous laugh (he started doing this a few years ago; it happens especially when he is in a good mood).

Then he started speaking (without notes). In general, he sketched out roughly the same concept as I described to G. Hall in detail on Sparrow Hills. He spoke almost exclusively about Eurocommunism. B.N. jumped in too and gave a twenty-minute speech, with pressure against revisionism and how we are fighting against the reformist tendency specifically. Tellingly, Suslov interrupted B.N. twice, emphasizing that “they (i.e. Western CPs) can choose their struggle, the path to socialism, themselves. This is their business. We do not want to interfere. We are having comradely discussions with them.” The second time he interrupted B.N. with a reminder that when the two of them were talking with Plissonier, “I told him that already at the XX Congress we, i.e. the CPSU, said that we are for a peaceful path, including a parliamentary path.”

Meanwhile, B.N. is eager as always to teach and instruct, though in practical politics he is more guided by common sense and for now calls to speak out only against the anti-Soviet aspects of Eurocommunism.

Gus Hall expressed complete agreement with the CPSU’s “balanced” line, and said that the U.S. Communist Party must act “in unison,” not like a partisan in the ICM (later, when we were leaving the CC, he jokingly thanked me for “preparing” him for this conversation). Although, judging by his report at the CC Plenum in early June (which Morris showed us) – there he held a somewhat different position: to openly lambast in defense of the CPSU.

We talked for a little over two hours, and at 5p.m. they had to meet with Brezhnev.

When I was saying goodbye, Suslov asked, “Aren’t you going to be there?” I said, “What for? There will be a lot of people... Mikhailov will be there, he is a consultant and speaks English.” His reaction was ambiguous. Later B.N. invited me (with Suslov’s consent), but in a way that felt like he was asking me to refuse. Which I did. And I did the right thing. As it turned out later, Brezhnev didn’t even invite Aleksandrov... I would have had to hang about in the hallway and then clear out.

B.N. and Mikhailov later told me that everything worked like clockwork. L.I. read the memo (which Aleksandrov lightly edited) in two parts, letting Hall speak in between. The latter was clear and brief: Carter will soon come to grief and take a more realistic position.

There is a large photo in *Pravda* and on *Vremya* on TV... Embraces and so on. The communique went out the way we prepared it. I haven’t seen any responses yet.

June 12, 1977

The USSR State Anthem and the CC CPSU’s response to the Communist Party of Japan’s open letter on the Kuril Islands were published today. [The response] is foolish, unproductive and will not appeal to anyone but chauvinists. Ulyanovsky and Kovalenko’s work comes through in every line, crude, slovenly work.

Brutents went to Mexico for the Party Congress. The CP there is also finding “its own way,” Latin American Eurocommunism. He was in Washington and New York for a few days in transit. Both in Mexico and in the U.S., he met with many journalists and diplomats from “our

neighbors” (KGB residents). The general impression from conversations with them – they, our people abroad, live in an atmosphere where “they don’t like us!” “They don’t like us, Tolya! Everyone – from the far left to the far right...” Some of our people talk openly about this constant feeling that arises from everyday trifles, and from more conscious political observations.

Indeed, there is no denying it. This is increasingly felt in Europe and in socialist countries. Alas! There are many reasons...

But it was very unpleasant to hear it from the lips of an “eyewitness,” even if it doesn’t come as a surprise to me.

When I told him about the Plenum and how Podgorny was removed, his Armenian temper flared and he started repeating to me across the table in a theatrical whisper, “Tolya! Everything is disintegrating! Total disintegration! It is everywhere – big and small! Senile degeneration is coming like a hopeless gray cloud.”

This also was unpleasant for me to hear. Then I realized it’s because I, a Great Russian, heard it from a foreigner. He is the same as them, so to speak, with his judgements!

June 13, 1977

I just re-read *Kholstomer* – Tovstonogov brought the premiere [to Moscow]. The theatergoers are drooling. So I “prepared myself” to see it. Lev Nikolayevich [Tolstoy] wrote it powerfully and with triple subtexts. A little terrifying.

The CC organized a visit to the exemplary Tamanskaya division in Alabino. I got to fire a machine gun and a handgun. The escort officer said that I scored “nearly excellent” with the machine gun: from short bursts (total of 20 cartridges) the targets did not fall twice. With the handgun I think I had the best result of the group, 26 out of the possible 30 (25 is considered “excellent”). It was nice to “relive a bit of the past.”

June 18, 1977

A week of “euphoria” over the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet taking his post. The Supreme Soviet session was nothing but applause and standing ovations. Suslov’s speech... (two half-phrases were all that was left of my contribution to it). Brezhnev’s acceptance speech: “The will of the motherland, the will of the Party... even though it will be difficult.”

Brutents – hysterical in the “dark room” next to my office: “How can we mock a great people so blatantly and coarsely, to put on shows that even half-civilized Latin American countries now consider inappropriate.” And so on. I was laughing. What can we do!?

The first session of the USSR Supreme Soviet under new chairmanship was being broadcast on TV all evening yesterday. A painful “reading” of the text in big letters, without understanding what he is saying, thinned-out by long pauses between the words in a phrase, unbalanced accents, pathetic attempts to give intonation with out of place gestures...

Members of the Presidium are sitting and writing down every word like schoolchildren, even though tomorrow the entire speech will be in the newspapers in corrected literary form.

Towards the end, the reader-speaker was faltering completely. When he finished, it was like he dragged a wagon up a mountain.

The Ukrainian, Lithuanian and other members started to speak, singing praises and prompting thunderous applause... And this is a session of the working (!) supreme body! Not like the sessions of the Supreme Soviet, which are a mass performance and people are long used to it.

Is even elementary common sense disappearing up there at the top?! We discussed what we saw with our consultants. Doesn't the basic feeling of self-respect (self-preservation) tell them that keeping bodies such as the CC Plenum, the sessions of the Supreme Soviet, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet closed makes it possible to preserve at least the mythology of power in people's minds? Let them think that at least here a serious conversation is taking place, instead of empty talk and hallelujahs. Can they really not understand it? Can't the KGB report that Homeric laughter is sweeping across the country and there is total indifference to all these theatrical performances that replace real governing and demonstrate the total impotence of our leading actor.

Or maybe the cynical and loutish Lapin and his television crowd are deliberately exposing [Brezhnev] to ridicule? After all, only a good director could come up with this: after Brezhnev finished speaking, others took over. He is sitting with an absent expression, obviously not hearing anything, and apparently struggling to cope with the heaviness that spilled over him after the grueling strain. From time to time he mindlessly looks at people bringing papers to him and utters something (we can hear the unintelligible sound because he didn't think to turn off his microphone, and others don't dare to make the suggestion). He is given "little texts" and he reads them in the "right" place (it's marked), then "concludes" the debate by reading off a paper prepared two days ago by advisers.

And all of this happens before the eyes of a great nation, which is astonished but has given up a long time ago.

The General Secretary-President is now only capable of perceiving the significance of the very fact of his speech or appearance somewhere, his conversation or meeting with whomever – not the content of these state actions. The same goes for state and party papers, which he no longer signs himself: Chernenko has long had the monopoly on the facsimile of Brezhnev's signature.

The content of Brezhnev's conversations, as well as whom and when he would receive, was determined by the all-powerful members of the Politburo – Suslov, Ustinov, Andropov, Gromyko, and advisers, mainly Aleksandrov.

Brezhnev has to go to France soon after his "elevation to the rank." Do they really expect that the French won't notice they are dealing with a "dummy of an eagle" (as David Samoilov once aptly named Konstantin Fedin in his role as head of the Writer's Union)?!

On Thursday and Friday I went to Tovstonogov's [plays]. An American play, *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds* and *Faratyev's Fantasies* (by a certain Sokolova) with Yursky in the leading role. Terrific acting. I do not remember being so impressed by the actors since the days of pre-war Moscow Academic Art Theater.

It so happened that I watched two plays in a row (from American and Soviet life), in which the situations, the subject matter, and even the arrangement of characters (a mother with two daughters) are similar. You could see (especially since the form was perfect) what a huge difference there is in spirituality between the two nations, societies, and countries. How great and incomparable our country, and incredibly abundant with talent.

By the way, Tovstonogov demonstrates the viability of classical theater. He doesn't need Lyubimov's props like sounds, good music, noise, buffoonery, punkish remarks and little tricks that aim to create the impression of cheap political bravery (look at me, so to speak, I'm not afraid of the Ministry of Culture and various other authorities!).

June 20, 1977

The euphoria continues. On the TV – departure to Paris, arrival in Paris. Kisses in Vnukovo – with some yes, with others below rank, no. For a time, they started to go out of practice in the protocol...

Zagladin is always visible in the background, along with Aleksandrov and Blatov. From a layman's perspective – Giscard is elegant, confident, and relaxed, while our leader is tense and cautious. The mask of an old and worn out man, who carries his burden with great difficulty and who seems to just want to get to Château de Rambouillet and take shelter in his designated rooms.

Giscard impudently says de Gaulle-style banalities, but with all the political meaning he needs. Our guy is standing there and, it seems, not comprehending anything. Because he will have to speak now... without a paper! He started getting confused, not one correct phrase, the joke about Parisian women sounds ridiculous, it just didn't work – some part was left out. Our poor viewer cannot see any political meaning besides "we have to work on issues..." However, in the newspapers everything will be in perfect order, i.e. the official text.

