

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1982

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It's happened! The Italians held their Plenum on January 11-13, and before that (December 30th) they passed a resolution of the Italian Communist Party regarding Poland... and they expelled us from socialism. We've observed their logic for a long time now. The Polish crisis, and especially the martial law that went into effect on 12.13, prompted them to finally declare that we are parting ways.

The formula is simple: the Soviet model of socialism has exhausted itself the same way the social-democratic phase of the revolutionary process did. The latter faced its own failure and futility with the collapse of the Second International. Great Russia (they do not deny that it is great) in the revolution of 1917 and Lenin with his decisive break with established dogmas initiated a new phase. And now this phase is over. The revolutionary process had momentum from October, but it has dried up. The institutions that emerged from it, which the Soviet Union imposed in Eastern Europe, have lost their ability to evolve.

These institutions can no longer serve as an incentive, or example, or a source of inspiration, or even a stronghold for anyone – because strengthening them, the Soviet Union, and the balance of power in the world in its favor, would mean depriving all others who want socialism with the freedom of choice. In other words, it would buttress the situation where the Soviet model is imposed.

The fate of the revolutionary process now depends on the ability of the Western European labor movement to overcome capitalism and create a socialist system that would integrate all the democratic achievements of European civilization. To use our phrasing, the center of the world revolutionary movement has shifted to Western Europe. And it is the Italian Communist Party that can make the greatest contribution to supporting this “third way” in the third phase of the revolutionary process.

I cannot resist quoting their main point... especially because it showcases phraseology that had seemed unthinkable to be used by communists (aside from the Chinese) in relation to us.

So, an excerpt from Berlinguer's report.

“It can happen, and has happened, that societies and states that emerge from radical revolutions may go through states of stagnation, regression, and experience moments of crisis. If we look at socialist countries (disregarding the fact that some of them hardly have a foundation in an intrinsic and authentic revolutionary movement, i.e. a popular, national, mass movement), here is what happened. Due to an interplay of difficult international and external conditions, as well as mistakes made, in particular, in the economic field (forced development, authoritarian centralization, etc.), due to bureaucratization (party-state, monolithism, the loss of the special political role of the party, Marxism turned into a state ideology), due to the predominance of closed dogmatism even with a touch of fanaticism (it should be noted that this is especially dangerous for egalitarian concepts, as happened for centuries with Christianity), a kind of

perversion began to take place regarding Marx's main philosophical innovation – his critique of ideology.

“Instead of reality, ideology came to the foreground. Instead of the transformative and creative practice of new facts and new ideas, there came a kind of ideological ‘creed,’ which is the so-called Marxism-Leninism. It is understood as an ossified doctrine, almost metaphysical, a set of formulas that are supposed to substantiate and guarantee a certain type of economic-political structure. It is a universal model to which various realities and social subjects must be adapted and which, by virtue of the unshakable party principle, must be implemented or imposed. Herein lies one of the main causes of the difficulties, stagnation, crises. This is why we say that these societies need democratic renewal.”

The Italians see it as their internationalist duty to speak about our crisis and impasse, because otherwise the party, the communists, may find themselves unprepared in the face of a crisis much worse than the one we are going through now, when we, for example, have to buy 25 million tons of grain from our “top adversary.”

They are expecting upheaval in our camp of such scale that it would make the Polish crisis seem like child's play in comparison.

Ponomarev is in a rage. Even after their first reaction to martial law in Poland (the interview with Natta, Napolitano, Berlinguer, the article in *L'Unita*) he ordered us to write an article for *Novoye Vremya* to call them to order, and a letter to the Central Committee of the PCI. The letter was sent on December 31, they did not even bother to respond. The article was finished a long time ago, before my vacation, but it hadn't passed all the stages [of our bureaucracy] before the Italians made a statement on Poland on behalf of the leadership of the PCI. We started to revise the article to respond to the declaration, but while we were fussing with it, they held a Plenum at which Berlinguer made a report, and all the others, except Cossutta, expressed themselves even more sharply... without looking back, including those who had seemed our bosom buddies, like Cervetti...

We had to revise the article again to account for the Plenum and to reorient it for publication in *Kommunist*. But so far it looks like a petty shout, a yelp – because what took place is bigger than Eduard Bernstein's speech at the end of the XIX century, and bigger even than the emergence of the Trotskyist opposition in the 1920s. What everyone has observed for a long time has now been said in the open – the International Communist Movement does not exist. This was said from the rostrum of the biggest party in the capitalist world. Rubbi practically used these exact words in a debate... And that the parties that continue to follow Moscow's lead are doomed to stagnate and disappear.

However, even this outcry by Ponomarev is not going through. The draft of the aforementioned article has been lying on Suslov's desk for a week, but he has not even read it... and he does not want to send it to the Politburo. B.N. complained: apparently Suslov said the most important thing right now is “the Polish front and the need to repel NATO's attacks, to make sure the missile negotiations are not disrupted... And here you are proposing to open a new front of struggle. Why do we need this?!”

I think this problem is gerontological rather than political or ideological. Perhaps he will change his point of view after he reads Lunkov's ciphered telegram on Berlinguer's report (TASS received the text of his speech only last night, even though it took place on 01.11).

The paradox of the situation is that no one in our leadership will read Berlinguer's report in full (with the possible exception of Zimyanin – by force of habit from his journalist days). They will only read quotes from the embassy telegram, which out of context look like pure anti-Sovietism. The only significance they will attach to the Italian Plenum (there is not a word about it in our press, by the way) is as an anti-Soviet and, of course, revisionist shindig. Because of this, they are overlooking its historical significance. By this I do not mean the Italians have brought Marxism and the revolutionary process to a truly new stage and supposedly given it a new impetus with their conception. Not at all! I am simply noting the truly historical fact that following the Chinese, Albanians, and many others, our former best friends dared to publicly declare that the emperor has no clothes.

Over the holidays I read V. Krupin's *The 40th Day. A Tale in Letters* (in *Nash Sovremennik* No. 11) – a story of a journalist, a failed writer, who returned to his hometown in the Vyatka area and what he saw there... Precisely what the Italians are talking about when they spell the death of real socialism. It's astonishing that it was permitted. I was told the author and the editor both got a big dressing down. But the CC Department of Culture decided to stop there and not raise a fuss. This is yet another striking confirmation of my "musings" that our cultural authorities either can no longer stop the natural process of Russian literature's return to its classical function as the conscience and philosophy of life, or that they are deliberately letting it slide.

By the way, regarding philosophy in Russia. There is a passage in this novel:

"I was struck by contemporary Russian literature – this historical line is echoed: in Russia, the best literature is always philosophical. In the West, philosophy comes first, and literature is separate... From a young age they have Montaigne, Pascal, Lichtenberg and other Catholics... But for me, a descendant of the Orthodox, there should have been our own philosophers: Florensky, Fedorov, Fedotov, Karamzin, Vernadsky, Tsiolkovsky, Ukhtomsky. But when did we read them? At a later time, lost time."

This reflection prompted me to continue – which the author couldn't do in the Soviet magazine, even if it was on his mind. Indeed, according to Gorky's definition, in Russia, classical literature was also philosophy. Actual philosophers like Leontiev, V. Solovyov, as well as Berdyaev, Shestov, Rozanov, and those mentioned by Krupin, found themselves on the sidelines. No more than a dozen people knew about them. We can find a historical explanation for why this happened... (in part because, unlike Catholicism that incorporated such figures as Montaigne, Pascal, and others, our Orthodox Christianity remained at the level of the Suzdal god. This is due to our national character as well as because we had to quickly catch up to Europe, which meant jumping over some steps). But that is not the point right now. This tradition (great literature being philosophy, national identity, morality and way of thinking) was interrupted by Bolshevism... The Great Revolution on its own, and later materialized in a great

state, created a completely new philosophy – a political ideology, which acquired a truly popular, all-encompassing nature and became a powerful driving force of our social development for almost 30 years, 20 at any rate. And what was literature, Soviet literature, during this period? Even in its peak moments, particularly in those peak moments, the classics (*Quiet Flows the Don*, *The Road to Calvary*, Fedin, Leonov, Mayakovsky... you can name dozens of names) – it was both an accessory and at the same time a dominant philosophy of life, based in Bolshevism. Literature aimed to give Bolshevism concrete expression through images and examples, develop it, apply it, enhance its impact, give it the most diverse forms of expression, manifestation, influence, etc.

But starting sometime around the middle of the war years, Bolshevism as an ideology, as mass consciousness, as public and generally recognized and authoritative morality began to lose steam. The crisis and decline of our literature happened precisely because of this (since the “cult of personality” could not replace Bolshevism!). Our literature revived after the XX Congress, but it was searching for its purpose for a long time yet... (Yevtushenko). Finally, in the 1970s, when the bonds and grip of the “cultural authorities” weakened, it regained its historical function, the one our great classical literature developed in the 19th century... To be the philosophy of life. I felt something of these tendencies when I read the reports from the last RSFSR Congress of Writers. It turns out it is not a spontaneous process, the authors themselves recognize it. What happened with Fedeyev’s *The Young Guard* would be unthinkable today: when Stalin read the first edition and said – where is the Party, its leading role! And the second edition appeared.

Kutsenkov’s birthday. All intelligent people, but there seemed to be nothing to talk about. It reminded me of a Jewish joke. A Jewish man is walking down the street and throwing sheets of paper. A policeman approaches him and asks: “What are you doing?” “Distributing leaflets...” The policeman picks one up, looks at it. “There’s nothing written on it, they’re blank...” “Why write anything, everything is clear anyway!”

January 20, 1982

I suddenly felt ill at work. I was distracted by the frantic race Zagladin and I are in: at the Secretariat on Tuesday, B.N. promised to produce an article for *Pravda* on the Italians by noon on Wednesday. He must have thought the assignment Timofeyev and Galkin were working on over the weekend could quickly be “brought up to snuff.” However, they presented something completely unusable: we couldn’t use a sentence of it, not a single thought even.

On Monday, with the same breakneck speed, I had to finish the article for *Kommunist*. Suslov signed the text on Saturday, but when we looked over this text with the reputation of our “theoretical body – *Kommunist*” in mind, it became clear that it lacked depth. Likhachev from *Kommunist* and I essentially reworked it over a couple hours and made it into something suitable and presentable. B.N. kept calling on the phone, mad about the delay, saying that the article was fine already and we only had to add references to the Plenum alongside the previous references to the PCI’s statement from December 29. I answered that I cannot do it otherwise, since the job came to me, I see it as my responsibility to make sure there isn’t a single poorly-constructed or inappropriate phrase the Italians could use to tear the entire framework down.

Instead of 16 pages we produced 23, completely reedited. Yesterday the CC Secretariat approved this text, it will go into the second issue of the journal. It was at this moment that B.N. promised an article for *Pravda* as well, and then a whole series of events to follow.

Zagladin, in his characteristic way of putting together public speeches – dictated 12 pages of a rather polemical text and gave it to me to turn into an article. It took him an hour and half, but took me 3-4 hours, even though I added only a couple of my own thoughts.

Vadim called. He told me that B.N. summoned him in the morning and threw a tantrum. The usual scenario: he cannot offer a single idea of his own, and he cannot reasonably, i.e. objectively, reject anything either. But everything is just “not it,” and that’s that. Vadim was furious afterwards, and when he came to his office and did not have any specific instructions, he simply moved around parts of the article and made new entries. “I’m sure B.N. will like it now. After all, he made his ‘decisive’ contribution!”

But these are just stories... Where are things going? Both these articles are extremely harsh. It is an accusation; we’ve thrown the gauntlet. They expelled us from socialism, and we are expelling them from what they themselves rejected – the communist movement and Marxism-Leninism. The separation is going to hurt, this is not like with the Chinese. With the Italians we have half a century of cohabitation and embraces. Not to mention the fact that their action is truly a powerful blow to the myth we call the communist movement. Although the same No. 2 issue of *Kommunist* will have another article – on the outcomes of the Prague meeting on the Problems of Peace and Socialism journal. I contributed a great deal to it (in terms of tone, assessments, formulas). Likhachev put it together, with Kozlov’s help. If you read it carefully, you can easily see that we (the CPSU) can no longer portray the ICM the way it is still portrayed in university and Party school textbooks, i.e. for millions of Soviet party members.

January 21, 1982

Zagladin called: B.N. went through the PCI article like a plow. Turns out plows damage the earth, and ours simply leaves it barren.

Today it was up for approval at the PB, along with the “plan of action” regarding the Italians.

My friend Dez’ka (David Samoilov) called me out of the blue. He’s drinking vodka with Karyakin. They decided to call me to tell me how much they love me. Dez’ka complained that Narovchatov shortly before his death confessed to Dez’ka that he is proud to belong to Dez’ka’s generation, even though he himself was in the Finnish War and fought more than Dez’ka in the Great Patriotic War.

By the way, *Novy Mir* began publishing Narovchatov posthumously. His *Witches* is deep. I heard on the radio, about three weeks ago, a recording of his recollections about the last pre-war years – IFLI [Moscow Institute of History, Philosophy, and Literature, 1931-41] and so on.

Dez’ka views me as Prince Gorchakov among Pushkin’s (his own) lyceum friends.

However: the example of Narovchatov deserves attention. He, like Konstantin Simonov, was a soldier of his time and country.

January 22, 1982

I came back to work today. I wish I hadn't. Most of the commotion was over the two articles about the Italians (for *Pravda* and for *Kommunist*). The Politburo decided to "assign Ponomarev to finalize them in the spirit of the discussion." He immediately promised to deliver by Friday afternoon.

The following happened, as Zagladin told me. He prepared a memo for B.N., so the latter would say something coherent at the PB. Zagladin had sent it to me at home, it was moderate and balanced. However, as Zagladin and Blatov later reported, B.N. did not use it and instead kept repeating that "a great deal of work had been done" with the PCI: Brezhnev met with Berlinguer three times, Ponomarev himself had met a number of times, other did as well, we wrote letters, sent delegations, and still – "here's what we have." Blatov later commented, "You can't report like that, 'we worked and worked, but got the opposite result.' And he brought Leonid Ilyich into it, too..." But herein lies all of Ponomarev's logic, the logic of a bureaucrat, a person who is still running errands at 77 years old. In this situation, the most important thing for him is to justify himself, to show that he, as the secretary of the regional committee in his area, did everything he could but they are such bastards and don't take anything into account. He is in that bureaucratic frenzy, the petty careerism, that has become his second nature. At his age, in his position, this behavior is pointless. When he is in this state, he loses the ability to correctly assess even his colleagues, who are not involved in the ICM, or foreign affairs in general, but who showed much more political sense and a no-nonsense approach.

Chernenko led the Politburo (Suslov is sick, Brezhnev is in Zavidovo). Andropov, who did not yet know L.I.'s opinion on the matter, started by saying that we should think it over, decide what we want, that we shouldn't shoot from the hip, we need a good plan of action to "keep the party (PCI) with us."

In the meantime, the following was taking place. Zagladin was not invited to the PB. He was in his office when the special phone line rang: Brezhnev. "I read your article (for *Kommunist*)," he said, "or rather, Galya read it to me. The text is patchy, it is clear that it had a bunch of authors. There are some decent parts, and there are banal and boring parts, like your boss himself (Ponomarev). Most importantly – it is not clear what we want. Should we break with them or work with them? What do you think? But tell me straight..."

Zagladin allegedly replied: of course, we should work with them!

"So, what are you writing here then? All these hysterical notes, railing at them? We are a big party, a solid power, we are the party of Lenin. So, we need to reason calmly, try to explain, clearly state our position. We should not turn the article into an indictment..." (This is precisely what Ponomarev demanded of us, literally saying: no discussion, no polemics even – an "indictment!").

"Deal?" – finished Brezhnev, – and hung up.

It soon became clear that he said the same thing to Chernenko. The latter, after listening to everyone, stated the abovementioned on behalf of Leonid Ilyich.

B.N. rushed to the Department, gathered Zagladin, Zuyev, Smirnov, and, as if nothing had happened, started to “backpedal,” blaming those present for the fact that the article was not what the PB wanted. Not a hint of remorse, no acknowledgement that he was to blame. He was the one who berated Zagladin for liberalism and complained to me that Zagladin is “aiding and abetting.” He did it numerous times. The first draft for *Pravda* that Zagladin and I prepared, he rejected precisely on the grounds that it was “even softer” than the text for *Kommunist*. Damn it! This is the kind of person you have to work under and give your best so he does not look like an anachronistic cretin in the public eye!

This situation got me so wound up I was having an internal fit. Especially when I saw the result of the work done by Zuyev, Smirnov, and Ponomarev himself on the text after the PB. If the previous version was patchy, as Brezhnev noticed, this version turned into a collection of paragraphs, often completely unrelated to each other. The edits and additional phrases executed by Ponomarev were the most glaring examples of the “banality and boredom” Brezhnev pointed out so aptly.

The clever Vadim went to work on the article for *Pravda* and completely switched off from this article... after Brezhnev’s comments, he did not want to be associated with it.

Late in the evening, there was a meeting at B.N.’s with Zimyanin, Zamyatin, TASS and radio, Rakhmanin, and Shakhnazarov regarding the upcoming “Poland Solidarity Day” Reagan is organizing on January 30th. Afterwards, rather tensely, I expressed my feelings about the new text (Zagladin and Menshikov were present).

“You are not up to date,” Ponomarev retorted, “there was a Politburo.”

“I am up to date. I have no objections to the political assessments that came out of the Politburo. But I think the matter is too serious to publish an essay that is so semi-literate in language and with downright disorderly logic.”

His temper flared. So did mine.

“What do you want?”

“I want the text to be readable, so that one thing is connected to another, and the same thing isn’t repeated in three different places.”

“So do it,” he concluded. “But so that we can see what you did.”

And I went to do it... Idiot! I should learn a lesson from Zagladin!

The meeting I mentioned (about Reagan and Poland) is yet another demonstration of the petty hassle that comes from his incessant activity and desire to show that he is doing everything possible to fight back!

January 25, 1982

Ponomarev summoned me this morning. He got up and suddenly said that Suslov was very bad. I remember on the 11th he agreed to an article about the Italians. Then he was admitted to the hospital for an evaluation. A week later it looked like everything was fine. But three days ago, he had a stroke (hemorrhage). He has been unconscious since. “He would be turning 80 this year,” Ponomarev said. And then he broke into a eulogy, which was unexpected, because he never favored Suslov and apparently the feeling had been mutual. Everyone suspected that Suslov was the one blocking B.N. from becoming a full member of the Politburo. (This opinion, however, is not confirmed. I think it is more likely that Brezhnev does not want it!).

So: “You,” he said, “have no idea what role he played in all our party and political affairs... and in this...” (he made a gesture from which I was to understand – in regulating relationships and setting positions at the top).

I replied that I did. For my part, I added that he could even curb the MFA, even Gromyko himself. The latter submitted to Suslov without argument. Suslov’s opinion was absolute: at the Secretariat, the Politburo, nobody bothered to question whether his views were coordinated with Brezhnev or not.

B.N. continued: of course, he stayed away from some matters, sometimes he dragged his feet, he did not want some things. But his strength was (!) in the fact that he was guided only by the interests of the cause. He never had external, especially personal, motives, nepotism and so forth. Everyone knew this. His enormous authority in the party was largely based on this. He never brought in “his own” people from anywhere. He did not have favorites, “kindred” preferences and nominations. This was his principled stand. If he had any personal interests, they never came out... What will happen now?!

January 30, 1982

Yesterday was Suslov’s funeral. For the first time, I was in the procession from the House of the Unions to the Mausoleum. I was chilled to the bone.

I think this is the most significant death since Stalin. I do not know what role he played in exposing the “cult” and in the XX Congress, but afterwards he, like a grey cardinal, determined the balance of power “at the top.” His support of Khrushchev against Molotov & Co. in 1957 played a decisive role. I think he was the driving force behind containing the anti-cult forces, even though he “followed” Khrushchev in the second surge of anti-Stalinism at the XXII Congress (this must have been necessary to put an end to the Molotov legacy). He played a major role in the overthrow of Khrushchev... He was the one who delivered the diatribe at the October Plenum in 1964.

If he had ever wanted to become the “First” (which he never did), he would have become one exactly back then, in 1964. But he promoted Brezhnev, and in fact – the troika: Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny.

Finally, in the early 1970s, he had the last word in “dismantling” the troika and the sole nomination of Brezhnev. I remember the Plenum in 1973 (when Gromyko, Grechko, and Andropov were appointed members of the Politburo). For the first time, praise for L.I. was

conceived and delivered. The use of the phrase “and personally [*и лично*]” was documented for the first time as well (with great reluctance, disputes and doubts; I remember how B.N. resisted it when I was preparing the draft resolution). So it has been since then. Anyway, I remember the tense atmosphere at the Plenum. Members went up to the podium one by one and sang praises... But everyone was waiting: will Suslov speak, and if he does, what will he say and how. He made a short speech... to the point. He did not allow himself any gasps or exultations, not even basic exaggerations. But he did say the most important thing: “And Comrade Brezhnev personally!” Since then, we have been increasingly living under this [slogan].

But that Plenum and that action secured for Suslov a solid (beyond any competition, much as Kirilenko tried to curry favor) second place and undeniable authority, autonomous from the General Secretary.

Then again, he had enjoyed real authority, not created by propaganda or considerations of self-preservation and promotion at the top, for a long time – from late 1950s, and at the ideological level even from late 1940s. In many ways, it was a moral authority, rather than an authoritarian one. It did not come from power, but because people truly believed his disinterestedness, his real modesty. People knew that he was not petty or vindictive, that there was no nepotism. He did not really have “his” people, “friends” in the personal sense. He was our Savonarola, only without his cruelty.

Everyone is wondering now – who will take his place?!

It is obvious: Chernenko. He has many good qualities. In this sense he is very like Brezhnev. But, of course, he does not compare to Suslov in terms of his moral authority in the party and the country. He is too much a product of the party, Brezhnev’s appointee and blatantly a “personal friend.” Then again, nowadays moral authority (as it was in the olden days) is no longer required.

At Suslov’s funeral, Ryabenko barely dragged Brezhnev to the top of the Mausoleum, but Brezhnev delivered a vigorous speech, he did not falter at all. That was smart – he gave it himself, not someone else, so as not to demonstrate a “direct heir...” Although both Chernenko and Kirilenko were included in the funeral committee. Someone is still waiting for competition between them. But that is pointless. Kirilenko has been written off; he is just being tolerated now.

For us in the International Department, there is now a problem: whom will B.N. run to when he needs to quickly get “preliminary decisions”?! However, Konstantin Ustinovich is ready for it and already has some international experience. But will he be able to resist Ponomarev’s extremism at first, as Ponomarev invokes his “professional” knowledge of the issues, people, and experience in this area.

I think Chernenko will quickly get the hang of it. Zagladin will help him, he has his ear and will suggest moves before B.N. comes running with his folder.

Zagladin could not get away with such things with Suslov. The latter did not like unsolicited advice, and he did not really like Zagladin, either: he did not have the “party spirit,” the way Suslov understood it, not to mention modesty.

