

The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev

1979

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1979

January 5, 1979

I was in “Sosny” from December 27th- January 3rd (35km from Moscow). However, this year I only got to ski three times. Unprecedented cold temperatures descended at the end of the year – up to -45C. Reportedly, the last time this happened was in 1842. Sections of Moscow are without electricity or heat. Some people say the power stations are out of order. Some say a train with coal arrived to the power station (by the Kievsky Railway Terminal) but it was 50 percent waste, and the management sent it back. Some say that 75 percent of the natural gas intended for Moscow has been used up by cities “along the way,” as they are also hit with terrible cold. In many buildings the temperature did not rise above 12C. For two days there was no bread in bakeries, and no milk.

In the meantime, Comrade Promyslov (mayor of the city) has been relaxing and celebrating the New Year at “Sosny” without a care in the world. I watched him there...

Burlatsky was there with his Irochka. I can't imagine how an intellectual can live with such an absolutely empty, affected, thoroughly artificial and primitive but pretentious woman... Then again, he is also just a provincial parvenu, despite the fact that he's the author of numerous books on sociology and even one fictionalized historical “dialogue” with Michelangelo. He imposed his company on me all the time, invited me to visit. The main theme was that I should recommend him, Burlatsky, as an adviser or a correspondent for a position in Paris.

I asked him: what about the language?

“I'll learn it in six months!”

What can I say?! Then for a long, long time he talked about his abilities and merits. It looks like his Irochka is demanding that lifestyle and shopping.

And now back to work.

Gus Hall's letter to the Chinese. It was reprinted in *Pravda*, and before that he sent it to us for a consultation. Now the task is to disseminate it throughout the world.

The letter to the Italians. Our response to their program theses for the Congress. It is actually a very informative and creative document, possibly the only realistic program for communists in a country with state monopoly capitalism... But why do they need to criticize us while they're at it? Whether their commentary on our “path” and our socialism is true or not, they could have done without it right now... It is a nod to fashion (a terrible fashion for us – to demonstrate disappointment in Soviet society).

B.N. initiated yet another article on “democratic socialism” (which will fall on poor Veber's and my shoulders). It will follow the same principle: let's beat up on an easy target to send a signal to the tough one. He is thinking about Eurocommunists, but he will criticize Social Democrats. (“I've written all this in articles ten years ago and thirty years ago,” he said... Hilarious!) In my ineradicable intelligentsia manner, I tried to resist, saying that nobody can

really define what “democratic socialism” is nowadays. The Social Democrats themselves deny having any theory; they boast of being pragmatists. We will criticize them and they will laugh... In Vancouver at the Socialist International Congress they never even mentioned having a “general theory.” And so forth.

This is all boring... A defensive position – that’s the extent of our theory. Then again, when the Eurocommunists borrow from Social Democrats, they do not really know what “democratic socialism” is either. Same as we no longer know what “Marxism-Leninism” is, and only flip through Marx and Engels to pull quotes to suit the occasion...

By the way, some dissidents are truly studying Marx-Engels-Lenin. For example, I am reading a book by Rudolf Bahro, *The Alternative*. He is a German, an East German, who was imprisoned last year, for this book in particular. Meanwhile, he has a truly theoretically powerful mind and he is a scholar the likes of which we probably have not seen since the days of our classics. In comparison with this book, all the outstanding Sovietologists, not to mention the authors of *L'URSS et nous* [The USSR and Us], Carillo and others like him – are mere boys, kindergarten.

B.N. is going to the GDR in a few days at Honecker’s invitation. He assigned Kozlov to make a summary of this book by Bahro. Alexey is baffled. We talked... I advised him to be as objective as possible and to push B.N. to push Honecker to release Bahro... After all, we did not imprison our Roy Medvedev, even though his books are also being published abroad and widely used by anti-Soviets.

Iran is going through a “Revolution of 1905,” a powerful development of mass popular struggle... Next door to us. And what did we, Marxist-Leninists, know about it? Did anyone in the Soviet Union have a clue about what would happen there, a scholar or politician?! What is all our science and theory “at the service of politics” worth! As the result, we have the “authoritative” opinion of the Head of the CC International Information Department, broadcast on television throughout the entire Union: these events are the result of CIA intrigues, the Americans wanted to scare the Shah a bit as he was becoming less obedient... Zamyatin even wrote a note to the CC, suggesting to “follow a line of supporting stability in Iran” (i.e. the Shah!). Suslov and Kirilenko already scribbled “Agreed” on the note. Fortunately, events unfolded quicker than the pace of paperwork turnaround in the CC apparatus... they overwhelmed this “Zamyatin line.”

January 17, 1979

B.N. started the new year by picking up the pace of his various projects, designed to “make the communist movement do what it was destined to do by fate and by its great founding fathers” (as I put it today in my “speech” for his 74th birthday).

He convened a group of consultants. Presented them with challenges. I burst out with reproaches at this meeting: Iran has been undergoing a revolution for a year now, and we pretend that we do not see anything. Meanwhile, it is the consultants’ duty to give these kinds of assessments to the Central Committee... B.N. ignored my attack. (The next day he said the PB

adopted a resolution to create a CC committee – based on Brezhnev’s note – on Iran). Now he is engrossed in the Iranian revolution, though he would have none of it when I brought it up.

January 28, 1979

From January 25-27th I was in Berlin with Ponomarev. At Honecker’s personal invitation. Talks on all the conceivable international issues – from Zimbabwe to the PCF and PCI. But everything was somehow noncommittal. From B.N. – a mix of propaganda platitudes with police information about individuals and the weapons supply chain. From Honecker – generally the same, but on a grander scale. At the same time it was unclear whether he really needed the consultations with B.N. or if it was a formality (for the CPSU) before his visit to Africa (the Germans know the situation there as well as we do). He listened to B.N.’s inarticulate speeches politely, but apparently with indifference.

On the morning of the 27th, before departing, we visited the museum of “revolutionary art.” German Expressionism from 1917-1933. It made a huge impression on me. And I felt embarrassed by B.N. His reaction upon seeing all this art that is so obviously unlike realism in the Soviet sense was to behave facetiously, as if to convey to our “high-level” companions: “we realize that this is all unintelligible nonsense, but if your intelligentsia finds something in it, then why not, we can take a look at it.”

February 17, 1979

B.N. was gone all week – he went to appear before the voters. Kalinin, Novgorod, Pskov. I ended up taking part in preparing his speeches, although he clearly did not want to bother me this time. I started objecting about one point, but he replied: “Right now in Tver’ they probably have neither meat, nor butter, nor even milk now... We have to say something to cheer them up: that capitalism is going through a crisis, unemployment, inflation (?!)...” And he laughed grimly.

March 3, 1979

From February 23-March 2nd I was in England and Ireland. A Congress of the Communist Party of Ireland in Belfast.

The destruction is like a war zone. Especially, and almost exclusively, in the proletarian districts. Patrols in armored cars, with rifles pointed at pedestrians. Constant searches – when entering the hotel, when attempting to go to the city center (fences with gates where every person is searched). There is some shooting. During the days we were there, from the 23-26th, there were two people killed and one British soldier went mad and shot two more people, then he was shot...

My interview for North-Irish television.

The Congress – the shabbiness and insignificance of their work. It is unclear what motivates them: for some it’s inertia (nowhere else to go), for some it’s habit, and for some it’s enthusiasm. The Congress took place in the reception hall of the hotel “Midland.” One hundred people.

I was the first to speak. I thought my speech was “beautiful” and relevant, but it seems I did not take into account that they do not represent a homogenous national organization. Not all of them were impressed by the national accent (the greatness of the nation) the same way as, say, it impressed West Germans (my speech there at the conference on Thälmann three years ago).

Volodia Janku from Czechoslovakia gave an effective speech.

Old man Pittman (from the CP of the U.S.) spoke for half an hour about the “special relationship” between the U.S. and Ireland.

The Cuban spoke about himself... The rest were boring, including the Frenchman Jacques Denis.

O’Riordan forbade us to walk around the city. So, all we had was hotel-Congress-and back in the car with him. But Andrew Barr did take us around Belfast once, after the Congress.

Some characters from the Congress: a red-haired girl (27 years old), Yvonne Sheehan. An American of Irish descent, a former nun, a former student of the Lenin School in Moscow, now – a doctor of Philosophy in Dublin. She is fairly attractive, endearing in her directness of a West European woman. She spoke several times. She speaks well, beautifully and instructively, sincerely. Her main idea is that everything is outdated: our ideas, our analyses, our conclusions. We need to rethink everything and present it at a high level, it needs to be imaginative and captivating...

After her first speech, she sat in the front row, directly across from me, and kept crying. Various people tried to comfort her. O’Riordan ignored her emotions. Later, at the hotel, he and I got to talking about her. He condescendingly despises such intellectuals...

Overall, this is probably how the Bolshevik congresses took place at the turn of the century, somewhere in London, Stockholm, etc. Scanty, poor, jointly with other events, several dozen people, lodgings with fellow emigres living in the city where the congress was taking place...

Flight from Belfast to London. More searches and very strict stewardesses.

It was cozy in London thanks to Yekimenko (an adviser at the embassy) – an amazingly kind person. Thanks to him, for the first time ever I had a chance to make optimal use of my time in London.

The National Gallery. I was there on my own. It was a communion. I spent a quarter of an hour just by Gainsborough’s Mrs. Sarah Siddons. I came back to her a few times over my two hours there. There are many exciting things, yet here in London, the most exciting are the English themselves: Gainsborough, Lawrence, Reynolds, Constable, Turner... Though there are surprisingly few of them there.

The Albert-Victoria Museum.

The Museum of Natural History.

The Tower...

Meeting with Carlsson, the Secretary-General of the Socialist International. I used the opportunity to grill him on Vietnam. Our KGB resident who organized the meeting was very impressed. Carlsson was helpless. In order not to look like an idiot, he said various reasonable and obvious things “on his own behalf,” but as a politician and the person responsible for the Socialist International, he spouted the usual Western vulgarity.

My impressions from the meeting convinced me once again that we are entering a time when Westerners are afraid to engage with us, they are afraid of a frank conversation, because their arguments about the “Soviet threat” are kicking the bucket, “human rights” are getting old, and it is ridiculous and not serious to build the international order around it.

This is also why the Labor Party avoided meeting me (and not because they are embarrassed to get tainted by us, like they were last year). Even though Kitson, when he was in Moscow a month ago, firmly promised me a meeting with Hayward and Lestor. Even though Jenny Little called the embassy and asked when I would be in London. But they got scared to “get in touch” (they sensed that I would use the Chinese to press them on all counts).

The meeting with the CPGB left me with a sad impression.

So – McLennan and Woddis. We sat down in the same room where a year ago he received Kunayev’s delegation for the Party Congress.

He opened with, “So, what do you have to discuss with us?” Clearly letting me know that “they” do not have anything for us. Luckily, the night before there was a telegram from Moscow (circulated among the fraternal parties) to help in holding the World Peace Council in Helsinki on the issue of PRC-Vietnam. I started with this “assignment.” We talked about Vietnam. They have the right position in general, even though when their representative in Belfast spoke about war between the two socialist countries he was “scuffed” (as in by feet on the floor – an Irish expression of disapproval).

McLennan picked up the phone and called Ramelson, our “old friend” and a member of the Presidium of the VMS [*Президиума ВМС*], who said that it was the first he heard of this initiative, but he would look into it.

We talked about Ireland. I told them my impression of both the Congress and the situation there. We agreed with each other.

On Vietnam, they both criticized the Chinese and used the word “aggression.” They claimed that the Labour Unions are starting to move away from the position of “both sides are to blame”... They expressed concern over how things will develop with China.

We moved on to inter-Party relations. McLennan mostly avoided responding to my initiatives, but on the main issue he said, “But most likely Comrade Brezhnev will again (!) be very busy.” In other words, he made it clear that if he did not get a meeting with Brezhnev, he would not come to Moscow.

I wanted to flatter them, so I asked for their advice: what should we do when it comes to the Labour Party. The question was unexpected, but they quickly rallied and one after the other started saying things along these lines:

- You (the CPSU, the USSR) should stop treating England as a third-rate power, putting it last after Schmidt and Giscard;
- You should get Callahan to come to Moscow;
- At the minimum, Callahan should make a detailed statement on détente (he has not done it so far, though even Carter has);
- You should use the mass media, both your and British, to tone down the topic of the “Soviet threat”; make sure that this year’s inevitable elections to Parliament do not take place with anti-Soviet overtones...

I thanked them (and in the morning reported all this to Moscow, though this kind of meddling in subjects outside the scope of my responsibilities will probably be not too well-received there).

Woddis took his leave, he had some business to attend to. I took advantage of his departure and outlined to McLennan, rather harshly, “our opinion” on what the CPGB press writes about Leninism, the crisis in the ICM, CPSU history, Stalinism, etc.

He watched me with a haughty smile. Then he said: “I do not personally agree with everything the CPGB press writes. But we – the executive committee – will not restrict freedom of discussion. We do not interfere at all, unless it comes to questions that are contrary to the principle of ‘fraternal relations’ with the CPSU.”

I asked him where is the line beyond which this principle is violated. After all, the whole point is that we have drastically different ideas about this line.

“Yes,” he said, “it is difficult to determine.”

I objected (taking into account the difference in our positions and the national character: he is a General Secretary and a Brit); I said that since they must discuss everything, they should at least give us the opportunity to set forth our arguments, especially when we are the subject at hand – the CPSU, the USSR, etc.

When I started talking about the fate of the Party “with such an approach to ideology,” the unity of the ICM, he put a stop to the subject rather decisively, saying, “We have significant disagreements on these issues and we could have a special discussion about them...” (apparently, not on my level). However, he recognized the usefulness of meetings like the one this summer when Woddis and Costello came to Moscow.

That ended our hour-and-a-half-long conversation.

Again I admired the greatness of London. It is truly not just a city but a Metropolitan [sic]: taste, wealth, greatness, reverence for everything that has happened in this country.

The television shows all kinds of Brits, the majority of them look like people from Tambov or Smolensk. The entertainment shows are full of nonsense, actually similar to German ones (all sorts of tricks with running and losing your pants, sticking your face in cake, etc.). I expected more intelligence and imagination in such things from the Brits.