Yesterday morning I was seeing off Gus Hall. Before that, all of Saturday night, we were on Sparrow Hills – conversation and toasts. I squeezed everything I could out of myself to downplay the impression that nobody cared about Gus Hall anymore after his meeting at the top. B.N. felt unwell and refused to even see him off at the airport. He did not call once after he returned from Riga. That's nothing! He didn't even once ask me how things are going [with Gus Hall]. So I had to make up for it, saving our internationalist reputation. I told him about G. Marchais' response to Brezhnev's offer to meet in Paris to "exchange information on the outcomes of the meetings with Giscard d'Estaing."

Kanapa replied through the ambassador: The Politburo discussed and came to the conclusion that a meeting would be inexpedient. The reasons:

1. You, the CPSU, tried to split our party by sending us the letter. You tried to overthrow the current leadership of the PCF.
2. You blatantly interfered in our internal affairs by sending your opinion before the May Plenum, at which we determined our position regarding France's nuclear weapons.
3. Your comrades from the CC are conducting subversive work against the PCF in fraternal parties. (On this point B.N. slyly asked Zagladin: "Are they talking about you and Chernyaev here – your trips to Italy, Belgium, Switzerland, the FRG?" To which Zagladin replied: as for me, that's exactly what I'm doing!)

I told Gus Hall about a lot of other things. I concocted (in Suslov's name) some flattering assessments of the significance of his visit for Soviet-American relations and the ICM. It was skillful and subtle. At the time, I even felt good about it. Now I feel disgusted.

Today Brutents talked about the problem of the CC's International Department slowly becoming superfluous! Indeed, with such attitudes towards "our work"...

K. Simonov – a two-volume war diary. The reason that Demichev pulped two issues of *Novy Mir* under Tvardovsky, but I managed to read the review copy. There were some powerful things in there. I wonder if they survived.

June 25, 1977

Zagladin's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Order of Lenin. But, if Heroes [of Socialist Labor] are being given left and right, he did earn this order. B.N. was jealous and displeased. He grumbled to me one on one, though he did say, "We are the ones who presented it this way." He criticized the overly laudatory and enthusiastic speech. Asked me who wrote it. I couldn't tell him, because I didn't know myself.

On the day of Zagladin's birthday, B.N. gathered a third of the Department in his office and, carefully choosing his words, congratulated Vadim. Vadim gave a moving "response," saying that he, whose parents are dead, sees B.N. as a father figure and considers him his teacher.

We decided it would be inappropriate to give the rest of the speeches in Ponomarev's office and moved to Zagladin's. There I gave an impromptu "beautiful" speech, even though no one asked me to. In the evening, we wanted to get drunk at the office, but I offered my apartment. Vadim agreed. Now I'm thinking, how sincere was I in my pretty and original speeches? I think I was one hundred percent sincere. In all three aspects of Zagladin, which Aleksandrov "laid out" in his toast, he deserves respect: as an already prominent politician, as a writer in the Headquarters, i.e. for the General Secretary, where real policies are formed, and as a private person. Zagladin is an uncommon figure on our elite-political horizon. Moreover, I have a personal liking for him. What I don't like is his attitude towards people, his indiscrimination in these relations. I don't dislike him. However, I would not want to be like him in any way, except one – to make decent reports for any audience in half an hour.

July 2, 1977

I was in Prague from June 21 – July 1. At the theoretical conference, where B.N. read our “Some Questions of the CPSU’s Theoretical Work Over Sixty Years.” Sixty-seven communist parties, 10 parties from the “third world.” Sixty-seven delegations gave speeches.

An insider who is absorbed by routine work might not notice anything: they gather and say things that have been said a thousand times before. There are snippets of real life (though by far not everyone has them) in the form of information about their home countries.

But you only need to reflect a little on the nature of the spectacle to see how senseless it is. These gatherings are organized to show by the very fact of their occurrence that the ICM still exists as an international phenomenon. However, these gatherings are doomed to be defensive actions against those who think that the ICM is interfering with the activities of the parties at home, and against those who are simply tired of this protracted game of “great power.”

One Italian (author of *History of the PCI*) tried to be original and approach the Soviet experience critically and creatively. However, firstly, there was no originality, since everything he (and the PCI as a whole – “Eurocommunists”) say on this subject is the many times forgotten and newly revived “ideas” of Kautsky-Trotsky, and first “dissidents” like F. Raskolnikov, anti-Soviets from the 1930-50-60-70s. Secondly, because everyone understood they are playing a game, and it was unpleasant and offensive when one of them started showing off and acting like he doesn’t want to participate.

Seventy percent of the conference was empty talk, and school-level at that, especially from people who recently completed the Lenin School in Moscow and hadn’t been in their countries for a very long time. But there were some curious and striking lines of thinking, on a purely intellectual level, too.

The main thing is that this event, aside from the aforementioned ideological demonstration, cannot give anyone anything in terms of advancing the real policies of communists even one step forward.

Prague is almost unchanged in its core “historical” and familiar features. Except it is all dug up because of the metro, which has been under construction for many years. It’s not just the metro, there is also the need to restore housing while preserving the traditional look of the streets... However, Praguers still blame the Soviet Union, which, you see, “had to build a metro here...”

There are almost no Soviets left on the PPS editorial board from my old friends, and the Czechs – a lot of them came there 20 years ago and look as if time has stopped...

Zarodov (editor-in-chief) successfully bustles about, but due to the “logic” he constantly finds himself at odds with Ponomarev’s tactics. For example, he invited Egyptian communists but B.N. said they cannot have the floor because Brezhnev recently received [Ismail] Fahmy...

Bilyak (member of the CC KSC [Communist Party of Czechoslovakia]). He came to our “villa” a few times, displaying closeness in general and to Ponomarev in particular. He even took us to the countryside – to the Botanical Gardens and a restaurant where he sang Slovak songs till



1 a.m., danced and told risqué jokes. Even B.N. was surprised, “I didn’t expect he could be like this...” This man usually looks sullen, and even spiteful. He is very well liked among our top leadership, but Zarodov and I think that he is a major scumbag, and he only “loves” us to stay afloat and get to the top.

The evening at the restaurant. Ponomarev-Bilyak duets. Hilarious. A feeling of hopeless and insurmountable, oppressing vulgarity and tactlessness.

Bogush (head of the Socialist countries sector) was seeing us off at the airport and told us about three problems that are undermining Czechoslovakia right now.

1. The split in the working class. Factory workers are putting in honest 7-hour days. But the service sector has long surpassed them in numbers. Here you have corruption, theft, defamation, outright deception and work on the side. As a result, the service sector earns at a minimum 1.5-2 times as much as factory workers, and some many times more. Everyone sees it. Factory workers are writing to say: let’s discuss this. We don’t want this to be broadcast in the newspapers for all the world to see, but let’s do it in a Party way, amongst ourselves. This won’t do...” But there is no reaction.
2. The nationalities question. The Slovaks have become completely brazen. They are now richer and better off, and they have control over all the key places in the Republic, in Prague. We, Czechs, are in favor of Slovaks working in the central government bodies. But we are against Slovak politicians having two apartments – in Prague and Bratislava. They come here for a day or two, give orders, and go back home. Everyone also sees and “hates” this!
3. Youth. In the 10 years since 1968 there have been 10 graduating classes in schools and universities. These students were taught by “people of 1968.” We couldn’t drive them out then because it would mean closing down schools and universities. So they taught: without provocations, without drawing attention to themselves, they taught students to be nationalists and anti-Soviets, they taught the values of Western democracy, etc. Plus the daily impact (radio, TV) of propaganda of the Western lifestyle! As a result, youth has left the Party. This is not “our” youth. The main feature of their individual psychology is anti-Sovietism.

There is an organized underground movement. We have evidence. It is not that small, if you take into account the half-million expelled from the KSC in 1969. Together with their children, relatives, friends and acquaintances, they make up a considerable percentage of Czechoslovakia’s population of 14 million, and perhaps the most active part of the population.

In Zarodov’s estimation (he whispered a lot of different bits of information into my ear), huge forces of discontent have ripened in society – passive, grumbling, hating, mocking à la Schweik.<sup>6</sup> It won’t erupt in an “uprising,” but it could create a situation that no one will know how to deal with: a situation of a socio-political impasse. Zarodov believes that people “at the top” understand this very well. This is how he explains the subordination of all policies to one goal – to save every krone in the state budget, to keep the economy “at level,” and, to put it

---

<sup>6</sup> Reference to *The Good Soldier Schweik*, by Jaroslav Hašek. (Trans.)

bluntly, to pour lard on society's sickness. As long as this is the case, the discontent will not have a dangerous outcome.

They do indeed live affluently. The store shelves are bursting. Their goods are much better than ours, though noticeably behind the West. But the contrast in variety and quality between us and the Czechs is much greater than the Czechs and the FRG, for example.

Their villages have become incredibly rich. The same head of sector Bogush told me that he recently visited his native land (North Moravia). He said there are families who earn 70,000 kron per month (7,000 rubles). Their houses are now real villas with two garages, color TVs, the best household appliances and the trendiest furniture. This is no longer an exceptional phenomenon, it is becoming typical in the most prosperous agricultural areas.