February 27, 1982

I didn't write all February. At first, I was busy with the Italians (while Zagladin was with Chernenko at the Congress of the PCF). For example, I wrote the “Remark” published in *Pravda*. It was perceived around the world as a “conciliatory” step. By the way, in the first draft I tried, for the sake of objectivity, to at least list the terms the Italians use to rail at us (“ossification of thought,” “turning Marxism-Leninism into a state ideology – a code of dead dogmas,” “state policy,” etc.). Andropov, together with Tikhonov, suggested to B.N. to remove that page entirely.

Once again, we are open to blows: the Italians publish everything we print as part of the debate, while we do not even quote them. They launched a vitriolic campaign against us, against “real socialism,” and without looking back, they are undressing us in front of their communists and the entire world.

On February 11, I flew to Canada with Mostovets and Ulasevich to attend the Congress of their CP. My diary is roughly as follows:

Twelve-hour flight to Montreal. Greenland. Mirabel Airport. Yakovlev, the consul, and others. Walking around the airport with Alexander Nikolayevich – he has a chip on his shoulder over the fact that he's been in “this exile” for nine years. Supposedly because of an article in *Pravda* that was an insult to patriotism. He had been the Deputy Head of the CC Propaganda Department. Conversations about Brezhnev, Podgorny, Demichev, Zimyanin, Bogolyubov. Yakovlev had refused to accept the latter into his department as head of a sector because of his “mediocrity.” Turns out Chernenko had also been head of a sector in his department. Complaints about wanting to return home. He is a person who, to my surprise, feels like he could still do a great deal, if given an appropriate sphere of work.

Four hours later, we boarded an Airbus and flew to Toronto. Kashtan met us himself, helped get carts for our luggage himself, drove us across town to the Holiday Inn himself.

The next day was free before the congress: an automobile exhibition with Sekretev and other businessmen, Bragin and Melikyan. Lunch at a posh hotel, just as Trudeau was giving a press conference there. Reading Kashtan's report to show Bragin what should (and what should not) be taken for *Pravda*.

In the evening at John Vor's (a correspondent for the Canadian Tribune in Moscow). Edwarda, Richard Sorge's former mistress. Lisa – their relative and housewife, a French teacher (she spoke with me in French).

Saturday, February 13 – the beginning of the Congress. Boisterous greetings. Kashtan's report... “the strikebreakers of socialism” towards the PCI – thunderous applause. My speech was the first of the foreign ones, right after lunch.

In the evening, there was an open banquet in the same location. A thousand people. Kashtan's toast. The CPSU was briefly mentioned in the next-to-last place.

We were seated for dinner with Ukrainians from Alberta. Three mighty Ukrainian farmers, who in conversation with us kept mixing up Old Ukrainian with English. Primitive, tight-fisted kulaks, but fanatically devoted to their former homeland – Ukraine. They are from those who emigrated in the 1920s. Their leader is Fedor (about 80 years old, quite lively old man), he is also the chairman of the board of the provincial party organization. Their primary “party work” is to make sure the young people do not forget Ukraine.

The same day after dinner I gave an interview to two of the largest newspapers, *The Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star*. They were very insistent and Kashtan wanted me to do it. But they were only interested in Poland. All my attempts to steer the conversation to the arms race and so forth were futile. The next day I read: “Communist Boss Agrees with Trudeau that Martial Law was the Lesser Evil.” That is all – from a half-hour conversation!

On Monday, during the closed session, the election, we were shown the TV tower, the tallest in the world (17 meters taller than the Moscow tower) and science center (like our Polytechnic Museum) – Toronto's pride. Then the closing of the Congress. Kashtan's speech.

In the evening there was a reception at the Central Committee. I had to make a toast. Impromptu, because Kashtan provoked me. But I think it went well.

In the morning at the CC – my report and a Q&A with the new executive committee plus all CC members from Toronto and the vicinity. I was on a roll and I think spoke engagingly, but a dull interpreter made my words so boring that I saw some people dozing off.

On the way to the airport, we visited our businesses “StankoExport” and “Belarus.” They sell agricultural machinery and programming machines. They do a good job; it is delightful to see how they run their business. Between the two organizations, there are seven Soviet managers and engineers. The rest are Canadians. They earn good money for the country.

Then Sekretev, after getting us drunk on whiskey, drove us to the airport. In an hour we were in Montreal.

On Wednesday morning I wrote a ciphered telegram, then lunch and walks around the city. In the evening I was in my hotel room. Yakovlev showed up. We went to a German restaurant, “Munich,” the place where local Germans hang out. The walls are decorated in the style of medieval Germany, beer-themed, waiters in old German outfits.

Yakovlev and I walked back to the hotel. He yearns for his homeland... he railed at the order of things, the bosses, the mess, Gromyko's shamelessness, Kirilenko's hunting in the Yaroslavl region... He kept saying: “Where are we going? What will happen? What's to be done?” In a word, the usual state of an intellectual. Plus, the outsider perspective, plus his personal resentment, plus a remarkable individual who was deprived of the opportunity to work at his potential.

On Thursday morning we went shopping, then lunch at the consulate with Sam Walsh. He is an interesting person. And then – Mirabel Airport and a long flight. That's it for Canada.

At work. Vadim, as always, is sick after a business trip abroad. The entire load of the battle with Italians and B.N.'s other irrepressible initiatives is on me. Now B.N. has set out to expose NATO. He really doesn't like it very much. We put together a paper: sixteen pages of proposals on how to do away with NATO.

March 13, 1982

I continue to work on the article against the Italians. When the draft was circulated to the PB members, there were some interesting remarks, especially Andropov's. It's happened twice already. There are objections to going on at length about real socialism, i.e. boasting. Andropov first, followed by Tikhonov and Ustinov, suggested to "drastically" shorten the article by removing precisely this section. The first time it happened with my "Remark." Back then, one could assume they did not want to quote the PCI's abusive expressions about us, but now... the doubts disappear. They must be preparing for the moment after "the big bell tolls" (Yu. Arbatov's expression).

But my B.N., approaching his 80th birthday, cannot let go of the propaganda-police way of thinking, even though he is better informed about the essence and nature of the Italian matter. He was stunned, he could not believe his eyes and ears when I showed him our Premier's remark in the margins: "it is not true that we build more housing than they do." In the U.S. they build twice as much (235 million m² vs. our 105-110 million m²). Even the Japanese have long surpassed us – 136 million m². He immediately called the Central Statistics Administration, Arbatov's institute. Unfortunately, they confirmed the information and added that when it comes to square meters per capita, it is downright embarrassing to compare. For a few seconds he was at a loss, but immediately recovered and started to edit this part of the text.

The Decembrists were awfully distant from the people – this was their problem (but not their fault). But what we have now is a conscious closing of eyes to the reality for the sake of propaganda. On a human level, one can understand him – brought up in the atmosphere of the "Short Course," even though he hates the cult of personality. However, he limits it only to the repressions.

I saw "Thus We Shall Win!" at the Academic Art Theater, by M. Shatrov and Yefremov. By the way, Hammer was at the show, while an actor portrayed him brilliantly on stage. Kalyagin was excellent as Lenin. It is an act of artistic and social significance. More than once, forgetting, I felt as if it was not an actor but Lenin himself in front of me. In part this is because the text is from the *Complete Works*. A great, brilliant text. For a long time afterwards, you feel that our homeland and the revolution produced a man who will not have an equal for a thousand years.

Yesterday we received a telegram from H. Mies: complaining that the Hungarians have contracted to build barracks for NATO troops in some town on the Rhine! There's a twist!

Arbatov is running around after a meeting with B.N. He had discussed his strategy with me on the phone beforehand: he is upset that all his various trips to Palme commissions, speeches in parliaments (Canada) and other places, on Western TV – nobody notices here, they are not even mentioned in the newspapers. I advised him not to go in with “personal complaints” but something related to the cause. Get B.N. interested in some anti-missile ideas. And it worked...

Arbatov had met with Andropov before that. The latter asked to help prepare the April Lenin report. Arbatov mentioned that it would be good to replace Lapin with Sasha Yakovlev (from Canada). Yu[ri] V[ladimirovich] was not against the idea in principle, but said “let it settle first” (what?), since he had been connected to the “*komsomoltsy*” (Shelepintsy).

Arbatov did not express himself very clearly; apparently the post-Suslov changes were discussed vaguely. Evidently, Yu.V. would like to move to the CC to the position of Secretary, because, as Arbatov commented, it would be awkward to go straight from “secret police” to General Secretary...

It is a problem: he is the only one from the possible contenders for M.A.’s role and a “rival” for Ustinych.

March 21, 1982

I was called to work, as the “letter to fraternal parties” B.N. made us write urgently – rushing after Brezhnev’s initiatives at the XVII Congress of Trade Unions – came back to the Department with comments. The essence of the remarks: the tone is directive, and should it fall into the wrong hands, so to speak, it will be the perfect evidence that the “anti-war movement” is the hand of Moscow. And one more thing – it is better to prepare such things with the MFA. You can feel here (and in the first remark) the hand of Aleksandrov-Agentov. Zagladin and I fixed it in half an hour and sent it to be retyped, so that later it would go to B.N.

Reception at the Hungarian embassy on the occasion of Gyula Horn. Our talks with him (with B.N. and Zagladin). Smart man. He digs deep. He embodies the Hungarians’ desire (and not only) to be an independent player in international affairs, though within a general framework. We have “theoretical” discussions with them about the international situation and so on. Towards the end, he asked directly: do you, the International Department, have a direct role in the Geneva talks, in SALT-II... even though he knew the answer.

But I first, I went to a reception with M. Szürös at the embassy. Arbatov’s toast praising Kadar – clearly in contrast. Shishlin’s drunk toasts on the subject of socialism – that only those who do not steal, deceive, engage in nepotism in personnel politics, etc. can lead a socialist country. The Hungarians saw everything, snickered and praised themselves, while we praised them too. Including me. I do not like these stripteases, it is despicable. But it is in the Russian manner. Corruption at the top and spirited self-accusation always go hand in hand with us.

March 27, 1982

Brutents returned from Yemen. The main impressions are about a visit that took place two weeks before his – by Churbanov, Brezhnev’s son-in-law, the First Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, who was made candidate CC member at the XXVI Congress. The ambassador and his wife, with others present, are horrified: it was an inconceivable disgrace and discreditation of our state, its leadership, and our policies. Starting with the fact that he was completely wasted as he got off the plane and nearly fell over (if someone hadn’t propped him up) in front of the “VIPs” greeting him, the guard of honor, etc. All the “business meetings” had to be cancelled because he would be drinking all night in the company of his sycophants and ass-kissers, then it was impossible to wake him up till lunch. The one time they managed to wake him, it was even worse. He was saying such nonsense that the interpreter had nothing to translate. The president was forced to send the ambassador a question – “should this guest be received at the presidential level.” The CC simply refused to have him, they cancelled the scheduled meetings.

Of course, the ambassador hosted a reception, but the distinguished guest kept falling face forward into his plate, he was completely out of it. He had to be taken away, as his uniform looked like god knows what.

In his lucid moments, his main intelligible phrase always started with, “Galina Leonidovna and I...” People from the East are good about such things and he flew back with innumerable suitcases and boxes.

The second impression: we’ve been building a hospital for the Yemenis since 1975. So far, the building only has three floors. In the capital, when someone is asked “how are you” they reply “like the hospital.” The French put up a nine-floor luxury hotel in two years. We’ve been building a thermal power plant for around 10 years and it is still at the groundwork stage. The Japanese built a more powerful plant in a year and a half. We’ve been exploring for oil: drilled one well since 1974.

Our loafer-specialists are hanging around (going for swims) everywhere.

So: it is clear how things stand with Churbanov, who was one of the our main (by position) catcher of thieves. Plus, the case of the gypsy, circus performer Kalevalov, also connected to Galina Leonidovna.

How we fight [corruption] in general: yesterday I was told about Nasreddinova, who was the chair of the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet. We know that several years ago she was removed, because she took 23 million rubles in bribes over amnesty cases. She was strongly reprimanded by the Central Control Commission, but was made deputy Minister of Building Materials. When it came time for retirement, she was made chair of the Committee for Solidarity with Vietnam. The “local” comrades resisted, but they got phone calls first from Petrovich, then from Kapitonov himself. She was given a pension of 300 rubles, plus a salary in the Committee – 270 rubles. When our referent was on the phone with her and politely asked, “How are you doing?” the reply was, “Oh do not worry, I am flourishing!” She returned only 3 million out of 23... Later it was found there was an entire mafia operating around her: death

sentences were deliberately given in cases that did not necessarily require capital punishment – so they could be easily commuted with Nasreddinova’s help.

One more example: Churkin, who was Mzhavanadze’s second secretary in Georgia and was caught stealing with him, hid the stolen goods in his house (in Ukraine, his homeland) after he was removed from his post. The authorities tracked this down and, in his presence, demolished the walls of the clay hut [мазанка]. The walls were full of valuables. However, he got off with a reprimand from the Central Control Commission and was appointed the director of a factory. Recently there was an article about him in *Pravda*, lauding him as an exemplary boss – achievements, experience, and so on. They realized it after the newspaper was published...

Brutents was in Baku last fall for his brother’s funeral. What he brought from there – the whole city knows that Churbanov and Galina Leonidovna visited, and she left with a necklace and he with cufflinks and a tie pin worth 1,800,000 rubles.

Aliyev went out of his way, but not without a nudge from [the General Secretary] “himself!”

And so forth. It is enough to read *Literaturka*, *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, and even *Pravda*.

By the way, on March 15, the Chinese *People’s Daily* published an article with the message – if the corruption in the party and the state apparatus is not curbed, it will be the death of the revolution. A very menacing and very frank article in the current Chinese style.

Grličkov (League of Communists of Yugoslavia) spoke on their TV – about the same thing: corruption, embezzlement, and other economic crimes as a threat to the nation and the party.

Poland goes without saying.

What does it come to?

There are objective reasons, of course. However, the Bolshevik Party did not know such corruption. Under Stalin, and even under Khrushchev, this would have been unimaginable. Khrushchev did not hesitate (in front of the entire world) to execute a gang of currency traders, though they were not connected to the state apparatus.

It turns out that nowadays there are still executions, but they are hushed up, because the exceptions being made are too scandalous. Unnecessary questions would arise, such as why those who stole a million, for example, are being shot, while those who steal 23 million are sent to head solidarity with heroic Vietnam.

March 28, 1982

I’ve gotten into Block. Prose from the 1917-18-19s. He is one of the greats. It is amazing the difference in perception of him now than in my school days. Back then it had been only 15 years since his death, so much closer to his time period... vs. now, 1982. We simply did not know him then; we were not allowed to know him. Also, his prose sounds prophetic today... back then it could not be perceived as such.

There is another thing that's striking: like Pushkin, Byron, Baudelaire – like them, he is the most lyrical of poets, a super-poet, but “in fact” he turns out to be the most rational (to the point of cynicism but not to the point of dishonor) realist! And very down to earth. Mayakovsky was not like that. Poetic “enthusiasm” never left him.

I read Lucien Sève's (CC PCF) article about the PCF's renunciation of Marxism-Leninism and why. And here we are railing against the Italians. The French are doing the same as the Italians. Except they do not say any bad words about us. Ponomarev is not interested in the essence of their position. Even he does not have the time or energy to delve into the heart of the matter. Though his position technically requires him to do it. Then again – why does he need to? And herein is the “spirit” of the collapse.

April 2, 1982

There is not much work right now. B.N. went to the south for vacation. Zagladin and all the other deputies are here, so the daily tasks are distributed among many. My main occupation is preparing Ponomarev for the Dimitrov celebrations in Sofia, there is still time. Although what the consultants presented to me yesterday, after a month and a half of work, is quite pathetic. Yezhov, Berkov, Kozlov, and, alas, Veber, who had thought that he would remain in the role of coordinator.

It is yet another confirmation that even in our department, people do not want to do good work just “for their conscience.” They do not believe that anybody needs this work, or that it would be useful. The feeling of corporate prestige, say in front of me or their colleagues, has become so weak that it is no longer an incentive. Still, it's unpleasant when a PhD, a professor, a consultant on a movie about Stierlitz, writes such banalities, so primitive, and even tries to defend his text.

I made a long speech, restraining myself, “sounding positive.” I tried to stress the need for imagination to fit the moment: they expect to hear from us, the CPSU, what we think about today's ICM... Is it in crisis and decline, or is it in a process of reconstruction [*непесмпойка*] from which we could expect an upswing? Why do we need this movement now? What kind of movement should it be? What do we see as its foundations, and of Marxism-Leninism too. What is revisionism after all, and what are the foundations of Marxism-Leninism? At least try to outline it. Because nobody knows what it is anymore (except students before an exam)... Try to portray that we “understand the situation” of our fraternal parties, we understand how hard it is right now to figure out what to do and how, that it is necessary to search for the path, but “in the right direction.” These are Brezhnev's words at the Congress, but what do they mean exactly, what do we mean by them.

And no moralizing, no declaring what's positive or negative, no giving out grades. We need to express our thoughts and thereby try to figure out our own place among the communist parties. Show that we are also thinking, searching, trying to “create.”

But I'm probably in fantasyland, anyway. Even if Ponomarev is able to understand this need (our fraternal parties are waiting for a “modern concept” for the ICM), he will not take it

upon himself to say it publicly: that's a punch above his weight. Although Sofia will be after the CC Plenum. Maybe something will happen at the Plenum.

It seems like something might happen: Pelshe is in the hospital, has been for a long time and it's serious. Kirilenko hasn't shown up in over two months; they say he has "spurs" and can't walk, and has a softening of the brain that is already greatly affecting not only his memory, but also the ability to speak coherently (though he never was particularly coherent).

Brezhnev flew back from Tashkent and was transported off the plane, he could not stand on his feet. He was taken straight into an ambulance and to the clinic on Granovskogo Street. Everyone was surprised: the departure from Tashkent was shown on TV (*Vremya*), but the arrival in Moscow was not. They say that people were "asked" to move off the streets into the residential courtyards, buildings, and so forth at the time when he was being transported from Vnukovo airport to the hospital. Why this was necessary is beyond comprehension.

Plus, there are persistent talks in the "adjacent spheres" that Andropov "wants to return to the CC." Indeed, there are only two people left who are both Politburo members and CC Secretaries: Chernenko and Gorbachev.

This week we had one of our "Tuesdays," when the Party Bureau arranges a presentation by some interesting figure for the Department. This time it was the head of a Department at the State Planning Committee. He spoke about how things are going with preparation of the "Food Program" (it will be discussed at the CC Plenum).

It is quite a sorry situation.

By 1990 (the endpoint of the program) we will not reach rational consumption norms. (Even though they were lowered by the Academy of Medical Sciences [AMS] – these words were muffled by long, loud laughter from the audience).

In 1968, the AMS defined the norms:

Meat – 78 kg, now 70 kg;

Milk – 405 liters, now 360 liters;

Vegetables – 165 kg, now 146 kg.

So: by 1990, he promised to achieve the rational norms only for sugar (to maintain what we have now – 44 kg, although the AMS believes this is more than a modern person needs).

For meat, we may get to 67-68 kg, and for fruits and vegetables we would be lucky to get to the 1968 norms by 1995.

To achieve the norm for bread (grain), it is necessary to produce 285 million tons, i.e. a ton per capita. But, he said, we can only produce 260-70 million tons.

On meat, to reach the norm, we would need to produce 26.5 million tons, but by 1990 we will only be producing 21 million tons. It is believed that today we have 58 kg per capita.

However, since 1975 we haven't increased it by a gram. Rather, there was a decrease of 2 kg, while from 1935-1975 we had increased production by 17 kg per capita.

Vegetable oil – bad. For 10 years we have been planning to harvest 10 million tons per year, but all we can get is 4 million tons. We used to export vegetable oil, now we have to import it.

For milk and dairy products, by 1990 we plan to produce 20 kg per capita. These are insufficient rates, but we can hardly sustain even that, because milk yields have been falling year after year. And in 1982, this trend intensified even more.

Now about imports: milk and dairy products – 28 kg per capita; meat – 6 kg per capita. The goal is to completely eliminate food products from imports, with the exception of soybeans (we need 10 million tons, but hard as we try, all we can produce is ½ million tons).

Sixty-eight percent of collective farms and state farms are unprofitable and subsidized. To help them become profitable, prices need to be balanced between the city and the countryside. This would require 15 billion rubles, and Gosplan does not know where to get them.

Right now, state subsidies for meat, milk, butter are 30 billion rubles. It costs twice as much to produce them than the revenue they bring in. The solution is to raise prices. But that is a political issue.

Meanwhile, our collective and state farms are nowhere near self-sufficiency. They know that banks will write off their debt. There is no interest in expanding production. And people keep leaving villages. In order for them to stay, there needs to be housing, roads, mechanization...

Losses during transportation, storage – 8-10 billion rubles. This is only from what's registered. They are planning to reduce losses by 35-40 percent. Why not 100 percent? Because that would require serious investment into new machinery, containers, storage facilities, road construction, etc.

The private sector contributes 28 percent of the gross value of agricultural production. Only in the last two years, this sector started to provide a little less.

Such is the outlook.

The Western press is reporting that we have purchased 42 million tons of grain this year. At the same time, the press is full of reports that our monetary and financial reserves are in terrible shape. We lost a ton of money due to the falling prices of oil (our main export), gold, and diamonds... We had to unload something like 30 tons of gold on the market to cover the deficit. Credit restrictions – the policy of Reagan and NATO – force us to pay in cash.

That said, most experts believe the Soviet Union cannot be strangled. But the countries of Eastern Europe can and should be. They figure the USSR will not be able to keep bailing them out of debt (all together, they have 58 billion in debt, i.e. four times more than the USSR itself) and will have to “loosen its grip”: let them run to the West...

April 4, 1982

I wrote already that my interest in Blok's journalistic prose has suddenly rekindled. He presents Ibsen better than anyone else (from those I had a chance to read, of course). He prompted me to take from the bookshelf Ibsen's plays that captivated me in 1937-39. I read "The Master Builder" in one breath (in the pre-war translation it was written as "Sulness"). To my surprise, I was impressed! Perhaps it was the way Blok presented it – you understand it more deeply when the writer's meaning (and the significance of the form) is presented at such a level. On the other hand – how long ago it all was! Both Ibsen himself, and my fascination with him!

April 18, 1982

Zarodov (editor-in-chief of the *Problems of Peace and Socialism* journal) passed away after losing consciousness ten days ago after a sudden heart attack (but it was his fourth heart attack). Yesterday I was called to work by Ponomarev, from the south, for the Dimitrov report, but ended up having to deal with the funeral paperwork. Mainly – at what level should the signatures be on the obituary and in which cemetery to bury him. B.N. believes that "to support the authority of the journal" it would be good to have Brezhnev's signature first, followed by all of the CC.

It turns out he died "in his 62nd year..." Although I've known him for a long time, I always thought he was at least five years older than me, and his anniversaries slipped my mind. He was only a year older.