Due to the condensed presentation of things in TASS, especially the white papers and ciphered telegrams, at home we think that their newspapers, television, and radio produce nothing but anti-Soviet materials. The reality is completely different: during my seven days there I did not see anti-Soviet materials even once on TV, and even in the newspapers there was no outright anti-Sovietism. Rather, there is a dangerous indifference to us as a society, nation, and culture. Plus, a fear that we could make an awkward turn in the world that would make it necessary to break some expensive dishes, and they would have to participate. In all other regards, they couldn't care less about us, including the dissidents. The only people who concern themselves with dissidents are the ones whose position necessitates it.

Their stores are full of wonderful things. Again and again I get frustrated for us, and for myself in particular, because at home, consumer goods are still a social, economic, political, moral-ethical, and neuropsychological problem.

March 9, 1979

From a micro-social point of view, my life philosophy is wrong. In a conditional and established society, all "elite" people play at life. The game has rules. In this milieu, people usually ask each other – how do you do? "Are you writing anything?" It does not matter what or why, the important thing is that you are taking part in this conventional game, since you are an intelligent civil servant. Nobody questions the content and internal significance of this occupation. I "do not write." I don't want to force myself. Although in contradiction with this position, I enthusiastically work on texts for Ponomarev. They have the same purpose – it's a game, but someone else's game! He never doubts the fact that he has to make a show of activity, since he occupies such a position.

For example, he stirred up a flurry of activity in connection with the Chinese invasion of Vietnam. He made us write "letters to fraternal parties" and explain to them as if they were children, to call upon them, and so on. He used his puppet Chandra (from India, he is the Chairman of the World Peace Council) to organize a meeting ["сходка"] (as Shaposhnikov puts it) of fighters for peace in Helsinki. For three days they proclaimed anathema and Ponomarev – through Zagladin and me – corrected the noise they were making "in accordance with the rapidly changing situation" in Vietnam. I think he understands that he has been pushed aside by Gromyko, Suslov, and Brezhnev to the sidelines of real politics. But he is keeping his chin up. And he keeps going full throttle within the scope of his jurisdiction.

So, there it is. His entire life he skillfully played his game. And he fell just a tad short of the ultimate prize – the Politburo membership.

Zagladin is playing too, though at a higher intellectual level. Unlike B.N., Zagladin is using his own intellect, abilities, will, and time, without exploiting anybody else (when Ponomarev was Zagladin's age, he already long had other people writing for him).

Yesterday I watched the first couple episodes of "The Unknown War" by Roman Karmen and an American. It is a twenty-episode documentary, created to inform modern Americans on who really won the war. Again, the same emotions – anyone who was in the war is chronically ill with it. I then picked up a book about the North-West front and went through pages describing the battles and movements in which I participated. It is as if it happened to someone else, not me. As chance would have it, at the cinema ticket booth I bumped into an acquaintance from 1947-48.

"You haven't changed at all," she said. "Are you keeping yourself preserved in a tin can or something? We are all getting fat, deformed, and you... as if it hasn't been 30 years. I read in *Pravda* that you just got back from Ireland..." and she started chattering.

In reality, I changed a great deal inside. Now I know that everything passes and in general nothing is really worth worrying about, and especially nothing is worth fearing. But in those days, I was very afraid of life's conventionalities. Then again, in those days they played immeasurably greater roles in people's fates.

I did not see Brezhnev on the podium for the elections. People say he was in worse shape, if it is even possible – to be "worse." His speech was slurred, his face was swollen, and so forth.

Following the official part, there was a concert at the Bolshoi Theater on the occasion of March 8th, and it was dedicated solely to Brezhnev. It was about his childhood, his family, his *Minor Land*, and *Virgin Lands*. If there was something "extraneous," it was a song by a Kazakh woman (because L.I. cultivated virgin lands in Kazakhstan) and a song by a Moldovan woman (because L.I. was CC Secretary in Moldova).

Who is doing this, and why? Why do they humiliate the old man this way, and taint (in advance) people's memory of him? Who benefits from this? Could it really be that "His Grey Majesty" is directing all of this, to later "expose" him once again?

March 17, 1979

Of the more significant events this week – Trapeznikov was once again blocked at the elections to the Academy of Sciences. Over the last three-four months, the majority of candidates' hustle on this matter has been particularly cynical and disgusting. But the main efforts among the inactive echelon were undertaken to push through Trapeznikov. Well ahead of time, "big press" was organized for his volume ("On Sharp Turns"), which is a classic embodiment of the insolence, ignorance, aggressiveness and vulgarity of neo-Stalinism. All sorts of hangers-on voluntarily ass-kissed; serious organs of the press "could not refuse;" and so forth. Diligent work was carried out by his office – the CC Department of Science, as well as by vice-president Fedoseyev at the Academy of Sciences and other subordinates and apparatus under his influence. They made sure that 100 percent of the Department of Historical Sciences would vote in favor of Trapeznikov.

So, the time came for the assembly of the Academy of Sciences: 138 votes “in favor” and 73 “against.” He was short four votes of the required norm (142 votes).

Old man Kapitsa commented in the hallway, for everyone to hear: “What a fool. He was made a corresponding member two years ago, he should have been happy and stayed put – after all, he didn’t deserve even that title. Instead, he tried to become an academician. One should have some modesty...”

In the West they will probably write that it is a form of opposition to power from the only democratic institution in the USSR. But I am sure this is not the case. It is simply an expression of the attitude towards this “figure,” and partially, of course, an expression of the academic circles’ attitude toward Stalinism.

People are saying that “in the course of preparations,” president Aleksandrov was summoned somewhere “to the top” regarding Trapeznikov. This is possible. However, he did not deliver, as one can see.

Do these lessons serve no purpose? Will this sergeant-major keep sitting as a Voltaire for our Academy and all scholarship in general? Most likely that is what will happen. But such outstanding luminaries “got in” as the “good guy” Primakov (author of one journalistic book but the director of the Institute of Oriental Studies) and the scoundrel Iskanderov (as a corresponding member) and others like them.

March 18, 1979

On the 29th I will be going to the XXIII Congress of the CP of Belgium. I am reading their materials, some of them for the second time, for example Renard’s report on internationalism (for the January 1978 Plenum). The report, as well as the 60-page draft of the political resolution, and other short materials – it all testifies to the great intellectual potential of the party, its deep “theoretical significance.” It is greater than the Italians’. I think something like this cannot be in vain. It will play a role one day, just as Lenin’s intellectual superiority over all others played a role when the time came.

In *Novy Mir* Issue No. 3 there is an article comparing Einstein (100th anniversary) with Dostoyevsky.

March 24, 1979

I read the *Notes of Empress Catherine II*. I got the idea from Herzen. I was barely able to get a copy – got it through an interlibrary loan from the Historical Library. They say there are only two copies left in Moscow.

It left a huge impression on me:

- This is high-level literature (after all, this was before Karamzin, not to mention Pushkin);

- It is an amazing depiction of that era, especially who ruled Russia and how, when it was moving full-steam into great-power status (Peter III, Elizabeth);
- Incredible depiction of everyday life;
- And, of course, Catherine II herself is truly magnificent human material, one of the giants of her century on an all-European scale, even though her *Notes* are limited to a period of time even before Elizabeth's death.

There is nothing pornographic in the *Notes*, as one might assume from Herzen's reviews. However, she does not hide and admits (though very "delicately," indirectly) her unbridled sexuality... and does not fault herself for it. On the contrary, she considers hypocrites the people who think, feel, and submit to their inclinations in private but speak and judge differently in public.

I read Azcarate's interview (he's a member of the leadership of Spain's CP) in the March issue of *Encounter* (a London magazine). He made everything clear about anti-Soviet communism. My god! How much he hates us! He is sputtering furiously... More proof that a heretic is worse than any arch-enemy. Alas! To a lesser extent, though not always, it is the same Ellenstein (author of the book *L'URSS et nous*)¹ and some of my Brits – many modern Western communists, or rather their leaders at various levels, have the same attitude towards us.

Zarodov is expected to be named Director of the Institute of History (replacing Narochnitskiy, who was forced out at the general meeting of the Academy of Sciences). But who then will head the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism (PPS)*? I suggested to Ponomarev to move things towards closing down the journal. Its number is up, nobody needs it, nobody reads it, it irritates a lot of people – some for ideological reasons, others because of the expenses associated with it, which are fruitless. Maybe it should be turned into a commercial agency = commercial publishing house, as Gus Hall suggested on numerous occasions. I said all this to B.N. His response was: "We will think it over and discuss it." We should push in this direction. I think Zagladin agrees.

Oh, and regarding the Institute of History. B.N. told me that Sen'ka Khromov is intended for the directorship. But he would be a new Trapeznikov!

Ponomarev is just delightful. When I told him about Zarodov (on behalf of Fedoseyev and Timofeyev, they nudged me and Zagladin about this after the meeting on the IV volume of the *International Labor Movement*) he replied: "What are you talking about! Is Zarodov director material? What kind of scholar is he? He had a couple books written for him... and that's it!"

As if Comrade Ponomarev writes his books himself! What is this? Senility? Or following the principle "Gods may do what cattle may not?" Or "childish debauchery" and naïve cynicism that are akin to his very nature, his sincere belief that "this is how it should be"?

¹ Francis Cohen is credited as the author of *L'URSS et nous* in Chernyaev's diary from 1978. The authors are: Alexandre Adler, Francis Cohen, Maurice Décaillot, Claude Frioux, Léon Robel [Trans.]

Ponomarev, due to age-related verbal incontinence and mounting veneration for “his past,” sometimes produces incredible things. When discussing volume IV, he suddenly told Fedoseyev, Zhukov, and us the following:

After World War II, capitalism was in greater shock than after the First World War, and opportunities for revolution in the West were also much greater, especially since communist parties had not only weapons, but also their own army, which formed from the Resistance. I (i.e. he, B.N.) told Togliatti and Thorez in these neighboring offices (he gestured around the room) “Go to Stalin, come to an agreement, it’s time to act...” They went, Togliatti first, then Thorez. Later they both told me: “Stalin does not want to look for trouble right now, he is against calls to seize power, he does not want to risk starting a new war – this time with the Americans...” And they submitted, they went back home and got to work on rebuilding the economies of Italy and France, both as Deputy Prime Ministers. We missed that chance. After all, B.N. added, hinting at Stalin, when it was really time to “fear” the war and to be vigilant against Hitler, then... (what then?). But at this opportune moment he got scared of the Americans, who would not have dared to fight against us then... And he hinted: Stalin raised the gauntlet of the Cold War and led it himself because he was furious at being betrayed once again (like he was by Hitler in 1941). He stopped the revolution, acted as an honest partner, met the West halfway. What he got in return was anti-Sovietism and expulsion of Communists from governments.

Of course, having told this story, B.N. did not recall that in his public speeches he repeatedly exposed anticommunists and imperialistic propaganda for claiming that communists followed (and obeyed) the Soviet Union’s foreign policy back then and in general (before the emergence of “Eurocommunism”).

Today I read F. Claudin’s *Eurocommunism and Socialism*, from 1977. The book has made it around the world in several editions. It presents the most consistent justification of Eurocommunism and criticizes its followers for being inconsistent. Claudin himself was a comrade of Carrillo, who expelled him from the PCE in 1964 for anti-Sovietism and “Euro-Communist” ideas, which Carrillo himself embraced only after Czechoslovakia ’68. The book is even more anti-Soviet than Azcarate’s interview, but it is calmly rational (not hysterical) and aside from anti-Sovietism it contains a lot of serious thoughts about the future of socialism and the ICM.

In general though, when you consume this kind of material every day, it “poisons” your system. For example, yesterday I studied Diligensky’s article, which he prepared following my initiative for Khavinson’s journal. In contrast to *Novoye Vremya*, this is anti-Carrillo, but not regarding his anti-Sovietism. It is about the real problems of revolution that he raises in his book *Eurocommunism and the State*. It is a serious and thorough article. Convincing, too. But after reading Claudin today, I saw that he criticizes Carrillo and Eurocommunists for the same things – for their illusions, their utopianism, legalism, social-democratism and reformism (roughly speaking). However, he believes and tries to prove that the future of socialism in Western Europe is hopeless if the USSR remains what it is today. Eurocommunism is a way out of yet another crisis of capitalism (a way out that leads to socialism), but it will turn into a fresh impetus for capitalism, similarly to what happened after the October Revolution, which did not lead to

socialism anywhere (including in socialist countries) because the revolution was defeated in the West. According to Claudin's theory, victory is only possible this time if Eurocommunism is combined with "renewal forces" in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

The "concurrence" in Diligensky and Claudin means that it is possible to have the right reasoning without including (and in Claudin's case even denying) the USSR as a revolutionary factor...

March 27, 1979

I received the Ambassador of Jamaica "Comrade Benjamin Clare." He is a handsome mulatto, very elegant despite the party uniform jacket he was wearing because they are also building socialism right now. In ten days, their leader is coming to Moscow, the Prime Minister and Chairman of the Party Manley. Clare gave me a letter for Brezhnev and for a long time explained the international situation and their full agreement with us. He also talked about socialist internationalism, because he needs me to support their requests – to build an alumina refinery, give them oil, provide them with a 50-million-dollar credit for raw materials and industrial goods. "This would be Leninist practical internationalism"...

In response, I spoke beautiful words about their road to socialism, and promised to "report" everything.

Yesterday in B.N.'s office Zagladin and I were discussing the plan for a meeting of CC Secretaries in Berlin. Over and over – to subordinate everything to the anti-war struggle. Even our (indirect) exposure of the Eurocommunists' opportunism should be done from this angle. Search for approaches to China... look for "our guys" there. We will not solve the problem with intimidation, confrontation, and Sinophobia. That would only bring us closer to war. War with China is a realistic prospect, because the Americans do not have troops to fight us with: they will not be able to deploy millions of soldiers across the ocean, and Germans, French and others are not a serious prospect nowadays. Their only real bet is to do it using the Chinese!