Bogush talked about the totally shoddy work of our embassy. He does not expect anything from Matskevich (ambassador). He says everyone knows that he got a good sinecure. His wife keeps saying that Brezhnev told him, "Bring me a map and point your finger wherever you'd like to go as an ambassador, and you'll go there."

Matskevich demonstratively neglects his basic duties. He is either getting [medical] treatment or he is hunting. The latter is the talk of the town. "Here we say: The Ambassador came to get acquainted with... Czechoslovakia's countryside" (not with Czechoslovakia).

The problem is, Bogush says, that we don't have objective information in Moscow. The lower rank embassy staff... They also don't know the situation, or they consciously close their eyes. And what can they know, if they only communicate with protocol people. The same Fominov (Party communications adviser), even though he is from your CC, he hasn't once invited a worker to his home, or a party activist. He doesn't have any connections or acquaintances in the public sphere. Because he is saving his money, because he is indifferent, and he is living an easy and comfortable life here. He boasted that he would like to spend another five years in Prague. Of course, he is interested in making sure everything is calm, not to offend anyone, to avoid scandal and escalation...

Zarodov told me that he, Zarodov, has vast contacts in Prague's various circles. People come to him to complain, "inform," pass on all sorts of intimate affairs, gossip. He said, "I wrote a couple times about the behind-the-scenes, sharp, angry, petty struggle at the top of the KSC and the government. But Matskevich detains my telegrams. He has no right to do that. But if I start to make noise, he will quickly demolish me. Why should I stick my neck out?!"

This is probably it for the main details on Prague.

July 10, 1977

At work – Zagladin and Shaposhnikov went on vacation. There is a stream of papers, a revolving door for "things to sign." And most importantly – delegations. On Friday, a conversation with [Roger] Dafflon, a PB member from Geneva. He is an old acquaintance, from the time of my trip to Switzerland with Shelepin in 1964. I don't have to hide things or be

diplomatic with him. Still, I was totally exhausted after two hours. Next week I have the Italians, French, and Belgians.

B.N. presented to the Politburo on the outcomes of Prague. An overview article for *Kommunist* is in the works.

Before Zagladin's vacation, B.N. gathered the deputies. Again: what to do with Eurocommunism. We came to the conclusion that we should not exacerbate it. The second article on Carrillo came out (in *Novoe Vremya*), and that's it. By the way, I liked it better than the first one: it clearly outlines that we are not against the PCI, and in general not against any Communist Party policy. We are against Carrillo's anti-Sovietism. If we have equal rights, then we have the right to respond to years of attacks on us.

In general, B.N. sees that "the process can't be stopped." And that it is not about reasoning or substance. Nobody wants to hear our arguments (I talked about this at the meeting). The point is, they don't want to associate communism (other communist parties) with the CPSU.

Essentially, in broad historical terms, we have a repeat of Bernsteinia. <sup>7</sup> This analogy is all the more relevant because capitalism is clearly entering a new era, as it was at the turn of the century. Perhaps, if we preserve ourselves in the world, and keep the world from nuclear war, the Bernsteinia will have a better outcome this time. We shall see! However, I probably won't get to see it. My fate is tied to Ponomarev – to hang on to the coattails of whatever we can save in "our" ICM, i.e. trifles.

#### June 12, 1977

Conversation with Lechleiter, a member of the Swiss Party of Labour Politburo, from Zurich. For two hours I talked about the bankruptcy of "Eurocommunism," about our right to speak out against Carrillo, about the fact that it's time for us, the CPSU, to begin to stand up for equality and independence of our party in the ICM. He seemed to agree but cautiously, and he didn't have much to say. Indeed, it is hard to disagree with our logic. Still, they don't want to openly support us, even people like Lechleiter – he is a quiet, reasonable man, who is completely dependent on us (as is his whole party), and he expects a pension from us when he retires. But in his mumbling you seem to hear – you do your thing, and we will do our thing.

We have already received a letter with information about the meeting of Suslov-Ponomarev-Pajetta-Bufalini-Macaluso. By the way, Suslov gave an excellent speech at this meeting. If suddenly they decided to leak it to the bourgeois mass media, it would be tremendously beneficial. I'm imagining, for example, this speech in the *New York Times*, where we say what we really think about "Eurocommunism," internationalism, the parties' right to independence, etc.

I am stupefied by the flow of papers and other routine work. Fortunately, B.N. took on the conversation with French secretaries of the federations (akin to our regional committee

---

<sup>7</sup> A reference to the political theorist Eduard Bernstein. (Trans.)

secretaries), and asked Zagladin to meet with two delegations of the PCI (luckily, he is in Usovo, at his dacha).

July 16, 1977

A hard week. Against the background of the primary work: the completion of the article for *Kommunist* on the outcomes of the Prague conference – wracking my brain. Everyone must be “reflected,” cannot forget anyone “noteworthy,” have to create a sense of objectivity so it is clear that the majority praised us, but in their own Marxist-Leninist interests and in the name of internationalism. [The conference] cannot look like a discussion of Ponomarev’s “report” (his speech is equal to others, though it is more equal because he got five times the amount of time as anyone else). The main ideas of Ponomarev’s speech must be reflected through quotes in other speeches. And even the Italian Spriano has to be “reflected”: to give a positive quote from him, and later hint that he proposed to master the experience of October by delving deeper into the essence of the “cult of Stalin,” which is absurd, so to speak, because the most important thing is the positive, victorious experience. And so forth.

A 30-page overview has been sent to the journal.

Editing B.N.’s article (a condensed version of his Prague speech) for *PPS*. Pyshkov suggested to include something on the CPSU’s contribution to the development of the “peaceful path of revolution.” Indeed, why not? After all, the XX Congress came up with it! Now all these PCF, PCI, CPGB are shoving their original paths into our faces, forgetting who spoke about it first. (To be fair, I have to mention that we later made maximum efforts to hush up this discovery of ours). B.N. hesitated, “It is a very important matter,” (probably partially because it is a reminder of Khrushchev, and the fact that the peaceful path became the source for reformism, and some other things). However, political vanity would not let him rest. He agreed, and we inserted a paragraph on this point.

Letter to Plissonnier, hinting that we are not upset with Marchais for refusing to meet with Brezhnev in Paris, and it would be good to organize something similar to what we are doing with the Italians.

Letters to a vast number of CPs, explaining why we spoke against Carrillo and how the mass media and Eurocommunists are misinterpreting us. This took a great deal of work, because Zuev, head of the sector, seems to be completely exhausted, and the consultant Pertsov, who is good at daily briefings, is terrible at writing, so I had to do it myself.

B.N. had already sent the draft to the CC when he raised an alarm (his Comintern soul gives him no peace), saying that we should add at the end that they (the CPs) should publicly condemn Carrillo. It took a long time to talk him out of it: God forbid this leaks, and we are sending it to almost 50 parties, they will again shout to the whole world about “Moscow’s directives,” nostalgia for the “center,” intrigues, and so on. He agreed.

Outcomes of the Dartmouth conference in Jurmala: Arbatov and Zhukov would not get off me, and so on.

Plus, yesterday I was at Silvestrov's funeral. My first eulogy. Grief and a meeting with eternity. Completely drained by the end of the day.

The day before yesterday I saw for the first time Bertolucci's festival film *1900*. Italy through the lens of the "class struggle" from the beginning of the century to the arrival of fascism (the 1<sup>st</sup> episode). In some parts it is powerful, but with showing off that is typical for Italians. And, of course, sex, which is why we did not buy this obviously pro-Soviet revolutionary movie (with "Italian Bolsheviks" of the 1920s and others, with Vive Staline! 1945).

About my meeting with Stukalin. He is the chairman of the Press Committee, the Minister of all books published in the Soviet Union, member of the CC, a deputy, etc., etc. He used to be deputy editor of *Pravda*, and in general is an intelligent person, not a hard-nosed bureaucrat. A soft and balanced person. We've known each other for a few years. He also knows that I am not an outdated apparatchik and not a career official with the Central Committee.

He called me, saying that he wants to stop by. "We are preparing an album ('by decision') for the participants of the November 6 meeting. I would like to consult with you on some of the more important political moments."

Alright. He came over. So, what are the political moments [he wanted to consult about]? A group portrait of socialist country leaders with Brezhnev in the Crimea. "Over here," Boris Ivanovich says, "Katushev stood behind Kadar. Now we removed him, you see, the surface of the photo is even a little damaged. I think this is the right thing to do. I spoke with Cde. Rusakov and he fully supports this."

The same procedure was done with the photo from the Berlin conference: they left Brezhnev and Ponomarev, and Zhilin and Zagladin in the background. I started expressing some concern but he insisted that there is no other way to do it.

We got to the end of the deluxe edition. "You may not have noticed," Boris Ivanovich said, "we didn't include any photographs where other (!) representatives of Party and state leadership would be shown separately, unlike the album for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October. Only once Comrade Kosygin participates in a conversation with the Laotians together with Brezhnev. And M.A. Suslov, you must have noticed, is at the podium when he makes the proposal to elect Comrade Brezhnev as the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet."

