

1981

January 18, 1981

From January 14-17<sup>th</sup> I was in Ryazan! I was sent there to be elected delegate to the XXVI Congress of the CPSU. It was a surprise which Smolsky (deputy head of the CC Organizational Department) delivered to me back when I was in “Sosny” (a sanatorium near Moscow). He congratulated me profusely. But I suspect this is a “buyoff” not to elect me to the Auditing Commission anymore.

I was very anxious about this trip. Zagladin, who went to Oryol for the same reason, talked about his trip excitedly and gave me pointers: he made two speeches and was welcomed with open arms. Then on behalf of the Central Committee he conducted the Plenum of the new oblast committee – to elect the first secretary. And what a farewell dinner they threw for him, how the entire new bureau came to see him off at the train station.

I made excuses... and then joked about Zagladin’s ability to be at the top everywhere, and everywhere to look organic in the front row. “That’s not for me,” I decided. Only one thing bothered me – the speech (both Smolsky and his boss Petrovichev said “it’s a must”). What would I say to these people? About the international situation? How bad Reagan and the Poles are? About the International Communist Movement? It might be curious for them to hear, but the speech isn’t supposed to be a lecture. It is a conference, where people will talk about how they feed people like me!

I spent all of last Sunday on the speech. I managed to put together some gushy and weepy remarks. I even grew to like it myself. But deep down, I couldn’t get rid of the feeling “it’s not right! It’s not right!” You cannot show up with this!

January 29, 1981

Ryazan was quickly erased by everyday trifles and the paperwork cycle. Ponomarev did not even ask how I was elected to the Congress, how I conducted the Obkom Plenum and elected the First Secretary. And in general, how things went there and what I think of the people, “whose bacon we eat” (following the Stalin-Mikhalkov fable).

He did, though, spur his consultants several times to prepare “inserts” for the speech of our fraternal delegations to the XXVI Congress. They are supposed to mention their support for our politics and rallying around the USSR, and – this is completely from the realm of fantasy (!) – influential parties are supposed to incorporate these “inserts” into their speeches!

The stream of notes and reminders for those who will be working with the delegations... Sophisticated counterarguments about our weak spots – the economy and democracy – against what is most popular in the West in assessing the Soviet Union.

Yesterday B.N. called me over... with some kind of intimate smile. “It turns out,” he said, “that ‘others’ (i.e. other Politburo members and secretaries) did not stop at making comments on the text of the Report sent by Brezhnev. They expressed their enthusiasm in writing. So I’m sitting here and writing, take a look. Would it be appropriate to say the Report is ‘worthy of our great Party’?” And so forth in that vein. I did not know the text of the Report but

had to sit across from B.N. and help him pick out lofty phrases. Poor B.N.! He's been through so much, but he still cannot completely let go of Leninist traditions.

Zagladin returned from Zavidovo. He was telling me about his interaction with Brezhnev. He's relishing the supposedly impromptu remarks, from which it follows, for example, that Afanasyev is almost finished as the editor-in-chief of *Pravda*. Or a joke – the Congress will have not 5000 delegates but 5002... Who are these two, you ask? It's "Kolya" and "Sasha" (i.e. Shishlin and Bovin).

I was amazed at how gloatingly Zagladin spoke about Afanasyev's "fall." In one moment, the latter ceased to be a person in his eyes. I remember how five years ago, when I heard about his appointment, I inopportunely expressed my skepticism about Afanasyev – both as a person and an official – in the presence of Zagladin. At that time, Zagladin started to resolutely refute me.

Or about Inozemtsev, who sat across from Brezhnev at the dinner table... About good soup and the academician's resourcefulness... God! How human relations are distorted in such circumstances – interacting with a person who has absolute power and who is completely devoid of the qualities that distinguished Lenin as a person and a politician.

Stalin loved Menshikovs and knew how to create or elect them. Brezhnev loves bootlickers who are capable with the pen. Though this is not about Inozemtsev.

I am reading V.A. Kuvakin's *Religious Philosophy in Russia: Early XX Century*. A book like this would have been impossible even five years ago. The same story – they turn a blind eye to spontaneous free-thinking as long as it does not directly interfere with the foundations of personal power. Meanwhile, I am getting acquainted with books and authors I learned about in my schooldays on Vadkovsky lane, in the library under the "Siegel" observatory which remained from the original builders (Zelenko and Shatsky). For some reason they were not censored. The censors at the time were after Trotskyist literature and did not attach any importance to some Berdyaev, Rozanov, Bulgakov, etc.

Curious discoveries.

Also – an amazing novel in *Inostrannaya Literatura* No.1 by the American W. Styron, *Sophie's Choice*. Rather, the last two chapters of the novel. It turns out it could not be printed in its entirety due to an abundance of sex. It is a powerful piece, as is American literature from the '70s in general. Something is happening to them in that sense. American culture overall is going down, but their literature is reaching the peaks of world literature.

Gorbachev. Canada – agricultural relations. I remembered a trip to Belgium with him in 1972, he was still a regional committee secretary then. He comes across as smart, truly devoted to the Party, a strong person in the right place – in the CC, in the PB. But he clearly will not stand the test of power: his manner with people is too familiar.

January 31, 1981

I visited friends on the 42<sup>nd</sup> kilometer. In heated discussions I argued that the "literary force of nature" can no longer be stopped. Demichev does not want to get involved and come out

looking like he cannot manage, so he is letting things slide and looking the other way. And the name Demichev is being used collectively here to stand for the entire apparatus of cultural control. The main thing is not to touch the subject of personal power, not to “reach the eyebrows,” which, of course, is identified with Soviet power, with Marxism-Leninism, and partisanship.

The Americans (Reagan-Haig) have changed the tune from Carter (his was “human rights”). Now it is: Moscow is the source and center of international terrorism. Our guys were alarmed, but again only along the lines of a propaganda rebuke. Instead, we should have long been denoting our (Leninist) position on terrorism, and doing it regularly. We should be proposing various measures along Gromyko’s line, organizing and participating in various discussions and making coordinated decisions on this real threat (for us, too). Yesterday I was working on this on B.N.’s instructions, and he said: we should first put an end to some questionable sympathies in our mass media to some terrorist actions, and only then push back on Haig. Then Zamyatin butted in (it only matters to him to shout louder) – you (Americans) are lynching Negroes over there...

In Poland, judging by Kania’s last meeting with secretaries of regional committees, it looks like dual power is moving towards the sole power of Solidarity. It is amazing how in 2-3 months an “insider” party and state apparatus materialized all across the country. Often it already has more people than the official apparatus under Gierek. And Solidarity can essentially do whatever it wants. When it comes to strikes, around 70 percent of the (working) population follow it unquestioningly. Our Ambassador Aristov is already insisting on severe measures: he says we should demand that Kania declare a “state of emergency.”

Meanwhile, the PUWP is truly incompetent and falling apart, not to mention having any kind of authority. The government even more so.

Haig, in response to Gromykov’s congratulations (on taking office), again warned us about “intervention” – the “scariest” phrases (everything but nuclear war! In the spirit of their agreement in NATO). But we don’t seem to be planning to do it before the Congress. Not because the situation in our view is not ready yet, but because we do not want to smear the “grandeur” of our event and “not to get distracted”...

#### February 8, 1981

The Congress is approaching. Of course, B.N. took advantage of the opportunity with “terrorism” (the Reagan-Haig accusations). The Politburo decided to toughen the peaceable passages regarding the United States. (They really were unusually accommodating and friendly). So, B.N. was right there. He rushed over and assigned me to “toughen it up.” I did it in a day. But even if B.N. sends it to the top, I’m sure that no one there will read it: Aleksandrov-Agentov has long since toughened everything as necessary and he does not need any help.

B.N. also assigned me to write a speech for Suslov for the Congress – with a proposal to make additions and changes to the CPSU Program. I did it. He seemed to accept it, but he did not discuss it: he will take it to Suslov as his own.

Karyakin celebrated Dostoyevsky's centenary with a wonderful article in *Ogonyok* (with allusions, but solid). He rubbed his hands, happy with how he got one over Safronov (the editor-in-chief). I explained to Yurka: Safronov is a "general" and a bastard, but what you cannot deny him is that he is no fool. He "took" your essay deliberately. He understands that in the future, the "writer" will be judged primarily on how he fit into the "new wave" – the process of restoring the role that literature had in Russia in the XIX century.

February 9, 1981

Volumes of Dostoyevsky's collected works started coming out again. About five years ago, a 30-volume set was stopped at volume 17, they say Suslov thought it was taking up too much paper – the versions, drafts, and so forth in this (academic) edition. I received the 21<sup>st</sup> volume, the writer's diaries. It crossed my mind that Dostoyevsky is exactly 100 years older than me. He was my age when he died. When I was born, I was only 40 years away from his death. Fifty-five years separated us when I first read him... i.e. the distance equivalent to my conscious lifetime. It's nothing... And how much has passed since the days when I first read *Poor Folk* or *Netochka Nezvanova*, for example. I still remember how I was reading *The Brothers Karamazov* in Maryina Roshcha under a huge porcelain and bronze lamp and I couldn't put it down. My god, I am so old, and Dostoyevsky is so eternal. He changes (one's perception of him) but infinitely, i.e. he is still great and new.

It occurred to me (must be inspired by the conversation with Karyakin) that Dostoyevsky in Russia is not just a writer = "someone who creates works of fiction." He played a role similar to the roles of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, etc. in the West. These are philosophers who were predominantly humanitarians and brilliant with the pen (not Hegel, Kant, Feuerbach). Dostoyevsky's journalism is directly parallel (in genre, too) to some works by Nietzsche, for example.

March 9, 1981

A lot has happened, which is why there was no time to write.

The Congress took place – the XXVI Congress – possibly the last one I'll be attending. I've attended every one since the XX. For the XXIV and XXV I "prepared" materials for the Report: Zavidovo – Brezhnev, Gorki before that, Novo-Ogarevo – Ponomarev, Aleksandrov. I did not prepare anything directly for this Congress, i.e. I didn't participate in the on-site teams. However, I was totally surprised to be elected as a candidate member of CC.

The Congress was decent. The Report – a common person's text in its simplicity and sharpness, its closeness to everyday life, things people deal with. During the Congress I interacted with Arbatov and Inozemtsev (meeting and seeing off foreign guests). They were in the pre-Zavidovo and Zavidovo teams and grumbled that the first version of the Report was better, and it had already been approved by Brezhnev. But after comments by PB members they had to make it worse – smooth it out, reduce the sharpness, frankness, etc.

Even before the Congress started, I went through and digested about 500 "memos" for conversations with foreign delegations. Conversations were to be conducted by CC members "attached" to the delegations, ministers and such. But, as before, all these bureaucratic initiatives

stayed with us. The “attached” did not read the memos, and the guests, if they had questions for the CC, demanded to speak with deputies of the International Department. So, we still had to carry the load, including me.

Ponomarev’s efforts to give our, Soviet, delegates “inserts” on international issues, especially the ICM, for their speeches at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses [KPC] were justified. The audience applauded the material written by our consultants and spoken from the podium of the Congress by Shakirov, a combine worker, a machinist, and someone else – about how some CPs criticize the CPSU, about “Soviet-style internationalism,” about the importance of peace for the ICM, etc.

I managed to sit with my crowd from Ryazan, i.e. the delegation on the upper balcony, for only brief periods. They received me very warmly. I was even presented with an address on the occasion of the Soviet Army Day (which happened to be the opening day of the Congress) on behalf of the “Ryazan Madonnas.” Before that, on Saturday when they just arrived, I met them at the St. George Hall to register together. We hugged, took pictures together, and then there was an embarrassing moment: when we sat down at the table and received our questionnaires, I discovered “to my horror” that I had not brought my Party membership card with me (I haven’t carried it with me in 25 years). It was easy for me to correct the mistake – I took a car to the CC, got it out of the safe, and came back. But for the Ryazan guys it was a “shock”: they looked at me with pity and reproach, as if to say – how can you come to the highest Party meeting without a Party card?!

My main work during the Congress was behind the scenes, literally and figuratively. Literally, because the International Department’s “headquarters” at the Congress were, as before, in the dressing rooms directly behind the main stage at the KPC.

Figuratively, because it depended on us (and me directly) what our dear foreign guests would say from the KPC podium and at dozens of rallies and meetings in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, Minsk, and Riga. Around 150 speakers (some spoke twice, and in some delegations there were more speakers besides the head) and around 100 written greetings to the Congress from our foreign friends, from the CPs above all.

I must have read, edited, and sometimes straight out rewritten over one thousand pages in several days. I had to make it sound good in Russian, and make sure that it made an impression in the oratorical sense. I cleaned out heaps of just nonsense and tried to give it some meaning; proposed to reduce to acceptable (and agreed-upon ahead of the Congress) size so texts would fit in *Pravda*; and, most importantly, “removed” moments undesirable in the political sense.