For the current state of affairs at the journal and the ICM, he was perhaps a very suitable figure: with experience of operating in an international team, with a keen sense and skill for navigating the apparatus, but at the same time polished by contacts with tenacious international colleagues. In a word, he steered the weathered ship of the "international theoretical and information body" of the ICM more-or-less competently, lacking a destination, but also preventing it from total wreckage. Memory eternal to him, as they say. Now we have to find someone else. The best option would be some faithful foreigner. But B.N. and his colleagues would never allow a budget of 4 million rubles per year to be given into foreign hands. As for our people... it would require almost incompatible qualities – a member of the CC Plenum and at the same time with a basic understanding of international affairs, and at least minimally known to the fraternal parties.

Neither Zagladin, nor Kosolapov, nor Afanasyev will agree: it would be a step down for them right now. Therefore, it is possible that the choice will be between Chernyaev and Nenashev (*Sovetskaya Rossiya*). I will say no. Then again, B.N. wouldn't want it himself – who else will expand his collected works, and now also lead the Department while Zagladin is increasingly moving away from the routine tasks.

Though it must be said, without Ponomarev (while he is in Crimea), Zagladin held two "theoretical meetings" with heads of sectors and consultants. We discussed: is the ICM really experiencing an incurable crisis and decline, or is it restructuring (*perestroika*) for a new upswing? Of course, everyone is rooting for the latter, but analysis of facts speaks in favor of the

former. Technically, this is a kind of preparation for B.N.'s position at the closed meeting of the CC Secretaries of socialist countries before the June celebrations in Sofia (Dimitrov's 100th anniversary).

Zagladin himself presented this week to the senior officers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the ICM at the present stage. He lives for public speaking. And he draws up a "new plan" every time, comes up with new moves and arguments. And he almost always practices the entire lecture/report on me beforehand. Along the way, I voice my opinions, doubts, suggestions, refutations, "enrich" and develop it. This time as well. I don't want to write here how exactly I "enriched" it, which ideas were mine: they will do for the MFA audience as proof that the ICM is still alive. But it would be embarrassing to seriously write about them in a more intimate circle. However, I did use these ideas of mine yesterday in a big conversation with Sam Walsh (Chairman of the CP of Quebec in the CP of Canada). We want to entrust him with a mission to invigorate the fraternal socialist party of Australia. To go there as a "friend from the outside" and advise them to abandon the harmful sectarianism hidden under the guise of loyalty to the Soviet Union and Leninism. He was very flattered by this request.

Brezhnev, even though he told Reagan (on the radio) that he is ready to meet in October, apparently continues to be in a bad state.

I was at the Conservatory at a concert by Rozhdestvensky: Denisov, Sofia Gabidullina, Schnittke, our avant-gardists. Quite curious. Rozhdestvensky accompanied each piece with a short lecture of his own composition. These kinds of lectures and manner of performing such compositions could easily have taken place in London, or San Francisco, or Tokyo.

April 25, 1982

Zarodov's funeral. It was my first time as a "host" at a memorial service. He was buried in the old part of Novodevichy cemetery. I was there for the first time. Practically Pere Lachaise. On the way back, I was taken past Alliluyeva's grave. Beautiful. The nose on the bust was broken off. This is probably why the bust is surrounded by bulletproof plastic. She was 31 years old. But she rebelled... Because she is Russian. Though Ordzhonikidze also rebelled, a little later.

All the speeches about Zarodov were sincere. This is because he was a good person at heart. In a word, he did his job, and with dignity. People spoke not only at the cemetery, but also at the memorial service at café "Khrustal'noye," all kinds of people.

The second event – the Lenin anniversary (112 years). It was notable for two reasons. First, for almost a month Moscow was filled with rumors that Brezhnev had died. Even one of the voices from "over there" talked about it as if it was a known fact. Upon meeting each other, people would first of all ask: "Don't you know?"... Everyone was waiting for the ceremonial meeting. I went. Five minutes before the presidium walked through the door on the right, five thousand people in the hall and millions of people watching on TV held their breath. The door opened. And then HE came out, following Grishin... He shuffled along, as always supported by his usual (handsome) "adjutant"... He was greeted warmly. You could hear a sigh of relief in the

long applause, or maybe it was something else. Because never have people “waited” (I won’t say they wanted, our people are kind) for so long, so persistently, and so en masse for “all of this to be over.” People want change and understand that while he is “in place” – nothing will happen. Change is really needed (but what exactly, no one can say). People are counting on these changes and are patiently waiting, waiting for “that.” Those who know that a CC Plenum will take place on May 24, are waiting for an interim version of the changes – because someone has to take Suslov’s place (officially, not just de facto). And Kirilenko hasn’t appeared in three months. Pelshe is also not to be seen. How can people not wait for change! There is no meat at all in the regional cities, except possibly from commission shops at the markets. There is no grain. Milk only in the mornings. There are almost never any dairy products, same as sausage. The biggest problem is that there is no butter or oil.

Vladimir Aleksandrovich Tolmachev, my former battalion commander in the war, stopped by on his visit from Leningrad. We haven’t seen each other in 7 years. He is retired and has had all kinds of surgeries. The situation in the cradle of the revolution is similar. No cheese, no sausage, no grains. His niece and her husband work at construction site of the Sayano-Shushenskaya hydroelectric power station. The dam is the size “of your Moscow State University” but there is nothing for the workers to eat. They came to visit him in Leningrad and were skin and bones. He sends them three packages a month, and that’s basically what they live on.

He worries about the outrageous situation in trade and overall, but he is careful around me. I am “from over there” after all, who knows with me, so to say. For me, the conversation with him is yet more proof that the regular Soviet man is tired “from it all,” he does not want to put up with the fact that nothing is changing. The fact that these problems are now being discussed by officials openly does not really make him feel better. People see that problems have gone too far (and too high up!).

Or: I was at the CC Secretariat on April 20. The subject under discussion (for the second time) was the situation in the chemical industry, the part of it that serves the needs of the population. Chaos and a mess – these were the most polite words used during this discussion.

Everyone sees everything, understands everything. Smart and experienced ministers, CC departments, qualified professionals everywhere, and scientists are really creating paints, machines, fiber, and so on at or above world standards (Solomentsev and Kapitonov tried to dispute this, but Minister Listov answered angrily: “I know where I am speaking and what I am saying!”) But we cannot produce them even in minimal quantities, despite the fact that not a single chemical plant is working at full capacity – most are only at 40-70 percent capacity, and in Fergana only 6 percent, including the plants built using foreign currency (purchased from Italy, Germany, England, Switzerland). They even came up with the term “disjointed construction” to describe the situation when manufacturing plants that are dependent on each other are opened without synchronization with other plants, as the result of which the entire “network” is disjointed and does not work. How can you not hope for change!!

Another “musical moment” (Bovin’s expression) was the very fact of Andropov’s report. According to Arbatov, who is close to Andropov, the latter wants to return to the CC (i.e. to take Suslov’s place). The report was unusual in style and in the manner of presentation (almost without the necessary formalities), and the fact that there was a minimum of praise for the General Secretary. But most importantly – how the internal question was presented: right now, we are facing the angle of Leninism that requires comprehensive development of initiative, creativity of the masses, and consideration for the demands of the masses. Such a claim! But for what?

Andropov was received warmly, though without getting up. They rise only for Brezhnev. However, when he finished speaking, there was a long applause. He already sat down, but the applause continued. Brezhnev and Chernenko stopped clapping, but the audience continued, and these two had to start again... Then these two looked at each other and stopped again, but the audience continued. If it had gone on a little longer, it would have turned into a real demonstration.

Here's what I think: if Andropov replaces Brezhnev, change may come. If Chernenko replaces Brezhnev, change is unlikely.

There was another event: Easter last Sunday. People went to the cemeteries in droves. The traffic police even had to announce on the radio and *Vechernyaya Moskva* that private cars would not be allowed on the roads leading to the main cemeteries. One would think, quite modern people, when greeting each other on the phone or in person would congratulate each other with the holiday and would exchange triple kisses quite sincerely. It’s been noted that the number of people participating in Easter celebrations is increasing every year. And for people whose eyes are open, this is starting to look like a veiled public protest... Or at least a move away from the dominant order of things (with its corruption, inequality, injustice, rudeness, open use of power for personal enrichment, boastful propaganda and demagoguery = “the propaganda of success,” and alongside this – queues, crowded metro and buses, shortages of everything, even in Moscow).

May 8, 1982

On May 4th we received representatives of the movement “Parliamentarians for World Order” at V.V. Kuznetsov’s in the Kremlin. Various prominent figures from five continents. Roche from Canada, Silkin from England (shadow Secretary for Defense), politicians from India, Nigeria, the former President of Mexico Echeverria. B.N. used a CC resolution to stick me in the company of Vasilij Vasiliyevich to receive these people. That was instead of a reception by... Brezhnev. They will go to Washington from here. I wonder, at what level will they be received there? Afterwards, they will draw up an appeal to the special session of the UN General Assembly on disarmament.

Boring games. I was struck only by the fact that at this level they use words for their peace initiatives that we have been saying through Brezhnev for the last decade.

L.I. Brezhnev will make some additional announcements on May 18, at the Komsomol Congress, including a formal, unilateral renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons.

No! There will be no war in the foreseeable future. But there will be a massive propaganda and economic offensive (especially economic) that will put us and all of socialism in a critical position. This means we need to urgently, radically change everything from top to bottom. Otherwise, in ten years or so we will have ourselves a “Russian Poland.”

I did not go to the May Day celebrations. It’s all too profane nowadays. I watched on TV how Brezhnev barely put one foot in front of the other, and when waving he could not raise his arm above the armpit. Needless to say, he has no strength to put a smile on his face.

Moscow is full of talk about who will go to Prague instead of Zorodov. Several people have asked me already, including G.L. Smirnov (First Deputy of the CC Propaganda Department). I laugh in response, because I know that B.N. will not send me there. He told me we should do it like this: send Kosolapov to Prague, and move Smirnov to his place in *Kommunist*. Earlier he named Stukalin and Tolkunov, but they refused. Sklyarov (first deputy at *Pravda*) is also hovering as a potential candidate.

Everyone is reading Soloukhin in *Nash Sovremennik* No 1, “Continuation of Time.” In terms of ideology, it is a completely counter-revolutionary piece, and if not anti-Soviet then nostalgically pre-Soviet. But he is talented and, in some respects (such as our attitude to culture and its past), he is right. It’s a good thing such things are getting printed, as if censors do not notice it. In other words, the rights and mission of “great Russian literature” continue to be restored.

May 15, 1982

What happened over the last week? Victory Day passed. I spent it with Kolya Varlamov (my friend from the frontlines). We strolled through Gorky Park, then went to my place to drink, then continued at his place in the company of his family. By five o’clock I was hammered.

Probably with him more than with anyone else we have frank discussions about what’s happening “at the top.” We talked about the all-encompassing theft and corruption, about “who” will come after the Plenum on May 24th... Neither one of us knows anything about it, and probably nobody knows.

By the way, I was told Tovstonogov’s (famous director) account of one more tidbit about our highest morality. He was flying from Stockholm on the same flight as Brezhnev junior – deputy minister of Foreign Trade, the son. Of course, the latter had a whole entourage with him. They were in a drunken debauchery the entire flight. By the time they got to Moscow, he could barely stand. He goes down the steps from the plane and is met by a fitting camarilla. He raised his arm in a “Leninist” greeting and drunkenly joked: “I welcome and congratulate you with my arrival in the capital of our motherland, Moscow!” He did not shake anyone’s hand, tumbled into the car, and was off.

We get what we deserve! If we bootlick and are willing to endure any mockery that is done to us – then why not stick our faces in shit at every opportunity!

And one more thing: almost all the trade representatives in the “rich” capitalist countries are his proteges, who not only thanked him one time, but send him tribute regularly.

On Monday there was a meeting of the six Deputy Heads of the CC International Departments of the socialist countries of Europe. Formally, it was in preparation for the Dimitrov celebrations in Sofia, but actually it was preparation for the meeting of “the six” CC Secretaries (also in Sofia, but a closed session) where they want to discuss “what to do” with the CPs of Italy, Spain, Japan, etc.

Ponomarev received the deputies. It was a crying shame. He barely made any sense. Especially dumb and embarrassing was his “information” about the meeting of delegates of the CC CPSU and CC of Finland that was taking place at the same time (before their congress we twisted their arm not to elect Aalto as chairman).

Zagladin later told me, as Pribytkov told him, that Chernenko read the materials for this meeting and found a specious excuse not to participate. So, it was led by Pelshe, Romanov, and Ponomarev. Ponomarev set the course, following the suggestions of our referents-Sinisalo followers.

May 29, 1982

The Chinese problem. My clash with Rakhmanin.

Since I am a member of the editorial board of *Kommunist*, I was sent Kapitsa’s (MFA) article about Borisov’s book, back in early May. I did not bother to find out who Borisov was, but I called Kosolapov and said that I was categorically opposed to such an article. It was pure apologetics of the book and railing against China, as if Brezhnev’s Tashkent speech had never taken place.

On May 11, another “Inter-China [*Интеркum*]” meeting was held in Sofia – a secret meeting of the deputies of six socialist countries to discuss the China question. From our side there was Rakhmanin, of course. First, he imposed “directives” from the Central Committee for his visit to Sofia. Once there, he pushed a protocol record (as the foundation for political propaganda and scholarly work in participating counties and for public consideration). However, then came the first misfire. The Germans (Bruno Mahlow) first made 100 corrections to the draft of this record, and then refused to sign it.

It seems it was Mahlow who told Rakhmanin that Honecker is “completely raving and raging” about this Inter-China meeting. Apparently, Honecker has been preparing for 15 years, writing down all kinds of empty phrases on China (dictatorship, military-bureaucratic regime, alliance with imperialism, degeneration, surrender to capitalism, etc.), while life goes on as usual. According to him, the CPSU made a ton of mistakes when it comes to China, and it is time to “apologize.” In any case, they have “their own” interests and they should have “their own” policy towards China. There you have it!

Returning to Moscow, Rakhmanin submitted a “report” to the CC to get signatures from the four departments. He called me and in his “quickly-quickly” manner said: sign it, everything is agreed upon there. I read it and decided that I will not sign it. I said as much to the referent who brought the paper.

Instead of signing, I sent it to Ulyanovsky. He also read it and returned it to me the next day with his “thoughts” – also against Rakhmanin.

In the evening, Oleg Borisovich “personally” flew into my office:

- Where is the paper?
- Ulyanovsky has it...
- What for? Everything is agreed upon. Today there was a commission of the Politburo (on China) and they essentially approved my note, they even ordered to “toughen up” I. Aleksandrov’s article for *Pravda*...

He looked menacing, angry, brooking no argument...

- I will not sign that paper...

He turned around and slammed the door.

By the way, about I. Alexandrov’s article... It was sent around the Politburo the day before. I made corrections for B.N., removing names of Chinese leaders and a few sharp phrases – throwbacks to the “cold war” with China. The article was not prepared by Rakhmanin’s people. Mostly likely, it came from Lubyanka, it is written in the spirit of Tashkent and radically differs both from Rakhmanin’s note and the protocol record. That’s how it came out on May 20th... Despite...

Indeed, the day Rakhmanin burst into my office, the commission on China convened. In the morning, B.N. told me what they discussed: he (B.N.) and Andropov spoke in favor of improving the relationship with China (“of course, when necessary, we will push back!”), while Gromyko surprised them by demanding we put pressure on the Chinese, give them no break. And in general, he was harsh, though it would seem that a diplomat should be more flexible.

An “alarmed” message came from Pyshkov (according to the referents’ chatter, likely from Rakhmanin, who is a member of the PB commission) that the commission took an even tougher position than the one in Rakhmanin’s note and the protocol record. Nevertheless, I returned the note to Rakhmanin without signing it, even though he threatened me over the phone that he would report to Chernenko that the International Department is refusing to sign it.

However, I considered it necessary (plus, it is in my line of duty) to briefly write my reasoning on paper for Ponomarev.

Namely: the note diverges from the Tashkent line, and the main objective (set) in the note is to expose the hegemony of the Chinese. It excludes a reasonable perspective. The propaganda creates an atmosphere that would make it impossible to establish normal relations. Also, the note

characterizes the situation in China as a “shift to the right.” “We know what ‘shift to the right’ means in our Party terminology,” I wrote to B.N. It means things “got worse.” But compared to what? To how things were under Mao, or under Hua Guofeng, or to a year or two ago?

Finally, we must not allow Rakhmanin’s line to block the Tashkent line, but this is happening because the execution of policy has been essentially placed in the hands of Oleg Borisovich, whom I always treated well on a human level.

I sent this to Balmashnov to pass on to B.N. upon his return from the Komsomol Congress. When he read it, true to his principle of “lest something happens,” he immediately sent me the “Conclusions of the Politburo Commission on China” on twelve pages of coated paper... Half the text was devoted to Honecker – with the conclusion “measures need to be taken,” especially because he is stirring things with the German question as well, and Poland... and in general.

About the Chinese – in Rakhmanin’s style, plus in addition there is a proposal to rein in “some of those Soviet communists” associated with the study of China in our institutes and the mass media who incorrectly understand the policy of the Party, who are saying that the Party and the government are not using all the opportunities to normalize relations with China, etc. It says we need to “work on” the directors and heads of departments...

So Rakhmanin decided to use the Politburo to nail all his rivals and opponents, and establish himself as the Lysenko of Sinology.

I understood why Balmashnov rushed to slip me this document: so I would know my place and keep my head down, or I could let Ponomarev down, especially because he is also a member of the Chinese commission and his signature was also on this “report,” along with Chernenko’s, Andropov’s, Gromyko’s, Kirilenko’s, Zimyanin’s, Zamyatin’s, and Rakhmanin’s. This document was intended for approval by the Politburo on Thursday.

The next day after the Politburo session, Ponomarev called me to his office. We talked about this and that, and in particular about the fact that we need to prepare a new edition of Brezhnev’s biography for the United States.

“Oh, by the way,” Ponomarev suddenly said. “About the note on China. The Politburo just met...”

“Boris Nikolayevich,” I interrupted. “I read the commission’s report on China. A lot of things surprised me. If you read my note, then there is no need for me to repeat that the report diverges from the Tashkent line, there is essentially no policy there – where to go, what our goals are, what we want from our relations with China... And besides, we cannot allow Rakhmanin to set policy of such national importance.”

B.N., in turn, wanted to stop me, but I got carried away.

“I don’t know if you’re aware that in the fifteen years that Rakhmanin was in charge of China in the CC Department, and especially since he became first deputy, he’s written dozens of articles, brochures, even books. Of course, all of this was done with the help of Sladkovsky’s

institute and his referents. All of them have one theme – how we should hammer China. He is well aware that if relations change, all this ‘literature’ of his will fly into the dustbin. Meanwhile, he is already running for election at the Academy of Sciences and he is not inclined to abandon this plan. So, he will do everything to ensure that our line towards China remains as it is outlined in his articles and brochures under four pseudonyms. But I don’t think it is a good idea to give away this vital part of our state interests to Rakhmanin’s personal business.”

B.N. pricked up his ears. He was clearly interested: this is the kind of reasoning he really gets; he likes this kind of stuff. Finally, he spoke.

“Take it easy, Anatoly Sergeyeovich. The CC resolution (Politburo) will be very different, not the same as the commission’s report. Leonid Ilyich spoke at the PB, I wrote it down,” he picked up a piece of paper, “he said, ‘We must continue our proactive policy towards China, we must improve relations. I think we should instruct the relevant comrades to prepare our new steps in order to normalize relations on the basis of what I said in Tashkent!’”

There’s a twist!

Here’s what must have happened. When Andrey received the commission’s report, he saw at once that it’s Rakhmanin’s doing, and he immediately dictated a memo for L.I. for the Politburo.

B.N. doubted Rakhmanin’s “information” about Honecker and so forth. Where were you before, all you members and candidate members to the Politburo? Or does the great power complex work automatically?! In its name you can accept anything on blind faith, even “consecrate” Rakhmanin’s monopoly on Chinese affairs. This means the CC is single-handedly closing the possibility of receiving objective information (and studies) about China, because the entire branch of scholarship is controlled by Oleg Borisovich!

Finns. Their emergency congress ended with Saarinen’s “farewell” final word, in which he “cursed” the CPSU’s interference in the affairs of their party... interference that led to its split. Publicly – for all of Finland and the entire world. What a boon for Eurocommunists... Yet for Comrade Ponomarev it’s like water off a duck’s back!

May 24, 1982

The CC Plenum was today. The food program through 1990. There are new ideas, but not very bold ones. Basically, just as it was before: to raise, improve, fine-tune, expand. In a word, “let’s go, let’s go.” But I should read the resolutions more carefully. I didn’t have time yesterday. Today Brezhnev (of course he, and not Gorbachev, for example, gave the report) mumbled as he read, so it was impossible to grasp the “effectiveness” of the proposed measures.

[I came across a pamphlet about the XVII Party Congress from those days. It piqued my curiosity: turns out in 1938 we produced 7 billion 300 million [sic] of grain. That is 120 million tons. With a population of 173 million. At a time when the collective farms had only 250 thousand tractors (there are many millions now), and when there was practically no machinery,

no chemicals, no herbicides. In a different year (the date is not published) 165 million tons were produced with a population of 265 million, etc.]

Brezhnev explained the shortages as follows:

- The urban population has increased;
- Consumption has increased (standard of living);
- Cash income has grown (people are buying more);
- Rural population buys a lot of food in stores;
- The chasm between production and storage plus transportation (big losses)...

And more along those lines.

But the scientific-technical and production-industrial base of agriculture has grown, probably several tenfold, if not several hundred-fold. And the result?

Seventeen years have passed since the “historic” March (1965) Plenum on agriculture, which began the modern, genuinely Leninist, agrarian policy. And the result?

The Plenum recorded that the current caloric intake provides the physiological norm. The problem, you see, is in terms of variety and quality... we haven’t reached it yet... Simply put, in most parts of the country there is neither meat, nor butter, nor many dairy products, nor even grains. In 1938 all of this was available. There was no outright hunger then, the physiological norm was met back then, too.

May 26, 1982

In a word, maybe something will come out of the Food Program, if... if investment in its ideas is not curtailed the way it happened with very similar ideas from the March 1965 Plenum.

Brezhnev looked bad. He could hardly walk, supported by a security guard disguised as an assistant to bring him tea... When he left the podium and tried to step onto the stairs leading to the presidium himself, he almost fell and the guard had to literally drag him. Then he sat there with a blank stare, not a single muscle moving on his face, and probably not a single thought, except how to make it till the end. When the audience reacted to some statement from the podium with laughter or noise, he would lean to Chernenko, apparently asking what was the matter, then moved back without any sign of understanding on his face... In a word, he is a living mummy. Everyone sees this and agrees that it is “normal.”

Andropov was elected Secretary of the Central Committee... The audience met this with genuine, long applause... twice. It means that Arbatov’s version, described above, was correct. It is clear that Andropov will assume Suslov’s area of expertise. It is hard to say how they will “share” it with Chernenko.

