

## **EXTRACT FROM PROTOCOL NO. 1**

### **Of General Closed Party Meeting of Party Organization of Heat Engineering Laboratory of the USSR Academy of Sciences. March 23, 1956**

#### Presentations:

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XX party congress adopted many good decisions on the economy, but its political decisions were of special importance. These are the condemnations of the cult of personality and policy of terror carried out under Stalin, the change of policy toward socialist parties, the decisive affirmation of the policy of peaceful coexistence. These are undoubtedly progressive decisions. Not all questions are resolved yet, some of them have been only raised, but that will also play a certain progressive role.

The policy of terror, conducted under Stalin, led to far-reaching consequences. Much has been said here about the consequences in economic life, I will talk about consequences in the life of the party, state and society.

Where did the country get to in the state sphere in those years? It was a socialist country, but not a democratic one. The accepted opinion—that the socialist economic system, being more democratic than the capitalist one, automatically ensures democracy in the life of the state—is incorrect. Why should we be compared with capitalism? Of course, in comparison with capitalism, socialism, when property belongs to the people, is much more democratic. And yet, by itself, it does not ensure full democracy automatically. We saw it for ourselves. Our experience showed us that property might belong to the people, but might also belong to a bunch of scoundrels (Beria).

The worst thing is that not only the people who were expressing some opinions, which differed from the official [line], became victims of terror and repressions, but also those people, about whom some agent reported falsely that they were saying those things.

This led to the general fear to express any kind of independent opinions. The party then became saturated by a bureaucratic, I would even say slavish, spirit. Our comrades are arrested—we are silent; disappear without trace—we are silent; being executed—we are silent! Shame on us!

This is a shameful page in the history of our party. There emerged a mass of people, who out of fear adjust their consciousness to the current events. You cannot fix it in three years. Unfortunately, there are even today many such people in our state and party apparatus. This spirit is not easy to exorcise. For 10 years or so people will keep speaking looking over their shoulder.

During these years we brought up a whole horde of writers, philosophers, economists, who were solely focused only on keeping their nose to the wind. We will not be able to get rid of them very soon.

Sessions of the Supreme Soviet evaded the painful, sensitive issues of our internal life. The same situation developed at our Congresses with their parade-like quality and pomposness. Even today many things have not been eliminated. It seems to me that our Congress delegates could say a lot about our deficiencies as openly as comrade Kovrigina has done, for example.

It is hard to understand that comrade Khrushchev's report on such a difficult issue for our party as the cult of personality was not discussed at the Congress. Because we are still living through the consequences of this cult even today. How can we not talk about it?

In the State Security [KGB—translator] we raised a child, who hit us in the face. Some time ago we were proud of our chekists [security services members], but then we came to be ashamed of them.

I don't know if it is completely safe even today to express opinions that differ from the accepted opinion. Here comrade Platonov knows this business better, let him respond.

I think that every communist must think deeply about the difficult period in the life of our party and his own life. Some of us were misled, others tried to adjust. Both ways are bad. We have to make sure we never repeat this again.

Extract is true  
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