It is difficult to say which of the above was more difficult.

Politically, we had to fight not only with “Eurocommunism” and attempts to talk about Afghanistan and Poland in a spirit of disagreement with us (the latter came only from the Italians and Brits). The main struggle was with attempts to declare us as the vanguard of the ICM and the world revolutionary movement, with “grateful” statements that this or that revolution, or some other liberation movement victory, would have been unthinkable and would not have taken place without help and support from the Soviet Union (perfect for Reagan and Haig!). There were

other types of “musical moments,” too: [some delegates] so criticized their country’s governments and regimes, that should this come out in *Pravda* we would find ourselves on the verge of severed diplomatic ties (Iran is the most striking example).

The CC confirmed me (by a special decision) as the head of the group in charge of releasing speeches by foreign delegations from non-socialist countries (and there were 113 of them). Zhilin was my deputy.

Hellish work: a nook with mirrors everywhere, a TV on the left-hand side showing what’s happening in the main hall of the Congress. Five-six referents and consultants crowding around you at any time, demanding that precisely his text has to be released before the others because his speaker needs to go on stage in just a moment, or board a plane to Leningrad, or Minsk, etc. A version for simultaneous interpretation, a version for *Pravda*, a version for the speaker to read, a version for the transcript, i.e., each speech in several different lengths. I was completely drained by the end of each day.

The main issues occurred with the Italian Pajetta, the Brit McLennan, and the Japanese delegate. However, Zagladin took care of Pajetta himself (later Zagladin was overloaded with work at the press center). The other two were on me.

Pajetta’s speech had jabs at us in almost every paragraph, but the passages on Poland and Afghanistan were especially venomous. Of course, as soon as we received the text “for translation” we reported it to Ponomarev. His first reaction was to try to persuade Pajetta to “soften” it. Zagladin, Kovalsky, and Zuyev tried to do this. They did not achieve much, just some changes in the phrasing, but the essence remained the same. B.N. had to make a decision, but he was afraid to do it, especially because he knew what happened at Chernenko’s a week before the Congress (B.N. was out sick, but Shaposhnikov and I were there). They were discussing the “operating procedure”: the order of the speakers and which of the foreign delegates would get to speak at the KPC. Pajetta was on the list, we planned the PCI’s speech at the KPC at the beginning. At the meeting with Chernenko the speech was only moved to a later slot. But Chernenko, with active support from other secretaries, said: “If the speech contains parts that are offensive to us – Afghanistan and so on – do not let them speak. The Cubans did it this way at their Congress and nothing terrible happened!” Naturally, I told B.N. about this. And naturally, he could not take the responsibility – to let Pajetta speak or not. He raised this question during one of the breaks... Brezhnev came over when he heard what was being discussed. And it was decided – let him present at another venue!

Pajetta was immediately told about this under the pretext that the delegate from the PCI is not a General Secretary, but at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses (due to time limits and tight regulations) we can only give the floor to top officials or those members of the leadership who were authorized to represent the top officials (so Plissonier from Marchais, so with some African representatives). Giancarlo got mad, but he realized that if he refused to speak at all, it would be an act of breaching our relations and the “base of the party” (the PCI) is not ready to understand or accept it. (Not to mention that a break with the CPSU would immediately weaken the PCI’s national-political positions in front of the other Italian parties.) He agreed to speak at the Hall of

Columns of the House of Unions at the city meeting (“the second in importance” place after the KPC for foreign delegations to speak).

But the “Pajetta affair” did not end there. Again, I was deciding the order in which the speakers would present, which spot Pajetta would take. The original list was as follows: the Austrian (Chairman Muhri), the Irish (General Secretary O’Riordan), and others. They would not have “understood” why the Italian representative, who is not the leader of the party, would be placed before them. Taking everything into consideration, I placed Pajetta as the sixth speaker. However, B.N. moved the Italian to third place to smooth over his discontent. B.N. must have acted through Zagladin, or maybe through Grishin, who was supposed to be presiding in the Hall of Columns. I was not informed, and *Pravda* operated based on the list I had made earlier.

On Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, *Pravda* came out with the published speeches by Muhri, O’Riordan, and two others who spoke after Pajetta, but his speech is not published (by the way, it was supposed to be printed without the slightest edit. Pajetta signed off on the Russian text himself). When I opened the newspaper in the morning, some vague anxiety flashed in my mind, but I thought: God knows what, maybe someone at the top got involved without informing me. Or maybe “up there!” they decided not to allow Pajetta even in the newspaper, not just on the podium of the Congress!

An hour did not go by when B.N. called me. It was a day off at the Congress and I was still at home, getting ready to head over to the delegations “to talk.” B.N. was furious – why wasn’t Pajetta published.

“I don’t know. I was surprised when I opened the newspaper... Maybe they ran out of space and did not get to him. He was the sixth speaker.”

“What the hell, he wasn’t sixth. He spoke third. You have to know this. You are responsible for this. Pajetta is already protesting. He already called Rome: discrimination! Insult! Rome allowed him to leave the Congress in protest. The entire world press is already dancing the cancan over the break between the Italian Communist Party and the CPSU. Meanwhile, you are sitting at home and did not even bother to find out why the TASS report published in the same *Pravda* mentions Pajetta speaking third, but the speech itself is not published, while the speeches of people who spoke after him are there! Pajetta is here. He is trying to come and see me. What will I say to him?! Figure it out and report to me...”

I started calling the printing and publication department and *Pravda*. As one could easily guess, everything happened as follows: no one had any bad intent, they just did not get to his speech. There was a decision to run the Sunday *Pravda* on eight pages instead of twelve, and not to overload it with international speeches. As it is, there are three-four times more foreign speeches than Soviet ones on the pages of *Pravda*. It is a Congress, after all, not an international conference.

I called B.N.... Of course, he already figured it out without my help. (Later Zimyanin told me that B.N. yelled at him too, and accused *Pravda* of provocation). This time he wouldn’t even hear from me. And he spoke to me in a tone he never used in 20 years. There were a lot of words. The worst I can recall was, “What are you blabbering about...” I quietly hung up the

phone, called the car and left to meet with the Brits. It took me a long time to compose myself, but internally I decided that if he continues in the same manner when we met in person, I would quit. I would tell him that even the commander of my regiment could not speak to me that way when I was a young lad in the army and dozens of lives were at stake... And if he did not understand that about me in the 20 years that we've worked together, then I have nothing else to do here... I prepared many such stern and proud speeches in my mind. I imagined how I would say them to Ponomarev's face (preferably in the presence of other deputies), get up from my seat, and walk out of his office... Forever! My god, I'm still such a boy! But there is something real here... If he really started to give me a "dressing down," especially in the presence of others, my offended fantasies would have turned into reality. Dignity, I think, has remained for me the highest value of an intellectual-individualist.

March 10, 1981

I'm sick. Anyway, the "Pajetta affair" was more or less settled. When B.N. met with him, he said that his speech is ready for publication in tomorrow's issue of *Pravda* (although the Italian press and others portrayed it as if Moscow only printed the speech after the protest). There was some noise in Italy. Almost all factions from left to right approved Pajetta's actions, some with irony. *Il Tempo*, for example, proposed erecting a second triumphal arch in Rome to celebrate Pajetta's return.

Nevertheless, he remained at the Congress and at the closing session applauded Brezhnev vigorously and even, it seems, sang "The Internationale" along with everyone else.

[Only Kashtan (Canada) did not sing or applaud, demonstrating his indignation at the fact that he did not get to speak at the KPC.]

However, for me, the "Pajetta affair" was a signal in dealing with Gordon McLennan. He remained the only one who would be given the podium at the KPC and who would say "the wrong thing" on Afghanistan. (There was also the Japanese delegate, but he was directed to Minsk right away, and only after protest from Tokyo we conceded and gave him the floor at the Hall of Columns).

So, what to do with McLennan? My first step was to send Dzhavad to him. Dzhavad came back with McLennan's promise to "think it over." In the morning I decided to get involved myself and during the first break I went to the buffet where foreign delegations were "having a snack" (always very enthusiastically and amicably). When I came up to Gordon, he said hello but continued eating with his side turned to me (standing). But, of course, he understood everything. They had spoken with Pajetta on multiple occasions, even though they do not speak a common language and did not want to use our interpreters, they spoke along these lines, "Afghanistan – yes?" "Yes," the other would reply. The Italian zealously tried to prevent the Englishman from retreating, so the PCI wouldn't be the only rebel on the podium.

He finally finished chewing and, after a sufficient pause to demonstrate that he is not rushing to the person who only shows up in emergencies, he turned to me. I immediately took the bull by the horns: the break is short...

“Gordon! I’m here about Afghanistan. You saw that Pajetta was denied the floor here. Not because we are afraid of his opinion. It will be published in *Pravda* for all the world to see. But you must understand: our Congress is not an international conference. It is not the place to demonstrate disagreements. Guests come to our Congress to express solidarity with things they agree with, what they consider useful for communist solidarity. When we attend the Italian, Spanish, and your Congresses, even though we have things to say about elements we consider wrong and harmful, yet all we do is talk about solidarity with your struggle, about our sympathy and support. Understand something else, too: for 5,000 of our delegates, this is not just a political forum – a Party meeting of the highest level. It is also a celebration. These ordinary people work truly selflessly and visit the capital only once every few years. Why do you want to disappoint them? They will not be disappointed in their convictions, nor in the correctness of the CC CPSU’s positions, but in your own party. You know that from their school days, our people have very positive ideas about your party. Plus, you simply will not have any time to provide arguments to support your position on Afghanistan. Which means it will be an “outcry” that will sound offensive. You will damage the effect of your speech and you will damage relations between our two parties. And so forth along those lines.

He listened, turning pink. Then he took me by the shoulders. “I cannot do otherwise. The Executive Committee will not understand. They will accuse me of taking it out under pressure. But I will think it over...” The bell rang, I went behind the scenes, he went to the auditorium.

After lunch, Lagutin (a referent) informed me that McLennan decided to keep the phrase about Afghanistan in his speech.

In the evening Ponomarev called a meeting of the deputies. He conveyed to us the “indignation of the Presidium” of the Congress over the fact that some foreign guests spoke for 20 minutes, when the agreement was 7-10 minutes. (This referred to representatives from Angola, Syria, Mozambique. On top of their empty speeches, they also read out messages from their presidents and contemptuously rejected any attempts to “abridge” them, as well as any reasoning – think about the others, you are knocking them out of the KPC in droves!) B.N. was irritated, criticized everyone and snapped at me for the first time (“why are you talking nonsense, my blood is boiling!”) This happened before the incident with Pajetta, but on the day when it was decided to deny him a spot at the KPC. The deputies tried to talk back, but he must have gotten a slap in the face at the top, so he growled and did not listen to anything. I was angry at the end and said: “By the way, now McLennan is the only speaker in the KPC who will have Afghanistan; his speech is tomorrow.”

B.N. responded categorically and furiously:

“Do not let him speak!”

“Tell him just like that?”

“Yes. Just like that!”

When I returned to my office, I summoned Dzhavad and told him to do it. He waited for the Brits to return from the theater and told McLennan “the decision of the Presidium.” The latter

did not make a scene. He was upset, but he reconciled himself with the fact that, like Pajetta, he would have to present at one of the meetings.

In the morning Dzhavad told me how it went. “What should we do?”

“Listen,” he said, “let’s write B.N. a note and quote that line (about Afghanistan), it’s only a brief mention... B.N. hasn’t seen the actual text. And add something from yourself.”

That’s what we did. An assistant took the note to Ponomarev.

From what followed, I understood that he hadn’t discussed with anyone his “order” not to let the Englishman speak. But he also did not bring up the question of removing his last name from the chairman’s “notes.” Balmashnov brought me the following: Boris Nikolayevich carefully read your note, thought it over again carefully, and said: let Chernyaev decide!

That’s very like him. He understood that we made a blunder with Pajetta, and he did not want to make it worse with McLennan. However, he also did not want to take on the responsibility, so he used Chernyaev as a scapegoat. But I didn’t care. I proceeded from the presumption that we really should not make the situation worse, especially since it had to do with “my” party. And technically it was very easy for me to resolve. I had already been informed that McLennan was not yet removed from the list of speakers. In these circumstances, all I had to do was not say anything or take any actions, and McLennan would automatically get the floor. Then I had a burning realization: McLennan himself isn’t expecting to speak, he isn’t prepared... the interpreters have his text (the translation), but does he have his own copy with him? I urgently called Lagutin and he rushed over “to the stage.” It turned out that Gordon indeed did not bring his text, since he decided “that’s it!” He might have not come himself – the rest of the delegation went to visit some English school...