I was informed that Politburo discussed Ponomarev before the Plenum – whether to make him a full member of the PB or leave as-is. (I thought this question had been closed long ago,

and B.N. seemed to have calmed down about it.) It was declined. I asked – who? Apparently, it was [Brezhnev] “himself,” and Chernenko put the last nail in it... a wave of the hand, as if to wave it “aside.” Had anyone been in favor? Yes... the “provincials” (i.e. Kunayev, Shcherbitsky. Not likely Romanov). But I was told it was three people. Maybe Grishin. But the two voices of Brezhnev and Chernenko, with the likely support of Gromyko, were quite enough to deprive B.N. of his last chance. The very fact that this discussion took place is not in his favor, of course: now everyone in the Politburo knows that he is “not in favor,” and consequently, he does not need to be taken into account.

And already he isn't: the Chinese affairs are an example of this. What he told me about the Politburo discussion of the commission's note on China turned out to be greatly exaggerated. Both the note and Rakhmanin's “report” about Inter-China [*Интеркит*] (albeit at the Secretariat) were approved and became “resolutions of the CC.” So, Oleg Borisovich pushed me aside...

Already (together with Zamyatin) he sent around the PB information about the New Constitution of the PRC. In reality, it is pure misinformation. I said as much to B.N. today, in the presence of Zagladin, who not only agreed with me, but also informed B.N. with an “emphasis” on the fact that the General Secretary's assistants Aleksandrov and Blatov are outraged by Rakhmanin's behavior.

That's the state of things there. Maybe something will change when Andropov comes to power...

In general, I have hope... He is a reasonable and competent person, open to the “new” and prone to reflection... I do not doubt for a minute that he is the best choice right now. There is no way B.N. could fill the vacuum left after Suslov. As a politician, he is petty, burdened with the agitation-and-propaganda complex of the 1920s and 30s, and inclined to a policing rather than political way of thinking. The latest example of this is his action against the Finnish CP, which for many years had been completely given over to his control. And here is the result. And to a large extent, the Italians are also the fruit of many years of his “work” to convert them to the “Moscow faith.” The result is the direct opposite.

It's also good that Dolgikh was promoted as candidate member of the Politburo. He is being prepared to replace Kirilenko, who is already like a lemon rind. This man is smart, knowledgeable, courageous, well-versed in his field, thinks realistically. If he doesn't falter, like Ryabov and Katushev, something may come of it – in the industry that he oversees.

Yesterday I turned 61. Celebrated with relatives and family friends.

Sixty-one is old age! I must hurry to live.

Yesterday Zagladin and I received a delegation from the CC International Department of the SED. We discussed the “Euro” CPs, the general problems of the ICM. Vadim gave a lecture, striving for literary effect, with cheap sociological themes. The Germans flashed ironic looks at him. Once again, I am convinced that Vadim is inspired when he speaks in public and by publicity. But he usually doesn't do so well in frank conversations.

May 31, 1982

I'm sick with bronchitis. When I'm alone and surrounded by my "library," it is overwhelming and I end up not reading anything serious.

I did not go to work. Having nothing to do, I started reading Nagibin and was once again convinced that Soviet prose has reached a mastery of the highest level, surpassing much of what came before, including during classical times (measuring by the sum of techniques, originality of ideas – quantitatively, because it is impossible to compare qualitatively out of the context of the era and plot).

There is a folder on my desk with newspapers, clips from TASS, notes. It is time to toss much of it in the wastebasket, but I can't even be bothered to open it, though I have a whole day ahead of me with nothing to do.

Across from me, on the shelves of my bookcase, there are hundreds of books and all kinds of semi-classified information. I know that I will never come back to almost any of it. For example, hundreds of "items" about social democracy, with which I connected my career since graduate school and my work at *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. Twenty-five, thirty years ago, even fifteen years ago, we had nothing on social democracy. Now we have heaps. What a treasure it would be for a student or "young researcher." But now I don't need it. No matter how much of this literature I might read, about this social democracy, for example, I won't learn any more than I need to know. Because you have to understand it once, and the rest is routine supplemented with ciphered telegrams and daily TASS. It is clear that now I need to read not to increase my knowledge, but to maintain the ability to think and satisfy my intellectual appetite.

What is good about Nagibin: he intertwines entertainment with thought. The ideas may not be new, but he collected them from a very large segment of culture and over a long segment of time.

By the way, he has a great thought in "The Typist Who Lives on the Sixth Floor"... Any action has a certain speed, below which comes a stop, paralysis, death. A person of an artistic nature does not make a writer. For this to happen, one has to start moving and gain speed, even if it's slow...

June 1, 1982

Even though I'm sick, I cannot help but fuss over work. I'm preparing materials for the Dimitrov session in Sofia. And Brezhnev's biography for the American publishing house "Sphinx." Apart from the pre-war years, where there is real biography, the rest is a collection of quotations. However, they'll be useful for Americans.

But this time, that's not the problem. The idea for this publication is B.N.'s (same as with *Pages from His Life*). He hesitated for a long time over how to approach Leonid Ilyich with it. Already the book (manuscript) was almost compiled, but he still hadn't "discussed" it. Finally, he found a moment (he essentially does not have face-to-face access) and talked. The General Secretary said "alright" and that we could adopt a short CC resolution "with instructions."

We drafted a CC resolution (similar to the one for *Pages from His Life* from 1978), i.e. to assign the International Department to prepare and organize the matter. But when we received the completed CC resolution, it turned out the Department of International Information had also been included, i.e. Zamyatin's department. Yesterday Zamyatin received an Order of Lenin from the General Secretary's "himself" for his 60th anniversary.

So, our B.N. was pushed to the side again. As if to say, since you started this, you can do the work, but it's really none of your business... In general, it looks like it's moving towards strictly restricting B.N. to the communist movement and curtailing his attempts to be involved in foreign policy.

June 2, 1982

Today Ponomarev summoned me after all. To consult with me, Zagladin, and Zhilin on the text for the closed meeting in Sofia. He insists on limiting it to the ICM. That's not like him... The argument he makes is symptomatic: Gromyko will be speaking at the UN in New York on the same days... and "he has an analysis of the international situation; the whole world will immediately know about it."

I was even more struck by another one of his remarks. Vadim proposed not to submit the entire text of B.N.'s report for the closed meeting in Sofia ("the six") to the CC, and instead just a page-and-a-half of the "directives" for the delegation – a list of questions the speaker will present and their main focus. B.N. expressed doubt. I supported Zagladin: of course, the CC must know what you will be speaking about.

He looked at me, winked and said:

"You think anybody cares about that?"

I'll be damned! Why then do you fuss and show off, if you see and understand everything.

And one more thing – about the Finns. He started to rail against Sinisalo=the left, saying "what do they want, Finland won't go anywhere. What are they thinking, to build socialism over there, a revolution? Or – this is ridiculous – to demand a salary increase of 35 percent? Or: not to join the government! But we are friends with President Koivisto and he is behaving well, all the reports (before the elections) that he is looking to the West were not confirmed. Prime Minister Sorsa is our trusted friend, with whom we have confidential relations... Why not join, when we encouraged them when they were previously members of the bourgeois government?!"

"On the whole, the SKP [Communist Party of Finland] is not so bad... Of course, there are some anti-Soviets. But overall, it is a healthy party. We can (and should) work with Aalto, too. In any case, he is the General Secretary and we cannot install another one!"

But if this is the case, dear Boris Nikolayevich, why the hell did you insist on presenting the Finns with a handwritten memorandum from our Politburo before their Congress, a memorandum that reeked from a mile away of the Comintern spirit and Great Power posturing! Why did you have to provoke Saarinen into a scandal?!

He must have been showing off (like his referents), trying to show his higher-up colleagues that he stands firmly behind “the ideological purity of fraternal parties.”

June 12, 1982

On Monday I will have to go to Bulgaria with B.N. after all, for the 100th anniversary of Dimitrov. I really did not want to, but what can you do. There will be almost 30 people accompanying him, to cover all 140 delegations from around the world with our conversations about the Communist Movement and the international situation.

B.N. was busy the entire week with Israel’s attack on Lebanon. It was his luck that Gromyko was in New York at the UN, so our man got to be active to his heart’s content under Andropov’s wing. This included two conversations between Brezhnev and Reagan over the “red line.” Brutents was playing a supporting role. Israel’s attack is indeed international banditry in broad daylight. But they get away with it... a far cry from what we got and are still getting for Afghanistan.

The editor of *Agricultural Gazette* [*Selskokhozyaistvennaya Gazeta*] (an organ of the CC, by the way) was fired for mixing up the titles of Brezhnev and Tikhonov. When I was told this, I roared with laughter: “Naturally! It’s like saying ‘Your Excellency’ instead of ‘Your Majesty.’” But Andropov’s new secretary summoned all the main ideological workers on this occasion and instructed them how to ensure this does not happen again.

Serious people! Would something like this be conceivable under Lenin?! I think even under Stalin it would be unlikely, he would have just laughed into his moustache...

June 22, 1982

According to Zagladin (from his embraces with CC Secretaries Stanishev, Mikhailov, and someone else) – a “coup” is brewing in Sofia. Zhivkov’s entourage, especially Balev, are preparing to overthrow Lilov and other pro-Soviet intellectuals who in recent years have raised the prestige of the BCP in the communist movement. B.N. and Zagladin even composed a ciphred telegram to Moscow on this subject. And B.N. twice “softened” gasps addressed to “Zhivkov personally” in the printed versions of his speeches.

I am reading Eidelman’s *Turn of the Century* about Paul I. When will Russia finally reach a point when it can analyze itself in the present moment without looking through the prism of bygone centuries. Eidelman does this in all his books very elegantly, without a hint of the vulgar associations a la Lyubimov.

June 23, 1982

Bulgaria. B.N. His lackey-Comintern-like attempt to impose on the conference, through the Bulgarians, to accept a “common document” in support of Brezhnev’s message to the UN on the no-first use of nuclear weapons. It is amazing how he is never embarrassed if he finds himself in a total and shameful puddle (and this is increasingly the case). Same thing this time.

Topic: Zimyanin as the ideological leader of modern Soviet society. On the one hand, it would seem natural, on the other hand, it is still ridiculous.

Topic: Soccer and politics “based on materials” from conversations at the dinner table with delegations to Sofia. Zimyanin enthusiastically described how he prepared our soccer team for the World Cup in Spain. Ponomarev laughed at this and especially at how in the evenings Zimyanin would rush to the TV “like a normal person.” Since there were games every day, the conversations at the table did not stop.

Zimyanin lacked the skill to raise them to the political level. And B.N. lacked the political instinct to understand the foolishness of his snobbish-Bolshevik attitude to this activity. Towards the end, I had a little to drink and intervened to help Zimyanin:

“Boris Nikolayevich, Lenin taught that politics are where the masses are. Millions of people all over the world are riveted by the World Cup right now. Unfortunately, innumerable more people than participate in the anti-war movement. For a politician, it is at the very least something to think about.”

He gave me a dark and careful look. Zimyanin also fell silent, I don't know if he got the hint directed at him: that Chernyaev is suggesting it is inappropriate for a CC Secretary for so many days to “develop” the soccer theme at the level of a sports fan.

B.N. really does not like Zagladin's manner of always coming forward, whether in general serious political conversations, or at the dinner table, or in protocol matters. But has he looked at himself?! And he has far fewer internal resources than Vadim does!

June 24, 1982

I'm still sick. With fresh impressions from Sofia, I remembered that in 1972 I got a copy of Dimitrov's Diary. I pulled it out and started reading. The years 1937-1942.

If it gets published, it will once again shock the world, not the just the ICM.

There are three most significant themes.

1. Dimitrov was not afraid of Hitler, but he backed down in front of Stalin, primarily when it came to the repressions. Stalin created a situation around Dimitrov in which the latter was expecting his own arrest any day. And he did not stand up for anybody (!), not even his closest colleagues when they were taken or going to be taken. He played along with Yezhov regarding Rákosi, the Polish CP, and others.

Moreover, he participated in denunciations. When brigade commander Gorbachev arrived from the front (fall of 1941), he told Dimitrov's daughter about the horror and chaos there. She told her father, and Dimitrov called Mekhlis. The rest is clear. Jose Diaz, as soon as the war started, told Dimitrov that he does not trust Togliatti. Then Ibaruri (!) did the same. Both said they did not have any facts, but Togliatti's behavior, mood... Dimitrov reported to Molotov.

2. Dimitrov sincerely admired Stalin. He repeatedly cites conversations with him, statements, toasts especially...

He emphasizes Stalin's contemptuous reaction, and even anger, when people would praise him in a close circle. There is a lot on how Stalin valued Lenin. And there is not a hint, not once, of putting himself (Stalin) on the same level with Lenin. There is a great deal about the significance of the "middle cadres," the fact that old people who always cling to their places should be replaced by young people in a timely manner.

3. Immediately after the VII Congress of the Communist International (1935), Stalin started to push the Comintern aside. Dimitrov attributed this to intrigues, spy mania, and so on. He was offended when he was no longer invited to sit in the presidium, was not allowed on the Mausoleum during demonstrations, when the 5th anniversary of Leipzig went "unnoticed." Only in 1941, on the eve of the war, around April, Dimitrov started to see that Stalin had a grand strategy behind all this. Stalin, and then Zhdanov formulated it quite clearly in conversations at the PB, at which Dimitrov was present, as well as in personal conversations with him, in the CC of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) commentary on documents and draft articles coming out of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The gist of this strategy: the Communist International was created to make world revolution. But now it is clear the kind of world revolution envisioned in 1919 will not happen and is impossible. And it is time to end the existence of the policymaking organ in the ICM. Now there should be an emphasis on integrating CPs into national life, which is the only place where any CP can grow. They must be completely independent and act without looking back at Moscow. Yes, they should be Marxist parties, but without common leadership and a single strategy. And let them be called differently: workers', people's, labor, Marxist.

Zhdanov later developed these ideas and presented them as a coherent document, outlining every point, and concluding with a proposal to consider dissolving the Comintern. In April 1941!!

Zhdanov also strongly corrected Dimitrov when the latter sent him a draft Comintern document on social democracy, which proposed to completely push out social democrats from the labor movement leadership and secure a single "leadership headquarters" – the communist parties.

The essence of Zhdanov's remarks was that the idea is complete nonsense, harmful and unrealistic. So, it turns out the united and popular fronts, which came from the VII Congress of the Comintern, and which in turn the CC of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) ignored and hushed up in every possible way (including the in "Short Course") got their real substantiation from our CC, not from the Comintern. The Comintern had been intimidated by repressions and disoriented by the unexpected situation of 1939-1941.

And now, on the occasion of Dimitrov's 100th anniversary, in Sofia and here, everyone and everywhere is attributing these ideas to Dimitrov.

Stalin and Zhdanov looked deeper. They already understood that the Soviet Union was alone in the face of fascism and "democratic" but anti-Soviet England, France, and the USA. They understood that the Western working class would not help, the German working class had already conquered Europe in the Wehrmacht troops, and the Skoda factories supplied the

Wehrmacht with the latest technology. The French working class had not awakened yet. In a word, they could rely on no one but themselves.

And so, there was no need to fuss with organizing world revolution from Moscow with the help of the Comintern: it would not happen, the ground for it had crumbled. Therefore, let communists start from scratch, at home, relying on the nationalism of their people and becoming a national force.

Oh, if only “pops” had been consistent in this and his other right, big ideas...

The West, from right to left, is convinced that Stalin manipulated the Comintern in his own interests. But from Dimitrov’s Diary, it follows that quite the contrary took place – Stalin ignored it. Rarely, he corrected or advised. Which, as it turned out, was too bad... Because the Comintern, similar to the early CPs in the era of “Infantile Disorder” [«Детской болезни»], in fact, despite the VII Congress, continued to wave red flags and live by old dogmas. This rallied the united front of the West (from fascism to petty-bourgeois democracy) against the Soviet Union. Stalin was right when he once angrily said to Dimitrov: “You (i.e. the Comintern) are working for the enemy.”

July 10, 1982

I’ve been ill and did not touch the diary. I did go to work for an entire week, however. Nevertheless, yesterday at a checkup, the X-ray showed I have pneumonia. The doctors wanted me to go to the hospital for treatment, but I “stood my ground,” despite intimidation and threats. And, as it now turns out, I got over the illness using my own method, i.e. by having contempt for the illness. I thought to myself: if I give in now, that’s it, time to retire. But just like at the front, I must have an animal instinct for real danger. And when I don’t feel it, I take risks.

At work... The first few days, B.N. was not interested in me. We quarreled only once on the phone because of Muhammad Ali (boxer, fighter for peace). He tried to accuse me of being inattentive to this issue. I proved to him that we do not need Muhammad Ali...

Zagladin and Brutents kept me informed about Lebanon. There we stepped into it, of course... The Arab press, including the PLO, Western European press, Iranian press, they are all intensively talking shit about us. They are saying we did nothing but make some menacing statements, while the United States supported and defended its ally Israel, stopping at nothing. Brutents says it’s because we have no policy. We did not establish in advance for ourselves: what do we want, how far are we willing to go, what are our real capabilities, what are the real forces (and readiness to fight) of our allies. The only “strategic” idea we have there is – to “annoy” the Americans.

My war with Rakhmanin has entered a new round. As I already wrote, he succeeded in getting Inter-China approved by the Politburo with the clause – publish an article in *Kommunist* based on this anti-China nonsense, which the Germans refused to join this time.

When I came to work after my illness, I found the page proofs on my desk (since I am a member of the *Kommunist* editorial board) and was horrified once again. On 21 sheets (which is

about 66 typewritten pages) China is blasted from every direction. Two-thirds of the text are devoted to internal affairs – Party, constitution, economic situation, economic policies, etc. And this is written in such a free-and-easy style that we wouldn't allow ourselves something like that towards many imperialist countries, let alone France or the FRG – unthinkable. As for foreign policy, it goes without saying.

In a word, complete disavowal of Brezhnev's Tashkent speech.

Because what it says about China's internal affairs – ...every reader would be surprised that this country could be called "socialist."

Or: if China is so immersed in an alliance with imperialism (and irreversibly), how can one hope for normalization and improvement of relations and cooperation.

That means Tashkent was either an opportunistic (and fundamentally hypocritical) tactical move, or our right hand does not know what the left is doing, or there is a "struggle" in our leadership on the issue of China.

The first question that arises in the West: is Tashkent finished?! And China would feel totally justified in responding by exposing even more of our internal order and "hegemonism."

I called Kosolapov. Presented him with every conceivable argument. He told me: it's the CC Politburo resolution and Rakhmanin is sitting on my head... and the issue has already been signed.

I called Ponomarev. He replied: "I cannot cancel the decision of the Politburo."

"But you are a member of the China commission, you could tell Andropov. I am sure when the decision was made to publish, none of the CC Secretaries and PB members had read this piece by Rakhmanin. This is a matter of big politics. God forbid someone should tell Brezhnev – in the same spirit, that his Tashkent line is on the verge of being destroyed..."

"Do you know what the Chinese are writing about us every day? And what a bad speech the Chinese made at the UN?"

"I know. But I also know they stopped writing a lot of the things they wrote six months ago. The whole world sees that. You only have to flip through TASS. But Rakhmanin hides this from the Central Committee. And most importantly – Tashkent – is it in force still, or not? If yes, then we cannot have propaganda diverge from policy..."

"Tashkent was a long time ago..."

"How so? You mean..."

"No, no, you misunderstood me (he got scared). What do I suggest? Let Kosolapov call Andropov himself, if he sympathizes with you. And you should be careful, don't present it as if we (the International Department) are pro-China, while Rakhmanin is the only one fighting against it..."

"Alright."

However, Kosolapov did not dare to call Andropov. He said he would call his immediate superior, Zimyanin.

In the morning I still did not know anything about the results. (I don't like to push... and put people in awkward situations). Meanwhile, B.N. was already calling: what came of it? I said I didn't know. But just in case (I reported to B.N.), I called Andropov's assistant Vladimirov (Suslov's former assistant). He became very concerned and promised to report to Andropov as soon as the Politburo session was over.

Then Kosolapov reported on the results of his conversation with Zimyanin. The latter also became concerned. He called Rusakov and together they decided to suggest to Kosolapov to send this article to the Chinese commission, and to remove it from the next, tenth, issue.

August 7, 1982

Probably the most important developments over the days missing from the diary are once again related to China.

A week has passed. It turns out, as Ponomarev told me with displeasure, Andropov called him and said: "It seems your Chernyaev wrote some kind of declaration regarding this article... It's not good to have conflict between departments... Have them figure it out." Ponomarev (he probably got scared) replied that Chernyaev did not make any statements, only spoke out as a member of the editorial board of *Kommunist* (God forbid as a deputy of his Department) in favor of reducing... the criticism of PRC's domestic policies.

I replied (impudently): nothing of the sort, Boris Nikolayevich. I spoke out against publishing such an article at all, because it contradicts the Tashkent line. I wrote a rather harsh review and sent it to Kosolapov.

B.N. attributed such a "restrictive" action to me in his conversation with Andropov because he was going along with what Andropov was saying. The latter told him that he demanded from Rakhmanin to "drastically shorten the domestic part" and reduce the harshness overall.

To my impudence, followed by more arguments about Rakhmanin's writings, B.N. declared that he will not deal with this anymore and does not advise me to, either.

In the meantime, Arbatov and I somehow found ourselves seeing Erdman's *The Pretender*¹ (1930) at the Satire Theatre. Nonstop allusions and "associations." Afterwards, Arbatov dragged me around the little Arbat lanes near his house till two in the morning, and once again scolded everything and everyone for the great-power policy towards the CMEA countries. Tikhonov enlisted the usual cadre of academicians (Arbatov, Inozemtsev, Bogomolov) to prepare materials for the upcoming highest-level meeting of the CMEA. They went at it tooth and nail with Garbuzov (Minister of Finance) and Baibakov (Chairman of the State Planning

¹ Likely *The Suicide* [*Самобуйца*] by Nikolai Erdman, written in 1928. Chernyaev calls it «Самозванец». [trans.]

Commission). According to Arbatov, Garbuzov and Baibakov's goal was to shift our difficulties onto the shoulders of our allies, to make them pay for the fact that we do poor work.

I, in turn, told him about the Chinese affair. He cursed out Rakhmanin and others, and offered his services: "I will call Laptev (another one of Andropov's assistants), maybe Blatov who is in the south with Brezhnev, and carefully inform them that something might be published in *Kommunist* that is off... Send me the note you wrote for Kosolapov, so I have the arguments." This was on Friday night.

On Monday morning I sent Arbatov a copy. On Monday evening, the abovementioned conversation with Ponomarev took place, from which it followed that my further actions could be regarded as an attempt to plot against the Politburo's decision, as a violation of apparatus discipline. On Tuesday I called Yurka and told him to hold off with my paper... It turns out he already spoke with Laptev and Shishlin, who was going south that day to help Blatov. But he said he had not sent the note to anyone, everything was verbal.