Non-alignment... If we (?) do not uphold an anti-imperialist direction there, it will turn into a reserve for imperialism. This is how he taught us. And there is something to that. [Ponomarev] has an ability to reduce everything to "Soviet interests" (like Lenin, according to Gorky, ultimately reduced everything to class struggle).

April 8, 1979

From March 29-April 4 I was in Belgium. The Congress of the Belgian CP. Solovyov was the head of the CPSU delegation, he is the Secretary of the Leningrad city committee.

To Brussels by car in the evening. Above us there was a density of lights, all roads, not just the highways, are illuminated by street lights. They shine with a yellow light that we only have in downtown Moscow. This is their energy crisis... and the capitalist principle to pay for everything on a case-by-case basis!

The Congress was at the “House of Eight Clocks” [в «Доме восьми часов»]. Disregard for foreign delegations and of course no special treatment for the CPSU. General Secretary Van Geyt did not even approach our delegation in the auditorium.

We barely had a chance to hand over the greeting from the CC, which was so thoroughly thought-out and carefully approved, to the head of the International Department (he did not want to take it until the end of the Congress, no time!). I doubt anybody read it. There was definitely no time or place to present the “gift from the CC” to the Congress and give our delegation’s greetings. I physically handed the gift to Van Geyt during a lunch for some members of the PB with foreign delegations, already after the Congress.

These delegations were a kind of international decoration: they were present only at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Congress. All the real work – discussions of document drafts – was moved to committees that were closed to “outsiders.”

The Politburo of the Belgian CP, newly elected at the Congress, did come to the embassy like in the good old days. Gradually, we got into laid-back, “comradely” chatter about whatever came to mind. The “European Parliament” turned into a serious topic. We do not even remotely understand their concerns in this regard. In general, we are behind – not Inozemtsev’s institute, but politically in assessing the realities of the powerful internationalization of capital – the economy of capitalism that Lenin foresaw. Nowadays there are virtually no national capitalist economies...

B.N. caught on to this several months ago. Now we are preparing a note for the CC, so we have at least some platform (our own) regarding the European Parliament and their current state of integration in general.

We went to Antwerp, had a chance to stop by the famous cathedral with the Rubens’ triptych. Then the port, meeting with workers of the oil refinery who are still on strike. The oil refinery was closed by Brezhnev’s “friend” Hammer. It’s been closed for six months. When they were employed, they got 25 thousand francs per month. Now on unemployment they are getting 20 thousand francs per month, without paying taxes or deductions. It is quite possible to live and strike! It’s a comedy! Hammer abandoned the plant – do whatever you want with it.

On Monday, April 2nd, I met with socialists in their Central Committee. Almost their entire “top” was there: Van Eynde, Van Miert, Leonard, Radu, Teddy, and some others. Solovyov did not go to meet with them. He said, “The CC did not instruct me to work with socialists.” My interlocutors talked a mile a minute about whatever came to mind. Again, the conversation eventually came to the European Parliament. I barely had time to throw in some comments – on China, the arms race, the Middle East, the significance of the relationship between the CPSU and Belgian Socialist Party... The atmosphere is better than with communists. The socialists are not afraid of being suspected of receiving orders from Moscow. Therefore, everything was straightforward, friendly, natural, though without any substance for political consequences. My French did not fail me. I think if I lived “in its midst” for a month, I would become quite fluent.

April 15, 1979

Once again about Diligensky's article, written against Carrillo on instructions from B.N. I gave it to Lesha Kozlov (a consultant in our Department). He got mad, and, blushing over his "revisionism," started to argue: "This means we condemn any theoretical pursuit of communist parties; whatever they might come up with we call it revisionism. At the very least, we do not see anything new in it." I tried to explain to him that there is nothing theoretically new in Eurocommunism. Social democrats from Bernstein to Kreisky and others had all these ideas, and presented them with better execution. The new factor in Eurocommunism is the communists' readiness to abandon their birthright (Leninism) and to try out the experience Social Democrats have gathered since 1917. To try to integrate into a capitalist system that has changed a great deal in the last 60 years. Thereby, they want to justify their existence, which for most communist parties turned into stagnation long ago.

Quite a different matter is whether a revolution could ever take place under the modern conditions of state monopoly capitalism. If not, then there is no need for orthodox communist parties. But while we (the CPSU) maintain that a revolution will take place, naturally we cannot agree with the social-democratization of communist parties.

I met with the Jamaicans again. Manley asked Kosygin that his comrades – Bertram, Heaven, Clare, and [Manley's] wife Beverley (who, it seems, is running the show in the Party) – be received at the CC International Department. Kosygin called Suslov, Suslov called Zagladin and we had the meeting. (By the way, this Beverley is a very elegant mulatta, quite sexy and smart).

Despite all of their Oxford education (they are far from the African revolutionary democrats) they are very genuine. It seems they really want to build their socialism and they are interested in everything. They want to learn from our experience without following it to the letter: how to accept membership into the ruling party, how the apparatus works, how to organize elections, how to conduct propaganda, etc.

Kosygin later reported to the PB about the talks and this meeting we had, he praised Zagladin and me.

Following B.N.'s orders from the south, I keep "improving" an article on how the ICM is a good thing. He is planning to arrange with Suslov to get it published for May 1st.

April 19, 1979

CC Plenum. It was announced who would be elected at the Supreme Soviet session and for what positions. As always, CC members showed up to the Sverdlovsky Hall one-and-a-half to two hours ahead of time (there were barely enough seats for everybody). A few minutes before the start, the auditorium fell silent in oppressive anticipation: will the General Secretary Himself be there or not. He was sick since the end of March, we found out about it because Giscard D'Estaing's visit had to be postponed.

He came out... Prolonged applause. But the oppressive atmosphere remained in the auditorium – from the General Secretary’s complete, obvious, striking physical and mental helplessness. He could barely tie words together. He tried to perk up and make jokes during Suslov’s speech but it came out nonsensical and awkward. Against the background of this power – which is completely empty inside but exorbitantly absolute on the outside – the nature of the highest party organ as nothing but a stamping tool was even more pronounced. This includes nominating candidates to all government bodies and for ministerial positions – all the same people. They should have replaced one of them, just for fun. The average age is probably about 70.

April 22, 1979

Session of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet to approve the Soviet-Afghan treaty. Brezhnev was presiding. The entire world knows what condition he is in; he did not even show up to the Lenin celebrations on April 21st. Any schoolboy would understand there is no need to convince the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium on this issue. But no! Brezhnev spoke for five minutes, Gromyko for three, but our Ponomarev spoke for half an hour. As always, he was certain that whatever he says is of enormous “international importance.” People were not just surprised, they were irritated, especially as they looked at the languishing chairman. Leaving the auditorium, one guy said loudly to those around him, “That old fool thinks he is smarter than everybody and we would not know what to do without his lecturing – to adopt the treaty or keep thinking it over.”

May 12, 1979

From April 30-May 4th I was in West Berlin. The official reason was to participate in the Communists’ May celebrations, the real reason was to attend numerous meetings with Communists at various levels to show that the CPSU still respects the United Socialist Party of West Berlin (our “fraternal” party, communist), that we stand with it despite its major defeat in the March 18th city elections.

I stayed in the “Hamburg” hotel. Impressions from “the wall” (Berlin Wall). When you walk through it, in just a few seconds you are transported to a different world, you feel it in your skin.

The May demonstration. Quite the fun crowd there: trade unions, anarchists, Maoists, Trotskyists. Their main slogan is “A 35-hour work week.” Fairly massive seven columns. Seventy thousand total. A rally at Kennedy Square. Trade union bosses and other such leaders on stage. There was a lot of anti-Soviet and anti-GDR sentiment in their speeches. A lot of foreign workers – Turks, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Italians... They look better than Muscovites do on a holiday. Already there are 200 thousand of them in a city of two million. Feminists had a special platform. I heard they live in special high-rise apartment buildings where men are not allowed.

Communist celebration in the “People’s House.” A mix of hippie attitudes with communist ideology that is serious in the German way. On the stage there were episodes from the Peasant War of the 16th century. Primitive at the level of our fifth-grade amateur school

performances. But it is presented with incredible enthusiasm. I saw a subtext in this play – the “German idea” – all Germans share one history, therefore in their minds there is a feeling of impermanence and inconceivability of permanently maintaining this ridiculous construct of West Berlin. Whomever you talk to this idea slips through.

The monstrous roar of jazz and almost pornographic moves of half-dressed young dancers made it very difficult to have a conversation.

On May 2nd there was a meeting with the leadership of the Party – Horst Schmitt and others. A clear analysis of the situation: exemplary modern production at the level of the latest achievements of the Scientific and Technological Revolution. High wages – higher than in the FRG, plus an additional eight percent for everyone from the FRG’s budget. Full economic integration with West Germany, but at the same time unemployment, especially among youth (but not foreigners), which breeds leftist extremism. There are seven communist parties in the city alone, and the “Alternatives” movement. Prosperity combined with hopelessness and terrifying boredom in everyday life. Drugs, porn, various other types of entertainment no longer help, even in the presence of genetic German discipline.

In the evening in the Administration there was a meeting with ordinary factory-worker communists. I wanted to bow to these fellows for their unselfishness, courage, and ideological commitment. They are working in an environment that is hostile and smothered in prosperity, they have no hope either for personal career growth or for achieving the Party’s ultimate goals (as one of them put it: to attain socialism in a city that is surrounded by a socialist “wall”). Almost everybody who shared a personal story goes through a similar cycle: he hides his communist affiliation, earns the trust and support of most of his “colleagues” (this is how they refer to other workers on the shop floor at their factory), gets elected to the workers’ council and the trade union leadership, gets promoted higher and higher, and then... a provocation, usually from a social democrat, and a lightning-fast slide down. Even though everyone already knew that he is a communist, the harassment starts when it is announced officially: he is kicked out of everywhere, up to being fired from the factory. And even his closest friends turn away, sincerely beginning to consider him an agent of the GDR, a provocateur, a liar, a deceiver, a corrupt individual.

The next day – the Reichstag. The grounds around it have been beautified. Inside there is a permanent exhibit on the history of Germany from the end of the XVIII century to the present day. It is very smartly done. Conceptually, the exhibition is social democratic. There are dozens of buses with tourists from the FRG and foreigners. And schoolchildren, schoolchildren, schoolchildren – with special notebooks in which they write down (and then read out loud in front of the “white wall”) their own answers to “questions about German history.” The answers suggest themselves – if, for example, Marx and Engels, who are so revered by the communists, fought for a united Germany a hundred years ago, why shouldn’t we do it now?!

The exhibit does not aim to arouse sympathy towards Hitlerism. But the causes for the war are presented with the help of photos and quotes from Stalin and Hitler along the lines of:

two tyrants and dictators could not divvy up what belongs to whom, and as the result the Germans experienced a terrible tragedy.

The monument to the Soviet Soldier near the Brandenburg Gate and two tanks on pedestals (the tomb of soldiers killed during the capture of the Reichstag) has been turned into a symbol of communism's isolation in the world, the contempt and hatred for everything that is east of the "Wall," which is nearby, along with crosses for those shot while trying to escape from East Berlin.

May 13, 1979

Some more about Berlin.

After lunch we drove to Spandau. This is something like the Maryina Roshcha district of Moscow – a huge industrial area, proletarian, where people say "I'm going into the city" if they go downtown from Spandau. There are jokes about it, too: "Berlin is somewhere on the outskirts of Spandau." It has the strongest regional organization of the United Socialist Party of West Berlin. They received us at their district committee – around 100 people – with remarkable hospitality. They gave the prepared greetings, then [spoke] one after another, as if reporting to us, without a hint of subservience, sincerely, not on someone's orders. A young teacher was especially memorable, she was beautiful, refined and delicate. She was very nervous. Again, the same scenario as I heard the previous evening: the whole district knows that she is a communist, all her superiors know. And yet, she advanced to a position of deputy head of the district organization (our equivalent). She is loved and respected everywhere. But the moment there is a public protest mentioning the "professional ban [*Berufsverbot*]" law (it applies in West Berlin the same as in the FRG) she will be persecuted and brought down in a matter of days.

In the evening, already in East ("our") Berlin, Herbert Häber drove us to his house. He is a head of a CC department in the SED (he is also in charge of the international department, same as Winkelmann, heir to Paul Markowski, but a different one – only for West Germany and West Berlin). It was a long drive to the outskirts of the city, a neighborhood with new buildings. I expected that living conditions would be incomparably higher than those of officials at a similar level back home. However, what he showed us surpassed expectations: a two-story house with a garden, guest rooms, bedrooms, offices, a cellar, facilities, garage, nurseries, etc. There are TVs and all kinds of sound equipment everywhere. The interior décor is fine, and I (having a similar-level position in the CC CPSU) would not even dare to dream about anything like it. We had a nice and delicious visit. His wife and son (a tenth-grader) joined us. We almost did not talk about politics.

Ponomarev barely asked about my trip. He summoned me and right away started to comment on the text of his speech at the economic conference at Inozemtsev's Institute, and on May 7th he already had to leave for Paris for the XXII Congress of the PCF.

I was at the CC Secretariat on the 8th and Politburo on the 10th. The Secretariat discussed a letter prepared by our Department, from the CC CPSU to the CC of the Communist Party of Finland regarding their rapid slide into revisionism – a "Finnish-style historical compromise."

Aalto's article and discussion in the party, especially after their defeat in the parliamentary elections. Our letter is frank, and even going by the standards of CPSU-SKP relations, it is an unceremonious interference in the affairs of a fraternal party... I gave explanations.

The Politburo discussed the outcomes of Giscard d'Estaing's visit. The discussion lasted no more than three minutes and the visit was considered to be very positive. I read the transcripts of the talks and saw that L.I. only read two texts. Kosygin and Gromyko led the entire conversation. Brezhnev only made one remark about the "gray zone" (a reciprocal non-placement of weapons on both sides of the border between the two "camps" in Europe), and even that Gromyko quietly disavowed later.

Brezhnev recently made a few appearances on television. He personally awarded some generals (for May 9th) and his own son, who is a deputy minister of trade, with the Order of the October Revolution. That made a special impression. It's all Moscow is talking about.