I ordered to immediately get a copy of the English-language text and give it to Gordon; on TV you could see how it was handed to him. Within minutes, he took the podium. He got a normal reception, even a warm one. But what is this? In “that very” spot, you could not hear the phrase (half a phrase) about Afghanistan. (The text was: “It is known there are disagreements in the Communist movement on various issues, including the issue of Afghanistan. Our position on these issues is well known, as well as our internationalism.”) The interpreter did not say “including the issue of Afghanistan.” You cannot tell from the internal TV whether he said those words in English, because the sound from the auditorium is muted for foreign speakers and only the translation is heard. Lagutin was sitting next to me. I told him, “Run over, find out”... He came back: “Dzhavad was in the auditorium, in the first row. Gordon did say (!) about Afghanistan.”

In other words, the interpreter omitted these words. But how is this possible? Booth interpretation is strictly controlled by our guys. The interpreter has to read from a text that is carefully coordinated with the speaker, coordinated with my group, and sent to the interpreter with my signature. Nobody can interfere with this process... Actually, this is a serious incident, a violation of regulations, instructions, the CC’s resolutions. But I did not start an investigation, to avoid a fuss. I still don’t know how it could have happened. Possibly Ponomarev grew nervous about my decision, and when he heard that McLennan was to take the podium after all, he called

his trusty San Sanych and told him to rush to the interpretation booth to tell Legasov that the interpreter should “hush up” these words!!

During the break, Dzhavad witnessed the following “musical moment”: Gordon, beaming, stepped out into the foyer and headed for the buffet. Pajetta intercepted him, but there was a comrade nearby who spoke English. Pajetta asked: “Did you say Afghanistan?”

“Of course!” Gordon replied.

“Ha-ha-ha!” Giancarlo burst out, attracting the attention of the entire crowd of foreign delegations leaving the auditorium. “I didn’t hear it!” Pajetta kept laughing. “In one ear, in English, I heard that you did say it. But in the other ear, in Italian, it wasn’t there. Same as in Russian, because they translate into all other languages from Russian!”

Gordon was confused. Dzhavad did not see what happened next... the crowd disappeared into the buffet.

However, Gordon did not once ask, not in any way, what happened. Not in the evening at dinner with Lagutin, and definitely not the next day with Dzhavad, and not on Sunday when I had dinner with them at the “Aragvi” (in a wonderful, truly fraternal, very frank and friendly atmosphere, on a note of real sincerity and without a shadow of “faultfinding” from the British).

Plus, it would not have been in his interest to do it. He should have been completely happy. He spoke at the KPC – such an honor was only given to twelve communist parties out of 113 delegations from non-socialist countries. He was well received; he did not offend anyone in the auditorium (only a dozen English-speaking delegations heard the part about Afghanistan). He said everything he wanted, and *Pravda* published it without any omissions, including the phrase on Afghanistan. So, he has a total alibi for his CC and the public. Let Pajetta talk, everyone knows his reputation.

I assume that nobody at the Presidium noticed anything, and were overall satisfied with the Englishman’s speech. Of course, no one “from the top” read his speech in *Pravda*. Our relationship remained intact. All is well!

But because it worked out “so well” with McLennan, Ponomarev only grew more irritated. Because the blunder with Pajetta stood out even more: so what if he would have said his bit, everyone knows how Italians are! We ended up having to publish it anyway.

March 11, 1985

We only created a scandal and provided fodder for speculations in the West. In other words, we shot ourselves in the foot... and all because of the cowardice he showed himself (B.N., of course, felt this deep inside): if he had not gone to “consult,” everything would have been fine... We would have even gotten praise from the PCI for the Congress. This is exactly what happened with McLennan: he gave excellent interviews for radio and TV. They were not only sympathetic, but truly friendly (towards us). He held one of the best press conferences on Zubovskaya street. He gave a real fight to British bourgeois correspondents, who wanted to speak with him “separately” and tried to provoke him into anti-Sovietism. Namely, they asked

whether there was pressure regarding Afghanistan, whether any line was imposed on him, etc. He rebuffed all of this, ridiculed the suggestions.

With the PCI it's the opposite...

I'm guessing this explains Ponomarev's fury.

Nevertheless, I got seriously upset (even though the old man's state was understandable and even excusable). Everything in me was protesting and I was ready to defend my honor at the first opportunity.

We were all at the Department on Monday, March 2, before the closed session of the Congress when the election process was supposed to start, i.e. when the lists of those proposed for the Central Committee would be announced. B.N. scheduled a meeting of the deputies for 4p.m. The assistants rang my phone off the hook, but I did not pick up and told my secretary not to tell where I was. I did not want to see Ponomarev, I would have lost my temper with him. The meeting ended and assistants started calling: Ponomarev wants to see Chernyaev one-on-one. I refused to go, saying I know my responsibilities regarding the foreign delegations, and texts for *Pravda*, radio, and TASS...

They must have passed this on to him. But I could tell that he was summoning me to inform me whether I would remain on the lists or whether I would be removed from the Auditing Commission (in that case, as usual with B.N. – all sorts of explanations and references to other people, who “would not budge” while B.N. did everything he possibly could). Since I was sure that he was summoning me to talk about this, I did not want to see him.

I can't say that I didn't care. I understood that my position at the Department and “at work” in general would become strained if I were to be removed from the Auditing Commission. But I “forbade” myself to show interest in this from the very beginning. After all, in the line of my work I interacted almost daily with Petrovichev, Razumov – the all-powerful personnel officers from the Party Organization Department, Kapitonov's deputies. Every time I could see in their eyes the expectation that I would ask them “in confidence.” And I could see “how their faces changed” when again and again, I nonchalantly spoke only about our common affairs related to the work of the Congress. Meanwhile, they'd known for a long time whether I'd “survive” or not.

I was especially uncomfortable with this uncertainty because I would be sitting with the Ryazan group when the voting lists would be announced at the closed session. I even considered not attending.

How would they, the Ryazan folks, look at me, the person who sat in the front row of the presidium at their conference in Ryazan and conducted their first Plenum on behalf of the Central Committee, who supervised the election of the regional committee's first secretary!! But not going to a session like this would have been a blatant violation of discipline. After all, as a delegate to the Congress, having not heard my name announced as part of the list, I would still have had to vote – participate in the secret ballot – and this was registered.

Andropov opened the closed session. Elections were the second item on the agenda. Chernenko was given the floor to announce the names of the people that the council of elders (a meeting of the heads of delegations) proposed to be included in the voting list for elections to members of the CC. I was happy to hear the names of Arbatov, Zagladin, Inozemtsev. Aleksandrov-Agentov was there too, of course. I.e. the entire main quartet of “Zavidovo guys” was being made full members. Kosolapov, the editor-in-chief of *Kommunist*, was also on the list, which is well-deserved and I was happy for him. But Afanasyev was there too, in spite of the rumors Zagladin had brought from Zavidovo...

Kirilenko was assigned to read the list of candidate CC members. First of all, what a reading it was! He mangled almost every name, marked the accent in unimaginable places even in the most basic Russian surnames. One of the Ryazan guys nailed it when he commented out loud, “people can only recognize themselves by their job titles” (which were read out after the surnames). Some names he seemed to read syllable by syllable to himself first, and then say “in their entirety” – for the auditorium. Non-Russian surnames were completely impossible to decipher. The auditorium and the presidium led by Brezhnev were openly laughing. It grew noisy. The Ryazan folks around me simple-heartedly mimicked the pronunciation of our Party’s “omnipotent third.” Overall, it was totally scandalous.

(By the way, he received more “against” votes than anyone else nominated for the CC, for candidate members of the CC, and for members of the Auditing Commission. Namely, 10 votes “against.”)

So, stammering and distorting, Kirilenko was getting to the end of the list, and suddenly, getting to the letter “Ch” he says my surname, name, patronymic, and job title. There is no longer any doubt. I tried to act cool, but the Ryazan guys were already reaching over to shake my hand. One woman even exclaimed: “What a row we have!” Indeed, in the row where we were sitting, there happened to be four “nominated” persons: Priyetzhaev himself, Ryazan’s first secretary; Silayev – Minister of the aviation industry, a delegate from Ryazan for CC membership; Kalashnikov – Deputy Premier of RFSFR; and I as candidate member of the CC; and also, one milkmaid from Ryazan for membership in the Auditing Commission. The row ended up being unusual in the number of nominees.

Then it was time to vote. When I returned to the Department around 8pm, everyone already knew and rushed to congratulate me.

[By the way, Bovin, another one from the main Zavidovo team, was made member of the Auditing Commission. He got over the Suslov barrier, after all... but he received two votes “against.” He called me afterwards: “Count,” he said, “I thank you for freeing up a space for me in the Auditing Commission.”]

How did “all of this happen?” The conversation with Ponomarev on the second day after the Congress reveals a little. He summoned me after all. And I went... no longer in such a quarrelsome mood. He congratulated me. I said thank you and added that it was a complete surprise for me.

“Yes, I wanted to tell you ahead of time and congratulate you, like last time.” (I.e. at the XXV Congress, when I was nominated for the Auditing Commission). “But you decided not to show up...”

I did not get wound up. He continued:

“It took some work... I put in a word for you with one, another, and a third,” (who, I wondered: Suslov, Chernenko, Kapitonov?) “more than once. They all said we would be breaking procedure, setting unnecessary precedents... I had to insist. I said, Chernyaev works as much as Zagladin. The latter is often away, and the Department is regularly on Chernyaev. In a word, I convinced them. But then they said, if we do that, then let us nominate Razumov too, so it is not the only exception.” (The thing is, Razumov and I are the only deputies, out of dozens, in the entire CC apparatus who were brought into the highest elective bodies at the XXV Congress. First deputies of departments were elected into the CC and the Auditing Commission at this Congress and the previous one, same as the majority of department heads. But out of just deputies – only two. That was and continues to be an exception to the rule.)

Perhaps some of what B.N. said is true. Especially because many of the apparatchiks (even first deputies) remained “unpromoted.”

And so, on the threshold of my 60<sup>th</sup> birthday I became part of the Central Committee... Compared to those who made the revolution, the first five-year plans. Then again, the war was fought by us, mere boys, too. But we were not entrusted to manage what we won. The generation of battalion commanders became humanitarians (as Dez’ka says), not careerists.

March 12, 1981

I’m still sick. But today I already stopped by work: B.N. made comments on the text of the article about the international significance of the Congress. During the Congress, I “transferred” my consultants from behind the stage to the Department to start preparing it. On the second day after I got sick, I received their first draft. It was completely useless. I worked on it even though I was running a high fever. Most importantly, I came up with some ideas and a structure = the conception of each section so it wouldn’t be just a paraphrase of what Brezhnev said, but “one more teaching” on the significance of the Congress to the world. The guys put it together pretty quickly. The day before yesterday it was delivered to me, much better this time. I edited it and gave the go ahead to send it to B.N. (he is in the hospital). This morning I got his notes. The main idea – about the new formulation of the problem of peace (new in contrast to 1915-1920, from Lenin and to Khrushchev): that without peace there can be nothing – not just any struggle for anything, there wouldn’t be anyone left to carry on the struggle. This idea, which was now openly stated by Brezhnev, B.N. managed to distort with his Carthaginen delendam esse [sic]: “And if capitalism nevertheless unleashes a war, then its domination will be abolished” (“along with all of humanity,” added Veber after hearing this remark in the margins).

The Congress is over, but I’ve still got a million things to attend to. Firstly, I didn’t even get a chance to properly talk with many of the foreigners who were assigned to me. The first ones I saw off were the Brits: they flew home just as the CC reception in honor of the foreign guests of the Congress started. They left completely charmed... The finale of their visit was done

with great flourish. From the Sovietsky Hotel, in a big new “Chaika,” with a police car in front flashing lights. Plus, the policeman turned out to be a spirited fellow. Not only did he flash his lights and turn on the siren all the time, he also stuck his baton out of the window and practically shoved cars to the side, clearing the way and driving 140km/h. Behind the motorcade was a “tail” of several “Volgas” with the farewell party. I was in the “Chaika” with our guests and secretly observed how everything in them practically bubbled with pride. Indeed, in England even Thatcher doesn’t ride around with such chic.

Andy Barr, the chairman of the Irish CP, flew back on the same flight.

The next day we had the farewell dinner with Gus Hall on Plotnikov Lane. Arbatov and other members of the accompanying party were there. Hall carries himself artfully. He presents himself to us (and all the other CPs) as a true representative of the American people – namely, the American people as we (the CPSU) would like them to be. This is the best possible stance in his (Gus’) position. And, paradoxical as it may seem, it inspired respect even in bourgeois journalists, who readily sought him out and interviewed him with great enthusiasm.

Winston – the chairman of the party – is a blind black man. Of course, by this point, he is a complete nonentity and senile. But Gus must need him as a symbol of the party’s anti-racism. He physically, and in every other aspect, cannot stand this unpleasant, stinky, dumb and obnoxious [n-----] [sic]. He even takes separate flights from him, under the pretext that if something happens, the party wouldn’t be left without a leader.