That's all there is to our politics! And our propaganda, too!

July 17, 1977

Today I'm having a day of "Eurocommunism." I read up on everything I've put off for two weeks, materials written in Europe and America about our articles against Carrillo. It's very mixed, but the essence seems to come through. I'll try to summarize: the French and Italians (Carrillo is another matter) want to take advantage of the confrontation between us and America to sneak into power. To this end, they want to lull the class enemy and the petty-bourgeois masses (the overwhelming majority of which is, alas, anti-Soviet) into believing that they have

nothing in common with the Soviet system. People may trust them, however, not because of their anti-Sovietism, but because they look like an alternative to the rather deplorable state of capitalist society.

In addition to the Eurocommunist texts, all day I read Lenin, including *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*. If you ignore the historical specifics, he is still right and very relevant in his way of thinking and internal logic. And what brilliance of thought and phrase! Sometimes I would jump up and run around the room, chuckling with delight.

By the way, today I read in *Le Monde* exactly what I had feared and anticipated: that the French will see who they are dealing with... “a dummy of an eagle.” There was a note in bold type, i.e. marked as something important. Giscard shared his impressions about Brezhnev with someone (it turns out Vance had spoken to him on this subject before). He got the impression that Brezhnev is incapable of holding an in-depth conversation and in general can't talk for more than an hour. Both of their meetings were cut by half. The General Secretary's health is in decline. Giscard suggested that Brezhnev may not last until the end of the year. I wonder, does anyone here read anything like this?

July 21, 1977

Today I spent all day with Stanishev (head of a department in the Bulgarian Communist Party). He came to get instructions, since Kanapa is coming to Bulgaria with a letter from G. Marchais to Zhivkov.

B.N. volunteered to talk with him (because Zhivkov will later go to the Crimea and may tell L[eonid]. I[lyich]. how well Ponomarev helped him to fight against Eurocommunism).

B.N. becomes extremely tiring, he repeats his Short Course nonsense three times over while referring to the conversation he (and Suslov) had with the Italians. In reality, the conversation was totally different. Then he himself suggested to Stanishev to read the transcript. Either he is making his own policy, different from Suslov's, this way, or he really perceives the essence of the conversation differently than it was reflected in the transcript.

He predominantly talked about what reformists the Italians are, how they've forgotten about socialism, etc. There wasn't anything like that in Suslov's conversation. On the contrary, Suslov emphasized that, “it is up to you to choose your policies, your path”...

Later (after Stanishev read about the Finns, the PCF, the PCI, Carrillo, and the Swedes) I tried to steer him “back” to Suslov's path. I don't know if he noticed the discrepancy between Ponomarev's rantings and the texts he read, and my presentation of our line in the ICM.

In the morning in B.N.'s office: Zuyev, Pertsov, and I. About Spain. A police way of thinking and acting (however, so dumb that these actions have no chance of being realized). Amaya, Ibaruri's daughter, has returned to Moscow. So, we should persuade her to “implant” into the Western press (but so people wouldn't notice that it is “from us”) how poorly Carrillo treats La Pasionaria. He isolated her and so on. We should get in touch with the Garcia group and one other breakaway CP and give them the 50,000 they are requesting for the struggle against

Carrillo. But it can't look like it's coming "from us," let the GDR transfer this money. We should write articles for Spain, not against Carrillo directly, but so everyone would see that they are against him. (This is when nobody read even the articles "directly against Carrillo" in *Novoe Vremya*, people were content with just the summary from the news agencies!)

Pertsov should go to Portugal and from there persuade "Intersindical" (trade unions) to influence Spain. Labor committees – against Carrillo. Senile Comintern-police nonsense.

On Tuesday I was at the CC Secretariat. The topic of discussion was the non-black-earth zone. It turns out nothing is being done there. They chose the Minister of Agricultural Construction as the whipping boy. He pitifully babbled that he doesn't have this and that, he is not receiving this, that is getting cut. But nobody wanted to listen.

They "chewed him out" to show a critical approach, but didn't promise him a kopeck in funds.

A discussion of the work of the CPSU Moscow Regional Committee for the development of the textile industry (as it turns out, it produces 40 percent of the USSR's goods). Konotop (secretary of the Moscow regional committee) gave a totally empty speech – off subject, about the Constitution, about the election of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, about the care of the Party, etc. But during the discussion he started snapping back: 30 percent of the spinning equipment and 50 percent of the weaving equipment started their working lives before the Revolution; we don't have modern dyes; we are 8,000 workers short; new machinery is five times more expensive, but we have to buy them with the funds we got based on old prices. Funds for consumer services are being cut. And... more along these lines.

Even though this guy did not get chewed out, he still didn't get a kopeck. But the Secretariat demanded to "raise," "improve," and so on.

In both cases orders were given to draw up "detailed resolutions" with publication in the press. Even though it's clear that these resolutions don't change anything. Thus, even discussions at the CC Secretariat are in the best-case scenario subordinated to propaganda, talk, the appearance of activity, but not actual activity.

July 30, 1977

There was a meeting with [Alfredo] Reichlin, a member of the PCI's Politburo and director of *L'Unita*. There was a draft letter to the Communist Party of Spain. There was Grigoriev's trip to "Jurmala" to see Axen – "Once again our Cinderella (Ibarruri) is in trouble and needs to be rescued..."

Publication, on my initiative, of Berecz' article from *Népszabadság* in *Pravda*, on Eurocommunism, i.e. a demonstration of the fact that in the nuances in the socialist community (Bulgarians, Czechs, and others) the CPSU chooses the Hungarians. This is very useful after our move with Carrillo.

Brezhnev's conversation with Kadar in the Crimea, where he (Brezhnev) spoke about Eurocommunism in the Hungarian style: we should study the work of our fraternal parties in the

West (assign this to the International Departments), and select what is interesting and new, in other words – the search for the right policy... Polemics is the last resort. We have to bring together and unite the ICM. We have to tell them more about us, they do not know us very well. Calmly discuss problems...

By the way, B.N.'s conversation with [William] Kashtan – the Jewish problem was at the center (we are being distorted, B.N. said, in reality we are good with Jews). Even a mangy sheep's good for a little wool. Unfortunately, we won't even get that. Kashtan doesn't really have a party, hasn't had one in a while. And he's lying about its "activities."

August 3, 1977

The KPD came out with an initiative to have all participant parties of the Berlin Conference sign a statement against the neutron bomb. Yesterday there was a telegram from Falin (ambassador in Bonn). But I already knew about it: a week ago I got a call from the GDR embassy for approval. In the eyes of the German adviser I represent the CC, of course. I said that I am for it.

When B.N. received the telegram, he declared that the KPD is "disloyal" (they should have warned us in advance). I told him about my conversation with the embassy of the GDR, but he pretended he didn't hear: God forbid someone finds out that it was "coordinated" with some Chernyaev, and that he spoke on behalf of the CC! Ponomarev himself is in favor of the initiative, but the MFA is against it – there you have it, so called "interests of the state!" [The MFA] already managed to sway Kirilenko.

However, after B.N. tested my resolve on Brutents and the sector deputies, all of whom expressed "unequivocal" support, he got to work: called Suslov in the Crimea, called Blatov, and convinced Kirilenko.

In the evening, we got a message that 16 parties already "signed," including the GDR and Bulgaria (!). The Hungarians and Czechs called me and waited for our decision.

It has to be done by the 6<sup>th</sup>, because the DKP wants to announce it on Hiroshima Day. But Blatov (an MFA man at heart) will have a hard time getting to the General Secretary with this trifle. There are memos for a conversation with Zhivkov and Ceausescu coming up. It might fall through, for the same line of reasoning the MFA used – not to provoke the Americans. That would be a scandal!

August 7, 1977

We, the CPSU, agreed to sign the DKP's appeal. Brezhnev did not object, Suslov and Kirilenko joined. We told Dusseldorf, but there was a hitch: the Italians suddenly started to drag their feet, saying that "all the secretaries are out in the regions"... It's obvious that they have no use for this initiative: it goes against their position "between" the USSR and the US. The Japanese refused to sign it. The Spaniards (Carrillo) joined without a sound, but the French, of course, could not help but make corrections (absolutely insignificant ones, but now there is a



French contribution and their pride is satisfied). Long story short, it did not happen in time for the 6<sup>th</sup> – Hiroshima Day. Now it will be published on Monday.

What has happened to our beautiful ICM, as Mao would say!!

It is fortunate that the text came to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs after it already became a “decision of the Central Committee.” When Ponomarev made me (pending publication) coordinate it with the MFA post festum [sic], I heard from Kornienko (who discussed it with Kuznetsov, as Gromyko is on vacation, otherwise it would have been shot down!) whining along these lines: why are we calling it a barbarian weapon when we may need to manufacture it ourselves against the Chinese. If they invade our territory, what are we going to do? Plus, we do not include the neutron bomb as a type of nuclear weapon in our talks with the Americans. What is going on, they will say. Why are you making such an incompetent racket? And so on.

I did not try very hard to justify myself. It’s pointless for the MFA to go against the CC’s decision. I thought to myself: if we can’t join the CPs of other countries on an issue like this one (against the neutron bomb), which is clear to any normal person (although not people working for the MFA), then we really should close up our little “communist shop.”