Victory Day. With Kolya Varlamov. Nostalgia for our wartime youth combined with a feeling of uneasiness in front of today's youth for imposing our criteria on them, our way of feeling and thinking. This only causes them to feel irony towards us, if not downright resistance and contempt. Especially since this is done through official politics and propaganda in an atmosphere when, it turns out, the 18th army (i.e. Brezhnev at *Minor Land*) played the decisive role in our victory!

May 19, 1979

Once again at the CC Secretariat.

I was in the picture twice. Once regarding the twinning of cities: SSOD [Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Contacts] suggested to choose 10 from the 56 requests. I questioned Vologda and Velikiye Luki as partners for two Swedish cities earlier, back in the Department. And I was right to question them. Suslov and others strongly criticized that "comrades are not thinking" about what we will show in those cities and what there is to boast to the Swedes. Vologda barely made it. I only remember Velikiye Luki from the war, and all it had was dugouts. It was struck off the list.

May 20, 1979

I am concerned about B.N.'s speech tomorrow on the STR at Inozemtsev's, with the participation of Western communists. I'm more concerned than he is himself. He is preoccupied with something else, namely – in Paris, Plyushch filed a lawsuit against him for mentioning his name at a conference in Sofia in a list of people who cooperate with foreign intelligence. The journal *L'etude Sovietique*, which reprinted the speech, is threatened with a fine of \$10,000 and paying to publish a refutation and an apology in 10 newspapers. Chervonenko sent this "episode" into broad circulation, thereby making B.N. even more outraged. B.N. tried to pounce on me, too: why did I include something like that. But, texts in hand, I quickly proved to him that the phrase mentioning Plyushch was neither in the draft, nor in the text that was sent to the PB, nor even in the text he read in Sofia (the stenographer noted the changes he made as he was giving the speech and I have that copy). The phrase with Plyushch appeared for the first time in the

Bulgarian stencil copy after the speech was given. B.N. can feel it is his own fault, he is trying to find people to blame among those who reviewed the page proofs before publication. It could have been me...

But that is not the point. All the printed texts in all languages contain this phrase. And that is a legitimate basis for a libel suit. It is impossible to prove that Plyushch is a spy, especially post factum. After all, he was not even tried... He went straight from the mental hospital to Paris.

B.N. is worried how his superiors will react to this. It is obvious how they will react: "He appears in the press three times a month, the devil knows what they write for him and he delivers it all and even publishes it in the most authoritative print media. He is an 'authority' on all issues – from disarmament, the Comintern, and Social Democracy to the STR and the crisis of capitalism, not to mention real socialism, etc."

His academic-theoretical productivity has long been annoying Brezhnev, Suslov, Kirilenko, practically everybody.

I already said more than once: we, the people worn out by his "oeuvre," cannot understand why he needs it. It is obvious that it has the opposite effect on his career. From the point of view of theory and access to Marxist-Leninist thought?! Contributions there can only be announced from the top, not "introduced."

The other day I was a guest of one intelligentsia family. Again, I found myself at the crossroads of a philistine-intellectual debate – why there is no meat and why, for example, Estonians, who produce 180 kilograms per capita in their republic, have to feed the Uzbeks and themselves remain without meat?

I enjoyed Glushkova's article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*. She sharply ridiculed the "moral critique" of contemporary Soviet poetry, and recalled Pushkin's famous lines about the "moral": it is, so to speak, "quite another thing." She said it is time to step away from this drivel (this pathetic fashion) and judge poetry by the laws of culture and historicism rather than by the "criteria of morality," to which every person attaches his own capricious meaning.

June 9, 1979

Practically every day B.N. gives birth to some kind of initiative. For example, to send a note to Brandt in connection with the European elections. But from whom? Who can address Brandt besides Brezhnev? And Brezhnev, who hasn't even heard about the European elections, probably has nothing better to do! I usually "ignore" such initiatives, but sometimes B.N., with his tenacious memory, reads some ciphered telegram and remembers... and then he reminds me, too...

June 21, 1979

Over the last few days the "Carter kiss" (with Brezhnev) happened in Vienna... And we are already in a time crunch preparing Ponomarev's texts for the Berlin meeting of CC

Secretaries. In light of “the kiss” our class approach and unmasking American imperialism does not look very appropriate.

I’ll go wring my brains to try to combine the two things.

When last Friday Ponomarev made me and Zagladin prepare a draft Politburo resolution on the outcomes of the Vienna Brezhnev-Carter summit, I was inwardly exasperated. Where is he sticking his nose again? We, the Department, had nothing to do with the negotiations.

But once again I underestimated Ponomarev, who knows how to use the corridors of power. Many times in similar circumstances he managed to push through “his own” solutions... Of course, through Suslov. Suslov, he said, read the text and approved it without amendments.

He also told us about what L.I. reported at the PB. Ponomarev’s account was boring and muddled. I caught a few points that are important right now on a practical level for the preparation of the meeting of Secretaries in Berlin: do not portray the summit in Vienna as our victory; do not insist that it is particularly advantageous for us; do not scold Carter but also do not praise him, do not interfere in his attempts to get it ratified. We need it. We will survive if it does not happen, but we will have to fork out a lot more.

However, Carter’s career is over. Though he apparently would really like to remain president for longer, and he does not hide it.

Attempts to pressure us (spying from Turkey’s territory – by airplane; on the Middle East – to accept the new timeframe for UN forces in Sinai; to support the plan to regulate the situation in southern Africa) did not succeed. Carter was firmly told that it is pointless to expect anything from us on these issues.

Particular emphasis (which is viewed as an achievement) on the fact that both announced that they will not seek superiority. However, when Carter returned home, he openly said in a speech before Congress that America is stronger and will remain stronger. And his Powell had figures in hand to publicly demonstrate that this is the case: on missiles, and planes, and submarines, and economic potential, in which together with the allies they surpass us threefold!!! And so forth.

June 23, 1979

I am at home.

Where is Russia going, after all?

Soon, the prices for luxury goods will go up: cars, furniture, furs, gold... Following the laws of eternal political economy, this will immediately affect the people who buy onions, turnips, dill, cucumbers, potatoes at the market. And then following the laws of inflation it will be reflected in the prices of consumer goods.

The guys from the Department of Planning-Finance Agencies say these kinds of “measures” never produce the desired effect: for two-three months the budget revenue increases,

then things go back to “normal,” but corruption, cynicism, and embezzlement grow. For example, if a store used to take a 10 percent kickback of the total cost of a furniture set, now the kickback is 100 percent of the cost.

The same guys are also saying there is a stream of letters from the regions, increasingly demanding and threatening. For example, “Do not think the Russian people have endless patience...” More and more often, they are seriously (not anonymously) demanding to have ration books introduced for meat, milk, grains.

It looks like the harvest this year will be very bad. We can expect a disaster.

Seriously, does a great nation and great country have to endure such economic shame for so long (and there is no end in sight) so its leader can talk “on equal footing” with Carter?! Nobody believes anymore that anyone wants to attack us, or “conquer” us, or subjugate, defeat, etc. Why, then, do we need this military power which turned into a terrible obstacle to all our development? The interests of our people are sacrificed to this military power. But at the end of the XX century such glory is ridiculous. It is no wonder that today’s youth (unlike our generations) could not care less about this glory, and sometimes about the “Motherland” itself.

As could be expected, after attending the Politburo, B.N. realized that we need to go back to the first version of the Berlin report, focus on promoting SALT-II and tone down the class analysis of the long-term trends in the struggle against imperialism. Yesterday he made comments precisely to that effect on a draft that was made in strict accordance to his instructions from a week ago. He was unhappy with the emphasis on “long-term problems.” And – it never ceases to amaze me – he acted as if he was not the one who gave us the framework and dictation, as if he was not the one who blasted the previous version for “superficiality, because its main parts were dedicated to SALT-II.”

However, I did not fail to remind him politely... But it’s like water off a duck’s back.

From the perspective of “the good of the cause” it is better, of course. Plus, I am tired of his theoretician airs.

June 30, 1979

The week went by in a haze: the usual finish before Ponomarev’s action. On Monday we leave for Berlin. In my job of political writing, my hunch is almost always right. Ponomarev, with his Comintern-propaganda approach to politics, from the very beginning was pushing us in the wrong direction. We resisted, but the “difference in our weight categories” quickly puts a limit to our protests. The same thing here: B.N.’s vision essentially boiled down to the idea that nothing will change, despite SALT-II and all that. The race will continue, imperialism will keep preparing for war, everything will keep moving along the path predetermined by class struggle. Therefore, in Berlin we have to sound the alarm, expose, mobilize, and so on.

We were all sure that after Vienna he would have to lower his tone. That is exactly what happened. Now he is surprised how the text could still have things like – “By propaganda we

will strive to influence the government and Congress in the spirit of SALT-II ratification"... God forbid there is a leak!

Yesterday the last redoubt fell: "MX" (the new most powerful American missile). For more than two months, there has not been a "conversation" on preparations for Berlin where he did not demand to expose "this plan of Carter's." "What is going on! With one hand he, Carter, is for SALT, and with the other he is creating a new, almost uncontrollable threat to us, he is encouraging the race, etc.!"

Reluctantly, cursing under our breath, we first wrote five pages about the "MX," then cut it down to three, then one, then, after Zimyanin's remarks – down to one paragraph. Yesterday we received a rough, unmarked "remark" from Gromyko: it is wrong to raise this issue. "MX" does not fall under SALT-II, and overall it is not fitting to deal with such matters at "such a forum." When I showed it to B.N., he turned red in the face and said, "Well, let us accept this," and struck out his last attack on the "MX."

My attempt to speak with B.N. about corruption in ministerial circles failed. One after another, cases of bribery, nepotism, theft of state property worth millions of rubles are coming to light (at the level of deputy ministers).

And now there will be a price increase starting on July 1st. So much for SALT-II!

Viktor Afanasyev's article in *Pravda* about his trip to Japan. It seems to be a new style by which Viktor (from the height of his position as *Pravda's* editor-in-chief) is demonstrating how to carry out the CC resolution on ideology. He showed a model of capitalism that we should learn from. He explained (plainly, without the air of exposing the exploitative system) why the Japanese increased their industrial production twenty-fold over the last thirty years. He described modern-day Japan. And a lesson for us – not as a subtext, not through hints, but straightforwardly: this is how one has to work, this is how one has to organize labor, this is how to use resources, etc.

July 8, 1979

From July 2-6th I was in Berlin. A meeting (the sixth) of CC Secretaries of socialist countries. There is a mini-logic of events, but there is also their place in shaping the course of main events. From the perspective of big politics, my observations are as follows: "Our friends are tired of us." Primarily, they are tired of us creating a situation on a global scale that is supposedly necessary for us and for them. We do this through our position towards the West, the Chinese, etc. It is not that they (the ruling communist parties) are in principle against our foreign policy. No. But they are sick of playing the role of the choir, they have "their own affairs," and they grew tired of spending their energy on political empty talk.

As for the ideological-political coordination (these meetings are largely held for this purpose), the Bulgarian Dmitriy Stanishev² once expressed our friends' attitude towards this (not at a meeting, of course, but in a bar): "What coordination are you talking about?.. People need to be fed, clothed, and have living conditions on par with the FRG, for example. Then you won't need any ideological coordination. But you interfere. For example, you always complain that we take loans from the West, that we are getting into debt. But what are we supposed to do? You are not giving us those loans, and you cannot. This stuff – he tugs at Zagladin's shirt – we make better quality than you do, and you sell shirts like these for foreign currency in "Berezka" in Moscow. So, what can we expect? In the meantime, our people are asking us why we cannot live the same or better than West Germans or Austrians or Danes, who come by tens of thousands to our Gold Coast? Not millionaires, mind you, but workers just like us!"

That's the whole story! Our German "friends" did not like that we made our European policy with the FRG, going over the head of the GDR. In the meantime, we made them, the East Germans, shout against the FRG. While we actively developed economic relations with West Germany, we kept thrusting Bonn's "treachery" under the GDR's nose and tried to prohibit or at least hold them back from developing economic relations with the FRG. Despite our prohibitions, this development already turned into the FRG's economic expansion. Regular people welcomed it, and the GDR leadership did not see any other alternative. When Axen, a member of the SED PB, was speaking at the aforementioned meeting, he wanted to please us and ritually railed against the FRG and especially their social democracy. Behind the scenes he was indignant that Ponomarev did not do the same!

The Hungarians were not happy that in our coordination we acted like there is unity between the policies of Vietnam-Laos (especially ideology) and Hungary, and the USSR as well. "Listen," Lakos³ told me, "do you really think that it is one policy? What the Vietnamese said here would have been appropriate 15 years ago, and even then, it would have been jarring. And now? Why are we being duplicitous, why such hypocritical meetings? Is it not dangerous to the policy itself? After all, no one said even a word to make the Vietnamese doubt that they have universal support for their point of view!"

And, of course, everyone was outraged because we are forcing 10 parties to fuss with Romanians at these meetings, just so they join the joint communique. But when a Czech, Vietnamese, and a Pole tried to make some minor editorial corrections, we brought all possible means into play, right up to conversations at the level of CC Secretaries, so they "do not insist," do not rock the boat that is about to tip over.

Naturally, our friends drew the conclusion that the more you act up with the CPSU, the more they reckon with you!

² A CC Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, he was very close to us, the International Department workers. He was a man who trusted the CC CPSU enormously. He was long aware and understood what was happening in his own country under Zhivkov's leadership. [Author's note]

³ [Sandor] Lakos at the time was the director of a Party-Ideological Institute under the CC MSZMP (similar to our Institute of Marxism-Leninism). I got to know him when I worked for the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*.

The Romanians themselves, their tactics and policies, not to mention personal behavior, won nobody's sympathies. People "did not want to understand" why we fuss with them so much. The Soviet Union needed a show of unity and the rest had to suffer the Romanians' vulgarities and sacrifice their dignity for this.

Our "friends" are tired of the CPSU's double game in the communist movement in connection with Eurocommunism. During the abovementioned Berlin meeting we conducted yet another secret meeting of CC Secretaries (without Romanians).

Here is how it went. SED Politburo member Hager chaired the meeting. Ponomarev spoke first, presented his assessments as if they were shared by all those present. He finished.