Toasts and passionate speeches about gratitude and admiration for the Soviet Union, the Congress, etc. by the delegation members – young Jim, the editor of *Daily World* (black) and Sam Webb, Gus Hall’s crown prince. The latter Menshikov called “the quiet American” (in the mornings he would run in his boxers along the Kremlin embankment). Gus Hall flew to Sofia early in the morning.

On March 5, I saw off my favorite Maltese, Vassallo. He is an amazingly intelligent person. A find for Malta and for us.

Then we saw off a whole group from Hotel Ukraina: the deputy leader of revolutionary Grenada, “my old friend” Coard with the boys he brings with him as experts and lovers. The wise Thompson – the chairman of Manley’s Party in Jamaica. Cheddi Jagan – the leader of a party in opposition to Guyana’s progressive regime. I had to meet with him in advance, in the morning at the CC, and explain for two hours why we threw out from his speech accusations of fascism towards this regime. Moreover, a delegation from this regime was also represented at our Congress, spoke, and its “good” speech was published in *Pravda*. When I was given the translation of Jagan’s speech on the first day of the Congress and said that “these two paragraphs” would not be given to our press under any circumstances, he started to throw a scandal. He declared that he would not present at all, that he is being silenced, that we are protecting and encouraging fascism in Latin America and his country. At this point I reported to B.N. and received permission to stand my ground. Jagan gave in, spoke at a rally, said (orally) the things I crossed out, the interpreter translated to the audience (without a text), but we did not allow these paragraphs in *Pravda*.

The conversation at the CC started off strained and edgy. I was building up my argumentation, and firmly – I had no intention of making excuses. And he “backed off,” he realized that otherwise there would be a breach, which would mean political suicide for him. We parted with an embrace and seemingly on good terms. But!.. Why do we need such a communist party? It is pursuing a stupid policy with the aim of removing an antiimperialist regime in its country. What can such a party have in common with Leninism?! But somehow, we call it fraternal.

In the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup>, I had dinner with the Australians (Clancy who has lost his sight, and Symon) at Sovietsky Hotel. I accompanied them to Sheremetyevo as well. Nice words but hopeless cause. I lied to Clancy, when we were saying our goodbyes, that Slava Fedorov, a professor and my friend, really hopes to restore his eyesight when they visit next summer.

There was a very difficult conversation at dinner with the Canadians. Kashtan was beside himself that he did not get to speak at the KPC. He refused to speak anywhere else. Members of his delegation barely persuaded him to give his speech for publication in *Pravda*, as if it had taken place. The entire day he took out his anger on the referent Ulasevich (the latter, poor guy, took it and did not complain), and partially on Mostovets. Kashtan did not allow himself such behavior with me. But he kept aloof. I launched a counterattack gradually. I said that meetings of fraternal party leaders with our party organizations (especially ones like in Moscow, which alone has two million communists, while he, Kashtan, will be lucky if he counts a few hundred in his entire party) are a direct continuation of the Congress. It is the great school of internationalism for our communists, for all people. After all, ten million copies of our friends’ speeches are distributed, they are heard on the radio, etc. It would be strange to consider this platform to be beneath oneself. Especially because out of 115 delegations from nonsocialist countries, over one hundred spoke at precisely such meetings, and it never occurred to anyone to be offended. And so forth along that vein. I got angry and was almost provoking him... But the more I talked, the more he lost his spirit, the more his colleagues in the delegation beamed. Later, the wonderful Sam Walsh (leader of the Quebec CP) whispered in my ear: it’s good that you laid it all out, it will make it easier for us to work with him at home...

Winter has been persisting for a month now. The cold has been intensifying since the beginning of the Congress. And tonight, the temperature is supposed to fall to -20 degrees. In the middle of March!

While I was sick, I read, in addition to various socially significant books and prolonged enjoyment of Apollon Grigoryev (prose!), Bykov’s *The Third Rocket* (for some reason I missed it earlier) and Stadnyuk’s *War*. The latter is an anti-literary work. You only need to open any page and read any paragraph to understand that this comes nowhere near literature. But the information content is interesting. The comrade thoroughly rummaged through the archives, talked with some of the participants, and presents information that cannot be easily found anywhere else. About the tragedy of General Lukin, about Timoshenko, who is not so bad in the author’s account, about Stalin and the Politburo sessions in July 1941, about Yakov Dzhughashvili, about General Zhukov and Mekhlis. The author’s presentation is quite straightforward. He does not rehabilitate Stalin and his entire style. He does not consider it necessary. For him, Stalin did the only possible thing. It is impossible to imagine anything else

(even if you try). But, I repeat, it is curious. Despite the fairly banal philosophizing *a la* Tolstoy, there is something intriguing in his reasoning. The more so because nobody will ever be able to answer the question of “what would have been if what had been had not been” in the 1930s and early 1940s.

In *Novy Mir* No.12 there is a new novella by M. Kolosov “Three Circles of War.” War from the standpoint of a boy who ended up in the army after being liberated from occupied territory in 1943. But that’s not the point. The point is how the author describes war. Most of all, it resembles Okudzhava’s novella that appeared sometime in the 1960s and was mercilessly hammered for making war look unheroic. Nowadays it is a common thing – to turn the diaries of ordinary participants of war into literary works. It really is what war is like and what happened to millions of soldiers: you ran somewhere, shot every which way, bent down, carried out some orders, went hungry, trampled through mud, heard commands that were not followed by any actions, you were confused whether you are in battle because everything around is shooting and exploding or if others are involved in another battle nearby and you accidentally got in the middle of this mess. It is impossible to see the sense in all the “movements” of this soldier and his comrades, nobody can either understand or explain anything. Indeed, this happened to me many times, even when I was already a commander. But for some reason, it is not interesting to read about. Bykov’s, or Bondarev’s, or Baklanov’s versions are more interesting – meaningful, organized battles. Even though you can see through the invented, artificial harmony.

### March 15, 1981

Yesterday I visited the Aksyonovs. He is a cosmonaut, twice a Hero. He is from Ryazan and we met at the little house in the middle of nowhere, where the Ryazan delegates who were not from Ryazan stayed (the house was given to the Soviet government by its builder, the owner of the Kazan railroad, who later served as a railroad inspector in the People’s Commissariat until 1927).

Vladimir Viktorovich Aksyonov is from Kasimov. A man of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Now I’ve met his family. Knowing him, I could assume they would be good people. Now I know it to be true from experience. There is not a hint of being spoiled by fame and comfort, neither in him nor in his family members. They are an intellectual modern family with deep Russian traditions (genetically, his grandfather and grandmother were pre-revolutionary folk teachers).

Of course, we talked a great deal about space. He showed photos that you can’t see in the mass media. He knows how to present it without personalizing it, “getting to the point” (his expression). Once again, as with everything else, there is an upsetting gap between what we could be adopting for practical life from the space program, and what is actually adopted. He believes the space program could be self-sustaining even now, if we made good use of all the discoveries we make there. However, no more than two percent is cost-effective. For example, maps of the USSR that are taken from an altitude of 300km. Only 200 out of 200,000 routine surveys were used for geologists, the agricultural sector, biologists, foresters. The rest are in safes, since they recorded military objects. But also because we haven’t created mechanisms to process the material we obtain in space for practical use.

For the first half hour, Vladimir Viktorovich seemed to feel awkward, as if he were self-conscious and did not know how to entertain us. Instead of us feeling shy in the presence of such a celebrity, he was the one – even though he is world-famous and a true hero.

Moreover, he is a handsome man. And his manner of speaking is that of a teacher: measured, clear, correct, convincing.

I still do not understand what he saw in me, why he immediately became attached to me and persistently pursued a friendship, invited me to his home...

When I came back to work on Friday, Zagladin stopped by. We discussed two topics. Zhilin, who is drinking again. Shaposhnikov is the bad influence, he's drinking with him. What to do. Yezhov, who was caught with prostitutes tied to Americans, he was telling them something about official business (sounds like it was about the distribution of responsibilities among the consultants related to the Congress). Some secrets! Plus, he probably doesn't know that his girlfriends are fooling around with Americans. I would guess they are some old acquaintances from the university or his journalism days, they became professionals later... and they're giving it to him for old times' sake, not for \$1000 per session (we found out the rate for the Americans!). B.N. told me about this – that Yezhov is in trouble – back when he congratulated me with the CC election. He commented, "They stepped up surveillance because of the Congress, that's how he got caught... Now we have to get rid of him. I'll speak with Zagladin..."

Zagladin also told me about this, thinking I didn't know. He lamented: how to do it? It turns out we cannot say why we are firing him... We can't even warn him now to stop seeing these friends of his.

Another topic is Kirilenko. Vadim attended the first CC Secretariat after the Congress. M.A. Suslov went on vacation right after the Congress. For many years now, when Suslov is absent, the Secretariat and Politburo (when Brezhnev and Suslov are absent) was led by Kirilenko. This time, Chernenko walked out of the back room first and sat down in the chairman's seat. Kirilenko walked out behind him and sat in his usual place "at the right hand." He was silent for the entire meeting.

March 21, 1981

B.N. gave a report at the Grand Kremlin Palace at a party meeting for the entire Central Committee apparatus (2900 people!). This time the report was decent and his delivery wasn't longwinded, as it often is (he also did not deviate from the text, which always especially hurts his oratory).

I was elected to the presidium and to the editorial committee of the meeting. I sat in the seats where members of the PB and CC Secretaries usually sit. I was looking at the auditorium, the far balcony, and for some reason was thinking: how did people speak here before the loudspeaker system was installed, how could you hear anything from one end of the auditorium to the other. Then suddenly, it struck me: 25 years ago (a quarter century), almost to the day, I was sitting over there on the balcony and listening to Khrushchev's report on the cult of personality – the XX Congress!! I remember how I, dumbfounded, rushed to Iskra and in the

agitated company of Zinoviya Fedorovna (mother) and stepfather (an old party member) and confusedly told them. Then, and later, it seemed that now something big will definitely happen. And now a quarter century has gone by. Of course a lot has changed. But the radical changes everyone expected then – the right, the left, and the swamp of intelligentsia – did not happen.

On Tuesday I was at the CC Secretariat. Indeed, Chernenko is leading it. Kirilenko comments, makes a show of activity, periodically butts into the discussion, but he is received politely and ironically. I was impressed by the discussion of the prospects (and results) for the development of the gas industry. We are doing tremendous things (though with colossal waste, costs, mess, mismanagement, squandering of resources, nerves, energy, human destinies). Nevertheless: during the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, 29,000km of gas pipelines were built. During the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan, we will build 50,000km! It is difficult to imagine, and if you add everything that goes along with these “threads” that are almost 1.5m in diameter! In the 1960s we produced only 46 billion cubic meters of gas, and now just in the next five years we are planning to add 205 billion!

Secretaries tried to criticize and even whack for shortfalls, errors, and so on. But the ministers, especially Shcherbina, bristled. And they unfolded a truly stunning picture of what was done and what is being done. Moreover, they showed (like their colleagues on other occasions at earlier Congresses) outstanding competence and mastery of the material (figures, data, issues) without any papers, references, or memos.

Gorbachev and Dolgikh participated in the discussion at the ministerial level (really smart and politically passionate, educated people). Kirilenko and our B.N. looked somewhat ludicrous, like people from the “come on, come on!” era. Solomentsev was closer to the first two, and Zimyanin kept quiet, and rightly so. In such matters, one must really know the “material.”

The day before yesterday I talked with our ambassador to the FRG, Semyonov. We spent about an hour together. Talked about Mies, social democracy, Schmidt, Wehner, Brandt... a colorful figure. He's been interested in futurology for a long time. He started to tell me his ideas. The Earth right now is at a critical point in the development of living matter. Three billion years have passed since life emerged and about the same amount of time is left (before the extinction of the Sun begins). It depends on humankind right now whether the “second half” of life on Earth will happen or not. These “theories” are generally known... But it is good that we have such an ambassador, he has something to talk about with the bourgeois “Manilovs” in the FRG. I found out from him that among the aristocratic military circles in the FRG (the establishment) the anti-war sentiments are very strong right now, stemming from “Guderian's idea” that Germany would not survive a modern war (another war). Whoever won, Germans would greet or curse them from mass graves. General Bastian belongs to this “caste” too, which, incidentally, despises not only communists and social democrats, but also Genscher and those like him. General Bastian resigned last year due to a disagreement with the government's policy.

Semyonov thinks it would be nice to arrange a closed seminar (like Pugwash) between our (educated) generals and the generals of the Bundeswehr, and not only Guderianists, but also supporters of the Americans.

March 22, 1981

Sunday. I walked around the city. When I came home, I read absentmindedly, not knowing what to get into. I would switch between a collection for Kant's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, to reports from the Institute of Information on terrorism, to Cromwell from the "Lives of Outstanding People" series, to Byron's letters and diaries again, to Montaigne's "Experiments"...