I recently had an asthma attack. Feeling sick made me reflect on things. By the way, it is noticeable that my diary does not have a lot of soul-searching, but consists exclusively of facts of my daily life, and the people who are close to me, unlike even the diary I kept at the front, when, it would seem, I was facing truly important life events but my diary was full of all kinds of “worries” ...

Maybe this is because I do not want to dig deep and look inward. The politics I am involved in have no future. It is a decline, the degeneration of the ICM and so forth. And, it seems, the point of my work is to delay or disguise this process as much as I can.

September 2, 1977

Jurmala, [santorium] “Amber.” The public. Like at trade union resorts. From the provinces. They are at the beach wearing ties, decoration ribbons, and even various medals: in full dress, since going to a resort is serious business and not everyone gets this honor. Dance floors outside of the buildings in the evenings. How ecstatically people dance away their rightful vacations there!

The Jews. They make up 70-80 percent of the free tourists who come without vouchers. And in general, Jurmala is predominantly Jewish. In Moscow you perceive them as separate “individuals,” who are integrated into the general Moscow crowd and the metropolitan population. Here, you almost physically sense that they are a nation... like the Tajiks or Bashkirs. Or Armenians. All of their provincial manners and lingo look like real, “objective” national traits. Since there are many of them, they are the majority, they behave like they are at home – like in Gomel, Zhytomyr, or Odessa – without any complexes or impudence. They are natural, they are in their element. Yes, they are a nation and there’s no way around it. We should treat it the way we treat other nations. After all, any Russian or Ukrainian chauvinist may not necessarily like a Kazakh or Turkmen. He often turns his nose at them... However, he would not

allow himself to deprive them of their moral right to their identity, the way any anti-Semite does it in regard to Jews.

September 19, 1977

When you step away from the routine tasks, the damned “global” problems sweep over you again and again. The reason – another of Ponomarev’s vain ideas: an address to world nations on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October. As a cover, it would also be presented as an address to the Soviet people (although this is absolutely ridiculous, since there will also be Brezhnev’s report). Brutents (to whom B.N. assigned this) and I told him back in the summer that one address would be better. But no way! It’s not difficult to guess why: he wants to appear on the podium of the Kremlin Palace. If there is only one address, surely they will not ask him to read it!

So, Karen and I started to wrack our brains. Nothing came to mind. It is clear that we needed only pretty words rather than new ideas, as “no one would allow” new ideas because Ponomarev’s speech is not the place for them... But the problem is that pretty words (fresh ones) didn’t come to mind since all of them have been said a thousand times before. Everyone is sick of them and they only cause annoyance and mockery, at best – complete indifference.

This is because we have nothing to say to the world. It does not want to follow us, let alone imitate us. Generally speaking, there is nothing tragic about this. What is tragic is that we do not want to come to terms with it, because we have gone too far in our boasting and immodesty. Yesterday I was going through my boxes with notes spanning 25 years, and came across an amazing passage from Lenin on the significance of what “we accomplished.” “If we act like a frog,” he writes at the end of a long passage on this topic, “if we huff and puff, we will be a worldwide laughingstock, we will be mere boasters” (Volume 38, pg. 180). Of course, over the last 60 years we have things to boast about. Nevertheless... Our boasting has grown in geometric progression over the decades (and with each new stage – from Stalin to Khrushchey, etc. – it acquired practically cosmic proportions), while our accomplishments are less than “arithmetic.” At the very least, all the sociological, principally important milestones we set for ourselves we never reach in time, or we reach them with such expenditure and delays compared to the West, that their psychological effect in the country and the world is devalued.

But that is not even the point. We indeed transformed tsarist Russia in just half a century in a way that nothing else could have ever changed it. But we pushed the world away and undermined our authority with our almost irrational drive (stemming from the very logic of a great power) to impose ourselves on others, to portray ourselves as better than everyone else, to bless everyone with our military and political presence and overall meaningless interference. This marred our great revolutionary past, something that used to cause sincere and exalting admiration of millions everywhere in the world... even if it was a mythological, primitive view.

Our boasting acquired the power of objective law. It cannot be stopped with a simple order or decision of the Central Committee, because we would need to immediately expose the screaming discrepancy between what is being done and how. For example, the reality of the construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline in contrast to what is being shown on TV. We would

have to admit that certain shortcomings affect the lives of tens of millions of Soviet people, while “mass” achievements affect only a very small layer.

Anyway, to come back to the address to world nations. What are we going to tell them? They already know we don't have anything to boast about. On top of that, the world has changed tremendously in 60 years, right now it is going through a real crisis on an all-encompassing scale. It is looking for answers, a way out. What do we have to offer that would be serious and truly based on science? We probably could offer something, if we weren't prisoners of our boasting, if we weren't trying to impose ourselves on others again and again under various pretenses...

To appeal to world peace, again? We do that every day as it is. And everyone understands by now that peace doesn't depend on nations, but on the determination, responsibility, and honesty of those who have real and enormous power in their hands, as well as nuclear weapons. People are pretty sick and tired of these solemn appeals.

The same with “Eurocommunism.” We are recognized as a historical reality, an important one but not exemplary. But we keep fussing. Before his vacation, B.N. assigned us to write an article for *Pravda*: to show how imperialism is using “Eurocommunism.” After some ordeals (Korionov, Sheidin) it turned into Zhilin's article in *Novoe Vremya*, which was ready a month and a half after the original assignment, and was published a week ago. Before I got sick I managed to catch [the following in TASS reports]: *L'Unita* gave a sharp rebuff, saying that it would be akin to them starting to judge Moscow's politics based on what anti-Soviets write about it. It is silly, we do not deny that your policies are being misrepresented. However, it is symptomatic: *L'Unita* suggested that if we want to know about Eurocommunism, we should at least look at Buffalini's latest interview.

In other words, they will not let us, on any occasion, portray Eurocommunism as a policy of imperialism and to deny them the right to be independent, and for Eurocommunism to be an original course, maybe even a movement.

We keep trying to bury our head in the sand. We are building Potemkin villages, inviting everyone to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October. We are anxious that they might “say something unsuitable,” and they will... Though the euphoria is gone. They won't pick a fight. But they will repeat once again “from this high rostrum” that they are independent now and we shouldn't interfere with them, it will not work anyway...

Boasting is destroying us, it is undermining our authority.

A week ago I read G. Kennan's new book. He gives wise advice to his government – from a position of generally sound modern isolationism. Reading closely, it occurred to me that his recommendations also apply to us, since we are under the same “verdict” – we are a great power. To make less fuss and not stick our nose everywhere, to pay less attention to what people say and think about us, to concentrate on our own affairs...

On Sunday I was at the Manege for an exhibition of Russian artists – for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary... This comparison just occurred to me: in Jurmala I went to [play] tennis with a

wonderful young man, a coach, and we had this conversation. We were sitting on the bench and watching two pairs of amateurs, tourists, playing. Sometimes they would have pretty good reaction to the ball, would hit accurately into the opponent's court, and deliberately didn't send the ball out of the court. I pointed this out. The young man's response was very unexpected: "You know, this kind of game – the jabs, running around, accidental points – it will always remain an amateur game of people on holiday. It has no prospects, it can't develop, it will never rise to the level which we associate with the word 'tennis'..."

Looking at the exhibition at the Manege, I remembered the words of this intelligent professional. The paintings represented there are doomed to the same fate...

There are even a few exciting works, but in general, where you see something new – there is imitation, where you see realism – there is conservatism and mirroring, where you see social activism – there is deliberateness, affectation, demagoguery, and sometimes downright careerism. Against this background, the posters of the 1920s are winning. They are exhibited as a "retrospective." There you have true innovation, aspiration, dynamism, the capacity for growth even in the cases when there is still a touch of the distant "God's Earth" [*Мира Божия*] style, symbolism, and true political nature.

While I was sick, I reread Lenin's *On the Food Tax*. This little booklet contains all the wisdom, all the philosophy – the strategy and tactics of the modern revolution. And it was written in Russia. I read some other things from Lenin too. A stunning genius, unimaginable... And his language! We have completely forgotten how to speak and write like this. Only this kind of language is victorious in an era that stems from October.

October 1, 1977

I went back to work on the 28<sup>th</sup> after being sick. It turned out there was nothing urgent or significant happening there. B.N. was only asking after me because of his report at two conferences in November. He dismissed Zhilin's memos (although they are generally sensible), which he had assigned him on what to do with the PCF and the ICM: "He mostly explains where 'Eurocommunism' came from, and the things he suggests we are doing already." Ergo: Marxist-Leninist Ponomarev isn't interested in the causes of Eurocommunism, give him emergency (most likely police) measures to suppress it!

Lyubimov's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He called and invited me. I went. He was given an Order of the Red Banner of Labor, and I hear he is going to get the title of People's Artist of the USSR. There were a lot of people – waves of glory and smugness. Lyubimov was very courteous with me. It was one of those situations when they say, "he didn't know where to seat me and how to treat me." This was all under the puzzled glances from people crowded in his office, like Plisetskaya, Shchedrin, Kapitsa, etc. Naturally, they had no idea who I was, they just knew that I wasn't an artist or a writer, and Lyubimov usually deals differently with "high level bureaucrats"!