Hager: "Who would like to speak?" Silence. It lasts a few minutes. The Cuban, probably trying to save the situation, speaks for a long time about preparations for the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Havana. In other words, completely off topic.

Hager asks again: "Who would like to take the floor?"

Silence again. Then Rusakov takes the floor, even though he was scheduled to be the last to speak. He talks about our relationship with the Romanians, Yugoslavs, and Koreans.

Hager... and silence again. Then the German thanks the speakers (i.e. Ponomarev, the Cuban, and Rusakov) and wishes everyone a good night. At all six previous such meetings, starting in 1973, we had this kind of closed session. I was present at all six of them. But there was never anything like this! It looked like a silent obstruction. Like a protest on their knees or flipping the finger behind their back. Our friends-allies no longer wanted to listen to directives, they allowed themselves to "disagree" with the method of formulating policy, especially policy that was "made" without them. They are now defiant, they do not want to accept the CPSU's policies as the general policy of the socialist community as a whole.

Ponomarev was shocked. I later tried to talk to him about it, but he avoided the conversation. He knew how to act: the CPSU cannot fail at anything, which means everything was fine here too. In any case, we should not make noise even if something was not quite right.

On the small-scale, everything really was ok. At the open meeting everyone took a turn speaking, some delegations even spoke two or three times, making it look like a "lively discussion." In reality they did not even listen to each other. There were receptions, conversations amongst themselves, all kinds of other communication. The second echelon (experts and advisers) lived in a Party hotel and spent their evenings at the bar: jazz, dancing, and frank conversations over wine and beer.

There were 28 people from the Soviet side. The other delegations were sizable as well, about the same number of people. I heard that in total there were at least 200 foreign participants.

So, everything was impressive and in line with expectations.

July 13, 1979

It was a busy week: draft for PB on the outcomes of Berlin and a cheat sheet for B.N.'s speech at the PB.

Evaluation of the 11th volume of "History of the CPSU" (1946-1964) – B.N. asked me to conduct the final edit before submitting it to the publisher. I looked over these 600-plus pages. Boring and hypocritical. The people who lived through this time and who remember it can reconstruct this deeply dramatic period of our history from the jargon formulas and external reference points. But a "new" reader will not get anything from this volume, and he won't have the patience to get through this fluff.

I wrote a very vitriolic review. Zaitsev said that B.N. used it widely in front of the 32-member group of authors.

July 19, 1979

Today I spoke at the Politburo for the first time. Only right now, at home, I "realized" the significance of this event. When I was walking back from the Kremlin and then resumed editing the memo for the upcoming talks on Tuesday with a delegation from the FRG (Gremetz), when I reported to our sector on the outcomes, somehow I did not think much of it: just work. And, in reality, that is what it is. But out of 15 million Soviet communists not many get to even attend the Politburo, much less speak there.

The PB was discussing the issue of the ongoing demolition of Iraq's Communist Party by the Ba'athists – Saddam Hussein, who just became president. Our Department was offered to publish an abbreviated text of the May address to Iraq's CP on this matter, and a "cautious article in *Pravda*." To send to communists who went to the mountains to join the Kurds "blankets and pillows," but not weapons, two radio stations, etc.

Kirilenko was the chairman and asked me to say a few words. I explained why we are suggesting this and how "in our opinion" events in Iraq will develop with the arrival of Hussein: in any case, for the Communists things will get even worse.

Nevertheless, A.P. proposed to wait, so this reprimand from us does not become the first public act towards the new president. He said we should try one more time to appeal to his reason. After that we can make a public statement. I did not quite understand whether the initiative to send "blankets and pillows" was supported or not. I did the right thing [not to push this point] because why waste time on trifles when the policy is outlined.

B.N. is in Afghanistan. He is coming back tomorrow.

Giving an award to Kashtan, the General Secretary of Canada's CP. A disgusting business: on Plotnikov street I had to give a speech about him – a toast. In the presence of his comrades, PB members. To talk about the non-existent achievements of the leader of a non-existent party, and moreover – a dubious character.

Ambassador Alexander Yakovlev was sitting next to me. He was transferred to Canada seven years ago from his post of Deputy Head of the Propaganda Department because he was not ready to organize the Brezhnev cult in the media. As soon as I finished my artfully labored

speech, he whispered in my ear: “He is the shiftiest character of all the Canadians I’ve dealt with.”

Good thing I had the sense to advise Vasiliy Vasilievich Kuznetsov – Deputy Chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet (after the award in the Kremlin) to remove from his speech (from the text for publication) the words “loyal Leninist.”

... The CC Secretariat adopted amendments to the rules of conduct for Soviet people abroad. On the one hand it has a loud preamble about carrying the truth about our Soviet homeland and so forth, on the other hand it essentially prohibits any contact with the natives.

July 27, 1979

Gremetz (PCF CC Secretary) arrived. On July 24 and 25 we had talks at the CC CPSU, with the participation of Ponomarev, Chernyaev, and Gremetz. *Pravda* wrote about this: “The conversations, which took place in a friendly, frank atmosphere, covered a wide range of political and economic issues of today’s international situation, including in Europe. Particular attention was given to questions of disarmament and the need to strengthen action against the arms race in order to reinforce détente.

“The participants of the meeting presented the views of their Parties on the questions of democracy and socialism.

“Representatives of the CPSU and the PCF believe the exchange of views was useful and constructive, and expressed the joint desire of both parties to continue developing relations and cooperation.”

For those who understand, such a communique (the first since 1971) says a lot. It seems the PCF needs us. They understood that they will not survive if they are “against us” (although not with us), and they’ll never be the ruling party anyway... Though Gremetz did not insist on including a mention of our differences in the communique, I had to offer the penultimate paragraph as a compromise to avoid their wording, which had a written allusion to our differences, not just a semantic one.

Gremetz himself is a simple guy and really wants to live up to his post, so he accurately conveys Georges’ (Marchais) resolutions and statements, but does not get wound up and does not escalate. His range and scope do not compare to Kanapa’s, who had his own politics alongside the politics of the Party.

Cartesian clarity has degenerated in our French friends (due to weak personal intellectual potential and education) into simplistic revisionist dogmatism. Their whole policy boils down to one simple goal: “everything for the Party, everything in the name of the Party.” At one time, Thorez managed to get them on the track of – Party for the nation. Now they are returning to pre-Thorez times, but with a claim to creative development of Marxism.

Having a serious discussion with them is a waste of time. They do not know how to substantiate their premises.

Examples:

1) Shift to the right in Europe. It must not be repeated too often, because such insistence on a shift to the right benefits the Social Democrats. And that is bad! (There is no beast scarier than Social Democrats right now, whether it's Mitterrand, Brandt, or anyone else.)

So, it does not matter if there really is a shift to the right and how real politics should react to it. The important thing is not to give Social Democrats a chance.

B.N. asks him: "Is Strauss better than Schmidt?"

Gremetz: "I don't know, I don't know. I do not want to give an unequivocal answer. Schmidt does well for monopolies and such." In other words, the same old song – the worse, the better. Therefore, any kind of cooperation with Social Democrats (on any issues – détente, the arms race, etc.) is out of the question, including in the European Parliament. "There we will only express our Party's point of view."

2) "The main disagreement between us," Gremetz says pompously, "is, as we stated during our Congress, that you do not understand (underestimate) the universality of the democratic component and its significance under socialism. It is not about dissidents, that is a trifle. It is about a global theoretical disagreement."

We ask him: "How is our lack of understanding manifested?"

In response we get unintelligible phrases, and then: "You take administrative measures when you should be fighting through political means."

B.N. catches him: "So the issue is dissidents after all? You would like us to allow anti-Soviets to go on Red Square and yell whatever they want, allow them to create anti-Soviet groups, etc. Is that right?"

Again, we get generalized phrases in response, but he did not come back to the idea that dissidents are a trifle, a detail.

How can you have a discussion with such theoreticians?

At the same time, they repeatedly declared they have no intention of teaching anyone, and they uphold the right of anyone to have a personal opinion on any issue. But apropos, they protested after Mauroy (Socialist leader) visited Moscow last year (for the twinning of cities Kharkov-Lille) and said on a French TV program that the CPSU shares the Socialist Party's assessment of the parliamentary elections in France.

B.N. immediately called Mauroy's statement a lie. But that is not quite true. I was present at the confidential meeting between Mauroy and Zagladin and heard with my own ears how Vadim strongly hinted that we do not share the assessments made by communists on the outcomes of those key elections...

But that is not the point. The point is that our French friends, with all their demagoguery about equality, bar the thought that the CPSU, for example, could have a different opinion from the PCF on any French issue.

B.N. spent around six hours talking with them over two days. The rest of the time was on me. Many times the conversation jumped to Catholics, the Pope in Poland and in general. Here, as in other questions, their scope is very shallow. For this specialist on Catholics (Gremetz for a long time led this subject in the CC PCF), the Pope is just a realist, and his visit to Poland is a great achievement in terms of cooperation between the church and the socialist state. My attempts to take this subject deeper into the philosophical-ideological sphere, or even just political (but with perspective), only led to monotonous and arrogant repetition of the same general phrases.

B.N. came up with yet another lesson for the West: he wants to “write” an article stating that revolution in the modern world is not “the hand of Moscow” but an objective process. Just as soon as he says this, Brzezinski & Co. will immediately realize this and anti-Sovietism will suffer another blow.

He advised Kozlov and me to read his articles and reports published at such-and-such a time, or not published but we can get them from Balmashnov. “I,” he said, “worked on this issue long before Brezhnev said it in Vienna. You should read those materials, they already contain most of the things we need for this one.”

The funny part is that Leshka (Kozlov) and I were the ones who wrote most of those articles and reports for him. What is this? Contempt for us, senility, self-conceit, or total moral perversion on the basis of the bureaucratization of his mind and soul?!

This happens so often that I do not even want to complain anymore.

August 4, 1979

This last week was very difficult.

On Tuesday there was a meeting of the CC Secretariat. Shaken, I listened to a discussion about the ministries’ failure to carry out PB resolutions on the production of equipment to facilitate and replace manual labor. Head of the Department Frolov said we are 60 percent behind capitalist countries on replacing manual labor. He declared that the ministers showed a lack of discipline. Then the ministers came to the table: Antonov (Radio engineering), Novoselov, Polyakov, and someone else. Also, Deputy Chairman of Gosplan Isaev.

I once already wrote about Antonov and others like him. These are Soviet managers who are competent, knowledgeable, fluent in their subject, and clearly people with character and brains. Even though they were summoned for a dressing down, it did not look like any of them were afraid. Their position was *a la* Mayakovsky: “Here is my pen, comrades, try writing yourselves!”

Antonov started out by saying that yes, he is guilty, he came up short. But then: “I am reproached for not meeting the objectives on the production of forklifts. This is true. Indeed, I

did not put into operation (this many) new plants and did not retrofit (this many) old ones. I did not do this because half of the Bulgarian forklifts we imported and half of the ones I manufactured are standing idle. There are no accumulators for them. And we do not have accumulators because there is no lead, and Gosplan withdrew the funds to build a new accumulator plant, because we would not have the raw materials to make the product. And so forth.”

Novoselov started off another way. “Do you think,” he said, “we, white-haired and distinguished, enjoy standing here like boys and listening to these words?! No... You, Andrei Pavlovich (Kirilenko), said that we have been warned six times. But over these years, Gosplan reduced appropriations for civil construction through my Ministry six times as well. First by 12 percent, then 15, 20, and finally by 38 percent. How was I supposed to retrofit and build new factories?”

Polyakov (automotive engineering) spoke in the same spirit. Isaev tried to blame the ministers but acknowledged that he did not allocate sufficient funds through 1978. Now he promised to catch up.

But most importantly – Kirilenko’s helplessness. He kept calling his assistant and kept throwing numbers at the ministers. These numbers were supposed to show that they have not done anything over the last seven years. But they immediately politely refuted the accusations by presenting irrefutable facts. The accusations against Polyakov turned into an embarrassment: he turned a deaf ear to them and it seemed from the outside that he was blatantly ignoring them by not responding to the grave questions. Finally, his patience ran out and he politely explained: “Andrei Pavlovich, you are talking about something else, it is not under my department. I produce motor cars with internal combustion engines...” A minute of silence...

But again, this is not the main thing. The main thing is that the CC could not come up with any specific plan to fix the situation – no redistribution of funds, no new funds, nothing. CC Secretaries, except for Gorbachev who said something sensible about how much agricultural products we are losing because we do not have loading and unloading facilities, were silent (not our B.N. though): they are ideologists or foreign affairs specialists, or organizational workers who do not really deal with economic issues.

Kirilenko spoke most of the time (and more than once). But he moralized: oh, this is so bad, you are communists after all, responsible comrades, you are smart and knowledgeable. The CC appointed you, you were given a task, and what did you do? One cannot have such an attitude towards a PB resolution, it is bad! You were not given the funds or had reduced appropriations, what’s the big deal! You stopped trying and used it as an excuse to do nothing. This is because this is not your main line of work, and you did not want to work for someone else. And so forth.

It was embarrassing and barbaric! There was nothing in the chairman’s inarticulate tirades except old-fashioned “Let’s go, let’s go!” and “Communists are not afraid of any difficulties!”

I happened to be sitting near these ministers. They sat there, listened, smirked, exchanged scornful remarks, or even just phrases: “What was the need to gather us here? If I may say so, what is the use of this kind of discussion at the Central Committee? Is this not discreditation? There is nothing we can do if they keep planning like this. They can remove us, but it will not change anything...”

I left completely crushed. Don't they know better than to put on such Party spectacles if there are neither material resources, nor the ability or determination to solve issues in a businesslike manner?

This is one event from my week.

On Monday we received Kashtan at B.N.'s. The usual chatter: as always, he told us platitudes about the situation in Canada and nothing about himself or his Party.

B.N. consulted with me before the meeting and decided to give Kashtan a dressing down this time: “How is it that you are talking about a crisis, unemployment, inflation, pressure from the Americans – but your Party keeps dwindling? At the last parliamentary elections, you got even fewer votes than before (by the way, Kashtan himself got only 193 votes). And what is this story with Biging, whom you expelled...” Kashtan was completely lost and could not find anything to say, started confusing numbers and why workers were not joining the party. The meeting ended in a state of upheaval. When we left the office, Kashtan said to me, “I would like to continue the discussion with you.”