When your time is free, it turns out there is a lot of it, and the excerpts you read (some of them re-read) stick in your mind for a long time. And Byron is still amazingly deep and clever, the contrast between who he was on his own and in society, and how he appears from his *Corsair* and others. However, *Don Juan* is very similar to how he really was.

March 28, 1981

How long the month of March is! How many things it encompassed.

I spent two hours with my old acquaintance Krzysztof Ostrowski, Deputy Head of the International Department of the PUWP. The situation is dire, in his observation. Jaruzelski's "90 days" failed. The events in Bydgoszcz, when the police booted out Solidarity activists from the premises of the City Council, and of course got heavy handed with some... destroyed the last thing they were betting on. "Solidarity" demanded from the party and the government: either condemn (legally) the police & Co., or leave. They said they don't need a government that "beats the workers," it would mean the same thing as 1956 and 1970. Yesterday they already held a four-hour warning strike and there is a general "occupational" one planned for March 31. Tomorrow is the CC Plenum... In the meantime, the store shelves are empty. People queue up at night for the most basic foodstuffs, and usually come away empty handed. Factories have nothing to work on, if you can imagine such a fantastic situation, where workers would want to work, there are no raw materials. Imports are closed, since the West is delaying the deferral of the credits. Things are heading towards hunger...

They are on the brink of an explosion... The party is in total collapse. Now the CC forbade communists from participating in strikes because they are "purely political," against the government. But it is unclear if at least two-thirds of the party will obey.

And us? In a conversation during the Congress, Brezhnev demanded from Kania and Jaruzelski to push back against the rampant counter-revolution, which grows more impudent every day as it sees the helplessness of the authorities. This is indeed the case. Walesa is already losing ground, he is a "liberal" now, he is being pushed aside by people who will go to the end, regardless of anything. But the smallest attempt to rebuff (in Bydgoszcz) immediately led to a general strike... What is there left to do?

If we come in, there will be a massacre, but we won't be able to make them work anyway. Or maybe Jaruzelski will decide to repeat the "Pilsudski option" from 1926?!

B.N. came up with the idea to hold a mini-conference of communist party newspaper editors in May. The pointlessness of this enterprise is obvious. But B.N. cannot just "sit back and

do nothing,” like Pushkin’s Balda, he needs to constantly twist the end of the rope in the well... The appearance of “mobilizing the communist movement.”

We put together a beautiful, clever invitation. But I think Suslov will bury it.

On Thursday I met with the CC Secretary of Austria’s Socialist Party, Hacker. Curious. But they, the social democrats, are impudent with us, as they call it, acting “with dignity.” I tried to pin him down with the fate of Austromarxism. He replied: Austromarxists were the first to take up arms against fascism, not the Schutzbundists, who later, after 1934, fled to the USSR and were all killed in 1938... I will describe our “comradely” polemics in detail sometime.

The second half of the day. After tennis. I played with Stefan Dmitrievich Mogilat. He is Pelshe’s assistant. I asked him: what’s happening with Zdorov? Zdorov is the first deputy of the CC Department of Machine Building. I’ve known him for a long time, back when I worked at the Department of Science. We played together in 1956-57. Then we went to the pool together at Avtozavod in the former church on Solyanka. He is from the “Rachmaninov” breed – the master of life, the ruling class.

So. Yesterday I found out that Chernenko read the following resolution at the Secretariat:

1. Remove Zdorov from his job.
2. Transfer the case to the Central Control Commission for violating Party ethics when he arranged a business trip abroad for his son.

Stefan Dmitrievich clarified today – the son fled, asked for asylum, and has already begun to publicly badmouth the Soviet regime. The Central Control Commission has not yet decided what to do with the father. But it is clear they will do something, since the father actively pushed for the son to go abroad and “spoiled him in general”: arranged an apartment, bought a car, gave him rides on the service car. The son did not hide the fact that he took trips abroad to buy things, he went almost every year even though he, a 30-year-old, worked at some military-technical institution.

But then why did Falin get “liberal” treatment? He even remained a member of the Auditing Commission after the Congress. Could it really be only because Falin’s son is adopted?!

Or maybe the “regime” towards party officials is being tightened in general, considering what is happening in Poland, where “Solidarity” now lives and feeds off exposing “communism for apparatchiks” created under Gierek. Perhaps... But then we should start “higher up”... Or at least from our administrators, Pavlov and Poplavsky. Though they are skillful, and if they do not steal outright, they know how to use the party treasury for their “family” purposes.

I met with Iskra. For the first time she called me to meet to ask a favor for her husband – Gulyga. He is at the Institute of Philosophy; he heads a group that publishes the “classics of philosophy.” With approval from the top, he wanted to publish Russian classics as well... Starting with Fedorov – the forefather of cosmonautics and the founder of the theory of reviving ancestors – all the people who’ve died over millennia, and with their exact appearance – with the

help of chemical-electronic methods! And so on. I don't know much about him. I only read what *Prometei* had on him – about him and Tolstoy.

The book was set in type, but then through Yovchuk's intrigues (Yovchuk was finally not elected candidate member of the CC, where he's been for 30 years) someone made a phone call and ordered to break it up. Naturally, Gulyga does not want to. The publisher does not want to either. They appealed to Afanasyev (*Pravda*): he also wants the book published, but cannot help. Now I will be trying to help...

April 5, 1981

Yesterday Inozemtsev's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated at CMEA with a gathering of about two hundred people. Third Order of Lenin. He represents a part of the academic and apparatus-party elite.

I have conflicting feelings both about this person and about yesterday's event. In my speech I decided to focus on the achievements of the Institute, not its most distinguished representative. But overall, I expected a greater orgy of toadying.

With pain in my heart and feeling uneasy, I presented him with one of the pages once given to me by Ernst Neizvestny, "The Heart of a Child." I had to cut off the part that was addressed to me, "To Anatoly from Ernst on his birthday, believing that as long as our inner child is alive, we continue growing" May 25, 1972.

April 6, 1972

Today I spoke with Sasha Galkin about the preparation of the VI volume of the "International Labor Movement"; about Salychev's ridiculous complaints and weaknesses, which may ruin the volume.

I met with Timofeyev. He keeps trying to get B.N. or someone like him to open the conference on transnational corporations. Without a "general," any undertaking loses its meaning to Timofeyev.

A call to the publishing house of the Academy of Sciences. Likhtenshtein is ill. His deputy told us they will have to publish books on the communist movement, too. Under our supervision, of course.

I tired to edit the memo on the prospects of the Department's work in light of the XXVI Congress.

Kovalsky (a consultant) stopped by with the text of the English version of Brezhnev's *Pages from His Life*. Maxwell is taking it on. I will have to edit.

A heap of various memos for the CC, documents to sign. Over a hundred ciphered telegrams from all over the world.

Diligensky stopped by to pick up comments on the VI volume of the "International Labor Movement" (the post-war period). I argued with him that we should not include the ICM in this volume; we won't be able to give anything but superficial information.

Conversation with B.N. over the high-frequency line (he is in Crimea) about all the day-to-day matters, but especially about the idea to convene editors of communist newspapers from all over the world... hosted by *Pravda*. He called Suslov. The latter suggested to have this meeting hosted not by *Pravda*, but by Zarodov. But that would kill the initiative. Nobody will come if Zarodov calls. It looks like Suslov does not realize how insignificant the authority of PPS really is (the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* in Prague). It hasn't had any significance to anyone in a long time.

This is a general outline of a 12-hour work day. I did not mention small conversations on the phone, or when this or that coworker would stop by with his matters and questions.

April 17, 1981

I'm still working my tail off without Ponomarev and Zagladin. He's been sick for over a month. B.N.'s report at the upcoming ideological meeting of regional committee secretaries is hanging over me. On the ICM. He keeps wanting to raise "the level of theory" by shouting about the communists' selfless struggle in confines and their great admiration for us...

On Thursday I was at the Politburo. Last Thursday Chernenko was leading it. Yesterday – Brezhnev himself. You always walk away bewildered, especially when Brezhnev is leading. It's some kind of shadow show and Kantian transcendence. For example, the discussion of Tikhonov's visit to Austria. As usual, the day before, a transcript of the conversation is sent out. This time it was Tikhonov's conversation with Kreisky. I read it. It is was a competent conversation, nothing short of Gromyko's level, who has a good command of the material and skillfully conducts such conversations. Knowledge of facts, timely reactions, accurate assessments, elements of polemics in diplomacy. In a word, it was appropriate for the level of premier. But now he gets up from the PB table to "briefly" report on it: an incoherent, tongue-tied string of words that contradicts what was written in the transcript. At times it is impossible to understand what he is talking about. He keeps looking at a piece of paper and constantly reads out perfunctory, standard, banal phrases.

How does this happen? Where does the transcript come from? Or is it not a transcript at all, but a piece written *post factum* on the subject of what and how he **should have** said to Kreisky?

There is no discussion, either. Everyone approves everything after Brezhnev reads syllable by syllable the prepared drafts of the orders and resolutions.

Incidentally, the last question was about a meeting of doctors in the United States, dedicated to analysis of the terrible consequences of a nuclear catastrophe. Chazov boldly reported (B.N. commented on the phone: he doesn't need to hush up – he knows everyone, treats everyone, everybody knows him and they value him). The issue did not even need to be discussed at the PB. But people listened to him because he is Chazov.

But the reason I bring it up. The incoherent exchange of remarks after Chazov's speech revealed that not everyone understood what he was talking about. Brezhnev himself and others thought it had to do with a scientific committee on the clarification of consequences of a nuclear catastrophe, which had been in the Report for the CPSU Congress.

In a word, I repeat: if the Sovietologists' and Kremlinologists' fantasy came true and they got to be a fly on the wall at a session of our PB, later nobody would ever believe this "fly." They would think he is fooling them or has lost his mind.

April 25, 1981

The other day Suslov descended on Poland. For one day only, but it agitated the whole world. The Politburo sent him. As B.N. told me, Suslov did not want to go: he is not in good shape, plus "what can I do there"? Everything has been said, everything is clear, what can we achieve?!

Shakhnazarov was with him. He will tell me in more detail later, but yesterday by the car at the third entrance (before going to Gnezdnikovskiy Lane to see an American film) he said that in general, M.A. understands everything and he is not the lead initiator of the pressure. The "hawks" are the "minister" (i.e. Gromyko) and Ustinov. Those two are pressing hard and it looks like they are the ones deciding, or, in any case, predetermining.

The long-awaited party meeting finally took place. Vadim Zagladin made a brilliant report – he had time to prepare. Ponomarev suddenly showed up too.

In a fatherly way, Zagladin posed the problem of drinking in the Department... the "moral atmosphere." For the first time in the history of the Department, we had anonymous letters "from the inside" about one of the junior referents on the economy. Everyone was shocked.

He called for people to feel at ease, to have more discussion at meetings, so not just those who are assigned in advance are speaking.

Using this momentum and the fact that Ponomarev was present, Malyukovsky, the referent on Yemen, took the floor and said such things about our practical "internationalism," that everyone felt uneasy. Seven of the PB decisions on cooperation with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen have not been implemented. The ones that have are a mockery and robbery. Our specialists there are doing a better job of spreading anti-Sovietism than any Americans or Saudis.

For example, we made an agreement on (helping with) fish. Our vessels would fish in the coastal waters and 25 percent of the catch would be given to the Yemenis. But they started giving only 15 percent, and plowed the coast to such an extent that there wasn't any fish left for Yemeni peasant fishermen. The fishing state farms that we helped to create all disbanded!

Brutents later said: the State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations is a kind of "complex" like the military-industrial, or the mafia. The headquarters are connected to local organizations through mutual interests. There are 10,000 specialists, or so-called specialists. Their main interest is to cash in, acquire goods, without breaking the rules of the game and following the established rotation: Moscow-abroad-Moscow-abroad. They despise black and yellow-skinned people, they treat them as an inferior race. And they know that if they rip them off for an extra ruble, they will only be praised for it. But if they work at a loss, even for the sake of internationalism, they will get it in the neck. Therefore, the CC decisions are one thing, but the

commercial activity of the people carrying out these decisions is another. There isn't a hint of internationalism in the latter.

The next day, at a meeting of deputies, B.N. said: of course, Malyukovsky exaggerated, but we need to look into "this," monitor Skachkov (he's a minister, a hot-air-salesman and senile, I wrote about him before in connection with Shakirov).

The Politburo passed a resolution to prepare an International Conference of Communist and Workers' Parties – following Brezhnev's visit to the Congress of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia in Prague and as soon as Husak publicly presented this idea.

Yesterday at a meeting of deputies with B.N. we started to think it over and came to the conclusion that it would be better for the conference to include revolutionary-democratic parties as well, not just communist ones.

May 10, 1981

Yesterday was Victory Day. I couldn't spend it the way I usually do, walking in the streets with my friend Kolya Varlamov, because I have a sore throat. We walked a little, and then spent about five hours at my place, drinking vodka little by little. We talked about the same old things – the immorality at the top, the money-grubbing, the situation where the goal is to grab as much as possible, for your children, your sons-in-law, all your relatives and friends. In the background the TV was showing yet another performance for the opening of the Victory Memorial in Kiev. Of course, Brezhnev, Moscow, and Leningrad were there as equivalent hero-cities.