Meanwhile, the second version of the *Kommunist* page proofs has been lying on my desk for days. Kosolapov sent it to me in violation of instructions, so to say, because it was ordered to be sent only to members of the Chinese commission of the Politburo. Nothing really changed, except that it was cut by a fifth. Even Andropov's direct order was essentially not carried out. Of course, the mailing came to Ponomarev, as a member of the commission. Balmashnov, the assistant, sent the mailing to Kovalenko (another one of our deputies, his sphere is the Far East) so the latter could give B.N. his opinion. Kovalenko did, as one does in such cases. B.N. replied: "I said I will no longer deal with this, do not take any more of my time."

Having received a slap in the face, which he is already accustomed to, "San Sanych" (Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Balmashnov) returned to his office and of course called me, knowing my involvement in this matter and also because he had sent the materials to Kovalenko with the note: report to Chernyaev, as well. In any case, Balmashnov did not dare to go to B.N. again with the Chinese question.

What to do? On the one hand, I need to neutralize the accusation of violating discipline, especially if Arbatov's involvement reaches Andropov (an additional negative aspect: I involved someone who is not from the apparatus, though Arbatov is a trusted person and "with access" to high places and Andropov himself. Yurka visits him often, starting from the times when he was the head of a consulting group in the CC Department that Yu.V. was in charge of in the 1960s).

On the other hand, we cannot allow the *Kommunist* article to go through – in the interests of the state.

I called Sharapov, Andropov's assistant who is in charge of international affairs and with whom I had spoken earlier about the first version of the article, after I realized that my conversation with Vladimirov on this subject would be fruitless. Vladimirov works on internal affairs and even though he promised to report to Andropov about my concerns regarding the *Kommunist* article going against the Tashkent line, he probably did not do it. Or maybe he asked Sharapov to do it.

So, I called him.

“Are you still interested in the China question?” (I asked half-jokingly).

“Yes. You promised to send me your opinion on the second version. After the first one, as I told you, Yu.V. called Rakhmanin and asked him to ‘drastically cut the domestic affairs and then it can go ahead.’”

“I am prepared to give my opinion. Even though the article was shortened, the essence and tone remained the same. Would you like me to put my opinion on paper?”

“Please do.”

I sat down and composed two polite but very resolute pages, insisting that the article should be held back at least until the Congress in China takes place. I sent it.

Three days passed. No word. In the meantime, I get a call from Bugayev, Kosolapov’s deputy (the latter went on vacation to play it safe).

“What should I do, Anatoly Sergeevich? I only received comments on the second version from Ustinov (Minister of Defense, PB member). Well, he toned down the harshness in some places, but in other places, he ramped it up... But nobody else...”

He said he later found out that Rakhmanin (as a secretary of the China commission) ordered for comments to come to him, instead of going to the editorial office or to us. And he would send us the final text later.

“I don’t know what to do, Yevgeniy Iosifovich... I did everything I could. Now I’m not even allowed to give you my comments on the second version.”

“By the way, I got a call from... (he stopped short and did not say the last name, but I understood he was talking about Zimyanin). He started yelling at me, you know, in his ‘comradely’ (familiar) style: ‘Are two decisions by the Politburo and one by the CC Secretariat not enough for you?! Why aren’t you printing the article? And so forth.’ I replied to him calmly: I have nothing to print, Rakhmanin took everything, I don’t even have the text and I’m not getting any more commentary. Furthermore, Mikhail Vasilyevich, until I receive a text that the PB commission officially signs off on, I will not print anything. Because the editorial board is essentially suspended from this case, while all the members of the editorial board without exception are against such an article (here he added: Anatoly Sergeevich, I completely, 200 percent agree with your opinion, Kosolapov showed me your note). So, neither I, nor the editorial board, will take responsibility in this fundamental issue. I am an old Party man and I will not go against my conviction, and I am convinced that it will do great harm to our policy.”

I don’t know if he really said all this to the CC Secretary (though I would not put it past him, he is determined, experienced, honest, and speaks his mind). The response he received: “Suit yourself!”

After this conversation with Bugayev, I decided to call Sharapov after all. He said he reported to Yu.V. (Andropov), but in his own name...

“Why? Why didn’t you think you could mention me, I am not hiding, I just didn’t think I could call myself...”

“It’s how it worked out. I decided it would be better that way.”

“Alright. What came of it?”

“He said... and he repeated the same thing – the part on internal affairs needs to be shortened and then it can go ahead. (Only later I understood, what was going on here. But more on that in the finale.) However, your comments in the text itself are useful, I think.”

“But now I cannot even send them to *Kommunist!*”

“You should try giving them to Boris Nikolayevich. He is a member of the commission.”

“Alright. Thank you!”

I wrote a note to Ponomarev, saying I spoke with Sharapov to find out if he reported the general considerations – I’m attaching them! – to Andropov. I couldn’t tell. However, he found the comments in the text “substantial” – also attaching!

Two more days passed. Balmashnov calls me: Boris Nikolayevich returned your comments, your note, and your copy of the article without saying a word. I will send them to you...

In other words, the same “line” as with Kovalenko: I said I am not dealing with it, and that’s it!

I realized that it was useless to try other avenues and decided to dutifully wait for the article to appear in the next issue of *Kommunist*.

Then yesterday the following happened.

B.N. called me to his office (he went on vacation today): “We have to talk before I leave.” I came over. He is beaming. I approach his desk. He throws me some paper, saying: Here, read it. You win!

I read it: Brezhnev’s note, addressed to Andropov, very short, just one paragraph. It says, “I’m attaching my assistant Golikov’s note on Chinese affairs. I think it has good ideas. Please discuss it at the Chinese commission of the Politburo.”

And Golikov’s note, about 15 pages, says the following: it appears we are underestimating the importance of normalizing relations with China. Our propaganda poorly supports the Tashkent line, and sometimes produces materials that actually undermine it (a reference, in particular, to the *Pravda* article from July [sic] 20). No one wants to notice the changes in China, but they are happening. Our main enemy is US imperialism, so our main blow should be directed there. Instead, it turns out that with the United States (even at such a critical moment) we are prepared to engage in negotiations, contacts, and exchanges that we do not allow ourselves with China. We need a strategic, Tashkent-like, approach to the China issue.

Every day we need to do everything possible to relieve tension, establish cooperation, achieve mutual understanding, and not push China towards the United States. And so forth.

There is not a word about the *Kommunist* article in this note, and nothing about Rakhmanin's line. But the essence is absolutely anti-Rakhmanin.

As for Ponomarev's reaction to this – he is like an open book. He tells me: "I sent this text to Kovalenko. You know, some time ago we prepared a letter to fraternal parties on the Chinese question. Now we need to correct it in the spirit of this note from Leonid Ilyich. Andropov had almost agreed with our draft, but now he is asking us to 'look it over' again." (The letter is not entirely in Rakhmanin's spirit, but almost... And the framework was prepared by Rakhmanin's people and our guys only edited it, "toned down" the Rakhmanin-style parts).

I immediately called Kovalenko. The three of us sat down, B.N. actually got up from his desk and came to sit with us at the small side table. I had the nerve to say: B.N., maybe we do not need to send it at all? What's the point, if we are also for normalization, how are we going to try to dissuade others from it?

"No, don't get carried away!"

And he got to editing.

While Kovalenko was walking over to his office, B.N. had time to tell me the "details"... Andropov had called him... about this issue and said (in some context, of course): "Rakhmanin is not acting right. I warned him. If nothing changes, we will have to find him some other position. I told my Sharapov, too – you know they are friends with Rakhmanin, they were in China together and maybe even went to school together – either you carry out your assistant duties as expected, or you will have to leave the apparatus."

So that's what it was! And here I was, knocking on Sharapov's door, hoping to find understanding and support. Instead, my every word and my note on China immediately became known to Rakhmanin!

But who gave Golikov the idea? Or maybe he is the source of the Tashkent line. And he "arrived" at the note "independently," maybe he did not even know about the *Kommunist* article. But he must have known about Inter-China...

The most important thing is that his intervention came in time!

And how do you like my Ponomarev! "I won't deal with it anymore!" A political figure = a petty apparatchik, who has been maneuvering his entire life, just to hang on in the wagon!

The Arbat walk had other consequences as well. But I'll start from afar. Even before Zagladin's departure, B.N. told him and then me that we need to urgently put together a reference note on the state of the ICM. Andropov had asked him for one so he could be informed, since after the May Plenum he was assigned to oversee our Department, and the ICM, and all other movements.

I remembered that we had prepared a similar note on our own initiative even before the Congress. But it remained in Balmashnov's "ammonals." It all came down to a printed handbook (400 pages) about the parties, marked "secret," that nobody from the Politburo would ever think to read. I suggested to Zhilin to use that "analytical note" as the basis of this assignment. The consultants got to work. But B.N. needs it "Quickly! Quickly!" He called the stenographer, dictated 13 pages, and ordered Zhilin to "fix it up." The latter ran to me with this text and Ponomarev's note (for us both to sign), saying, here is the first draft. It was an optimistic, window dressed text.

The next day I said to B.N.: I can give you what Zhilin put together, but I personally consider the text unsuitable, it needs more work.

And so, few days later, Arbatov and I found ourselves walking the lanes around Arbat.

August 8, 1982

Sunday, after dacha. Arbatov: the other day he was at Andropov's regarding various matters. Andropov opened up (which hasn't happened in a long time). He said: Ponomarev was the last of the CC Secretaries to accept me. And I'm still not sure if he has... I understand, he is almost 10 years older, and I came to politics much later than him. Then both of us were heads of parallel departments in the Central Committee. But he became CC Secretary first. Then I surpassed him and now I'm his boss. In a word, one can understand. However, business is business. I will do the work that was assigned to me as I see fit. And one would think... But he is deceiving me. I asked his department to prepare an assessment of the International Communist Movement, so I could get a general idea for myself of "where we are." Not about what they (i.e. the CPs) should be doing, but what we, the CPSU, should be doing in relation to them. But it's been almost three weeks and I've gotten nothing. I need to remind him. I will get it. They won't be able to pull the wool over my eyes: by nature of my occupation, I have some idea about this matter.

Arbatov retold this with a hint of disdain for Ponomarev, clearly conveying Yu.V.'s tone. To tell the truth, I wondered if all this was said so it would reach B.N. Yurka told me how he responded: "I said I respect Boris Nikolayevich, because he is not an intriguer, he's never played nasty tricks on anyone, he hasn't tanked anyone, he is not vindictive, he has some 'foundations' in him, and so forth." But all this was said to justify the following "however..." regarding B.N.

Yes, everyone sees him for what he is: a small-scale apparatchik whose first thought while doing his job is always how to keep his seat.

Even before this conversation with Arbatov, I had reminded Ponomarev a couple times about this task-request. He did not react and one got the impression that he would like to hush-up this "request," that it would be better if it was forgotten, etc.

Now I knew that we could not forget about it. I also realized that I would have to convey this conversation to B.N. in some form. A couple of days later, I was in his office, and among other things, as if I had just remembered something, I told him that I had an interesting conversation with Arbatov. "You know that he is 'acquainted' with Yuri Vladimirovich, he visits

him. So, Yu.V. told Arbatov that he intends to seriously study the ICM and he had asked Boris Nikolayevich to give him an objective analysis of the situation, realistic, so he could approach problems practically... And thereby (here I fibbed a little, as if Yu.V. had said to Arbatov) he would like to see how the comrades themselves, i.e. the International Department, which deals with the ICM, gauge what is happening and what we can expect here.”

B.N. grew serious, he was obviously agitated. “Let’s do it, let’s do it. When can you present it to me?”

I said: “I think, tomorrow. We’ve been working on it for a long time...”

“Alright, let’s do that!”

And I did. Twenty pages of a truly realistic assessment of the situation.

The next day, as soon as I got to work, there was a phone call: “Come to my office.”

His anger knew no bounds. “You paint everything black! Why do we need such a gloomy picture?! I am speechless. There are more arguments against such an approach than I can find ways to express...” And so forth. I tried to object, even used the following phrase: “we are being probed and we cannot sugarcoat, it will be immediately obvious.”

“What do they know about the communist movement?! What are you saying, our work is not noticeable then? Everything is so bad?”

The altercations were lengthy. Finally, I had to shut up. B.N. kept pushing the reference book on all the parties to me, citing their merits and achievements, and demanding the note be written “in that spirit.”

An hour later, I learned that he immediately called Pyshkov (the head of the information sector, my subordinate) and ordered him to write “the right kind” of note.

Pyshkov always has sugarcoated overviews at the ready, and a day later one of them was on Ponomarev’s desk. But B.N. could not work up the nerve to bypass me, he must have had some doubts, or perhaps he suspected I had not told him everything about the Arbatov-Andropov conversation.

He sent me Pyshkov’s paper and called me to say that he considers it mostly suitable. A few hours later, I read it and called him. I said: “In my opinion, Boris Nikolayevich, this is not good at all. In the lingo of the regional committee, it would be called a misrepresentation.”

“Why are you speaking to me like that?” He lost his temper and was vibrating all over. “Do I not have the right to express my opinion? You did the job. It was a big job, but I do not agree with a lot of it. Why are you being like that?”

“Boris Nikolayevich, I stated my opinion on Pyshkov’s note. Here is how I understand it: you made comments and instructed me to redo it. Since I have been following your orders for the last 20 years, it is your call.”

In two days, Kozlov, Zhilin and I came up with 55 pages, where most of the text was taken up by “references” about individual parties. However, I decided not to abandon the essence of the previous analysis and told Zhilin and Kozlov: we cannot obey B.N.’s demands completely. By doing that, we would let him down (since I know from Arbatov what they want). And we would look bad. But most importantly: we have a chance to finally have a new, modern approach to the ICM. Andropov wants to and can do it. We’ve needed a new approach for a long time. If there is still a chance to rescue something from this “most influential factor of our time,” including for ourselves and our international policy, then we need to help this new, influential, smart, responsible person. We cannot lie to him right off the bat and defend Ponomarev’s clearly backward and long-outdated line and modus operandi, which is defined by the same attitude towards his “object” (and his responsibility for it) as a common regional committee secretary for his oblast.

Ponomarev “polished” our text for two days, crossing out as much as possible from the realism and criticism, not to mention self-criticism. In the end, the picture came out pretty rosy, but there was something left of the realism anyway. That’s what he took to Andropov.

August 26, 1982

I’m on vacation. From August 13-25 I was in Lithuania with my daughter Anya.

The day after we arrived, I was invited by the First Secretary of the CC CP of Lithuania Griškevičius to his “villa,” close to our resort. We had lunch, talked. From that moment, I became a “general” to everyone in Lithuania. Vodka, beer, and sweets appeared in the refrigerator the next morning. The secretary of the Klaipeda regional committee came to arrange the aforementioned visit. The director of the resort kept buzzing around me. The chairman of the Palanga city executive committee “personally” invited me to the Amber Museum in the Tyshkevich castle, offered to show me the city. Then the Secretary of the CC CP of Lithuania Šepetys showed up (he is smart, well-educated, democratic in the Western way, a man of great culture. He leads ideology in the Central Committee). This whole trip ended clearly “above my rank,” unmeritedly so.

Sovetskaya Litva published about my meeting with Griškevičius and about our meeting with O’Riordan-Šepetys.

September 2, 1982

After living in Palanga, we drove through Kaunas and Vilnius on the way back.

The quality of the roads. Landscapes. Farms.

A collective farm, I think it was called “Vostochnaya Zarya,” you rarely see such farms on TV. But it was reality. Population of 3,000 people, 450 workers, 86 tractors, 50 combine harvesters, their own repair shop that is practically a factory, 81 specialists with higher education, two schools, two daycares, a house for family celebrations (sauna!). The houses are all made of brick and almost all with individual design, it is simply a pleasure to see. They have everything they need. Their machine operators earn 12 rubles a day, which is a decent salary for

the year, and on top of that they get 500 rubles a month during harvest. This is a medium-scale farm. The cows produce 4200 liters per year, 3700 of which they give to the state and they have plenty left over for themselves. They produce almost all their food, except bread.

Kaunas. The Chairman of the City Executive Committee and the Secretary of the City Committee took me around town and to the Čiurlionis museum. Wonderful! The guide was a young woman of the highest culture.

Šepetys came to meet me in Kaunas. We had dinner at the guest house and arrived in Vilnius only late at night.

A spinning and knitting factory. The personnel... completely different from ours. Simplicity, democracy: at all levels – the city, the CC, district committee, the factory (by the way, O’Riordan later noted this, and believes this is the primary factor in the success of the republic).

Old Vilnius is being restored. Churches. One of them has a very rich art gallery. Lunch with the First Secretary of the Vilnius City Committee. The party seeing me off at the plane’s gangway was of the highest category.

I still cannot quite make sense of why I was given a reception at the level of a CC CPSU Secretary at the minimum. The personal factor played a certain role: my acquaintance with Šepetys, who very recently went to the Congress of the Communist Party of Ireland instead of me. And the fact that he is a wonderful, intelligent, sympathetic person, with genuine authority in the republic. Still, I was on vacation, a CC Secretary did not have to take care of me. Most importantly, probably, was that I knew Griškevičius, who made phone calls after our lunch.

So, in a short span of time, I got to know one of our “difficult” republics. A republic with Roman Catholic priests and deep historical anti-Sovietism and anti-Russianism (more the latter than the former), with which “our comrades” have to deal. And if it wasn’t for their material well-being, Lithuania could create big problems for us (especially being close to Poland). I think the majority of Lithuanians are not against the Soviet regime, and now they are not against the collective farm system either, they adapted it all to their own way of doing things and used it to their benefit. They are against the abstract (essentially purely ideological) subordination to Russians.

Inozemtsev died unexpectedly. On August 12th. A day after he came to see me at the CC. He needed to call Georgia over the high-frequency communication line to let them know he would be coming to Pitsunda with his wife on the 20th. We talked. I tried to persuade him to spare Kholodkovsky, whom he planned to fire in connection with a “political affair” at his institute (two employees were arrested for anti-Soviet activities). Unsuccessfully. He talked about it arrogantly, as if it didn’t concern him. Clearly, he had already recovered (just like from some other dishonest economic scam in which he and his deputy for economic affairs were involved. Rumors were going around Moscow. He came to B.N. to make excuses and paid out of pocket for some institute property he took for his dacha, where he eventually died). In a word, it

was the same “Kol’ka” – sweet and intrusively frank with “his people,” and rude, hard, and vulgar with his subordinates.

The materials for the top-level CMEA summit he called every name in the book (just as Yu. Arbatov had done the day before). He swore at Garbuzov, Baibakov, and the rest. After visiting me, he went to Shaposhnikov to discuss the upcoming trip to Japan, then came back and finally reached Georgia. The tone of his message about his arrival there was not a request, but an order.

And here we are... I found out about his death under strange circumstances, in Palanga. On the evening of the 14th, when I was visiting Parastayev, he asked me matter-of-factly, in between toasts:

“Anatoly Sergeyevich, do you know what Nikolay Nikolayevich died of?”

“Which Nikolay Nikolayevich?”

In Moscow there were rumors of a suicide. However, it was a heart attack. The abovementioned events must have played a part, even though he had been “forgiven.”

September 11, 1982

Work all over again. Evidently, the rhythm of work is the main thing that ensures all other vitality, including in the moral sense: like you are constantly upholding the right to everything else, even the “major” things, instead of a philistine attitude to everything.

But of course, I am not well-rested physically... The “play” time of vacation does not exceed a week. Possibly I no longer need more than that.

The episode with Ustinov’s speech at the presentation of an order to the city of Kuibyshev. The speech included a paragraph berating China. Aleksandrov caught on to it immediately: this is despite Brezhnev’s note and the Chinese commission’s resolution! If it is Rakhmanin’s doing, he will pay for it. He checked, this paragraph was not in the mailing, which means it appeared after the “comments.” It turned out – yes, it was Oleg who recommended to restore it!

But it is already an episode. At the first PB meeting that Brezhnev presided over after his vacation, he spoke on “all the issues under discussion.”

He spoke about China (in the spirit of his note), and he said that we need to assess the international situation more calmly and smartly: “there is no negative without positive”... We should focus more on relations with large capitalist countries, “U.S. allies,” but especially with smaller ones.

Regarding Japan – do not repeat the same thing over and over again, that there is no territorial issue. Think of something to counter it. Attract Japan to us, instead of angering it.

And in general: we talk about internationalism, about friendship of peoples, but what do we show on TV, what do we broadcast on the radio about capitalist countries? Aggression, crisis,

all kinds of disasters to the point of absurdity... Meanwhile, people live there who have accomplished something, they have something good and worthy of respect. We are buying patents from them, but what we show...

(Here, however, he must have not seen everything on TV. For example, the programs by our correspondent from Japan about their car factory in Tokyo and the sawmill. Muscovites saw these programs as a “reprimand” to our economic executives!)

About the work of the CC apparatus – it should not turn into an appendage to the Ministries, rather it has to be the control body of the Party’s Central Committee.

About the fact that we should be even more proactive at the disarmament talks in Geneva, so everyone can see our sincerity and honest readiness to achieve fair results.

He said sound things about the economy, too. In a word, everything is right in this part of our top leadership. And Andropov will be the main conductor of all these ideas, the more so because they are his own ideas...

But the trouble is in the inertia, imperfection, backwardness, laziness and depravity of the executive mechanism. It must be altered radically, there needs to be a general purge (similar to what the Chinese planned at their XII Congress!) – of senility, careerism, decrepitude, stupidity, and indifference. At least 80 percent of the personnel needs to be changed! Otherwise, nothing will happen.

September 18, 1982

Bovin stopped by this week, again to ask for something, or rather for someone. This time he is trying to help Tanya Alekseyeva, who was fired from the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism* in Prague for trying to shoplift a pair of panties. Most likely it was a set up by the Czechs, who now also “love us very much.” Bovin invited me over in the evening. Kolya Shishlin was there. I found him studying the list of members of the Soviet version of the Union of the Archangel Michael. There are many familiar and unfamiliar names: Soloukhin, Chivilikhin, Sartakov, Gulyga, Andrey Nikolayevich Sakharov (member of the editorial board of *Questions of History*), Yevseyev, and other well-known anti-Semites, many members of the *Molodaya Gvardiya* publishing house (which is a nest of *pochvennichestvo* and anti-Semitism), Kozhinov (the author of last year’s sensational article), employees of the Moscow City Committee of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League, editors of *Nash Sovremennik* and other journals... There are at least fifty people. In a word, something like a Masonic lodge. Bovin decided to look into it.

Some of them had already been expelled from the Party, but then reinstated and placed in good positions. Basically, as you would expect from any good semi-secret organization associated with the upper echelons of the apparatus.

He read aloud excerpts from some of their rotaprinted compositions, particularly their charter. Nothing fundamentally new, except the fact that it is being written in the Soviet Union and by members of the CPSU! The nation is the only viable category; internationalism – yes, but

in the spirit of universal Russian primacy as a unifying principle; intelligentsia is scum, the source of spiritual rotteness and physical depletion of the nation; the soldier is the best model of a person; chivalry (in the Pavlovian style); even corporal punishment, punishment for the slightest crimes, etc.

Yes... our society is ailing!