On Wednesday we continued it on Plotnikov street. However, just as during his previous visits, it came down to him pulling out a piece of paper and carefully making notes during lunch. He asked me about theoretical questions of the ICM, about possible election strategies, about all the things he will need for his report at the upcoming November congress of the Party – to look informed and up to speed.

The next day at B.N.'s we met with Florakis (General Secretary of the CP of Greece). He is a completely different story. In a few years he created a strong party. Now he showed up to lay the groundwork for Prime Minister Karamanlis's visit to Moscow (for the first time in the history of USSR-Greece relations). He traveled by sea to Yalta. But, first of all, neither Brezhnev (who is in Yalta right now), nor even Chernenko (who was at the last Congress of the Communist Party of Greece [KKE]) received him in Crimea. They did not even respond. Once again, B.N. had to stand in. He agreed to meet with Florakis in Moscow. Of course, the latter has no idea about how things work around here, that nobody will seriously listen to B.N. when he brings Florakis's considerations to the “highest level.”

Here is what he brought: Karamanlis, even though he is an anti-communist, does not want to be under the Americans' heel. So, he is looking for support from the USSR. However, he needs tangible results from the visit, he cannot return to Athens with nothing but nice words. He expects to receive agreements to build an alumina refinery in Greece, to supply gas, electricity (even modest amounts), oil, and expansion of goods exchange.

The only thing B.N. could tell him was – we'll report it! And immediately he “confidentially” added: “A week or two before the visit you should send a telegram through our ambassador with all this information.” I don't know whether Florakis guessed, but the point of this operation is that an adviser or Gromyko might report the telegram to Brezhnev. It is more problematic for B.N. to report his conversation with Florakis, much less to take some specific measures.

However, our practices are not the only problem. The fact is, if Americans found themselves in our position, they would give Karamanlis everything he wants and more without hesitation. But we have nothing to give. The only thing we have left is “moral capital” – you can't do much with it, and it is withering away.

Yesterday I received at the CC (alone this time) ten Spanish communists – scientists who traveled around the country. These conversations are very difficult: I cannot look like a trivial apologist or I would lose their trust and the overall result of this contact with the PCE would be rather negative. At the same time, I have to present our issues, concerns, and affairs in a serious, critical manner but on a cheerfully optimistic note. This is easy for me in international affairs. But when it comes to domestic – it is very difficult. I spent the whole night before the meeting coming up with what to say.

Pertsov (assistant who specializes in Spain) told me after they left that I charmed them utterly and most of their conversation during lunch was about me.

Then I had a two-and-a-half-hour lunch with O'Riordan, who is going on holiday to Lithuania with his “Soviet wife,” his former interpreter here. I pitched him the idea of holding a communist conference of Catholic countries on the Pope's policies (in connection with his visit to Poland). He liked it. He had a less enthusiastic reaction to the idea of a communist conference against anti-communism.

Of course, his Party is as significant as Kashtan's. But at least he is an intelligent person, he is interesting to talk with. He shares his own thoughts, instead of just fishing for yours, like Kashtan does.

On top of this I have all my daily work. Dozens of large papers – notes for the CC, all sorts of proposals, hundreds of telegrams and many of them need responses. Every day, there are dozens of on-the-fly questions from sectors and consultants. And B.N.'s assignments are getting funneled to one person, again. The flow of information, not to mention TASS, is deafening. But to ignore it would mean to fall behind instantly, and I would feel unsure about my responses to memos and calls.

As the result, in the evenings sometimes I would feel dizzy. When I walked home, it felt like part of my body was atrophied.

August 12, 1979

Physical fatigue is increasingly making itself felt. I feel progressively worn out by the measured monotony of life: 9-10-hour work days, sometimes work in the evenings, “foreign

friends,” communists who like to arrive on Saturdays and Sundays and meet with the likes of us on those days as well. By the way, last week I received Gasperoni and Barulli, the Chairman and General Secretary of the Communist Party of San Marino. They came to ask for oil (60 thousand tons), otherwise the Italians will overthrow their government, which is the only one in the capitalist world that includes communists, through an energy blockade.

The Ministry of Foreign Trade was ready to give them this modicum (we give the Italians seven million tons). I knew that, so it was easy to make a show of the CC accommodating them, even though B.N. warned me not to get involved in “this business.”

He is getting pushed around more and more, and he is becoming more careful, especially when it comes to financial matters. Even Kornienko (that impudent Ukrainian who works from under Gromyko’s cover) allowed himself to go against B.N., resulting in B.N.’s amendment (actually mine) being rejected. The amendment had been to strike out from the draft legislation on foreign nationals in the USSR a phrase on restricting their movement “to safeguard the morality” of our citizens. It is absolute nonsense – it makes it look like an immoral foreigner can live in Moscow, for example, but not in Novosibirsk. However, it was rejected... so once again we are exposing ourselves to anti-Soviet eruptions. Clearly, the irrational need for security is stronger than any argument. But most importantly, [we see that] some deputy minister can openly knock out a CC Secretary and this behavior is encouraged because Gromyko “has access” and is a friend.

I’m undertaking the full edition of Chaadayev (for the first time in my life reading it in its entirety), published by Gershenzon in 1913-14. Chaadayev was never “integrally” published in the Soviet Union.

The other day I read A. Besançon *The Intellectual Origins of Leninism*. Of course, we, Russians, will always perceive Lenin differently and more emotionally. But the West and practically the entire world, including the new generation of communists, already perceives him as Besançon does, or close. They are predisposed to perceive him this way, and the further he recedes into history, the more “permissible” this perception becomes, even for people who are not anti-communists.

By the way, Chaadayev believed that Lenin was the necessary factor in Russian history for the Russian people to attain the qualities of a civilized nation.

August 16, 1979

I keep coming back to Besançon in my mind. How perceptively he saw us! We cannot see ourselves this way, and if anyone does see it, it doesn’t matter – as proved by Besançon.

Gogol on Pushkin... it’s the first time I had a chance to read it. In general, only as I get older do I begin to comprehend Gogol’s greatness.

Yesterday on my way home from the clinic I noticed signs of Brezhnev’s return from Crimea. Police every 100 meters and so on. Extremely embarrassing against the background of everything else.

September 10, 1979

I am leaving for Jamaica in an hour. I read the transcript of the Brezhnev-Berlinguer conversation. They were pleased with each other. The only thing they did not agree on was China...

Of course, the consultants did a poor job on materials for Jamaica. It turns out I was assigned to lead the trade and economic negotiations with Grenada's Prime Minister Bishop. They also had a revolution last spring.

On Saturday I watched a film based on G. Markov's novel *Father and Son*, about Siberia in the 1920s. It is weak from a cinematographic standpoint, but the material is powerful. The message that comes through, maybe without the creators' intention, is that 1917 would have perished without "the year 1929." There would have been a Restoration.

I lead the CPSU delegation to Jamaica. The conference of the ruling People's National Party [PNP] (which is a member of the Socialist International, by the way) addressed topical issues of domestic and foreign policy. There were members of trade unions and representatives of socialist and communist parties of many countries.

October 14, 1979

A month has gone by. I've traveled to the other end of the world. I will try to recall some details of the trip.

We left Moscow for Montreal in the morning on September 10th. Eleven-hour flight to Montreal. I read some Finnish novel in *Inostrannaya Literatura* [*Foreign Literature*], played chess, looked over materials for Jamaica.

The airport [in Montreal] – modern luxury. It is designed for 50 million passengers per year, but only a third of the capacity is utilized, running at a loss.

Ambassador Yakovlev, who met us at the airport, complained to me that Moscow, Demichev and others, doesn't want to bring him back home. They haven't forgiven him for his article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* [*Literary Gazette*]. He is languishing, begged me to assist...

The Congress of the People's National Party was supposed to open in the morning on the 12th, but started only in the evening. Many of the delegates, of whom there were over two thousand, could not arrive due to the flood caused by the hurricane. The flood washed out the roads. Plus, at a time like this, the most active segment – the "leading cadres" – have to be together with the people.

Our appearance at the sport palace...

Common prayer. The pastor's sermon.

Sékou Touré (the Marxist dictator of Guinea) driving practically onto the podium in his car. He came with an official visit. His hour-long speech at the Congress: demagoguery, racism in reverse. Manley's speech in response. My first impression of Manley (now his portrait is

standing behind the glass of my bookshelf) – an outstanding, larger-than-life persona. One of those who make history. On top of that he is handsome, an orator, charming...

The British parliamentary manner of conducting discussion... Women make up two-thirds of the delegates. Very active.

Dancing, bursts of enthusiasm, hymns, etc. Instead of our usual applause during the Congress.

You can see through the Congress what's happening in the country. It really reminded me of our country in the first years after the revolution (as I imagine it, of course): a highbrow intellectual elite of the Party and state (with British, Canadian, and American universities in their past; work in journalism and law, etc.) One after the other, the people [in Jamaica] make a much greater impression than our European "Eurocommunists" both in their political outlook and their way of thinking. They far surpass pretentious Europeans in the degree of understanding of their historical mission. That's on the one hand. On the other hand – the semi-literate masses, full of revolutionary enthusiasm, devoted to the idea of "their own socialism," hating imperialism...

The election of the General Secretary – Duncan. He is a black Jew. His ascent to this post... Left-right in the Party.

Manley, who towers above everyone while remaining easygoing, calm, confident, elegant... He makes a magnetic impression on the delegates (and female delegates especially). But he is not a Negro leader like the likes of Sékou Touré. He more resembles Fidel Castro, but he surpasses Castro intellectually and as an orator. There is something Bolshevick-British to him, if you can imagine such a mix. His mother is an Englishwoman, a world-famous sculptor. His father is a mulatto, the founder of the PNP in 1938 and now one of the "fathers of the nation."

Manley received our delegation together with the ambassador. We talked for two hours, despite the fact that the Congress was bustling 20 meters away from us, electing the governing bodies. Not a hint of airs and graces over his significance. Superb (truly!) Marxist analysis of the world situation and a deeply realistic approach to their national problems. And tactful, "with understanding," sub textual appeal to us for... not even for help – for solidarity.

A month has gone by and I am still charmed by this man. God forbid he has the same fate as Allende!

I knew Allende personally, too... He was weaker than Manley in all respects. Manley is a statesman while Allende was a political activist, though in a positive sense of the word: he was a demagogue-romantic favoring socialism.

Manley's speech at the closing of the Congress is the highest example of modern oratory art at the world standard. The audience raved. His "dialogue" from the podium with the U.S. ambassador (who was in the audience) was something!

October 21, 1979

Weeks are flying by... A little more on Jamaica.

A meeting with the leadership of the PNP: Bertram, Beverley, Manley... all from the same elite.

Interparty connections: they asked us to send tape recorders, loudspeakers, portable typewriters and other propaganda equipment. They asked for 60 sets – one per each region. (When we got back to Moscow, we only managed to send them 10...)

The question about pepper. Our merchants all of a sudden refused to buy it (even though it has been a traditional item for which we pay cash, because it is strategic). They did this right after Manley's visit, too, after all kinds of embraces and beautiful words about solidarity. Moreover, they purchased pepper from neighboring Mexico (as we found out in Moscow) because the Mexicans sold it for 20 percent cheaper. So much for the "big brother" internationalism. I had a heated conversation about this with the Ministry of Foreign Trade, they promised to take it into consideration next year. I wonder if it will happen?

Reception for foreign guests at the palace, on the occasion of the end of the conference. Manley. He came up to me before others and we continued the conversation we started at the official meeting with him. I carefully expressed my enthusiasm. Then Beverley joined us (she is a very elegant mulatta, they say she was a finalist in a beauty pageant. Her level and manners would make any Parisian intellectual look like an amateur). But we had an even more open and friendly conversation with her after the rally on the occasion of the Cuban school opening in the suburbs of Kingston. By the way, that was an impressive sight. A huge gathering of people and the entire Congress was present, it was taken there by bus.

Our daily breakfasts and lunches at the hotel, buffet and so on. The room where I stayed had air conditioning and a view of the ministry of foreign affairs (which was always empty) and some banks and companies. These buildings were shown in the propaganda slides at the Congress as symbols of imperialism and neocolonialism (as an illustration for the masses). And so they are.

The conference ended on September 16th, the next day in the evening the ambassador took us to Montego Bay by car, across the entire country from South to North, to the resort zone. Along the way – tropical, barefooted poverty. At first, I thought the "chicken coops" made out of a hodgepodge of materials that we saw along the way were some kind of temporary shelters (like our garden plots). But it turned out this is the normal type of housing for local villagers (though it is no better on the outskirts of Kingston). We drove past the buildings of Canadian-Jamaican bauxite mining companies... A massive red lake – production waste that destroys everything around it: forest, grass, wildlife, fish. It poisons groundwater and pollutes the atmosphere, etc. Nobody knows what to do with this blood-brown deadly stagnant lake, and it keeps getting bigger.

In the morning we returned to Kingston by the same road, again in the rain. Colonial-type estates (like in the movies) with the corresponding houses on hilltops. With colonnades, porticos, turrets... The pastures are fenced, like in Scotland, with low stone walls... In the middle of each 4-5-hectare square there is a single huge tree, probably an Elm...

The main conclusion is that we should take this country seriously (I doubt anyone in Moscow paid attention to this, except Ponomarev, who “nicely” called my impressions overly enthusiastic, but left the political findings without comment. Anyway, what can he do!).

Duncan arrived a few minutes before our departure for the airport. We got into one car and became friends over the thirty-minute ride. It was endearing to watch him at the airport: a mass of people with suitcases and such, crowded because flights were disrupted by the hurricane. In his corduroy jeans, with a shirt unbuttoned down to the navel, a shy Jewish smile framed by a skipper’s beard and African curly hair, Duncan did not act like a big authority. But people immediately started approaching him: some just to say hello, some to pat him on the shoulder, some for a brief chat... Airport personnel started running around us (though unlike our situation, of course nobody warned them about a delegation from the Soviet Union). They carry themselves in a comradely way, at the same time demonstrating respect for their Party leader...