He (Kolya) is planning to retire: "I'm tired of seeing all this, it's disgusting"...

From May 3-6, I was in Rome. The PCI invited us to smooth over the "episode" with their delegation at the Congress. To restore our good relationship, which we denied them in the CC Report. I, Zuyev, Genrikh Smirnov. They received us at a high level. Their delegation was two members of the leadership, i.e. PB members, two members of the CC (Pajetta, Bufalini, Rubbi, Mechini)...

I think the most important thing for them was to see where we are planning to take our relationship with them and, for example, with Poland. The guys from the embassy said the Italians viewed the fact that I was sent as a good gesture, because I am known for being sensitive and understanding of our fraternal parties' circumstances. Maybe B.N. had thought about that. But if he did, it was in the background: he simply did not want to "give this gift" (a business trip, in his view, is a bonus!) to Zagladin after the latter missed a month and a half of work due to illness. However, when he was sending me off, he advised me not act like a bigshot.

The Italians led the discussion with uttermost politeness. I responded with the same (even though I was given the first word, I conducted all the counter polemics in an indirect manner. As Pajetta later said, it was quite understandable).

They did not say a word about what happened at the XXVI Congress, where they were not given the floor at the Palace of Congresses, they were not mentioned among the good parties, and Pajetta's speech was only published in *Pravda* after he threw a scandal with Ponomarev.

They did not bring it up at the official talks, nor over wine at restaurants, not at the level of Pajetta, nor Mechini.

They asked about everything: from missiles to Ethiopia. The issue of the Senator-General Pertini was particularly acutely discussed. I think this was perhaps the only practical issue they wanted to “solve” with the help of our delegation.

Despite their truly busy schedules, the Italian leaders gave us attention well above our rank. For them we were “the CPSU,” although they very subtly took into account the individual characteristics of the members of the delegation.

Why weren't they afraid to invite us at the same time as the NATO Council was meeting in Rome, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Congress of the Italian Socialist Party [PSI] just concluded and Craxi made it clear that until the PCI “completely” breaks with Moscow, there will be no PCI-PSI coalition? Finally, the referenda and local elections are coming up, there is a risk that under the crazy pressure of anti-Sovietism, the communists will win even fewer votes than before and the trajectory of setbacks will be confirmed?! Why did they do it?

I am convinced that alongside complex Machiavellian considerations, there is also the profound force of Italian communism's devotion to our country. In their leadership, its main bearers are (together with Cossutta, but he's bending over backwards for us too much) precisely the historical leaders, i.e. Pajetta, Bufalini, and others – the ones we are particularly unhappy with because they criticize us the most. But they also “love” us, consciously and emotionally. They worry about the things they consider wrong and dangerous in our politics, and they will never break away from us.

I tried to impress this on Ponomarev when I got back. I also persistently pushed this idea in the ciphered telegram for the top. But B.N. raised a ruckus: “you're getting carried away,” “that's impossible,” “why would he (Pajetta) say such things about us then.” B.N. will never understand that the days are gone when a large, influential CP with political clout (under normal circumstances) could pursue an openly [pro] Soviet policy and conduct its ideological and political work using language that sounds like it is translated from Russian.

I was in Rome for only two and a half days. There was almost no time to walk around the city. But I did stop by some places if they were on the way... And thanks to the smart and handsome Lenya Popov (our adviser on party relations in Rome) I got to see and feel some things. The church with Michelangelo's Christ (holding the cross like a spear at his foot). A man of extraordinary beauty. I noticed to myself that I used to have, and still do I think, a figure very similar to his. The legs could have been cast from mine. The Pantheon, about which one could write pages of impressions.

On the day of our departure – the Vatican Museum.

Once again, I am describing my superficial impressions, but I run out of time and energy to write down what I'm feeling and my thoughts. That's what I really should be writing about.

I read Nagibin's “inspiring” story in *Novy Mir* about Goethe's last love... at 74 years old!

In the same issue there is a lovely piece by Tokareva, “Nothing Special.”

May 17, 1981

Yesterday I played tennis and watched *Fedora*. Once again, I am convinced that it's better to watch Soviet films instead of paid-for Western ones. The worst Soviet ones still leave something behind, while these Western ones are nothing but annoyance.

We wrote "a letter from the CC to fraternal parties" about the Rome session of NATO, urging them to "raise the fury of nations."

Mitterrand became president. Our PCF completely degraded and crawls on its belly, but tries to talk tough. If three years ago they had maintained and carried through the strategy of the left forces (Kanapa), they might have come out looking like partners even then. Maybe junior partners, but still. Now they are "in a position." Precisely the position they wanted to avoid by breaking with the socialist party – being Mitterrand's weapon, bound hand and foot. In the June parliamentary elections, they will probably roll back even further. They'll be lucky to get 10 percent.

Zagladin, as usual, talked about his speech at the Lenin School (on the outcomes of the XXVI Congress). It was not in the usual lecture form, but in the form of a discussion – "one versus all." He conducted a frank conversation on the issues that are the subjects of disputes in classrooms, in hallways, in dormitories. In general, he is doing an important job with his "publicity" regarding representatives of the CP. He has long since refused to represent the CPSU to fraternal parties "through" Ponomarev. "That aspect" of our work is completely on me. He appears before them as a spokesman of the CPSU and says such things, and in such a way, that of course would never pass through Ponomarev's mouth. Nevertheless, he is not Ponomarev yet, and he is often perceived to a large extent on a "personal" and not an official level. So, my task of speaking through Ponomarev's lips is not such a dead-end job. Because an ounce of novelty from B.N. weighs more than pounds of novelty from Zagladin, "in the eyes of the international community."

I had a good conversation with Boris Nikolayevich ahead of my 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In general, he has a somewhat inexplicable soft spot for me. Maybe he sees in me a duplication of himself. Maybe he likes my disinterestedness, my lack of self-conceit, my lack of desire to put myself forward and try to be front and center. Although that's unlikely – he personally always tries to be at the forefront, even when it's not his place. It is clear that he does not know me, he does not understand me. He apparently perceives my "dedication to the cause" and professional self-respect ("if you do something, do it well!") as personal devotion to him. He must appreciate the fact that I've never asked him for anything in 20 years, and never bootlicked him or anyone else. But again, this is because I equate "devotion to the cause of the Party" and service to him, Ponomarev, as "the embodiment of the Party." He believes that I "grew up" under his wing, "became a mature party member," and so forth – and that is true. But these categories, undoubtedly positive in his eyes, in this particular case mean nothing more than mastering apparatus ethics and logic, knowing when to stick one's neck out and when not to, learning the lesson that things are morally good only when they are such from Ponomarev's point of view, etc.

Of course, he sees an ideological person in me. But the problem is that it does not occur to him that his understanding of ideology and mine are – “two colossal differences.”

May 24, 1981

The most noticeable thing I did at work was rewrite B.N.’s speech for the upcoming congress of the German Communist Party in Hanover on May 29. I tried to take out the “lecture” and “political literacy” aspects from it. B.N. himself did not like what Rykin and Zagladin prepared for him, but he still put back a lot of that material into my text. By the way, he did not accept this analogy: “Germany above all!” in the 1930s and “America’s interests are most important!” – Haig in 1981. In general, he removed key cute words and little phrases from my “inventions,” and the speech once again regained a respectably banal appearance.

The editorial board of *Questions of History*. Turns out this month they re-confirmed the staff. Four new people. They kept me once again, I’ve been there since 1966. We had to discuss 36 materials. The most intriguing one is about Konstantin Leontiev. Under the guise of criticism of the most reactionary but talented publicist, the general public will be presented with a set of quotes that are direct analogies with the present day. Of course, everyone was in favor. For the sake of appearances, we advised to add some things, make corrections here and there.

There was also Sivachev’s brilliant article on Roosevelt’s “New Deal.” He is now a doctor, professor, head of the department that I headed 30 years ago. My student (i.e. he attended my seminars), but I wasn’t his mentor.

On Friday and Saturday there were celebrations to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Soviet Georgia. Brezhnev travelled there. From the TV and newspaper reports you can see (same as with the celebrations in Kiev for Victory Day, again with Brezhnev’s participation) that the situation (economic and other) is forcing a relaxation when it comes to “national characteristics” and strengthening the role of the republican origins. Brezhnev probably does not realize in what a far-reaching process he is taking part.

June 21, 1981

Tomorrow will be 40 years since the beginning of the war. Memories enter my mind during regular work more and more, they are woven into everything I think about, in the most unexpected way.

Work. It’s been nearly a month since my 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and there has been a lot of work. Letter to the Communist Parties on missile affairs. Letter to the PUWP Central Committee with a warning that they’ve reached the “end of the line.” An appeal from the USSR Supreme Soviet (the session is on the 23<sup>rd</sup>) to parliaments of the world – for peace. The idea was born when Kuznetsov reported on the agenda for the required summer session. There didn’t seem to be any serious issues to discuss, so it would seem there is no reason to have a summer session, but – protocol! (In a break with standard practice, the CC Plenum will not be held this time). To give this session some weight, they came up with this Appeal. It was assigned to the International Department, the MFA and Antyasov (Kuznetsov’s assistant) to prepare the draft. A week later, the PB decided to “assign” Brezhnev to speak at the session with this proposal.

The process of composing the text was curious. B.N. and we, of course, started trying to set the sea on fire again. If we are going to do this, we need to offer something concrete, because in the West they are fed up with beautiful appeals. What makes an impression is when we say something specific about our intentions with regard to missiles, our own missiles. So that's what we did.

But guys from the Foreign Ministry on behalf of Gromyko (Kovalyov) clearly explained to us that anything like that is out of the question. The whole point of this Appeal is a call (pressure) for negotiations, where these issues would be decided. The text was composed in this spirit.

Materials for Brandt's visit. Again, it is not quite clear what to do with him (Vadim is mostly suffering over it), what exactly he could bring back from his visit here.

Memos are being written, and the procedure for writing them is increasingly as follows... It can be illustrated by how the telephone conversations between Leonid Ilyich and Kania are prepared. We anticipate that the latter will initiate the call (for example, after their Plenum). We prepare a "response" to what Kania might say, and we print it in large letters. Whatever Kania may say, he will receive a response prepared in advance. The assistant present records the conversation and composes L.I.'s "report" for the PB on the "conversation" and the conclusions that need to be made. This composition is read at the PB and unanimously supported by approving a text of the resolution, which is also prepared ahead of time.

July 18, 1981

From July 8-15 I was in Spain. To officially transfer the party archive to the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party. Our troops captured it in Vienna in 1945. We gave it to the communists, but when they quarreled with us, we sent it to Bucharest. One of their renegades, Claudin, "sold us out" that the archives are in Moscow. When we became friends with the socialists, they demanded we return the archives. We had to shake our fist to get it from Bucharest to Moscow... and so half a ton of papers, mainly from 1931-1939, have returned to Madrid.

The schedule: I, Pertsov, Kovalsky flew to Frankfurt. There (at the airport) we had to outline to adviser Litvinov, who rushed over from Bonn, the outcomes of Brandt's visit to Moscow (by the way, I was included in the team for his reception and participated in the "dinner" at the Kremlin: Brezhnev – Brandt).

An Aeroflot representative took care of us (on orders from Moscow, since we had to spend 7 hours in Frankfurt waiting for the Madrid flight) – Kovalenko, V.V. He showed us around the city, which I'm already familiar with.

We arrived in Madrid around 10 p.m. We were met at the airport by Ambassador Dubinin, Carvajal (Federico) – Deputy General Secretary of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party [PSOE], Senator. In addition to our ambassador, present were: Igor' Sergeyeovich Ivanov (secretary of the party bureau of the embassy), Igor' Aleksandrovich (first secretary of the embassy), a tedious translator and the driver.

It was hot, 40 degrees Celsius. We had dinner at a nightclub. Made our acquaintance with Carvajal. He is from an aristocratic family, even royal blood.

The next morning, we were at the embassy. Conversation with Dubinin.

Prado. The director and two girls, the interpreters. Astonishing. Especially Goya. They presented us with two albums.

The main event was in the evening: the formal transfer of the archive. Felipe Gonzalez – Secretary-General of the PSOE, the entire leadership, a bunch of press, TV. Gonzalez and I made speeches. Then dinner at a restaurant with all the leadership of the party.

On July 10, conversation with Gonzalez at the Central Committee of the PSOE. Then a conversation with members of the Executive Committee who deal with international affairs. Quite a friendly discussion. Especially on Afghanistan.

Then the tireless Carvajal organized another dinner, pleasant and relaxed. We had seafood.