In the presence of Shishlin, the conversation turned to how together with Blatov they organized and executed Brezhnev's numerous notes to the Politburo – on the economy, agriculture, China, international affairs, principles of governance (with an emphasis on local initiative), etc. I got emotional and said that the Party and our people would bow in gratitude to them (i.e. Shishlin and Blatov) if they knew that “it was you.”

Bovin said the trouble was that all these initiatives will “remain as they are”... on paper. I objected: now that Andropov is the alter ego, for whom these ideas are essentially his own, but formatted as coming from Leonid Ilyich, there is an opportunity to implement them.

Bovin did not argue with that, on the contrary, he confirmed it (from his personal communication with Yu.V.). But, he said, we should not exaggerate Andropov's capabilities, not to mention the fact that he does not have an apparatus. Aside from two-three assistants, the apparatus is in the hands of others.

Take, for example, the ideological apparatus. Who's there? Put them next to each other: Zamyatin, Tyazhelnikov, Trapeznikov, Shauro. From these four, the first one – a schizophrenic fool – is, alas, the most decent one.

You can't really rely on “the author of the notes.” “You know how they are made,” Bovin said (I didn't until then). On the eve of the General Secretary's departure to Crimea, the “guys” get together: Yura Arbatov, Bogomolov, Kolya Inozemtsev (before his passing), your humble servant [Bovin], and others of course (he did not name them). Everyone gets assigned a role. For example, you write about planning, you write about agriculture, you – about America, you – about Japan, etc. But don't overdo it. Though this year one note broke through “from the right” – from Golikov about China, unexpected assistance for the right cause. So. These reports come to the South, some from the Institutes (this time one came from Arbatov, on international affairs. Indeed, what Arbatov told me the day before my vacation about his report, almost all of it went into the note I read after returning from vacation). These reports come to Shishlin and Blatov, who compress and edit them “to a style and language pleasing to the General Secretary.” Then these notes are read aloud to him at an opportune moment. Usually, he signs them without making any changes. The notes are then sent to Moscow, in this case to Andropov, with a request to review them at the Politburo.

But if you mention this note in the morning, or even start talking about the subject matter, he will stare at you as if he never heard about it before and will brush you off like an annoying fly who is disturbing his rest. He simply does not remember what he does and what he signs.

I said: that's another matter. But from the point of view of our cause, I think Andropov is seriously getting to work. Of course, he knows how these notes are prepared. But for him, these notes are a document, a basis for the struggle to overcome the mess, to save the Soviet regime.

Bovin said, "That's true. But what if instead of Shishlin and Bovin at the General Secretary's side in Crimea, there was someone from the Union of the Archangel Michael? What then?!"

This week I met twice with leaders of the new Catalan CP, who broke away from the PSUC (Eurocommunists) and are now the core of the reconstruction of Spain's anti-Carrillo Communist Party (together with other groups). So, the CC decided to almost openly support actions to get rid of Carrillo's party, or rather to let it come to its natural breakdown and death. Ramos, Ardiaca – young and old (fought in the Civil War). We shall see how they manage.

We prepared a report for B.N., "Lenin's Strategy of Peace," he will present it before the elite of the Moscow City Committee. This time he was not very capricious.

Martynov visited me, he is the acting director of IMEMO after Inozemtsev's passing. He came to try to help Diligensky and Kholodkovsky. Diligensky was, as it turns out, the academic adviser of one of the people arrested. Kholodkovsky is under suspicion over "Zionism" (there are anonymous letters) and this case is being used to get rid of him. There is pressure from the city committee and the CC Department of Science. But he is, together with Diligensky, one of the pillars of the entire team's scientific potential.

I said all the nice words about them both. I've known them for 30 years. But what can I do? I spoke with B.N. He knows Diligensky well. He valued him, invited him to work on our big projects. Regarding Kholodkovsky, B.N. acted like he never heard of him before. But he took my whole "approach" on this matter as just me making conversation about "such affairs" in Inozemtsev's institute, not as a request to at least support me in my intention to do something.

The Thursday before last, Kirilenko was sent into retirement at the very first PB meeting Brezhnev attended after his vacation. I've been saying for a long time that Kirilenko is completely senile: he does not know where he is and what's happening. Complete loss of memory. Still, on Tuesday, two days before he was retired, I saw him at the Secretariat. Andropov's attempt to get at least two phrases out of him on the Tula question yielded no results. Looks like this is how completely rotten branches will fall off.

It is impossible to read Herzen's *Kolokol*. The associations are painful. One feels ashamed under the influence of his rage, which, however, Lenin considered inconsistent. What kind of rage do you need then – against the incessant Russian abominations!

September 29, 1982

Brezhnev was in Baku at the end of last week: he presented an order to the republic for the last Five-Year Plan.

Aliyev surpassed all records of ass-licking and servility, called these days "historic." (Even under Stalin there wasn't such vulgarity and crassness in praising the leadership.) And it's

impossible to understand – is he just an idiot, or is he so cynical: as if to say, here, eat it! I will get my share, and then come what may...

But that's not the point right now. Sunday really turned out to be "historic."

I was on my way to dacha. The radio station *Mayak* indicated 11a.m. and I asked the driver to turn up the volume: a direct transmission from Baku. Aliyev opened and gave the floor... the slurred speech began, meaning our leader was going through a bad stretch of his flickering consciousness. Evidently, he did not understand or hear what he was saying, and all his energy was focused on reading the next word (which he did not always manage). Every phrase was followed by applause, thunderous applause. About ten minutes went by. He already started saying "Afghanistan" instead of "Azerbaijan," and suddenly stopped completely... There was some rustling, then noise and thunderous applause. Suddenly you could hear him saying, "It's not my fault..." Then several seconds of silence and he added, "I'll have to read it from the beginning." Applause.

The next day at work, I asked those who were watching it on TV – what happened? Of course, by the time it was shown in *Vremya*, everything was cleaned up.

The following took place.

Brezhnev read about three pages, printed in inch-size font. At this point, people noticed Aleksandrov's confused expression on the screen, he was sitting in the presidium next to Aliyev and was "in line" with the speaker, only above him. He feverishly raised pages close to his nearsighted eyes and threw up his hands. He repeatedly went from one folder to the other, and finally jumped up and ran to the podium. He approached the speaker from one side... The latter cast an unseeing glance at him and continued to read. Aleksandrov ran to the other side, making signs, but the speaker waived him off and continued to read. Finally, "Sparrow" had to take the speaker by his elbow. At this moment the cameras switched to show the audience and Aliyev began to applaud furiously to mask the awkward situation and the pause.

The words "not my fault" were uttered when the camera was again directed at the podium and Andrey Mikhailovich Aleksandrov-Agentov was seen hastily leaving. When Brezhnev said these words, he threw an angry look in his direction.

So, he had been reading the wrong text and would have never noticed, even when the word "Afghanistan" appeared. As it turned out, he had been reading the speech for the meeting with the leadership of the republic, which had confidential passages not meant for the press (I was personally able to compare what I heard in the car with the text of this second speech that was published the next day).

Alas! It was less than two weeks ago that Bovin and I were discussing our fears that while Brezhnev is in this condition, anything could be slipped to him and it immediately becomes policy against which no one dares to lift a finger. And now these fears are confirmed.

There was a great deal of coverage of him being taken to various "objects" in Baku. He looks completely senile.

The protocol of his meetings there was copied from the protocol of a head of state's visit to a foreign state: guard of honor, waving a saber, anthems of the USSR and the Azerbaijan SSR, a parade by the guard of honor, an escort of cars and motorcycles... The same thing when visiting monuments, when seeing him off at the airport... Not to mention the national dances "along the entire route" and folk crowds with flags and banners along the entire 30 kilometers from the city to the airport. My first reaction was: this is a violation of the Constitution... However, upon reflection, it became clear that Aliyev proposed such a protocol and no one dared to say a word.

Today Brutents brought in his pocket a clipping from the newspaper *Baku Worker*. A poem by Suleyman Rustam, the People's Poet of Azerbaijan. It's similar to Suleyman Stalsky and Dzhambul, only they didn't rise to such heights. It has everything: our leader, radiance, happiness in every heart from just one glance, wisdom, the source of all blessings... It is impossible to convey in my, normal, language.

I read it and started laughing. Karen said: someone brought this from Baku, i.e. people see perfectly what's going on. The paradox is that if you try to make dozens of copies of this, you will be charged with anti-Sovietism. Because it will be seen as a mockery, and no one will believe that you are sincerely delighted with this poetry.

October 2, 1982

Today is the first day with a proper autumn chill. The week was crazy: I read and read, about everything in the world – from the public domain and the materials marked "top secret." And one gets the impression that something is about to happen soon.

B.N. gave our report, "Lenin's Strategy of Peace" in the Hall of Columns at the Moscow City Committee readings. He's pleased.

Rakhmanin tried to slip his Sinophobia into B.N.'s report for the mailing list, but this time B.N. resolutely rejected it. He was surprised at Rakhmanin's stubbornness and impudence. Rakhmanin, as well as many others, can't wait for the Chinese to do something to anger Leonid Ilyich – so the entire Tashkent line, and especially the course the PB has taken since Golikov's note, would go up in smoke. Total inability to think historically or understand the meaning of state policy. Rakhmanin, that blatant mediocrity, played a hand in the fact that we squabbled with the Chinese for an extra 7-8 years.

... How do such people become Secretaries of the Central Committee? I was at the Secretariat recently. A sore subject was on the agenda, which has been discussed more than once before: why are compensation-based construction projects [*компенсационные стройки*] backed up, especially in the chemical industry. Various ministers and others spoke, saying all sorts of things. Finally, Chernenko, who was leading the Secretariat, said: "Nothing is clear, why and how this is happening, who is to blame, how do we get out of this situation... Maybe you, Yakov Petrovich (he turned to Ryabov, who until recently had been a CC Secretary and now is the Deputy Chairman of the State Planning Commission) can clarify the picture for us. Ryabov got up and for fifteen minutes was saying such nonsense that disrespectful whispers started going

around... After this, all the Secretaries spoke and each considered it his duty to express “surprise” and “indignation” at the helplessness of their former colleague. Ryabov had really been pathetic and dumb in his attempt at a “synthetizing analysis.” But before his secretaryship, he had been the First Secretary of the Sverdlovsk Regional Committee! And he was not removed due to his ineptitude, but probably for saying something “not proper” about the General Secretary, likely while drunk.

Rusakov, Zimyanin... they are just like him but work in other spheres, which are also vital for the Party and the state.

The people in the Secretariat who make a strong impression are Dolgikh, and, of course, Andropov and Gorbachev. Our B.N. is a little ridiculous with his grandfatherly attempts, in a “big-policy way,” to get into issues he knows nothing about. When he begins to speak, you see smiles and hear whispers from “the public” (those present). I always feel embarrassed for him, even though I have nothing to do with these “interventions” of his.

I am reading *The Czar's Madman* by the Estonian Jaan Kross in *Druzhba Narodov*. Once again, it is about us, though the story is set in Pushkin's times.

Israel and the atrocities in Beirut are constantly before our eyes. You can't really say that our “public” is sincerely worried or indignant – these are different times, not the Spanish war of 1936-7. We grew up and became indifferent.

Everyday life and the deafening chatter of propaganda in all the mass media have dulled our natural feelings. Still, people are thinking, what does it mean, such brazen cruelty and impunity? On the one hand, people are asking how we can stand by while it is happening. On the other hand, there is a general opinion that we should not have gotten involved in the Middle East, we have more than enough to do at home.

Maslennikov Arkadiy Afrikanovich, *Pravda* correspondent, arrived from London, accompanying Chater, the director of *Morning Star*. In an hour and half, he presented a picture that we see from numerous ciphers from embassies and agents. Smart and deep, though his forecasts are too unambiguous, too categorial. I will be meeting with Chater next week, as well as with Jagan (General Secretary of Guyana), Clancy (Australia), and Vassallo (General Secretary of Malta).

October 8, 1982

Day off. Yesterday I watched the film *Family Relations* by N. Mikhalkov and went to Kuznetsky Most for the fall exhibition of the Moscow Regional Union of Artists. The subject is the 65th Anniversary of October. A loose interpretation of the anniversary, anyway. There are maybe a dozen paintings on the subject of October, out of a thousand. Overall, it reflects both the state of our society and the degree of freedom in reflecting this state. Artists from the applied arts and decorators are especially apt at this right now: all sorts of sketches for plays, films, set designs for theatrical productions, book illustrations, etc. There is an element of deliberate stylization and defiant outright imitation (especially of surrealism and *Mir Iskusstva* from the turn of the century – Somov, Sudeikin, Lanceray, Borisov-Musatov, Benois). The subjects and

themes are all allegory of course, but everything is about our reality. There is a constant crowd in front of the painting “Dance of the Little Swans” – open surrealism, but no one is deceived: it is about Moscow’s “highly civilized” philistinism. There are some things on the opposite spectrum, deeply meaningful, with nostalgia for the revolution, its ideals, and the spirituality of an even more distant “past.”

In the main halls there is, as always, plenty of junk and art devoted to subjects that are understandable to “friends and family.” But even here, all styles are present and there are several good portraits of women (there are quite a few of them, maybe it is also a sign of the times?!). They are done in different styles, from photo-realistic (one portrait of a specific woman with a name and surname) in Laktionov’s style but modern – simply magnificent. There is also satire, but mainly in graphics (Mamonov, for example). Not a great deal of nudes, a lot of accidental things, behind which you can see the muddling along of losers who accidentally fell into the arts and now drag out their profession, showing off and adapting to the fashions.

Apparently, a Korin exhibit opened in the Tretyakov Gallery. *Farewell to Rus* is shown for the first time. I should go.

October 9, 1982

Yesterday we had a get together at Gililov’s. The evening was... it is hard to find words that wouldn’t sound trite. It was simplicity without vulgarity. It was a meeting of people who trust each other, who understand everything and do not need to come up with topics for conversation. People who are glad to be genuine and impeccably decent, who understand that they have a short while left and the only thing ahead of them is the conclusion... though it may bring some last-minute surprises.

I read in issue No.7 of *Nash Sovremennik* Georgy Semyonov’s *Game of Pass the Ring* [*Игра в колечко*]. Another confirmation of the greatness of our modern prose and the fact that it is already playing the role that, for example, Chekhov and Bunin played in their time. This is genuine critical realism, if one must resort to definitions (and masterfully done). On these twenty magazine pages you see our entire society. By comparison, Solzhenitsyn with his *Matryona’s Place* (the same subject matter) is a childish ignoramus. Meanwhile, the writer (G. Semyonov, I mean) of course had no bad intentions towards the Soviet government. It is merely the self-realization of his talent.

Marxism Today published an article by Roy Medvedev called “The USSR after Brezhnev.” That’s brotherly friendship for you. I should mockingly speak with Chater about it, he is in Moscow right now at *Pravda*’s invitation. The equivalent would be if *Kommunist* published an article by Trevett, the leader of the New Labour Party, which was formed from those who challenged the CPGB for being revisionist and anti-Soviet.

October 16, 1982

It’s been a long week. I’m exhausted from delegations. Every day there has been one or two.

Clancy – Australian CP Chairman. The Party is withering in pro-Soviet dogmatism.

Vassallo. A big man, the General Secretary of a small party in small Malta. As a person, he is more significant than his party by many orders of magnitude.

The Polish Ambassador Kociolek with his secretary. He came to introduce himself and get informed.

Vieuguet – member of the PB PCF and the editor-in-chief of *Cahiers du Communisme* – with one other Frenchman. For two whole hours I talked about everything. But the French have paled since Kanapa. They speak in phrases from Marchais' last speech, or from the report at the last Plenum. Like the Romanians. It's boring. But I "charmed" them with my confidence.

Chater – member of the PB and the editor-in-chief of *Morning Star*. He has evolved significantly in five years (since I last saw him) in our direction. The conversation was not coming together for a long while, Afanasiyev was present.

When I told B.N. about this later, he became very worried: the Italians are raising a ruckus, we have to take measures and now it turns out there is a trap on the other side, too. If we do not report to the CC and they find out, there will be a "reprimand." But to report? How can you report it, when it is unthinkable to even mention the title of the article in a note to the Central Committee? In a word, his usual large-scale bureaucratic anxieties instead of political thinking.

Yesterday Zagladin was defending his doctoral dissertation at Moscow State University. Almost four hours in an atmosphere of philosophical babble. The thoughts these academicians, correspondent-members, and professors of philosophy "expressed" are, for me, everyday banalities that I come across almost daily in TASS. But it is presented at the level of modern Marxist-Leninist ideological scholasticism. Vadim was brilliant and you could see that all his official and unofficial opponents tried their best to look at his level.

Then we were drinking in a rather small circle, for some reason not at Vadim's but at Vanya Frolov's, they work on globalist problems together.

Yesterday B.N. gathered scholars from the Lenin School and the Academy of Social Sciences, six people, to "consult" on how to update his brochure "Is Marxism-Leninism Outdated?" (Officially – "Living and Effective Teaching of Marxism-Leninism"). I warned them ahead of time what to expect. They came prepared and said a lot of sensible things... The brochure that Kozlov and I put together five or so years ago was well received both here and by foreign communists.

Of course, everyone was given a task – to add something, change something, to supplement the text in the appropriate places on the subjects that this person had just presented at the meeting.

From the standpoint of maintaining the level of our "theoretical" prestige in the ICM, this undertaking is not a bad idea. But in this day and age, such actions do not have a theoretical impact on anyone.

And it would have been better if B.N. had not gotten into the discussion himself. The moment he opened his mouth, he revealed his shameful ignorance even of the issues that are already present in “his own” brochure. He referred to me twice, suggesting to direct the institutes’ attention to this or that issue that, according to Ponomarev, no one had worked on yet but was important and deserved attention. I gloomily refuted his suggestions, saying these subjects had long been developed and entire books have been written on them. But for him it’s like water off a duck’s back.

These kinds of “events” show the cynicism and depravity of this now quite open practice of exploiting other people’s brains.

October 24, 1982

I read *Elena the Beautiful* by Kozhevnikova in *Novy Mir* – “beautiful” portraits of Galya Volchek and Oleg Yefremov. The author, it turns out, is the sister of Yefremov’s first wife, the one who was the daughter of the pilot Mazuruk and the future wife of the writer Vadim Kozhevnikov. She was beautiful, as I remember her from the beach in Koktebel in 1966. She died of cancer a few years ago.

The story is an example of the high professional skill in our current prose, brilliant observation and accurate characteristics of the “Moscow eras” of the 1950s and 60s among the Moscow intelligentsia. People are saying that Galya is outraged, but I think one can only admire how painstakingly the author portrayed her.

I’ve had quite a week: Marchais fraternized with Xu Yanbin in Beijing. Our ideological and political isolation in the ICM became even more pronounced. At first, B.N. wanted to send a telegram to Chervonenko in Paris saying: “How did this happen? The French comrades promised to help us repulse Beijing’s attacks on Soviet foreign policy, but what’s actually going on?” But he changed his mind. Zuyev convinced him that it would lead nowhere but would only anger the “French comrades” and all of “Ponomarev’s achievements” in restoring fraternal relations with the PCF would be wasted.

B.N. is upset that Andropov, and not he, was “instructed” to go to Berlin for the 100th anniversary of Marx. B.N. will have to speak here at the jubilee meeting. The fuss has already begun, especially with the “decided” article by Leonid Ilyich for *Problems of Peace and Socialism* – about Marx, whom, as he himself long ago admitted, he never read.

Yesterday our department had a subbotnik at the new Party hotel on Dimitrov Street. Profanation and shame. Workers of the Central Committee were down on their hands and knees, washing rooms, including the bathrooms, while the staff walked around snickering and pointing out spots that were still dusty and needed to be cleaner. I was an idiot to go – the only one of the deputies! I am playing the democrat and I can’t forget the atmosphere of the bygone subbotniks (as well as the May Day demonstrations in the 1930s and 1950s).

I went to the Korin exhibit (*Farewell to Rus*, Peshkova, panoramas of Moscow, Russia...). But *Rus*... he was tightly in the clutches of Soloukhin-style *pochvennichestvo* and

knew how to express himself strongly. It is a phenomenon, and the crowds there are huge. But he is one of the “gone” ones. His skill is inspiring, not his ideas.

October 30, 1982

A week ago, a mini-Khodynka happened at Luzhniki. Towards the end of a match between Spartak and some Dutch club, there was a crush in the crowd and either the railing at the exit stairs broke off, or someone fell and pulled dozens of others after him like pebbles off a mountain, and it resulted in 67 people trampled to death and 200 injured. *Vecherka* reported about it with the words “there are casualties.” “Voices” are giving out conflicting numbers, but all of Moscow knows what happened.

And already, as in everything else, instead of blaming the administration of the stadium and the police, people are angry at “the authorities,” “our methods,” “the system.” My tailor, measuring me, grumbled: it is because falsehood prevails everywhere, it has suppressed truth. There are a lot of bosses everywhere, but nobody wants to work, only to get paid well.

The stadium, which seats over 80,000, only had 16,000 people this time, mostly in two stands. But for the sake of “order” there was only one open exit... And of course, the majority of the crowd was drunk. Of course, in a direct way, the “system” wouldn’t seem to be responsible. However, nothing like this ever happened before, not in the 1930s, not after the war, when there were less police and the Dynamo stadium was nothing like Luzhniki, nor in prior years at Luzhniki itself. So, ultimately, this incident is another signal of the decay of our society, the demoralization of the “system.”

Meanwhile, Brezhnev continues saying that we are “at the height of our power.” A speech before military leaders, from which it follows that we will not back down in the arms race, and contrary to all our theories about the “historical advance of socialism,” it is imperialism that is advancing. Also, we need to normalize relations with China in order to not have a second front (which people usually think about, but do not say).

I’m tired of whining to myself that the store shelves are empty. In Tashkent, for example, there are no fruits or vegetables (in the fall) in stores, and at the market prices are sky high. Why? Because Comrade Rashidov is using all the fields for cotton. But cotton fabrics are also nowhere to be found.

Zagladin was in Italy for a week. The mass media pushed aside all international events while covering his visit – his public discussions, his meetings, including with Berlinguer. The party is split, and the overwhelming majority of the “base” does not accept the thesis that “the impulse of the October Revolution has been exhausted.” Indeed, why be a communist, if the event that originated modern communism is declared dead?

It's interesting to observe Ponomarev’s reaction to Vadim’s telegrams from Rome: “he is self-advertising... who allowed him to issue communiques about his meetings? Anyone else could have done just as well...” In a word, he is petty and envious at the age of 77!

A stunning victory for the socialists in Spain: almost 46 percent of the vote and an absolute majority in the Cortes (and Carrillo slid from 23rd place to 5th).

This is in line with Palme's victory in Sweden, Papandreou's "movement forward" in Greece, and the "left" government in France, such as it is. But it is also in line with Schmidt-Brandt's departure. Is it not a sign of the "nationalization" of the world's political development! Alongside the internationalization of everything else? Is the new nationalism not becoming the primary mass ideology in the modern technocratic-cosmopolitan world?!