We hugged by the ramp. As we were saying our farewells, I told Duncan – as the embassy staff stared in astonishment – that I am bringing a photograph of Manley with me and that I would hang it up at home. I was speaking sincerely and I did what I said I would...

We took off right above the water and this time arrived in New York in four hours, on time.

The staff of our UN mission gave us a nice reception. They took us to a historic hotel in Manhattan and brought along a whole box of homemade food, including pirozhki baked by their wives. All of this was enough for us for the two days in New York... Thereby we were able to save some money and I even managed to buy a leather jacket for \$100 on “Yashkin-street.” (By the way, an episode there: “Mama, they wanna [*xoyym*] a denim suit!” This is across the street in Odessa jargon. “Let them come here,” the mother in heavy make up replies. This whole neighborhood speaks in Jewish-Russian dialect, and many of them speak proper Moscow Russian. These Russian Jews emigrated over the last 9-10 years and set up businesses here. They treat Soviets like good customers. Our sailors often buy all their goods in one visit... They have no nostalgia but no hatred either. They are easygoing and even friendly with us. But our people treat them with familiarity and contempt, looking down on them. Still, Soviets mostly buy from them in New York, because their wares are 30-50 percent cheaper.)

The following day we spent with Communists. Gus Hall was in Moscow, getting medical treatment. Henry Winston was in charge in the meantime. He is the Chairman of the Communist Party, a blind African American with whom I have long-standing friendly relations: he visits Moscow twice a year.

The headquarters of the U.S. Communist Party. They recently bought a large high-rise building; it also houses the printing house, bookstore, meeting rooms, and so forth.

They convened the Politburo for my sake: “discussion.” The entire editorial staff (around 100 people), the core of the New York organization (around 200-250 people). Because of this, I was talking the entire day (in the evening there was also dinner at a restaurant). I felt tired after Jamaica and was afraid that I could not handle the strain. However, when the time came to “keep

up appearances,” the energy came from somewhere. At times I would approach the podium or get up from my seat without knowing how I would begin, but suddenly words and arguments would appear... I got constant applause during the meeting with the core group – this was their reaction to my responses and arguments, even though initially the audience was apprehensive. After all, this took place in the days after the story with Vlasova was resolved and Godunov defected. Kozlovs defected just before we arrived in New York, too. The conversation covered everything: from these Bolshoi Theater performers (“why did they run away” and “why do people run from the USSR” in general) to nuclear energy, to the position of women in the Soviet Union, to China, SALT-2, and so on. I usually started off by speaking for 20-30 minutes, followed by Q&A. The questions were in the Western manner, when the questioner gives a broad overview of his opinions and asks for a response to all his thoughts...

Winston, Helen Winter, Jackson – all PB members said that my visit was an important event because American communists for the first time had an opportunity to easily talk and debate, share their doubts and questions with a live Soviet communist, “directly from the CC CPSU.” In a word, the visit ended with hugs all around.

The next day N.A. Mitin (a UN official, secretary of the Soviet mission Party organization) and his friends took it upon themselves to show us around New York City. The power and simplicity of skyscraper America, especially the 107-storey new business center on the East River.

Harlem is downright 1942 Stalingrad. It looks just like it. You wouldn't believe it if you didn't see it with your own eyes. The UN building. What it looks like inside, the spirit and order of work – how much this costs “the world community” and what it produces!

By the way, they received me as a very important person, despite the fact that Gromyko was in New York at the same time (at the UN General Assembly) and that I was only passing through and nobody was under any obligation to meet with me. And despite the fact that I came to New York to meet with communists and the staff of the Soviet New York mission do not communicate with them (they are not allowed to). Maybe they are just good people, or maybe I underestimate how I am, or my position is, perceived “from the outside.” So, this was my discovery of America.

I returned to Moscow and the next day was already meeting Woddis and Ashton, the official delegation from the CPGB, at Sheremetyevo Airport. Conversation with B.N. Later they expressed to me that they were upset with B.N. for his mentoring tone, for interrupting, for not being interested in the essence of the matter. [They said] there was no real “discussion,” it was a waste of time. They thanked me for the numerous meetings with experts on all subjects – our advisers on southern Africa, the Middle East, Kampuchea, Iran, Afghanistan, Japan, etc. In our final conversation I spent a long time convincing them that everything was fine. Hugging at the airport, the short Woddis said in a conciliatory tone, “The important thing is for us to fight a common enemy, not each other.” Which is what we set out to prove! As for their hurt feelings, they were not so much upset by Ponomarev's behavior as by the fact that he laid out before them our view of the anti-Soviet writings in all of Great Britain's communist press. I did not make

excuses for Ponomarev. On the contrary, I added on a bunch more facts, including about the activities of Buschel, their correspondent in Moscow. But I did it in a humorous style.

Then we had to urgently prepare a speech for B.N. for the ideological (All-Union) meeting. We got it done in a week. He put a lot into that text himself... I hear B.N.'s speech made an impression, especially in contrast to Suslov's report, which was an overview of the fulfillment of CC resolutions on ideology for six months and was written in the worst traditions of our propaganda.

Naturally, *Pravda* printed only 9-10 pages out of Ponomarev's 20-page speech. I carefully reformulated all the parts that our communist friends and the bourgeois press could latch onto. And then, like a bolt from the blue... a TASS correspondent released (officially!) for the foreign press one paragraph of B.N.'s speech that exposed the whole mystery (it says: "As the result of CPSU's fundamental and flexible policy, "the Eurocommunist leadership of the corresponding parties started to change its positions in a positive direction" and so forth). Awful! This scandal broke on the 18th, Thursday. On Friday Zagladin and I composed an embellished text for the part of B.N.'s speech that talked about the ICM, to present it to the French, Italians, and Spaniards as the real thing. The TASS version would be presented as a misrepresentation.

...Gremetz already protested to Chervonenko in Paris; Rome and Madrid demanded explanations. *L'Humanite* and *L'Unita* fired their first shots at us. The whole thing is in motion. And all of this right before the Marchais-Brezhnev meeting: Gremetz and Fiterman were in Moscow on October 9-10 to prepare for it. "With a great deal of effort" they coordinated with Ponomarev and Zagladin the draft of the joint declaration for the summit. And now we have this little surprise.

The correspondent turned out to be someone by the name of Avelev, TASS deputy editor-in-chief for information abroad. Either he is a total political imbecile, or he is an instigator. In either case, he violated all the basic standards (when he did not coordinate such an action with anyone).

Then again, the Marchais-Brezhnev meeting might not take place. L.I. returned from Berlin (where he went on the occasion of the GDR's 30th anniversary – a disarmament initiative, unilateral measures for the first time...) in a very bad state, and since then has not been active... He did not meet with Assad or anyone else. In Berlin, too, he struggled to read his initiatives. The people who listened to him in Russian probably could not understand him. The translated version was another matter.

October 28, 1979

The incident with the leaked paragraph from Ponomarev's speech at the ideological meeting had an unexpected outcome. Instead of being outraged, the French Communist Party used this story as a pretext to assert its thesis that disagreements exist between the CPSU and the PCF and it's a good thing that neither side is hiding it. The Italians used this as evidence of the power of Eurocommunism: Moscow has to reckon with it if they are discussing it at such a forum.

B.N. again took up the article on “the hand of Moscow.” He wants an article on this subject and that’s that. Last weekend he wrote something himself – about the two lines of the revolutionary process in theory and policy. He read it to Kozlov and me... He thinks that this “thought” immediately raises this question to a major scale... My God! I just cannot understand: is this senile graphomania, or does he really believe that he will not be forgotten the day after the end of his service in the CC, that he will remain in “the Party’s memory” as a theoretician? Or is this just the usual vanity of a normal bureaucrat?

Unexpectedly for the whole world, BBC, French, and West German television let out a story that Brezhnev is completely nonfunctional (after his Berlin trip). He met, “held talks,” and saw off the South Yemeni leader Abdul Ismail, who came to Moscow. The people who saw this performance in person are pretty depressed. The rest saw it on television and are just as depressed. He is completely falling apart... Why, why? Why are they showing him...

As luck would have it, Kosygin, Suslov, Kirilenko, and Chernenko all got sick at the same time...

November 20, 1979

I was in West Germany from November 5-12th.

In Berlin with Axen at the Central Committee of the SED, with Häber at the Party hotel. Discussions on how best to stir up the West with Brezhnev’s initiatives, to try to postpone NATO’s decision to supplement armaments because of our SS-20.

Häber, head of a CC Department on West German affairs, is a symbol of the fact that the idea of German unity remains real and vital for our fraternal East Germans. Häber not only controls Mies’ German Communist Party, but also all the levers of the common German cause... Somehow this does not occur to us. He was surprised when I asked him whether they would protest against holding a congress of West German Social Democrats in West Berlin.

We took the bus to the Tegel airport in West Berlin and flew from there to Frankfurt am Main.

I gave speeches three times a day. Even lunches and the like turned into political acts. I was brutally tired, the first night in Frankfurt at the school for working youth I almost fainted...

I talked about whatever was relevant for the occasion, but the main idea was that Germans cannot allow war to be waged against us from their territory again... That would destroy everything. Everyone agrees with this, and nobody believes that it could happen. The leadership of the Communist Party of Germany does not believe it either. Mies, with his Fuhrer-like arrogance, expounded his election platform (which plays into the hands of Strauss), and spoke about the NATO plan with an air of finality. My “sour” reaction (instead of the enthusiasm he anticipated in response to his “iron party logic”) alarmed him. He was glum later, too, at the official meeting.

The country is beautiful – a balanced combination of incredible industrial power with careful maintenance and beautiful nature. It was my first time traveling through the Rhine Valley

(although it's my fifth time in the FRG): from Düsseldorf, through Cologne, Bonn, Koblenz, to Heine's *Lorelei*, then towards the German Wine Road to Pfalz. It was a colorful, golden autumn. It turns out there are five times more vineyards in Pfalz alone than in all of Georgia.

My main impression, which is still weighing me down: we have fallen terribly behind capitalism. And there is nothing left to justify this gap (at least in America "blacks are being lynched"), we have no social or economic advantage to show. After all, Germany was also wiped off the face of the earth. Now their salary is 2500-3000 marks (even considering the exchange rate, this is more than 1000 rubles). Their workers have six weeks of vacation. Their "iron battalions of the proletariat" (Ponomarev's favorite phrase, a quote from Lenin) get in their personal cars to drive to work in the morning and home in the evening – every third German has a car. Their roads are so well maintained that you can drive at 160km/h with a full cup in the car and not spill a drop. They have no center-province separation – just as they do not have "country roads" and minor roads, so there is no difference between villages and cities in terms of welfare or comfort.

This is awfully frustrating, and for now I do not know what to make of it.

Yesterday I read Brezhnev's speech at the PB (before the upcoming CC Plenum on the economic situation and planning for 1980). I was amazed at how frank it is. But I was even more alarmed: the situation is dire. He does not hesitate to use expressions such as "state of emergency" (transportation), "alarming" (food supply). Really, everything: energy, metals, construction, machine building, meat and dairy, fruits and vegetables, etc. We keep talking about quality and efficiency, but we have not made a breakthrough. We raise the same old issues, and they are still there. And so forth.

In the text of the Plenum speech (which I also read today) all of this is presented in lighter form and as always against the background of "successes"... though the responsible ministers are "called out by name"... But what of it?!

December 2, 1979

The Plenum took place, session of the Supreme Soviet. Brezhnev spoke more or less clearly. But the text was significantly "smoothed out." Even Baibakov's looked sharper. The debates did not reflect the acuteness; the concern and anxiety were concealed. Everything was published, with the exception of a few phrases related mainly to the mess at compensatory construction sites and the stockpiles of imported goods (including grain) in our ports. From what I hear, people don't really read this stuff. No one is interested in these words after which nothing happens. However, propaganda again moved to its usual tone: "to new achievements..." Again, everything will go on as usual.

The people's oversight law was adopted. Tikhonov was sent to report on it at the Supreme Soviet session. The West is writing about him as if he will be the next Premier after Kosygin (who is ill and has not been making appearances). He tediously spoke for over an hour... Even readers like myself cannot get through his entire report, same as the text of the law

itself (which takes up two pages in *Pravda*). It is very doubtful that this law will have any effect in restoring order.

Arbatov spent about three months in Serebryanni Bor, fighting to make any kind of progress (in the team preparing Brezhnev's speech). The day after the Plenum he was admitted to the hospital with a heart attack... Symbolic!

I saw Bianca (the wife of an Italian communist with whom I worked in Prague at the journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*). She is here exhibiting machinery for the production of plastic goods at the new pavilion at Krasnaya Presnya. She dragged me to meet the businessmen and communists (who are on the staff of the Italian exhibition teams). They were all over me about how they were treated in Sheremetyevo airport – at customs they were stripped naked and even had fingers stuck up their rectums. They railed about the solicitation from local workers who are sent to them for unloading and installation. They do not take a step without demanding ten, twenty, twenty-five rubles and... half a liter. Otherwise they just sit there smoking, or wander around the pavilion, and there is no way to reign them in. They jumped on me with all their Italian expressiveness, especially the communists (the businessmen tried to hold back): this is what you call socialism! This is the Soviet working class! This is the country of Lenin! It's not our first time here, it's our twelfth time taking part in various events of this kind, and it's always the same thing. They come with a foreman whose chest is studded with medals for labor valor, then behave like the lowest lumpen, like beggars, with no scruples over what anyone might think. They don't care about what we might say back home in Italy about them and Soviet workers in general. Shameful!

I laughed it off, fought back as best I could, and seriously advised them to write to the party committee, the "Ballbearing" committee in this case. It's terrible, especially in parallel to the Plenum and the Supreme Soviet session.

A commission from *Le Monde* – to give them an article on Stalin in connection with his 100th anniversary. B.N. wanted to do it himself, but Suslov "did not advise it." So, Ponomarev ordered us to sign the article with the name of Academician Mintz. He, of course, agreed. But at the last moment B.N. almost added "on top": a) that nobody in the USSR cares about Stalin; b) that the cult and everything connected to it did not last long, around 10 years; c) that legitimacy and collective leadership reigned before and after. And some other things along those lines.