After the dinner and a rest at the hotel, we went to the Valley of the Fallen (about 40-50km northeast of Madrid). It feels sad – this is all that remains of the euphoria of 1936-38, the years of the Spanish Civil War and our youthful enthusiasm.

In the evening – Madrid: Royal Palace.

On Saturday morning (07/11) we flew to Seville. Meeting with Rafael – the Chairman of the Andalusian government. Problems of autonomy and “self-governing socialism.” Meeting at the regional council of Seville. “Casa” [sic] – the Saracen Palace of the 11-14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The morning of 07/12. Sunday. A walk through the old city. Beautiful. A trip to a tobacco factory. Corrida – one act, a disgusting sight. An hour later we were on the plane.

Monday, 07/13. Madrid, a meeting with Carrillo’s associates, Azcarate and Bornao Leonor from the Communist Party of Spain. Three hours of discussion. In the evening – ciphered telegram to Moscow.

07/14 trip to Toledo. Lunch at the ambassador’s villa outside of the city: Gonzalez, Carvajal, and others. Long conversations and my toast – a declaration of love for Spain.

In the evening, the plaza del Sol, the basement where Hemingway used to sit. The owner’s father was Hemingway’s best friend.

Late in the evening – a reception at a banker’s club on the occasion of the presentation of Brezhnev’s book *Pages from His Life*. Juan Gadricez [sic] – a billionaire, chairman of the club, and publisher of the book. One of the Spanish “Kennedy clan”... Down to earth, charming, and in love with the Soviet Union. Smart and clever. All sorts of luminaries of the scientific world, a famous artist, a senator from the ruling party. Speeches by me and Gadricez for the TV (it was broadcast a week later in Moscow).

In the morning we flew home, again through Frankfurt.

When I returned, B.N. was surprised that I “believed Carrillo”... The socialist party only interests him when it can be used to confront Carrillo’s anti-Sovietism. In general, everything he is doing now is “off the mark.” His main concern is the report he will be giving on July 27 for officials working abroad. This is what I’ve been working on since I got back from Spain. Plus, an article that B.N. promised Zarodov, as well as reworking a speech he gave at a newspaper meeting that took place before my trip into an article for *Kommunist*.

August 2, 1981

In the morning before Sheremetyevo – seeing off Bufalini and Cervetti. Talks with them: Ponomarev, Zimyanin, Zuyev (on Plotnikov Lane regarding missiles). The story with the memorandum (B.N.’s idea. I think he regretted it, and I did everything so he would regret it – but unfortunately, you can’t fix it).

The presumption of anti-Sovietism in the PCI leadership. But I think B.N. and Zimyanin stopped thinking that people like Bufalini and Cervetti, at least, are anti-Soviets; they even love us and worry about all the shadows in our relations.

*Novy Mir* published a new article on Machiavelli – finally, this genius has been completely rehabilitated in our country. The first attempt to do so took place as early as 1933, when the *Academia* publishing house released *The Prince*. I am almost certain that Stalin studied this book very carefully.

Speaking of Stalin, we had a conversation about Stalin and Stalinism with Bufalini over dinner, it was stormy and purely ideological.

August 6, 1981

I read the transcript of Brezhnev’s conversation with Ceausescu in Crimea. The main thing that follows from it is that Brezhnev is not planning on, and apparently never seriously considered, sending troops to Poland. But, he said, the Poles shouldn’t think that we will treat a socialist-democratic or bourgeois Poland the same way we would treat socialist Poland (in the sense of material assistance and so forth). By the way, aid from the West is growing: the U.S., the FRG, and now France especially. Mitterrand has given enormous amounts both of cash and goods. The mass media are presenting it under the motto “France is saving Poland”... And there are already hunger-marches and riots.

Of course, it is scandalous for the socialist camp. With all our internationalism and fraternity, with all our boasting that the socialist community is producing over one third of the world’s output, we were unable to “save” Poland from hunger. Then again, it would have been unfair – they got their country into this situation, and we have to feed them! It is by far not a question of altruism and humanism. But the West can afford to deliver this kind of aid, whatever their goals may be. And we cannot afford it, even with the best fraternal motives. And the whole world sees it.

As for missiles, Ceausescu, like Bufalini and Cervetti, like our other “friends,” is essentially recommending that we disarm – militarily, and politically-ideologically – as concessions to please the Americans, the Chinese, Europe, the ICM. In other words, to abandon

the principle of the balance of forces and the Great Power logic (though right now what it would really mean is abandoning the “logic” of real socialism, abandoning class struggle for the sake of saving humanity from nuclear catastrophe).

August 7, 1981

Awful day. The final day before B.N. leaves for vacation. Ciphred telegrams to the Laborists and McLennan, Zarodov-Husak, a new project on “disclosing” some of our defense figures and the missile names for propaganda – fuel for the anti-missile movement in Western Europe. And most importantly – Ponomarev’s article for PPS after yet another one of his whims. The article is a comparison of our and American statements and actions, to give an “answer” on who is to blame for the military threat.

August 10, 1981

In a telephone conversation with Kania, Brezhnev said (he repeated this forcefully at a meeting with Honecker and Zhivkov): our relations with Poland will depend on what Poland will become. If it will be socialist – the relations will be internationalist; if it will be capitalist – our state, economic, and political relations will be different.

It follows from this that the transformation of Poland into a capitalist country is “a possibility,” i.e. troops will not be brought in. This follows also from the atmosphere, in which the subject of Poland is being discussed at the Crimea meetings (with the aforementioned comrades, as well as with Kadar, especially with Husak, who tried to steer Brezhnev towards an interventionist stance. But the latter avoided giving a direct answer). Moreover, Ceausescu tried to “harden” the attitude toward Poland; he kept demanding: something must be done, we cannot allow, etc. Brezhnev checked him: “Why do you keep repeating, ‘do this, do that.’ We are worried over Poland every day. And you keep saying ‘do something’! Why don’t you do something, make a suggestion.” (Ceausescu even volunteered to go to Warsaw).

Brezhnev said to Zhivkov about Nicolae’s outcries: idle talk, he doesn’t know or understand anything about Poland.

The situation in Poland and with Poland is really awful. But the approach suggested by Brezhnev is the only wise option. He also said that we cannot take on Poland as a dependent.

I’m the only one left at the office. B.N. went to Crimea. All the papers, delegations, etc. – they’re all on me. I met with the Spaniard Alonso [Puerta] (general secretary of the Madrid working committee, member of the Secretariat of the all-Spanish working committee. He was not re-elected to the CC at the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of the PCE, the lead “pro-Soviet” against Carrillo). The situation in the party – collapse. But he doesn’t suggest what to do (strategically!). The “Renovationists” (Azcarate, Bravo & Co.) together with the “officialists” Carrillo are reducing the PCE to the status of socialist-democrats (fifty percent of the party left over the last three years). But this means yielding our positions to Felipe Gonzalez, our new friend.

I read G. Baklanov’s “The Youngest Among Brothers.” Wonderful prose. Not a single empty phrase. Again, this phenomenon: after reading “The Foothold” 20 years ago, I saw “my own” perception of war on the pages of a book. Now in this book, with the same accuracy, I saw

“my own” feelings about the current state of affairs and our life, the morality of our modern society.

October 10, 1981

I haven't picked up this diary in exactly two months. Now I'll try to at least outline what's happened since.

From August 14-21, I was in the Baltics, in my favorite “Yantar” sanatorium. Swimming in cold water, walks, and runs along the beach for many kilometers. Trips to Kemer, Tukums. Then by plane to Riga – Simferopol, I transferred to “Yuzhnyi” (a sanatorium not far from Foros). I swam a lot and never ceased to be amazed at myself – slender and young, and like Andre Malraux at 70 (I read him there), “I do not admit old age and do not feel like an old man.”

Ponomarev's daughters were at this sanatorium as well. He came over from the neighboring “Dacha”! My dinner with Cossutta. Brutents was also there and a Kiev regional committee secretary (I don't remember his last name) with his wife, and others.

I read Nechkina's “The Day of December 14, 1825.” I also discovered some other things for myself in this Plutarchian (for us) era... Against the background of another novella “I am from Counterintelligence” – another era, where our new, modern understanding (and vision) about the people who made our revolution is presented in a simplified and concentrated form.

I left two days early because of the arrival of the Labour Party delegation – Foot, Healey, and eleven other parliamentarians. The event, as it turned out, was more important than Brandt's visit.

Next came a frenzied week of preparing materials for the meeting with the Labourists. My sessions with Blatov – preparing a memo for Brezhnev. Blatov's manner of turning every word inside out, examining it, then replacing it with another – frazzled my nerves. But overall, it turned out shorter but with more weight, more impressive. He removed all of Ponomarev's “contributions” (based on clues from me about what exactly came from Ponomarev), thereby clearing the text of propaganda, moreover – it was the vulgar Ponomarev-style propaganda. He removed (or simplified) some of my “artistic touches” as well, but the ideas associated with them remained. He added (after conferring with Ustinov) the most important aspect – specific “concessions” on missiles, which made the greatest impression on Foot & Co., as well as the entire international community.

The Labourist delegation's arrival on October 15 [sic]. Sheremetyevo. B.N.'s games – he was deliberately obscure about a meeting with Brezhnev. Talks at the CC Secretariat. The effectiveness of Zagladin and Inozemtsev. The Labourists' metamorphosis – pragmatism, cynicism, sincerity.

The problem of the “communique” that Dzhavad and I settled in 20 minutes over dinner at the Sovietsky Hotel. The next day a meeting with Brezhnev at the Kremlin, right after the Politburo. Three photo and other correspondents. “Dear Comrade Brezhnev” – Foot shakes Brezhnev's hand with both of his, which right away creates the necessary momentum. Shock from the fact that there is neither ideology, nor propaganda... Foot's response, essentially a

commentary on what Brezhnev said. But there was also a reaction to the reminder about 1940-41. Healey's intervention – a clever move adopting what Inozemtsev said the day before (about Brezhnev in the war, about him as the head of defense, someone who understands what war is, etc.). B.N. ruined Blatov's and mine final memo for Brezhnev (who was sitting nearby) by advising him to remove the playfully-intimate parts that would have certainly embellished the finale.

Healey asked for the text of Brezhnev's speech, cheekily interrupting him in mid-sentence. The latter allowed it... In the end: everyone liked everyone and we "parted like friends." The General Secretary immediately ordered to present them with gifts, which turned out to be quite expensive.

In the evening there was a reception at the British embassy (my first time there).

From September 25-October 4 – in England with Dzhavad, at a Labour Party conference.

London: 25, 26, 27. Meeting (briefing) at the embassy. Developing an action plan following the Foot & Co. visit to Moscow.

Then a trip to Brighton for the conference itself. Meetings, rallies, farewells.

October 17, 1981

London and Brighton are far behind. At work – texts, texts, completely different ones. The restless B.N. came up with the idea to respond to the Pentagon's "Soviet Military Power" with a counter-book along the lines of "American Military Power." He persuaded Ustinov. I went to see the generals at the General Staff on Frunze Street. We discussed the plan. We will publish it by the end of the year. In the meantime – an article in *Pravda*, which will come out soon. It was also prepared by the generals, but I edited it heavily. Yesterday B.N. sent it around the Politburo.

At the same time, it took the General Staff a week to verify the figures in "a letter to fraternal parties" on the same subject, which we composed in one day last Friday.

The flow of day-to-day affairs and papers. Brezhnev's interview for *Der Spiegel* in connection with his upcoming visit to Bonn. Articles by H. Mies for *Pravda* and *Kommunist*. I put them aside for later, after the visit.

Greetings from the CC to McLennan on the occasion of the CPGB's Congress in November and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gallacher (former General Secretary of the CPGB). A paper giving consent, finally, to include in the English edition Marx's work "Revelations of the Diplomatic History of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century," where he slanders Peter the Great and Kalita, and generally spouts hatred of Russia (I had a big conversation about it with McLennan in London, but they are threatening to stop the entire publication!). I think Zimyanin will again dig in his heels and make noise, though B.N. seems to have made peace with it.

All of this I essentially have to do myself. Zhilin is right: the structure of the Department's personnel is falling terribly behind the nature of the work we do. Our main product, one way or another, has to go through the consultants, through me, Zagladin, Brutents.

The sectors for the most part are not adapted to literary-political work, they do not know how to write “for take away.” But there are only four-five (real) consultants in the Department! That is why some are awfully overloaded, while the majority is sitting idle while receiving almost the same salary.

B.N. is planning to visit Mitterrand for the congress of the socialist party. He wants to set the sea on fire here too, and most importantly – he wants to go to France. The communists were baffled by this. Gremetz said (to our ambassador) it is “a great gift” (the level). B.N. hesitated for a long time, but he consulted with others, not me. Especially because the draft documents for the congress contain a fair amount of “the Soviet threat,” and “re-armament” (because of the SS-20), and Atlanticism, Afghanistan, Poland, and even human rights.