November 6, 1982

I managed to have some time to myself on the eve of the holiday. I sorted through a lot of books, including from the series *Lives of Remarkable People* about Leonardo da Vinci and Kuznetsov on Newton. They are captivating, and all of them (even Newton) makes one come back again and again to the "fate of the Motherland" and "what is happening" and "how much more can we take." Especially against the backdrop of Grishin's boring, expressionless report at the Palace of Congresses. He even read it in a whiny voice, constantly stopping and sniffing.

They say he was reprimanded at the PB for Luzhniki. It would be good if it were true... but it's hard to believe. It would be too unusual.

Ponomarev was fussing over three reports on Marx, but I think he finally realized that both Brezhnev and Andropov can do without him, i.e. their teams will write the texts without the intervention of the aspiring theoretician of our Party. It looks like he has focused on our draft plan of his own report.

In general, he has gotten quite a few snubs lately, to mind his own business. But I doubt he will back off.

The novella *Remaining Human* by Mikhail Khanukh (1929) in Issue No. 14 of *The Far East* journal, 1981. All of Moscow's reading public is currently chasing after this journal, and there are probably only several copies in the entire city, if not just one library copy. I think Bovin started it, and it took off. It is about rehabilitating Jews as full-fledged Soviet citizens. It is masterfully written, very moving and necessary. It's always this way with us: it was not openly talked about, but if someone reproaches us, we show something like this and say "here you go, 'everyone is equal here' and you can write about everything." Nevertheless, for Jews who remained and want to remain Soviet, pieces like this are a big moral support, same as Rybakov's *Heavy Sand* from a few years ago.

November 7, 1982

After much hesitation, I did not go to the parade. And I was right not to. Even though my "fighting horse" is still alive within me, and is beating the pipe with its hoof... but this holiday, which was once so inspired and ideological, has been too vulgarized and bureaucratized. I also did not go to the Palace of Congresses. But literally an hour before the reception at the Kremlin, Ponomarev summoned me (urgently and without fail) to the Central Committee. What's the matter? Greetings from the PCI and PCF for the 65th anniversary of the October Revolution. The

Italians, aside from “complete autonomy” in our relations, were more or less polite. In any case, their “vision” is presented so generally and so veiled that we could publish it – most people would have no idea.

The French note was just insolent. Everything Marchais said in China, it is all there in a compressed form: about the need for democracy in socialism; about the possibility of peace and disarmament if the sovereignty and independence of all peoples is respected; about the “model” of socialism that does not exist and cannot be either exported or imported; about the “tragic mistakes” we made in the course of building socialism; about the fact that the PCF also put forward its disarmament proposals (alongside ours) and all of them deserve to be studied and discussed. And so on and so forth. The only thing missing is praise for Khrushchev, which Marchais launched into in one of the interviews in Beijing.

B.N. must have gotten furious. He was especially triggered by “tragic mistakes”... And none of the deputies were at hand. Zagladin was at the theater. So B.N. called me, but I arrived late. He already left for the reception. He took these texts, these telegrams, with him to “coordinate.” I can just imagine how happy Andropov and Chernenko will be when he accosts them at the celebratory table with his “stinking” papers from fraternal parties, which he, Ponomarev, “let loose” to such a degree that they send us such things for the occasion!

The texts have B.N.’s comments, which indicate that he is leaning towards editing them, but that would be a scandal. And Marchais (if not the Italians) would not hesitate to throw such a scandal publicly. I wrote B.N. a note (Balmashnov rushed to him in the Kremlin), saying, “I would publish the Italians’ note, and would hold off with the French, we can add them to the list later. Under no circumstances should we edit them, it will cost us dearly.”

So, the backlash has started. After all, it was B.N. who introduced the practice of turning messages to the Congresses of our fraternal parties into lectures and hints in between the lines about what we do not like in their theory and practice, and how it is bad and dangerous “for them” to hold some of those views. Now the French used the same method.

No, Boris Nikolayevich, you cannot save the Comintern-style Communist Movement, you will not be a regional secretary responsible for order! Everything is drifting and floating away.

Instead of the parade, Arbatov and I walked around Kropotkinskiy Pereulok. Arbatov, Bovin, Tsukanov and Co. just finished working at Volynskoe-2 on Brezhnev’s speech for the upcoming November 15th Plenum. Arbatov described it this way: since Brezhnev for some reason is lately favoring the Premier (Tikhonov), and the latter doesn’t want to hear about any shortcomings or problems in the economy, the learned Jews at Volynskoe could not get anything into the speech, despite support from Andropov and Gorbachev. At previous Plenums at least some thoughts were expressed, some proposals put forward, even if none of them were fulfilled later... But this time there aren’t even any thoughts. All the work is wasted.

Most of the time Yura [Arbatov] talked about his clashes with Ponomarev over Yura’s idea to form an “international department” at the Academy of Sciences, which would include the

U.S. Institute, IMEMO, Institute of International Labor Movement, the Institute for African Studies, the Institute of Latin American Studies, Institute of Oriental Studies and something else. He would be the academician-Secretary. “Who else?” I asked Borya (!!)" Arbatov told me. “If you don’t want to, that’s ok, but I won’t work for others...” In a word, the subject is not very interesting. But, in passing, he told me the following: Andropov summoned him and Bovin regarding the upcoming report for the 100th anniversary of Marx and the speech to ideology officials. And he mentioned, by the way (or maybe on purpose, so it would leak to the masses) that Brezhnev called him and asked, “Who is in charge of personnel?” Andropov replied, “Chernenko.” “That’s not right,” Brezhnev said, “you have to take it into your own hands.”

Andropov: “Leonid Ilyich, I do not really understand what’s going on. While Chernenko was on vacation, it seemed I had to do the work I was elected Secretary for. But now he is back, he leads the Secretariat, everything goes to him, and to tell the truth, I started wondering what am I doing... Maybe I was moved here to make room for Fedorchuk?”

Brezhnev supposedly replied, “No, no, that’s not right.” As the result of this conversation, last week it was again Andropov who led the Secretariat. But last night at the ceremonial meeting at the Kremlin, Chernenko walked immediately after Brezhnev and sat next to him, while Andropov was on the left, in the category of “premier.”

Yura commented: “Lenya is cunning when it comes to personnel matters. They underestimated him initially, and some later regretted it. Look, he never promoted one person, always a pair (Podgorny-Kosygin, Suslov-Kirilenko, and when Kirilenko started declining rapidly, he promoted Chernenko). The same thing now: Andropov-Chernenko. He keeps them both on a leash and ‘invisibly’ creates a situation of rivalry... so they would need him as a referee. If any one of them gets a little more power, then why would he need a referee, why would he need a ‘first?’ Plus, given the helplessness of our current ‘first,’ it would be easy to move him aside, if there was only one ‘second.’ But there are two of them! So first he would need to ‘move aside’ his rival, and the ‘first’ remains on top in the meantime.”

Yurka is quite the Metternich and Talleyrand. And, undoubtedly, he is a man of great abilities. He is not interested in the essence of things, he is busy observing how events play out, what’s on the surface of power and what determines people’s fates. These processes tend to indirectly have bad consequences for people and for the state. This was true under the tsars. It is a Russian tradition, Russian model of doing politics.

November 8, 1982

I am reading Yu. Davydov’s *Two Bundles of Letters*, a novel published in *Druzhba Narodov*. About Nechaev, Lopatin, and in passing Bakunin, Lavrov, Herzen. These rank-and-file writers are doing a great job by restoring living history in its most magnificent and noble points. There is, of course, a subtext and even direct formulas addressed to us, the Soviet people... And there are probably quite a few of us who are affected by these historical examples and thoughts. Though the ones determining our present history do not read these, or any, novels, the same way as, for example, thieves, rapists, bribe-takers, con men, alcoholics and others do not read *Literaturka*, which so fiercely and skillfully exposes and stigmatizes them.

I completely forgot to record one more piece of information I got from Arbatov. Kiselyov (Belarussian First Secretary) has cancer. The 80-year-old Pelshe is also dying of cancer. We know that Kirilenko was removed from his post in September (and I think he already was not included in the celebratory portraits). So, it seems there will be positions to fill at the upcoming Plenum.

I learned today from the duty officer that B.N. coordinated the French greetings with Zimyanin (at the reception) – in the sense that the expression “tragic mistakes” was removed and replaced with “At the same time, in the course of building socialism, problems arose (in the USSR)”... This is how it came out in the newspaper today (the PCI’s greetings have not been published yet). I am sure that Zhora [Georges Marchais] will throw a scandal.

Has Ponomarev really begun to act on the principle of Louis XVI? He is not in a good position under Andropov... I hope he does not get appointed to replace Pelshe as the chairman of the Party Control Committee.

November 11, 1982

Brezhnev died yesterday. Here’s how I found out about it. Around 11 o’clock I got a call from Zimyanin: “Can you come to my office right now? For the entire day. Do you have any other engagements?”

“Not really,” I said. “Ponomarev wanted to have a meeting of deputies...”

“I will call him right now.”

“I am coming. What’s the job, Mikhail Vasiliyevich?”

“An urgent one.”

I came, it took me a long time to find where he was. It turns out he moved from the new building into another wing. Afanasiev and Tolkunov were standing on the landing.

Viktor says, “You don’t have to go to the boss. You’re at our disposal now.” Both of them laughed. I walked into Zimyanin’s office, still no idea what was going on. He said hello and immediately got on the phone: Shchelokov – to cancel the concert on the occasion of police appreciation day. Demichev – to cancel entertainment performances. Lapin – to cancel light programming. Along the way he scolded someone either at TASS or in the General Department for asking whether to put Brezhnev’s signature on the message to the Angolan leadership...

I understood what happened. He said:

“This morning, at 8:30a.m., Leonid Ilyich passed away. Right now, we need to prepare an obituary and an address to the nation. Kosolapov-Zamyatin’s group is already working on the address. You will be in the group of Afanasyev, Tolkunov, Tyazhelnikov.”

He turned to the phone again, gave an order to prepare a mask, reported to Chernenko about the two groups. Then he continued:

“Reference how it was done for Suslov, and for Stalin. Except without this... without cultism! Strictly, calmly, with dignity. About the role of the Party, Politburo. Everything must be put in its place.”

Then he got back on the phone and I left. We were put in a room on the third floor – some unoccupied office for a CC Secretary.

We quickly drew up a plan and each started writing his part. By lunchtime we had it written, typed up, and started reviewing each other’s work... and this is where “discussions” began that would have been absolutely impossible only a few hours before.

Despite the “orders” we received, the momentum of the cult was in action: Brezhnev is the initiator of everything, he is the creator of everything, everywhere he made a great contribution. But we started to cool off as we debated the material.

For example, I said: “What did we write? ‘The Soviet soldiers led by Commissar Brezhnev accomplished an unparalleled feat on Malaya Zemlya.’ But there was also an army commander, he had a staff, there were division commanders, etc. But we just said ‘led by commissar.’” The guys agreed, we took it out.

The same thing for the economy, especially contributions to theory. But here we missed something. B.N. noticed this morning and reproached me: “How is it possible,” he said, “L.I. Brezhnev’s theoretical works formed the basis for the development of Soviet foreign policy... What about Lenin, what about the Party Program?! What are these theoretical works?!”

Nevertheless, ultimately our text turned out to be quite restrained and almost without exaggeration. I only wish I had succeeded in removing the word “modesty” as one of the distinguishing qualities of the deceased. Tyazhelnikov objected particularly, citing the official biography.

Zimyanin liked the text and sent it to the Politburo almost without corrections. But he did not give us any additional information, only said that the funeral is going to be on the 15th, and publication about the death is tomorrow.

At this point, Ponomarev called me.

“Are you done? Come in.”

Brutents and Shaposhnikov were sitting in his office. He told us how he found out when he was on the way to work. He said the PB decided to recommend Andropov as General Secretary, there will be an extraordinary CC Plenum on Friday.

He railed against our medical system for a long time, Chazov – an incompetent doctor, weasel, and even a poor organizer: it took the ambulance 20 minutes to arrive! Can you imagine!

At the same time, a curious “discussion” took place between him and Karen:

Karen: “It also looks like the workload he had lately turned out to be too much.”

B.N. (with irritation): “What workload? What are you talking about Karen Nersesovich! What workload?! You just don’t know? I know – he had three days off per week, not including Saturday and Sunday. Politburo meeting? You must have seen it yourself; you’ve been there: Chernenko prepared all the papers, phrases, replies... Aleksandrov wrote all the brief remarks. All of this in big letters. He reads it – it’s accepted, reads the next one – it’s accepted! They just had to be stamped.”

Karen: “I was saying that even this turned out to be too much.”

B.N.: “No, no! Don’t argue. I disagree. Plus, he died from a heart attack, not because of mental strain.”

This was said categorically and with obvious irritation. After all, he really did not like the deceased (it was mutual), did not think much of his mental abilities, and especially doubted his competence. He always winced when the words “Brezhnev,” “theory,” and “Marxism” came up next to each other.

In the argument with Karen, he must have gotten wound up because he, Ponomarev, is older than Brezhnev had been, but he works morning to night, five days a week and sometimes six, and has a right to say that he “works when he works!”

Then we got back to business. B.N. must always hustle and make “his” contribution to every matter. He came up with the idea to make an address to the communists of the world, which would be in addition to the national address. Karen made a two-page draft, B.N. asked me to read it. I did, and said: “It’s good, but the text we made ‘following the instructions’ (about restraint and without cultism) was more reserved.”

(Today at the funeral commission, B.N. tried to impose this text. He was told: “Send it [to the Politburo], we will see!”)

And now about the most important thing – about Andropov. It’s very good that he will be General Secretary. I think his conversation with Brezhnev, about which Arbatov told me on the 7th, acted as a kind of “political testament” in his favor.

But he is in poor health, he doesn’t have much time to leave his mark on history. And he doesn’t have time to slowly come into his role, to be careful, to get used to it. Plus, it’s risky – this “process” draws you in and relaxes you. You get used to the status quo and then it is harder to tear things apart. And we need to tear apart quite a lot.

From my “self-professed expert” angle, I would suggest the following “program.”

The goal is to feed the people and restore people’s interest in work.

Methods and main problems:

1. Eliminate the Brezhnev infrastructure – all these relatives, hangers-on, favorites, all the people brought in from Moldova and Dnepropetrovsk: the Trapeznikovs, Pavlovs [at the time the chief administrator of the CC], Golikovs, Tyazhelnikovs, Shchelokovs... The villas,

country dachas, hunting farms, the bloated security apparatus, the hundreds, if not thousands, of personnel. This is necessary to revive the moral authority of the leader.

2. Get out of Afghanistan.
3. Tell Jaruzelski to figure it out on his own, and let everyone know that we will not go into Poland under any circumstances.
4. With regard to socialist countries, adopt a declaration similar to Khrushchev's in 1956 (which he immediately violated in Hungary). Reject the principle that whatever is not done our way is unacceptable and will not be allowed. Let them do what they want.
5. Remove the SS-20 missiles from Europe.
6. Curb the military-industrial complex. Openly ignore the American intimidation and reduce the size of the army by a factor of four.
7. Put the MFA under the control of the Central Committee. Appoint a full CC Secretary for International Affairs. But whom? B.N. obviously doesn't fit.
8. Let all dissidents go abroad, with Sakharov at the helm – both those who are imprisoned, and those Andropov hasn't gotten around to imprisoning yet.
9. The same for all the Jews who would like to leave. And at the same time outlaw anti-Semitism. Put the Jews at least on the same level as the Armenians in the "friendship of peoples system."
10. Send 70-80 percent of ministers into retirement.
11. Give the republics real independence, including the autonomous ones. Give the regional committees real rights. And every possible encouragement for horizontal connections between regions.
12. Supply cities and industrial centers through regional and district resources. Have a minimal centralized fund – for the capital and a few other cities.
13. Give all the vacant lands to pensioners and in general to anyone who wants to take it, no matter for what purposes.
14. Reduce the CC apparatus, but elevate the role of the CC departments. Put them above the Ministries, so the latter would tremble and be cautious. Free the departments of routine work, of administrative and regulatory functions.
15. Propaganda. Put an end to the cultism (this goes without saying) and watch carefully that it does not seep through the cracks again.

Give the press more rights – including when it comes to criticizing party authorities. Look to the literary journals and contemporary literature – which is again approaching the greatness of Russian literature – for freedom of expression, to get ideas. Take from these sources methods of taking to task, urging, inspiring, telling the truth to the people. Learn to speak with

the people in general, to explain and have accountability. *Pravda* should set the example for all of this, in concentrated form.

This is the minimum. And it should be felt already in Andropov's first year. Otherwise, everything will get stuck again.

The most challenging aspect will not even be overcoming the resistance, but what to do with the "waste" – the newly unemployed military personnel, the so-called "scientists," parasites of propaganda and public activity, those who will be thrown out of the state party apparatus, especially from the ideological sphere? They will form a social stratum that will be a swa-a-amp of dangerously unemployed...

We shall see. But I would like to hope. The Plenum is tomorrow... But it will probably be limited to electing the General Secretary.

November 12, 1982

I was at the Plenum. As always, I arrived at Sverdlovsk Hall early, to get a seat. I was unpleasantly struck by how people were acting when they started coming in and taking their seats. "Old friends" kissing French style (hadn't seen each other for six months!), "Party" jokes, casual chit-chat, laughter, teasing. As if nothing major happened... As usual: a display of uncertainty, an inner lack of culture, covered up with a peppy show of their significance.

As always, the hall grew quiet a few minutes before 11a.m. Everyone was waiting tensely to see who would walk through the doors of the presidium first.

Andropov came out first, and for some reason stopped by the door. Chernenko was next, and the rest a few steps behind them. They went up to the presidium table. Everyone in the auditorium stood up. This lasted about a minute. Then Andropov went down to the podium and began to speak. Nobody gave the floor to anybody. He finished with the words: "This is an extraordinary Plenum and we have to resolve one issue – the election of the CC CPSU General Secretary. I ask you to comment on this matter." Then he went to his usual place next to Ustinov.

Chernenko got up, without a pause, and went to the podium. He spoke for 7-10 minutes. I whispered to Bovin: "K.U.'s speech turned out to be more eloquent than Yu. V.'s." He replied, "Because K.U.'s speech was written by Shishlov and Blatov, and Yu.V.'s by his assistants, they didn't pull it off, didn't make enough of an allowance for the occasion."

But both speeches were free of cultism, of obvious sycophantic exaggerations. They did have overestimations dictated by political considerations, but that is natural.

When Chernenko, "on behalf of the Politburo," named Andropov's candidacy, the hall erupted in a long ovation, which came in waves, subsiding and then growing stronger. People were really "tired" of the previous one.

Chernenko was calm, confident, and seemed to sincerely support Andropov's candidacy. In general, he must have understood how modest his abilities are compared to Yu.V., and the latter's clear superiority.

So, it's happened! Then the crowd, in groups, went through the usually-closed Nikolsky Gate to the Hall of Columns. People surrounded the coffin – democratically, without ranks, people standing wherever they could find a spot. On the right, there were about 50 relatives and the wolfhounds – the gloomy security guards. The weeping Victoria Petrovna, their son next to her, also weeping. The b... daughter. Looking angrily at everyone. A stately woman, obviously still far from being consoled... In about 20 minutes, Andropov and Politburo members came in and mixed with the general crowd. We stood like that for about 15 minutes. Then the principals went to give their condolences to the “friends and family of the deceased,” and the rest proceeded to the exit.

When Bovin, Arbatov, and I were walking in the CC crowd to pay our respects at the coffin, Arbatov started talking about what Yu.V. must do immediately, without delay. He outlined his own “program for Andropov”:

- Get rid of the Premier (Tikhonov) and put Gorbachev in his place;
- Get rid of Fedorchuk (he was appointed chairman of the KGB after Andropov went to the Central Committee) and put Kryuchkov in his place, thereby securing a solid base for all his further work;
- Assign some smart guys to redo the report prepared for Brezhnev for the 60th anniversary of the USSR. Because it will be Andropov's Speech from the Throne;
- Create a personal office, to exist in parallel with the CC until the CC is radically restructured (“And put you in charge of it,” quipped Bovin, panting from our fast walk);
- Get rid of Trapeznikov (Bovin added that Trapeznikov did not clap his hands even once when the Plenum welcomed Andropov's election). That would be a signal that would be well received by the intelligentsia;
- Get rid of Shchelokov, in particular, in order to restore the moral prestige of the regime.

And do it quickly. Any delay would mean getting sucked in, getting used to the status quo, and then it'll be too late. Then everything will get back to normal and all our hopes will vanish.

I got back to the Department. B.N. once again surprised me with his “initiatives.” To use the congress of “guests” – the representatives from states and parties – for our propaganda, to show that the entire world thinks highly of our Party and its politics. I have to write a note to the CC tomorrow on the subject, but while I'm at it, I will report what Zamyatin told me over the phone. Andropov called him and said: “Do what you need, without waiting for resolutions, to make the mass media use ‘Ilyich's death’ for our benefit.”

The stream of condolences and requests to come to the funeral is indeed overwhelming, both in quality and quantity. Brezhnev's name is tied to the importance of our country and politics in the world.

November 13, 1982

I spent the day at work. The bustle before the influx of the mourning delegations. B.N. stood out once again. For two days he discouraged us, the deputies, from “inviting” delegations, more than that – he wanted us to make sure the small fry would not come. It’s a lack of elementary intuition (despite so much experience). They didn’t ask us: they came to the embassies themselves and “snatched” tickets. In the end, all CP leaders, almost without exception, are rushing to Moscow. The Italian delegation is comprised of: Berlinguer, Pajetta, Bufalini!

It is absolutely clear: everyone wants to use Brezhnev’s passing to close all the dark and unpleasant pages and start everything anew in the ICM. But B.N. doesn’t get it. The only conclusion he is making is that we need to take advantage – to properly exploit this congregation of people, to prove how great and good we are, how everyone respects us and recognizes that we are right. Nothing could be further from reality.

If life teaches him anything, it’s only for a couple days. When he saw that the influx of delegations was unstoppable, he began to fuss and scold us – why hadn’t we yet (!) organized everything in terms of meetings, schmoozing, accommodations, attendants, etc. I tried to remind him that just yesterday he was yelling at me about the fact that Schmidt was coming from West Berlin, and the Turks, and Kashtan wanted to come. He got mad.

In general, he would be a good fit to replace Toporikov as the head of the service sector.

It would be futile to believe that we could start a new policy in the ICM under Ponomarev’s leadership. Even if Andropov would be “for” it, he won’t have the time to get into it. No one else cares: let Ponomarev fiddle with it.

People in the Department are whispering. Who will be in charge of ideology in the Politburo, who will head international affairs? And everyone expects that “our guy” will finally be promoted. I doubt it. And he shouldn’t be. It won’t do any good now. Under Brezhnev-Suslov he still passed for a progressive. Now he is a reactionary.

And most importantly – he has no position of his own, except for an indestructible impulse to use the ICM as a propagandist and defender of the great achievements of real socialism.