I saw *Master and Margarita* one more time. The first act is powerful, the rest is still a farce that demonstrates the surprising combination of talent and poor taste in Lyubimov.

Then there was a skit and a banquet. They say it was a pretty good performance, featuring Gerdt, Paperny, and Vysotsky, with whom I exchanged a few words during the intermission. But I didn't stay.

### October 9, 1977

A busy week. The CC Plenum was on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Brezhnev announced that the PB recommends V.V. Kuznetsov as first deputy of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, i.e. under Brezhnev. Therefore, he would be a candidate member of the PB, as well. Then Brezhnev sorted his papers for a long time, and when he found the one he was looking for, he started saying that there is increasingly more work at the CC, so Chernenko needs to become a candidate member of the PB as well. (By the way, he said the same thing a year ago when he recommended Chernenko for CC Secretary). B.N. was once again passed over, despite the fact that he's been showing off with the Constitution for years now, clearly hoping that his "hour of triumph" will come. But no such luck! And it would be ridiculous to expect that the adoption of the Constitution would be tied to any one person's name.

The report at the Plenum on the constitutional committee's results and corrections was short and rather formal. It was agreed in advance not to open it for debate because whoever wanted to speak could do so at the session itself.

Be that as it may, all three of the General Secretary's speeches and the Constitution itself were very impressive. It is truly an ideological, political, and legal framework for the real advancement of our society. Another one is impossible and unnecessary. Now the important thing is to actually overcome the rigidity of the apparatus and cadres, to fill the Constitution with what is written there. Will we be able to? The age is wrong at all the decisive levels of government and power! Consequently, there is no chance for bravery, alertness of mind, or readiness to act according to the Constitution rather than with an eye towards bosses near and far, and various "colleagues" and neighbors who are in turn acting on the same principle. (It's like the applause at the session: sometimes it goes on for so long that you can feel an unutterable cry in the air, "when will it be over," "enough is enough," "ridiculous," "disgraceful," "stop already"... 99 percent feel this way, but they keep applauding).

### October 14, 1977

This week Zagladin came up with an unusual idea. He sent invitations to an "informal, honest, closed" meeting to the smartest and most free thinking individuals – Galkin, Burlatsky, Leibzon, Diligensky, Karyakin, Ardaev, Sobolev, Krasin, Gililov, Timofeyev, four of our consultants, three professors from Matkovsky, and some other less notable people. To talk about Eurocommunism. Zagladin, Zhilin, and I sat at the head of the table in a U-shaped seating arrangement. Zhilin gave an "expose." And it started. They did not say anything new, of course. But it felt like a conversation among trusted people from our department's group of consultants – as if they got drawn into a conversation in my office and got to talking without looking over their shoulder. The participants were very happy (and proud, of course, that they were chosen for such a confidential discussion). Everyone tried to show off. But besides the vanity fair there was also

serious brains, concern about the matter at hand, interest and knowledge of the subject – surprisingly, considering the limited information they can obtain legally.

They were also happy that their broad and calm approach to “Eurocommunism” was met with understanding and encouragement. Essentially, we were in agreement in our assessment of the central problem. Basically, our conclusions were: what can we do? We need to urgently raise our, the CPSU’s, authority in the theoretical field; we need to overcome the prejudice (though it is justified) that we are steeped in dogmatism and we use our yardstick for everything, and whatever it cannot measure we call revisionism, bias, etc.

We need major theoretical initiatives at the most authoritative level of the CPSU.

Indeed, the “Eurocommunist’s” theoretical base (if we are talking seriously) is very weak and helpless. Their claims to discoveries are ludicrous. Essentially it is not theory, it is politics, tactics, seizing the situation – all of which is covered up with theoretical babble to look important.

However, we are also not saying anything (on the issues where they are trying to say something “new”), and we haven’t offered anything besides a string of quotations, which may be powerful but they look like we are imposing our old experience. And so forth.

This lasted for six hours. It took place “on the premises” of the Lenin school, where Vadim is head of the department. It was truly a unique discussion, it probably would have been unthinkable even five years ago.

Ulyanovsky (one of B.N.’s deputies. He is one of those, as people darkly joke, who was at one time imprisoned and then needlessly released) accidentally heard about the meeting and told his “confidant” (who immediately reported it to Zagladin), “We should tell Suslov about this revisionist amusement!”

However, I am sure that he is very mistaken about today’s Suslov!

October 15, 1977

The other day I was by the metro on my way home from work and ran into Ziga (Sigmund) Schmidt (son of the famous academician and polar explorer, I know him from the History Faculty at the University [MGU]). He was standing and chatting with someone in a beret. He saw me, so I had to come over. His companion immediately said goodbye and left.

“Do you know who that was?”

“No idea.”

“Krasnopevtsev! The very one! The Secretary of the University Komsomol Committee in 1956, the leader of an underground group for the restoration of justice and Leninist norms after the XX Congress... You remember, Obushenkov from your department was there too, Eidelman, and about eight other people... They went to the people, to factories, to ZIS [Stalin car-making plant], they put up leaflets. There was a big stink about it. They were all sentenced to prison, Krasnopertsev got ten years...”

“I remember. But how did he end up here, where are you coming from with him right now?”

“We were at a meeting of the museum section of the Archaeological Commission. I was sitting there with Belyavsky. I already left the History Faculty when this all happened, and Belyavsky was a member of the Party bureau. He noticed him right away. And when he started to speak (“broadly, smartly, freely, with ideas and using good language”), Belyavsky prodded me and said, ‘It’s definitely him, Krasnopevtsev!’ After the meeting, I came up and introduced myself. He is now head of the museum at the Moscow Metallurgical Plant *Serp i Molot* [Sickle and Hammer]. He served all ten years! I didn’t get a chance to ask him about the rest, you showed up. It is possible he recognized you. You were teaching in the History Faculty then.

October 29, 1977

From the 19-21<sup>st</sup> I was in Warsaw. A meeting of international and ideological departments of nine socialist countries. Shakhnazarov, Nenashev, and I. The idea was to transform these meetings as much as possible into working events, free them from the gabfest a la Ponomarev. My speeches. Everyone was happy that the CPSU finally reached the conclusion that it is better to talk in a businesslike manner with comrades, instead of uttering propaganda at each other and enlightening everyone about the obvious.

Work is crazy right now. The stream of delegations is underway. I have about a dozen myself. Yesterday I met Kashtan. I can imagine his reaction when he learns that he won’t get to speak at the Kremlin Palace. Then again, many others won’t either.

I am the head of the press group that “edits” and issues for publication all speeches, greetings, and other communiques for the 110-120 delegations (about 100 of them are ours) here for the celebration of the anniversary of October.

November 19, 1977

Yesterday I got back from England. A lot of interesting things happened over these days, even though it was exhausting. Since I didn’t have even an hour to sit and write things down, a lot has faded in my mind. The aroma of spontaneity has evaporated. And facts, too. For example, the entire “incident” with Carrillo happened before my eyes (together with Zimyanin and Afanasyev, I was assigned to meet and accompany the Communist Party of Spain’s delegation). I saw for myself what he looked like when he arrived and when he left, after he was not allowed to speak in the Kremlin. We, the International Department and B.N., were prepared to give him the floor! Now he went to the U.S., where he will speak and act as a strike-breaker at a university that is on strike. Carrillo really wants to enter Spain’s history as the “great national figure” after Franco, and he doesn’t care under what ideological and political banner it happens. He wants to belong in the West and for this he will trample on the ICM, while simultaneously exploiting his part in it and his role as an instrument of the Communist Party.

The incident with [Alec] Kitson (a Scottish trade union leader). He spoke in Krasnogorsk. He praised the USSR, and railed against unemployment in England... then he found himself practically fired from all his positions. In London he came to see me together with Jenny Little

(secretary in the Labour Party) at the embassy, confessed. Jenny got drunk, cried, tried to kiss me. We couldn't get them to leave for a long time (the boss was waiting). But that is a separate and long story. I once again felt the chasm between people who are close and personally sympathetic to each other – not only a political chasm, but also between “civilizations” and different national characteristics. Although it would seem we are all the same people outwardly – kind, intelligent, we understand everything.

The English trip to the Congress of Communist Parties has faded from memory already. But I will try to reproduce just the “program of the visit.”

We left on November 11<sup>th</sup>. In the morning we were already in Heathrow. Jack Woddis and the embassy were meeting us. Kunayev was a little perplexed... We got the same security from Scotland Yard as Ponomarev, with an armored “Rover” squad car. Directly to the CC CPGB. There we had a friendly talk with McLennan and McGahey.

November 12-15<sup>th</sup> – four days of the Congress. We spent 6-9 hours per day there, with one lunch break. It was interesting and sometimes exciting. Genuine enthusiasm and interest, frank debates and polemics, serious reasoning, passion that is not typical for the Brits. Though at times the passion was theatrical, oratory. Almost everyone is a skilled public speaker, from young workers to experienced politicians and orators. There was a real discussion, the kind from which you expect results – something that has long been absent from our meetings, especially public and party ones. Our generation of 25-30-year-olds doesn't even know what this kind of discussion looks like.