I received Volume I of the four-volume edition of Byron, *Don Juan*. It is brilliant after all. But I just do not have time to read at least a minimum of journals and books. This is bad.

Moscow bakeries are running short, and by evening the shelves are almost empty. There is no variety of bread. Meanwhile, the other day at the Kremlin, Suslov went all out talking about our “mature” and “developed” socialism in front of the departments of social sciences. Even B.N. told me what comments he made on the preliminary text at the request of the speaker. He bitterly and spitefully “chuckled” on this score: “they allow themselves something like that with me! (I am a CC Secretary; I know the real state of affairs!)”

December 5, 1981

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Moscow was celebrated yesterday at the Kremlin Palace. Applause for Stalin (he was shown on the screen). Thunderous applause in the auditorium. Everyone stood up. Brezhnev was surprised: how is it possible that people are giving a standing ovation to someone else but him. He reluctantly half-stood up.

For some reason, Grishin did not mention the Siberian divisions.

On the one hand, yes, it is good that we honor the memory of 1941. On the other hand, nostalgic patriotism is now the only thing that can evoke a genuine feeling of unity.

And our present-day reality – there is no more butter in Moscow...

Today is volunteer cleanup day. The metro is packed, and above the escalator you hear Zykina singing about “Malaya Zemlya”... You can’t make this stuff up! However, I noticed in the Kremlin yesterday that the applause wasn’t too enthusiastic when his name (Brezhnev’s) came up. It was dutiful applause, according to the established norm... But try the sycophants as they might, it turned out to be impossible to connect his name with the Battle of Moscow.

But – they will make up for it! His 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary is coming up!

November 23-28 in Prague. A meeting of 90 parties regarding the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. The Japanese railed at us... But everyone else was lovely. About twenty delegations spoke in favor of a meeting on the ICM. But why do we need it? And what are the majority of these 90 parties really worth?! And why waive a red flag over a truly big anti-war movement.

The Czechs. Czechoslovakia is bursting with fat and plenty. Eighty-six kilograms of meat per capita. Hungry and angry Poland is nearby. And all of this is the socialist community, headed by us.

Menshikov and Bogdanov were in Hungary for a seminar on American policy towards Eastern Europe. My friend Gyula Horn spoke out about our policy towards our “friends”: “You can’t do that to allies.” And Hungary turned to the IMF.

Elections to the Academy. Brutents, Shmidt, and Volobuyev are begging... They’re sending me to B.N. to put in a word for them. Disgraceful. However, it fits into the general moral decay. Trukhanovsky told me how Bromley is blocking his path to become an academician: he told Rybakov (academician – Secretary of the History Department at the USSR Academy of Sciences) that his (Trukhanovsky’s) wife is Jewish. And Rybakov started checking. He invited Trukhanovsky and his wife to his house. Then asked their daughter, who is a student in the history department, to see him at the department. Trukhanovsky wrote a note, sealed it, and gave it to his daughter to pass to Rybakov (“I’m fulfilling your request. Here’s my daughter.”) I don’t know if Rybakov was convinced that both his wife and daughter are Jewish. How he will vote now – nobody knows.

On the airplane on the way back, B.N. was frank and told us that ideology and the class approach towards Yugoslavia in 1948 was a sham. It was just that Tito became too popular! And Stalin said: “If I lift a finger, he will be gone.”

He told us at length about the Slansky trial. He investigated it later (after 1953), talked to those who led the investigation (KGB officers): they bluntly admitted that all of it was pure farce.

About Laszlo Rajk: it is all very simple – he fought in Spain, and in 1948, somewhere by chance he met with some Serb with whom they fought together in the international brigade. The case against him was ready: “conspiracy.”

Our old man (Ponomarev) got worked up. And all the more he is a puzzle of the Stalinist era. He is outraged by the Slansky trial, but he is just as indignant about the revelations by the Czech journalist in his book and film “Confession”... although it is historical fact. This is the whole Ponomarev – he does not want to be present to witness the collapse of “his empire” (i.e. the ICM), therefore he faithfully serves whoever is at the top “currently.”

The November CC Plenum and session of the Supreme Soviet. The same things again. “Work better.” Senile appeals. And no one wants to give even a 10 percent effort to speak frankly, urge, criticize. It is useless. Meanwhile, there is talk in Moscow about “the gypsy.” He is the longtime lover of Brezhnev’s daughter. Her husband, Churbanov, who was made a first deputy at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and candidate member of the CC, knows about it of course, and puts up with it. But this gypsy got caught (as part of a ring) on some foreign exchange transactions. They started a case against him. And suddenly... the case gets closed and the gypsy gets a position at the Bolshoi Theater. It looks like this is not just a rumor, considering how loving the General Secretary is with his relatives.

People presented each other with pins – “Fifty Years in the CPSU”...

A rock opera at the Theater of the Lenin Komsomol “Juno and Avos” based on Voznesensky. Talented, powerful, modern-patriotic. Russia will not perish, because with every crisis it falls into almost fanatical patriotism.

Visit to Bonn.

Negotiations in Vienna on arms reductions. What are they talking about, when 40 percent of national income goes to the military-industrial complex. And irreversibly... That is the question. Because no one has any plans to conquer us. An article by the famous Kennan (saying: come to your senses! What values do you care about? Neither you, nor they, can show each other anything that is truly worth dying for!)

December 13, 1981

I went to the Manege for an exhibition dedicated to the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Moscow. Not much to see. The photos were the most interesting part. There were few paintings (from that time, 1941-45) due to the circumstances. The art being produced right now is stilted and pointless – in the current style of feeble imitation. And again, half of the exhibition is dedicated to Brezhnev. This is terrible, above all from aesthetic and ethical perspectives.

Today Jaruzelski declared martial law in Poland. What will happen? But it looks like it was done skillfully and at the right moment... The whole world is probably raging. However, I think the Pilsudski effect will kick in. There’s a reason why Olszowski in a recent speech recalled why the Kingdom of Poland fell.

I read Yevtushenko’s novel in issue No. 10 of *Moskva*. He transferred to prose everything he’s written in verse over the last 27 years. Whatever they may say, and however they may purse their lips, it is a public action with very brave, open, albeit banal thoughts about our modern condition. Whatever may drive a writer, he must appear honest, otherwise he does not fulfill his role. This is what Yevtushenko is... He wants to remain himself to the end.

Yu. Trifonov’s *Time and Place*, a novel published in Issues No. 9 and 10 of *Druzhba Narodov*. Talented nostalgia, unresolved issues over Stalinism. But this is already boring. Trifonov is not breathing as one with society, in this respect he is much weaker than Bondarev, and that same Yevtushenko, and other talented ones.

I’ve been into Collingwood (*The Idea of History*). A remarkably smart book. What’s even more remarkable, is what Karyakin told me today: he received a letter from Dez’ka, who writes that he’s currently into Collingwood as well... Yurka concluded: if you didn’t conspire over it, then it’s because you are “from the same lyceum.”

I’ve been tasked to give a report at the Department’s regular party meeting on the November Plenum. Once again, for the third time now, I will shine with pessimism, that’s why they like me. I say the things that aren’t published on this subject. I can’t do demagoguery.

I came across a book I bought at the CC’s kiosk in 1963, the only book of Korzhavin’s poems. I started flipping through it. The powerful pieces move you to tears – especially about Russia, Borodino, Russian intelligentsia, patriotism... And this poet became a dissident, left, ruined his enormous talent... a Jew who saw into the essence of our great history, who embraced

Russia as his own, as the most important, unique, and great. And there you have it, he was “crushed by everyday life.”

And article about Baudelaire in a compilation from 1970, *The Flowers of Evil*.

December 29, 1981

I'm on vacation. But I was working on B.N.'s request – went over the manuscript he wants to publish in the U.S. (he already found a publisher) about scientific communism. Some parts are even interesting. Most of it is primitive, at the level of a university textbook. But the West may find it interesting: what do the Moscow communists themselves (one of the team leaders) think about Marxism-Leninism today...

In a word, he grasped the needs of the market. He is accumulating publications in order to remain in history... And out of the 325 pages, he himself wrote hardly a dozen. Kovalsky was the “foreman.” I recruited Ambartsumov, Vakhromeyev. Some contributed without my knowledge. It was portrayed as an assignment from the CC, and of course nobody said that it was for Ponomarev's (“original”) book. A little bit here, a little bit there... and it turned into yet another book in his now six-volume collected works.

This methodology testifies not only to his personal contempt for people, but also to the general atmosphere – when it is considered normal to write for your bosses, and the bosses consider it normal to openly order, or even demand this work and admit without embarrassment that they did not write it themselves.

Brezhnev's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. An all-Union and even international showcase of shamelessness. If we compare it to what took place exactly 30 years ago on the occasion of Stalin's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the latter comes out looking like a very modest man. The only things missing now are the words “great leader.” Everything else is much more lavish than was done for Joseph Vissarionovich. “Titanic labor for the good of the people”... this is said when even in Moscow there is no butter, when candy has been removed from store shelves so there will be something left to sell on New Year's Eve, when in the capital a person cannot buy more than two loaves of bread at one time, no more than half a kilo of sausage, if it ever appears on store shelves, and so forth.

## Postscript to 1981

This is the year of the XXVI Congress of the CPSU. All the fuss with its preparation (in which the author had to participate) once again exposed the bureaucratic and artificial nature of this event, and its carefully calculated outcomes. Nothing but symbols sanctified by the tradition of the Great Revolution, but it meant a lot to the millions of party members who used it to demonstrate their special status in society. And for the society itself, accustomed as it was to the institution of hegemony, the “decisive role,” the Congress of the “Leninist Party” was always a sign of hope.

The Congress is interesting from the perspective of the situation in the International Communist Movement. For the CPSU, the presence of almost one hundred fifty “fraternal” delegations served as proof that the USSR maintained the position (appearance) of a “great ideological power.” That is why we went to such great lengths to make sure that none of those who came to welcome the Congress would feel slighted. But at the same time, we could not allow any disagreements to become visible, even though quite a few had accumulated in the ICM.

As for the “fraternal parties” themselves (at least for many), the XXVI Congress became a difficult milestone, a time to decide.

Ideologically, many had long parted ways with the CPSU. Revelations about the Stalinist nature of the Soviet system, which were further motivated after the suppression of the “Prague Spring,” the dissident movement, Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov, repressions for ideological and political reasons, the Jewish question and essentially official anti-Semitism, human rights and the obvious deficiencies in Soviet democracy, economic degradation that finally buried the USSR’s claims to catch up with the West on the standard of living – all of this plus Afghanistan and other ineptitude in the foreign arena – left the Soviet Union stripped of its former authority and attractiveness. The only thing that remained was the power of the state, essentially its military strength.

The communist parties finally had to choose (“Eurocommunism” laid a tempting foundation for this process) between identifying with real democracy or loyalty to the superpower. Democracy promised some hope to revive their influence among the masses of their countries. The “reflected light” of the superpower gave significance to these (often completely insignificant) parties in the eyes of Western officials and among the public.

The rejection of loyalty and ties with the CPSU in favor of the “purity” of the original (essentially democratic) ideas of communism was fraught not only with the loss of this significance (albeit illusory), but also with the disappearance of material support from the CPSU. The very existence of the majority of these parties depended on this support, especially the small and mid-sized communist parties.

This volume contains many details of how “reciprocal efforts” were successful at preventing obvious breaks and preserved the appearance of unity in the ICM to mutual reassurance.

In 1981, as in previous years, periodically there are glimpses of departure from rigid ideology among the upper echelon of Soviet leadership. However, this is most noticeable in Brezhnev himself. His position in the party hierarchy allowed him to behave more freely, he did not have to bow to sacred icons on every occasion, he could resolve issues with pragmatism and realism. For example, he refused to repeat “1968” in Poland. He was characteristically indifferent to the affairs of other communist parties; he had a distaste for various international conferences associated with them; and he had a readiness to engage with socialist democrats and others.

In part, this can be attributed to the growing intellectual “disconnect” of the General Secretary. There were few things he managed to do himself by this point (intellectually as well). He nearly lost the ability to articulate his thoughts. However, such things as the refusal to intervene in Poland are unquestionably his personal achievement. He was persistently pushed, including by Husak and Ceausescu, to act “like before.”

Political control over society was tightened, persecutions for blatant anti-Sovietism multiplied. At the same time, censorship over art, literature, and the publishing industry surprisingly weakened. Aesop’s style became so transparent that the true meaning could be seen “with the naked eye.” Those who were in control often preferred to close their eyes to this, essentially, opposition to the “socialist” regime. The authorities seemed to be losing their confidence, their sense of being unconditionally right. It was as if they felt change approaching.

This volume includes personal observations and thoughts on the country’s decline, its loss of vitality, which was substituted by props and demagoguery.

For the author of these notes as well as for an increasing number of people involved in politics and social science, it was becoming more and more difficult to participate in the cynical and hopeless political game as they faced the contradictions in their minds and ambiguity in their self-esteem.