I wrote a mocking commentary on these "contributions," corrected them as I saw fit, and passed them to B.N. through Balmashnov. B.N. grumbled but agreed.

We continue to battle with NATO over the decision that's coming up in 10 days to install the Pershing-II and cruise missiles. Although it is clear to everyone that it's a lost cause. Gromyko said in a TV interview in Bonn, "If that happens, the basis for negotiations will be destroyed." But we will have to continue the negotiations, keep "racing" forward.

December 7, 1979

On Monday I'm flying to Hungary for a conference of twenty-nine European communist parties on questions of social democracy. I did a shoddy job preparing, although this topic is very

acute right now because of American missiles and the upcoming NATO session. There is a big upheaval among the social democrats, we helped bring it about... But we haven't taken one decisive step that would cause total stupor "over there": we are receiving hints, requests, questions and suggestions from everyone that the USSR should freeze the production and deployment of SS-20s for the duration of the negotiations, if we want negotiations to happen before NATO's decision.

Our Department carefully bombarded first Ponomarev, then others in the PB to take this step. Finally, we worked up the nerve and wrote a note with the text of a possible TASS announcement on the subject. Aleksandrov and Blatov delayed and edited it for a long time. But they supported the idea. The edited text came back to us so we could officially submit it to the CC. B.N. called Suslov, but the latter said that we could not do it without Gromyko. But Gromyko is in Berlin at the meeting of foreign ministers of Warsaw Pact countries. He is teaching Honecker, gauleiter-style, not to succumb to Schmidt's advances.

There are just three days left before the NATO session. And Gromyko does not really want to, maybe Ustinov does not either...

The day before yesterday I spent two and a half hours talking with Jagan, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Guyana. I was talking him out of raising a rebellion against Burnham, whose government we (officially) consider a progressive, anti-imperialist regime, and Jagan we consider a fascist.

Today I visited Gus Hall in Barvikha. In person he does not come off as a major figure. But when you read his speeches, there is a sense of magnitude... who writes for him?

The "Socialist project" of the Socialist Party of France – for the 1980 Congress. By the way, they portray the USSR not as a socialist but as a police state.

December 21, 1979

From December 10-15th I was in Hungary. In Tihany.

I gave a speech, participated in discussion. There really was a discussion, unlike at many other conferences. Once again, I felt like a politician, a representative of my Party. It was my job to protect its prestige through my ability to present myself and represent "its" opinions as creative, free, and realistic. The Hungarians were wonderful – both as organizers and intellectually, in terms of political tact. Janos Berecz and his team.

An episode with the Spaniard, who brought a protest from the Executive Committee of his CP: we do not need such conferences because they create the impression that communist parties do not make their own policies but follow directives... (He got a lashing from the Eurocommunists, first and foremost from the Swede and Frenchman). Everyone saw how artificial this whole Eurocommunist construction is – that we do not need any collective forms, not even an exchange of opinions. The fear of "the center," of Moscow's dictate, fear for their independence, fear that we could impose something on them from the center – these fears are disappearing.

On the plane from Budapest I was flying with a delegation of our agricultural workers, who visited Hungary to “share experience.” All of them were from Ukraine (heads of departments, secretaries of regional committees) led by the head of sector and CC Agricultural Department Kovalenko, whom I do not know. These workers struck up a conversation with me and opened up. At first, they glanced over their shoulders at the “head” and were nervous, but then got more comfortable. Luckily, the noise of the engines made it impossible for Kovalenko to hear everything. The main subject: “We only talk about initiative, but what initiative can there be when we are completely dependent on one person – the First Secretary. Suppose I take a risk, I experiment. Suppose I do not get immediate results. But the First always wants everything at once. Or he might not like something along the way. Then I go bust. And there is no mechanism that could evaluate my initiative objectively: the district committee plenum, the regional committee plenum, any other collective body – none of them will make a peep if the First says that something is bad.

“So, the bootlickers and fools thrive while the cause suffers. Make a wrong move and they could slap you with ideology, too, saying you encourage kulak and possessory tendencies. As the result, the country has a meat shortage.

“We looked at Hungary: they did not depart from principles, from Lenin, but managed to combine personal interest with public interest, with the interest of the state. They judge people by their actions, without foolishness and empty talk. By results. And Hungary has meat. What about us? Are we so stupid, or uneducated, that we cannot do even better? Are we not loyal? Are we not embarrassed when students, teachers, workers, and soldiers are sent to work at collective farms?

“No! Anatoly Sergeyeovich, the country would have had meat a long time ago, and everything else, if we were really given the opportunity to show the initiative that is clamored about in all the newspapers and on television.”

I was impressed by these people. Indeed, I have heard others like them even at CC Plenums, though they had to express themselves more carefully, of course.

We will see how the Conference of European Communist Parties on Disarmament and Détente will go. Marchais came up with it and it is planned for February. But our Tihany became the *de facto* step onto new ground of contemporary internationalism (even though B.N. and the CC agreed to it because I called it a theoretical seminar in my note). Rakhmanin told me that Rusakov was mad after reading an announcement in *Pravda* from which it followed that it was not a seminar at all, but a political meeting.

Khavinson is pressing me to give him an article on Lenin for the Lenin issue (of the journal *World Economy and Politics*). I dragged my feet, but in vain: I do not have the strength and energy to write an article commensurate to my knowledge, my convictions, and my confidence in Lenin’s relevance. There is neither the incentive, nor the ability. I am too tired to do something truly serious. Maybe the only thing I really have left is to put together articles for Ponomarev, and even those from drafts prepared by the consultants.

Today there is an article in *Pravda* on Stalin's 100th anniversary. Balanced. I had a conversation with Ponomarev about it, he "shared" how it passed "at the top."

December 23, 1979

I asked B.N. if he had read the article on Stalin that was prepared for *Kommunist*. "No." He lowered his voice and moved away from his desk and the phones (I always find it endearing how by habit from Stalin's times he is instinctively afraid of bugs) and said: "How many times this article was reworked, everyone is talking about the balance of positive and negative in Stalin, but essentially they are pushing entirely towards the positive. Even that Dolgikh... he told me himself how in 1941 soldiers came to the Moscow front without rifles. And now he spoke out against a phrase on Stalin's mistake in defining the timeframe of the war, a harmless phrase compared to everything else Stalin did. And others are like Dolgikh too. Of course, you cannot change them at the top. But here we could have said something... I do not understand what they want: he committed so many crimes, killed so many people, ruined so much..." (B.N. cursed, which rarely happens) "And here you are, the article paints the picture with too much black! It's that Kapitonov stinking everything up there... that petty schemer. Plotting. He was already trying to create a little group in the Secretariat under Katushev... Oh, it's not good!" And so forth.

I could not get a word in during this convoluted speech, full of interjections and hints. I did not understand everything in the literal sense. But the general point, it seems, is that not only do we have reigning incompetence and senile impotence, there is also nostalgia for Stalinist times... And B.N. is bitter that he is not given the chance to reach his full potential.

By the way, he knows a great deal about Stalin due to his work on the history of the Party. He knows things that others wouldn't even think to wonder about. But the hatred he has for Stalin feels partially personal. I do not know why... He is not one of the "intelligentsia"... And none of his relatives were imprisoned or executed.

I once again picked up Isaac Deutscher's *Stalin* (on the occasion of the 100th anniversary), I have it in French. The final chapter: "The dialectic of victory" has a lot of thoughts – on the "revolution in one part of the world" (parallels with Napoleon on the Rhineland, Italy, Belgium, Poland, etc.); on the purpose of the Iron Curtain that was brought down after the war; about the fact that Stalin legalized lies as official ideology when he called the 1930s socialism; about the fear of "the Decembrists" – the officer corps that was the only force with enough moral authority to potentially oppose Stalin's regime; and about the fact that Zhukov's name disappeared from propaganda already in 1946, and in the *Pravda* article on the third anniversary of the capture of Berlin, Zhukov was not even mentioned in the list of Stalin's generals who participated in that operation.

Novy Mir published the novel *The Limit of the Possible* by Iosif Gerasimov, another talented Jew who succeeded in showing our wartime (the home front) and post-war heroic history without bowing to any myths and dogmas, in the spirit of patriotism unclouded by demagoguery.

December 30, 1979

Our troops entered Afghanistan. They brought Karmal Babrak with them, deposed Amin (“the bloody dog”). Babrak assumed all the necessary posts, gave all the necessary speeches, including one in which he said that he invited the Soviet Army, released political prisoners, and promised everything to everyone. In a word, in line with expectations.

From Carter, to Khomeini, to *L’Unita*, everyone is furiously condemning the occupation, intervention, interference in the internal affairs of a small and weak country. “Russian imperialism” and the like. By the power of the mighty mass media, the rest of the world has turned against us. The détente capital we accumulated after Brezhnev’s Berlin speech in connection with the December session of NATO is shot to hell. All the “democratic” and “peace-loving” forces that were lined up to support our peace policy are discouraged. All that communists and our unwavering friends in general can do is rebut comments about “Soviet aggression,” nobody will listen to campaigns against American missiles. All those in the “third world” who were planning to or already set course for socialism now can only think about how not to tie themselves up with us *a la* Afghanistan, because they have a clear demonstration of what it can lead to. And we provoked all the imperialists and NATO members to get even tougher by confirming the “correctness” of the hawks, who always argued that the only way to speak with us is from a position of power, using the language of power... And so forth.

The question is – who needed this? The Afghan people? – Possibly. Amin would probably have turned the country into a second Kampuchea. But did we really commit an act that will be positioned alongside Finland 1939 and Czechoslovakia 1968 in international public consciousness just for the sake of revolutionary philanthropy and humanitarianism? The argument (which was also present in the CC letter to the Party) that we need to secure the border is simply ludicrous. For decades Afghanistan had a reactionary regime and the Brits were in charge there like they owned the place. Until the mid-1930s – through the almost open border – Afghanistan inspired the Basmachi movement, moved contraband, etc. And now, with our current power, what danger could they present to us, even if the Americans did get a hold over Amin!

The Soviet people do not need it at all. What they need is meat, consumer goods, and more order!

Who made it happen?

The next day after Taraki’s murder, Aleksandrov told Brutents that we should send troops. (Remember, in 1968 he was the first to tell me about it in Zavidovo). Of course, he was one of the ringleaders. With Leonid Ilyich’s current mental and physical state, the influence of this assistant could have been decisive. Especially because L.I. could not forgive Amin for killing Taraki the day after the publication of a large fraternal communique and the Brezhnev-Taraki meeting in Moscow.

Of course, our “neighbors” (i.e. the KGB)... But I wonder – on their own initiative, or were the KGB guys merely the organizers of relevant information.

I am not sure that Gromyko was an active supporter... or Suslov. The rest, including our Ponomarev (who was clearly at a loss) – do not count. Which means this plot was brewed somewhere “under the radar”...

The decision to send troops was made three weeks ago. Assault forces started moving close to Kabul a week before the coup, at the request of Amin himself (!), who must have decided that he could not stay in power otherwise (!). However, he did not take into account that the troops were being sent for the exact opposite purpose. Now an entire division is moving across the border, and it will take them a whole week (crossing the mountains) to reach Kabul (apropos the question of “border security”!).

This is how policy is made in the name of the Party and the people. And nobody objected – not members of the Politburo, not the PB Secretaries, of course not the republics, not even the apparatus. I think there hasn’t been a period in Russian history, even under Stalin, when such important actions were taken without even a hint of coordination, counsel, discussion, weighing of options – even in a very small circle. Nowadays everyone is a pawn that is ready in advance to quietly and meekly recognize the “rightness and necessity” of any decision emanating from one person. And this one person might not have come up with the decision himself (this is most likely the case in the current situation!).

No, comrades, we have entered into a period of senility at the ruling top that is very dangerous for our country. They are not capable of assessing who is doing what and why. These are not even desperate blind flings from the realization of the hopeless situation in our society; these are just senseless inertial impulses of a decrepit organism that has lost its bearing. These impulses are born in the dark corners of political dysfunction, in an atmosphere of complete atrophy of responsibility that has turned into an organic disease.

What about us, poor sinners? Yesterday Brutents and I were already writing drafts for Babrak: a statement against the imperialist slander campaign in connection with the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan, and a letter to communist parties calling for solidarity (i.e. so they do not protest, as the Italians already did). This is once again Ponomarev’s initiative. He quickly regrouped, and as always, he’s hustling more than anyone. He wants to earn some points even here: who knows, maybe fortune will smile on him and he will be rewarded with membership in the Politburo!

Postscript to 1979

In terms of content, this year was a continuation of the previous one. The same farce with keeping the demented Brezhnev afloat as the supreme leader. The same feelings of shame about our economy and living standards (especially in comparison with the West, where the author often found himself during this year). The same feeling of hopelessness that anything can be fixed in the conditions of the ossified system and the worthlessness of the top leadership. The same pointless bickering with the Eurocommunists, when we ourselves did not know what we wanted from them, what our political goal was: whether we wanted to return the communist movement to the old order, or if we wanted to ensure that we would not be shamed and scolded, or if we wanted to defend our theoretical (and ideological) rightness... But none of those options were possible. We were deceiving ourselves and trying to deceive others. Most likely we were active because we could not just sit and pretend that nothing was happening around us. We, the workers of the International Department, would not have been allowed to do this by our bosses or by the “orthodox” fraternal parties.

We also kept busy at work because once there is an ideology and its objects including the ICM and foreign propaganda, they all must be “covered” – that’s why the corresponding bodies and institutions exist (and are paid for).

In this “volume” there are many impressions from foreign trips (England, Ireland, Belgium, GDR, West Berlin, FRG, Jamaica, New York, Budapest), descriptions and thoughts about the various meetings with all kinds of people. All of this is performed as a matter of routine, bleak and hopeless, but it is interesting as a “chronicle of the times”... I think not only for me.

However, the day-to-day official (and social) existence in the vicinity of power that was dragging a great country who-knows-where suddenly broke through at the end of the year with the attack on Afghanistan. But more on that in the next and subsequent “volumes.”

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