It seems the CPGB is an active and lively organization when it comes to “cadres,” it is no wonder it supplies highly respected people to the trade unions. But it will not be a large-scale party. Outside the walls of the Congress, it appears as a whole to live in the reflected light of “world communism.” Even though it does try to appear like something original through the efforts of people like Falber, Chater, and all its leaders.

The CPSU delegation, led by PB member Kunayev, was welcomed with open arms. They waited anxiously for us, afraid of criticism between the lines. But we showed an “open approach”: do whatever you like at home, accept any program, but support us in international affairs, in the sense of a “high appreciation for the CPSU's role” and everything will be ok. We wish you everything you wish for yourself.

They needed a demonstration that we support them, the CPGB, and not the new rampantly pro-Soviet breakaway party of [Sid] French.

Episode with the resolution on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the October Revolution. One guy, a shaggy and high-strung student, tried to object... He was booed and shushed. McGahey had to deny him the right to speak. But when the time came for the vote – nine were against the resolution. Whistling, shouting “Shame!”

A beautiful Jewish woman, from whom everyone expected an anti-Soviet speech, did not say a word about us and triumphantly looked at me... I was sitting three meters away, directly in front of the podium.



The same guy who objected to the resolution on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary spoke in the debate on “pluralism,” and said: “You see, the Soviet Union does not have pluralism and therefore you have 10,000 ‘prisoners of conscience.’”

Judith Hunt (from the CP Israel delegation) at first pretended she did not see me from the presidium, but when we met during the break she rushed to kiss me.

Awkwardness with the security and staff accompanying Kunayev. Altogether there were twelve of us entering the hall. All the other parties had one person each. A total of seven. We looked especially colorful when this ratio of delegations appeared for lunch, which the leadership was giving for foreign guests.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> there was a visit to a farm. There was no bragging, in striking contrast to us when we give similar presentations with our inferiority complex. Meanwhile their achievements, which we heard during the presentation, would warrant seventeen Heroes of Socialist Labor over this period at home.

Agricultural equipment manufacturers advertised their goods, then took us to lunch at the Shakespeare Hotel on Stratford-upon-Avon.

The house where Shakespeare was born. The house he bought for his wife. By the way, over there they don’t even hint at the fact there are theories that Shakespeare never existed.

We drove through the Midlands – lovely country.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> – shopping. Oxford Street. Magnificent shops that make your head spin, enough to make an unprepared Moscow woman have a heart attack. There are a lot of people in the shops and they are buying, buying, buying... At one point we were sitting around a table and Kunayev dreamily said, “[They say] Crisis, crisis, but the shops are full and it looks like people have plenty of money!”

Brezhnev’s article came out in *PPS*. Zarodov’s guys prepared it, then Zagladin and Aleksandrov went over it. I hope the right people will read it (us) carefully, and I hope we will not forget the essence of what is written in that article. In other words, I hope it won’t have the same fate as the many smart and sensible phrases, ideas, and “statements” that are already fixed in Brezhnev’s collected works!

Yesterday at the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences – awarding an order to the journal *Voprosy istorii* [*Questions of History*]. The majority of the historians of our generation were there, including those of my generation and close to it. My God! What decrepit old things. I’m so glad that I left that environment and now I can mockingly look at this menagerie from the outside. Plus, I look twenty years younger than them...

December 4, 1977

On Friday, B.N. gathered his deputies to once again discuss what to do with Eurocommunism. Incidentally, Eurocommunism itself is pretty clear now – both theoretically and politically. Entire books are being published about it, not to mention articles and brochures.

For example, I recently read A. Kriegel's *Eurocommunism*. In-depth analysis of the causes, the substance, and where it might go.

Or – the conversation of the English historian Hobsbawm with representatives of *Rinascita*. By the way, I met with Hobsbawm sometime around 1954-55. He came to Moscow and was received at the rectorate of Moscow State University. All the “Anglicists” were invited... Could I imagine then, when I was talking to him about the English Revolution of the XVII century (he is an expert on it) that soon (in connection to the events in Hungary) he would become a dissident from the CPGB, then would leave it and come back. And now he is one of the theoreticians of Eurocommunism, but a skeptical one!

However, here nobody writes anything serious about it, even though we seem to worry about Eurocommunism more than anyone. And we cannot write about it. “I’ll explain why,” as they say now in Moscow-intelligentsia jargon. Take for example the meeting at B.N.’s (and who if not the CC International Department is called upon to formulate such assessments?!). Ponomarev asked Zagladin to prepare, so Zagladin tried to give a comprehensive overview of “Eurocommunism”... B.N. immediately got bored: characteristic in such cases tapping on the table, unambiguous repeated glances at his watch. Vadim saw all of this but persisted, though he started rushing. Amazingly, even though I am completely in favor of taking an in-depth look at Eurocommunism and the ICM in general, and substantiating our policies, I felt awkward for Vadim: why is he pushing his theories like a schoolboy, since it is clearly not the right time and nobody (the boss) cares about it! The only thing they care about is how to shut up or discredit Carrillo, how to pacify Marchais so he doesn’t sever ties with us completely, whom to send to Italy to “have a talk” with Berlinguer so he does not strike things like “Marxism-Leninism” and “proletarian internationalism” from the Party’s constitution at the next Congress of the PCI. B.N. later talked about this himself. Only about this. There is not the slightest desire to penetrate into the essence of the matter, into the process that can be explained by deep currents and which is destroying the old ICM – it is impossible to save it in the format that B.N. has gotten used to over the last 60 years...

In other words, there is no policy (only criticism) and no theory of the ICM... Because there isn’t even a hint of a desire to imagine what to do with the socialist revolution next, and what it has become.

B.N. (who is a kind of a tuning fork with a coefficient for awareness and knowledge) can be disarmingly naïve sometimes. For example, he said at this meeting with his deputies: “What else do they (the Eurocommunists) want?! We held such an international celebration. We gave them such a good reception. We said good things, that we wouldn’t interfere with them... We adopted a Constitution with the broadest democratic rights... But they came back home and started again: giving all kinds of interviews and speaking against Leninism, against our democracy, against general laws. Once again there are anti-Soviet materials in their newspapers?! What do they want?!”

Ok, fine! What if Zagladin becomes head of our Department, even if he becomes the Secretary of the CC International Department – will anything change substantively? Then again, who knows, maybe it will change slowly...

Is there a spontaneous undercurrent in our society that will form something new, something that matures almost independently of people's congresses, conferences, Leonid Ilyich's greetings to collectives and their letters to him, all this official activity that even the participants themselves view as a tired but mandatory ritual (you can see it in their faces on the TV screen)? After all, society lives in the material conditions created by the regime, but it does not determine the long-term consequences. New houses, a hectic pace of life, the constant rush, concerns that our people did not know even 10 years ago, incomprehensible relationships between people at home – alienation, the absence of "close circles," household friends, the lack of interest even in very close people, the "fragmentation" of life when you can't remember the difference between one day and the next... A broad knowledge of life in Central Asia or Moldova from the TV and total ignorance about the lives of your next-door neighbors... An extremely fragmented society where true intimacy, openness, and interest happens only between a man and woman who love each other. Our society's unity is purely formal, held together by almost religious ties. Its stability comes from indifference and complete ignorance of the fact that something else exists, some other way of life.

December 14, 1977

Yesterday – the CC Plenum. Some confusion, people couldn't even immediately figure out whether to stand up and applaud... Brezhnev was not leading the procession of Politburo members. When Suslov was announcing those present, he said that Leonid Ilyich will not be attending. Nothing special, just fatigue brought on by the common cold. But he [Brezhnev] prepared his speech and it will be passed out during the break, so it can be taken into account during the debate. Therefore, the break would be 40 minutes.

The most interesting tidbit is that at the end of the plenum Suslov "came to an agreement" with participants to pretend that Brezhnev was at the Plenum – "he took part in the work of the Plenum..."

The newspapers had the phrase, "General Secretary Leonid Ilyich Brezhnev gave a big speech at the Plenum..." I don't know the purpose of this strange lie! It's hard to imagine that the information won't "leak"... Five hundred members of the Plenum, and the next day there was a session of the Supreme Soviet at which he again did not show up... Tomorrow the whole world will find out, he is supposed to meet with Brandt, who will be passing through Moscow on the way to Tokyo for a conference of the Socialist International. But even if he meets with Brandt, that's not the point. The point is this petty lie – to our entire Party, to the country, to the world. Without an obvious, good reason. This is a bad symptom of both contempt (we can get away with anything!) and cult-mythology (how can we have a Plenum if Brezhnev isn't there!).

About the Plenum itself. Baibakov's report (chairman of the State Planning Committee). I haven't heard such an anxious and harsh assessment of the economic situation even in his always

somewhat “pessimistic” speeches. The situation is bad. Worse than you would imagine, and worse than before.

Against the background of his report, Garbuzov’s praise in the following report “addressed to [Brezhnev]” and about the enthusiasm and upswing in connection with the Constitution and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of October sounded like stupid irony. There was even a stir in the auditorium. The debates also mostly consisted of glorification and only some people said the same thing as Baibakov, in the context of their local and branch specifics.

What is the solution? In Leonid Ilych’s “speech” there were the same “conclusions,” “appeals,” and “directions” that he now periodically announces (starting at the XXIV Congress, when they sounded fresh!) in all his economic and other speeches.