November 14, 1982

Today I was meeting delegations at two airports: Florakis, Vassallo, Gus Hall, McLennan, and others. On some trips I managed to get from Sheremetyevo to the hotel on Plotnikov Lane and back in 50 minutes. In the car I explained what Andropov’s election meant, how it happened, how we understand the West’s reaction to Brezhnev’s death and how we are planning to use it.

I got home late.

November 16, 1982

The funeral. Members of the Central Committee – a privilege – gathered in Okhotny Ryad near the Hall of Columns. I remember being struck by the fact that I was the only one who took off my hat while standing there (and during the procession). The other three hundred-or-so people kept their fur hats on. And it wasn't 30 degrees below zero, as it was on November 29, 1924, it was 7-8 degrees! Later, many of those who saw the procession on television were surprised and outraged by this demonstration of lack of culture, disregard for an age-old folk tradition.

Then again, this time, judging by both the funeral and the atmosphere at the Plenum, “the Bolsheviks did (not) sob,” and “Ilych's death did (not) become the greatest communist organizer.” I took out Mayakovsky on purpose right now, his “Vladimir Ilych Lenin.” I read it through and again it nearly brought me to tears. Formally, the motions were essentially the same... But at the core, not at all. People were waiting for Brezhnev's death... When this profanation of power, ideals, beautiful phrases and words would end? When will this deadly grip of a living corpse come to an end!

About a week later, I was in an “academic” company, people from various institutes (among them three of my friends). We were in the countryside, stayed up till after midnight. Naturally, the conversation revolved around the “change of signposts [*смены век*].” I asked a provocative question: what do people say in your, intelligentsia, circles about the “recently departed?”

One after the other, they started to more or less “passionately” speak their mind. One woman spoke out over everyone else. She is not from academic circles but of artistic “affiliation” – Lyudmila Perepelkina. She summarized it like this: “People are saying that the overall result is a big minus. What can you say about a General Secretary who collected foreign-made cars? Who on the occasion of awarding an order to a republic could receive a diamond ring of countless carats? Who gave his relatives cushy positions and personally, in front of the nation, gave his son an order – the son being an alcoholic and speculator in foreign currency, who is loaded into the car every evening in front of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, passed out drunk? What can you say about a General Secretary who made his son-in-law practically a Minister, the son-in-law being a drunkard and bribe-taker who decorated himself with military medals for the Patriotic War even though he was only a boy during the war? What can you say about a General Secretary who allowed his daughter to openly and impudently behave like a vulgar whore, the daughter being a thief and running the biggest criminal den ever known to Moscow? What can you say about a General Secretary who took from the state coffers for his own whims, hunting farms, dachas and villas, and millions to pay for his servants? Who brought to Moscow his friends and sycophants from his former jobs and gave them key positions in the government, where they also were not shy about dipping into state pockets and brazenly showed off the stolen wealth and luxury? What can you say about a General Secretary who awarded himself 4 + 1 Hero stars, the first of them for heroic feats in the war 20 years after it was over? Who allowed an orgy of praise to be unleashed around him, a thousand time greater than his actual merits? Whose reign is marked by a decline in communist prestige unheard of in the history of the party; under whom theft, bribery, corruption, and abuse of official positions took on proportions that surpassed those described by

Gogol and Shchedrin... And when someone was caught, like Mzhavanadze (First Secretary of Georgia) or Medunov (First Secretary of the Krasnodar Regional Committee) or the Minister of Fisheries Ishkov (the case with "Okean"), they got off with a transfer to a good position in the capital. This man brought the country if not to starvation, then to shameful ruin – to such a state that even the largest industrial centers do not have meat, butter, milk, fruits and vegetables, cereals, even bread is available intermittently. Under him, the 'propaganda of success' came into such blatant contradiction with obvious facts that it became the subject of universal disgust and ridicule... and alas! led to the moral decay of our youth. Drunkenness and alcoholism reached proportions never before seen in Russia's history. He 'gave' us Afghanistan, whatever they may lie about internationalist duty and the security of our 'underbelly!' This is what people say and how they evaluate the 'recently departed.' Unfortunately, it didn't happen soon enough!" concluded this beautiful lady.

It is also symbolic that the "silent crowd" brought into Red Square to say goodbye to Brezhnev, selected people, were enclosed in a rectangular space surrounded by two chains of people – in military uniforms and civilian clothes. And these chains did not break until the last person from the "elite" left the stands. What a shame! But also promising!

In a word, Yuri Vladimirovich got quite an inheritance! God give him courage and health to first clear the Augean stables and open some way out of the obvious impasse that our great country has been brought into.

Aleksandrov-Agentov ("Sparrow") will remain an assistant to the General Secretary, Blatov and Tsukanov were made consultants to the General Secretary, Golikov as well.

Let's see what happens at the Plenum on November 22. Some things should come into focus, if only because three PB positions need to be filled, someone must be appointed Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and of the Party Control Committee, somehow respond to Aliyev-type behaviors, etc.... Someone needs be put in charge of ideology...

But you cannot, cannot promote our B.N. with his police-propaganda way of thinking and acting, and his absolute disregard for the realities of socio-political processes.

Yesterday I saw off McLennan, tried to stir him up about the new concept of the ICM... He said nothing. Tomorrow B.N. will receive Gus Hall and Kashtan.

November 19, 1982

Morning. Before seeing off Gus Hall. I'm exhausted from these send-offs, every day there is "lunch" and "dinner," and I talk, talk, talk – about China, about Marchais' visit there, about impressions from the Westerners who met here with Andropov, about the Spanish Communist Party, about "new internationalism," about "what to do" with the ICM, about Afghanistan, patriotism for a non-ruling party, about the fact that here (like in Canada) everyone who is not "proletarian" was portrayed as a "bastard," even 40 years after 1917. Now we thought better of it (the stream of fiction and historical literature)... But the moral factor turned out to lag behind most of all and it is keeping us back... My God, what didn't I talk about, trying to "charm them with intellectuality" of the Central Committee and smooth over the terrible impression they

got from meetings with Ponomarev – from his primitive kindergarten didactics, his lectures, the almost undisguised “demands” that the CPs serve us.

And most importantly – from his inner lack of culture, the clearly palpable disrespect bordering on rudeness, his plebeian arrogance... He is so disconnected, he’s forgotten that without these Kashtans, Vilners, Urbans and other small CPs, no one would need him at all. Because our leadership can communicate with Mengistu, Assad, Gandhi, and Marchais by going over his head (which they are doing already!)...

It's awful! What “new approach” to the ICM can you speak of!

... We are nevertheless writing an article for him for *Problems of Peace and Socialism* on the international (pardon me: world-historical) significance of the funeral – and for this I ordered to slice up the already finished edition of *PPS* No. 12.

November 20, 1982

A three-hour conversation with Gus Hall. As always, boring. He is an uninteresting person, but he is the only one who can still manage to be a CP leader in modern-day America. He perked up when he told me about a trip he took around the U.S. – rallies, which for the most part took place in churches with the assistance of priests. And right there in the churches they recruited for the CP – these same priests compiled lists ahead of time. It is the efforts of bishops that led to the current movement to freeze nuclear weapons. The bishops declared it a sin not only to support such weapons, but also to work in enterprises where they are manufactured.

The case of a young woman who told to a priest in confession that she joined the CP... and how she was reinstated in the party by the archbishop.

Gus talked about all this with childlike delight.

If there will be no Gus Hall, there will be no party.

The evening with Vassallo – the most honest and perhaps the smartest of the communist leaders I know. “‘Use the element of shock’ (about the death) both in foreign policy and in the ICM, break away from routine. For example, convene CP delegations for the 60th anniversary of the USSR – just for tea, for a casual conversation – better than any Conference,” he advised.

In order to spare me the disappointment (that he won’t be elected at the Plenum), B.N. told me “confidentially” that there would be no big changes: one person will be made member of the Politburo in order to be appointed first deputy under Tikhonov and some regional committee secretary will be made CC Secretary of the Economy (he did not give a name).

Aliyev?! Is it possible that this brownnose weasel is being prepared to be a Premier? And another bad sign: Arbatov called from Volynskoye, very upset – his and Bovin’s attempt to introduce something about the economy into the General Secretary’s speech was extinguished with disdain and without explanation. (“We are not used to such treatment,” Yurka concluded sourly. He must have thought it was “his time” to be the grey cardinal, but no!)

Can it be that everything will return to the Brezhnev ways? Or is this a waiting tactic? That would only lead to the clean water getting covered with slime.

On the 30th I'm going to France – a party delegation.

November 21, 1982

During the transition “from Brezhnev to Andropov” I read Yuri Davydov’s *Two Bundles of Letters*, about the famous populist German Lopatin. He cites an excerpt from the diary of Lev Tikhomirov, a turncoat from *Narodnaya Volya* who became disillusioned with the revolution and switched to serving the tsar and Stolypin. I copied a couple paragraphs related to 1905. Here they are: “As a matter of fact, one does not see a single ‘historic’ figure around. We have all descended into senility. Russia, it seems, has already been left to the mercy of the ‘natural course of events.’ It may not perish in the literal sense of the word, but the entire state and church [for Soviet times, read: ‘ideological’] system is changing and it would be strange to keep the forms that have lost their spirit, and therefore, their meaning. It would be better if we were under the wrath of God: after wrath and punishment, there might be mercy. But maybe we have already reached the point where we have simply been ‘released into the wild’ – we’re on our own.

“A terrible time! The Russian part of Russia is going down the drain. The rot of spiritual debauchery is mixed up with dumb lack of faith and materialistic depravity. And all this dirty slime envelops the people at the top.

“So, fantasies disappear, reality remains. How strange: all the brilliant representatives of the Russian spirit – Khomyakov, Dostoyevsky, V. Solovyov, L. Tolstoy – they were all merely fantasizing. Does that mean that all those sparks of the national in them, in the nation itself, do not exist? The shadows of Marx and Engels are smirking: we told you, you fools, that nothing national exists, and all the ‘voices of the Russian soul’ are merely voicing the ‘class’ aristocratic consciousness!

“If Russia, the last country from which humanity can expect a new dawn, disappears, then the way for the Antichrist will be open.

“There is no cause where I am needed, it would be better to just give up and become a publicist again.”

This is a sample of what our great Russian literature is doing, where it’s taking us, and where it is going. Mimicking the style of “that” time, and even the Tikhomirov’s style, the author is grabbing by the throat the deepest and most urgent questions of “modern Russia.” There are associations with the October Revolution and with fascism, but primarily: where are we going and what should we do now?! Is there a “historic figure” right now, and maybe it’s true about “the sovereign has become outdated in light of ‘recent events’”?

The present-day Lopatins, Tikhomirovs and the Burtsevs, all the Arbatovs, Bovins, Brutents’es, me, the poor sinner, and many like us really want Andropov to become that “historic figure,” the savior of Russia that Tikhomirov had in mind.

Why does it always need to be saved (!)... And once again for the benefit of all mankind, and now all life on Earth, because if the “general line” is continued in principle, then disaster cannot be avoided.

By the way, I had the following conversation with B.N. the day before yesterday. He showed me a ciphered telegram from the ambassador in Vienna: Kreisky is offering his services. He will be meeting with Reagan and is ready to “carry out any instructions” that Moscow deems useful. He is ready to work towards convening a big meeting between Andropov and the Social Democratic leaders (Palme, Brandt, himself, and others). In a word, he also has high hopes in connection with the change of leadership in Russia. And by the way, for the good of détente, he asks/advises us to immediately release all dissidents and Jews from the USSR.

I told B.N.: I will comment on everything else in a moment, but I’ll start with voicing my complete agreement regarding dissidents – preferably starting with Sakharov.

B.N.: No, Anatoly Sergeyevich, I disagree. How would that work? How many of them are there? Maybe a thousand. Are we supposed to let this thousand go, so they start telling how it was over there (?) (he is implying their places of incarceration). Such material for anti-Soviets...

I started to object, saying they’ve already exhausted themselves, starting with Solzhenitsyn, and the public is tired of these stories. But if we eliminate this irritant and source of anti-Sovietism in one fell swoop, it would really be a statement of a new policy.

No, no! What am I expecting from this police-propaganda brain!

And how about that Davydov! He finished the novel with a downright threat: a new Lopatin is coming...

December 12, 1982

The November 22 Plenum brought some stylistic changes, but barely noticeable for now. Chernenko seems to have accepted the role of the second readily and without jealousy.

The second event of this period is the trip to France from November 30-December 8, on a party exchange. I went with Petrovichev, Ivanova T.G. (First Secretary of the Kalinin Regional Committee of Moscow), Khabegishvili (CC Secretary from Georgia), Igrunov (Head of a sector in the Party Organizational Department), and two of our referents – Gusenkov and Moiseyenko. Paris – CC PCF – three times, three federal party organizations.

December 20, 1982

I have no time to write, though there are things to write about. The intense work for the 60th anniversary of the USSR has begun. Nonstop delegations. My main job is translating from Russian to Russian the speeches they will be giving here. By the way, I edited around 70 of them. They are, as it’s called, brimming with internationalism. Even the Italians, with their hints, recognized the role of the USSR in solving the national question.

I was at the Politburo – a completely different picture (compared to the disheartening atmosphere under Brezhnev): people are speaking freely, throwing out remarks, discussing.

Andropov extracts the main points and draws practical conclusions/tasks, just as he did at the Secretariat.

Yesterday I met the Brits (Halverson and a woman), had dinner with them at *Sovetskaya*. Dzhavad again flashed his charm while explaining what the Soviet Union is. The woman – she was here for the first time – was sitting with her eyes open wide and you could see her stereotypical image of the “Soviet apparatchik” crumbling on the spot. I, together with Kuznetsov and Arbatov, had to meet Gus Hall. The planes were coming in one after the other. I asked them to delay the start of the dinner on Plotnikov Lane, made it only in time for the ice cream but still managed to amuse them while explaining what they will be doing here and the logistics of the celebrations (the delegations, speeches, etc.).

Then, at around 11p.m., Yurka Arbatov grabbed me by the arm and took me on a walk along the alleyways. “Looks like I fell into disfavor... Maybe I did go too far... On Friday I wrote a note to Andropov. From myself, a personal one. You know, our relationship allows it. I’ve done it many times before. Official notes as the director of the Institute are quite another matter.”

“What did you write?”

“It said: you don’t see how you are being isolated. While you haven’t had time to look around and delve into everything, some people want to slip in their policy and make the public think it’s yours. You will find yourself facing a *fait accompli*. For example, Volkov, Trapeznikov’s deputy, is going around the institutes and giving instructions. At IMEMO he said: stop working on concrete economic issues, we need to develop political economic categories. He didn’t even let anyone open their mouth. In culture, Lyubimov’s ‘Boris Godunov’ is banned, Erdman’s ‘The Suicide’ in the Theatre of Satire is being removed from the repertoire... Who is doing this and what for? To summarize: you need intelligentsia, it will ensure support for your policy among the people. And actions I described above already got people talking: ‘Say goodbye to our expectations!’”

I was shocked. You really did it, I thought. Though it is very like him – to quickly switch to familiarities. He really overreached this time. But I didn’t say that to him. I reassured him, but “sternly.”

“So, what happened next?”

“Here’s what. Yesterday I was sitting at home with my wife when the doorbell rang. I opened; it was a courier: ‘A letter for you.’ I looked at it, it was from the office of the General Secretary. A short note, but typed up and with his signature. What immediately caught my eye was that he was using the formal form of address. We hadn’t done that in 15 years. It would have been better if he picked up the phone and just cussed me out. ‘What are ‘You’ saying. So, Volkov, so what? If he is saying something wrong, he can be corrected. Why do you want to go through me? Furthermore – why is all this information coming to you. He didn’t come to your Institute... Theater performances... If someone was criticized, what’s the big deal. Why do we

need to get involved at the highest level. As for ‘The Suicide,’ it was taken off the stage back in 1932.’

“And more along those lines. In a word, he put me in my place.”

Then Yurka started railing against everyone and everything, and at the same time talking up how indispensable and necessary he is: “How can he not understand that I, with my international reputation, I built his reputation in the West, and at home too. It was thanks to me that he got to wash off Lubyanka so quickly... Maybe he is compensating for his colleagues? I wonder if he showed the note to anyone? As if to say, here’s how I deal with these presumptuous unsolicited advisers! Meanwhile, time is flying by, he only has a few years, and he is taking it slow. He thinks if he removed Tyazhelnikov and Fedorchuk, he’s good to go! No. Can he be sure that when Brezhnev was alive, the same Fedorchuk did not start a dossier on him, to slip to members of the Politburo if he ever wants to put pressure on Andropov?” And the worst thing, from Yurka’s point of view, is that “he is distancing himself from people who can tell him the truth to his face.”

My reassurances: I do not believe in intrigues either against you or against Andropov. Chernenko is satisfied with his secure second place, he has no sights on being first, you can see it from the way he led the Secretariat. I also do not believe that you’ve fallen from grace. Maybe Andropov wanted to put you in your place (to myself I thought: he got tired of how you impudently impose your opinions and criteria). As for Volkov, I think you are right on this point: Trapeznikov and Zimyanin are trying to put their foot in the door, so that it will be difficult to slam it later. And Volkov’s Stalinist activity (by the way, he appealed to Stalin’s *Economic Problems of Socialism*) is being presented as something new for the “new phase.” But Trapeznikov won’t be around much longer. B.N. told me even before his departure to Athens that it was only a matter of finding a replacement. Trapeznikov has long held on only due to the fact that Brezhnev brought him to Moscow.

As for the theater productions, I would not take on the role of the mouthpiece of Soviet intelligentsia. In any case, it would be better to see “Boris Godunov” at Taganka, before saying something. I heard, for example, that it is blatantly vulgar and a desecration of Pushkin in the name of Lyubimov’s usual prank-political style of sticking it to the authorities. The Pretender is dressed in a sailor’s striped body shirt and carries a Mauser, and so forth.

But overall, I “reassured” him. It’s not that he is afraid. He really has nothing to be afraid of, he won’t be sent “further than the front” – the Academy of Sciences. But he is agitated about the fact that he didn’t manage to become a Kissinger under Andropov, which was his lifelong dream. I have to admit, he has this dream not out of petty vanity or careerism (he’s already as high as he can be), but because his large personality craves self-expression. It’s how he sees himself, and not without reason.

December 25, 1982

The 60th anniversary of the USSR. There were 140 delegations, 140 speeches that I went through over the course of a few days (each speech 3-5 pages long). I had to make them sound

good in Russian, remove nonsense – factual, political, theoretical, and “coordinate” these edits with the speakers. I had to shorten the texts against the colossal resistance of the authors (if *Pravda* published these texts in full, it would be running them until mid-January). I oversaw the order in which these speeches would come out in *Pravda*, because people were giving speeches everywhere – at factories, in houses of culture, at the Bolshoi Theater, in the Hall of Columns, in Leningrad, Kiev, etc. I was going crazy from seeing the same thoughts, exclamations, phrases, enthusiasm, praises. But there are some original thoughts, too... And there were pearls, too. For example, the black Winston – Chairman of the CPUSA – wanted to start his speech as follows (in the Hall of Columns):

“...It is a great honor for me to speak in the same hall, in which 58 years ago lay the body of the great leader of the October Revolution, and just recently lay the body of another great Leninist. Moreover, as I speak, I am under the impression of the speech of the third great Leninist, Comrade Andropov, who promised to fulfill the decisions of the XXVI Congress of the CPSU.”

I had to persuade him to go to Leningrad, where he had to speak at a completely different hall.

I am sick of all the conversations, welcoming/seeing off delegations. These receptions seemed to be interesting for the foreign guests (after our meetings with Kashtan and Jagan, their parties even held Plenums about them). But I have to put on an act, because I know this is all for nothing, it is idle inter-party diplomacy that is essentially meaningless for everyone.

Tomorrow, I have lunch with the Spanish socialists and dinner with the delegation from Canada.

Today I cost the government 25 thousand rubles because I made *Pravda* re-set the speeches – they placed them in the wrong order.

December 26, 1982

The delegations are talking a lot about Andropov’s report. And almost everyone starts by noting that it was short. The second quality everyone noticed – criticism and self-criticism. The third – it wasn’t loud. It has a business-like and exacting style. Everyone is expecting major changes from us, something the entire world would notice, changes that would eclipse Afghanistan, and Poland, that would make everyone forget the “Brezhnevian” created in the West (about the use of power for self-enrichment, nepotism – relatives everywhere, about irrepressible boasting, demonstratively showcasing senility as wisdom, corruption, and so forth). Western communists are tired of fighting back, and some didn’t make it. *L’Humanité* was sold out with the headlines “A Declaration of Hope” (though only about the foreign policy proposals in Andropov’s report, but hinting at everything else).

By the way, Arbatov told me that Aleksandrov-Agentov called him and “on behalf of” thanked him for the report (after reading the reviews it received). Yurka considers it a gesture of “reconciliation.”

Postscript to 1982

This year can be called the run up to *perestroika*. The notes showcase a sluggish but incurable crisis – it had metastasized into all spheres of life in a degrading society. The top leadership’s glaring senility, the mediocrity and cynicism of the overwhelming majority of the leading cadres from top to bottom made it impossible to hope for change, except perhaps with the coming of a “new tsar” (new General Secretary after Brezhnev).

The most intelligent, cultured, and authoritative of the foreign communist parties – the Italian CP – publicly declared (and substantiated their claim) that the impulse of the October Revolution had been exhausted, i.e. the Soviet “socialist experiment” had failed.

This “volume” contains evidence of practical (though not openly acknowledged) recognition that it was impossible to revive the International Communist Movement. Its dismantling as an integral factor in world development began under Stalin, even before the dissolution of the Comintern.

Soviet literature demonstrates with amazing frankness (though still using Aesopian language) the disappearance in society of those criteria, signs, and potency that had allowed it to claim the role of discoverer of a new civilization. There is frustration, unscrupulousness, moral decay and cynicism everywhere and in everything.

In connection with Brezhnev’s “departure,” the author and his friend, Academician Arbatov, simultaneously composed “for themselves” programs of internal and external reforms. These “fantasies” (especially the author’s) coincide strikingly with what later became the domestic and foreign policy of “new thinking.” Their presentation here does not mean that the authors, who both later found themselves on Gorbachev’s team, showed these “programs” to Gorbachev and he incorporated them into his thinking. It only means that the measures and ideas outlined in them were, as they say, “lying on the surface,” and were obvious to anyone with common sense.

This “volume” contains many examples, now comical to think about, of people similar to the authors of these programs – who worked in the government apparatus, conscientiously carried out their official duties, and at the same time tried to influence the political decisions and instructions of their “leaders,” precisely from the standpoint of common sense.

Illusions persisted about some of the leaders, especially Andropov. One justification for this is that the “leaders” of the Brezhnev era were not such monsters as Stalin’s comrades-in-arms. They might have personally truly wished well for the people and the country. But they appeared on the political stage through the criteria laid down by Stalin’s purges, and represented the mediocrity and cultural smallness of the so-called “elite” of the time. They did not understand, much less admit, that their “good intentions” – which did exist in some – were not destined to come true due to the “nature of things”: the “**system**” would reject or quietly swallow any significant changes, depriving them of their original intent, as happened in the 1960s and early 1970s.