Our pathetic attempts (on the scale of a consultants’ group and deputies) to “master” Eurocommunism and make a decision – to get approval for some kind of policy – came to naught. B.N. does not want this, and Suslov probably does not either. Others don’t want to know any substance, just as long as Marchais & Co. don’t talk badly us... Certainty brings with it obligations; while things are uncertain we can maneuver indefinitely.

Brutents told me about Kirilenko’s “approach” to the problem of “Eurocommunism.” He was just in Angola and Plissonnier with the PCF delegation was there too. They know each other, Kirilenko was at the XXII Congress of the PCF. One day Kirilenko asks: “Gaston, how long will we keep walking around and smiling? Maybe it’s time to talk?”

Gaston: “As we already said, we are for it. But there are disagreements between our parties.”

Kirilenko: “So what? Maybe we should look for the tallest tower here, climb on it and shout from the top to all the world that we have disagreements? Maybe we could do this from the Eiffel Tower and the Ostankino Tower? Is that what you want? Why? What disagreements will we shout about?”

Gaston: “We told you...”

Kirilenko: “Come on! Stop fooling around. And tell your people in Paris. For three years now you don’t want to talk with us, you turn up your nose. Fine, we won’t be the worse for it... Remember this and tell your people: we can do this for another three and thirty years, we might not notice at all that ‘you are treating us badly.’ We will see what this will do to you...”

December 25, 1977

From December 15-18<sup>th</sup> I was in Budapest with Shakhnazarov, Nenashev, and Sorokin (he is a new head of sector in a CC Department). We were assigned to prepare a meeting of CC Secretaries of socialist countries, which will be held at the end of February (actually two meetings: one will be open – on coordination “against imperialist propaganda,” the second will be closed – a comprehensive look at “Eurocommunism”).

Rather lively comradesly debates. We quickly agreed on the main agenda. Then the most interesting part happened in the International Department of the MSzMP [Hungarian Socialist Workers Party]: [Janos] Berecz, [Gyula] Horn, Varga.

Berecz was irritated and aggressive:

- 1) “You want to have a frank conversation about “Eurocommunism”? Do you know that we don’t have a general consensus about it even amongst ourselves (i.e. Bulgarians, Czechs, and everyone in “The Six”)? This kind of frankness might expose the disagreements between the socialist countries!” In response I started to assure him that if there is no unity in “The Six” on these questions (if there isn’t), it’s most likely because they are not informed about each other’s positions.
- 2) “You want to coordinate in connection to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of events in Czechoslovakia... How can we participate in this if we disagree with the Czechs’ approach? They are telling me that they, i.e. the Czechs, are going to celebrate this 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a great victory of socialism! What victory?! What are they talking about? It is a disaster, a tragedy! We also had a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1956, but we did not make noise about it as if it was a victory and so on. We are ready to share our experience with the Czechs on how to diffuse and downplay such things, instead of provoking excitement and hubbub worldwide... But they don’t want to listen to us.”

Shakhnazarov responded to this, assuring them that we, the CC CPSU, also do not think “this” needs to be portrayed as a victory... (I thought to myself: from your lips [to God’s ear]...). The Hungarians took note, but I don’t think they believed it very much.

- 3) Berecz reprimanded us for not supporting them as coordinators on social-democracy. “Do you not trust us in this delicate ideological question?” I assured him and so on... In reality I just didn’t get around to it during this busy anniversary year.

Then we were received by two CC Secretaries: Denes and Dury. We kind of “reported” to them together with our Hungarian colleagues on the work we did and the issues. Dury told us about their latest Plenum. “On January 1<sup>st</sup> we will raise prices again by 4-5 percent. The people are used to it and there is no unrest. We do it so it essentially matches the growth of real income. Everyone is happy. Everyone is confident that every year gets better and better. The country is calm. There is universal trust in the party...”

Indeed. Budapest before Christmas. The shops are full of people and... goods. The variety and quality, and the style of selling and advertising is closer to Paris and London, and way ahead of Warsaw, Moscow, not to mention Sofia.

The products they have you can’t even find in the “privileged” section of GUM in Moscow. For example, there are plenty of sheepskin coats, leather coats of any style, huge variety of women’s clothing and shoes. In a word, I looked at it and did not feel a big difference

between Budapest and London. (I unexpectedly bought myself a leather coat – a dream from my youth).

We watched the film *The Witness* there, based on the process of Laszlo Rajk. It turns out it was released in 1969, but not allowed in theaters, although all of Hungary saw it in the provincial club theaters. Essentially it is similar to the film *The Trial* [*Исповедь*] by the Czech director London [sic].<sup>8</sup> *The Witness* is a satire on the cult of personality played by Hungarians. It is excellently made, some parts had me falling off my chair from laughing.

However – politically? What claims can we make about it openly? Nothing, really. They recently celebrated the director's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He is a national celebrity. And this movie was allowed in one of the largest cinemas in Budapest.

At work. A new burst of commotion in connection with Kanapa's lecture appearing in *La Nouvelle Critique*, and Marchais' book *Let's Be Frank*. Kanapa's piece presents a balanced, not sensational, not rude (against us) concept of "Eurocommunism." Ponomarev does not want to admit this and keeps imposing an approach according to which "these two" sold out to the CIA.

At a meeting of deputies and in a private conversation with B.N. I insisted that serious things should be taken seriously, that attacks will do no good. However, it is not just B.N. After Chervonenko's telegram from Paris, it's clear B.N. got a call from the top and was asked what he is doing and how much longer are we going to tolerate it?!!

As much as he fumed, we, the deputies, nevertheless insisted on a solid approach. Zagladin and I put together a note to the CC, where we balanced a program of "calm actions," and recommended not to touch Kanapa or Marchais personally until after the parliamentary elections in France.

For a whole week I worked on a brochure for Ponomarev, "Is Marxism-Leninism outdated?" It's a strange feeling: you know for a fact that this is all conservative-defensive nonsense and it does not have any significance, even if Ponomarev keeps some of the liberties I wrote into the text. However, constructing the text, despite my convictions, I got carried away by the debate.

I saw the film *Till Eulenspiegel* at the movie theater "October." There's lots of tall tales in it, but as a whole the movie is not bad and has some ideas, for example – where the ideological struggle can lead us, and about the fatigue and meaning of power.

### Postscript to 1977

---

<sup>8</sup> The 1970 film is called *The Confession* and is based on a book by Artur London, a Czech politician who was a co-defendant in the Slánský Trial in 1951. He wrote a book called *The Confession* about his experiences. (Trans.)

Reflecting on the year 1977, you distinguish two points of its official history – the Constitution and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Revolution.

A big lie was connected to the former. The commotion around the drafting of the Constitution and the attempts by “intelligent apparatchiks” together with selected scholars to democratically ennoble the core Soviet law somehow obscured its key aspect – “Article 6,” which turned the aforesaid attempts into demagoguery that was normal for our way of life. Meanwhile, as we know, when this article was repealed ten years later it “turned the key” to the rapid disintegration of the state.

The anniversary of October was a symbolic international event: it became very obvious that the USSR is still a power, but no longer a “leader” and example for imitation. The Soviet government tacitly acknowledged it (“in their hearts”) by largely disregarding the efforts of its own apparatus to save the “unity” of the ICM, as well as [ignoring] the ideological and political essence of “Eurocommunism.” One could generalize the mood at the very top of the Soviet superpower as, “As long as our ‘friends’ don’t openly criticize the USSR and CPSU, we don’t care what they do!”

Increasing numbers of our “fraternal parties” more and more openly denied the CPSU the right to impose policies, ideology, and in general to “teach” them what to do and how to do it. Our ideological, “foundational” authority had practically fallen to zero. Our only attraction was in being a “world power,” and... money, “a payroll to support [the fraternal parties’] existence.”

This “volume” contains new evidence of Brezhnev’s sincere wish for peace and his increasing illness – physical, mental, and as a statesman. The public demonstration of this illness testified not only to the worthlessness, cowardice, and stupidity of propaganda and political “departments,” but also the country’s increasingly disastrous downward movement.

The fact that a “troika” of Politburo members – Ustinov, Gromyko, Andropov – brazenly picked up the functions of power was further evidence of this process. They were still held in check by Suslov, who was growing “weaker,” but the levers of “real politics” were in their hands.

This volume contains a great deal of observations related to the author’s travels abroad. The discussions that took place there, contacts with many people, provide materials on the international atmosphere of the day; the problems the “Cold War” was putting ever more sharply before the present and future of the international community. Among these people – Communists, Social Democrats, Laborites, real friends and “friends” in quotation marks, in socialist countries and others – the author met smart and honest people who were genuinely concerned about “where we are going and how;” but also hardened politicians, cynics and opportunists, stupid selfish dogmatists and simply primitive people who were accidental players on the political stage.

The author’s contacts with the spiritual life of society did not bring anything new in 1977.

**NATIONAL  
SECURITY  
ARCHIVE**

This document is from the holdings of:

The National Security Archive

Suite 701, Gelman Library, The George Washington University

2130 H Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20037

Phone: 202/994-7000, Fax: 202/994-7005, [nsarchiv@gwu.edu](mailto:nsarchiv@gwu.edu)